

HISTORY OF THE SPANISH PEAKS

RANGER DISTRICT



Compiled by

LEWIS A. CUMMINGS

The history of the Spanish Peaks Ranger District was compiled by Lewis A. Cummings who, at his retirement in 1959 after thirty-five years of service with the United States Forest Service, was called the "Dean of the San Isabel National Forest". Mr. Cummings was born in Massachusetts in 1901, and after having lived for a time in California, finished high school in St. Petersburg, Florida. He received a Bachelors degree in Forestry from the University of Idaho, and in 1929 graduated cum laude with a Masters degree in Tropical Forestry from Yale University. He was married to Florence Ratcliffe of Denver in 1928.

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The original manuscript was completed in 1947, and throughout the 1950's Mr. Cummings continued to add material. The additions begin on page 101, and as Mr. Cummings notes on page 100, he "believed they should be inserted at the end of the original account instead of attempting to place them under the various headings." This accounts for the double entry of page numbers for various chapters in the Table of Contents. The only change in the reprinting of the original document is in the page numbers, and the original was double-spaced.

This study, in addition to being a valuable historical document, is an interesting survey of the Spanish Peaks area. Too often the considerable efforts of people like Mr. Cummings who compile such histories are lost and forgotten. In order to preserve this study for future generations and to make it available to a wide audience of interested persons, Mrs. Cummings generously gave her permission for this printing. The actual reprinting was contributed by old friends of the Cummings, Marion and Fred Lampe, and Natalie Cambon.

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HISTORY OF THE SPANISH PEAKS RANGER DISTRICT
AND SURROUNDING COUNTRY
SAN ISABEL NATIONAL FOREST
Region 2

Compiled and edited by Lewis A. Cummings

December, 1947

HISTORY OF THE SPANISH PEAKS RANGER DISTRICT

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HISTORY OF THE SPANISH PEAKS RANGER DISTRICT

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Introduction

The geography of a country plays an important part in the nature of its settlement, its industries, and in the welfare of its people. In the Spanish Peaks area coal mining and cattle ranching are dominant, the former creating work in the forests in the production of props and other materials needed in the mines. The formation of coal took place millions of years ago and the cattle industry became possible only through geological stabilization and the formation of soils. This in turn has created extensive grazing lands, at first providing feed for the buffalo and other wild animals, but now for the large herds of cattle and sheep. Goats are numerous in certain sections and have proved to be as destructive here as in other parts of the world.

From the very beginning the earth's crust was built up by the deposits of sedimentary material washed from unknown land masses and by volcanic disturbances beneath the surface. Although erosion has never ceased it is not as spectacular as in ages past when broad valleys were carved from mountain masses. This is true of the Cucharas valley for there are rock formations around the Peaks which are also found near Gardner, but no longer in between.

The Spanish Peaks District and surrounding region is of a varied topography. To the northwest of La Veta can be seen Veta Mountain, rising well over 11,500 feet above the level of the sea. A close examination of the peak shows it to be largely slide rock with large flows resembling glaciers in appearance. The Culebra Range lies to the west, a low range of mountains covered with forests until it reaches Trinchera Peak, 13,546 feet, well above the line of timber. Farther south, though not visible from La Veta, is Culebra Peak, 14,069 feet in elevation.

The Spanish Peaks are two independent masses east of the Culebra Range. West Peak, with an elevation of 13,623 feet, overtops the one to the east which only has an elevation of 12,708 feet. This difference in elevation is not readily discernable in the distance.

Several streams rise in the mountains in this area, all of which flow in a general northeasternly direction to the Arkansas River. However, little of the water originating in the mountains finds its way to the parent stream during the summer months, being diverted from the channels to flow over the nearby hay lands. A large quantity of water also flows into storage reservoirs for domestic use by the cities of Trinidad, Walsenburg, and La Veta.

The main streams, Cucharas, Apishapa, and Purgatoire, though relatively small, are designated as rivers upon the maps. These streams have carved deep canyons in the plains region to the east where evidence of a prehistoric race has been found.

Trinidad, with a population of 13,223 according to the 1940 census, is the largest city adjacent to the district. Walsenburg, with a population of 5,855

follows, while Aguilar, 1,397, and La Veta, 897, are the other principal smaller communities. Other towns of this area are dependent almost entirely on the production of coal and several ghost towns exist due to the mines becoming inoperable.

West of Trinidad, along the Purgatoire River, are several small towns largely dependent on coal production, and for several miles dwellings line the highway. Among these towns are Jansen, Sopris, Cokedale, Valdez, and Weston. Farther west are small resorts, including Storz, Stonewall, and Monument Lake. Weston is the headquarters for the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation in this area. Other small communities connected with the coal mining industry are located around the district.

The country surrounding the Spanish Peaks abounds with legendary and historical stories. A tribe of Indians is known to have inhabited the plains and foothills, and from the potsherds found in the caves and dwelling places, they are believed to have been here as early as 1000 A. D. Local authors have written much concerning these early aborigines and with little restraint on their imaginations.

There are tales of the Spaniards visiting this area as early as the sixteenth century hunting for treasure, but this is not borne out by the facts. However, several expeditions did pass through the area in the 17th and 18th centuries but not in search of gold and silver. The Spaniards had learned long before this that the wealth of this southwestern country was not in precious metals. However, the Spanish Peaks were on the border of the Spanish territory with the possibility of some Spaniards visiting the area without leaving authentic records to prove it. These little-known explorations make up part of the legendary stories of today.

The Mexican Government claimed the territory around the Spanish Peaks as shown by the land grants made shortly before it was purchased by the United States. However, the boundaries were pushed too far to the north and all the grants were not recognized by our government. This is true of the area around La Veta. Shortly after the Mexican War the area began to feel the first influx of settlers.

Settlement of the area was rapid after the Civil War and with the construction of the railroad in 1876. The settlers swarmed over the plains, into the foothills, and finally on the slopes and high-altitude parks of the mountains. However, their stay in the mountains was not of long duration and one by one they gradually deserted their homesteads for more comfortable places below. Even at high altitudes cultivation was attempted but climate was too severe for most crops.

The opening of the coal mines from Walsenburg to Trinidad created an enormous demand for props. Prop cutters swarmed through the forests cutting anything that would make props, taking out valuable growing stock at the same time. Even today on private lands the cutting of mine props is removing stands of young ponderosa pine thus depriving future generations of saw-log material.

The destruction of the forests in the western mountains led to the creation of the national forests at the turn of the century. The Spanish Peaks area was set aside for this purpose in 1907.

The following article written by S. E. Doering, former Assistant Forest Supervisor, under the date of December 5, 1924, expresses the sentimental side of the Spanish Peaks.

HUAJATOLLA

"In the city of old Mexico, were one to look patiently enough, one would find an old, old record. Perhaps the volume would be aged and dusty, the parchment brittle, but in its very age, in its quaintness of language, one would read with intense interest:

"It is a gigantic double mountain in the northernmost limits of the Empire, it being far across the Painted Desert, towards the sunrise where the world ends. The tribes of the desert reverence it and call it Huajatolla, meaning 'breasts of the world.'

"The Rain Gods dwell in Huajatolla. The mountains are round as a woman's breasts. There the clouds are born and nursed that bring the summer rains. There only, toward the far North, where the limitless plains meet the sky, it rains on the eve of every day. Trees grow with fruit upon them. The birds sing. The air is heavy laden with the sweet perfume of flowers.

"This mountain is the abode of those above. It is the abode of the Gods of Rain who have power to move the clouds and scatter them all over the world. Jealously the tribes of the Great Painted Desert guard the mountain of Huajatolla, for if the rain fails they have no food, and with no food they perish all.

"Many years ago, before the first white man stepped ashore, even before the alliance of the three kingdoms of Alcolhua, Aztec, and Tepence, gold was already an eagerly sought article.

"But it was not coined in those days, nor was it used in barter; it was offered to the Deities only, and with which the shrines of Huitzilopochtli were decked.

"The bulk of it was brought from the double mountain of Huajatolla, sixty days travel to the north, and it was taken to the cities of Mexico, Tezueco and Teacopan.

"But when Nezahuatcovtli reigned in splendor at Tezueco, the Gods perhaps became envious of the magnificence of his court, for they placed demons at Huajatolla to guard the gold, and although invisible, they manifested their power in many ways.

"History relates that these peaks were the first mountains sighted by white men of this continent. Many centuries ago the tribes of the Plains and the Great Painted Desert east and south, long before the coming of white man, called them Huajatolla. When the Spanish penetrated westward to their base, they called them Los Dos Hermanos, meaning 'The Two Brothers.'

"The old Spaniard has lived many summers and winters at the base of Huajatolla. Often he can recount his history of more than a century.

He is quaint and quiet, his English is very limited. He lives very simply on dried vegetables from his garden; a little meat and milk from the goat herd, and tortillas, a flat pancake-like bread, the flour for which comes from his own mill of two flat, rounded stones. He answers questions very kindly whilst he searches the questioner with keen, penetrating eyes. Then he will roll a cigarette from brown paper adding only a tiny wisp of tobacco. His is a life of rigid moderateness in all things and, above all, he is devotedly a catholic, a humble believer in God.

"His casa, or house, wherein centurians before him have been cradled and passed to the Great Maker, is found always in a settlement of like casas, following a straggling, unkempt street. His casa is small and unpretentious, being plastered entirely over with mud and having a flat, mud-covered roof.

"In every hamlet there is the little mud-covered church with its ever-tilting wooden cross. Back of the church, or at its side is God's acre, a bit of land that has been blessed and is holy. There are many graves, some are very old. Always, at the head of the grave, there is a cross carved from wood or chiseled from stone, but always, the cross.

"Along the roadside one may frequently find a small wooden cross, tilting. It seems they always tilt. Many small round rocks are piled about its base, but there is no grave. Again it is their devout religion. The cross is for someone who has passed to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The stones are placed there by a passing relative or loved one, as a token of remembrance and with faith that the absent one is happy in the land of Everlasting.

"Away south and east are the limitless prairies and the Painted Desert, shimmering under the heat of summer sun, ending farther on in a dull haze of purple and blue. There are many hamlets and blocked-off ranches out there. One sees a winding, silver-like thread streaming along the base of the ranges from Pueblo to Trinidad. It is the auto highway marking almost the exact route of the Pony Express of a short century ago. Over its course, dare-devil riders worked night and day, in calm or in storm, evading the redskin and bandit as best they might."

Geological History

The historical record of the Spanish Peaks and adjacent areas could not be complete without reviewing the vast geological activity which took place millions of years before man set foot upon this earth. When the ancient seas lapped the shores of the present Greenhorn Mountains most of Colorado lay beneath the water, teeming with life as it then existed. Even this ocean received the sediments washed from unknown land masses which long since have disappeared. These ancient sedimentary deposits underlie the region to a profound depth yet in many places they are exposed and afford man an opportunity to study the events which occurred.

The beginning of North America as a continent has been described in Geological History of North America* as follows:

"At the beginning of the Cambrian Period (Paleozoic Era), some 500 million years ago, the North American continent had what might be called its triangular backbone already outlined. . . The eastern side of the triangle consisted of a mountain chain parallel to but east of the present Appalachian system. The western side was formed by a chain of mountains just beginning to be uplifted near the present west coast. The interior of this triangle must have been a broad, rather smooth plateau. In other words, North America was even then a true continent in that it consisted of a large land mass with its edges turned up into mountains. . . . During this period a long narrow trough stretched down the eastern side of the continent just inside the eastern highlands, at its greatest extent reaching from northern Greenland to Alabama. . . . Another long, narrow trough extended southward from the Arctic, through the region that is now the Rocky Mountains as far south as southern Nevada. Thus, while the major structural features of North America were already outlined, one would scarcely recognize at first sight a map of the continent as it then appeared, with seas replacing the present Appalachian and Rocky Mountains and with other mountain ranges occupying what is now the coast line on the east and west."

The Greenhorn Mountain mass is composed of ancient granites and schists with sedimentary rocks lacking in areas where they might have been preserved. These mountains are thus considered as of Archean origin, or during the period when the first rocks were made. In most places on the earth these are covered with thousands of feet of sedimentary material through which great mountain chains and peaks pushed their way from below, bending them into unnatural positions.

From the beginning the Greenhorn Mountains appeared above the sea, uplifted from time to time and more than once depressed, but never submerged into its depths since this first period of geological time. No record of life has been found in these ancient rocks and if any existed it would be of the most primitive.

But this region was not always peaceful and quiet, for in the more recent times it experienced considerable volcanic activity. On the summit of the

*Smithsonian Scientific Series, Volume 10, By Ray S. Bassler and Charles E. Resser.

Greenhorns there is a large area of extrusive lava made up of several distinct flows, the later overlying the earlier in nearly horizontal positions.

Some scientists place the Archean age as far back as 2000 million years. During all this period the Greenhorn Mountains are presumed to have been in existence but afford little information as to the events occurring at the time. The absence of fossil remains is characteristic of the Archean and only the most simple forms of plant and animal life are believed to have existed.

It is difficult for man to visualize the vast amount of time occurring between the Archean age, the most ancient of the periods of which physical evidence remains, and the Carboniferous period. The latter came into existence about 300 million years ago and is represented by a brick-red sandstone around Badito, and to a greater extent in the Sangre de Cristo range to the west, where it attained a thickness of several thousand feet. The remains of a Carboniferous fauna and flora have been found in the beds on the Sangre de Cristo range, but nowhere in Colorado is there evidence of the great coal-bearing forests and their inhabitants which are found in the eastern part of the continent.

The Carboniferous period was characterized by dense growths of vegetation in most regions, and the depressed land surfaces bordering the continents provided swampy conditions most favorable to coal formations. Varieties of plants which are now of small size and lowly position in the botanical world acquired the proportion of large trees. However, the great coal-bearing formations of Colorado occurred at a more recent time in geological history.

During the Age of Reptiles, about 160 million years ago, the Morrison formation was laid down, characterized by shales, sandstones, and lime. This formation is highly variable in character, with much of the clay often buried beneath the floor of the valley. Dinosaur material has been taken from this formation in the Canon City and Morrison districts. In addition to the bones of reptiles, there are plant fossils, usually of poor quality, and freshwater gastropods, in some places more or less abundant.

The Cretaceous period, also during the Age of Reptiles, had its origin about 125 million years ago and lasted for 60 to 70 million years. The more ancient rocks of the Spanish Peaks region are buried beneath the sediments deposited in the waters of the ocean which covered most of Colorado at that time. During these millions of years formations were laid down in the ocean with deposits ranging from 4000 to 5000 feet in thickness, consisting of sandstones, shales, and limestones.

Plant and animal life existed during this period and numerous fossilized marine shells have been found in some localities. Among the marine fossils are Inoceramus labiatus - a flat, concentrically-ringed shell from 3 to 4 inches long and from 2 to 3 inches broad; the coiled ammonite, Prionocyclus wyomingensis; Inoceramus deformis; Baculites; cephalopods with straight chambered shells; small oyster shells; Halymenites; sharks teeth and fish scales. The tracks of a small crustacean have been found in the Apishapa formation.

The oldest deposit of this period is the Dakota formation which in places has yielded leaf impressions in the clays.

The Trinidad sandstone is the last of the marine Cretaceous formations, and with the beginning of the Laramie epoch new conditions were inaugurated. The

waters in which the sediments were deposited, while still connected with the ocean, no longer supported marine life. The areas receiving sediments continued to subside, but the rate of subsidence was slower in relation to the rate of sedimentation, though they varied with respect to one another. These variations gave rise to an alternating series of sandy and silt-like deposits depending on the action of tidal and other currents. The subsidence was also marked by halting stages, during which extensive peat-like beds were formed from the remains of semi-tropical vegetation that flourished in the marshy land areas of the period. With further subsidence these areas were buried under fresh sediments, which continued to accumulate until another halting stage permitted the formation of swamps and marshes. These conditions were many times repeated, and the subsequent consolidation of the sediments into sandstone and shale, and the peat into coal, give rise to the extensive coal-bearing Laramie series.

The Laramie is the most important formation in this area from an economic point of view. It is characterized by a rich, semi-tropical flora, very similar to what is found in the Gulf States today, and leaf imprints of certain species of oak, fan palm, fig, poplar, willow, and tulip trees are of common occurrence in the thin-bedded sandstones and lower shaly beds.

In the Geological History of North America the Cretaceous period is summarized as follows:

"This phenomenal inundation during Upper Cretaceous time submerged the central part of the North American continent from Alaska to the Gulf of Mexico. On low-lying swamps bordering the newly formed inland sea grew ferns and other plants whose carbonized remains were transformed into the present coal beds of the Rocky Mountain region.

"At the close of the Mesozoic era the sea was completely drained from the land. Mountain building now began at a great rate and continued into the next era. The end of the Upper Cretaceous period saw the birth of the Rocky Mountains in North America and the Andes in South America. Changes in climate and environment which accompanied this uplift proved fatal to the more highly specialized animals and plants of the Mesozoic, and whole groups of them perished."

With this ending of the Laramie, the Eocene (dawn of recent life), had its beginning. During this time important changes were effected in the configuration of the country by the pronounced mountain growth which then took place. Previous to this time the Sangre de Cristo Range was simply the eastern shore-border of a low-lying land mass that extends west so as to include the area now occupied by the San Juan Mountains. The initial stages in the formation of this range coincide with the post-Laramie movement, though the final stages of the upheaval occurred during a latter period of disturbance. At about the same time the Greenhorn Mountains, which had been a land area from early times, were also uplifted, while the strata of the plains border were arched up and probably more or less faulted. Between this arch and the Greenhorn Mountains on the one hand, and the Sangre de Cristo Range on the other, was formed the depression that was occupied by the Huerfano Eocene Lake. This lake stretched from the Purgatoire River Valley in a generally northwesternly direction to the Huerfano Valley. During the early Eocene this depression, or basin, steadily subsided, and a great depth of sediments accumulated in it.

The character of these sediments varied from place to place according to the composition of the neighboring land surface that furnished the debris. This

is especially true of the late Eocene deposits, which were formed during the erosion of Archean, Carboniferous, and early Mesozoic beds; while at the beginning of the Eocene the debris was either Archean or derived from rock that was made up of Archean material.

During the period of the Huerfano-Eocene Lake, the Poison Canyon, Cuchara, and Huerfano formations were laid down with a thickness of several thousand feet. In the Poison Canyon formation petrified wood is the only organic material that has been found. No organic material of any kind has been found in the Cuchara formation.

The Huerfano formation on the Huerfano River has afforded remains of a mammalian fauna rich in species. The fauna of the basal zone corresponds mainly with that of the Wind River beds of Wyoming or the upper portion of the lower Eocene, while the fauna of the principal body of the formation corresponds to that of the Bridger beds of Wyoming, or Middle Eocene. The most abundant remains are those of Tillotherium, an animal about the size of the modern black bear, but possessing enormous incisor teeth, very much larger and more powerful than those of the beaver. These are associated with remains of carnivorous rodents, and the primitive Bridger horse, Pliolophus.

After the Cucharas beds were deposited the basin of the Huerfano continued to receive sediments up to the close of the Bridger (Middle Eocene). At the close of the Bridger the Huerfano Lake ceased to exist, and coincident with additional upheaval of the Sangre de Cristo range, the sediments along the western border of the lake were steeply upturned and the arch or swell to the eastward was considerably augmented. Whether or not this period of disturbance was contemporaneous with the earlier eruptions of igneous rocks has not been determined, though it is evident that the eruptions were subsequent to the laying down of the Eocene sediments, as numerous dikes that traverse the latter testify. During the latter part of the Eocene and the early part of the Neocene or possibly early in the Pleistocene period, further movement, resulting in appreciable changes of level, gave rise to conditions that admitted to limited areas of sediments being deposited.

During the more recent periods, covering several millions of years, igneous eruptions occurred throughout the Spanish Peaks and Huerfano regions. The earlier eruptions gave rise to sheets intruded conformably with the bedding of the sedimentaries, and to dikes traversing the beds more or less nearly vertical. The dikes are most numerous in the vicinity of the Spanish Peaks, evidently the chief centers of eruption. From this center they radiate in all directions. At least fifteen separate eruptions have been determined, the dikes being formed beneath the sedimentaries of the Huerfano Eocene lake formation. With the subsequent erosion of the sedimentaries the dikes have been exposed with those radiating east and west most numerous. The Spanish Peaks themselves were erupted sometime after the formation of the sheets and dikes.

The radial system of dikes is supplemented by a rudely parallel east-west system, really part of a larger system extending from the Greenhorn Mountains southward to the Cimarron River in New Mexico, a distance of over 100 miles, with an east-west range of as much as 60 miles.

Briefly, the effect of the eruptions on the previously formed trough was the production in the very bottom of it of a great upward bulge, rent and faulted at the summit, warped by the intrusions of huge masses of igneous rock, and ribbed by a magnificent system of dikes.

The igneous rocks belong mainly to the Spanish Peaks system. They consist of stocks, dikes, and sheets, representing a long series of eruptions centering at the Spanish Peaks, the focus of all the earlier ones being situated somewhere in the area now occupied by the West Peak stock, with reference to which the dike system is arranged radially. The intrusion of this stock and of the East Peak mass was subsequent to the dike eruptions, the late basalts excepted. The West Peak body occupies a broad, nearly vertical fissure in the Eocene beds and presumably in the Cretaceous also. While it cannot be demonstrated that the two masses of the peaks extend beneath the surface to a junction with each other such is probably the case, not only from the structural conditions, but from the fact that towards the east end of the West Peaks stock some portions have practically the same mineralogic composition as the summit-rock of the East Peak.

The dikes are from 2 to 100 feet or more in thickness, though the majority of them are from 10 to 50 feet. As a rule they dip slightly one way or the other, but the direction changes from place to place in the same dike. Some are practically vertical and project from the surface as smooth, wall-like masses from 50 to occasionally over 100 feet in height. Their course is either straight or curved, though local sinuosities are common. The dikes range in length from a few hundred yards in the case of the most acid rocks to as much as 10 and 15 miles in the most basic. As the dikes rise into the higher portions of the Eocene beds they become fewer in number and rarely penetrate the uppermost strata of the Huerfano formation, as may be seen near the summit of West Peak.

The eruptive bodies north of the Spanish Peaks take the form of dikes, sheets, laccoliths, and plugs, all of which were intrusive. Most of the dikes belong to the Spanish Peaks system and to those common to southern Colorado and northern New Mexico. Others belong to the Silver Mountain system.

The laccoliths are represented by two small mountain bodies near Alamo, between the Cucharas and Huerfano Rivers. They are directly connected by dikes with the similar rock of Silver Mountain to the westward, and are doubtless a lateral intrusion from that center. Previous to erosion they were probably buried under a considerable depth of sediments, and while not in any sense typical, are really modified forms of the laccolith. The connecting dikes presumably occupy the fissures that were formed and filled with lava by the force of the injection, in the beds overlying the channel connecting the main mass with the Black Mountain bodies.

The volcanic plugs are few in number and of little structural importance. The most prominent is a projecting pinnacle of lava near the Huerfano River, which, by reason of its conspicuousness and isolated position, has suggested the name Huerfano (Orphan).

The Veta Mountain eruptions occurred at a later date than those previously mentioned. This eruption gave rise to a group of mountain masses extending from the Huerfano south to and beyond the Spanish Peaks. With the exception of the Greenhorn Mountain eruption, those cited were confined to the area of the Eocene Lake basin. The latest eruption was of much wider range than the others, sheets and dikes extending from the Greenhorn Mountains southward at least as far as the Cimarron River in New Mexico, if not beyond. The Veta Mountain eruption is represented by a single dike-like mass only.

There are many dike occurrences that may extend to a profound depth. West of the Spanish Peaks the dikes and sheets, with but two exceptions, and in the marine Cretaceous, but west of Silver Mountain there are sheets as low as the Morrison, while south of Aye there is one dike-like body in the Archean.

EARLY INHABITANTS

Within view of the Spanish Peaks, which rise sharply from the plains, once lived a primitive race as revealed by the stone enclosures and artifacts left behind. Here there is no evidence of elaborate structures as found in other parts of the world, but crude enclosures constructed with the least possible effort. Considerable speculation as to the use of the stone enclosures and of the living conditions of this primitive race are set forth in a paper prepared by the University of Denver.

The three principal streams rising in the Spanish Peaks (Cucharas, Apishapa, and Purgatoire Rivers), flow in a general northeasternly direction through the plains to the Arkansas River. In places deep canyons have been formed, sometimes as much as 500 feet below the general level of the plains. It is here that most of the structures have been found although on the Cucharas drainage these extend into the Santa Clara region at the foot of the peaks, and also on Middle Creek and Veta Creek, west and north of La Veta. In the foothills along the Cucharas a cave has been discovered and partly explored, showing evidence of early habitation. West of Aguilar there are also remnants of stone enclosures and signs of occupation. These are more extensive in the plains region along the Apishapa to the northeast of Aguilar.

To the north of the Spanish Peaks, along the Huerfano River, are sites which were used by a primitive race. Although several sites were located along the river and adjacent tributaries at the lower elevations one was found near Goose Lake in the upper tributaries at an elevation of around 11,000 feet. Many flakes of red petrified wood, some of yellow jasper, two large scrapers and a few broken arrow-heads were found here. It is presumed to have been a stopping place of the Utes on their way towards the Sierra Blanca Peak, not far to the south. From this point one would have access to the San Luis Valley.

That there is little evidence of permanent sites in the mountainous region around the Spanish Peaks is not surprising. Even the early white settlers found living conditions extremely rugged and gradually deserted the mountains for homes on the foothills and plains. In time all traces of their occupation will have disappeared. It is possible that summer camps may have been established by the early Indians, with structures made of less durable material than stone, and have long since mingled with the elements.

The cave previously mentioned along the Cucharas is located in the east one-half of Section 3, Township 31 South, Range 69 West, on the ridge between White and Cucharas Creek and was described in the Archaeological Report as follows:

"The width of the opening is 13.50 meters; 5.50 meters from overhang to back wall, and the maximum height at the mouth is over 4.5 meters. Several broken netates and manos were found, as well as chips and a few implements. An extensive fire place was set in a trench at the depth of 30 cm. while the rock bottom was 65 cm. below the present surface and covered with a bed of leaves, mostly oak. Traces of fire were seen the whole length of that trench and especially at the overhang and beyond,

oArchaeological Sites of the Cucharas Drainage, Southern Colorado. By E. B. Renaud, Professor of Anthropology, and Janet Chatin, Acting Field Assistant. Fourth Paper, Archaeological Series, Denver, January 1943.

where thick bushes and heavy rain combined to prevent further investigation. The few finds of flake stone and animal bones were made on or near the hearth. From the front of this large rock shelter one has a fine view towards the Spanish Peaks."

The archaeological report further states: "There are nearly twenty sites now known to exist in a small area hardly more than a dozen miles in a general southwest-northeast direction, and spreading over less than five miles east-west. Except for the site at the junction of the Cucharas and the Huerfano Rivers, all the others are located in Township 25 and 26 South, Range 64 West. The six northernmost sites are in Pueblo County and the others in Huerfano County."

The stone enclosures are located on the rims of the canyon and on the steep slopes leading down to the river. Stone rings were found on the floor of the valley marking the dwelling places of the primitive Indians. Petroglyphs are found on the large boulders at the various sites. In addition, artifacts and sherds have been picked up and have afforded some identification as to the type of people making and using them.

The stones in the fences, when still in their original positions, are covered with lichen. This shows the construction is not recent and cannot be attributed to white men.

A more or less detailed description of the enclosures, petroglyphs, artifacts and sherds as taken from the archaeological report is as follows:

"The Stone Enclosures. The stone enclosures are usually located on tops of cliffs, on the rim of a canyon, on the edge of a mesa or the side of a valley. They were so situated as to detect the presence of game or to observe the approach of men, both friend or foe. From the vantage points the Indians on duty could signal to men in similar positions who could thus transmit the message up or down the canyon or to distant sites across the valley. In the Cucharas Canyon vital information could be passed on directly from the lookouts built on top of the cliff to those living in the rock shelters on the slopes, and in the dwelling places established on the flats by the side of the river.

"If not for war and security the signals might convey the good news of game in the valley or on the prairie. The obtaining of food was a constant preoccupation of people in a primitive stage of culture such as that of the hunters of the plains and the hills of Colorado and New Mexico.

"This function as observation posts for the stone enclosures had always been understood because of their positions giving such an advantageous view of the surrounding country. But a second purpose, that of defense, was not clear. However, it has been suggested as a possibility in some cases.

"In places, the stone enclosures are heavily built and their surrounding walls are high and bulky, far in excess of what would suffice to make them good and efficient lookouts. Even the modern Indians are not prone to do unnecessary work such as the lifting of these large stones unless for defensive purposes.

"Although the high walls afforded shelter against the strong winds it is believed the early Indians used other means of obtaining this protection, such as branches of trees or the skins of animals.

"The approaches to the protected little dungeons is not easy. Once the position of the enclosures has been spotted, one has to push his way towards it by zigzagging between the trees, dodging their low branches, stumbling among the rocks or going around large boulders in natural position. This would prevent a frontal attack in force. To attack the stronghold from below would also be hazardous as the slopes are steep and high, some 400 to 500 feet above the floor of the valley to the rim of the canyon.

"In places the ancient builders used trees to reinforce their defenses. Big, old junipers, with multiple stout branches spreading obliquely low down from the trunks, were incorporated in the outside wall of the enclosure, giving support to the stones forming the fence. Or else, big stones were placed in the crotch of the low branches to plug holes in the defensive screen, preventing man or animal from crawling through and thus penetrating unobserved inside the enclosure. Trunks of trees and large branches were still tangled up in and against the fence, holding rocks, and adding their sharp projections and entanglements to the defense afforded by the stone wall. All these precautions and this added labor speak of a purpose which obviously seems to be one of defense against enemies, men or beasts.

"The stone enclosures seen on intermediate levels are often smaller, with lower and less bulky surrounding fences than those seen at the circular enclosures located on the top level and apparently strongly built for defense as one of their functions. They generally have not either the supplementary entanglement of trees and branches. They may have been considered as means of secondary defense, as advanced works of the stronghold above, or as protecting from an attack coming from below, from the lower levels. This does not seem unreasonable if the hypothesis of defense of the site against possible aggressors is accepted as true, and some arguments previously offered appear to favor it. However, it must be noted that flakes, some simple artifacts, and a few arrow-heads have been found on those same intermediate levels and traces of a few fire places also. This might be construed as their having been occupied and lived in and could have been used as supplementary lookouts as well.

"The stone rings found on the lower levels, and especially on the grassy flat, on the bench down by the river, are obviously of another kind. The view from there is limited to the valley and in no way suggests the function of an observation post or lookout. Everything bespeaks of a peaceful dwelling place and probably fairly comfortable. It was sheltered by the high slopes against the violent winds blowing on the plateau and along the rims of the canyon. Fresh flowing water was easily accessible within a few steps in all seasons. Wood could be had from trees and bushes growing nearby on the slopes and between boulders.

"Flaking material could be obtained; river pebbles of quartzite, trap rock from quarries or work shops, and occasionally chert, slate, petrified wood, jasper or obsidian, some of which was imported into the valley. But the ever present trap rock and the common quartzite seem to have been the stones principally used in the making of the simple and rather crude artifacts of the people who lived in the Cuchara Canyon in an indefinite past. The more rare and colorful materials, generally of finer grain and reserved for the manufacturer of beautiful arrow-heads and other artifacts may have been brought in by more recent Indians using the large camps on the plateau.

"The food of the people who lived in our circular stone rings and the neighboring rock shelters must have consisted of the flesh of wild animals such as buffalo, antelope, deer and elk, and smaller game. Whether they enjoyed the delicious trout of the creeks or had a tabu against fish eating, as some tribes have, we do not know. Wild berries, seeds, roots, pinyon nuts, and the like, added the vegetable element to their diet. The skins of animals furnished them with material for clothing, bags and pouches, and possibly tent making. There is no material proof of all this but it seems reasonable from observations of the habitat and from our knowledge of the habits and culture of Indians having lived in the general area of the High Western Plains.

"Stone rings located on the lower levels of our sites along the Cucharas Canyon and vicinity and which seem obviously to mark ancient dwelling places are not built as strongly as the stone enclosures on the upper levels. They are different also from the ordinary tipi rings such as are seen on the old camp sites of the High Western Plains, in Northeastern Colorado and Eastern Wyoming. These are made of stones, sometimes not very large, generally found lying flat in the ground. They mark the base of the old conical skin tent of the Plains Indians. . . . Usually there is a fire place, circular and concave, near the center of the ring. A variety of stone artifacts such as pounders, one-hand manos and shallow metates, flakes, and some blades, end- and side-scrappers, knives or cutting edges, drills, weapon points and the like, are found scattered, more or less abundantly, around the old camp sites which sometimes are quite extensive.

"The stone rings along the Cucharas seem often to come by pairs of circles and are two to six in a group. Their circular fences are in places fairly well built of slabs placed on end, or leaning one against the other, sometimes in a double row, or made of rocks of irregular shapes and sizes, natural fragments of broken boulders or ledges from the upper levels or having tumbled down to the lower spurs and flats. Often two circles are tangent or even are contiguous on a length of several feet. The common wall may then be made of two or three lines of stones. These stone rings are circular in shape, (only two or three instances of rectangular enclosures have so far been seen), but they do not always form a perfect circle as is common for tipi rings. They usually vary from six to eight feet, with a certain number ten to twelve feet across, although there are examples of larger ones.

"A certain number of these small enclosures have a central hearth, but not all, and it has been observed that in certain cases of coupled circles a central fire place was seen only in one of the rings. But very frequently two, three or more rarely, four, fire places were found around the circles, against the outside face of the fence and generally built or surrounded with stones of the same kind as those making up the wall. Ashes and charcoal dust were deep as if the hearths had been extensively used. This practice of multiple outside fire places seems to be characteristic of the circular stone enclosures having served as dwelling places on the lower levels of the Cucharas Valley. . . . They are carefully built stone hearths, one foot or more in height, completely surrounded with slabs or rocks and usually attached to the wall of the dwelling place.

"Stone fences around the rock shelters were observed in the Cucharas Canyon and a few other places. These fences are generally low but clearly visible and recognizable. They are made of slabs or rocks but are not as high as the shelters or as well built. Fire places are seen inside and outside of these fences. They obviously serve the same purpose as those of the circular enclosures on the flats along the river and must have been built by the same people.

"This type of stone fence was also observed at some sites along the Upper Rio Grande Valley. It was then suggested that poles or branches could be placed, the butt against the inside face of the stone fence and the tip leaning on the rock forming the roof of the rock shelter, and supporting, if needed, skins or hides, to supplement the protection against the violence of the winds, the inconvenience of rain, the heat of the sun, or the cold of winter. There is no material proof of this supposition although it is a reasonable possibility.

Petroglyphs. "No painted pictographs were seen in the Cucharas district. We have only petroglyphs and these have all been produced by the pecking method, not one made by incising the surface of the rock has been seen or reported. The pecking process is the most commonly used over the High Western Plains and, in general, it seems older in practice than incising. The petroglyphs of the Cucharas conform to the common practice of the Indians of the several states in the Rocky Mountain region.

"Petroglyphs are found at a number of sites in the Cucharas Canyon. The most common figures represent animal life but nowhere could any of these be interpreted as being horses. This would indicate that the petroglyphs were made previous to the explorations of the Spaniards in this area. Although there are quadrupeds, some birds and reptiles, none can be identified with certainty. The ancient artists lacked precision in the representation of animal life. A number of H-shaped petroglyphs were seen which could be interpreted as representing men. These figures have been observed at other sites in Colorado and elsewhere. A long sinuous line could be a snake, or perhaps a river. Simple geometric signs are rare. The petroglyphs are not especially interesting and belong to the general class of the area from Wyoming to New Mexico, but devoid of characteristics or specializations found at some plains or Pueblo sites.

"The pecking observed on the boulders of this district is of the ordinary type: nowhere were seen especially fine pecking and only two or three apparently older figures showed broader and shallower pecking, made rather indistinct by much weathering. Elsewhere the petroglyphs had a medium patination, and on one large boulder there was evidence that a few figures had been 'reworked.' that is to say, retraced in more recent times. But in view of the types of these petroglyphs and of their association with others found in normal conditions, there is no doubt of their authenticity. Thus, outside of two or three examples of obviously older petroglyphs, all those seen appeared to belong approximately to the same general period, whatever its relative age may be. Like those frequently found at many Plains sites of Colorado or Wyoming, some figures were 'pecked over', that is to say, filled in with pecking, instead of a simple contour line.

This process renders the figures more easily visible and clear on the dark surface of the brownish rock. Thus the Cucharas petroglyphs resemble those at the sites near the mouth of the Apishapa Canyon, and others in the vast Colorado Plains area, south of the Arkansas River.

Artifacts. The types of arrow-heads are generally classified into stemless, stemmed, or based with either lateral notches or both lateral and basal notches. This last subdivision is apparently not represented among the points found in the Cucharas drainage and only two or three had lateral notches. A certain number of arrow-heads belonged to the stemless type, but the majority was with some sort of stem, as is most common on the High Western Plains.

"The skillfully made and more finely shaped artifacts, displaying pressure flaking and often made on better and more varied materials, such as collected on the plateau and along the valleys coming down from the mountains and foothills to the west, very likely do not belong to the typical, simpler and rougher industry of the Cucharas Canyon. They are the work of the Plains tribes and of more recent Indians, who also probably frequented the region of the Cucharas Canyon, possibly after the ancient inhabitants left it. This part of the story is not yet clear.

"The lithic industry of this region is in no way specialized or with outstanding characteristics. It merely appears simple and rather rough, not very varied in implement shapes manufactured exclusively, or almost so, by the percussion method, producing a preponderantly uniface industry, on flakes and blades often displaying a Clactonian type and frequently with little or no retouching.

The Potsherds. "In the Cucharas Canyon and near-by sites pottery is extremely rare. While not frequent, it is still found more easily on the camp sites of the High Western Plains. The abundance of potsherds as seen at Pueblo sites, small and large, is absolutely undreamed of in the Cucharas district. Thus, one leaves this picturesque region and its complex sites with the clear conviction that the ancient people who inhabited this part of Colorado, in a yet undeterminate past, were not pottery makers.

"A few sherds of poorly made, sand-tempered, pottery, gray to brown in color, have been found in scattered places. It obviously belongs to the generalized types of the Plains, some plain or undecorated, others bearing cord imprints as is frequent on the High Western Plains. Such pottery is not usually seen in the stone enclosures and rock shelters of the Cucharas Canyon, but is picked on camp sites likely occupied at a later time by more recent Plains Indians. The type of artifacts found here suggest sites which were visited and occupied at various times by different tribes, among which the Plains Indians. These were the makers of the poor or relatively primitive pottery represented by the few sherds found there and elsewhere, similar to many others coming from the numerous camp sites of the Western Plains. This type of ceramic does not belong to the Cucharas Canyon and was not made by its ancient inhabitants, otherwise we would find many more traces of it and at all of the typical sites.

There is a second class of pottery found very unexpectedly at a few of the sites. The sherds show affinities with Southwestern wares and some of them are definitely of Pueblo origin. The latter are of significant importance. They suggest some sort of relation between the Cucharas Valley and that of the Rio Grande, from Taos southward to the Tewa Pueblos. In view of the small number of sherds, all different, only one conclusion seems logical and it is that they represent trade pieces, as they are obviously intrusive so far north of their respective places of origin and have been found at sites where a non-ceramic culture was that of the ancient inhabitants.

It is interesting to note the dates given for the time of the making of the Pueblo pottery fragmentarily represented in the Cucharas Valley. Some are dated around 1000-1250 A. D., others around 1300 A. D. This suggests the seemingly possibility that our rock shelters and stone enclosure sites were occupied at a period approximately dated 1000 to 1300 A. D., since there is evidence of trade between Southern Colorado Indians and New Mexico Pueblos of those centuries. The period of occupation may, of course, have been extended before and after that time. Thus sherds from the Santa Clara Valley, show aberrant forms of Pueblo pottery, likely from Taos and one was referred to the 16th Century. This seems to suggest a second and more recent period of trade relations, between the 16th and late 18th centuries. This is the first approach that we have had at dating our sites of the Cucharas Canyon and others farther up-stream. Even if our clues are few they must not be overlooked and more may later be found, especially by means of careful excavation of some of the rock shelters and of the stone rings marking dwelling places.

The sites of the Cucharas Canyon are far from the New Mexico sites where the Pueblo wares above mentioned were made, according to Dr. Mera. All known Anasazi sites are located along the Rio Grande and its tributaries, and the coiled pottery of an eastern form of Chaco 2, comes from a few small pueblo sites to be found close to the foot of and east of the mountains, south of the Colorado line. However, there is no empty gap between that region and the Cucharas district. This means that over a long period extending from the first half of the 11th Century up to modern times the Pueblo Indians came on hunting expeditions to south-central Colorado during those several centuries or at least, had some contacts with the tribes north of the New Mexico-Colorado line, probably both.

"If one looks at a map of Southern Colorado, he will see that the Cucharas drainage comes very near the region of the Upper Rio Grande and the San Luis Valley. La Veta Pass and other less known and accessible passes connect the two basins and the distance between the sites of the eastern and western slopes is not very great. It would allow the possibility of contacts, direct or indirect by trade, between the tribes of the Cucharas Valley and those of the San Luis-Rio Grande drainage. Judging from the sherds picked up this would have happened between 1000 and 1300 A. D., and between the 16th and 18th centuries. The finds of Pueblo pottery in the Cucharas region are much more rare than those from the sites west of the mountains because this part of Colorado is much farther northeast from Pueblo land. The New Mexico

Indians had a natural highway northward into Southern Colorado by means of the Rio Grande Valley, whereas a high range of mountains separates this drainage from that of the Cucharas. For that reason even our very few Pueblo potsherds may have reached their final destination not by direct contact but through the intermediate contact or trading between Cucharas Valley Indians and San Luis Valley Indians who had obtained the pottery from the Pueblos of New Mexico. This seems to be a reasonable possibility because if the Pueblo Indians had actually visited the Cucharas Canyon they would likely have left more evidence of their passage along the way from the Rio Grande and more of their pottery would have been found on the Cucharas sites. However, it was interesting to discuss the probable contact between the ancient inhabitants of the Cucharas Canyon sites and those of the San Luis and Rio Grande Valleys and between those and the Pueblos farther south in New Mexico. It furnishes a plausible explanation for the presence of Pueblo sherds in the Cucharas Canyon, and important clues to estimate the time of occupation of our Cucharas sites."

SPANISH EXPEDITIONS

Evidence that the Spaniards penetrated into Colorado in the 17th and 18th centuries is revealed by letters and diaries of the explorers. However, some authorities credit the Spaniards with earlier explorations but these have not been authenticated. An article on the expeditions has been written by Alfred Barnaby Thomas after painstaking research and this is quoted at considerable length. Although much of the information does not directly concern the Spanish Peaks region it is believed a better picture of the expeditions will be had if the excerpts are not limited to this area alone.

Spanish Expeditions Into Colorado^o

I. Introduction.

"We customarily associate Spanish explorations in the West with New Mexico, with Texas, with Arizona, or with California, but not with Colorado. Yet the Spaniards in the eighteenth century were well acquainted with large portions of the region now comprised in that state. Local historians of Colorado often err by pushing the clock too far back, and asserting that Coronado, Onate, and other sixteenth century conquistadores entered the state. On the other hand, they fail to mention several important expeditions which at a later date did enter the confines of the state.

"The Colorado region in Spanish days was a frontier of New Mexico. Santa Fe was the base for Colorado as San Agustin was for Georgia. Three interests especially spurred the New Mexicans to make long journeys northward to the Platte River, to the upper Arkansas in central Colorado, and to the Dolores, Uncomphagre, Gunnison, and Grand Rivers (Colorado River) on the western borders. These interests were Indians, French intruders, and rumored mines. After 1673 reports of Frenchmen in the Pawnee country constantly worried officials at Santa Fe. Frequently tales of gold and silver were wafted southward to sensitive Spanish ears at the New Mexico capital. But in the main it was Indians who furnished the immediate motive for long expeditions to the north.

"In the Colorado area the Spaniards came in contact with several well known tribes. Nearest at hand to the north and northeast were the Jicarilla and other Apache bands. Beyond the Arkansas in eastern Colorado were the so-called Quartealejo Apaches, who may have been the Arapaho. Still further to the northeast were the Pawnees, on the Platte. In western Colorado and in Utah were the Utes. In northern Colorado and Wyoming lived Comanches. Other Comanche bands occupied stretches of country in northeastern Texas, along the Red and Canadian Rivers. Into this country the Spaniards went to trade, to spread the gospel, to pursue runaways, or to punish marauders of the Spanish Settlements.

^oBy Alfred Barnaby Thomas, M.A., Berkley, California. The Trail Magazine Vol. 1, No. 7. Denver, Colorado, November 1924.

"By three distinct routes the Spaniards of New Mexico of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries found their way north into the territory comprised within the present state of Colorado. The way most often traveled led north from Santa Fe to Taos, then east over the Culebra Mountains, and finally northeast to the Valley of the Purgatoire River. From here they proceeded north into the eastern plains of the state. Their return was generally over the same general route. The second route was northwest toward the La Plata Mountains in southwestern Colorado. Occasional expeditions went as far as the Gunnison River; one crossed the state and penetrated to the Great Basin. One official expedition, at least, went north into the territory by way of the San Luis Valley.

II. Expeditions which did not penetrate the Colorado Region, 1560 to 1600.

Coronado. - "Explored as far north as Taos, New Mexico, thence into eastern Kansas about the middle of the sixteenth century. At no time did this expedition pass through any of the territory of Colorado."

Rodriguez and Espejo. - "About 1580 Fray Agustin Rodriguez, a Franciscan Friar, and eleven others explored as far north as Taos. On the return of the expedition, two of the three friars decided to remain in New Mexico as missionaries. Reports of the murder of one of them sent another party north in the following year. This expedition, under Antonio de Espejo, arrived too late, for it found both missionaries murdered."

Sosa. - "Gaspar Castano de Sosa, stirred by the report of mines brought back to northern Mexico led a colony as far north as Taos in 1590. Since the expedition was without official permission he was arrested and taken back to Mexico."

Onate. - The next expedition to New Mexico was one of colonization led by Onate in 1598-1601. To the north, his lieutenants went as far as Taos. . . So far as we know, down to this time no Spaniard entered the Colorado region.

III. Expeditions which did penetrate the Colorado Region (17th and 18th Centuries).

Archuleta. - "The conquest by Onate was the beginning of active colonization in New Mexico. The Spaniards, once secure along the Rio Grande, took steps to strengthen their position. In pursuance of this policy the governor of New Mexico, about the middle of the seventeenth century, despatched to the northeast Juan de Archuleta with some soldiers to bring back some Taos Indians who had fled to a spot afterwards known as El Cuartelejo. This expedition marks the first definitely known penetration of the Colorado region by Europeans."

Uribarri. - "Almost half a century later the Indians of the pueblo of Picuries fled, like those of Taos, to El Cuartelejo. Accounts vary as to the date; one gives 1696 and another 1704; possibly there were

two flights, Juan de Uribarri was sent to recover the Indians in 1706. With him were some forty Spaniards and one hundred Indian allies. One of the party was Juan de l'Archevique, who, it was recalled, was one of the murderers of La Salle. He was now a thriving trader of Santa Fe. From Taos he moved along Fernando Creek and over the mountains. The mountains were difficult, but he described some pleasant valleys on his way. He seems to have gone as far east as the present Urac Creek, and here, cautioned by friendly Apaches that marauding Indians were ahead, he turned north. The route, now across the spurs of the Rockies which jut eastward in New Mexico, was exceedingly rough. In a few days the Spaniards came to the divide which separates the headwaters of the Red from the tributaries of the Purgatoire River. After a brief stop they began the next stage of their journey to the Arkansas River. Their route was apparently northeast through the Cucharas Pass, west of Spanish Peaks, then along the eastern foothills of the Greenhorn Mountains. They seem to have arrived on the Arkansas in the vicinity of the present site of Pueblo. From here, after a short rest, they proceeded east for some five days, traveling sixty to sixty-five miles to El Quartejejo.

Valverde. - "After the expedition of Uribarri, so far as is known, the Spaniards did not again penetrate the Colorado territory until 1719. In that year Valverde, then governor of New Mexico, made an extensive expedition to punish the Utes and Comanches who were raiding the Apache settlements to the northeast. He proceeded as far north as the Arkansas, and possibly as far east as the present town of La Junta or Las Animas. The expedition returned with news of the French, a fact which had important results the next year.

"The expedition left Santa Fe on the 15th of September. At Taos the governor was joined by Indian allies. On his departure from Taos his force numbered some six hundred men - one hundred and five Spaniards and the rest servants and warriors. Valverde's route, like Uribarri's, was east along Fernando Creek and then over the mountains. Just beyond the ridge he stopped on Cieneguilla Creek, a stream on which Uribarri had camped some thirteen years before. At this point Valverde swung off to the northeast. In the course of a few days he came upon, as did Uribarri, the divide which separates the Red and Purgatoire Rivers. During this time he was joined, somewhere, by an Apache band under a leader whom the Spaniards called Captain Carlana. Across the divide the expedition camped on the banks of the Purgatoire, apparently near the present site of Trinidad. From here they moved east to pass around a spur of the Rockies, which comes down at this point, and then marched northwestward to the Arkansas along the foothills. On their way they came upon numerous signs of their enemies, and upon each occasion the governor immediately halted to consider what to do. Once in camp the Spaniards and Indians spent their time hunting and eating until the danger passed. Twice bears raided the camp in pursuit of the hunters and temporarily ruined the morale of the expedition. In spite of these experiences and a serious attack of poison ivy, the expedition arrived on the banks of the Arkansas River apparently above Pueblo.

"After crossing the river they marched northeast to Fountain Creek, where they camped. From this point on their directions in some small

detail are confusing, but since they traveled in a generally eastern direction and continually speak of a river, we may conclude that they followed the Arkansas and made occasional sallies in search of the Utes and Comanches, for signs of Indians were frequent. During this ten days' march, they had spent two days in camp and traveled in the remaining eight days about one hundred miles. Their halt, therefore, was probably in the bend of the Arkansas in the neighborhood of the present town of Las Animas.

"Here they were met by a great concourse of Indians who had come from El Cuartelejo. They brought with them recent signs of the French, particularly an Indian who was suffering from a gunshot wound. The governor questioned this Indian and learned that he had been attacked by some French and Pawnees on a river to the north. From the description given this river was apparently the South Fork of the Platte. The governor obtained what information he could of the affair for his report to the viceroy, and then after a short visit with the chiefs he began his return to Santa Fe.

Villasur. - "A council of war was held in Mexico in January, 1720, and orders were despatched to Valverde in New Mexico to conduct a reconnaissance of the French position in the northeast.

"The governor waited for the summer months before carrying out the orders, and on the 16th of June, 1720, an expedition under Don Pedro de Villasur stood ready to depart.

"When Villasur set out from Santa Fe he had with him forty soldiers, some traders, and sixty or seventy Indians. Among the traders was our old friend Jean de l'Archeveque. He was to act as interpreter should the Spaniards actually find French habitations. A Pawnee Indian, in captivity since early boyhood, also went along to interpret the Pawnee language. One of the party was a priest, who served, no doubt, as chaplain.

"The command left Santa Fe on the 15th of June, but their movements until the middle of August are almost unknown. In view of the fact, however, that there were with Villasur men who had accompanied both Uribarri and Valverde, we may assume that the Spaniards went, in all probability, over the usual route: first to Taos, then over the mountains east, and finally northeast to the Purgatoire River. Their next stop was at El Cuartelejo, where they began their long march to the Platte. Early in August they arrived on that stream. According to the fragment of Villasur's diary, the party came to a point which the Cuartelejo Apaches regarded as the beginning of Pawnee land. Here they held a council of war and decided to continue their search, though they had traveled already some three hundred leagues since leaving Santa Fe.

"The Spaniards crossed the stream which they had been following, the Rio Jesus Maria (apparently the South Fork of the Platte), and soon after came to another very large stream which they also followed a short distance. This latter was the North Platte. On the ninth of August their scouts reported that some Pawnees were ahead. Villasur immediately crossed the river; and after a journey of some twenty miles

on the 10th, the expedition arrived opposite a Pawnee settlement. Here Villasur instructed his Pawnee interpreter what he wished to know regarding the French and sent him across the stream.

"The Spaniards were visited shortly by some of the Pawnees who told him of "other Spaniards" - French, of course. Villasur immediately ordered l'Archeveque to write a letter to the French, which was entrusted to the interpreter. The Indians returned with some old paper, but the writing on it was unintelligible. The Spaniards, thinking that the writers lacked materials, sent back paper, quill and ink, and a letter in Spanish. For two days they awaited a reply, but no Pawnee appeared. Fearing trickery, the little force retreated some twenty-five miles to the river which they had forded on the ninth. Recrossing the stream, they made camp in the tall grass on the southern bank.

"The Spaniards evidently felt themselves secure from attack; for, though they established a guard, they were not particularly disturbed by the loud barking of a dog and the noise of people moving along the bank of the stream. While the Spaniards slept, Indians were cautiously surrounding the camp, and with the first break of dawn they came down upon the bewildered Spaniards like a whirlwind. When the smoke cleared, l'Archeveque, Villasur, the priest, and thirty-one others lay scalped in the tall grass. Eleven men, at least, escaped and fled back to Santa Fe to tell the news.

"From the various sources now available we are now able to determine the site of the massacre with considerable degree of accuracy. The spot was on the south bank of the North Fork of the Platte in the neighborhood of the present town of North Platte.

Bustamante and Tangle. - "After the disaster to Villasur's expedition, the Spaniards made no entries into the Colorado region, so far as known, until about the middle of the century. Some time before 1750 the Indians to the northeast again became restless and Bustamante and Tagle made a punitive expedition down the Arkansas. What his route was, however, the account is too meagre to determine.

Anza. - In 1779, Juan Bautista de Anza, of California fame, but then governor of New Mexico, led a military force north into the San Luis Valley and east over the mountains. The purpose of this expedition was to punish some Comanche Indians who, under their leader, Cuerno Verde (Greenhorn), had been murdering Spanish settlers. In August, 1779, Anza and his army of six hundred and forty-five men left Santa Fe. Their route, northwest over the Rio Grande and then north, took them across many small streams in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The diary mentions the streams Las Nutrias, San Antonio, Conejos, Las Jaras, Los Tumbres (Rio Alamo) and San Lorenzo (Piedra Pintada Creek), all of which are easily identifiable today. Apparently they crossed the Rio Grande near Del Norte. From here they proceeded north along the foot of the main range to a point where they were able to cross over the headwaters of the Arkansas near Salida.

"Soon after they effected the crossing, they came upon the Comanches and inflicted a severe defeat upon them. The region is now immortalized

by the name Greenhorn Mountains. After this they recrossed the mountains, by what pass it is not at all clear (possibly Sand Hill), and then returned to Taos along the western foothills of the Culebra Range.

"The expeditions are part of the great story of Spanish expansion, and furnish the background of the region which was later cut off to become the state of Colorado."

(Note: Other expeditions were made by the Spaniards farther to the west and north, but since they did not penetrate the Arkansas region they are not included with the history of the Spanish Peaks.)

ROMANCE OF THE SPANISH PEAKS^o

"An atmosphere of mystery has always surrounded the Great Double Mountain, known all over the country as the 'Spanish Peaks.' Much has been written of this lofty, natural monument, and more will probably be written in days yet to come, for there exists a wealth of facts, historical and traditional, connected with this unique landmark.

"For thousands of years probably, the Spanish Peaks served as the guiding mark to ancient tribes of peoples, the Indians, the Spanish, Canadian trappers and traders, and all distances, especially North and South, were reckoned or computed from the Double Mountain.

"The plains Indians named them 'Huajatolla,' which means two breasts. Some of the aboriginal people rendered divine honors to this Mountain, claiming that all things receive their maintenance from that source, for they considered those gigantic Twin Peaks as the seat of the 'Rain Gods,' expressing their beliefs in the following simple words, which have been uttered for ages and ages, - brought down to posterity from father to son.

"'Huajatolla,' so we read from the pages of a booklet, published many years ago, 'are two breasts as round as woman's, and all living things on earth, mankind, beasts and plants, derive their sustenance from that source; the clouds are born there, and without clouds there is no rain, and when rain fails, we have no food, and without food - we must perish all.' Beautiful is this simple sentiment of primitive people.

"Many other legends were current among the native population formerly before newspapers appeared and people learned to read and write. In those olden days all events were transmitted orally from mouth to mouth, often embellished, amplified in scope, extended in directions, becoming at last as interesting and fascinating as if transcribed from the pages of some enchanted romance.

"Some of these old stories bear a close resemblance to the legends of Mexico. An analogy can often be traced between Aztec traditions and the old stories, which once circulated among the people of the Spanish Peaks.

"Here is a section of Colorado, where the romance of the past and the memories of ages still linger - like the reverberating sound of a great cathedral bell.

"Over these hills once roamed a people who were experts in the art of making flint spear heads. Beautiful specimens are frequently picked up by the casual wanderer.

^oRomance of the Spanish Peaks". By Louis B. Sporleder Sr. Published by O'Brien Press, Pueblo, Colorado, 1944.

"A race of people came into these wilds thousands of years ago - and no one knows from where. They wandered and hunted among these hills and mesas, building themselves houses of brush. The red burned stones of their fireplaces can still be located, usually near running water. Later as the climate grew colder, they dug holes in the ground and roofed them over with logs and earth.

"Ruins of stone houses are comparatively rare. It is reported, however, that a small round tower once stood at the head of a brook, known by local people, as 'Lost Creek.' The first Mexicans who settled at the base of the East Peak and the Indians from Taos, who hunted in the vicinity occasionally, were fully acquainted with these, now vanished ruins; - they dubbed the region 'Torre Redondo.'

"The substance of all the old stories is generally of a nature, extolling the country, which long ago, so it is said, was fruitful beyond man's imagination. 'All this region, which is now cold and barren, was once a veritable Garden of Eden, in which people lived - much like Adam and Eve, innocent of the grosser sins, but in sloth and ignorance.' And these old stories continue further and say that 'Those GREAT ONES ABOVE, the HIGHEST GODS, who rule the world and are incomprehensible, held back the rain, which comes from the bosom of sacred Mountains Huajatolla, - and all the country became parched and dry. The blue and red corn and the yellow and green calabash withered, the fruit trees shrivelled, the rivers became dry channels and the great lakes disappeared.'

" 'All the land became a desert except the region of Huajatolla; there only, towards the rising sun, where the world ends and limitless plains meet the sky, there only the Rain Gods still holds sway and the trees grow great and tall, and the grass is juicy and fresh.'

"The tribes that lived here once - could no more but worship a thing that belongs to the world of Eternity and Infinity. To them, the great Mountain filled the whole of a Divine Horizon, a godly perfection - where not one rival could ever endure.

"There have always been rumors of Huajatolla's gold. Students of modern geology, however, claim that the mountain is devoid of the precious metal, although silver and lead have frequently been found. Of course, gold is evident west of the Spanish Peaks, in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, and was extensively mined during the last century with the use of a huge dredge. It is possible that in a remote past, the mining of gold was carried on - near, if not directly on the Peaks, for it must be remembered, that the famous Mountain always served as the point, from and by which other localities were designated or described. Ancient legends have it, that gold, from the region of Huajatolla, was transported as far south as Old Mexico.

"We read that in Mexico the aboriginal people adorned the shrines of their stone gods with gold from a Double Mountain - far in the north. It was found there in great quantities. But the deities of this Mountain became envious and intervened, placing evil spirits in the gulch where gold was mined, driving treasure-seekers away for ever. We read further, that gold was again taken as 'Gran-do-ta.' In the seventies

of the last century, much prospecting was done on the West Peak. Promising ore was discovered - but only in pockets - hence these prospects were soon abandoned; holes and shafts only remain as mute evidence of wasted money and futile human efforts.

"The tramp of the white man's foot was first heard here in the year 1706. Then an expedition crossed Cucharas Pass just west of the Peaks. In 1719, Governor Valverde of New Mexico, camped near the site where La Veta is now located. He had in his command some six hundred men, and the object of his expedition was to punish 'Cuerno Verde,' the Comanche Chief.

"One of the most outstanding events happened in 1821. It was in this year that the 'Indian Prophet,' of whom many stories are still told, arrived, and with his followers remained in the vicinity of the East Peak for several years. A synopsis of the story of el Gran-do-te, the Prophet, is contained in the following paragraphs, excerpted from 'Pictures, Legends and Stories of the Spanish Peaks, the Terra Incognita of Colorado.'

" 'Trenchant and intensely dramatic is the story of el Gran-do-te, Prophet of the Tarahumara Indians. It is a tale of romance, love, adventure, spirituality and a great faith. To emulate the virtues of Gregorio Lopez, he who is revered to this day by all Chichimecs, was the one dominating desire of the 'Tall One' - even the days of his youth.

'Bitter grief he experienced; his bride was poisoned by Lola, surnamed the 'black tigress,' while he and his brother-in-law were prospecting on Huajatolla Mountain for gold. In a dream he sees her "lying upon her bed, a smile of serenity upon her lips. Never had he seen a woman so beautiful - the spiritual beauty of death."

'The young Indian and his companion return to their home immediately, only to find the latter's father murdered and his property destroyed. Then el Gran-do-te made the vow, one that was never broken, a pledge of faithfulness to his dead wife. "No woman shall ever lie in my arms again. No woman's lips will I ever touch with my lips again. Like the proud eagles of the mountains, I too, shall remain faithful and true to my dead love."

'A sign came to him in the course of time - and into his ear words were spoken, entreating him to go again to the mountain, where he "dreamt true." He goes, and thereafter dreams of Nina, his dead wife, almost every night. With her he wanders in dreamlife through a world without barriers and without limit or time.

'In the fall he returns to his home and remains there until 1821. It is at this period of time that he became an apostate. He worked out a "Credo" for the benefit of his few followers and determined to be their prophet. But he longed for independent action - a thing he could only find far away from his old environment.

'The Dream Mountain? To penetrate closer into the mysteries of that strange region? To commune constantly with his bride - she who was dead in the body, but alive in spirit-land? Yes, he would go. The prophet became a second Moses, the law-giver and judge of his band.

'They traveled towards the north. At the "Barranca" they receive information that Comanches are raiding the country. The grandson of "Cuerno Verde," chief of the Indians overtakes them, but a massacre is averted. The supreme courage of the Tarahumares staggered the young Indian; it awakened a feeling of admiration; the two begin to argue and become friends.

'They arrived in due time at the "Dream Mountain," and lived there for some years; they farmed, they hunted, and they worshipped in the cave, from which issued the "Mountain God's song." The idealism of their prophet took material form. Tall and green stood the corn in the palisaded field, and the calabash glimmered in color of golden yellow. The Tarahumares rejoiced.

'But troubles came also. Ugly bearded strangers appeared: they killed the Indian's buffalo, which they had so carefully guarded. And then a happening, a catastrophe without sign or warning.

'The Indians were taken to the long looked-for "County of Bliss and Delight" - so many times described by their beloved leader. As the old legend has it, the entire band was destroyed by an avalanche. No protest came from the lips of the Prophet - did he not have the most wonderful of all visions that very same night?

'Later he was joined by Juan Benito, who brings along an old servant, known as "el Cojo." By the hunters and trappers, in the last days of his life on the Mountain, the Prophet was surnamed "Old Huajatolla" but his growing austerity and ascetic bearing forbade intimacy. How and where he died, no one knows. El Cojo never divulged the secret.

'Old Huajatolla or el Gran-do-te is only a memory now. The legendary stories of the simple, pious Mexican people of the Spanish Peaks country, maintain that el Gran-do-te, honored and loved by the Gods, like Elijah of old, was taken bodily from the earth and transported into his own heaven.'

"The site of the Prophet's village is still pointed out. A 'Metate' found there - testifies to the truth of the facts. His emblem of authority, a queer kind of old Spanish 'Rapier,' was discovered in a gulch near-by. It is claimed by old natives, that in this region, during the deep silence of midnight, the singing of el Gran-do-te's entombed Indians, can frequently be heard - even to the piping voices of the little children.

"At a point from which the whole East Peak is visible from base to summit, a beautiful grove of tall pines once stood, defying time and the elements - until the white man came with his axe.

"There the aborigines practiced their symbolic rites, some of them as interesting as the Eleusinian Mysteries of the ancient Greeks. Festivals in honor of certain deities were held in the grove with the greatest solemnity and pomp of ceremony. Like a cherished garden the Indians loved this little spot on the side of the Holy Mountain; to them it was ever a vision of loveliness and peace.

"Less those old-time Indians - good and bad perhaps at the same time. Visible they are not to the mortal eye, but they linger near Huajatolla - and the resting place which the gods for them provided - cannot be far away from the enchanting scenes of their former corporeal lives.

"Of that grove, the most beautiful on the Mountain, only a few trees remain. Their place is taken by a new growth of pine and firs, perfect in shape and full of young vigor, lacking only in that richness of maturity which comes with the fullness of physical life. But the old trees mourn, - they miss their hundreds of companions.

"In soft, calm nights, when all the trees in breathless silence are silhouetted against the radiance of a velvet-black sky, when they have ceased their breathing and the shining moon has enchanted all the uncounted living things in the wide forest, then listen - gentle winds play on the outstretched limbs and branches - a dirge is sung by the lone survivors.

"The Spanish Peaks were much frequented by early American and Canadian Mountain Men. Jean Challifou, famous trapper and well-known character in the annals of Western history, made this region almost his second home. The two Challifou brothers came to Taos in the winter of 1829 - with two feet of snow on the ground. A year or two later found these men on the Purgatory and the A-pish-a-pah, near the Peaks, trapping beaver. Jean took an active part in the insurrection of 1846 and 1847, that is, he served as juror in the trial of the murderers of Governor Bent, and dramatically demanded the severest punishment for all those who had taken part in the bloody affair. He died on the Purgatory in the year 1863, within sight of his beloved mountain, the great East Peak.

"Hatcher, a man immortalized by Lewis Garand in his book, 'Wahatoya,' passed the summer months for a number of years near Huajatolla Mountain, long before the Mexican war. A few 'Squawmen' with Indian wives kept him company, but no permanent settlement existed in the region before 1847.

"In the fifties the first stragglers arrived. In 1860, Colonel Francisco erected a fort on the Cucharas river, followed by a colony of Georgians a few years later. Then Spanish-Americans settled on upper Bear Creek, among them the well-known family of the Vipers and rich old Trinidad Baca. It was he who occupied the famous old building still standing, although the structure has now been modernized - thereby losing much of its former charm. The architecture was of a type prevalent all over the southwestern part of the United States and Mexico. Thick-walled, square, solid as a pyramid, surmounted by a knee-high parapet, from which wooden spouts projected.

"The house contains lofty rooms, with smooth, snow-white walls and curtained windows, through which, in the evening, a setting sun filtered her mild rays, so that the rooms were flooded with a subdued gold-shimmering light. The great East Peak was responsible, mellowing the sunlight and giving it a yellow cast.

"Don Trinidad possessed an artistic eye. Pictures hung on the wall, painted by the would-be artist, Miguel Montoya. Crudely executed of course, sketched and painted on slabs of wood, these paintings yet showed an unusual natural talent. The boldness of their design was remarkable, although faulty in construction. There were portraits of Saints, with sad-looking Aztec faces, a few Indian figures and attempts at landscapes. Trinidad was a lover of trees and planted hundreds of them, for both shade and utility. Some are still standing and thriving. His son, Domingo, enjoyed the reputation of being the most skillful Vaquero in the country.

"Another outstanding man, but of a different type, and known as the Patriarch of the Bear Creek settlement, was Agapito Atencio. In an age when life was simpler, - he it was, who told the villagers, 'That people led happier lives, long, long ago.' Then, he said, 'the summers lingered 'til the time of Christmas, the month and day when the God-child was born.'

Don Agapito, devout Catholic that he was, knew the history of every Saint in the calendar, and he could tell you the good and the bad qualities of every plant that grew upon the Mountain. 'Nearly all the herbage was wholesome in those days,' he often said. 'Plants abounded, good for either man or beast. Much rain in the summer cheered our hearts, and water flowed - where none is now. Fruit grew in such abundance, that the bears became fat and lazy, so that they could hardly walk. But we must have provoked the anger of God, for He severely now chastises us.'

"The simple dignity with which these words were uttered, left an impression on the listener's mind, greater perhaps than the prolonged sermons of Priests or Pastors.

"Dona Josefita, Don Agapito's wife, possessed strong opinions of her own; she remained old-fashioned and never adopted the new-fangled systems of measurement introduced by the Americanos; neither did she ever accept the decimal system of counting money. To the last of her days she continued to sell her grain by the 'Fanega,' and in 'Reales' she counted the cash, received for her grain. Agapito and his wife have long been gathered to their fathers, but the memory of these two fine old people, survives in the hearts of their friends - who still tread the ground of the living. Peace be to their ashes.

"Two freaks lived in the Spanish Peaks country a few years after the Civil War. 'El Pinto' one was called, and 'Wa-ha-lo-te' (Indian name) the other. El Pinto was an Albino, but not completely. He showed great white splotches over face and body. Wa-ha-lo-te was the exact opposite. He had black splotches on his yellow skin. It was claimed that when his mother carried him she received a dreadful fright - for a wa-ha-lo-te crossed her path. These repulsive reptiles were much feared, by both Indian and Mexican women. Horrible stories of these ugly creatures are still told. The two freaks became fast friends and worked together, manufacturing vessels and ornaments of clay, which they sold in the larger villages.

"A destructive civilization has done the Spanish Peaks much harm. The writer has been living within sight of this monstrous incubus of our

earth nearly all his life, and he deplores the vandalism that has been going on for more than fifty years. Fire followed the axe and large tracts of beautiful forests have been irretrievably lost. Before that time the Peaks were still in their natural state.

'Glorious then is all this region,' we read in a little book, published years and years ago. 'Soft and mellow is the landscape, sweet the breath of each summer day, and the night which follows the day - is even more perfect.'

'After the glowing clouds of sunset, in the delicate and subdued light of a violet sky, appear one by one, in incomparable brilliancy, according to the season, the arbitrary assemblage of glittering stars.'

'And on the slopes of the silent Mountain that are exposed to those higher air currents which blow steadily for days sometimes from the Gulf of Mexico there are moments in the night when a fragrance strong and sweet like incense is wafted towards us; awakening in the soul faint memories of a lost or forgotten past, bringing with it a conspicuous or perhaps recollection of the spicy balsamic scent of great white flowers, - nodding and dreaming beneath a tropical sun.'

'Under the spell of the moment we can even imagine the warm south wind whispering to us - of waves beating against coral reefs, of regal palms on tropical shores.'

'The waters that flow from Huajatolla, "the bosom of the world," are soft like velvet, and even in summer ice cold. Fountains and springs are without number, most of them pure and sweet; a few only containing solutions of mineral matter, of which, however, no analysis has yet been made.'

'It is said that some of the springs, close to the mountain's side, contain an infinitesimally small percentage of arsenic, and that their waters, if used for a prolonged period of time, for drinking as well as for bathing, will clear the skin wonderfully.'

'While the altitude near the base of the Spanish Peaks is great, the latitude is far enough south to temper the winter's cold, with a resultant climate, which, if not quite as mild and refined as that of northern Mexico, is yet wonderfully agreeable, with weeks of bright sunshine - even in the stress of mid-winter.'

'Why seek foreign shores and yearn for the beauties of far away countries? Here we have the counterpart of many of the most charming landscapes in Switzerland and Italy. If not the olive and the vine-clad hills of the Riviera, we possess the chaste and sterner beauty of an idealized and yet almost unknown Holy Mountain - with hallowed associations that inspire in the human breast feelings of profound reverence - the highest degree of veneration.'

MEXICAN LAND GRANTS

Several land grants were awarded by the Mexican Republic in this region before the territory became a part of the United States. Some were recognized as legitimate by the government while others were ruled invalid.

The Vigil-St. Vrain Grant was said to extend from near the Kansas line west to the top of the Sangre de Cristo Range, and from Pueblo south to Trinidad, 4 to 5 million acres. Other sources limit the grant to 30 miles square but it finally shrunk to 30 square miles. The first manager was Henry Daigre. Squatters took up much of the area and St. Vrain only got 1720 acres of the total originally claimed.

The Maxwell Grant

The following history of this grant was excerpted from Pinon Country, by Haniel Long:

"In 1843 the Mexican Republic granted Charles Beaubien and Guadalupe Miranda a stretch of land on the northernmost boundary of New Mexico. It was intended as a buffer against the encroachment of the United States. Mexican law permitted the granting of only eleven square leagues, about thirty-three square miles, to one petitioner, so that twice that extent of land would be all this particular grant could include. In 1857 the Surveyor General of the United States and in 1860 the Congress confirmed the grant as 'good and valid under Mexican law.' Beaubien died in 1864 and left most of the grant to his daughter Luz. His son-in-law, Lucien Maxwell, bought out the other heirs. In 1869 Maxwell applied for a survey because squatters were beginning to come in. He claimed some two million acres of land. The Secretary of the Interior, Sunset Cox, threw out this stupendous claim and ruled that the grant was limited to the original twenty-two square leagues (about 97,000 acres). In 1870 Maxwell sold the vague territory of which he was overlord to three Colorado business men for \$650,000. They at once resold it for \$1,350,000 to an English syndicate called the Maxwell Land Grant and Railway Company. A group of gilded youths came from London with blooded hounds, five grand pianos, and a group of stuffed Bengal tigers to take over the estate and resist the squatters. After the Civil War, veterans of both the Union and Confederate armies were moving west, and the law stated the squatter's right to land on which he paid taxes for ten years.

"The English owners undertook a new survey of the land. It is widely believed (though it has never been proven) that twenty leagues square looked better to them than twenty square leagues, and that they set back the four corners of the boundary. In any case the government surveyors, whom they entertained in princely fashion at Maxwell's great mansion at Cimarron, set their seal to a survey that showed some two million acres.

"The English owners with the new survey and U.S. law on their side now proceeded to make trouble for the squatters. The squatters argued that the extension of the original grant to two million acres constituted the biggest land grab in the history of the West. The Squatter's War followed

culminating in a battle at Stonewall. Most of the settlers there were veterans of the Civil War, but they were defeated, and their leaders killed, by the 'forces of law and order,' the English owners."

The Maxwell Grant, comprising a total area of 284,391 acres in Colorado, of which 28,248 acres is owned by private individuals, was purchased by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation in 1901 for its coal deposits and as a source of timber for use in the coal mines. The following description of the Grant is taken from Howard C. Lee's timber survey report of 1941:

"The Maxwell Grant is situated in the extreme south-central part of Colorado. It is roughly bounded on the north by the Purgatoire River, on the east by Fisher's Mesa, on the south by the Colorado-New Mexico state line and on the west by the Sangre de Cristo Range. At one point, in the northwest corner, it is immediately adjacent to the San Isabel National Forest.

"The extreme eastern part of the Grant surrounding Fisher's Mesa is fairly rugged. However, from Fisher's Mesa westward, the highly dissected terrain rises gently to the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Range, then comparatively abruptly to the crest. The range in elevation is from 6000 feet at Trinidad to 14,000 feet on the crest of the Sangre de Cristo Range.

"The deep mountain drainage along the east face of the Sangre de Cristo Range shortly merge into either the Middle or the South Fork of the Purgatoire River."

The headquarters for the administration of the Grant is at Weston, about halfway between Trinidad and Monument Lake, at which point the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation operates a sawmill. The mill is connected by a spur to the Colorado and Wyoming Railroad, over which considerable lumber and other forest products are shipped. The town of Weston is also connected with Trinidad with an oiled highway.

The Forest resources of the Grant have been of considerable value to the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation in supplying lumber, mine props, and other material used in the mines and the steel mills in Pueblo. Of the total acreage 154,273 acres is timberland, the remaining portion consisting of grassland, brush, cultivated land, and areas above timber line.

The ponderosa pine and Douglas fir stands have largely been cut over since the Grant was acquired. The thrifty intermediate trees of these species were removed for the production of railroad ties and in many cases the mature and overmature trees were left standing. In addition, the best poles were removed for prop material. This condition exists in the more accessible parts of each logging unit, while frequently in the less accessible parts, only the trees suitable for the making of hewed railroad ties have been removed.

The grazing resources consist of approximately 91,000 acres of grass and brush types. The woodland type accounts for an additional 43,000 acres which receives some grazing use. There are also 6,000 acres of open land above timber line on the Sangre de Cristo Range grazed by sheep during the summer months.

The Soil Conservation Service estimates the present actual stocking is one animal-unit per 30 to 40 acres. A study of the entire Grant indicates a safe carrying capacity of one animal unit per 120 acres. From these figures it can be seen that three or four times the number of cattle graze on the Grant above the estimated carrying capacity.

The grazing lands are leased to stockmen on the basis of acreage and not by animal units. For this reason the ranges are overstocked since the Corporation does not limit the number as in the case of the National Forests. No attempt is made by the cattlemen to stock the range according to carrying capacity since the leases are on an annual basis with no certainty of being renewed from one year to the next. According to the cattlemen, the grazing fees are high, for which reason they try to get all the available forage possible.

Considering the east end of the Grant as a whole, the original vegetative cover has been depleted to such an extent that both sheet and gully erosion are in evidence. The bottom lands, adjacent to the creek beds, which should support relatively dense covers of the more palatable grass species, are now sparsely covered with only Russian thistle. A considerable portion of the area is used for yearlong grazing.

The scenic attractions on the west end of the Grant can be said to begin at Stonewall where the highway passes through a narrow gap in the spectacular dike. The highway runs north from the gap to Monument Lake, the playground of Trinidad, partly located within the boundaries of the Grant. The scenic attraction of the highway can be preserved by controlling the manner in which the timber is cut.

Fishing in the various streams around Stonewall is more or less restricted and cannot be said to constitute an important recreational activity. This, however, is relatively unimportant due to fishing attractions at Monument Lake.

The following account of the Maxwell Land Grant was taken from the Denver Post, issue of January 31, 1955:

"This huge tract came to life when Carlos Beaubien, who came from Montreal as Charles Hypolite Trotier, Sieur de Beaubien, to make his home and become a Mexican citizen, and Guadalupe Miranda, petitioned Governor Manuel Amrigo in Santa Fe for a land grant 114 years ago this month.

"It had long been the practice of the Spanish, and later the Mexican government, to make such grants to deserving citizens, the principal reason to promote development of colonial territory. On January 11, 1841, the original grant was approved.

"Under the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848, the United States took over New Mexico and inherited the troubles of the grant. From 1854 to 1870, the United States confirmed 62 grants in its new territory, among them that of Beaubien and Miranda in June, 1860.

"But a constant g-of-war continued for about 50 years over rights to the land. Finally, in May, 1887, the U.S. Supreme Court settled the

matter - at least to its satisfaction. The opinion said ' . . . we are entirely satisfied that the grant . . . is valid . . . '

"The decision left gloom shrouding many families who had settled on the land, believing time would give them the right to their homesteads and ranches, but it ended a period of open war between grant and anti-grant factions.

"Among those who figured in those battles was James Masterson, brother of Bat Masterson, one-time marshal of Dodge City, Kansas. Masterson was made captain of a company of territorial militia, hastily formed to back up the grant owners.

"On the other side was George Curry, later one of Teddy Roosevelt's rough riders, head of Manila's police force when William Howard Taft was governor of the Philippines after the Spanish-American war, next to the last territorial governor of New Mexico and one of the state's U.S. senators.

"Curry organized a group of anti-grant 'vigilantes' and ousted Masterson and his men from the territory.

"The year the grant was made, Lucien B. Maxwell of Kaskaskia, Illinois, arrived in Taos. The 23-year old trapper, who, with Kit Carson acting as guide, accompanied John C. Fremont on two of his western expeditions, married Luz Beaubien two years later. Through that marriage, Maxwell eventually inherited Beaubien's share of the grant.

"As time went on Maxwell acquired the remainder of the vast tract, paying \$2,745 to Miranda for his share. From the new owner, the grant took its present name.

"Apparently Maxwell was not aware of the immense potential value of his property, for in 1870 he sold it to the Maxwell Land Grant and Railway Co. for only \$650,000. From that organization, the present company* took over."

*This refers only to that portion of the Maxwell Land Grant lying in northern New Mexico. The original grant covered the following territory:

"All of what now is Colfax county (New Mexico), reaching 45 miles east from the top of the Sangre de Cristo range to a point beyond Springer, New Mexico, and then on a line north 51 miles to a point a few miles southeast of Trinidad, Colorado. The northern border ran northwest 44 miles to the crest of the massive range again and south along the range 73 miles to a point southeast of Taos, New Mexico.

"Raton, as well as Springer, is in the grant's old boundaries. So are the villages of Cimarron, where Buffalo Bill Cody organized his wild west show; Eagle Nest, popular modern-day fishing resort, and what is left of Elizabethtown, frontier gold camp."

Sangre de Cristo Grant

The Sangre de Cristo Grant, more commonly referred to as the Trinchera Ranch, lies west of the Spanish Peaks District within the drainage of the Rio Grande. Formerly the cutting of timber was an important activity, with a spur track from the Rio Grande Railroad running south for a number of miles, over which the forest products were shipped to market. In places the railroad grade is still discernible with a few cross ties still in place. A number of camps were built along the railroad and tumble-down cabins are met with on the old abandoned roads and trails in the timbered areas. This Grant constitutes the western boundary of the Spanish Peaks District and is also the southern boundary of the Huerfano District for the Sangre de Cristo division.

The following sketch regarding the Sangre de Cristo Grant was taken from the Rocky Mountain News (1921).

"The Trinchera Ranch, down near Fort Garland, used to be considered quite a sizeable property, but there was 100,000 acres of it recently sold, so it now comprises only 127,000 acres. Before this sale it was said to be the largest single ranch in the United States, and even with that 100,000 acres lopped off there are some that maintain this ranch still ranks as one of the largest, if not actually the largest.

"The Trinchera also stands as one of the most interesting ranches in the state, with a history that deals with an old family carriage in the beginning, and leads up through several changes, including the construction of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, and a few tragedies.

"Back in the beginning of the last century the governor of Sante Fe conceived a liking for the family carriage of a French Canadian named Bouvien. Now Bouvien was what may be termed long on Mexican grants, having gathered in what later became known as the Maxwell Grant in Colorado, so he figured how he could trade the carriage for a land grant. He solved it by bringing in his two nephews, Louis Lee and Narcisso Bouvien. Then they applied for and obtained the grant their uncle had his eye on, and the governor got the carriage.

"This, be it known, was when Mexico took in a large part of the present United States, including Colorado. Land wasn't considered of any special value in those days, except to give away by a Mexican governor. This particular grant included all the land under the watershed of the Rio Grande.

"The two nephews were killed in the Mexican revolution in 1846, and their heirs passed the grant on to Charles Bouvien, father of one of the holders.

"There were numerous twists and turns in the handling of this grant, ending with Governor Gilpin of Colorado territory obtaining the northern portion. Then along came Dr. Bell and General Palmer, builders of the Rio Grande, and made a bargain whereby the Rio Grande was to get a large slice of the property if it built six miles west of Fort Garland by July 1, 1877. This was done, and Bell and Palmer got the land.

"Eventually the Trinchera ranch grew out of the changes, with Bryant and Turner of Denver as General manager, with its 400 miles of fence and 5,000 Herefords.

"There have been several killings on the property during its history, the most noted being that of Espinosa, most famous or infamous of all Mexican bandits ever infesting that section of Colorado. Tom Tobin out to earn \$2,000 reward Colorado offered for the outlaw, took up the trail, came upon him cooking his breakfast one morning and shot him. To prove that he had killed Espinosa, Tobin chopped off the head and brought it in a sack into Fort Garland."

INDIAN BATTLES

The area surrounding the Spanish Peaks formerly constituted hunting grounds for the Utes and other marauding tribes have been reported in this area. Among these are the Comanches and Arapahoes. There is little doubt fights occurred between the warriors of the various tribes but little is known concerning them.

Perhaps the most famous would-be battle between the white men and Indians occurred at La Veta during the Civil War period. The few white men at the fort would most certainly have been massacred had not Hiram Vasquez* managed to elude the Indians and race to Fort Lyon, a distance of approximately 120 miles, for help.

An account of this action is told by Eugene Parsons in the Trail Magazine (date unknown).

"It was when Hiram Vasquez lived with Daigre and Francisco (Probably in 1863) that he took the famous ride from the Plaza on the present site of La Veta to Fort Lyon in the Arkansas Valley, a distance of 120 miles. The Ute Chief, Canache was on the rampage with a thousand warriors, who surrounded Francisco's little fort. They expected to finish, within a short time, the little company of some seventeen or eighteen men with Daigre and Francisco. A crisis was at hand. It developed upon someone of their number to ride to Fort Lyon for troops - the sooner the better. Vasquez was considered the only man for this important mission, and he took the hazard without a moment's hesitation. This ride is regarded as one of the greatest feats performed by frontier men, or by others in this Western country.

"Mounted on a tough, wiry mule, Hiram Vasquez started on his perilous trip at eight o'clock on a mild spring evening. Slowly and cautiously he picked his way through the brush growing along the banks of the Cucharas, which is only a creek here. In the darkness he eluded the watchful Indian sentry stationed to the northeast of the Plaza. The rider had for his first objective Rattlesnake Buttes, forty miles from La Veta. Thence there was a ride of another forty miles over the rolling uplands northward to the Arkansas; he knew the route well. Down the Arkansas he had a ride of another forty miles to the military post. He reached the Buttes without a mishap at two o'clock in the morning; then he sped on, getting to the Arkansas at nine o'clock in the morning. Man and mule stopped not for refreshments, except to take a long draught of water from the river. The wearied mule slackened her pace a little, but kept-a-going on a stretch through the day. They were at Fort Lyon late in the afternoon."

An Indian battle was reported to have occurred between Arapaho Indians and Utes at the junction of Wahatoya Creek with the Cucharas. An account* of this action is recorded as follows:

*Hiram Vasquez was taken captive by the Shoshone Indians in 1843 when about 5 years old, in the vicinity of Fort Bridger. Six years later, near Salt Lake City, he managed to escape from the Indians and was reunited with his mother at Fort Bridger.

*See Footnote, page 10.

"The Utes were routed by their foes from the Plains and hastily retreated up the Cucharas Valley and then the Indian Creek, leaving dead along their trail. I quote from my report of the 1932 season of archaeological field work the following lines: 'On July 12th, kindly guided by Forester Karl Gilbert, we went up the thickly wooded slope along Indian Creek. The purpose was to look over an Indian burial . . . discovered the previous winter by John Durant near the top of a pass crossed by an old Ute trail . . . The Burial had been made in a broad crevice of a large boulder and covered with small rocks. The skull had been removed but many bones were still there, as well as great many glass beads. Various objects had previously been collected . . . They comprise a flintlock gun dated 1848, Barrett, three metal arrow points, one saddle buckle, five saddle rings, one piece of copper, one spoon, and anstone pipe.'"

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

The principal cities and towns around the Spanish Peaks are Trinidad, Walsenburg, Aguilar, and La Veta. Other small towns connected with the coal industry are also located here and a number of these have been abandoned. The following account of some of the early settlements is taken from "The Romance of the Spanish Peaks" by Louis B. Sporleder Sr. (See footnote, page 24).

"Trinidad, population 15,000, lies approximately ninety miles to the south of Pueblo and is the seat of Las Animas County, the largest county in the state. Its location is near the junction of Raton Creek and the Purgatoire River (El Rio de Las Animas Perdidas en Purgatorio) or, as old timers call it, the Picketwire; and although the site had long been the gathering place for early travelers, traders and trappers, its permanent establishment of residence did not begin until 1859, when a cabin was built by Gabriel and Juan N. Guterrez. The settlement was first called Rio do Las Animas, later changed to Santisima Trinidad (Spanish for Most Holy Trinity) which eventually was shortened to Trinidad. The city was incorporated December 30, 1879.

"Walsenburg is principally a coal mining community, and its history is interesting. Various settlements over a period of time were started along the Cucharas. One of these, Tequisquita, held a strong place in the memory of Mr. Sporleder, for it at one time was considerably larger than the forerunner of Walsenburg. The village and beautiful springs by which it lay were south of the Cucharas, opposite the Walsen mine; both have long been completely out of existence.

"In the 1860's, one and a half miles below Tequisquita, up sprang La Plaza de Los Leones (embryonic Walsenburg). Miguel Antonio Leon, for whom it was named and who served as Alcalde, H. W. Jones, Roman Montes Vigil and Francisco Atencio were among the first men responsible for its birth.

"Two schools found their beginning in the late 1860's. J. A. J. Valdes taught in Hermanes Plaza and Father Percevault opened a private school in Plaza de Los Leones. It was about this time too, that the first American child was born in what is now Walsenburg. She was Fanny Jones, daughter of Mrs. Henry W. Jones, a direct descendant of Colonel Daniel Boone.

"In 1869 the Right Rev. Bishop J. P. Machbeuf established the first church, the Parish of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. It was a 'jacal' or picket house, located where now stands the O'Byrne Hardware and Furniture Company.

"Fred Walsen and his young wife (Emilie Sporleder) arrived in 1870 and on the sixth of August of the same year opened a fortified trading post. Mr. Walsen's success was immediate and he soon became the accepted leader. When the Plaza was incorporated June 16, 1873, it was named in his honor.

"Badito on the Huerfano River, was the first county seat, but through the influence of Mr. Walsen and Charles O. Unfug, the records were transferred to Plaza de Los Leones. Thereafter Walsenburg was and remained the county seat.

"It was John Albert, one of the last original Rocky Mountain trappers and one of the few survivors of the Taos massacre in 1847 (the only one to escape from the Arroyo Hondo) who erected the fort on the banks of the Cucharas River. At that time the channel of the river was narrow and deep . . . It ran for several hundred feet along what is now Tenth Street . . . Joining the little estate on the north, loomed the old and first Sporleder Hotel. The proprietor of the hostelry was August Sporleder, better known as 'the Governor' . . . Heavy rains and prolonged high water in 1878 combined with an insufficient rock foundation caused its walls to collapse, also destroying John Albert's house and almost the entire Plaza of the Leons.

"La Veta was founded by Colonel John M. Francisco who came to the Rocky Mountain Country in 1839 and was first known as Francisco Plaza. Francisco Fort, erected by Colonel Francisco and Henry Daigre during the Civil War, still stands and is marked by a bronze tablet.

"There are conflicting reports about the ruins of the Old Spanish Fort built by the Spanish government probably about 1720. There seems to be no doubt that it was the first building constructed by white men in what is now Colorado. John Albert, early trapper, made definite statements to first settlers about its location in La Veta. More recently, assertions have been made that it lies in the Yellowstone region.

"A great amount of land claimed by Colonel Francisco, under agreement with Don Ceran St. Vrain, but unconfirmed by the United States government, passed into the hands of early American settlers; especially did members of the so-called Georgia Colony acquire some choice property. Prominent in this group was the historic figure, Joseph Decatur Patterson, who with his father and a cousin, explored the fertile Huerfano region. Their glowing accounts resulted in a large number of Georgians flocking to the Huerfano and upper Cucharas Valleys where today many of their descendants still live."

Other information concerning the La Veta area is reported. In the spring of 1862 Hiram Vasquez first set foot upon the ground where La Veta now stands. Here he found Henry Daigre with sixteen herders, mostly Mexicans and French. With them was a Portuguese, John Deleware. These men were punching Daigre's cattle, rounding them up in pleasant pastures or driving them into grassy mountain valleys. In the fall of 1862 Colonel J. M. Francisco showed up. This noted man was associated with Daigre for many years.

In 1864 and 1865 Mr. Vasquez was doing irrigation farming in the upper Cucharas valley. In 1866 he took up a ranch on the Apishapa. He says there was no one else living near him that summer.

Hiram Vasquez built the road to Stonewall in 1865, using oxen. Henry Daigre paid for the road. The old trail to San Luis Valley via Indian Creek was used to pack flour from Fort Garland. La Veta Pass road was built just before the railroad by a Mr. Sefton for toll. It was abandoned as a toll road after the railroad came in. The first postoffice in La Veta, called Spanish Peaks, was established in 1871, with W. B. Hamilton as first postmaster. The first school in La Veta was in 1878.

The first sawmill on the Apishapa in 1868 was owned by Captain Bell. He hauled the lumber to Fort Lyon with teams and oxen. The trip took twelve days and the material sold for \$40.00 per thousand feet. The first sawmill in

La Veta came in with the railroad in 1876 and was owned by a man named Hendrix. It was located on the mesa just above town. Most of the fires occurred in 1866. The Mexicans warred with the Indians and fires were set as war signals. A water mill was constructed in 1870 above Benton Vories.

There were lots of cattle around La Veta in 1865. Over 6000 were taken to Fort Bascam, New Mexico, by Vasquez for government use. These belonged to St. Vrain, Francisco and Daigre. Cow and calf brought \$15.00. A 5-year old steer brought \$20.00. The first cattle were common Mexican cattle. Daigre brought in the first sheep, 65 head. Sheep grazing in the mountains began about 1875.

In 1862 there were 14 buffalo near La Veta, and one large band of antelope, later killed by the Indians, plenty of deer and black and cinnamon bear, but only a few elk and mountain sheep.

The railroad came to La Veta in 1876. The first telegraph also came to La Veta that same year. The first passenger trains across La Veta Pass were in the summer of 1878.

ECONOMIC GEOLOGY AND MINING ACTIVITIES

The most important mineral product of this area is coal. The coal beds of workable thickness are confined to the coal-bearing portion of the Laramie formation, and those from which the present output is derived lie within 150 feet of the base of the measures. The total area of the Laramie outcrop in the Spanish Peaks quadrangle is 494 square miles; but the measures undoubtedly underlie all the portion of the district occupied by Eocene beds. The eastern border of the Laramie terminates in a bold, irregular line of bluffs, which within the limits of the quadrangle, extends from the Purgatoire to the north boundary. The western border lies several miles beyond the west boundary, except in the South Fork of the Purgatoire, where a deep indentation, due to erosion, brings a portion of this border within the limits of the district. The area thus included constitutes an important part of the Colorado portion of the Raton coal fields, which extends south to the Cimarron River in New Mexico and north nearly to the Huerfano.

Coal formations have been observed on the East Peak but no coal mining has been attempted in the high mountains. The area to the east of the Peak is underlaid with coal and there are numerous abandoned coal mines and towns in this locality. Old abandoned coal mines surround La Veta and dumps can be found in the foothills in the region southwest of the town. Ojo, on Highway No. 160, was once a thriving coal-mining town but now the mines have been abandoned and most of the buildings torn down or moved away.

To date all of the coal mining has been done by means of tunnels. However, during the latter part of 1943 strip mining was started near Pictou, northwest of Walsenburg, which could change the method of mining coal in this locality.

Petroleum has been found in the Walsenburg quadrangle but not in quantities of economic value. The existence of petroleum and natural gas in economic quantities in the Spanish Peaks quadrangle is conjectural, though not altogether out of the question, as both these substances have been detected at several points in the vicinity of Trinidad.

With the exception of the iron ore concretions toward the base of the Laramie, there are no known deposits of this ore within the boundaries of the Spanish Peaks quadrangle. Nor are the conditions such as to warrant a belief in the probable existence of deposits of economic value. The same is true of copper ores for copper alone. Moreover, where it is possible for deposits of these metals to occur the formations are so fully exposed that ore in paying quantity could not very well escape detection. The precious metals - more especially gold - unless associated with base metals or contained in the matrix of well-defined veins, are not so easily detected, and it frequently happens that the most unpromising-looking rock is really the most valuable.

The occurrence of ores containing precious and other metals in the Spanish Peaks quadrangle is confined to West Spanish Peak. Nearly all the gulches draining into the Wahatoya and Apishapa contain more or less placer gold, and close to the base of the mountain the gravel near the bed rock generally yields colors, or small specks of gold on panning. But so far as known, it is doubtful if any of the gravel can be profitably washed. Beyond the fact that this gold must have been derived from auriferous material occurring somewhere within the boundaries of the West Peak mass, its source has not been definitely ascertained. While ore-bearing veinlets have been found in the eruptive mass of the mountain,

the most promising deposits are confined to the surrounding zone of metamorphosed sediments, where there are small, vertical veins containing comparatively rich ore, cutting the formation. Ore shipments were made from Monarch Basin, on the Wahatoya side of the mountain which are reported to have yielded over \$100 per ton in silver and lead.

Deposits of precious or other metals have yet to be discovered in the Walsenburg quadrangle, though their existence in the Archean area of the Greenhorn Mountains is not altogether improbable, as they occur elsewhere in the same area.

Fire clay of excellent quality underlies the greater part of this quadrangle and in the areas adjacent to Trinidad. Sandstones, of which there are several varieties, have been extensively employed in local structures.

Prospecting for precious metals has been going on in the vicinity of the Spanish Peaks since the days of the early settlement. Legends credit the Spaniards with mining silver in this area shortly after they made explorations from the south. One of these legends is as follows:

"Looking back to the time of the Spanish occupation there were silver mines in the Spanish Peaks before there were well built settlements on our eastern coasts. It is related that the Spanish monks made slaves of the Indians to work these mines and that after they had collected a great amount of treasure they blew up the approach to the mines and killed the workers. But they never reached the settlements to the south for the Indians murdered them before they could reach the protection of Spanish rule and thus meted out stern justice to the murderer monks."

Prospect holes are found throughout the mountains, some where least expected. However, most of the mining activities centered around the West Spanish Peak and the area between the peaks. There are several short tunnels along Trujillo Creek and evidence of prospecting was observed in several of the side branches coming off of the East Peak. The small creeks are eroding on a large scale even at the present date and mining activities have been practically obliterated.

Prospecting has also been done on the Culebra Range and in Indian Creek. Several prospect holes can be found in Price Canyon. George Price is now working in an old prospect hole which was first opened up many years ago. The G. L. O. Plat of 1885 shows a cabin which is still partially standing. The cabin contains an old bucket used for hauling ore and rock out of the mine. Another prospect hole is located in Hope Canyon. At the present time Mr. R. B. Linscott is prospecting in this area, having sunk a shaft and a tunnel through the solid rock during the time he has been working in this area. Another prospect hole can be seen in Copper Gulch to the northwest of the Sulphur Springs resort.

In the '70's and '80's there was considerable mining activity around the Spanish Peaks. The first ore taken out of the mountains was by burros over a rough trail. The ore was brought to La Veta and shipped to the smelter. Later a road was built to the mines and the ore was brought out with team and wagons.

The patented mining claims are located on the West Spanish Peak, and are as follows:

Monitor Lode
Aztec Lode
Alpine
Grand Duke
Bulls' Eye Lode
Whale et al Lode

Although the area from La Veta Pass south to Bonnett Park is largely a sandstone formation some prospecting has been done along this range. However, the holes are not extensive showing the prospectors were easily discouraged. South of Bonnett Park the mountains increase sharply in elevation, culminating in lofty Trinchera Peak, 13,546 feet in elevation. Evidence of prospecting can be seen on the ridges and other areas above timber line along this range of mountains. Lately prospecting has been done in the vicinity of La Veta for ore carrying traces of uranium. Prospecting has also been done on Veta mountain to the northwest of La Veta and in the immediate vicinity.

Prospecting for minerals in the Spanish Peaks region was extensively carried out shortly after this area began to be settled. Mining was a major industry during the latter part of the last century. Some of the early mining activities were recorded in newspapers at that time and are a matter of record. The following information was compiled from the Huerfano Herald in 1951 by Paul Frick, an instructor at the La Veta High School. Other information was furnished by Albert Parks of La Veta, the present owner of several of the old mines on the Spanish Peaks.

"Prospecting in the Cuchara area began soon after the arrival of the first settlers in about the year 1870. In the February 17, 1881 issue of the Herald, A. E. Graham writes that 'mining claims have been held in the Peaks for at least 7 years,' and he goes on to implore 'the small scale operations up to now with one man holding 4 claims' by doing the necessary minimum of work and praises Senator Harlan of Iowa who 'plans to send in a shaft 1000 feet in a known pay lead' (the Whale). Also mentioned at this time were mining operations at Placer (Russel) in Costilla County in the fall of 1880. The February 10, 1881 issue notes that William Sager owned a gold and silver mine on top of Baldy Mountain (probably Mount Mestas). By 1880 coal mining had progressed in the Ojo district and a thriving little community had sprung up there.

Here are some more items gleaned from the herald that will help give a better picture of the mining scene in the early 80's. A. E. Graham writes on November 18, 1880 that rich copper and silver ore is being mined in the Copper King owned by the Sangre de Cristo M. and R. Company. It showed a 3 foot lead with a pay streak of sulphite of copper carrying 20 oz. of silver. I believe it lies west of La Veta in the main range. Other mines mentioned by him as being in the same region, but privately owned, are the Elk, Hunton, Poverty Lode, Goodenough, Baldy Belle, and Copper Cliff. The February 25, 1880 issue reports that the Highland Chief (Burtch, Pavey, and Daigre) is producing ore that assays from 60 to 100 oz. Later issues of the Herald note the beginning of rich strikes from Silver Cliff to Williams Creek and the Huerfano, the richest one being the famous Bassick Mine. On July 7, 1881 the Herald states that the Ball Lead on West Peak (J. G. Hamilton) was the first lead discovered in the Peaks. By July 1881 iron was being mined at Placer by a force of 50 men under the employment of the C. F. and I. The population of La Veta on March 16, 1882 was 500. On March 23, 1882 the Herald notes a strike on Silver Mountain. The

iron mine at Placer gave out on August 10, 1882. It was considered only a slide from the main lead further up the mountain. The land is now owned by the Drum family of La Veta. The Grand Duke owned by Dr. Miller is on the east edge of east gulch. Mr. Parks has informed me that a hotel to house 75 miners was built one-half mile south of the Bull's Eye Mine (Mountain Monarch). Only the foundation remains today. They dug through slide rock to reach water. It is located on the south island at the upper end of East Gulch. In 1883 a lead was discovered on the western slope of Trinchera Peak, the first and possibly only strike made in the Snowy Range.

"The Mountain Monarch mine is located about 200 feet above timber line on the west side of East Gulch on the north slope of West Spanish Peak. Today it is called the Bull's Eye mine and is owned by Albert Parks. The Whale mine is located on the northwest slope of West Peak and is several hundred feet above timber line. It is also owned today by Albert Parks. Further notes taken from the Huerfano Herald will be concentrated on these two mines."

The following information was largely taken from the Huerfano Herald by Mr. Frick.

April 21, 1881. The good people of La Veta and vicinity will be pleased to learn that the Mountain Monarch Mining Co. have decided to continue work on their mine this season. Members of the company will arrive from the East the last of May and decide upon the amount of work to be done this summer. Mr. Landis with 2 or 3 men as soon as the snow will permit will clear up the grounds and prepare for the season's campaign. About \$15,000 has been expended on this mine exposing mineral that assays as high as 953 oz. Three tunnels have been run, 130, 160 and 180 feet.

May 12, 1881. J. A. Landis made an attempt to reach the Mountain Monarch mine Tuesday but the snow was too deep for him.

June 2, 1881. Lucky Boy Lode at Bonanza owned by the La Veta Coal and Mining Company. At a depth of 3 feet there was just a trace of silver. At 10 feet there was a trace of gold and 2 oz. of silver. At 15 feet it assayed 84 oz. of gold at a value of \$105.76.

June 9, 1881. George Depp states that the prospects of the Whale grow better as they go down. On the surface there was only a trace of ore. At present at a depth of 15 feet he has a vein of 7 inches of ore that is worth \$100 per ton. He has about 5 tons on the dump and within a few weeks will commence stoping, when he can produce 3 to 5 tons a day. Just as soon as stoping can be commenced he intends to put burros on the road to pack the ore to this point, whence it will be shipped to the smelter at Pueblo. This is the mine in which G. W. Frederick and M. R. Maynard, our new Kansas men, invested in this spring.

June 23, 1881. The proprietors of the Whale mine have their trail completed from the wagon road to their lower tunnel. They were to have commenced delivering ore to the wagon road Tuesday. J. G. Goss came down from the Peaks Saturday night and left at this office specimens of ore taken from the Iowa Lode, an eastern extension of the Whale. This is the mine in which Senator Harlan of Iowa, non. Robert T. Lincoln, Secretary of War, and Mr. Lincoln's old law partner, Mr. Isbom is interested in. For two weeks past Mr. Goss with a shift of three men has been engaged in shoveling snow and last week commenced a new tunnel. At a depth of 2 feet he struck carbonate of lead, at four feet carbonate

in nugget form showing particles of galena, and at 7 feet chlorides of silver. The pay streak has widened in that 7 feet, from 2 inches to 3 inches with 6 feet of space between wall rocks. The gangue matter and pay streak is about 3 feet. The earth in which the tunnel is being run is frozen hard. Senator Harlan states that he will be here in July to prosecute work on this mine and designs sinking 1 or 2 shafts 50 to 100 feet on same. Mr. Lincoln has instructed him to draw upon him for the funds to perform the work.

June 30, 1881. The proprietors of the Whale mine made their first shipment of ore on Tuesday of this week to Pueblo.

July 7, 1881. R. A. Hayes and J. G. Hamilton, the owners of the Ball Lead, went up Tuesday with a shift of men and will sink an additional 15 feet on their lead. They are now down 35 feet and have a well-defined vein at 2 feet of gangue matter with 4 feet between wall rocks. This is the first lead discovered in the West Peak and is located in the west gulch.

July 14, 1881. Some people are surprised that the Spanish Peaks has not boomed after the manner of a few mining camps whose mining excitement has been noted for its short duration. It is a source of great satisfaction to residents here that they have done nothing of the kind. They have desired a substantial uninterrupted growth, a growth where each day adds to the mining and business progress of the locality.

July 21, 1881. Senator Harlan arrived in La Veta Tuesday and will spend a few days looking over his mining interests in this vicinity.

July 28, 1881. A personal survey of the mines by A. E. Graham. By night I had arrived at the cabin owned by the owners of the Whale where we were given a hearty welcome and after supper and the usual round of story telling we retired for the night quite fatigued. First in order in the morning was the Whale Lode #2. More developments have been made on this property in the Peaks except the Monarch. Pay ore is being taken out. The Iowa Lode shows with merely surface development a 7 inch pay streak of galena and iron pyrites with some sulphate of copper which I believe runs about \$100 in silver and lead. This vein stands perfectly straight with 11 feet between walls and the shaft is only in 10 feet. The Ball Lode. Within the last 5 feet the mineral vein has widened from 6 to 18 inches. The Setting Sun shows a large vein of solid galena. We should also add with reference to the other properties to be cut the proposed tunnel (Whale) that we examined a number of them and think that no better site could have been selected. It will cut in 1000 feet which resembles the Iowa in character of ore. It will almost traverse the main belt of the Spanish Peaks.

August 11, 1881. J. A. Landis has been engaged as superintendent of the Iowa Lode.

August 16, 1881. There is a stretch of the Sangre de Cristo Mountain from 60 to 75 miles long lying between the Moreno mines at the south and the Wet Mountain Valley at the north which has been utterly ignored by miners until the past year or two, it being the prevailing belief that there was no mineral in it worth looking for. However, prospectors have been gradually encroaching on this area discovering good mines in silver and gold leaving the only unworked area that portion of the range 25 miles south of the Peaks. The mines on the north slope of the Spanish Peaks have been successfully worked for two years.

September 15, 1881. We are informed that those composing the Whale mine and a part of those interested in the west gulch property known as the Goss or tunnel site lode have formed a joint stock company to be known as the Whale Consolidated Gold and Silver Mining Company with its principal office at this point. The officers are: President, Senator Harlan; Vice-President, G. W. Frederick; Secretary, D. D. Ryus; Treasurer, F. L. Martin; Superintendent, J. A. Maynard. The purposes of the company are to more thoroughly test the true value of the Peaks by a concentrated effort of skill and means.

November 3, 1881. The Mountain Monarch Silver Mining Company last week let the contract for running a new tunnel of 200 feet to Mr. Winans of St. Louis. He is now in the city gathering provisions for a full winter's campaign. He will buy about 5000 pounds of provisions and at once send them to the mine having telegraphed the owner of the pack train at Pueblo to commence delivery of same. His force will consist of 6 men this winter and a man and wife to take care of the boarding house. The new tunnel will be commenced at the bottom of the gulch about 100 feet below the lower tunnel and continued a distance of 200 feet this winter. The new organization of the company, effected in August last, is composed of men of ample means and disposition to place this mine among the valuable properties of Colorado. William H. Stone, Hamilton White, Hon. James Harlan, William H. Mason, and John Coate are the directors. The articles of incorporation specify that it shall be known as the Mountain Monarch Mining Company with principal office at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa. The amount of capital stock is placed at 2 million dollars, represented by 100,000 shares at \$20 each not subject to assessment. The company has no power to contract debts, but must make all improvements and pay all liabilities out of unappropriated money in the treasury.

November 17, 1881. L. A. Salle came down from his ranch at the base of the Spanish Peaks with much difficulty the first of the week. Snow in that vicinity was from 2 to 4 feet deep on the level - deeper than ever known before.

December 1, 1881. NOTICE TO MINERS. The Whale Consolidated Gold and Silver Mining Company of La Veta, Colorado desires to give a contract for the construction of a tunnel 5 feet wide, 6 feet 6 inches high, clear of all incumbrances, from 100 to 1000 feet in extent. The tunnel is under cover. Cabins for the accommodation of miners at the mouth of same. Contractors will be required to commence work at an early day, to work at least a double shift of men continuously until the contract is completed and to give approved security for fulfillment of contract. Address sealed bids to Jas. A. Maynard.

December 3, 1881. Senator Harlan returned on Friday and will remain in La Veta until the good work now progressing on the Whale is farther advanced. Mrs. Harlan accompanied him.

December 15, 1881. The Whale Consolidated Mining Company let a contract last week for the sinking of an additional 50 feet on the Depp extension to the Whale Lode.

December 22, 1881. The Whale Silver Mining Company through its President Senator Harlan, has purchased the second lot east of the Herald building and will at once commence the erection of a handsome business office thereon. The front room will be fitted with cabinets and shelves for the display of ore from this vicinity. It is now generally conceded that Robert Lincoln will be retained in Arthur's Cabinet. His valued interest in the Peaks are such as to identify him in no small degree with this community.

December 29, 1881. Since our last issue work has been progressing on the Mountain Monarch and the Whale Consolidated mines with satisfactory results. The lower tunnel in the Mountain Monarch is now in about 90 feet. The fissure is about 9 feet from wall to wall, filled with decomposed quartz, carrying ore of good quality and with every indication of becoming a solid body of the best mining mineral. The company has a double shift of miners at work night and day and have supplies in store sufficient to carry them through the winter. They have also put men to work erecting ore houses in which to store the mineral. The Whale Consolidated Company has 3 gangs of miners at work on their property driving in a development tunnel so located as to cut a nest of fissure veins of unquestioned value, and are also sinking a shaft on one of their claims on a body of mineral uncovered last fall. They have provisions, powder and all required material in store at their mines to carry them through the winter.

December 29, 1881. The Mountain Monarch Silver Mining Co. of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, whose mines are located in the Spanish Peaks, Huerfano County, Colorado, have recently let a contract to run a level on the mine from 300 to 600 feet. The intentions of this company is to work during the winter and have the mine in shape to produce a constant supply of ore for the smelter by spring.

January 12, 1882. W. F. Patterson is reported as having badly frozen his feet on his return to the Whale on Monday morning. Mr. W. F. Patterson, foreman of the Whale and A. G. Graham, one of the miners, came down from the works Saturday and will remain until Monday. Mr. Patterson informs us that they are now in 60 feet on the 1000 foot tunnel and hope to average 8 feet per week. Though in consequence of the hard rock through which they have passed and the making of necessary improvements including the building of a cabin at the mouth of the tunnel, they have been able to make only 3 to 6 feet a week. The rock they are now in is granite, but it is softer, shelly and easily worked. In 10 or 15 feet they will strike the first lead and will follow this for some distance. The tunnel is 5 by 6½ feet in size and the rock is hard enough to save timbering. A blacksmith shop has been erected convenient to the tunnel. Grub in sufficient quantity to carry the workmen through to spring is on hand, except a few canned goods. These will be taken up this month.

January 19, 1882. It was \$1000 stock each in the Whale mine that Charles and Will Martin received as a New Year's present from their father. Mr. William McCorkle has been placed in charge of the Whale mine as foreman since the misfortune that happened to W. F. Patterson and work is progressing as usual. W. F. Patterson was brought down on Wednesday and is now at the La Veta Hotel. Dr. Vandervolgen went up on Tuesday and worked on him until Wednesday morning when the boys placed him on a stretcher and started for this place. For a mile and a half he was carried over rocks and allowed to slide over the snow on their progress down the mountain. The snow has drifted so much that at one place a new trail had to be made for 2 or 3 hundred yards. At Depps cabin Mr. Patterson was placed upon a burro and late in the evening after a slow and tedious trip arrived safely in town. Both his feet were frozen half way to the instep and the toes were hard as ticks and black as the ground. The doctors state that he will completely recover.

January 26, 1882. McCorkle, foreman, and Parker, Graham, and Rose, miners on the Shale tunnel, took a run down to town Saturday and returned Monday. Parker and Rose were down for the first time since December 6. The boys are all well and in the best of spirits, but they have struck hard granite again.

February 9, 1882. Since the death of Mr. Maynard, F. L. Martin in addition to his office as Treasurer has been acting in capacity of Superintendent of the Whale and the good work both in the tunnel on No. 1 and the shaft on No. 2 is progressing as usual. In the tunnel they have struck digging again and are making good headway towards the first lead which they hope to reach in a few days.

March 9, 1882. Mr. Winans, contractor for 200 feet extension of the lower tunnel of the Mountain Monarch, has been engaged on the contract for several weeks and is well nigh through it. For some time he has been passing through a blue decomposed matter that has much the appearance of clay. Recently a box of the stuff was shipped to the company at Mt. Pleasant when a dispatch was at once telegraphed by Senator Harlan to "save the ore, it is rich," great quantities of the ore have been thrown over the dump, but of course it will be saved. Stock in the Monarch has gone up to \$5 a share.

March 16, 1882. We now have it pretty straight that the family of Mr. Robert Lincoln will spend next summer in La Veta. Mrs. Lincoln is the only daughter of Senator Harlan. L. Winans, one of the contractors on the Mountain Monarch mine, returned from Iowa last Saturday with instructions to proceed in the tunnel as fast as possible with an unlimited contract. The Winans have 3 eight-hour shifts employed and during the winter have extended the tunnel 200 feet. Mr. Winans was accompanied by 10 men who went up the same day to begin the extension of the toll road from its present terminus to the mine. J. Graham and S. G. Parker were engaged for 6 weeks in burning charcoal for the Whale Co. and had several hundred bushels just ready to turn over. The night before delivery the whole outfit took fire and burned up. Although a mile and a half below the Whale tunnel the fire was plainly visible here. Seventy-five dollars each will probably cover the loss.

April 20, 1882. The Winans have just closed their contract for 200 feet on the lower tunnel of the Monarch. A few feet before the close of the contract the pay streak that had been running only a foot in width widened to 4 feet and bears the appearance of a chimney or a large deposit of ore. They will continue development as fast as possible following the vein and taking the ore from the deposit just discovered also. They have been saving ore for some time and expect to see the Monarch declare a dividend by the first of July. G. F. Marbut came down Saturday from his second trip to the Peaks this spring and says that snow has been but little drawback recently. The storm last week covered the mountain to the depth of 6 or 8 inches, but the wind is fast drifting that into the gulches. Mr. Marbut has staked another claim 600 feet south of the Whale No. 1 and 2. He calls it the Decatur Lode (Mr. Parks thinks it is the present Big Four). It shows 14 inches of galena and decomposed mineral in a vein of 3 feet of porous quartz. The vein is well defined between wall rocks.

April 27, 1882. Mr. A. S. Hunter, a dry goods merchant of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, and Treasurer of the Mountain Monarch gave us a pleasant call Monday. He was here in company with Senator Harland and J. B. Coate. While the officers of the Mountain Monarch mine were here this week they let a contract to the Winans for the extension of 300 feet on their tunnel, 3 shifts of men to be employed in running same.

May 11, 1882. There is some talk of starting a town at the Mountain Monarch to be known as Monarch City.

May 25, 1882. The Mountain Monarch mine is now being operated by a full force of men with night and day shifts. The ore being taken out grows richer with the chimney widening as the lead is followed down. The ore being taken out is sacked and made ready for shipment to the smelting works at Pueblo which is said to be the most extensive works of its kind in Colorado. The road to be made down the mountain will be ready for travel in a few days. The shares that were started at \$2 a few months ago are selling right along for \$5 a share. They require little effort to sell wherever the Monarch is known.

June 8, 1882. The new strike demonstrates that the Monarch is a true fissure vein. Old timers give us as their opinion that the strike in the Monarch will turn to true silver sulphurets. Renewed interest in the Monarch was awakened on Sunday last by the bringing down of specimens of another strike just made. In the lower level now in about 350 feet the inch streak that has been followed suddenly widened in 4 feet to 12 inches and seems to indicate that they are now in close proximity to good pay mineral. About 30 men are now employed on the mine and toll road. The road will be passable in a few days but will not be completed until about the first of July.

June 22, 1882. G. F. Marbut has just finished assessment on 3 claims on the west side of the Peaks (present Copper King?).

June 29, 1882. And now it is said that Mountain Monarch stock has gone up to \$10.00. Senator Harlan arrived last Friday night and Saturday morning found him astride a burro enroute up the mountain to the Monarch mine. Monday he was again in the saddle enroute to the Whale with the view of locating a new tunnel site. He is perfectly at home whether astride a burro, trudging up the mountain afoot, or lumbering over the rough road in a freight wagon.

August 3, 1882. Dr. Miller will this week let a contract for a 50 foot tunnel on his extension of the Monarch vein. (Chicago Mining Journal): A large double force of men are now operating in the Mountain Monarch mine with night and day shifts. The ore grows richer at every foot and the chimneys widen with depth. The ore is sacked as fast as it is removed and will be taken to the Pueblo smelting works. There is no longer any doubt that the mine is a true fissure. Stock has gone up to \$10.

September 14, 1882. Senator Harlan, accompanied by his granddaughter, Miss Mamie Lincoln, the daughter of the Secretary of War, arrived Saturday and will spend a week with us (Pass Creek Mines). There are altogether about 30 claims being worked at present, the majority of which show considerable native copper, iron, and some assay good in gold and silver.

September 28, 1882. Mr. Dunham of New York City advertises for sale in another column 1000 shares of Mountain Monarch stock at \$4.

October 19, 1882. The Mountain Monarch has sent down 6 tons of ore for shipment to a smelter at Denver. Dr. Miller has closed down work on the White Spar and Grand Duke for the winter. The miners all concede that he has the brightest prospects in the Peaks.

November 2, 1882. The Mountain Monarch Mining Co. received on Monday a new steam drill for use in their tunnel. Also a new 24 h.p. engine and a 25 h.p. boiler and started the same up the mountain on Tuesday. The cost of the machinery is said to be \$3500 to \$4000.

November 16, 1882. The series of law suits that have been going on for several years between the owners of the Last Chance Lode on one side and Landis, Mason and Co., on the other, have at last been settled, the latter paying the former 500 shares, that is \$10,000 worth of Mountain Monarch stock in payment for what is now 600 feet of the Mountain Monarch lode. The Last Chance owners feel considerably elated over having a fund which will be large enough to open their property to a paying condition as soon as they can dispose of the stock.

November 30, 1882. The Pueblo Chieftain. From a gentleman who returned yesterday from a trip to the Spanish Peaks we learn that there is every probability of bonanzas in that region. The parties who are developing the Mountain Monarch, the Whale and other mines are known to be shipping black sulphurets constantly, and it is good ore. They are dreadfully sly about it, having nothing to say, try to keep information about their business suppressed, and allow no one to carry away specimens of ore. Until a recent date a game of freeze-out has been going on there for a long time, as a result of which are known to be of great value.

February 22, 1883. The Whale. With the exception of 3 weeks, work has been pushed on the Whale since last October, two and three shifts of men being employed part of the time. The work has been directed to opening a new tunnel on the west side of the mountain 300 feet below the old shaft, in a good location, and it has been driven in a distance of 200 feet. Seventy-five feet was a crosscut to the vein and when it was struck the pay streak was only 3 inches thick. The rest of the work has been done on the vein and the pay streak has widened to 9 inches with a prospect that it will continue as the tunnel continues. The wall rocks are 5 feet and well-defined. Quite a bit of activity is recorded at this time on the Silver Wave mines on the south side of West Peak.

March 3, 1883. Dave Ryus, F. L. Martin and G. W. Frederick, stockholders and officers, are so interested in the new strikes made in the Whale that they have employed Mr. Clark to continue the tunnel another 50 feet. The public is watching the Whale with greater interest than ever before.

April 5, 1883. Manufacturers of a new patent concentrating process have been endeavoring for 2 weeks to establish concentrating works here. They have written L. Winans asking him to send them 10 lbs. samples from each of the mines in the Peaks and inquiring if 50 tons of ore a day could be furnished. We have no means of knowing just how much ore is on the dumps in the Peaks, but it seems to us the Monarch, the Whale, the mines on the south side and the numerous flattering prospects that are more or less developed in the Peaks, together with what may come from Silver Mountain and from Placer (now Russell), would reach a considerable quantity in the aggregate. But if we do not secure the works this season, it shows that the attention is turned in this direction. The firm in question desires to put up works costing from \$30,000 to \$50,000.

March 22, 1883. The newest strike in this vicinity is the strikes of Manganese in the dike east of town by John Herbin, G. E. Gordon, John Stranger and the editor of this paper (J. B. King). A sample from the surface sent to Burlingame of Denver assayed \$3.91 in gold and silver with some manganese. The lead is well defined and within 1½ miles of La Veta. At Pueblo the steel works pays \$700 per car load. Mining experts give it as their opinion that if it does not develop manganese the lead may run to gold. The Wahatoya Creek which flows near by is known to contain gold, and gold in an early day was washed from it, one to two dollars being an average day's return per man. This gold is now thought to come from this lead. The dike has been staked all the way north from Willis' ranch to and across the Cucharas River.

April 12, 1883. Prospects are now encouraging that the concentrating works will be established this season. Mr. Winans has forwarded samples of ore from 12 leads in the Peaks. The company now proposes to put in works costing from \$12,000 to \$15,000 if our people will construct the building and place the machinery (\$2500). The capacity will be 40 tons a day. Mr. Winans insists that there are 40 leads in the Peaks that can produce one ton of ore a day. Senator Harlan has told him that concentrating works were all that was necessary to make a paying investment at present. An effort has been made to have the works built at Spruce Canyon . . . L. W. Burtch received his new assay outfit and is now prepared to do assaying. The scales alone cost \$150.00. His furnace is constructed of the best fire brick.

May 3, 1883. Mr. Leech, the concentrator man, has tested the samples of ore sent him and writes Mr. Winans that 5 of the samples are satisfactory to him. He had been detained at Boulder but will be here in a few days to look over the field.

May 10, 1883. Mr. Leech spent 2 days in the mountains and visited a number of properties. He seemed pleased with the ore and evidently desires only to be sure that it can be produced in quantities sufficient to keep the works employed. The works he desires to erect will cost about \$15,000 and will have a capacity of from 20 to 40 tons per day. The expense of reducing ore will be \$2.50 to \$4.00 a ton. Low grade ore running \$10 to \$20 a ton is just as desirable as high grade ore. There is another article stating that it is best to concentrate holdings instead of one prospector holding many claims.

June 28, 1883. A strike was made at the head of the Trinchera River in Trinchera Peak above timber line, and is a well defined vein that can be traced for a quarter of a mile up the mountain. Assays from the surface give \$320 gold with a trace of silver. At a depth of 4 feet they have uncovered a body of mineral 8 x 20 feet. The section the discovery has been made in is new and has never been prospected.

July 5, 1883. D. N. Roberts and Dr. Erwin put in a week prospecting from the head of Indian Creek to the head of the Trinchera, and the only thing discovered was an iron lead. This is in such a difficult location it can scarcely be worked to advantage.

July 19, 1883. Clark and Kearns have been employed by the Mountain Monarch Company to work on the tunnel until the arrival of Senator Harlan when a contract will be given them. The senator is expected next week. Mr. Herbin had an assay yesterday from surface rock on the dike at the foot of the Peaks which runs \$18.67 in gold and silver. He claims a lead 4 feet wide of this ore and will ship a mill run to Pueblo at once.

August 9, 1883. Senator and Mrs. Harlan came in last Friday and have rooms at Mrs. Tanners. Saturday the Senator took in the Monarch and Wednesday the Whale. There fails to be a quorum of the Whale Company and Mr. Frederick was telegraphed to come with the view of letting a new contract. The Mountain Monarch is said to be improving every day and the vein widening. Arrangements are being made to commence stoping in a few days.

September 20, 1883. The Mountain Monarch Mining Company last week let a contract of 100 feet extension to the tunnel in the Monarch Mine to Clark and Kearns, and the contractors are now busy crowding the work with 2 shifts of men. Eight dollars a foot was the contract price.

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1882

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE MINT ON THE PRODUCTION OF THE
PRECIOUS METALS IN THE UNITED STATES
HUERFANO COUNTY, COLORADO

Huerfano is one of the southern counties of the state, and was settled at an early date in the history of Colorado.

Prospecting has been carried on in the mountains on the western borders of the county for several years, chiefly in the vicinity of the Spanish Peaks, Huerfano Park, and Ojo.

On West Spanish Peak there is a group of lodes, comprising the Whale, Iowa, Monpareil, Goss, Jeffries, Western Queen, Treasure, Monitor, Highland Lass, and Lincoln, which are controlled by the Whale Consolidated Gold and Silver Mining Company.

These lodes are true fissures, containing carbonate and galena ores which assay from 100 to 200 ounces of silver to the ton, and carry a fair percentage of lead. The company is engaged in driving a tunnel to cut the veins. The work done is of good character, and the properties have prospects of becoming paying properties.

The Mountain Monarch Mining Company is also operating on West Spanish Peak, some 10 miles from La Veta, upon the Mountain Monarch and Island lodes. The ores are galena and pyrites, rich in both gold and silver.

IN HUERFANO PARK DISTRICT, the principal mines are the Copper Bull, Boss of the Gulch, Huerfano, Sitting Bull, Big Boss, Little Boss, Alice D., and Good Friday.

The Copper Bull is opened by a tunnel 165 feet in length, cutting the vein at a vertical depth of about 150 feet. The ore is rich in copper, and carries 10 to 20 ounces of silver to the ton.

The developments on the Huerfano consist of a tunnel 210 feet in length, showing a large vein of ore, carrying gold, silver and copper.

The other mines are opened by shafts and tunnels, from 10 to 200 feet in extent, the ore bearing the same characteristics as in the Huerfano.

Coal Mining

The following article on coal mining was published in the World-Independent, Walsenburg, Colorado on July 27, 1954.

"One of the most important facets, and one of the most tragic, in the growth of Huerfano county was the coal industry.

"Coal was known to exist in the county long before the first mine was opened. When it was first discovered it was not feasible to dig it from the ground and transport it to market, but the coming of the railroad in 1876 meant that what for years would be the principal resource of the county could now be exploited.

"Accordingly Fred Walsen, for whom the town was later named, opened the first mine in 1876. It was located about a mile west of Walsenburg in the same locality which the important Cameron mine, now a fascinating ghost town, opened shortly afterwards.

"The start of coal mining created a burst of activity. The population rapidly increased and with the increase came a sense of civic responsibility resulting in three stores three hotels, shade trees on Main Street and a county jail.

"From the mining of "black gold" rose the company and the men, with injustices on both sides resulting in a natural conflict. Miners came from the British Isles, the Mediterranean countries and the far corners of Europe and Asia to mine the black diamonds which were buried deep in the land of opportunity.

"The miners lived in wretched isolated camps consisting of ugly shanties, unpainted and stark, watched over by armed guards.

"They worked long hours at low wages under hazardous conditions, were often paid in company script, redeemable only at company stores and they were a hard lot, ignorant, poverty stricken.

"Into their midst came men whose aim was to improve standards - living, wages, safety. John Lawson, a United Mine Workers representative, brought some of the first talk which led to the elevation of the miner. Mother Jones, an 82 year-old woman who was one of the most colorful figures of the era, came and was periodically expelled and jailed.

"The United Mine Workers sent their best organizers into the coal fields, and the mine owners sent professional strike breakers to keep the mines operating despite the outcropping strikes. The Colorado National Guard came to maintain order.

"And from the conflict came one of the greatest tragedies of the area - Ludlow.

"On April 20, 1914, 33 persons died, 13 of whom were women and children, who perished in an underground shelter beneath the flaming tents of their striker's colony.

"Over that cremation pit today rises a marble monument dedicated to the memory of those expendables.

"The miners had begun leaving the mines for strikes and their tent colonies in 1913. The situation gradually grew worse and spasmodic fighting broke out in 1914. The state militia was called in, but after months of watchful waiting their funds ran out and they were returned to Denver. Some remained of their own volition.

"There were 276 tents at Ludlow, sheltering 800 people. On April 19 military officers demanded that the colonists turn over a man believed to be in their camp. They were told the man was not there and the demand was renewed the following day. It was then the firing began.

"The battle raged continuously for 14 hours until the miners began running out of ammunition and were forced to take to the hills. As the miner's forces grew weak the military moved in and it was then the colony burst into flame.

"Because of the bitter wet winter, cellars had been dug under many of the tents and it was in one of these that the 13 women and children had sought shelter from the raging battle.

"The military commission which investigated and reported on the Ludlow massacre placed the blame for the strike battles on the coal mine operators. They found the soldiers deliberately spread the fire.

"On the other hand the report blames the miners for firing the first shot.

"Ludlow threw the Nation into an uproar and President Wilson ordered the Federal troops in.

"In the ensuing years labor and management began to come closer together and the sacrifice at Ludlow was not a vain one. Out of the tragedy came a renewed effort to better the miners' conditions and the mines became unionized, miners were given an eight-hour working day and week limitations, safety practices were installed and the rate of pay was amended to the cost of living and the work, and the conditions of the miners in general were improved.

"Coal mining remained the leading industry in Huerfano county until the 1950's, and although it has declined the coal fields still hold unlimited resources. The coal field in Huerfano covers an area approximately 265 square miles and deposits are conservatively estimated at more than one billion tons of high grade coal."

SPANISH PEAKS RANGER DISTRICT

The Spanish Peaks Ranger District of the San Isabel National Forest is located in south-central Colorado along the eastern slopes of the Sangre De Cristo Mountains. The Spanish Peaks are two independent mountain masses rising sharply from the foothills and plains. Trinidad is located approximately 25 miles to the southeast of the district, while La Veta is approximately 10 miles to the north.

The Spanish Peaks District began its existence as a withdrawal January 28, 1901. The original boundaries extended far beyond the present ones, taking in considerable agricultural land as well as a few small settlements. However, the area as a whole was rough and supported timber of fair quality. It also took in land underlaid with coal, as well as the high mountainous area along the Culebra Range, south to the Colorado-New Mexico line. Later the General Land Office held that no public land existed between the Sangre de Cristo and Maxwell Grants and that the Land Office Map was in error. (Commissioners letter No. 131933, August 6, 1906).

The entire area was released on January 3, 1902. The greater portion was again withdrawn February 25, 1907 and proclaimed the Las Animas National Forest March 1, 1907. That portion of the withdrawal not included in the forest was released May 6 and June 13, 1907. The present boundaries of this district were established by Presidential proclamation on May 27, 1910, whereby certain lands were eliminated from the San Isabel National Forest. Over five years elapsed between withdrawals, during which time considerable land was filed on under the Timber and Stone Act and later patented. Both the original withdrawal and final boundaries of the Spanish Peaks District are shown on the attached map.

The status record now shows 12,003,148 acres of private land within the boundaries of the Spanish Peaks District. This land was patented as follows:

homesteads	9681.97 acres
Timber and Stone Claims	2207.81 "
Mineral Patents	113.368 "
Total	12003.148 "

The homestead filings occurred as early as 1880 and some patents issued in 1883. The latest homestead filing was made in 1906 and the latest patent in 1914. No filings are recorded in the status book subsequent to the creation of the Las Animas National Forest in 1907.

Timber and Stone entries were made as early as 1903. The earliest patent was issued in 1904. Late filings were made in 1910, several years after the creation of the forest. The latest patent is recorded in 1911. The records show from 3 to 4 months to 4 years elapsing between filings and patents. No timber and stone filings were made prior to the original withdrawal on January 28, 1901. Most of them were made between 1903 and 1906, and a few at a later date.

The number of homestead filings made in relation to those proved upon is not revealed by the records. However, the diaries of the rangers of the time show considerable time being spent in checking homestead claims, and some protests were made in the courts regarding them.

The records show that most of the homestead filings were made within the boundaries of the present Spanish Peaks district prior to 1901 when the Las Animas National Forest was first withdrawn. Between 1901 and 1907, however, over 3000 acres of public timber land passed into private ownership through the Timber and Stone Act.

It is interesting to note that only three permanent residences for agricultural purposes are maintained within the boundaries of the Spanish Peaks District. Most of the alienated land is used for grazing cattle during the summer months, and some of it is too rough and rugged for even this purpose. A considerable amount of land has been consolidated into single ownership with few of the original owners or their descendants still retaining possession of the land. Here the fallacy of permitting private ownership of mountainous land for the single purpose of making a living from it through agriculture becomes apparent.

In general, the homesteaders picked out the most open and level land and areas along the creek bottoms as long as they were available. A considerable amount was located above 10,000 feet in elevation where the growing season is so short as to almost preclude the growing of any kind of crops, although it was attempted. Even at the lower elevations, such as around Cucharas Camps, only the more hardy types of vegetables are grown. Although corn might mature at this altitude it rarely attains a height of over three feet. However, it is reported that the land in the foothills around the peaks once yielded potatoes of good size and quality until some disease prevented the further production of this crop.

Settlers arrived in the Cucharas drainage within the district as early as 1880. By 1890 there were thirteen families living upon their claims in the Upper Cucharas. They made fairly substantial improvements and broke up some land. School houses were built and several terms of school held with a good attendance. The old school house just east of the west $\frac{1}{4}$ Corner of Section 35, Township 30 South, Range 69 West, still stands, but has not been used for a number of years. This is located in the flat below the highway on what is locally known as "Red Hill."* After 1890 these settlers gradually left the area and in 1914 there was not a single person living upon the land in the Upper Cucharas.

The crops raised upon the ranches within the unit were nil when compared with those grown upon the land below the forest boundary. Ranchmen maintain that it takes two tons of hay to winter an animal on the forest while in the lowlands one ton is sufficient.

A number of abandoned homestead buildings can still be seen around the district, especially along Cucharas Creek and below the Apishapa Truck Trail between Cucharas and Apishapa passes. The old haunted house in Spring Creek burned down during the summer of 1946. The buildings in Baker Creek also burned down several years ago. Most of the remaining buildings are in a badly dilapidated condition and none are habitable. The remains of Albert Parks' homestead can still be seen in Bonnett Park. These abandoned, tumble-down buildings are mute evidence of man's failure to conquer the mountains.

*Torn down in 1949 by John Vories.

Mining activities took place on the West Spanish Peak in the '70's and '80's. The patented claims are as follows:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Date of Patent</u>
Monitor Lode	54.915	8-18-98
Aztec Lode	10.23	9-24-92
Alpine	6.90	10-1-92
Grand Duke	10.33	10-1-92
Bulls Eye Lode	10.331	2-21-96
Whale et al Lode	20.662	5-1-05

Prospecting is still being done around the West Peaks in the vicinity of these old mines.

Administrative Sites

Several administrative sites were withdrawn from entry or selected for this purpose shortly after the forest was created in 1907. These are as follows:

Black Bear	SWSE, SESW of Section 21, T. 31 S., R. 69 W.
Camp Cuchara	SWSE Section 6, and NWNE and N $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 7, Township 30 South, Range 68 West.
Camp Dean	SWSE, SESW of Section 26, T. 31 S., R. 69 W.
Little Santa Clara	NENE of Section 22, T. 30 S., R. 67 W.
North Fork	80 acres in Section 16, T. 32 S., R. 69 W.

The original map of the Las Animas National Forest, dated 1908, shows an administrative site in Indian Creek, in the SWNE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 8, Township 30 South, Range 69 West. This administrative site does not show on the other records. It was surrounded by patented lands which later were acquired by the government under the land exchange laws. Another administrative site shown on this map but not recorded elsewhere is located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 29, Township 30 South, Range 68 West on Pine Creek (Now Lcho Creek).

The Black Bear administrative site is located about one-half mile above the forks of the road on Cucharas Creek. Perhaps the only use made of this site was for pasture purposes. Ranger Boyd in his diary for September 13, 1911, wrote as follows:

"Mr. Willey and I drove to the Black Bear Ranger Station and packed our camp outfit up to the timber. I took the horses back to the Black Bear Station and returned to camp."

Camp Cuchara is located about five miles southwest of La Veta. The old house and barn used by Ranger Boyd for several years still stands on this site. This station was exchanged for the Popul Vuh site west of La Veta in 1923. The improvements on this administrative site were not entirely satisfactory and Ranger Boyd occupied the station for only a short time. However, it was a desirable place for a pasture for the ranger's horses and was used for this purpose for many years.

From his diary Ranger Boyd apparently had little love for this site. Under the date of July 22, 1911, he wrote as follows:

"Drove out with the family to the Ranger Station. Examined the well, got out 4 dead rabbits and I guess there are others. Pumped all the water out that the pump could reach. It is in bad shape. I hardly know what to do with it."

Ranger Boyd also mentioned rabbits getting in the well at other times.

The Camp Dean administrative site was located a short distance southwest of Cucharas Pass. Although there were some improvements at this site the area was used largely for pasture purposes.

There is no record of any improvements on the North Fork administrative site. However, Ranger Boyd mentions using this area, probably as a camp site. For the most part when traveling in this area the ranger stayed at different ranches overnight. These ranches also have long since been abandoned.

There were some improvements at the Little Santa Clara site and these were sold and the land relinquished. It was patented in 1917.

La Veta was originally the headquarters for the Las Animas National Forest. Although administrative sites were available nearer the forest this town has been used by the ranger since approximately 1911 for his headquarters, it having many advantages, including accessibility to the public, schools, water, lights, etc. At the time of the construction of the Ranger Station and office in La Veta the Popul Vuh site was not considered desirable due to its isolation from the town and other factors.

The Popul Vuh site is located on the mesa just west of La Veta. It affords a good lookout for the north-half of the Spanish Peaks District. However, it is in an exposed location, for which reason it was not considered as a desirable place for a ranger station. At the time of the exchange for the Cuchara Ranger Station there was an old adobe dwelling with three rooms on the lower floor and an unfinished one above. There was also a rough barn made of lumber. The adobe bricks from this building were later used in the construction of the office in La Veta. Mr. A. A. Bruce of La Veta, exchanged this site for Camp Cucharas in 1923.

The La Veta administrative site was purchased from Mr. J.T. Manning in 1935. Shortly afterwards the office building for the La Veta ranger was built on this site.

The site for the La Veta Ranger Station dwelling and garage was purchased from John P. Stranger in 1937. Construction on the garage and dwelling was completed around 1940.

Forest Fires

The history of the great forest fires of the past is somewhat obscure. Some state these were set by Indians as signals during their wars with the early Mexicans; others that they were set while hunting to drive the game out of the mountains. It is also possible some are the result of lightning storms for fire suppression was not practiced to any great extent before the beginning of the national forests.

Without regard to cause there have been several large fires on the Spanish Peaks District many years prior to the creation of the forest. Fires ravished a large part of the North Fork, sweeping over the divide into the Cucharas and continuing north into Baker Creek, Dodgeton Creek and Bonnett Creek. This extensive burned-over area may be the result of more than one fire at different times, and all very destructive. This extensive area now largely supports a cover of aspen with coniferous trees growing in the shelter beneath. Some of the conifers are large and are beginning to overtop the aspen. However, the fire was so severe in the North Fork that the forest trees did not come back. This is mostly grassland now and probably will be for many more years to come.

There is also evidence over the entire district of forest fires occurring long before the advent of the first white settlers.

After the forest was created the detection and suppression of forest fires became a major activity. For a time, at least, the rangers patrolled the district for fires. Later the present system of fire cooperators was inaugurated whereby local residents have made themselves responsible for the detection and suppression of fires.

One of the worst fires on the Spanish Peaks District occurred in 1916. It would appear that the last week in May of that year was dry and windy and several fires were burning adjacent to the district at the time. Ranger Boyd's diary for this period reads as follows:

May 24. "At headquarters. About 3 p.m. received a phone call from J. I. Thomas, Gulnare, that he could see smoke east of the East Peak. Took the glasses and went on the hill west of the creek. Could see smoke but could not tell just where it was coming from. I hitched up, took some tools, provisions and saddle and when I got over to Bear Creek found there was a fire there, someone burning tops and the fire not likely to get on the Forest. I could then see the smoke east of the Peak and started there. The roads are awful bad. It got dark and I could not drive over them. I stopped at Ed. Simons.

May 25. "Drove over to the fire. Found it was A. I. Lindsay's man burning brush for 2 or 3 days. The fire had run off his land onto G. Romero's place which joins the forest. I did not see anyone there so I got above it and checked it next to the Forest. It was within 200 yards of the forest boundary. Bud Tarter came and helped me this afternoon. I stayed overnight at Dick Smiths.

May 26. "Went back to the fire as some old logs and stumps were still burning and worked on them where they were near the edge, rolling some together, burning them up and covering some with dirt. Stayed there until 3 p.m. then drove down to the house where Bolen, the man that works for Lindsay, lives. I wanted to see him and caution him to be more careful with the fire but there was no one there. I drove to J. I. Thomases.

May 31. "A. B. Parks called up and said there was fire on the East Peak. I went out and could see the smoke. In a little while J. I. Thomas called up on the phone and said it was above where the other one was. I had heard that A. I. Lindsay was in the hospital, sick. I called his brother, W. W. Lindsay, at Aguilar, and asked him about it. He said he knew nothing about it but would go right up. I rode to the fire and found there were seven men fighting it on the north side and they told me J. I. Thomas with some men on the south side were working on the fire. It had run pretty well up on the Peak. They had just come down the line and said they thought they had it pretty well under control. I rode up on the south side and saw it was not spreading much, as the wind was against it, so I rode back to the north side. Four of the fellows said they would stay, the others went home. I sent word for the others to come. Five of us stayed all night.

June 1. "The wind got up in the night yet it did not spread much on us. I stayed at the fire until 6 o'clock. The wind had quit blowing so hard and the chances looked fairly good to control it. I went and got my horse and rode over to Thomases to phone the Supervisor. The phone was out of order and I did not get him until 10 o'clock. I rode back to the fire. The wind had got high and there was about 12 men went out this morning but they could do nothing with it. No amount of men could as they just had to get out of the way and let it go. It was one of the worst possible days for fire, warm and windy. In some places the fire jumped for a quarter of a mile. I rode back to the phone to try and get the Supervisor as he came through Walsenburg or Aguilar but did not get him. He had told me he would come as soon as possible. I sent out for more men.

I phoned the Sheriffs of Hu-erfano and Las Animas Counties. The wind went down late this evening and the fire quieted down. I rode to R. F. Smiths. Supervisor Al Hamel came in during the night, he had sent men up from Rouse.

June 2. "A heavy dew this morning and the wind fairly quiet all day and fire easy to control. Worked up on the side of the Peak nearly to timber line with 4 men putting out fire. Went down to where Caldwell was camped with the men from Rouse. Hamel went to Westcliffe tonight. Fire performing nicely.

June 3. "We moved camp up to Alex Hamilton's ranch. Rode over to the south end putting out fires. Saw Thomas. He says that there is still fire up high on the Peak that needs attention and that he cannot very well go tomorrow. Made arrangements with 3 men to go and told them I would come. Rode to camp, no fires spreading, just old logs and stumps burning. We have had two good days for fighting fire and it looks as though the danger is about over. We made arrangements to let all of the men except 4 riders go in the morning and Caldwell with the Westcliffe party left tonight.

June 4. "Rode over to the south end of the fire area. About 11 a.m. we had a shower which will stop the danger for a few days. Rode to Thomases to settle the phone calls and get the time of some of the men.

June 8. "Let the two fellows go and rode over on the south end and climbed up the Peak. Found two smudges. Went to G. Romero and Rubel Romero to see what they knew about the fire getting started. Rubel says that on Monday there was fire burning near where this fire started. Stayed at Dick Smiths. He says about the same as Rubel."

Although fires have occurred around the Spanish Peaks District since the forest was created only a few have occurred within the boundaries. Fortunately, most of them have been small and little damage can be said to have resulted since the disastrous fire of May 31, 1916.

The month of June, 1946, proved to be exceptionally dry and a 60 acre fire resulted on the Santa Clara drainage. This fire occurred about noon on June 26. The fire is believed to have been caused by throwing a lighted cigarette into dry needles. The case was brought to court but the evidence was all circumstantial and the case was dismissed by the Justice of the Peace in La Veta.

Timber Cutting

Timber was cut from the Spanish Peaks District before the forest was created. The cutting was done in Indian Creek and Wade Creek, probably about the time the railroad was constructed across Veta Pass. Stumps of trees three and four feet high are still visible and in places hewed ties can be seen in the woods. On other areas prop timber was cut for the coal mines and some forest fires are said to have resulted from this activity. Especially heavy cutting has been done around the East Spanish Peak. In places log cabins or traces of them can be found on the district where prop cutters worked.

One of the early sales of timber on the Spanish Peaks District made after the forest was created was to the Cuchara Lumber and Supply Company in 1911. The sale area was located at the head of Cucharas Creek, around Blue Lakes, in Sections 19, 31, 32, and 33, Township 31 South, Range 60 West. The following timber was included in this sale:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Amount, M feet B. M.</u>
Engelmann spruce	2,181
Alpine fir	744
Bristlecone pine	114

The Cuchara Lumber and Supply Company was incorporated under the laws of Colorado, having its principal place of business at La Veta. The principal stockholders are said to be men of small means. Charles A. Whitney, former Forest Ranger, was the President and General Manager.

The appraisal stated a donkey engine and endless cable would be used to snake the logs from the woods. Teams would be used to skid the logs to the cable. The cutting of the timber was to be done in the summer and the logs hauled in the winter. The mill was to be run by water power. The distance from the timber to the mill was from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

The appraisal further stated that Mexican labor can be secured in the locality of the sale at from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day with board. Teams and teamsters can be hired at \$5.00 per day.

The cost of the various operations per M feet board measure was estimated as follows:

Stumpage	\$1.50
Cutting	1.00
Brush disposal	0.25
Skidding	0.75
Hauling logs	1.00
Sawing	3.00
Surfacing	2.00
Hauling to market	5.50
Total costs	15.00
Market price	18.00
Estimated profit	3.00

This sale was never cut out. Timber to the value of \$317.92 was removed from the area before the sale was closed. Poor markets were said to be the cause of the failure of the company to complete the sale. The old original road to Blue Lakes, built about this time, is still discernible in places. This road was very steep and extended about one-half mile south of the lake into the timber.

The Spanish Peaks District has furnished prop timber for the coal mines from Walsenburg to Trinidad for many years. One of the pioneers in the prop business is Joe Ferrari. Mr. Ferrari cut props in Indian Creek and then extended his operations to Bonnett Creek in 1933. The sale in this area was completed in 1941 with the following amount of timber being removed.

Saw logs, all species
 Mine props, all species
 Mine lagging, all species

303,250 feet b. m.
 2,423,548 " " "
 18,647 " " "

The government received \$8,208.36 in stumpage for this timber. A summary of the appraisal for the Bonnett Creek sale is as follows:

Selling Price

\$30 per M L. Ft.

Cutting	\$7.00	per M Lin Ft.
Skidding	3.08	" " "
Brush disposal	.15	" " "
Supervision	.50	" " "
Depreciation	.25	" " "
Maintenance	.35	" " "
Taxes	.05	" " "
Workmen's compensation	.30	" " "
Yarding	4.10	" " "
Hauling to market	5.46	" " "
Depreciation on Improvements	1.25	" " "
Total	22.49	" " "
Margin for profit and risk 20%	4.49	" " "
Stumpage		\$26.98 Per M L Ft. 3.02

The main camp for this sale was located on Bonnett Creek, about one-half mile above the Cucharas highway. It consisted of log cabins for the Mexican labor and crude barns for the horses. The road above the camp to the sale area, approximately 3 miles, was exceedingly steep. The props were hauled from the sale area during the summer with team and wagon and in the winter with team and sled. Usually only one round trip was made per day. A camp for the prop cutters was located nearer the sale area and just below Bonnett Park in a stand of aspen.

Mr. Ferrari is at present cutting props in Dodgeton Creek with conditions similar to those previously described for Bonnett Creek.

Some of the early sales in this area were made in Indian Creek and its tributaries. A sale was made to W. E. Smith in 1936 and 508,579 feet of saw log timber and 83,059 feet of prop material was removed. The camp for this operation was built in a small park about two miles above Sulphur Springs. Portable saw mills were also set up in the woods. The camp was removed in 1942 by Roy Spangler of La Veta.

Other sales in Indian Creek were made to the La Luna Excelsior Company and to Ben Nason in 1943. Saw timber amounting to 784 M feet was cut on the former sale and in addition 161 cords of aspen was cut for the excelsior mill. The stumpage for this timber was \$3.65 per M feet for saw longs and \$1.00 per cord for aspen. The logs from both this sale and from the Nason sale were hauled to La Veta where the saw mills were located.

The appraisal for this timber was made in 1943 and the summaries for logging and milling costs are shown as a contrast to the appraisal made in 1911.

Logging Costs, per M ft. b. m.

Felling and bucking	\$3.76
Swamping and skidding	2.87
Hauling to mill	3.81
Slash disposal	0.48
Supervision	1.50
Depreciation	1.12
Maintenance	0.52
Taxes	0.10
Social Security, etc.	<u>1.14</u>
Total logging costs	15.30

Milling Costs, per M feet b. m.

Milling	\$6.78
Sawdust disposal	0.52
Insurance	0.10
Maintenance	0.52
Yarding	<u>1.73</u>
Total, mill tally	9.65
Extended by 25% overrun	2.41
Workmen's compensation, etc.	<u>0.91</u>
Total, log scale	12.97

Selling price	\$35.62
Logging and milling costs	23.27
Depreciation on Improvements	<u>1.21</u>
Total	29.48
Margin for profit and risk	3.09
Stumpage indicated	3.05

This timber was advertised for \$3.00 per M feet board measure and a bid of \$3.65 was received.

The sales in Indian Creek to the La Luna Excelsior Company and to Ben Nason included a large volume of white fir. Up to this time this species had been heavily damaged by the spruce bud worm. Although the trees were not killed outright they were considerably weakened and many have recently died in this area as a result of repeated defoliation. Approximately 450 M feet of white fir was cut by these sales which undoubtedly would have been lost within a few years after the sales were made. The infestation of the spruce bud worm accounts for the almost clear-cutting on these sales of white fir.

A number of small sales were made during the early days of the forest and many small trespass cases were investigated. The cutting of national forest timber under trespass at the present time is negligible. Some of the old cases were undoubtedly wilfull.

Planting Activities

The planting of tree seed and small trees has been done on the Spanish Peaks District, especially in the North Fork. Douglas fir seed was planted on the Cucharas in 1908 and this experiment was a failure due to drouth. Trees were planted along Cucharas Creek from the forks of the road up and some are attaining a good size. Only those planted beneath the aspen survived.

Tree seed was planted in the North Fork in 1910 by Ranger Boyd and considerable time was spent preparing the seed beds. The seed was planted in April, May, and June, consisting of Engelmann spruce and Douglas fir. Only a few seedlings were visible in September of the same year.

The planting of seedlings was also carried on in the North Fork drainage. Although the plantations have been classified as failures, nevertheless a large number of trees have survived and are beginning to show up on the open slopes. Trees were planted in 1924 and also in 1931. Ranger Paul Gilbert had charge of the planting crew in 1924 and under the date of June 19 wrote to the Forest Supervisor as follows:

"Last night a hurricane hit our camp at 11 p.m. completely destroying one pyramid tent that belonged to the road equipment, also one forest service tent, and partially destroyed a new brown canvas tent belonging to the forest service. The men employed on the planting area were all asleep when the wind hit so had no chance of saving any of the tentage. Part of the dishes, bedding and clothing were found at daylight this morning as far as three-quarters of a mile from the camp."

About 5000 Engelmann spruce seedlings were planted in the North Fork in 1935. These were planted the first week in November during freezing weather under the supervision of Forest Ranger Karl Gilbert. The top of the ground was frozen and planting was difficult. The plantation proved to be a failure after the fifth-year count.

Planting was also done in the open country north of Bear Lake in 1936, 1937 and 1938. A large percent of the trees failed to survive and the failure was attributed to drouth.

Forest Insects

The infestation of forest trees by insects is somewhat continuous although there will be a few years in succession when the infestations are heavy, and again light. Ponderosa pine appears to be the tree species most often attacked by bark beetles. To date there is no evidence of bark beetles in the Engelmann spruce stands on this district. An occasional corkbark fir tree in the high country has been killed but this is not considered serious.

The most severe damage to forest trees in the past few years is attributed to the spruce budworm and the history of this infestation is about as follows:

The spruce budworm, *Cacoecia fumiferana*, started on the Trinchera Ranch property prior to 1938. The moths crossed the divide into East Indian Creek

on the Spanish Peaks District of the San Isabel National Forest. The heaviest infestation occurred in Indian Creek although damage has been done elsewhere on this district.

The following is taken from a letter by Ranger Bryant under the date of September 17, 1938:

"The widespread infestation of Spruce budworm apparently is less virulent at present than for any time during the summer. The vicinity around La Veta Pass, which is outside the forest, was hit very hard this year and many trees have been killed by the budworm and secondary insects, primarily Ips. On the district proper, although budworm work may be found almost everywhere on white fir, no serious damage to date has resulted. The heavy rains of the past month or so have killed off many of the moths."

The following is an extract from the 1939 report by Ranger Bryant:

"As yet the spruce budworm has not seriously attacked the Douglas fir, working principally on the white fir, but it is feared that unless natural enemies of the insect keep it in control that most of the white fir and Douglas fir in the Indian Creek drainage will be killed. Scattering trees over the entire district have been attacked, but to date the only serious damage has been in the Indian Creek drainage which is all infested. Equally bad attacks occurred in the entire La Veta Pass area and on most of the Trinchera Ranch."

This report states that approximately 1,000,000 trees were infested in Indian Creek, La Veta Pass, and on the Trinchera Ranch.

The following is taken from the report of Ranger Bryant of 1941 in regard to Indian Creek:

"The entire drainage is now seriously infested with the spruce budworm. Rather than diminishing in the last two years the insects seem to have increased in numbers. It is now difficult to find any stand that is not more or less infested. Moreover, the insect is rapidly traveling south over the district.

"With each succeeding year the trees are becoming weaker, and it is believed that if the damage continues for another two years the kill on the drainage may amount to as much as 80 percent of the merchantable trees. Poles, reproduction, and seedlings are as well attacked so that the problem of obtaining a stand provided the kill is as expected, will be a serious one."

From 1942 to 1946 the infestation continued to occur in Indian Creek and other scattered areas on the district. The infestation in the former area in 1946, however, was negligible, being more severe in Dodgeton and Spring Creeks. Mr. W. D. Buchanan of the Bureau of Entomology stated that 70 percent of the larvae were parasitized in 1945 in the Indian Creek area, accounting for the small number to be found there in 1946.

During June and July of 1946 Mr. Buchanan collected the larvae of the spruce budworm. In all, 62,000 were collected from which 11,500 parasites

of the type desired were developed. Other parasites were also present which occur in the east. These parasites were sent by air mail to P. B. Dowden of Lake Clear Junction, New York, and liberated in the vicinity of Lake Placid. The infestations in the East and in Canada are more severe than in the Rocky Mountain region and it is hoped that the parasite being introduced will in time check the spread of the budworm.

In 1947 Mr. Buchanan again visited this district but failed to find sufficient caterpillars to warrant collecting them for parasites. From observations made the past few years it is believed the infestation of the spruce budworm has declined to the extent it can no longer be considered in the epidemic stage.

Only a few caterpillars of the spruce budworm were found in 1948 and none in 1949. In all probability the parasites of the budworm account for its decline.

In the years following the attacks (1949-1955) considerable white fir, mature and immature, died on the Spanish Peaks District in the Middle Creek and Indian Creek drainages. An examination of a number of the trees reveals that a bark beetle (probably Scolytus sp.) followed the spruce budworm which had severely weakened many trees by partial defoliation.

Great Basin Tent Caterpillar (Melacosoma fragilis Stretch). Aspen has been attacked more or less by leaf insects for a number of years. In a letter by Ranger Ralph Bryant, September 17, 1938, the following statement is made:

"There is a small patch of aspen near the top of Cucharas Pass which has been attacked either by a small leaf-cutting insect or some fungus growth. The infected leaves appear mottled with brownish spots which eventually cover the entire leaf and kill it. This is the only area noticed so infected and has not grown in size during the past year. Although complete defoliation occurs in some cases, the damage occurs very slowly and few of the trees have been killed."

The Great Basin tent caterpillar was prevalent in the La Veta Pass area during most of the 40's. During this time complete defoliation of the aspen occurred and the caterpillars were so deep on the highway at times that driving became hazardous.

In a report made September 4, 1949, by the Spanish Peaks ranger the following statement was made:

"A severe infestation of caterpillars on La Veta Pass denuded the aspen stands but the trees leafed out again later in the season. Small infestations were observed on the district but only a few trees in any locality were attacked."

In 1952 W. F. McCambridge, Entomologist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, made the following report:

"On May 24, 1952 the Great Basin tent caterpillar situation on La Veta Pass was examined. . . The aspen leaves had not broken out of the bud stage at this time. However, numerous egg masses and small tents

could be found along the entire length of the Pass. The infestation is heavy and will probably cause considerable defoliation this summer.

The tent caterpillar spread from the La Veta Pass area in the late forties to the north covering all of the aspen along the west slope of the Sangre de Cristo mountains to the Sand Dunes. On the eastern slope the insect spread from Pass Creek around to the Huerfano River and thence north to Mosca Pass. In 1952 and 1953 complete defoliation of aspen occurred in these areas and along the Huerfano River the infestation spread to the cottonwood at lower elevations.

However, in 1954 the infestation north of La Veta Pass began to decline with very few insects observed in the Huerfano drainage. A light infestation also occurred in the La Veta Pass and Pass Creek areas although it was still heavy in the aspen types on Mosca Pass. During this time no infestation occurred in the Muddy drainages in the northern part of the district.

In the early 1950's the tent caterpillar began to spread to the south covering all of the aspen types along the west side of the range. In 1951 the infestation was heavy in Middle Creek and pushed southward through McCarthy Park on the Sangre de Cristo Grant and thence into the Spanish Peaks district in Bonnett and Dodgeton Creeks. From here the infestation spread south and east covering most of the Cucharas and North Fork drainages. During 1953 and 1954 the infestation was especially heavy in this area.

Due to the heavy infestation which occurred in 1954 in the Cucharas drainage the people of the area became alarmed that the water would be polluted and the aspen trees would be killed. In addition, the recreation area along Cucharas Creek was practically unusable during the month of June as a result of the caterpillars.

A number of letters were written to Congressman Chenoweth during the summer of 1954 requesting aid in the control of the tent caterpillar and numerous requests were made to the Forest Service for the same purpose. However, the infestation was practically over at the time the requests were made but the ground work was laid for control the following year if sufficient funds should become available.

A field examination made by Walter D. Ray, Jr. of the office of the Colorado State Forester in conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service in December of 1954 showed about 90,000 acres of aspen types on and adjacent to the Spanish Peaks District were more or less defoliated by the tent caterpillar the previous summer.

During the spring of 1955 efforts were made by the U.S. Forest Service and the State Forest Service to obtain funds from various sources to control the caterpillar in the headwaters of the Cucharas Creek drainage, especially along the stream and recreation areas. Sufficient funds were secured to spray a limited area and these funds were obtained from the following sources:

City of Walsenburg	\$350.00
Huerfano County	350.00
Town of La Veta	200.00
Private contributions	210.00

State of Colorado	1200.00
Pest Control funds (FS)	1290.00
Total	3600.00

Control work was started at 4 a.m. on June 16 and the area of approximately 1600 acres was covered by June 18. Flying was done over the area only a few hours each morning while the air was still. After 9 a.m. heavy winds occurred which prevented effective spraying.

The area covered consisted of a narrow strip along both sides of Highway 111 from the forest boundary in White Creek to Cucharas Pass, the lower portion of Baker Creek, and an area along the Blue Lakes road for a distance of about two miles from Highway 111.

Spraying was done by Norman Kramer of Alamosa, Colorado. The insecticide used consisted of a solution of DDT in fuel oil. Approximately 1600 gallons of the insecticide was used at a cost of about \$1.50 per gallon.

The spraying was effective with very few caterpillars being found on the areas that were sprayed. In contrast, complete defoliation occurred on areas outside of the strip that had been sprayed.

During 1955 tents of the caterpillar were found on aspen over most of the aspen types on the Spanish Peaks section of the district and on the Greenhorn section. To date no infestations have been observed on the Greenhorn section of the district.

Ponderosa Pine Bark Beetle (Dendroctonus ponderosa Hopk.). Prior to 1946 only a few trees were observed that had been attacked by the ponderosa pine bark beetle. A gradual increase was observed from 1946 through 1950 when an estimated 640 trees were reported to be infested on National Forest and private lands. The infestations occurred in clumps of 2 to 40 trees.

During June and July of 1951 funds were made available for control work and 675 trees were sprayed. The estimated volume of the trees sprayed is 87,255 board feet. The trees were sprayed with a mixture of 1 part orthochlorobenzene with 6 parts of No. 2 fuel oil.

Some treatment was done in 1952 under the supervision of W. F. Lonsinger, Assistant Ranger on the San Carlos District. Due to the lateness of the season little was accomplished with only 79 trees being sprayed. Spraying was confined to the Echo Creek drainage.

Treatment was started in 1953 on the district on June 15 under the direction of W. F. Lonsinger. Approximately 247 trees were treated between June 15 and June 25. In one area approximately 100 trees were found in a group.

A more intensive control project was conducted in 1954. During the period from May 21 to June 29 approximately 1200 trees were sprayed, of which 460 were on the Muddy drainage which was formerly a part of the Huerfano District. From July 1 to July 23 an additional 1000 trees were sprayed on the Spanish Peaks portion of the district.

In 1955 only a few scattered trees were observed on the Spanish Peaks section of the district and spraying was not considered necessary.

The ponderosa pine bark beetle began to increase in numbers on the Huerfano District about the same time as on the Spanish Peaks. In 1949 only 85 trees were reported while in 1950 the number reported was 785, mostly in the Black Mountain area.

Spraying was done in 1951 on this district under the supervision of Ranger Van Doren. Approximately 1250 trees were sprayed during June and July. No control work was attempted in 1952 due to insufficient funds for this purpose.

Control work was done in 1953 between May 25 and June 12. Approximately 435 trees were sprayed over a wide area. Except for Muddy Creek no work was done on this section during 1954.

Control work was concentrated on the Huerfano section of the district in 1955. Instead of orthochlorobenzene with oil a mixture of Ethylene dibromide and water was used this year. Approximately 1350 trees were sprayed during the period June 13 to July 29, mostly in the Williams, Reveille, Custer and Cisneros Creek drainages along the forest boundary. The trees were scattered over a wide area and pack horses were used to pack the insecticide to them. The work was under the supervision of Elden Falk.

Range Management

The grazing of sheep and cattle on the Spanish Peaks District was done prior to the creation of the forest in 1907. Since then grazing has been allowed under the permit system. Reliable figures are not available for the early grazing on this district. However, Assistant Forest Ranger James W. Thompson, in a letter to the Forest Supervisor, October 30, 1907, shows 2055 head of cattle and 6 head of horses grazed on the national forest in Las Animas County during that summer.

Regardless of numbers the ranges have been consistently overstocked. It is difficult to visualize the condition of the ranges forty years or more ago in comparison to present-day conditions. The many years of drouth, coupled with heavy grazing, depleted the ranges considerably. Repeated reductions have been made in the past 20 years. In 1932 the permitted number of cattle was 1534 head while in 1947 there were 817 head with non use for 191 more, or a total of 1008 head of cattle. In addition, the seasons have been shortened from 4 and 5 months to 2 and 3 months. The animal-months use at present would show a decrease of at least half the amount in the early 1930's.

In 1939, on the North Fork, 429 head of cattle were grazed from the season June 16 to October 15, or a total of 1716 animal months. With a twenty percent reduction program carried on between 1940 and 1943, and the dropping out of one of the permittees, the number of cattle permitted on this unit was 322 head for the season June 16 to September 15, or 966 animal months. The North Fork showed exceptionally good progress in 1947 due to riding by the permittees and an unusual amount of rainfall.

The Lake Allotment was also reduced twenty percent between 1942 and 1945. In 1941 there were 452 head of cattle for the season June 16 to September 15, or 1356 animal months. In 1947 the permitted number was 352 head of cattle for the season June 16 to September 15, or 1056 animal months.

The open range on the Indian Creek Allotment was closed entirely during 1942 and 1943. In 1940 the permitted number was 189 head of cattle for the season June 1 to October 15. When the allotment was reopened in 1944, the season was cut to July 16 to September 15, or two months. During the period from 1944 to 1947 only a portion of the permittees ran stock on the allotment. The reduced number of stock and shortened grazing season has made a remarkable change in this allotment. Over most of the area the grass has a good growth by July 16 and is less susceptible to damage by grazing.

With the exception of the Apishapa subdivision, the Peaks Allotment has been closed to grazing since 1945 and will continue through 1949. In 1932 this allotment carried 378 head of cattle for the period June 1 to October 15, or a total of 1701 animal months. In 1944 the permitted use was 179 head of cattle for the season June 16 to September 30, or a total of 626 animal months. The grazing survey for this district allows 377 animal-months use on this allotment.

Accurate figures on the number of cattle grazed on the district are not available prior to 1930. Also prior to 1935 the four cattle allotments were divided into smaller units. The figures for the smaller units were combined

for the period 1930 to 1934 to correspond with the revised units. The information on permitted use is not all available for the smaller units prior to 1935. However, it is possible to show some statistics which have a bearing on the amount of use between 1925 and 1930.

Indian Creek. The boundaries of this allotment have not been changed since 1925. The management plan for 1930 shows a season from June 1 to October 15. The capacity of the range is given as 145 head of cattle.

Lakes Unit. This unit was formerly subdivided as follows:

Chaparral C&H. Includes Cottonwood, Barnes, Wade, Lower Chaparral, and White Creeks.

Wahatoya C&H. Includes Wahatoya, Wall, and Echo Creeks.

Lakes C&H. Includes all the drainage of Cucharas Creek from Raspberry Mountain south to the North Fork divide and west of the Cucharas-Stonewall Highway. These subunits are Bend, Dodgeton, Bonnett, Baker, and Cucharas Creeks.

The following table shows the estimated capacities for these units with seasons, prior to 1930 and the permitted use during the 1947 grazing season:

Sub-Unit	Use and Seasons			
	Prior to 1930		1947 Season	
	Capacity	Season	Capacity	Season
Chaparral	170	6/16-9/30	147	6/16-9/15
Wahatoya	40	6/1-10/31	32	6/16-9/15
Lake Division ^o	354	6/16-10/15	173	6/16-9/15
Total	564		352	

^oThe area south of the Blue Lake Road was grazed by sheep at this time. The estimated capacity was 157 head of sheep from July 1 to September 15. The capacity for this unit includes the sheep on a 3 to 1 basis.

North Fork. The boundaries of the North Fork Allotment have not been changed. This allotment takes in all the drainages of the North Fork within the forest boundaries, including Coal, Murray, Wildcat, Bear, and Guajatoyan Creeks. The amount of use and seasons prior to 1930 and the permitted use for the 1947 season is as follows:

Prior to 1930. 452 head from June 16 to October 15.

1947 Season. 322 head from June 16 to September 15.

This shows the animal-months use prior to 1930 to be almost double the use in 1947.

Peaks C&H. The following sub-units were combined to make up the present Peaks Allotment in 1935.

Apishapa. All the drainage of the north and south forks of Apishapa Creek.

West Peak. All the drainage of South Trujillo Creek.

East Peak. All the drainages of the South Santa Clara and North Trujillo Creeks.

Turkey. All the drainages of Bear, Story, and North Santa Clara Creeks.

The following table shows the estimated capacities for these units with seasons prior to 1930 and the permitted use during the 1944 season. (Note: this allotment with the exception of the Apishapa sub-unit was closed to grazing during 1945, 1946, and 1947 through an agreement with the permittees using the allotment).

Sub-Unit	Use and Seasons			
	Prior to 1930		1944 Season	
	Capacity	Season	Capacity	Season
Apishapa	150	6/1-10/31	50	6/16-9/30
West Peak	166	6/1-10/15	75	6/16-9/30
East Peak	78	6/1-10/15	44	6/16-9/30
Turkey	54	6/1-10/15	20	6/16-9/30
Total	448		189	

Trinchera S&G. The Trinchera Sheep and Goat Allotment covers practically the same area now as it did prior to 1930. The estimated capacity in 1930 was 500 head of sheep from July 1 to September 15.

White Creek S&G. Prior to 1929 the White Creek subunit of the present Lakes C&G allotment was used by sheep. The estimated capacity was 300 head for the season June 1 to September 15.

Lakes S&G. This allotment was located on the Cucharas drainage south of the Blue Lake road. The estimated capacity was 157 head of sheep from July 1 to September 15.

Range Closures. The high range above timber line south of Trinchera Peak is closed to grazing through an agreement with the City of Trinidad which receives its water supply from the North Fork. Normally this area would be grazed by sheep. Through the same agreement with the city cattle are allowed to graze in restricted areas in this drainage.

History of Range Reductions. In 1948 a study was made of the grazing allotments on the Spanish Peaks District and it was apparent that the number of permitted livestock far exceeded the actual capacities of the ranges. Since drastic reductions were necessary the permittees were either contacted by the ranger or the ranges were ridden with them to determine the action that should be taken.

The proposed reductions came at a time when considerable newspaper publicity was given to the Forest Service-Stockmen controversy. A meeting was called by the cattlemen on the Spanish Peaks District in the fall of 1949 to discuss the reductions before all of the permittees had been contacted by the ranger. Some bitterness against the Forest Service was expressed at the meeting but this subsided somewhat after the ranger informed the cattlemen that

the reductions were not being made arbitrarily but on an allotment basis in accordance with the condition of the range. Although some of the cattlemen retained their bitter feeling most of the adjustments were made on a friendly basis with little or no adverse publicity.

In some instances reductions were made by a change in seasons, in others by reducing numbers and season, and in a number of instances by complete closure of the range. In some cases reductions were made by forfeiture of waivers of grazing privileges during transfer of ranch ownership and in others by forfeiture of non-use preferences. The former were the result of the failure of the permittee to waive grazing privileges and not an arbitrary action of the Forest Service.

At the end of the reduction program the allotments of 13 cattlemen out of 22 were completely closed. The permits of the other 9 were reduced in numbers from 333 to 211 head and in most instances the grazing seasons were also shortened. The reduction in number of permitted stock is reflected in the table on pages 77 and 78.

Status of Allotments. At the close of the 1955 grazing season the allotments were as follows:

Name of Allotment	Number	Season	Number	Season
INDIAN CREEK C&H	58	7/16-9/15	4	-
Magnino S. U.	-	-	7	6/1-10/15
Cassai S. U.	-	-	5	6/16-9/30
LAKES C&H				
Bend Creek SA	8	6/16-9/15	-	-
Dodgeton Creek SA	16	6/16-9/15	-	-
Baker SA	Closed		-	-
Cucharas SA	Closed		-	-
Bonnnett Park SA			9	6/16-9/15
Goemmer SU (Baker Cr.)	-	-	8	6/16-9/15
Goemmer Su (White Cr.)	-	-	18	6/16-9/15
Cassai SU (Baker Cr.)	-	-	5	6/16-9/15
Hopson SU (White Cr.)	-	-	13	6/16-9/15
White Creek SA	12	7/1-9/15	-	-
Chaparral SA	40	7/1-9/15	-	-
Wahatoya SA	10	7/1-9/15	-	-
Wade Cr. SA	Closed		-	-
NORTH FORK C&H		Closed		
Peaks C&H				
Santa Clara SA	Closed		-	-
Trujillo Cr. SA	Closed		-	-
Apishapa SA	20	7/1-9/15	-	-
TRINCHERA S&G	500	7/25-9/10	-	-

At the beginning of the 1956 season several of the allotments were changed in name. The individual sub-allotments, however, retained their original names and for future reference these are shown as follows:

Name of Allotment	Open Range		Special Uses	
	Number	Season	Number	Season
INDIAN CREEK C&H	58	7/16-9/15	-	-
Magnino SU	-	-	7	6/1-10/15
Cassai SU	-	-	5	6/16-9/30
LAKES C&H				
Goemmer SU	-	-	8	6/16-9/15
Cassai SU	-	-	5	6/16-9/15
Dodgeton SA	16	6/16-9/15	-	-
Bonnett Park SA	-	-	27	6/16-7/15
Bend SA	8	6/16-9/15	-	-
Texas Cr. SA <u>1/</u>	Closed			
Baker SA	Closed			
Cucharas SA <u>2/</u>	Closed			
WEST PEAK C&H				
White Cr. SA	12	7/1 -9/15	-	-
Hopson SU	-	-	13	6/16-9/15
Goemmer SU (White Cr.)	-	-	18	6/16-9/15
Chaparral SA	40	7/1 -9/15	-	-
Wade Cr. SA	Closed			
EAST PEAK C&H				
Wahatoya SA	10	7/1 -9/15	-	-
Santa Clara SA	Closed			
APISHAPA C&H				
Apishapa SA	20	7/1 -9/15	-	-
Trujillo SA	Closed			
NORTH FORK C&H	Closed			
TRINCHERA S&G	500	7/25-9/10	-	-

1/ Formerly Cucharas SA.

2/ Recreation area along Blue Lakes Road.

Cattle and Sheep Allotments

Permitted Use

Year :	Cattle						Sheep	
	Indian Creek	Lakes	North Fork	Peaks	Total	Trinchera		
	: Permitted	: Permitted	: Permitted	: Permitted	: Permitted	: Permitted	Non-use	: Permitted
1930 :	155	467	452	314	1388			
1931 :	151	465	473	338	1424			
1932 :	163	513	480	378	1534			
1933 :	163	513	518	318	1512			
1934 :	158	507	528	318	1511			500
1935 :	168	475	445	314	1402			500
1936 :	149	476	453	279	1357			500
1937 :	158	427	453	247	1285			500
1938 :	156	453	453	245	1311			500
1939 :	155	449	453	234	1294			500
1940 :	189	452	429	174	1244	60		500
1941 :	130	452	407	189	1178	45		500
1942 :	20	431	383	199	1033	145		500
1943 :	18	410	322	179	927	155		500
1944 :	100	392	322	179	993	73		500
1945 :	151	378	322	50	901	151		500
1946 :	116	378	322	50	866	176		500
1947 :	93	352	322	50	817	191		500

CATTLE AND SHEEP ALLOTMENTS

Permitted Use

Year	Cattle										Sheep	
	Indian Creek	Lakes	North Fork	Peaks	Total	Trinchera	Permitted Non Use	Permitted Non Use	Permitted Non Use	Permitted Non Use	Permitted Non Use	Permitted Non Use
1948	110	35	322	30	322	30	322	30	322	30	322	30
1949	105	1/	322	30	262	60	262	60	262	60	262	60
1950	110		210		312	10	312	10	312	10	312	10
1951	70	3/	210		0	4/	0	4/	0	4/	0	4/
1952	70		127		0		0		0		0	
1953	70		86	5/	86		86		86		86	
1954	70		86		0		0		0		0	
1955	70		86		0		0		0		0	

- 1/ Non-use canceled.
2/ Season July 26 to September 10 starting with 1949 to present date (1955).
3/ Includes 12 head in special use pastures.
4/ Closed for range protection.
5/ Does not include 53 head in special use pastures.

The following account of heavy grazing in this area appeared in the La Veta Advertiser, October 27, 1950:

"Some 30,000 sheep passed thru here Saturday. They had been pastured on the J. W. Vernon place."

(The Vernon place referred to is located at the head of White Creek and is now owned by Goemmer Brothers).

Wildlife Management

Although the Spanish Peaks District contains only a relatively small acreage in this section of Colorado it is of rugged topography, covered with timber, brush and grassland. It ranges in elevation from approximately 8,000 feet to 13,623 feet on the top of the West Spanish Peak. With this range in elevation it supports a varied wildlife population.

Among the big-game animals are elk, deer, and bear. The predatory animals include coyotes, mountain lion and wildcat. Furbearing animals are beaver, fox, muskrat and weasel. The smaller animals include the cottontail and snowshoe rabbits, porcupines, squirrels and chipmunks. Game birds are turkey, grouse, ptarmigan and band-tailed pigeon. The streams support various species of trout, and suckers are found in Bear Lake.

The records show a relatively small population of game and furbearing animals on the district prior to 1921. The Spanish Peaks Game Refuge, its boundaries coinciding with the Spanish Peaks Ranger District, was established on April 7, 1921. Since then there has been a steady increase in some of the game and fur-bearing animals while others can only be said to be holding their own. The number of deer reported on the district in 1921 was 75 head while in 1940 there was estimated to be 900 head. Ranger Bryant estimates 250 deer were killed on the district in 1940, the year the game refuge was first opened to hunting. This number probably includes the surrounding country also. Since 1940 around 40 to 60 deer have been killed annually on the district. There does not appear to be any appreciable reduction in numbers due to hunting. The estimated population of deer on the district in 1946 was 300 head. The 900 head reported in 1940 was based on the kill for that year and this figure is questionable.

Elk were first reported on the district in 1922 when three head were observed. There has been no steady increase of this animal with only 30 head being reported for 1946. Elk are not seen very frequently. They range in the vicinity of Bonnett Park and along the Trinchera Ranch boundary in East Indian Creek. The elk from this area use the Trinchera Ranch for winter grazing. With an open season on the Trinchera Ranch on elk it is possible a number will migrate to the east side of the divide where the hunting of this animal is not permitted. One large bull elk was seen in the large park at the headwaters of the south branch of Spring Creek in 1947. One was seen by Pete Cusimano in 1946 on the Apishapa just above his ranch. Others have been reported between the Peaks and in Echo Creek.

Black and brown bear are not plentiful in this area. In 1921 only 25 bear were reported for the district while in 1946 there were 30 head reported. For many years bear were considered a predatory animal and not protected by state laws. Although this animal is now protected it does not seem to be increasing to any appreciable extent. The habit of the bear in feeding on the dead carcasses of cattle have given it a bad reputation among cattlemen. If a bear is seen feeding on a carcass he is immediately trapped as a killer.

In 1945 Goemmer Brothers reported that three registered cows had been killed by bear in their pasture on Upper White Creek. Bryan Denton, State Trapper, set out traps and caught two large bear from this area. A number

of bear were also trapped in 1946 along the Cucharas. During the fall the bear came down into the orchards along the creek and reportedly did considerable damage to the apple trees. Two were seen in the North Fork in the fall of 1946 by Frank Parsons and Ranger Lewis A. Cummings, both of which were feeding on the carcasses of cows about a mile or so apart. Frank Parsons reported that one of the bear was later trapped.

During 1947 one bear was trapped on the Cusimano ranch on the Apishapa while two were taken from Drury's old place on Bear Creek south of Cucharas Pass. Several bear are killed each year by hunters during the deer season. The drain from these sources seems sufficient to keep the bear from increasing in appreciable numbers.

Coyotes vary in numbers but are not nearly as plentiful as during the early '20's when three to four hundred were reported. Trapping was done for a number of years and lately poison has been put out. This has been effective in keeping the population of the coyote to a low figure.

Mountain lion are reported from time to time as being seen on the district. Bryan Denton has succeeded in keeping this animal to a low number but it is probable one or more range in this area at all times. Denton estimates one mountain lion will average killing one deer per week throughout the year.

Beaver have increased to some extent. In places they have been trapped and moved to other locations. Most of the creeks with available feed have one or more beaver dams. In the past poachers have succeeded in clearing the beaver out of some of the streams. This is true of White Creek. With the beaver gone the dams soon wash away with high water and these can be seen on a number of the streams. In 1925 there were 125 beaver reported on the district while in 1945 the number was estimated to be 228.

Cottonwood rabbits are not plentiful on the forest due to the higher elevations over that of the surrounding foothills. However, the snowshoe rabbits appear to be increasing in the spruce country from Bonnett Park south to the North Fork.

Turkeys do not seem to be on the increase. Larger flocks are reported to have been seen ten to fifteen years ago than are seen today. The apparent failure to increase can be attributed to a number of causes, such as poor spring conditions when the eggs are laid and hatched, predatory animals and birds, poachers, lack of food, and severe winter conditions. The population was considerably reduced in November of 1946 after the storm had put down four to five feet of snow over the area surrounding the peaks. Many birds were reported to have been frozen while others were badly injured and did not survive. Several birds were trapped in the Indian Creek area in 1942 by the state and transplanted to other locations.

Although grouse have ranged in this area from time immemorial they do not seem to increase in numbers. Most of them are seen at the higher elevations although some frequent the oak brush type in the foothills. The small number of this game bird cannot be attributed to poachers considering the localities in which they are found.

The band-tailed pigeon is a migratory bird and frequently reported to be seen in small numbers in this locality during the summer months. In the

summer the birds are seen in the high spruce and lodgepole pine country, while in the spring and fall they are reported in the grain fields.

The streams and lakes on this district depend on artificial stocking. This is done yearly and with the large number of fishermen the streams at no time support a large number of fish.

Roads

Settlement in the La Veta area started in the 1850's and rapidly expanded at the close of the Civil War. The settlers spread out towards the mountains with the result that numerous wagon roads, now scarcely visible, were built to the outlying ranches. The old maps dated as far back as 1900 show a road extending from upper Wahatoya Creek to Bear Creek and from here across to the Santa Clara, across the divide to Trujillo Creek and thence to the Apishapa. Some of this road is still in existence but there is no automobile road within the forest boundary connecting Bear Creek with the Santa Clara or the latter with Trujillo Creek. Evidence of other roads can be found connecting with the many homesteads of the time.

Perhaps the first road across the mountains from La Veta to Stonewall was constructed by Hiram Vasquez in 1865 and paid for by Henry Daigre. Oxen were used to construct the road, which, in many places, is still visible, following the same route as the present road across Cucharas Pass.

Another important road, probably built in the '80's, was on Wahatoya Creek and extended to the Bulls Eye Mine. This road is very steep in places and was somewhat repaired in 1946 by Albert Parks of La Veta, who is interested in the mining claims of this area.

There is also an old road in Indian Creek and Middle Creek, both of which crossed the mountains to the Rio Grande side. A telephone line was constructed along the Indian Creek road, probably in the early 1900's. A permit was issued to the Colorado Telephone Company on April 10, 1908 by the Forest Service for the right of way. Both the Indian Creek and Middle Creek roads were badly washed during the flood of 1947. It is no longer possible to cross over the mountains onto the Sangre de Cristo Grant over these old roads with modern vehicles. However, after the flood in June, 1947, which stranded a group of Boy Scouts, the Trinchera Ranch Manager, Mr. Hall, connected the logging road constructed by the La Luna Excelsior Company in 1944, with the road across the Grant, making it possible to remove all of the equipment and stranded automobiles.

Another old road extended up the North Fork as far as Parson's Cow Camp and is still used by Frank Parsons to haul salt, with team and wagon, although it is badly washed in places. This old road served the settlers in this area and also the old Baca Mine.

An old road extended up the South Fork of Trujillo Creek about a half mile inside the forest boundary. There are two cabins located here, one of which is called the "Government Cabin." The origin of this cabin is not known but was used by Ranger Boyd and his assistants while working on trails in this area.

This road was probably used during the early days when prospecting was going on in this area. From the end of the road there is a trail going up the east side of the West Peak to a group of mining claims.

There is also an old road up Echo Creek extending at least a couple of miles inside the forest boundary. This road is badly washed and impassable except for horse and foot travel.

The principal roads which have been constructed on the district since the forest was created are the following:

1. Cucharas-Stonewall, Highway 111.
2. Blue Lakes Truck Trail.
3. Apishapa Truck Trail.

The Cucharas-Stonewall Highway was completed about 1922 although some work was done at a later date. The County Commissioners of Huerfano County (J. T. Trujillo, W. H. Hamilton, and Charles E. Furphy), under the date of August 1, 1919, filed an application with the Regional Forester to reconstruct the Cucharas-Stonewall Highway. The authority for this was Section 8, Federal Aid Road Act, approved July 11, 1916. The estimated cost of the road was \$2000 per mile. A part of this application is as follows:

"This application relates to an existing road extending from La Veta to Trinidad. Las Animas County in cooperation with the State has just completed a standard auto highway from Trinidad to the Forest Boundary on the south side of Cucharas Pass. The present roadway over Cucharas Pass is very narrow and has excessive grades as high as 18%, while the road from the foot of the pass to La Veta is fairly good, only needing bridges and grading up and widening in places.

"The opening up of the Cucharas-Stonewall would make a very desirable circle trip for auto tourists. . . and would also open up the recreation area which is to be developed on the head of the Cucharas for Trinidad, Walsenburg, La Veta and Aguilar."

The Blue Lake road was surveyed in the spring of 1920, at least as far as the old Blue Lake Camp. Ranger Eugene Vories mentions in his diary on May 27, 1920, that he accompanied James L. Brownlee and Arthur Carhart to start surveying the Blue Lake Road. A week or ten days was spent on this work. Work was done by the Forest Service on this road from 1920 to 1923. The commissioners of Huerfano County agreed to contribute \$3500 towards the construction of this road.

The upper portion of the Blue Lakes road beyond the old Blue Lakes Camp was constructed between 1929 and 1931. The first contractor, E. M. Harris and Sons, was unable to complete the project and the contract was later given to N. I. Jacobson, who finished the construction in September 1931. The American Surety Company was required to pay \$612.03 towards the construction of the road which was the difference between the original bid and that of the contractor who finished the job. The original contract was for \$7990.57 for the 1.75 miles to be built.

The Apishapa road was completed in 1934. This road extends from Cucharas Pass to Apishapa Pass and thence to Aguilar and was constructed in cooperation with Huerfano and Las Animas Counties.

This road is still referred to locally as Cordova Pass and is so shown on most road maps and signs. The road was given this name in honor of Mr. J. J. Cordova, County Commissioner. Mr. Cordova was active in the construction of this road in Las Animas County. In honor of Mr. Cordova a memorial status was constructed on the pass by Las Animas County in June 1935 without the knowledge of the Forest Service. A picnic was held on the pass on June 23, 1935 at which time the memorial was dedicated. In 1937 the county constructed ten toilets on the pass, possibly with W. P. A. assistance, also without the consent of the Forest Service.

The monument and toilets were removed in 1938 by a C. C. C. crew under the direction of the Forest Service due to the failure of Las Animas County to do so.

Because of the objection of local people to the name Cordova Pass it was changed to "Apishapa Pass," being located at the head of the Apishapa River. The road goes through a stone wall on the Las Animas side through an archway. The arch was completed in 1940.

There are several roads on the district which are not built to Forest Service standards. The road up Bonnett Creek was constructed to remove props from this area. This road is very steep although it is still passable to trucks. This road connects with an old logging road on the Trinchera Ranch whereby it is possible to drive to the headquarters of the grant.

Another road extends from Spring Creek into the head of Dodgeton Creek over which mine props are hauled. The extension into Dodgeton Creek was built by Joe Ferrari in the fall of 1944. The road up Baker Creek is shown on the old maps and was constructed in the early days to the Baker ranch on this creek. There is also a road extending up Barnes Canyon over to Wade Creek. A portion of this road was built before the forest was created to haul ties out of Wade Creek. An old building can still be seen at the end of the road which was used by the tie cutters.

Trails

The creation of the Las Animas forest led to the construction of trails throughout the mountains to facilitate their administration and protection. The changes in the transportation system are perhaps most graphically revealed by the early maps. Each edition shows changes which record the progress of trail construction and the abandonment of roads. Some of the old horse and buggy roads have reverted to trails, not being suitable to present vehicular transportation.

In addition to maps there are records of early trail construction to be found in the diaries of the rangers. Although a crude trail existed between the peaks for many years the present trail was not constructed for several years after the forest was created. This trail was undoubtedly used by the early miners and prospect holes are found along its length. Assistant Ranger Thompson mentions working on this trail in his diary in 1907. Ranger Boyd mentions working on the trail in 1911 and for several years thereafter. It was worked on as late as 1915. Before the construction of the Apishapa Truck Trail in 1934 this was an important trail across the mountains.

Another route from La Veta to the Peaks was the Black Hills trail, starting at the base of a high stone wall in Echo Creek and extending into Wade Creek before coming out near Apishapa Pass. Work was done on this trail between 1913 and 1915.

The trail from Chaparral Creek was constructed at a later date. It is not shown on the 1920 edition of the forest base map.

That portion of the Peaks Trail from Trujillo to Santa Clara Creek was constructed about the same time as the trail between the Peaks. Ranger Boyd mentions camping at the old government cabin while working on these trails. The Chaparral trail is now combined with the latter under the name of the Peaks Trail.

Another trail is shown on the base map of 1920 extending from the North Fork to Bonnett Park, crossing the headwaters of the Cucharas by Blue and Bear Lakes and then into Baker, Dodgeton and Bonnett Creeks. From Bonnett Park the old road through the Trinchera Ranch to the head of Indian Creek was used as a trail. The closing of the ranch to public crossing necessitated a trail on Government land in the 1920's.

Ranger Vories mentions the construction of the trail in Wildcat Creek in his diary for 1919.

The old maps show a trail on the east side of Raspberry Mountain but this has not been used for many years for administrative purposes. This is probably the Horse Thief Trail mentioned in Ranger Boyd's diary of August 4, 1915.

Another trail is shown on the map of 1920 extending from Cucharas Pass to the North Fork. This route is still passable although there is no plainly marked trail.

The Indian trail from the North Fork to Indian Creek is connected with the Cucharas highway by Bonnett, Dodgeton, and Baker Creek trails. These trails are now extensively used by tourists from Cucharas Camps.

Recreation Activities

Recreation was early recognized as one of the principal activities of the Spanish Peaks District. Camping, picnicking, and mountain climbing have long been major attractions. Fishing and hunting also provides sport for a large number of people, both local residents and those from other states.

Under the Act of June 7, 1910 (36 Stat. 459) the Town of La Veta was granted Section 30, Township 31 South, Range 69 West, Sixth Principal Meridian, for park purposes. This section includes Blue Lake and Bear Lake, at that time relatively inaccessible, and served by an old wagon road with excessively steep grades. A patent was issued May 29, 1918 to the town for the land.

However, the Town of La Veta was never able to develop the area and in 1919 made arrangements to return title to the land back to the United States. After considerable correspondence a quit claim deed was given to the United States by the Town of La Veta on April 30, 1924. This deed was accepted by the General Land Office in Washington on January 27, 1925, and the land reverted to national forest status.

The recreation activities of this area in the early '20's centered around the Spanish Peaks Mountain Playground Association. This association had members in Trinidad, Walsenburg, Aguilar, and La Veta and directly connected with the commercial clubs of the various towns. This association was interested in the development of roads within the Spanish Peaks District and other recreational features. It maintained a camp below Blue Lakes near the upper bridge along this road. However, with the construction of the road to Blue Lake and superior developments at Cucharas Camps the camp was abandoned and all of the buildings removed. This association has not been active for a number of years.

The Cucharas Camps is located in Section 1, Township 31 South, Range 69 West, within the boundaries of the Spanish Peaks District. This camp was started by George Mayes, a Texas man, who first conceived the idea while traveling through the country in a covered wagon on his honeymoon. He returned later and started the camp in 1906.

The following report of this camp is taken from the "Plans for Recreational Development, Las Animas Recreational Unit, 1932."

"The Cucharas Camps, located on land owned by C. W. Powell, is a rather pretentious layout. Situated on the Cucharas-Stonewall road, it boasts of a combined store and postoffice, a filling station, and a large number of well-constructed and pleasant appearing cabins, many of which are owned by persons who visit this region yearly. The camp is operated by C. W. Powell and the rate is \$2.00 per day for a cabin. If meals are desired, they can be secured at the dining hall operated by Mr. Powell. Saddle horses are available for \$2.00 per day."

A. E. Jameson acquired this property in the late '30's and he and Mrs. Jameson managed it for several years. In a circular issued by Mr. Jameson he states that a small cabin can be rented for \$1.00 per day and a large cabin with room for 8 to 10 persons for \$5.00 per day. Hotel rates are \$10.00 per week, including board and room.

The Cucharas Camps was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. John Albright in the fall of 1945. The dance pavilion was converted into apartments, a new store and a combination lunch room and recreation hall constructed. The rates are considerable higher than those formerly mentioned, from \$35.00 to \$50.00 per week for the cabins. However, these are furnished with gas stoves and other modern improvements which would naturally require an increase in rates. Saddle horses are available for \$1.00 per hour or \$7.00 per day.

For the most part the cabins at the Cucharas Camps are privately owned.

In 1922 the Sulphur Springs Resort on Indian Creek, about nine miles from La Veta, consisted of a central recreational building, a bath house, thirteen cabins and a campground. The cabins were constructed of slabs and only 3 or 4 remain at this date (1947). The principal drawing card for this resort was the sulphur springs, providing water for bathing purposes. In late years this resort has had but little patronage. It is used during the hunting season by hunters in this area.

Another group of summer homes on private land within the forest boundary is in Wahatoya Canyon. This group of cabins is largely owned by people from Kansas.

The number of visitors on the Spanish Peaks District during the past ten years is as follows:

Year	Using Recreational Facilities	Merely passing through	Total
1938	5,155	3,000	8,155
1939	4,485	3,920	8,405
1940	6,500	3,200	9,710
1941	9,100	3,020	12,120
1942	7,300	4,100	11,400
1943	2,200	1,500	3,700
1944	3,400	1,000	4,400
1945	7,000	2,000	9,000
1946	11,260	5,000	16,260
1947	13,950	8,000	21,950

These statistics show an almost steady increase from year to year in the number of people enjoying the recreational features of the district. However, during 1943 and 1944, while gasoline rationing was in effect, the number of recreational visitors dropped sharply. With the discontinuance of gasoline rationing in August, 1945, after the surrender of the Japanese, the number of visitors again increased, almost equalling those of pre-war years. During 1946 and 1947 the number of visitors increased sharply, overtaxing the limited campground and resort facilities on the district to the limit.

The Forest Service now maintains three campgrounds. These are located at Spring Creek, Cucharas Creek above the forks of the Blue Lakes road, and at Blue Lakes. The heaviest recreation day is on the Fourth of July. Over 250 cars have been counted along the road and in the campgrounds between Cucharas Camps and Blue Lakes on this day.

Floods

Heavy rains and floods have been reported to have occurred in and around La Veta over a period of years. Some old-timers report La Veta to have been under water and that the boys used rafts and boats to get around. Evidence of heavy rainfall can be seen at the base of the Peaks and elsewhere on the district. Mr. Louis B. Sporleder, Sr., mentions high water due to heavy rains destroying buildings in Walsenburg in 1876.

Residents at the base of the Peaks reported that an unusual heavy rain occurred on the peaks in 1946 and the water could be seen pouring off the rocks above timber line, even from below. During this summer a water fall appeared on the north face of the West Peak, remaining for several months. The water is said to have come out of the Bulls Eye Mine. This waterfall did not show up in 1947, even after the heavy storms in June.

Heavy rainfall occurred in the lower foothills of this area in 1942 during the latter part of April. The rain melted the snow and water rose rapidly in the creeks. Most of the bridges around La Veta were washed away during this storm, especially on Middle Creek. Some damage was done to the Indian Creek road at this time. The floods were more extensive south of the Spanish Peaks. The Purgatoire River carried a tremendous amount of water and did considerable damage to the railroad tracks in Trinidad. At least one man was reported to have drowned trying to cross the river during flood stage.

The most disastrous flood in recent years in this section occurred in June of 1947. The ranches and roads in Wahatoya Creek were hit by this storm. The summer homes in the canyon were for a time isolated and a group of Girl Scouts from Kansas were marooned by the flood.

The Cucharas drainage in the mountains suffered by little from this flood. Indian Creek, however, was heavily hit. About a hundred Boy Scouts were marooned by the high water which took out all of the bridges and most of the road. Unfortunately one of the boys received a bad cut on his hand with an ax and had to be carried out on a stretcher. The boys crossed the raging torrent on footlogs carrying the stretcher and almost miraculously succeeded in getting the injured boy to a doctor in La Veta. All of the equipment was left in the area when the boys came out. A road was reconstructed over the mountain into the Trinchera Ranch and the stranded cars and equipment taken out over it about a week or so later. The boys reported that springs came out of the ground everywhere during the storm. Water poured over the cliffs digging large holes in the ground below. The water in the creeks remained high for over a week and in some instances flowed throughout the summer when ordinarily the streams dry up. A portion of the road from Byron Palmer's ranch to Sulphur Springs had to be rebuilt on a new location. Extensive damage was also done to the telephone line along the road.

The drainages north of Indian Creek also carried flood waters, all of which converged north of the town of La Veta and nearly took out the approach to the concrete bridge which had just been completed. Several buildings fell into the river at Walsenburg as a result of the high banks becoming undermined by the high water. The old barn just west of the new bridge out of La Veta also went down the stream in this flood.

Between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. on June 19, 1947, about 2.25 inches of rain fell at the Cucharas Camps. This rain did but little damage in the vicinity of the camps. The rain falling north of this area must have been several times this amount to cause the creeks to rise so high and to have flowed so long a time afterwards.

Plane Crashes

Two planes crashed on the Spanish Peaks District during the war period. One of these crashed near Apishapa Pass in 1942, the other in the North Fork in 1943. An account of the crash near Apishapa Pass was written by Ranger Lewis A. Cummings under the date of November 15, 1942, as follows:

"Approximately 1:15 on the afternoon of November 10, four single-motored army planes passed over La Veta flying south. One plane was unusually low and residents of the town wondered if it would clear the mountains ahead. The plane lacked less than a hundred feet in elevation to clear the divide and crashed in a dense thicket of small trees approximately a mile west of Apishapa Pass. However, no one in the town witnessed the crash although several persons thought it must have done so.

"At 1:40 Mrs. Cummings received a call from the operator at Walsenburg notifying her of the crash and asked where I could be located. It appeared at least one of the planes witnessed the crash and immediately flew to Trinidad to inform the proper authorities. Unfortunately I was not at home to organize a searching party from this area. I was informed of the crash at 4:20 p.m. by Lou Coleman of La Veta. At this time I was working on the bridge on the Blue Lakes road.

"Leslie Bruce and Dan Griego were working with me on the bridge and we left immediately in the pickup. Since all the officials of Huerfano and Las Animas Counties had been notified there was little reason to go back to La Veta for help. On our way up the road we saw a plane circling over the mountains near Apishapa Pass and knew the crash must have occurred in that vicinity. Our only thought at this time was to reach the scene before it became too dark to see.

"A portion of the Apishapa Truck Trail was free of snow and we drove to within two miles of the crash. At this point we were forced to abandon our cars due to crusted snow. We continued on foot and soon overtook Pete and Adolph Goemmer who also had been notified of the accident. In places the snow was at least three feet deep and although slightly crusted on top it was not strong enough to hold up our weight. Traveling was exceedingly slow and difficult and we plodded along in the deep drifts. Approximately two miles from the cars we found a few tree tops in the road and pieces of broken glass. We realized the wreck could not be far off and the flying plane above us then disappeared behind the divide. We did not see it again and knew we were close to the wreck.

"Above the road we came upon larger tree tops and here and there small pieces of the plane. Due to the dense trees we came almost on the

plane before we saw it lodged among them. One wing was partly gone and the other badly crumpled while the tail was lodged securely in a broken tree. The canopy was completely shattered and spattered with blood. There was no sign of life about the plane and we stopped on the broken wing and peered in the cockpit. Both men were gone and their parachutes lay in the seats where they had been discarded. On the broken wing I found a suitcase which had been opened with the contents spilled about it. I put these back in the case and stuffed the latter in the baggage compartment of the plane which was open.

"During this time the other members of the party found the tracks of the aviators in the snow. We followed these to the road which was visible from the plane. The tracks led up the road towards Apishapa Pass for nearly 200 yards. From this point the aviators could see the town of La Veta in the distance and they left the road and plunged into the deep canyon of Chaparral Creek. There were five of us in the party and I sent Leslie Bruce back to get my pickup with instructions to patrol the road below and pick us up when we reached it. Lou Coleman also returned to get his car.

"Adolph Goemmer, Dan Griego and I followed the tracks in the deep snow. Although the men had left the plane about 2 p.m. we did not believe they could travel far on foot. We knew one of them must be badly injured from the amount of blood on the plane. Night was now settling in fast and the temperature was dropping rapidly.

"About 100 feet below we came upon the Peaks trail which the men were following. However, they did not follow this far, leaving it for a wind-swept ridge. We hurried as fast as we could through the deep snow hoping to overtake the men before dark. We lost the trail in several places where the ground was bare or on crusted snow which left no tracks. Just as darkness was settling about us in the dense timber and we could barely see I saw a flashlight gleaming below. In a minute I came upon the men resting against a tree. One man had a bloody handkerchief tied around his head and his face and clothes were spattered. The other man appeared uninjured although during the slow journey down the canyon in the darkness he was the weaker of the two.

"That both men were glad to see us is stating it mildly. They immediately asked if I was the ranger and undoubtedly they had been discussing a rescue party between them. I told them I was and they seemed greatly relieved. It was unfortunate I did not have time to prepare for the trip having no food to offer them. However, I did take my first-aid kit from the car before I left and was able to cover a deep cut in Lieutenant Metz' head which had stopped bleeding. I did not consider it advisable to remove the other bandage for fear of causing the wound to bleed again.

"At this point Dan Griego left us to go down the canyon and build fires at intervals in order that the men could rest when we came up to them. Adolph Goemmer and I removed the shoes from the men and wrung out their socks and dried them before the fire. Lieutenant Metz had overshoes but his feet were wet due to snow getting in the tops. Sergeant

Watkins only had a pair of oxfords and thin cotton socks. His feet were cold but I did not believe they would freeze as long as his socks were wet. In fact, we all had wet feet for the men often walked in the creek which was free of snow. We followed their tracks at all times for we did not want to lose the trail and consequently our feet became soaked.

"There is no trail in the canyon and we worked our way slowly over windfalls and often sank waist deep in the snow. Lieutenant Metz was able to walk unassisted but it was necessary to help Sergeant Watkins at all times. While Adolph Goemmer went ahead to pick out the best trail I stayed with the aviators to assist them. Both men were worn out but I did not consider it advisable for them to stop for the night was getting colder. At intervals we were forced to wade the creek due to the rock walls which are exceptionally numerous in this canyon. The water was icy cold but the stones were balls of ice and we could not step on them.

"The falls on Chaparral Creek threatened to become an impassable barrier but Adolph Goemmer scouted around and finally found an old log trail for nearly a half a mile and finally came to Asa Arnold's cabin. Unfortunately the cabin was not occupied having been abandoned for the winter. It was approximately 10 o'clock when we reached the cabin, having taken us nearly four hours to travel less than two miles. However, we had almost expected to find a car waiting for us and learned later one had left about 9:30 from this place. Since there are so many canyons radiating from the Spanish Peaks it was difficult for the other parties to determine which one we would finally come down. Had the men followed the Peaks trail it would have been possible for us to have gone to Vernon's ranch at the mouth of White Creek.

"Although worn out we did not dare stop with the expectation of a car coming in at a later hour. However, the men cheered considerably at the sight of the bare ground and the cabins after hours of toiling in the deep snow in the darkness. Dan Griego again left us in order to be free to travel as fast as he could to the nearest telephone. We were able to walk abreast on the road and I put Sergeant Watkins arm about my shoulders to help him along. Although Lieutenant Metz was badly cut he quickly recovered from the physical exertion of wading through the deep snow and was able to proceed without assistance.

"We were approximately 200 yards from the highway when we saw the lights of a car stopping at the gate. We waited for it to reach us and we were surprised to find a group of army officials in it. Lieutenant Brown, M. D., was in the party and spoke to the aviators. They assured him they were all right and we piled into the car which was already badly loaded. I told the doctor he could take the men to my house in La Veta, but he had already made his headquarters at the Galassini ranch only a quarter of a mile distant. Dan Griego told me later he had difficulty getting past the guards at this place or he would have met us sooner. We reached the ranch at 10:50 p.m., which at this time was crowded with Army officials and a number of local people. I did not realize how fatigued I was until I was in the warm room for a few minutes. My legs were soaked nearly to my knees but my feet were warm due to walking.

"I remained at the Galassini ranch until 1:30, during which time the doctor attended the pilots. More army men arrived from Pueblo and I offered to assist them in getting to the plane the next day. This offer was accepted by Lieutenant Ord who appeared to be in charge. Since I had been one of the first to reach the plane he wanted me to examine it the next day to see if anything had been touched after we left. During all this time numerous calls were made by the Army officials to the base at Pueblo telling them the aviators were safe and to make arrangements to remove the wreck. I arrived home at 2 a.m.

"The next morning I made arrangements with the County Commissioner in La Veta to assist the Army officials in opening the road to the scene of the crash. At this time I did not know what type of equipment would be sent in to do the work and the officials were anxious to remove the plane as soon as possible. However, the plow sent in from Pueblo proved to be of a rotary type and removed the hard-packed snow with ease.

"I accompanied the army officials and we arrived at the wrecked plane about noon. Before leaving I asked them if they had an ax with the trucks since one was needed to remove a tree which had blown across the road. They were not certain and I took one from my equipment. This proved to be the only one and was used to cut a few trees and to remove the wings from the plane.

"Part of the plane was hauled to the road during the afternoon. The body of the plane was intact although badly warped and was removed in one piece. This was dragged behind a truck to Spring Creek since the trailer on which it was finally placed was 45 feet long and could not maneuver around the sharp turns. During the early afternoon of November 12th all of the wreckage had been removed. From the moment the army officials arrived until they left guards were stationed on the road and no one was allowed to get near the wreck."

Other information on the crash as reported by the World Independent of Walsenburg, Colorado, November 12, 1942, is as follows:

"The crashed plane was a single-motored ship of the basic trainer type. The plane was one of four flying from Lowry Field in Denver to Luke Field at Chandler, Arizona. The fliers in the crashed plane were Lieutenant Robert L. Metz of Tecumseh, Oklahoma, and Technical Sergeant Roland M. Watkins, Jr., of Kansas City.

"Credit for quick and efficient rescue work in bringing the two U. S. Army fliers to safety after the pair had floundered around in deep snow and cold in an effort to reach civilization should go to a number of residents of La Veta and surrounding territory. Large parties were recruited in short order and the plane found within a few hours after it had crashed in spite of the fact that it was located in some of the wildest territory of Huerfano County.

"Mrs. Ada Vernon noticed the plane in distress before it fell and spread the alarm. Shortly thereafter a party was on its way.

"Members of the crew who made up the main party were Lou Coleman, George A. and Pete Goemmer, Leslie Bruce, Lew Cummings, forest ranger,

and Dan Griego, another member of the ranger force. Guided by the circling of another plane in the squadron, they made their way to the spot, and later, three of them tracked the fliers and found them in Chaparral canyon.

"Meanwhile others in the vicinity had joined the search, including Mr. and Mrs. Furlong who were at the Cucharas Camps at the time, Mrs. H. E. Magee, Mrs. Albert Jameson, Mrs. Vernon, and a number of others. Several went from Walsenburg, including the Rev. Francis Bottler of St. Mary parish, who was equipped to administer the last rites of the church in case of need.

"Father Bottler's party, including H. S. Kaltenbach and James Madison, were contacted by the plane from the air, the pilot dropping a map of the location of the plane to them as they made their way up the mountain. However, the main body had already found the ship where it lay some 400 yards from the Apishapa Pass road.

"Undersheriff Carl Swift of Huerfano County, in praising the quick and efficient work of the searching parties, said Army officers who arrived here to take charge of the men and the plane reported that they had never seen such splendid cooperation. Undersheriff Swift, Deputy Claude Vallejos and Charles Galassini, as well as an officer, met the party as it emerged from the canyon.

"Searchers from Las Animas County side of the pass encountered extremely bad conditions, and were unsuccessful in reaching the plane from that point."

Another plane crash occurred on the Spanish Peaks District during the evening of March 25, 1943. This was a large, four-engine plane and the entire crew was killed. The plane was headed towards Pueblo from a base in New Mexico and is presumed to have gotten off course after leaving Trinidad. Since there is no high country between Trinidad and Pueblo the plane was flying low and consequently crashed into the mountains.

The plane was reported low by William Smith when it appeared over the City Ranch on the North Fork. A minute or so later it crashed into the side of the mountain and immediately burst into flames. All the men were instantly killed and the bodies badly mutilated and burned, almost beyond recognition. Several of the engines rolled into the gulch below for a considerable distance.

One of the first to reach the scene was Game Warden C. M. Scott of Trinidad. Mr. Scott assisted the army officials in removing the bodies and in suppressing the fires in the fallen snags which were ignited when the high-octane gasoline exploded and burst into flames. So far as known nothing was salvaged from the plane and the engines were reported to have been dynamited to prevent removal intact.

The plane crashed in approximately Section 15, Township 32 South, Range 69 West, on a open ridge. Conditions on the ground showed that the plane barely overtopped the ridge for it had cut off the tops of the aspen for some distance from where it struck the ground. Had the plane cleared the ridge it would undoubtedly have crashed into the main Sangre de Cristo Range in a more remote and wilder spot.

Names of Features

The origin of the names of creeks and mountains usually puzzles one without a knowledge of the history of the country. Obviously some names have been derived from early settlers and in some cases these can be traced by old records. The maps of the San Isabel forest have been revised over a period of years in some instances the names of features have changed entirely. On the map of 1920, Bear Creek, on the north side of the East Peak, is shown as Arapaho Creek. This name is also shown on the G. L. O. plat of Township 30 South, Range 67 West, dated September 8, 1874. However the geological map of the Spanish Peaks Quadrangle, edition of 1900, shows the names to be Bear Creek. The 1920 base map of the forest shows Echo Creek to be Pine Creek. The former is more appropriate considering the large number of rock walls, or dikes, which allow echoes to reverberate through the canyon.

Silver Mountain is shown as Dike Mountain on the Huerfano Park geological map of 1900. This map also shows the Rio Grande Railroad extending up South Veta Creek to the Muleshoe and thence over La Veta Pass. The present location of this railroad is up Middle Creek and thence over Veta Pass, crossing over the mountains at the small station known as Fir.

The Spanish Peaks quadrangle, edition of 1897, also shows several changes, especially around Trinidad. This map shows a railroad from Trinidad southwest into Longs Canyon. This railroad is called the "Union Pacific Denver and Gulf Railroad, Catskill Branch." It is also shown on the map between Aguilar and Trinidad and is now the Colorado and Southern R. R. The railroad from Trinidad to Weston is not shown on this edition of the map.

Cucharas. In Spanish this means spoons. The old maps show this as Cuchara Creek, not the plural form. However, the G. L. O. plat of 1883 gives the spelling of Cucharas.

Spanish Peaks. These are now called the West Spanish Peak and the East Spanish Peak. Other names are "Huaajatolla," meaning "Breasts of the World." and "Los Dos Hermanos," meaning "Two Brothers."

Culebra. This is a Spanish name meaning "Snake." The Culebra range is an offshoot or extension of the Sangre de Cristo Range and extends into New Mexico.

Trinchera Peak. This peak is located on the Culebra Range. The name in Spanish means trench or intrenchment.

Purgatoire River. The full name for this river is "El Rio de Las Animas Perdidas en Purgatorio," (The river of lost souls in purgatory). It is also locally known as the "Picketwire." Within the forest it is called the "North Fork."

Las Animas. Spanish for "The Souls."

Huerfano. Spanish for "Orphan." This name is derived from the pinnacle of lava just east of the bridge on Highway 85 on the south side of the Huerfano River.

La Veta. Spanish for "The Vein." Probably derived from the veins of coal in the surrounding areas.

Wahatoya. English pronunciation for Huajatolla. (See Spanish Peaks).

Gujatoyan. Spanish Pronunciation for Huajatolla.

Zarcillo. Spanish for earring. The explanation for this name is as follows: In the early days a Spanish American saw a rock formation in the head of a canyon that resembled an earring and called the canyon "Zarcillo."

Boyd Mountain. Probably named from Levi or Solomon Boyd who had homesteads in this area.

Baker Creek. Probably named from W. A. Baker who had a homestead on this creek about a mile west of the Cucharas highway.

Story Creek. Probably named from Wallace or John Story who settled in this area. Both men are mentioned in Ranger Boyd's diary of January 6 and 7, 1916.

Devil's Stair Step. Name given to a rock wall south of La Veta from its step-like appearance.

Hills Branch. Probably named from Dewey E Hills who homesteaded in this area in 1883. Milton Hills also took up land in this vicinity in 1883.

Price Canyon. Local name given to the south branch of Indian Creek. Probably named after Albert T. Price who took up a homestead at the mouth of the canyon in 1893.

Hope Canyon. Local name given to a canyon just west of the junction of Indian Creek and Price Canyon. R. B. Linscott has a prospect hole near the mouth of this canyon. This canyon was probably named from Daniel Hope who did considerable prospecting in Indian Creek.

There are other names, such as White Creek, White Mountain, Murray Creek, Wade Canyon, Barnes Canyon, etc., named from families living in the community during its early settlement.

Forest Officers

The Spanish Peaks District was originally created the Las Animas National Forest on March 1, 1907. The following forest officers served on this division since that time.

D. E. Fitton. David E. Fitton was appointed Deputy Forest Supervisor on April 13, 1907. Mr. Fitton was in Del Norte at the time and arrived at Trinidad on April 15. On the 18th he made a trip over the forest, arriving at La Veta on the 20th in a snow storm. On his return to Trinidad on the 23rd he wired Washington to transfer the headquarters for this forest to La Veta.

James M. Thompson. James M. Thompson was Assistant Ranger on the forest from 1907 to 1908. The records show he was working on June 1, 1907, with

headquarters at Hicks, Colorado. In a letter to Mr. D. E. Fitton under the date of June 5, 1907, he states: "I will have to live in a tent this summer, am unable to find a vacant house close to school."

From his letter and diaries it would appear Mr. Thompson had charge of the forest in Las Animas County. Mr. Thompson estimated the cost of constructing a three-room house in 1907 as follows:

5,466 feet of rough lumber	\$95.65
1,250 feet matched flooring	50.00
Doors, windows, shingles, nails, etc.	80.55
Total cost	<u>226.20</u>

The last entry in Mr. Thompson's diary is April 14, 1908, but there is no record of his resigning at this time.

Charles A. Whitney. Charles A. Whitney was deputy forest supervisor in 1908. After the Las Animas was combined with the San Isabel National Forest in 1910 he remained at La Veta in charge of this district with the title of Forest Ranger. He remained in charge until about May 15, 1911 when Ranger William Boyd took over with headquarters in La Veta. Mr. Whitney resigned to go into the lumber business.

Asa Arnold. Asa Arnold worked on the forest from 1907 until 1910, presumably as an assistant forest ranger.

John William Boyd. John William Boyd commenced work as Forest Ranger about May 1, 1909 and continued as such until sometime in 1919. Between November 14, 1910 and May 15, 1911 he was ranger at Malachite. This move is recorded in his diary as follows:

November 14, 1910. "Got two wagons started out as soon as we could. Attended to some little things of a personal nature, put my team to the buggy, led one horse. Took my family and started at 10:30. Drove to Malachite. Arrived at 5 p.m. Wagons got in about 7 p.m. Storming most of the day. Stopped overnight at the Malachite Hotel.

November 15. "Unloaded my things onto the ground as the house was not in shape to get them in, being pretty well filled up with apples and different things. Helped get the stuff out of the house, put up the stove, heated water to clean floors. Got some things into the house, stored balance in a side room for the night. Stopped for night at the hotel.

November 16. "Went out and hunted up a Mexican to get him to haul me a load of wood. Built furniture out of goods boxes and helped to get things unpacked and straightened around."

Eugene Vories. Eugene Vories followed Bill Boyd as ranger. The first entry in his diary is September 1, 1919 and the last January 10, 1921.

Karl Gilbert. Karl Gilbert served as ranger from February 14, 1921 until some time in 1924. He returned to the Spanish Peaks District in 1928 and remained until 1937, resigning because of poor health. Gilbert's diary of June 4, 1921 reads in part as follows:

"With Supervisor Hamel enroute for Pueblo. We were unable to cross the St. Charles River as the bridges had all been washed out. Mr. Hamel

crossed on a cottonwood tree and I returned to Walsenburg."

Another entry is as follows: September 21, 1921. "Could not get over to Blue Lakes from where I camped last night as the hills are too steep for my packhorse - decided to cruise out some country where I had never been, hit the Cucharas road and proceed to Blue Lake. My packhorse slipped and fell into a canyon killing himself."

Paul Gilbert. Paul Gilbert was ranger on the Spanish Peaks district during 1924 and 1925.

Walter Oakes. Walter Oakes was ranger from 1925 until 1928.

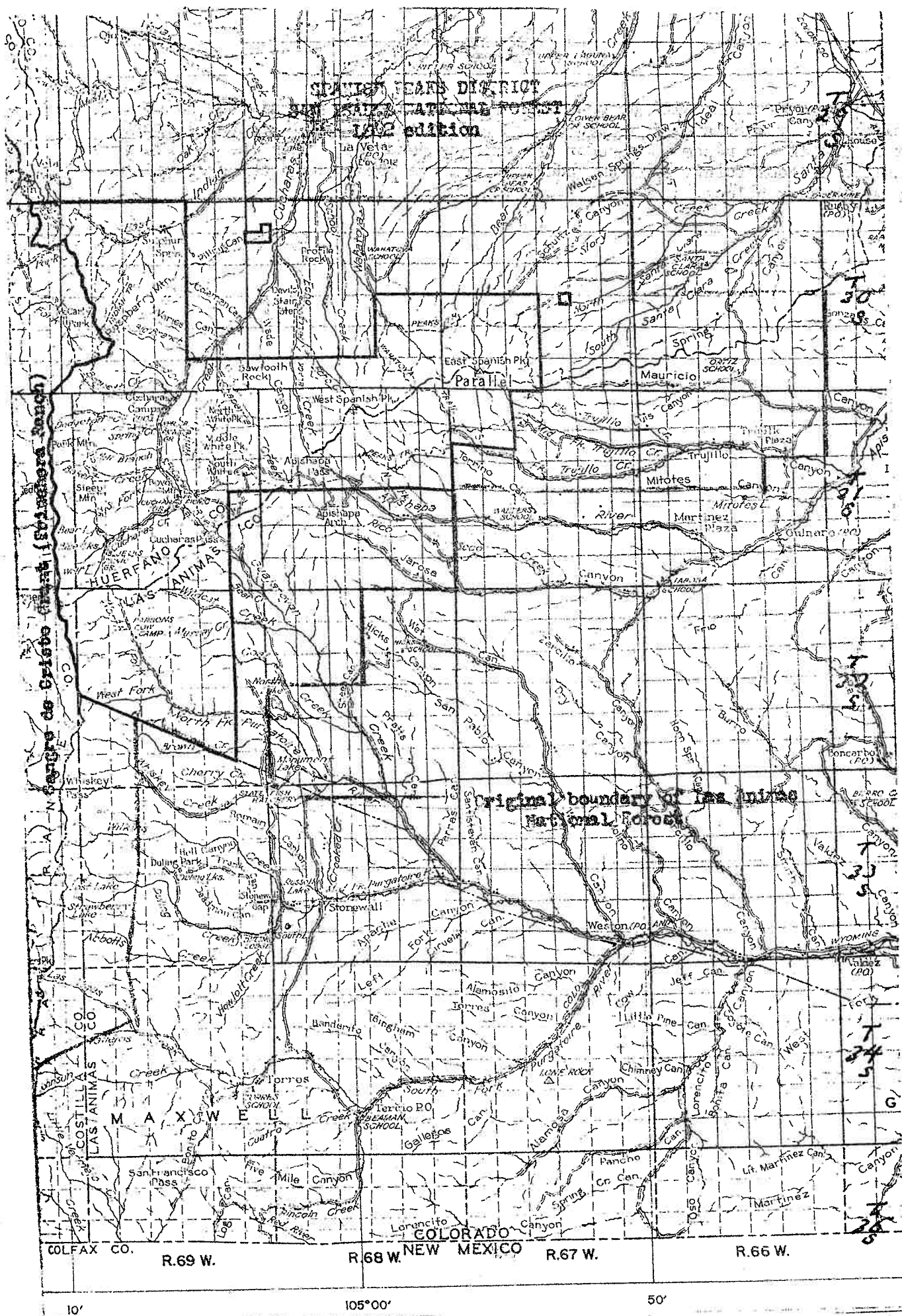
Ralph Bryant. Ralph Bryant was ranger from 1938 until 1942.

Lewis A. Cummings. Lewis A. Cummings became forest ranger on the Spanish Peaks district in February, 1942.

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Other sources of material include diaries, letters, reports, maps, etc. found in the files of the Spanish Peaks Ranger District.



ADDITIONS

Since additions will be made from time to time in this history it is believed they should be inserted at the end of the original account instead of attempting to place them under the various headings. When the history is revised at some future time the additions can be included in the categories to which they belong.

HISTORY OF HUERFANO COUNTY*

Up to the year 1821 the "County of El Huerfano" was Spanish domain, then it became part of the "province of Mexico." In 1846 this province was ceded to the United States, its northern boundary extending along the Arkansas River. In 1861 the Territory of Colorado was organized and the boundary lines of Huerfano County were the boundary lines of the St. Vrain-Vigil Grant, containing 4,000,000 acres. It included the St. Charles and Greenhorn portions of Pueblo County, all of Bent, Las Animas, Baca, Otero, and Prowers Counties, and all of Huerfano County as it is today. In 1867, by act of Legislature, our county was reduced to its present boundaries.

Huerfano is a Spanish word meaning "orphan," and Huerfano County gets its name from the lone rock butte which rises from the earth about 12 miles north of Walsenburg. It is near the place where the old wagon road from Pueblo to Santa Fe crossed the Huerfano River. The old Spanish road leading up from the Arkansas, crossing the Sangre Pass to Fort Garland, Taos, and Santa Fe, also passed this rock. Later a stage station was located near the crossing, and at one time John Ritter had a commissary and banking business in connection with it. The post office there was known as Butte Valley.

The first county seat was the Plaza of Carlos Ortivia, also called Charles Autobees, on the Arkansas River near its junction with the Huerfano River. Later it was moved to Ladito, where Ferdinand Meyer operated a trading post. A flour mill was built there in 1857 by Judge Hayden. Charles Hayden was born there. One of his early recollections was seeing huge wagons with solid wheels (wooden) waiting around the mill. He also told me he was nearly grown before he had any pants except those his mother made for him out of flour sacks with a red stripe on them.

Walsenburg was first known as the Plaza de Los Leones and had its beginning about 1859. Probably the first American to make his home there was M. W. Jones. He owned a ranch on the Cuchara River west of what is now Main Street in 1868. He later sold it to Joseph Bourroy for a yoke of oxen and a hundred sheep. A letter from Mrs. Jones reads, "We were isolated from all civilization, our house was of adobe, with dirt floor and dirt roof, which leaked in every storm, without comfort or convenience of any kind. Even the water we used had to be carried from the Cuchara River. My heart ached many times when I thought of my little children, innocent of all civilization, growing up without associates or schooling. Rumors of Indians was far from pleasant excitement. The happiest days of my life was when we traded our farm for a yoke of oxen and a hundred sheep, and left that isolated hamlet called Plaza de los Leones."

In 1873 Fred Walsen, Captain Hendren, Evaristo Gonzales, John Albert, Joseph Bourroy, and perhaps a few others organized Plaza de los Leones into a town and called it Walsenburg in honor of Fred Walsen, owner of the largest trading post in the county. Sometimes he was also called "The Kaiser." Also in 1873 a gigantic cinnamon bear and two cubs were killed by a Mexican citizen about 200 yards above Main and Seventh Streets. In 1883 my grandfather (Henry Strange) moved to Walsenburg and built the first two-story building (stone), which is still in use.

*By Mrs. Evelyn Capps Walker. In "A History of La Veta Lodge No. 59, A. F. & A. M., La Veta, Colorado." By Bennett H. Stigall. Jan. 1, 1950.

One of the oldest towns in the county is La Veta, which was first known as Francisco Plaza. Colonel Francisco selected this site for a home while on a prospecting trip in 1834. La Veta is a Spanish word meaning "the vein." Some authorities say this name probably refers to the numerous dikes radiating in all directions from the West Spanish Peak. Hiram Vasquez said it was named by Mexicans from a vein of white mineral which they called "La Veta Tierra Blanca." He said the vein was located at the foot of Pinon Hill, and the mineral was used by natives to whitewash their dwellings. The rock was also known as "Yaso."

The old adobe plaza was built by Colonel Francisco about the year 1862. Colonel Francisco had as his partners Henry Daigre and Hiram Vasquez. They traded with the Americans, Mexicans, and Indians, and also did some farming. The first plow was made by Mr. Vasquez from a pinyon stump with points of seasoned oak lashed to it with buckskin thongs. The Hamilton brothers, James and W. B. came to La Veta in 1868. As Walter Hamilton expressed it, "the gramma grass was knee high." They drove a thousand head of Durham cattle here from Missouri. They settled on the ranch on the Abeyta, later known as the Firm Ranch. Jim Hamilton raised the first patch of alfalfa for this vicinity on the Huajatolla. He also had the first bees, the first orchard, the first strawberries, and the first barbed wire fence. The first barbed wire was flat and ribbon-like, and the early settlers often saw deer and other wild animals caught on it.

The first church, known as the Spanish Peaks Baptist Church, was organized in 1872 at the home of Dr. James Erwin, a mile and a half east of La Veta. It was the sixth Baptist church to be founded in the entire state. In 1875 a school house of hewn logs and shutters for windows, dirt floor, and homemade benches was built in the Martin meadow. Church meetings were held there until the church was moved to La Veta in 1877.

The Indians played an important part in the history of our county. Several thousand Ute Indians used to camp in the canyon between Baldy (La Veta Mountain or Mount Nestas) and Silver Mountains. These Indians also camped on the upper Cuchara River. Chief Canyatcha and his Ute warriors made it quite uncomfortable for the settlers, although they killed but one white man in this immediate vicinity. That was Billy Potts . . . One authority said this was near the Bascom Sager ranch, and that his body was never found. Benton Canon said the murder took place on North Veta Creek, and several days later two Indians were seen with the head of Billy Potts tied to one of their saddles.

Another Indian incident probably occurred in 1864 or 1865. A band of Utes was camped near the Three Bridges. One day a band of Comanches came up the creek. The Comanches were successful buffalo hunters, and had a way of dressing themselves to look like buffaloes. A Ute scout, seeing them dressed this way, hurried to the Ute camp to get assistance to kill the big game. A party of about 30 Utes rode down in a hurry and rode into the ambush - consequently there was only one Ute left to ride to camp and tell the story. It is said the settlers used the skulls of the dead Utes for soap dishes.

A favorite camping place of the Utes was a pine-covered mesa on the upper Santa Clara River. Chief Shavano's Indians camped in what is now the Capps pasture as late as 1881. Chief Canyatcha's band frequently passed through Plaza de los Leones on their way to the Greenhorn. Ouray and his band to the number of about 2000 Indians often camped on the Huerfano River. Ouray and his wife, Chipeta, were young and exceptionally handsome and intelligent. Mother often told how Ouray and about 400 Indians camped at their place on the Apache,

and how they stayed until they drank the well dry. At another time just grandmother and the children were at home, and they kept hearing a peculiar and very frightening sound. Grandmother sat up all night with a gun and an axe in her hands. The next day there was no sign of Indians, so they ventured out to find the sound was made by the wind blowing in a jug hanging from the wall.

A story was told by Mr. Sporleder that interested me. It was told when only Mexicans lived in the Santa Clara Valley. It was called the "Story of the crowing rooster." Where the old government trail from Fort Garland to Fort Union crossed the prairie, between what are now known as the Arnold and Capps branches of the Santa Clara River, the loud crowing of a rooster was invariably heard, no matter what time of the day or night one passed. At that time no people lived in the vicinity and there was not a chicken nearer than Bear Creek. The old trail was well travelled then, and hardly a day passed without wagons or horsemen passing by. Theories were advanced about the rooster but nothing was ever solved. Mr. Sporleder says, "I, myself, heard the crowing frequently: it sounded as though the bird could not have been more than twenty steps away, so loud and piercing was the cry." The last man who heard the crowing was Carmel Martinez, uncle of Sherry Martinez.

The earliest settlers in the county were the Spanish, who retained the old customs and ways of living with their gay fundangoes and celebrations. At first there were only about half a dozen American families. In the years 1862 and 1868, besides the men I have mentioned, came Antoine La Brie, Nate Patterson, Joe Lincaid, Alex Levy, R. A. Hayes, Jasper Bruce, Abner Chaetain, Samuel Patterson, who was the leader of the Georgia Colony, A. H. Quillian, F. L. Martin, T. D. Creesy, M. Krier, Mr. Sporleder, and the John Browns, who for purposes of identity were known as Old, Young, Little, Dirty, and Coupling Pole. My father came in 1872, driving a team of oxen called Tom and Jerry. He later homesteaded on the Santa Clara, calling his ranch the Sunnyside Ranch.

In 1876 in one of the letters written by John Ritter this information was given to his cousin: "A man to travel through this country wants to be a jack of all trades - drive bulls and mules, chop wood, and dig ditches. If you clerk in a store you must speak Mexican. You need a pony to ride and a mule to pack, a pair of revolvers strapped to your side, and a big bowie knife, and be able to camp out like a soldier. In 1863 he wrote that snow was from three to ten feet deep in the mountains. There was no money and little food, especially vegetables. In 1871 he said there was a campmeeting close by, just 50 miles away. Girls were beginning to come out and things looked better. In 1880 he wrote that he thought of selling out as the country around Cuchara where he had homesteaded was getting too crowded and the sheep were taking everything.

The following account of the history of Huerfano County was published in the World-Independent, Walsenburg, Colorado, July 27, 1954.

"The early history of Huerfano county is somewhat obscure. The first settlers were undoubtedly the Utes and other nomadic hunting tribes. Explorers and fur traders used the county for a stopping place.

"The first permanent settlers were apparently the people who settled on the Cornelio Vigil-Ceran St. Vrain land grant along the Huerfano River over 100 years ago. They were apparently a combination of Spanish and French.

"History says that from the early 1800's when the land was first explored until 1858 there was little of importance in Colorado annals. But it was during this period that Huerfano county was being settled.

"According to some historians a Fort was built by the Spanish government about 1720 in what was first believed to be La Veta, but more recently thought to be at Yellowstone, also in Huerfano county. Wherever it was, there seems to be no doubt that it was the first building constructed by white men in what is now Colorado, and that it was erected in Huerfano.

"Tequisquita is mentioned as one of the earliest settlements in the county, but it apparently lasted only a short time.

"John Albert, one of the last original Rocky Mountain trappers and one of the few survivors of the Taos massacre in 1847, erected the "Fort" on the Cucharas river. Albert first came through Huerfano county during the escape from the massacre in his bare feet in the dead of winter.

"From 1804 to 1854 Colorado was being included, in whole or in part, in some half-dozen territories: French, Spanish, Texas, among others.

"It was 1860 that the move for statehood, away from the Kansas territory, began. It was completed in 1861, the same year the first election in Huerfano county was held.

"Huerfano was one of the 17 original counties in Colorado and one of the first to hold an election to organize the county officers.

"George Simpson was appointed county clerk by the governor of the territory. The county stretched from the top of the mountain range to Fort Bent on the Arkansas River and south to the New Mexico line. Simpson happened to live in Badito and since it was the custom to make the county seat, by law, at the home of the clerk, Badito became one of the first, if not the first seats of government in Colorado. Badito clung to this honor for years and today one of the first county buildings still stands, at the bend of the road.

"Autobes which is sometimes listed as the first county seat was a ranch, owned by a man of that name, which was designated as an election precinct along the lower Huerfano River.

"Walsenburg, after much fighting and several elections, eventually won the county seat in 1872 because of the natural bent of the population.

"The first school to be recorded in the county was also located at Badito. The first school records, which may not be the earliest, show that a school was located there in 1867.

"When the county seat moved to Walsenburg, Badito stopped progressing. The town was never incorporated and it remained a small country crossing.

"Today the largest town in the original Huerfano grant is Gardner, a small but thriving community which serves the rich agricultural region. Gardner was never incorporated either and its early history is known only

to a few and almost impossible to obtain. It is known that one of the largest early stores, of the variety still seen in Western movies, was located there and the building still stands complete with the hitching post porch which was necessary for the settlers whose trip to town was often a three-day affair.

"Farasita is little but a cluster of homes anymore, although it was at one time another center for the area, with an interesting general store-post office and reportedly a passing point for some of the infamous desperadoes who gave the west notoriety."

The following account of Huerfano County was also taken from the World-Independent of July 27, 1954.

"Other stories rise from this land over which six flags have flown. The earliest travelers must have been the Indians who later made way for the Spanish and French explorers, both of whom raised their flags. It is even said the Conquistadores slept here. Later the flags of Spain, the Republic of Texas, and the Colorado Territory flew before the American flag was raised.

"The first records of the county date back to 1815 when De Munn and Chouteau, fur trappers, had a camp along the Huerfano River. James Purcell, the first American to record entering Colorado, would have had to pass through the country in his 1805 trip, but he did not record the fact.

"The first permanent settlers of whom there is any record came in 1859. They were Jose Fabian Baca and Pedro Martinez and family, who settled on the Huerfano River. Sotero Pino was planting crops here at the time, and by November 1860 the "Plaza de Los Leones," was founded.

"In 1862 John Francisco, Henry Daigre, John Delivera and others settled at the Francisco Plaza, now known as La Veta.

"It is recorded that the census in 1859 was 25 and in 1865 there were 25 English-speaking and 336 Spanish-speaking people, mostly engaged in agriculture.

"The plaza was named after Don Miguel Leon, another of the first settlers and bore his name until 1875 when it was renamed Walsenburg.

"The original Plaza was built along an ancient trail which is now a major highway. In view of all the houses was the "fort," a haven in case of necessity. In a few years there was a church, hotel, post office, court-house, hall and 12 houses.

"In 1876 the railroad reached Walsenburg and La Veta and the boom was on. With the railroad came the opening of the first mine, the Walsen, by Fred Walsen. The opening of the coal mines brought a new influx of citizens and a new way of life.

"In 1905 there were 23 saloons on what was the few blocks of Main Street. Night and day, six days a week, and until noon on Sunday the establishments ran full blast. One old timer recalls his first sight of Walsenburg with a glance through the window of a saloon at the gambling table loaded with chips, cards, money and the ever-ready gun.

"The wide dirt Main street was spotted with houses and stores and the city and county governments had become established."

Another account of Huerfano County was published by Howard L. Delaney in 1944 under the title All Our Yesterdays. This account is as follows:

There stands a few hundred yards to the east of the bridge where Highway 85 crosses the Huerfano River today, a lonely little mountain, separated from its larger relatives by several miles - a sort of poor little family runt that could not quite keep up with its high-flying older brothers. Because it is all alone, it was called "huerfano," a word meaning "orphan," by the early Spanish explorers. It is not really a mountain, or hardly a hill either, for that matter. But because it rises sharply from the plain of the Huerfano River, it acquires prominence as a landmark all out of proportion to its size. Geologists call it a volcanic plug. Others, not so concerned about scientific accuracy, refer to it as a butte. Small though it is, it has given name to the vast area from which it springs - Huerfano County.

"The California gold rush of 1849 increased the clamor for a trans-continental railroad, a clamor that had been growing since the thirties. In 1853 Congress appropriated \$150,000 for the purpose of surveying several possible routes to the Pacific from the Mississippi. Two of the surveying parties came through this territory in that same year, one led by Captain John W. Gunnison and the other by John C. Fremont. Fremont's expedition was financed by private capital, while Gunnison's was an official United States railroad survey.

"To the south and west of Walsenburg a few miles rise the twin peaks, the Huajatolla or Spanish Peaks, famous in legend and in history. The oldest tradition tells of a sort of Garden of Paradise which once existed at the base of the Huajatolla, a place where people lived happily and peacefully. Many are the tales told of lost gold mines. The numerous old prospect holes and abandoned mine shafts bear testimony to the possible truthfulness of the legends, or at least the fact that many a treasure hunter, influenced by these stories, hoped they might be true.

"Just who first settled in what is now Huerfano County, or when, is difficult, if not impossible, to determine. Certainly the French and American trappers were in this country in the beginning of the last century. The first American to enter Colorado, at least in so far as there is any record, was James Purcell. He traveled from South Park to New Mexico in 1805 over a route which would take him through this vicinity. De Munn and Chouteau, organizers of the first large fur venture in Colorado, had a winter camp on the Huerfano in 1815-1816.

"George F. Ruxton, the young English adventurer and writer, who left Taos for the United States on January 1, 1847, tells of coming upon a little settlement of erstwhile trappers between the Huerfano and the Greenhorn who had been forced to take up other means of earning a livelihood because of the decline in the fur trade. They had on hand some corn which they raised in the valley during the preceding summer. No record of their name remains, or of how long these restless souls were able to stifle their longing for the forest trails and beaver dams.

"Huerfano county, as originally organized in 1861, comprised the area which now constitutes the counties of Huerfano and Las Animas, together with that part of Pueblo lying south of the Arkansas River and east of the St. Charles River, and that part of Bent lying south of the Arkansas River. The county was so inconveniently large that as its settlement progressed, it was, with the common consent of the people, divided by an act of the Territorial Legislature in 1867, when the present limits were established. The organization of the county as a political entity in those first years was little more than a figure of speech. Because the distances were so immense and towns did not exist, official proceedings presented a real problem. It is doubtful if the first county judge ever held court, and the commissioners met only once during their term of office. After the division it was the good fortune of the county to inherit about an equal portion of plain and mountain.

"The first permanent settlers of whom there is any record arrived in 1859. Jose Fabian Baca and an old blind man, Pedro Martinez, together with his large family, settled on the Huerfano River about two miles below the site of Badito. Sotero Pino, though his family lived at Costilla, planted crops in this valley during the years 1858 and 1859. Rufino Wilkins is believed to have moved into this same area early in 1860. By November of that same year the "Placita de los Martinez" was certainly in existence. There was a store in the placita, and a little to the east of the store, a fenced cornfield.

"Between 1860 and 1865 a number of persons from Costilla, Culebra and Trinchera planted grain experimentally in the Huerfano and Cucharas valleys, though they did not live here. In 1862 John Francisco, Henry Daigre, John Delivera and a number of others settled in a beautiful spot now occupied by the town of La Veta.

"The total population of the county at the end of 1859 probably amounted to 25 persons. By 1861 it had doubled, and there were about 75 the following year. In 1865 thirty-five English-speaking and three hundred and thirty-six Spanish-speaking voters made up the entire population, content with the profits of their agrarian or pastoral lives. They were without town, lawyer, doctor, or priest. Two or three little stores, with their handful of merchandise, supplied the immediate and simple needs of their customers. The distinguishing marks of a successful man, his refinement and social standing, consisted of a good horse, a saddle and bridle, a Colt revolver, and the ability to dance the fandango. Judging from the stories about the Huerfano county of today which are printed in our city newspapers rather frequently, one might gather that their editors haven't heard that these ancient qualifications for standing in the community are not de rigueur nowadays.

"In 1865 witnessed the beginning of the real settlement of the county. The new arrivals came chiefly from Costilla, Culebra, Rio Colorado and Conejos. La Veta, Walsenburg (then known as the Plaza de los Leones), and Cucharas village sprang into being in 1866.

"The infant village of Walsenburg, or as it was called at the time, Plaza de los Leones, consisted of a few families gathered together in a spot occupying hardly more than a couple of present-day city blocks. Most

prominent among the inhabitants of the new town were Francisco Atencio, Fred Walsen, August Sporleder, and Miguel Leon and his children. It was after Leon that the town was called for a few years.

"The growth of the Territory of Colorado as a whole had been so considerable during the decade following Pike's Peak gold rush that a more definite and localized ecclesiastical organization was required. Huerfano county, too, during these years was rapidly increasing in population.

In the fall of the year 1869 Bishop Machebeuf established the parish of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors at Walsenburg. Father Joseph Percevault was appointed as the first pastor. Father Percevault had, of course, neither church nor chapel in his new parish, so he set about the business of building one. The necessary ground was purchased from Joseph Bourcy for the consideration of fifty dollars. The site is now occupied by a store on the northwest corner of Seventh and Main. This first church was a jacal building. To build a jacal, logs are placed upright side by side in a shallow trench. After the doors, windows, and roof are finished, the logs are plastered with adobe. Even to this day a person driving about the country will see a number of these old jacal structures still in existence and use.

In July of 1876 the railroad reached Walsenburg, and then continued on to La Veta. This naturally resulted in a boom for both towns. Previously the railroad had run about six miles to the east of the town. Nucharas City had sprung up suddenly there. It became a town of some size, with street properly laid out, trees and a ditch for the public use. Everything to insure a long and prosperous future for this town was done. Its boosters hoped it would quickly eclipse Walsenburg in size and importance. Then the railroad was moved, and the end of 1876 saw the departure of the last inhabitant. Today all that remains are the ruins of the old hotel.

One interesting bit of railroad history in the state has to do with La Veta Pass. When the line reached its temporary terminus in La Veta in 1876, the chief engineer of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway was ordered to make a survey of the pass with the idea of finding a route through which trains could be run into the San Luis Valley. Colonel Greenwood, the engineer, returned after a few days examination and pronounced the pass impracticable for railroad purposes. Then General Palmer, president of the road, and Ex-Governor A. C. Hunt, managing director, made an investigation, and Hunt drew a rough sketch on a piece of paper of what he thought was a usable route. This sheet of paper became known as "Hunt's Goose Egg," a name given to it by the engineering department of the railroad. The eventual completion of the road over the pass proved who was in the right.

Coal was known to exist in the county for many years prior to the opening of the first mine, because there are outcroppings of it in many places. However, until some means of transporting the coal to market economically could be had, there was no percentage in digging it out of the ground. The coming of the railroad in the summer of 1876 brought with it the promise of things to come, for it meant that the principal resource of the county could now be exploited.

Along towards the end of 1876, Fred Walsen opened the Walsen mine. This was located about a mile west of what then amounted to Walsenburg, and in this same locality, the Cameron and the Robinson were shortly afterwards developed.

The start of coal mining created quite a burst of activity. The population increased, as was to be expected, since there were jobs to be had. And suddenly there were three stores and three hotels. Even a sense of civic consciousness blossomed forth where before had flourished only the yucca flower. In 1877 shade trees were planted on Main Street - a thoughtful gesture on the part of the city fathers since these provided a measure of comfort and protection from the sun's heat to the town philosophers.

On August 24, 1878, a heavy rain fell steadily for fully twelve hours. The river left its banks, and rose to a height beyond anything which the oldest inhabitant could remember ever having reached before. All the area lying along the river bottom (in Walsenburg) was inundated. Water reached to within one foot of the window sills of the church (Catholic), and about two feet above the stone foundation of the building. The structure was not swept away, nor did it collapse immediately. But its adobe walls were softened to such an extent that they were dangerously weak. The church tumbled down about a week later. The same flood destroyed the rectory and the house which had been intended for a convent.

Many of the things which are considered so necessary to amuse people today were lacking to the community 55 years ago (published in 1944), but that by no means indicates that life was without excitement in those days. The curious would, upon hearing a shot ring out, hurry onto their front porches in time to see a body slump to the ground. Then there was the time when a young lady from out of town went down bright and early Monday morning to the office of the Graphic and took two shots at the foreman. One ball grazed his nose and the other his abdomen, but neither hurt him. Both parties were of high social standing, and it was quite a sensation and a surprise.

"Money went a lot farther in those days. A man could, for instance, receive for one whole year the 'World' and the 'Denver Weekly Times' and, at no extra charge, the Works of Charles Dickens in Twelve Large Volumes, all for the trifling sum of \$3.50. Or, for \$75 he could purchase a handsome surrey, complete with fringed top. If he didn't care for so much style, a very sturdy road buggy could be had for \$28.

"The advertised properties of some of the medicines which were available at the local drug stores would make the curative qualities of a recently-discovered wonder drug pale by comparison. Anyone could obtain immediate relief from diseases which had been given up as hopeless, - just like the young man who had been restored to health and wife and job after taking these remarkable pills for only a few days, even though he had previously been confined to his bed for a full year with consumption.

"The years 1913 and 1914 were troubled by an outbreak of a particularly violent type of industrial warfare. A strike was called for September 23, 1913. The miners demanded a ten percent increase in pay, enforcement of Colorado mining laws in regard to such matters as freedom to select their own doctors, boarding houses, eating places, the observance of the eight-hour day, health and safety measures, and not the least important of their demands was the recognition of their union.

"The United Mine Workers of America sent their best organizers into the southern coal fields; while the mine owners imported professional strike-breakers to keep mines operating in spite of the strike. The Colorado National Guard was sent into the field to maintain order, but the

militia failed in this because it was regarded by the strikers as the protector of the operator's interest. Violence broke out between it and the strikers, culminating in the Ludlow massacre on April 20, 1914. Several deaths occurred in and around Walsenburg because of the strike. Eventually it was necessary to move Federal troops into the district to establish peace.

"One day in the spring of 1914 when a particularly violent battle was in progress in the west end of the town, word came from the sheriff's office that the children were to be kept in the school until their parents came for them. About ten children were kept overnight in the school by the Sisters on that occasion."

Early Settlers

John Albert. John Albert trapped on the Cucharas River as early as 1834. He was the only survivor of the Taos massacre. Twenty-six children were born to him. He spent the last years of his life in Walsenburg.

Colonel Ceran St. Vrain. St. Vrain and Cornelio Vigil were the recipients of a land grant from the Mexican government in 1844 of some 4,000,000 acres. This was known as the Las Animas Grant. Huerfano County was part of that grant.

Fred Walsen. Fred Walsen opened the first coal mine in Huerfano County. Walsenburg was named after him, and he was the town's first mayor.

A. L. Levy. A. L. Levy was one of Walsenburg's first merchants.

Walsenburgs leading citizens in the 70's. Captain James Thompson, John Chapell, John Albert, Fred Walsen, T. L. Greesy, A. R. Campbell, Charles Mazzone, Isaac Dailey, Henry Strange, Frank Duhme, John H. Brown, August Sporleder.

"In 1910 there was another flood in Walsenburg and considerable water flowed down Main Street from one side of the street to the other."

La Veta*

The beginning of the town of La Veta was in 1862, when Colonel John M. Francisco, Henry Daigre, and Hiram Basquez built a fort on the site of the present town. This fort was of adobe, built around a square in which was a well. This inside square was 100 feet each way. The buildings of the fort enclosed the square completely except for a wide entrance in the middle of the north side. This entrance was closed by a heavy gate. The inner area was large enough to shelter wagons and stock against Indians and thieves. The buildings were one story high, with thick, dirt roofs, almost flat but sloping a little towards the inside, and with a parapet all around the outer edge for protection to riflemen who might be defending the fort against enemies. The north and west portions of this old fort are still standing and in use as dwellings. The southwest portion has been worked over by Mr. and Mrs. John Penne and made into a modern home. The north portion is very much as it must have been when it was

*History of La Veta Lodge No. 59, A. F. & A. M., La Veta, Colorado. By Bennett M. Stigall. January 1, 1950.

built except for the ravages of time. A monument now stands on the site of the well. This monument bears the following inscription:

1862 1926
THIS MARKS
THE FRANCISCO PLAZA
ERECTED FOR PROTECTION AGAINST INDIANS
PLACED ON SITE OF
THE FIRST PLAZA IN LA VETA
BY
LUERFANO CHAPTER
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
WALSENBURG, COLORADO

Henry Daigre was the first white man to settle in this area. Hiram Vasquez arrived in the spring of 1862, or, possibly 1863. When he arrived Henry Daigre was already on the ground with 16 herders, mostly Mexican and French. Colonel Francisco arrived in the fall of 1862.

Mountain Indians and Plains Indians were still in possession of most of the country around the land used by Francisco and Daigre, and there was often danger of attack by one or another of the tribes. In a few years the Indians were removed from the Cucharas country, first into the San Luis Valley, later farther west. But for a good many years bands of them used to come through and camp here and there. One old campsite was in what is now part of Levy Kincaid's hayfield, just below the highway as it goes up Pinyon Hill one mile north of La Veta. Another campsite was near the point on the La Veta - Cucharas Camps Highway that is now commonly called "The Three Bridges," just above the Casual Ranch.

In those early days there was an Indian trail which went up Indian Creek and over the Culebras. This was used in pioneer days to pack flour from Fort Garland. The present highway over La Veta Pass was not built until shortly before the railroad was built following the same route. (After a few years the railroad was moved from this first route to the one it now follows). This road over La Veta Pass was at first a toll road, the "Baldy Scott Toll Road," but was abandoned as a toll road after the railroad was built.

The railroad - narrow gauge - reached La Veta in 1876. The track ran up Main Street and past the Plaza. The depot was in the Plaza. The first telegraph was strung to the town in the same year. The first passenger train went up to La Veta Pass in June 1877.

The post office in La Veta was established in 1881. "Uncle Billy" Hamilton was the first postmaster. He lived in the Plaza and the post office was in the Plaza also. In the beginning the mail was brought in on horseback. It is said when the mail arrived "Uncle Billy" would spread it out on the floor and let each comer claw through the pile for his mail. However that may be, the amount of incoming mail was small.

The first school in La Veta was opened in 1875, in Martin's meadow, "near where the Walsenburg highway crosses the Cucharas, just below Pinyon Hill, almost on the site of the old Indian camping place. It was, of course, a one-room district school.

During these early years game was abundant around La Veta. It is reported that in 1862 there were in the area 14 buffalo, a big herd of antelope, plenty of deer, a few elk, and a few mountain sheep on the higher mountains. The buffalo, elk, and antelope were later killed off.

In the mountains, and even in the foothills, bear, both black and cinnamon, were common. There were occasional "grizzlies," too. Charley Mack, at least, killed a "silver tip" which must have been a grizzly. Wild goats were common in the woods and in rocky bluffs. Mountain lions were not uncommon.

Beaver and muskrat have always been common in this region. In the days of the "mountain men" much trapping for beaver and other fur-bearers was carried on, and the history of this activity would match in adventure and romance, in "tall tales" and exciting real history, the history of other great centers of trapping. John Albert was trapping along the Cucharas as early as 1834.

Old legends relate that the Spaniards carried on extensive mining operations in this region, particularly in the Spanish Peaks. The mining of Spaniards seems always to have meant the search for gold and silver. However, so far as any credible records show very little gold or silver has ever been found in this region.

From the beginning the leading industry of the region around La Veta has been the raising of cattle and sheep. In the very early days the cattle were mostly, if not altogether, Texas longhorns. Often herds were driven in from the south to be fattened on the ranges around La Veta. In more recent times, Herefords have supplanted the old-time inferior breeds, and a number of ranches have grown into national reputation for their herds of pure-bred Herefords.

From 1876 to 1882 La Veta was governed by a Board of Trustees, of which the first chairman was Colonel John M. Francisco. In 1882 the town became a municipality and elected G. E. McComb its first mayor. By that time the Indians were gone, and the little town began to take on new life.

In our pioneer period evildoers were often dealt with very summarily. There was, as in other regions, a certain amount of "rustling" of cattle and stealing of horses. The ranchmen had an informal association for the suppression of such depredations, and when such crimes showed up the ranchmen were called out to help with the search for the stolen property and to catch the criminals. After such a search had been carried out the men guilty were likely to disappear and to be remembered only by their demise on some convenient cottonwood tree. At times even a pinyon might be made to serve. The last "mob hanging" took place in 1881, when a certain Del McCrumb was strung up on a pinyon tree near where the Abeyta bridge now stands. This was about six miles east of town, near where Highway 160 crosses North Veta Creek.

In 1903 an electric plant was installed in our town, chiefly for the purpose of furnishing light for the town. Current was produced by a water mill about half a mile northwest of town. In 1917 the electric system was hooked up with the larger plant located at Trinidad, and since that time all current has been obtained from the Trinidad plant.

As early as the late 1870's La Veta had a newspaper. That original newspaper disappeared long ago, and its files have also disappeared. "The Huerfano Herald" was published in La Veta from 1871 to 1873. It was the only newspaper in the county in those days. At the end of its third year it moved to Walsenburg. These old papers contain many a story of mining ventures, murders, elections, social affairs, school reports, business activities that reflects the pioneer conditions that prevailed in this country in those years. The advertisements indicate a very active commercial life. There were more businesses in the town at that time than there are now.

It is not certain whether or not there was a newspaper in La Veta between 1883 and the late 1890's. The "La Veta Advertiser" was first issued in 1895.

The water system of the town was installed in 1904, with two reservoirs a mile southwest of the town on much higher ground, so that a high pressure is maintained. The sewer district was created in 1921. For some years prior to 1938 Main Street had been macademized with crushed shale and rock. But in 1938 Highway 11 and Main Street were paved with blacktop from the junction with Highway 160, five miles east of town, to the south end of Main Street. Some of the side streets are paved with crushed rock. In 1937 the school plant, of which the original unit was built in 1911, was enlarged and improved by the addition of a gymnasium and a front corridor together with some working over of the interior of the building to make it serve the needs of the community more effectively.

The Baptists were the first denomination to organize their congregation. They organized in 1872. Their first building was located about a half-a-mile north of the present railroad, on the flat near where Highway 111 crosses the Cucharas, as you go toward Walsenburg. It was built in 1874. In a few years the center of town had become fixed about where it is now. The Baptists moved their building from the old location to its present site in 1877.

The methodist congregation was organized in 1881. The first church building of the congregation was located on the north side of Francisco Street, half way between Main Street and Birch Street. (This building was later used as a cheese factory). It was built in 1881 of adobe, later covered with weather boarding. In 1927 the Methodists built a handsome brick church on Main Street.

For many years the Catholics of La Veta worshiped in St. Mary's Church in Walsenburg, indeed until about 1938. They then began having services in La Veta. At first Mass was said in Strangers Hall, a short distance west of the hotel. When this building was taken over for business purposes Mass was said for a time in Kincaid Hall, over Kincaid's "Old Reliable" general store. In 1944 they began construction of a large, imposing church on south Main Street. This building is of adobe and timber, and the best southwestern style in architecture. Mass was first said in this building in 1949, and is still being said by an assistant pastor from St. Mary's Church, there being no resident pastor.

The Presbyterians of our community organized in 1881. For some years they met in various places, sometimes in homes, sometimes in some public place. This group was small but very earnest. For a number of years they had no pastor, but some member of the congregation acted as leader. About 1893 they built a church, the one which they still use.

The Seventh-day Adventists organized as a congregation about the year 1895. They built their church building not long after that time. Their congregation numbered about 40.

Early La Veta Settlers*

Henry Daigre. Henry Daigre was born in St. Hermas Province, Quebec, about 15 miles from Montreal, in the year 1832. The first fifteen years of his life were spent in his native locality, but eventually the restless spirit of youth took him to the state of New York, where he secured employment in a store. In 1853 he went to Louisiana, later to Nebraska. In 1857 he drove an ox team from Leavenworth, Kansas, to Fort Bridger, Utah. He joined a battalion for fighting the Mormons. In June, 1858, he was honorably discharged, and in 1860 he drove a team to Fort Garland, which was then a part of New Mexico, and remained with Colonel Francisco. The next year these two men located on the present site of La Veta, where they built the plaza and raised a crop of wheat. Mr. Daigre spent some time afterwards in Mexico and Florida.

He took an active part in community affairs, being county treasurer in 1873, county judge in 1877, and acted as deputy sheriff and deputy assessor. He was twice mayor of La Veta. At the time of the first railroad he and Colonel Francisco owned over 1700 acres of land and donated the right-of-way, site for depot, etc., besides 200 acres for a town site. He died on March 22, 1902.

Hiram W. Vasquez. Hiram Vasquez was a son of Louis Vasquez, partner of Jim Bridger in trade with the Indians of Wyoming. He was born about 1839 or 1840. His birthplace is given as Independence, Missouri. About 1842 his father moved from western Missouri to Fort Bridger, Wyoming, where he was later kidnapped by a band of Shoshone Indians. When he was eight or nine years old his Indian band made a trip to the mountains above Salt Lake City, then only a small village. He begged the Indians to take him into town but they refused. After the party had left the Camp, "Hi" slipped off and went to town on his own account. He was picked up by a white man who could tell he was a white child in spite of his Indian makeup. He was restored to his parents and they moved back to Missouri. He came West again in 1862 or 1863 to escape the draft in the Civil War. Soon after he arrived in La Veta he began working with Francisco and Daigre. By 1865 the number of cattle in the Cuchara Valley had grown until during the year and the two years preceding it, 6,000 head are reported to have been driven to Fort Bascom and sold to the army. Hiram Vasquez handled these drives, the cattle being owned by St. Vrain, Francisco, and Daigre. A cow and a calf sold for \$15, a five-year steer for \$20. Vasquez worked for and with Francisco and Daigre for two or three years. For a time he farmed in the upper Cuchara Valley.

In 1866 he took up a ranch in the Apishapa Valley and continued to operate that ranch until his return to La Veta about 1902. He died in La Veta, June 7, 1939 and is buried in the La Veta cemetery.

The mettle of the man is shown by a story which he told me of his experience during a time he ran sheep in the Mesa de Mapa country east of Trinidad. This was while the so-called war between the cattle and the sheep men was going on in southern Colorado. (This war never became so bitter in this region as it did in Wyoming and other regions). One day his Mexican sheep herder came in to their main camp and reported that a committee of cattle men had come to him and warned him that they had to take their sheep out of that country right away or suffer the consequences. The herder was badly scared. He told the herder to move the sheep down into the canyon where they would be hard to reach without coming past the main camp. He told him to sit tight until the cattlemen paid him a visit.

*History of La Veta Lodge No. 59, A.F. & A.M., La Veta, Colorado. By Bennett M. Stigall. January 1, 1950.

In a few days a party of the cattlemen came to their camp and told Hi that he had to get out. They were pretty ugly about it, making dire threats. Hi said he had his camp in a place well sheltered by cliffs and rocks, a place from which it would be very hard to dislodge him, and which could be defended by one man against a good-sized bunch. He said he had plenty of supplies on hand and also plenty of ammunition for guns. "Now, see here," he told the cattlemen, "this is my camp. This is where I am running my sheep. You'll have to kill me before you run my sheep out or kill them. You know right where to find me. Come on and try to drive me out just as soon as you feel like it. That's the word with the bark on it." The cattlemen never came back, and he never heard from them again. (See under Indian Battles for other exploits of Miram Vasquez).

Colonel John M. Francisco. Colonel Francisco made his first trip across the plains in the summer of 1839. Coming to Santa Fe, New Mexico, from there he went on south into Old Mexico, but Mexico did not welcome Americans in those days. He came back to Santa Fe and thence returned to Missouri, soon after going to Wisconsin for about a year. He then returned to Missouri and engaged in trading in St. Louis, with a few trips to the southwest to trade with the Indians. In the spring of 1847 he returned to the West with a large outfit going to Santa Fe. He located in Taos for several years, supplying American troops with grain, hay, and beef. In 1851 he located at Old Fort Massachusetts, in Costilla County, remaining there until the spring of 1862. Having purchased land from the Vigil-St. Vrain he located on the present site of La Veta, building an adobe fort. Here he, in company with Henry Daigre, farmed extensively for several years, or until the arrival of the white settlers, who forcibly seized his lands and disputed his title. The case was carried to the courts, and after several years of litigation only a portion of his original purchase was confirmed to him by the government. After the coming of the railroad he retired from active life, leading a life of quiet content among his fellow citizens, so quiet and unassuming that many failed to perceive his true value as a man and the nobleness of his character.

In the death of Colonel Francisco, Colorado loses one of her most interesting characters. His active life in the state covers that interesting period which marks the transformation of a trackless wilderness into an industrial empire of civilization and progress. He came to the West when it was peopled only by the savages in wigwams, with an occasional settlement of the rude civilization of the Mexicans, and became an active figure in the commerce of the early days, bringing civilizing influences that made this wilderness a garden of plenty. He was associated with many of the historical men of those early days, and enjoyed their confidence and esteem, and materially aided them in their work for the West.

He died at La Veta, Colorado, March 10, 1902.

William B. Hamilton. Uncle Billy Hamilton, as he was known to people throughout this region, was born in Westport, Missouri, in 1845. In 1862 his father moved the family across the plains to California, where they stayed two years. About 1865 Uncle Billy went to New Mexico with an ox team. He then returned to Missouri. For a time he was in the business of freighting in Kansas, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado. His first visit to Colorado was in 1867. That year he wintered his cattle in the Arkansas Valley and was so pleased with the results that he began raising cattle in the region north of the Spanish Peaks.

He was the first postmaster of La Veta, which was then known as Spanish Peaks post office. He was appointed to this office in 1871. In 1891 he was elected mayor of Pueblo, being in the livery and transfer business. With the advent of the automobile, he went back to ranching, this time on the upper St. Charles River in Pueblo County. In 1930 he retired from ranching and moved back to La Veta, living once more in the Plaza. He died in La Veta November 18, 1935.

Joseph Kaylor Kincaid. Joseph Kincaid was born in Morganton, North Carolina, January 2, 1853. When he became twenty-one years old his father gave him a mule, which he sold for cash with which to buy a ticket for the West. He worked with a road construction crew for a short time and then came to La Veta from Denver, part way by ox and team, and the rest of the way behind a team of horses, arriving here in March, 1874. For awhile he hauled freight from Pueblo, the nearest railroad town, to Taos, New Mexico, and other points west. He did this for about a year and then returned to La Veta and bought out a claim about five miles down the creek from La Veta.

William Thomas Sharp. Tom Sharp, as he was known to all his friends was born in Marion County, Missouri, July 30, 1838, and grew up in that state. In 1861 he came west in the hope that this would benefit his health. For about seven years he traveled over the West, working at a great variety of jobs, trying most of the kinds of work that the West offered at that time - placer mining, freighting, hunting and trapping. His travels took him as far north as British Columbia, where he had a part in the mining excitement of that country. He worked on the building of the Union Pacific Railroad. He came to Durango Park and settled near the present town of Gardner where he raised fine horses. He died December 24, 1929.

Robert D. Willis. Robert Willis came to Colorado from New York state. His ranch was two miles south of La Veta. He sold the ranch to James Hamilton. Later Albert Farks bought part of it, and it now is commonly known as the "Albert Farks Place." He moved to California in the late '30's.

Beauregard Wise. General Beauregard Wise was from the South. Little is known of him as he moved from La Veta in the late '30's.

J. Dawson Tracy. J. Dawson Tracy came to Colorado from Parsons, Kansas. He was a freight conductor on the D. & R. G. W. R. R. for some years. He was at one time post master of La Veta. He filed on a homestead west of La Veta at one time, but never lived on the claim. He moved to California about 1906 and continued in the railroad business.

Charles M. Mack. Charles M. Mack, known to everyone as "Charley Mack," was born in Georgia, but moved to Arkansas. He owned considerable land up Cuchara Valley and lived on what is now the "Vernon Place." He moved to Arizona in 1912 and later moved to California, where he died in 1941. He is spoken of as a fine man and a great joker by those who remember him. The following is a story told about him. Once Charley's preacher was to spend the night with him. Not long before that Charley had killed a bear and skinned it leaving the head on the hide. Just before bedtime that night Charley excused himself and left the room. He slipped around and fixed that bear skin so that the head was lying on the window sill of the preacher's room in a very lifelike manner, looking as if it were just

coming into the room. Showing the preacher to his room, Charley let him go in ahead. The preacher set down his lamp, spied the bear, and - scared out of a year's growth - came rushing out yelling, "Look, there's a bear coming into the room."

Julius G. Krueger. Julius G. Krueger came to La Veta from Illinois in 1874 and homesteaded what is now the Jim Falk Ranch. Before coming to La Veta he freighted between Denver and Cheyenne, Wyoming. One trip his outfit was attacked and looted. He saved his life by crawling under the neck of a dead mule and feigning death. His helper saved himself by pulling a dead man over himself. He left La Veta in 1904 and died in Boulder, Colorado, March 19, 1916.

Fred Pischel. Fred Pischel came to La Veta from Chicago, Illinois in 1877. He and Mr. Spielmann bought and operated the first "grist mill" in La Veta. He was the first county superintendent of schools of the county. He was also the first bandmaster of the La Veta band. After leaving La Veta he operated sawmills in Kentucky very successfully. He died in 1902 at Chicago.

Samuel L. Strange. Samuel L. Strange was born in South Carolina in 1833. He spent some time in Tennessee, then in Illinois, later in southern Missouri. He came to La Veta in 1879. Until 1880 he was a schoolteacher. He was several times town clerk of La Veta. With Virgil Banard and Reverend A. H. Quillian he founded the La Veta Methodist Church. He moved to California in 1897 and died there in 1902.

Albert Phillips. Albert Phillips was born in Georgia in 1820. He must have been one of the Georgia Colony which came to our region in the early 1870's. He lived on what is now the George Drury ranch. He is spoken of as one of the finest men anybody ever knew. He died in 1902 on his trip back to his old home in Georgia.

Ransom A. Hayes. Ransom A. Hayes was born in Caldwell County, North Carolina, in 1845. He lived in La Veta and then moved to California in 1893. He died in Bakersfield, California, February 14, 1917.

Fenton L. Martin. Fenton L. Martin was born in Martinsburg, Virginia, in 1833. His family moved to Missouri in 1836. He came to La Veta in 1872. His ranch was the one now owned by Adolph Goemmer. For some time he ran a meat market in La Veta. He moved to California in 1905. While on a visit to Colorado he died in Redwing, September 1, 1920.

John Herbin. John Herbin was born in France and came to Nova Scotia, where he lived for some years. He came to Alamosa in the early 1880's and lived there for two years working at his trade of watchmaker and jeweler. He then moved to La Veta and lived on a ranch about two miles up the Cucharas from town. There he carried on his ranching and also worked at his trade of watchmaker and jeweler. Later he preempted the ranch. He died in 1893.

La Veta

The following account of La Veta was published in the World-Independent, July 27, 1954.

"La Veta was founded in 1862 by Colonel John Francisco, then about 42 years old, and Henry Daigre, then about 30. The two men had spent about 10 years in the army, fighting Indians in the San Luis Valley and New Mexico, and other things, and had decided to settle down. They chose La Veta, a beautiful level piece of ground in a wide sweeping bend of the Cucharas River where to the west was the Culebras and to the south the Huajatollas.

"Colonel Francisco had secured a grant to 1700 acres upon which this scion of one of the first families of Virginia agreed to erect a fort which was to protect all from the Utes and other hostile Indians. This in spite of the fact the nearest neighbor of any kind was some 20 miles away.

"Francisco had, a couple of years before, left Fort Garland where he and Daigre had been army storekeepers and had opened a store in Pueblo where he had built the first house of any size.

"In 1862, after receiving the grant, he and Daigre, a Frenchman, again joined forces and in partnership built the fort and a house and began to farm at La Veta.

"Daigre was born in Canada and had moved to New Orleans, then up the Mississippi and Missouri to Independence, driving ox-teams for the army and mule teams to Fort Garland, learning English en route.

"Within a few years they were raising bumper crops on a thousand acres, and both had become wealthy. They sold lots to whoever wanted one and before long the settlement grew.

"The railroad came into La Veta, bringing one of the first booms. It was a narrow gauge railroad and the path it followed into the San Luis Valley is now the highway over La Veta Pass, built after the railroad was rerouted.

"The town was incorporated on October 9, 1876 and the first trustees were Francisco, George W. Morton, Samuel Todd, J. R. Brink and Joseph Baker, according to local historian S. M. Andrews.

"The town was named Francisco Plaza and later changed to La Veta, which means "the vein." The original fort built in 1862 still stands in La Veta and is used as a dwelling place."

Mining Activities*

Starting on October 4, 1948, and up to the present time, Vanadium Corporation of America, with headquarters at Naturita, Colorado, have leased 28 mining claims in one group, with several more expected to be added in the near future. All of this group are located on East Indian Creek, Huerfano County.

Some of the properties in this group were prospected for gold, silver, and copper as early as 1890, with some of the old location notices, dated about this time, in evidence some years later and among the names of the locators was the name "Creede," who in making further investigations in the Rockies, especially farther west, made a real discovery, and the town of Creede was named for him.

Starting in 1896 and continuing for a few years, several properties were worked by the owners, some of the ore was processed and many tons were stock-piled near the workings.

Among the pioneer prospectors in the district were Captain Coleman and his two sons, Ed and Al, Jim Barnes, Ed. Collier, R. T. Price, A. W. Scott, Daniel Hope, and for the last 25 years, R. B. Linscott has been doing development work.

The Coleman brothers removed a large sheet of practically pure copper from their property and several other rich "pockets" of copper were removed from other properties. There was also a fair showing of gold and silver, also the returns from a mill run showed a value of \$33.00 to the ton in something that was little known at that time, called vanadium. When further investigation was made regarding this element it was found the ore would have to be shipped to Germany for treatment, therefore the costs of handling were prohibitive.

One element which is now at the top of the list and known, if only by name, to practically everyone, is Uranium, and although no rich deposits of this element have been found in this district, the analysis of many samples has shown this element present, in a few cases, sufficient to pay to work and gives promise of developing into a real deposit.

*La Veta Advertiser, January 14, 1949.

Editors Note: During the summer of 1950 the Vanadium Corporation of America did extensive exploratory work on several claims in Price Canyon using "diamond drills." So far as uranium is concerned the element occurred in such negligible quantities as to preclude any exploitation activities.

Bull's-Eye Claim*

The old Bull's Eye claim is on the east gulch of the north face of West Spanish Peak, at an altitude of over 11,000 feet. This mine containing gold, silver, lead, zinc, and copper was abandoned in the 1890's. This claim is now being worked by Albert Parks of La Veta, Colorado who was 82 years old in 1951.

The main mine shows diggings have extended at least 1,200 feet on five levels, with the main level going into the mountain 700 feet. A bottom level, 200 feet long, is almost a solid mass of ice. The rails of years gone by remain intact and are still usable.

It was here that Senator James Harrison of Iowa, who later became Secretary of the Interior, and Robert T. Lincoln, son of Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War, became interested in the Whale lode in 1879. Their first shipment of ore to the Pueblo smelter was not made, however, until June 30, 1881.

In 1881, Senator Harlan and his associates organized the Mountain Monarch Silver Mining Co., now known as the Bull's Eye; incorporated at \$500,000 with stock valued at \$20 per share. They worked through many difficulties and their men dared the cold, wintry blasts to reach the ore. Things went well for seven or eight years when suddenly everything was abandoned, probably due to the panic.

According to information from the old pages of the Huerfano Herald of La Veta, the old corporation was successful while it operated. Whether the claim was worked out is not known, but Albert Parks apparently believes to the contrary.

*Pueblo Chieftain, 1951.

Sunset Mine*

As we go to press we learn of a rich strike having been made in the Sunset Mine in the Spanish Peaks. The vein is jointly owned by Judge Toffelmire, Frank D. McHolland, G. W. Robinson, and John Shank: is 40 inches between rock walls, nearly solid galena with grey copper that is plainly visible. Parties having attempted to jump the lead in the absence of workmen Sunday, the precaution was taken to place a guard over it last night.

*Printed in the La Veta Advertiser of January 26, 1923, from a copy of the Huerfano Independent printed in La Veta in 1877.

Maxwell Grant*

One of the greatest land-holders in America was Lucien Benjamin Maxwell, who came to Colorado from Illinois and trapped with Kit Carson, fought with Fremont and herded sheep for many years. He drove sheep into the Sacramento Valley of California and sold them to the miners at fabulous prices. Instantly rich, he returned to Colorado and bought from Charles Beaubien and Guadalupe Miranda a huge tract that had been deeded by Mexico. Although the land was bought in 1864 and became known as the Maxwell Grant, it was not until 1887 that the federal court finally decided that Maxwell owned 1,714,764 acres, starting just south of Trinidad and extending to Springer, New Mexico. The huge grant along the Red River was three times as large as Rhode Island.

Maxwell erected a castle which in reality became the gathering place for 100 miles around. There were free lodgings and meals, with one dining room for women and another for men. Maxwell rode around his land in a Concord coach drawn by eight horses. But one day gold was discovered on his land. The gamblers, prospectors, claim-jumpers and hangers-on flocked in. Maxwell became sick of the turmoil and sold his grant to an English syndicate for \$1,250,000. He invested money in the Texas and Pacific Railroad and a Santa Fe bank, but finally lost everything, dying in poverty in Fort Sumner, New Mexico in 1876.

*The La Veta Advertiser, July 1, 1943. (From the Treasure Chest)

Trinchera Ranch*

The 240,000-acre Trinchera Ranch, largest private estate in Colorado, is west of La Veta Pass and is part of the original Sangre de Cristo Grant given by the Mexican government to Stephen Louis Lee and Narcisco Beaubien in 1843. Beaubien was only 13 years old at the time. He and Lee were killed four years later in the same Pueblo Indian uprising that cost the life of Charles Bent, New Mexico's territorial governor. Beaubien's share of the estate passed to his father Charles, who owned much of the Maxwell grant near Trinidad. Lee's half of the estate was bought by Charles Beaubien for \$100. When the older Beaubien died most of the Sangre de Cristo Grant was bought by William Gilpin, Colorado's first territorial governor, and his associates.

*The La Veta Advertiser, December 16, 1943. (From the Treasure Chest).

Raton Pass*

The first highway across Raton Pass from Trinidad into New Mexico was built in 1852 by Richens Lacy Wooton. He drove 2,000 sheep from Colorado to the Sacramento Valley and sold them to the California gold miners for \$50,000. He used part of the money to build the Raton toll road. Everybody paid for the use of the road except Indians and posses seeking cattle rustlers. When the Santa Fe railroad wanted to build along his route it offered Wooton \$50,000. He declined in favor of his own proposal for a lifetime pass on the railroad for

members of his family and \$25.00 per month. Uncle Dick died in 1893, but his widow received the money until her death in 1916. The payments continued to surviving children, being increased to \$50 in 1925, and to \$75 in 1930.

*The La Veta Advertiser, December 2, 1949. (From the Treasure Chest)

Vigil-St. Vrain Grant*

After 23 years of almost constant litigation, the title of 3,000,000 acres of land, embraced in the Vigil-St. Vrain Mexican grant, has been declared to be in the United States, and all purchasers of the land from the United States are now secure in their titles. In 1845 Vigil, a Spaniard, and St. Vrain, a Frenchman, secured a grant of one million acres of land from the Mexican government. By some hocus pocus Vigil and St. Vrain took up 4,000,000 acres, and from time to time they sold large tracts from the extra 3,000,000 acres, giving title without interference from the Mexican government, but retaining for themselves the 1,000,000 acres. When after the Mexican war, the state was ceded to the United States, on condition that the original grants should be respected, the United States government started an investigation and discovered that the Vigil and St. Vrain grant was illegal.

*The La Veta Advertiser, October 27, 1950. From the 40-year ago column.

Weather

Since the founding of La Veta considerable damage has occurred in the Spanish Peaks area due to weather conditions, including wind, snow and rain. During the summer months heavy rain storms occur, not only in the mountains but also on the plains around them. These storms deposit several inches of rain during a short period and extensive damage occurs to roads and bridges. Gullies are common over the area as a result of these storms.

The following article was published in the La Veta Advertiser of January 2, 1951 in the 40-year ago column:

"Wednesday morning La Veta experienced one of the worst wind storms ever remembered. Light and telephone service was demoralized, chimneys blown down, buildings moved, and trees blown down. Harry Hamilton's barn was completely destroyed, and the school house so badly shaken that it is considered unsafe for further use. In the country F. C. Sager's fine \$1206 barn just completed was completely demolished.

"A committee of responsible citizens examined the school building following the wind storm and their decision was to completely abandon the building. The term will be cut short a month and rooms have been rented to accommodate the grades for the rest of the school year. Mr. Powell will teach in Stranger Hall; Miss Ritter will go into the primary building with Miss Capps and Miss Vories will occupy the Stranger store. A place is yet to be found for Miss Lester's room.

"The depot on the summit of La Veta Pass was blown down by the high wind Wednesday."

Snow and rainfall at Cucharas Camps for the period March, 1909 to March, 1914 is reported as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Water Inches</u>	<u>Snow Inches</u>
1909	21.35	108
1910	15.02	73
1911	23.89	127
1912	28.51	204
1913	27.24	171
1914	25.00	97

The snow was measured after each storm and does not represent a measurement at any one time.

A heavy snow storm occurred the first part of November in 1946. After three days of continuous snow 50 inches lay on the ground in La Veta and over 60 inches at Cucharas Camps. Roads were completely blocked for many days. Some livestock, deer and other wildlife perished because of the deep snow and cold weather.

During February, 1948 another big snow storm occurred in La Veta with close to four feet of snow on the ground. This snow lay on the ground for four or five weeks. Drifts of snow over 20 feet deep covered the flat north of La Veta on Pinyon Hill, mostly in the Highway to Walsenburg.

On January 24, 1950 a heavy wind storm occurred in the La Veta area. The wind blew down the 4-H barn and one end of the Colorado Excelsior and Mill Co. sawmill, both constructed of cinder blocks. The wind also blew down a number of trees and tore roofing paper from roofs of buildings around town.

This was also one of the driest years for this area, with no irrigation water available for most of the ranches. Water for sprinkling lawns in La Veta was entirely shut off on August 20. The following year was also very dry in the La Veta area.

During the latter part of January, 1951 a few days of severe cold weather was followed by a sudden rise in temperature. Two or three weeks later the trees within a narrow belt just outside the forest boundary appeared to be dead as the needles suddenly turned brown and red. This belt extended from Echo Creek west to the Cucharas and then along the rock wall from White Creek to Sulphur Springs; also an area in the Spanish Peaks district at the junction of Tracy and Indian Creeks and in the lodgepole pine type at the head of Indian Creek. All species of conifers were affected with actual kill occurring in Douglas fir and white fir, and some in lodgepole pine and ponderosa pine. The winter kill was especially severe in Wade Creek and Barnes Canyon and at the junction of Tracy and Indian Creeks. In these areas the surviving trees are

very sparsely foliated (1952 observations). It is also believed that winter kill is one of the causes for spike-topped trees in the ponderosa pine pole type.

In some of the areas of winter kill a marked increase in the ponderosa pine bark beetles was observed especially in the younger stands of ponderosa pine.

During the middle of May, 1955 a heavy rain and snow storm occurred in this area with over 12 inches of moisture falling at Cucharas Camps. Due to the heavy snow eight or ten cabins were almost completely demolished at Cucharas Camps and a few in the Wahatoya summer home group. Considerable breakage occurred to trees in both areas. The Cucharas River became a raging torrent with all of the side streams in flood stage. The high water persisted for a week or two, but no extensive damage was reported. Several small bridges were washed out over the Cucharas River in La Veta due to the high water.

The bridge over Middle Creek just west of La Veta washed out during the summer of 1955 and was replaced with a steel structure with concrete abutments.

The following is a record of the depth and water content of the snow at Blue Lakes since 1938. The readings are an average for 24 measurements over the course.

Year	April 1		May 1	
	Depth Inches	Water Content Inches	Depth Inches	Water Content Inches
1938	20.4	4.4	12.7	6.2
1939	13.4	3.3	3.8	1.4
1940	17.1	5.9	5.4	1.7
1941	40.7	11.0	48.9	16.6
1942	22.0	5.9	37.2	13.5
1943	10.0	2.7	0.8	0.2
1944	22.5	6.2	44.7	13.9
1945	29.8	9.1	35.2	11.9
1946	25.7	7.0	0.0	0.0
1947	24.2	8.3	31.3	11.7
1948	29.7	8.9	12.9	4.7
1949	39.5	10.3	20.4	7.2
1950	10.0	3.2	3.4	1.0
1951	22.0	5.8	17.6	6.0
1952	34.2	13.2	21.1	8.5
1953	16.8	5.0	7.5	2.1
1954	25.7	6.6	11.2	2.2
1955	12.3	4.4	8.7	3.2
1956	12.9	4.6	8.4	3.0

On May 31, 1957, a severe spring storm occurred in this area. Run-off was extremely heavy and considerable damage occurred to the Indian Creek road within the forest. Stream banks were severely eroded as a result of the heavy runoff.

SPANISH EXPEDITIONS IN COLORADO

After the conquest of Mexico the Spaniards made infrequent trips to the north, especially New Mexico and Colorado and these trips furnish a background of events that happened long before these states became a part of the United States. This history is a lecture given by Mr. Irving Howbert in Colorado Springs and published in the Colorado Springs Telegraph in 1922.

The history of Colorado covers two distinct periods, the Spanish and American. The Spanish period had its beginning little more than a century after the discovery of America, and was supposed to have ended at the time of the Louisiana Purchase, which event marked the beginning of the American period so far as the country north of the Arkansas River is concerned.

Although the Spanish period cannot properly be said to have begun until after the first permanent settlement in New Mexico had been made, a brief recital of principal events preceding that time may be of interest.

The conquest of Mexico began in 1519 and ended in 1521, the Spaniards in complete and permanent control of the country. During the 15 years following the conquest the Spaniards explored and took possession of most of the country between the City of Mexico and the Rio Grande, and were continually reaching out northward into new and unexplored territory. As the Spaniards neared the region adjacent to the present northern boundary of Mexico in their northern movement, they began to hear through the natives of a country farther north where there were large towns with many inhabitants. Later these reports were confirmed by Cabeza de Vaca and his three comrades, sole survivors of the ill-fated Narvaez expedition to Florida, who, after eight years of wandering in Texas, most of the time prisoners of one tribe or another, escaped and finally reached the Spanish settlements of northern Mexico. Cabeza de Vaca reported that the Indians of Texas had told him of "populous towns with big houses" in a region to the westward of that country.

The fever for exploration, which by this time had somewhat abated, was again greatly stimulated by these reports. The astonishing discoveries previously made in Mexico and South America had left an impression on the minds of the Spanish people of Mexico that possibly, in the great unexplored region to the north there were other countries just as remarkable as any already discovered. The stories told by de Vaca and the natives reawakened this hope and resulted, after some delay, in a decision to organize and send out a large and completely equipped expedition to explore and take possession of this northern region, the expedition to be under the command of General Francisco Vasque de Coronado, an officer of ability and large experience, who at the time was governor of northern Mexico. However, as the work of organizing and equipping an expedition of the size contemplated would take many months, it was decided to have, in the meantime, a small party make a preliminary reconnaissance of that part of the unexplored region lying nearest to the settlements of Mexico: Father Marco de Nizza, his companion, Father Honoratus, a number of natives, and Estivanico, a Moor, who had been with Cabeza de Vaca in his wanderings, and who was taken along as a guide because of his knowledge of the Indians.

The party left Culiacan, Sinaloa, Mexico, March 7, 1539, and reached the Zuni Indian towns in southwestern New Mexico without great difficulty, but

soon after trouble occurred with the natives in which Estivanico, the Moor, was killed.

Father Marco de Nizza, prior to this, had heard of other large towns to the north and east, but now fearing further difficulty with the natives, directed an immediate return to Mexico, the party reaching Culiacan in due time without further trouble.

Father de Nizza's report to the authorities gave a very exaggerated account of the importance of the places he had seen and heard of, which made it easy for Coronado to quickly enlist the full number of men needed for his expedition.

Coronado started northward in 1540 with a large, imposing and well-equipped command, composed of 300 soldiers and 800 Indians. During the next two years he explored the whole of New Mexico, and probably a part of Colorado. He captured all of the seven cities of Cibola, as the seven pueblo towns of New Mexico were then called, and brought under subjection the inhabitants of all the region now embraced in the state of New Mexico.

With a large part of his command, Coronado later made a journey across the plains northeastward in search of the fabled city of Quivari, and, on his way, he crossed the Arkansas river at a point probably not far from the present town of Wichita. He finally found the object of his search somewhere near the center of the present state of Kansas, but, instead of being a rich and populous city, he found it only a collection of rude Indian huts. Greatly disappointed at the results of his long and tiresome journey, Coronado, with his principal officers, returned direct to New Mexico, the main body following the route taken in coming out. In taking this direct course, Coronado and his party, on their way, must have traversed the southeastern part of the present state of Colorado, and, undoubtedly, were the first white men to come within its boundaries.

Coronado spent some months in New Mexico after his return, being loth to return to Mexico on account of his failure to accomplish more than a small part of what had been expected of him. However, in April, 1542, he plucked up courage, and, at the head of his command, started back to the City of Mexico, which he reached in due time, humiliated and discredited because of his failure.

In 1581 a mission was established on the Rio Grande River eight miles below the present town of Albuquerque, but the following year a relief party sent to the mission found that the priest had been killed and the mission destroyed. The relief party, after exploring the country to the eastward along the Pecos River, returned to Mexico.

Nothing further was done by Mexico in the way of exploration or settlement of New Mexico until 1598. In that year, Don Juan Onate, a wealthy citizen of Zacatecas, under the authority of the viceroy of Mexico, brought a colony of 130 Spanish families, 10 priests and a number of soldiers to New Mexico, which he located in the valley of the Chama River just above its junction with the Rio Grande. This settlement was about 60 miles south of the southern boundary of the present state of Colorado, and about 200 miles in an airline from Colorado Springs. This was nine years before the first settlement

of Virginia; 11 years before the first settlement on the Hudson River, and 22 years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth.

Those in charge of the new Spanish settlements almost immediately began the exploration of the surrounding country. One of these expeditions reported the discovery of gold in the San Luis valley, now a part of this state.

In the fall of 1598, Vincente Zaldivar, one of Onate's officers, with an exploring party, made a trip to the northeast, and must have passed through the southern part of Colorado. Onate, with a large party, crossed the plains to Quivari in 1601, and, in so doing, no doubt, also traversed southern Colorado for a considerable distance.

While the colony established by Onate was neither prosperous nor permanent at that point, his enterprise was the beginning of the permanent occupation and settlement of New Mexico and had a lasting effect upon that territory.

Bancroft, in his History of New Mexico, says that a report to the king of Spain, made in 1630, showed that there were at that time in New Mexico 25 missions, 50 priests and 60,000 Christianized natives, besides a considerable Spanish population. There is reason to believe that the Spaniards had, during the intervening time, explored and were familiar with all of southern Colorado, and much of northern Colorado and Wyoming.

Bandelier, who made an exhaustive study of the early history of this southwestern region, in a contribution to the Archaeological Institute of America, a few years ago, referring to the expedition of Marco de Nizza, Coronado and others says:

"Their practical result was not only the discovery, but the exploration of New Mexico and the country northeast of it, as far as the Arkansas River and beyond, at a time when the Atlantic coast of America was rarely visited and no Europeans had set foot on the shores where now stand the most populous cities of the new world."

There is a tradition, which is believed to have grown out of actual occurrences, that for many years prior to 1650, the Spaniards worked mines in the mountains 700 or 800 miles north of Santa Fe. According to the story, they had built houses and fortifications of stone and had constructed arrastras for milling the ores in the vicinity of the mines. Every year, a train laden with gold and rich furs would make its way to Santa Fe from this northern settlement, but about the year 1650, as the story goes, the natives made war upon the inhabitants, which caused it to be abandoned thereafter.

I have a map of the French possessions in America west of the Mississippi River published in 1718, that has marked on it, at the point where the Missouri River emerges from the Rocky Mountains, the following: "The Indians say that near this place the Spaniards ford the river on horseback, going to treat with some nations lying to the northwest, whence they bring back yellow iron, as they call it."

This indicates that the Spaniards were familiar with the country far to the north of Colorado at a very early date. However, there is much difficulty in giving more than a fragmentary history of New Mexico and surrounding country during the period from 1600 to 1680, which arises from the fact that

a rebellion of the natives occurred in 1680, which resulted in the killing or driving out of the country the entire Spanish population.

The natives held full sway during the next 10 years and were not entirely subdued until 1693. During that period they wrecked all churches, destroyed all records and everything throughout the entire territory that would remind them of the Spanish occupation.

In Volume 2 of Twitchell's "The Spanish Archives of New Mexico," the statement is made that only three documents relating to the official acts prior to the rebellion of 1680 remain. It is probably true that there are duplicate reports of all explorations and official acts during that period in the City of Mexico, and Madrid, Spain, as it was a requirement of the government that every expedition of importance be accompanied by a priest, who was supposed to keep a record and make out in triplicate a full report upon his return to Santa Fe, one report for Santa Fe, one for the city of Mexico, and one for Madrid, Spain. No doubt many of these records have been lost by negligence, and some of them of a date after 1700 may have been destroyed by the fire a number of years ago that burned some of the records in Santa Fe. It is possible that the reports of many expeditions into this region that we do not know about are in the Spanish archives of the City of Mexico or Madrid, Spain. It is more than likely that the future historians who have access to those records will find among them much of interest concerning those remote times.

Bandelier, who was the best authority on the history of Mexico, died two or three years ago, while on his way to Madrid, where he planned to make an examination of all records of the missing period in the government archives there pertaining to Mexico and New Mexico. I have no doubt, had he lived to carry out his plans, he would have brought to light many pages of most interesting history relating to the region we now occupy.

In 1716 the Utes and Comanches having attacked the town of Taos and some of the Spanish settlements, Governor Martinez sent Captain Serna northward into the present state of Colorado, and, at a point 120 miles north of Santa Fe, he attacked the Indians, killed a great number, taking many captives who were afterwards sold as slaves. The scene of this battle must have been in the extreme northern part of the San Luis valley of this state.

In 1712, Acting Governor Valverde led 105 Spaniards and 30 natives into the present state of Colorado on an expedition against the Utes and Comanches. The start was made September 15, the route was north with the sierra on the left to October 10, as the record says; therefrom October 11 to 20 down the Sto. Maria Magdalena thence eastward and southeast to the Rio Napaste. Here they met the Apaches from Cuartelejo; later they returned to New Mexico, having failed to come in contact with either Ute or Comanche. Some writers insist that Valverde's party in their outward journey traveled northeasterly across the plains, soon after reaching the southern boundary of the present state of Colorado, but it is difficult to understand why the record should state: "The route was north with sierra keeping the mountains on the left to October 10," unless the mountains were at least in sight. The further proof that their route was not far distant from the mountains is that they were seeking the Utes and Comanches; the home of the former being in the mountains, and the latter at that time were occupying the region along the eastern base of the mountains within the boundaries of the present state of Colorado.

Valverde's account of his expedition to the north mentions the Arkansas River under the name of the Rio Nepeste, which the Spaniards later shortened to Nepeste. The Arkansas was the name given by the French, and it was always known by that name in the French territory. The Platte River was variously mentioned under the name of the Rio Maria Magdalena, Rio Jesus Maria and Rio Chato, the Platte being the name given it by the French.

During his march to the northward after the Utes and Comanches, Governor Valverde found friendly Indians with gunshot wounds received in an engagement with the Pawnees. This he reported to the authorities in Mexico on his return. It was also learned that French traders had established trading posts in the Pawnee country, which was along or adjacent to the Platte River 200 or 300 miles east of the mountains, and were furnishing these Indians with guns and ammunition; bows and arrows having been their only weapons prior to that time. Fearing that this contact with the Pawnees might prove detrimental to the interests of the New Mexico settlements, the Spanish authorities of New Mexico in 1720 organized at Santa Fe a small, well equipped military expedition to visit the Pawnees, hoping in this way to counteract the influence of the French. According to Bandelier, the expedition started from Santa Fe on June of that year. It was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Villasur of the Spanish army, and was composed of 50 heavily armed Spaniards with a large number of Indian auxiliaries. The expedition was an imposing one for the time and was elaborately outfitted. With it, as an adviser and guide, was Captain Juan de Archiveque, a Frenchman who was one of the party that murdered the great French explorer, La Salle, in southwestern Texas, a number of years previous. After the murder, Archiveque escaped to the Spanish settlements of New Mexico, where he married, and later acquired a good deal of property, and by this time had reached a position of considerable prominence in the affairs of the province.

The expedition followed substantially the route taken by Valverde the previous year, keeping the mountains to the left of them so far as can be determined from the indefinite records of that time. The expedition eventually reached the Platte river at no great distance east of the mountains and then followed down the valley of the stream until they came in contact with the Pawnees. However, before a council could be held, the Pawnees surprised the Spaniards, killed the commanding officer and almost annihilated the party in the fight that ensued. Archiveque was among the killed, and, as no doubt there were Frenchmen with the Pawnees, it must have been a matter of great satisfaction to them that they were thus able to inflict punishment on the assassin of their noted countryman. A half dozen mounted men, among them two or three Indians of New Mexico saved themselves by flight; the Pawnees were not able to pursue them, not yet having acquired horses. These survivors after untold hardships, reached Santa Fe a month or two later. The tale of the awful disaster so disheartened the people of New Mexico that no further effort was made to counteract the influence of the French.

There is a strong probability that one or both of the expeditions I have described marched over the present townsite of Colorado Springs. One of my reasons for this belief is that from the earliest time of which we have any record, one of the principal trails from the settlements of New Mexico crossed the Arkansas river at the mouth of the Fontaine qui Bouille, and ran up the valley of that stream to a point a short distance below the mouth of Monument Creek, then up that stream and across the divide to Plum Creek, and down Plum Creek to the Platte river. This trail had been used for ages before the white settlers came. It was the line of least resistance, and the route,

it seems to me, that naturally would be taken by any party traveling northward along the eastern base of the mountains.

There are records of journeys into the present state of Colorado of various other parties from New Mexico during the middle and latter part of 1700 and the beginning of 1800, but many of them were unimportant, and are mentioned only to show that New Mexico kept in continuous touch with the region.

The San Juan and Gunnison regions of our state were explored by Juan Maria Rivera in 1761, and Escalante made an extended exploration of the same region and most of the western part of this state in 1776. Both were residents of New Mexico.

About the year 1780 a military outpost was established on Huerfano Creek not far from where it emerges from the mountains. A military campaign under command of Governor Anza of New Mexico against the Comanches was made up into the present state of Colorado in 1779. The command consisted of 645 soldiers and 259 Indians. Their course was north and northeast of Santa Fe for 95 leagues, or about 250 miles. They overtook the Comanches, killed the Comanche chief and 32 of the warriors. Their route took them into the Sierra Almagra, which was the Spanish name for the mountains west and southwest of Pikes Peak, and undoubtedly the battle occurred in that section.

In 1762 France ceded its Louisiana province to Spain, presumably to save it from being seized by England and it was held by that country until 1800, when it was transferred back to France. Three years later France sold it to the United States, and with it much territory that Spain insisted had belonged to New Mexico since the first settlement of that province.

The Spanish authorities of New Mexico, backed by the government of Spain, refused to recognize the validity of the sale of the territory in dispute, which extended north indefinitely from the Arkansas River, and in 1806 sent a military expedition north and eastward from Santa Fe, ostensibly for the purpose of inspecting all of the country as far north as the Platte region. The commanding officer also bore orders to oblige all parties or persons in the above specified countries, either to retire into the acknowledged territories of the United States, or to make prisoners of them and conduct them to Santa Fe.

While nothing was said concerning Lieutenant Pike's expedition, it is known that these Spanish troops were sent for the purpose of intercepting him, word having been received at Santa Fe that Pike's expedition was underway.

The officer in charge of the Spanish force was Lieutenant Malgares. The command consisted of 100 dragoons of the regular service and 500 militia of the province. Malgares marched east from Santa Fe several hundred miles where he met a band of Comanches and held a council with them; then the command went northeast across the country to the Arkansas river, where Lieutenant Malgares left 240 of his men with the lame and tired horses, while he proceeded with the rest to the principal village of the Pawnees, on the Republican River, in what is now central Kansas; there he was met by the chiefs and warriors of the grand Pawnees, held councils with the two nations and presented them with the flags and medals which he had brought for them. He had heard nothing of Lieutenant Pike, although the latter was then on his

way from the Missouri River. Seeing no reason for remaining longer, Malgares started back to Santa Fe. After reaching the Arkansas River, he marched up the south side of that stream to the mountains near the present town of Florence, in this state. He then went southward around the base of the mountains for a considerable distance and thence crossed over to Taos, whence he proceeded to Santa Fe, having accomplished nothing, as he still was in utter ignorance as to Pike's whereabouts.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Pike and his party, consisting of 23 men, were on their way westward, having left St. Louis July 15, 1806. They came up the Missouri River in smallboats and were more than a month in reaching Independence Landing, a few miles below the mouth of the Kansas River. They were delayed at this point in securing the requisite number of horses. The party started again September 1 with 15 pack horses, heavily loaded with supplies and equipment, and reached the Pawnee village on the twenty-fifth, traveling less than 10 miles a day.

Malgares and his soldiers had left the Pawnee village on their homeward journey three weeks previously.

After holding a council with the Pawnees and arranging friendly relations with them, Lieutenant Pike and party resumed their march October 7, and reached the Arkansas River October 10. From that point the party followed up the Arkansas river to the mouth of the Fontaine qui Bouille, where they arrived November 22. From this place, after building a low stockade on the bank of the Arkansas River for his men, Lieutenant Pike and three of his men, started from camp in an attempt to ascend the high peak that we now know as Pikes Peak, "which", as he says in his journal, "we conceived would be one day's march in order to be enabled from its pinnacle to lay down the various branches and positions of the country." Instead of following up the Fountain, Pike went across the country towards Turkey Creek, with the result that they reached the top of Cheyenne Mountain in the afternoon of the fourth day. Here Pike decided to abandon the attempt, saying in his journal that, even if they had reached its base, he didn't believe any human being could have ascended to its summit.

Pike and his companions on their return trip, reached camp the following day, one partridge and a piece of deer's rib, which the ravens had left them, being the only food they had eaten in 48 hours.

Lieutenant Pike and party resumed their march up the Arkansas River the following morning. From a point on the river a short distance from the present town of Canon City, the party went northwestward into South Park, and after wandering around in the park and on the headwaters of the Arkansas River almost a month, Pike and his party found themselves back again at the place where the Arkansas River emerges from the mountains.

The party took a new start from this point and went southwestward through the Wet Mountain Valley and across the Sangre de Cristo range into the San Luis Valley, almost freezing to death on the way. They then marched south down the valley a few days and camped, and a week or two later were made prisoners of Mexican troops and taken to Santa Fe. Pike's defense was that he did not know that he was in Mexican territory. Later the Mexican authorities took him to Chihuahua in old Mexico, where he arrived April 2, 1807. After being kept there for about a month he was returned in a roundabout way to the United States.

While Malgares and Pike were having their game of hide-and-seek, the Spanish authorities at Santa Fe were establishing picket stations at convenient places to watch the approaches to New Mexico by the Rio Almagre and the Rio Nepeste to prevent intrusions by the Americans.

I have a copy of a report made by a Spanish soldier in September, 1806, which says that he carried out a reconnaissance of the country adjacent to the confluence of the rivers Nepeste and Almagre without finding the slightest trace of the Americans, having gone over the ground, then betook himself to the "spring where the water rises" because of rumors that the Utes and Comanches were sure that the Americans had gone there. And, again finding the story untrue, he marched on to the river Chato, where he found Indians who told him that several small parties of Americans had been there, but none of them had gone across the river.

The Rio Nepeste was the Spanish name then in use of the Arkansas; the Rio Almagre of the Fountain; and the Rio Chato of the Platte; and the "spring where the water rises" refers to the springs of Manitou.

The only other incident of that period to which I have found any reference is in Dr. Jame's account of Long's expedition into this region in 1820, in which he says that at a point which I believe to be on the present site of Colorado Springs, the guide pointed out the identical place where a few years previous, he had been made a prisoner by Mexican troops, and later taken to Santa Fe.

The boundaries of Louisiana as ceded to the United States by Napoleon were very indefinite; the treaty itself, according to Chief Justice Marshall, having been couched in terms of studied ambiguity. Taking advantage of this ambiguity, the United States claimed about everything in sight.

After receiving \$15,000,000, the purchase price, France took little interest in the controversy and left the United States to settle the dispute as best it could. Meanwhile Spain had been greatly weakened by a succession of wars, the Peninsular war alone lasting six years. Following this long period of war, there was no stable government in Spain, and virtually anarchy in Florida, with disastrous results to Georgia which adjoined it. In a few years claims against Spain by citizens of Georgia for losses of negroes and by raids of Seminole Indians, a Florida tribe, amounted to \$5,000,000.

Florida by this time having become unprofitable to Spain, as well as untenable, the latter country now offered to cede it to the United States, provided the United States would assume the payment of the \$5,000,000 damage claims. The United States accepted this offer with the proviso that Spain should also abandon all claim to the country north of the Arkansas river. Spain agreed to this and a treaty covering the agreement, was entered into February 22, 1819. By this act the region we now occupy became undisputed American territory.

Pike's Expedition

Among those accompanying Lieutenant Pike's expedition in 1806 and 1807 was a sergeant named William Meek. In 1953 an effort was made to change the name of Medano Mountain to Meek Peak in honor of this sergeant. Since Medano Mountain is somewhat massive and the fact Sergeant Meek was unheard of the changing of the name was protested by local citizens and not approved by the Forest Service.

A brief account of Meek's part in the Pike expedition is taken from a letter from the Interior Department to the Chief, Forest Service, October 20, 1952.

"Meek was up the Mississippi with Pike all the way to this point with him. Meek figures prominently in what happened on both trips. Pike sent him back over Medano Pass to get the men left in the Wet Mountain Valley because their feet were frozen. Meek was away when Pike was captured. Meek came back with the powder and lead that had been cached at Canon City, and thus crossed Medano Pass three times in the dead of winter. When Meek reached the fort he found Jacob Carter there, with a message from Pike for Meek to take charge of the men from whom Pike was separated. So Meek was ranking soldier of this group all of the 15 months they were impounded in New Spain - - a tough assignment for a young, buck sergeant, 500 miles from his nearest Army post."

History of Huerfano County

The following account of Huerfano County was written by Ralph C. Taylor of the Pueblo Star-Journal and Chieftain and published in this paper March 4, 1956.

"Pikes Peak has not always been the world's best known mountain. For at least 100 years before Lt. Zebulon Pike tried to climb his peak in 1806, Spanish explorers were using Huerfano Butte as a landmark.

"This upthrust of volcanic rock is on the south bank of the Huerfano River about 10 miles north of Walsenburg and only a short distance east of the Pueblo-Walsenburg highway. It is many miles removed from any mountain.

"This topographical misfit was named El Huerfano long ago by a wandering Spaniard whose name has been lost in the passing of time. Huerfano in Spanish means orphan. Because of its loneliness the butte never has had any other name.

"For the early travelers Huerfano Butte was a perfect landmark. It can be seen for great distances. For hundreds of years important trails have crossed near its base. The river and the county years ago took the name of the detached volcanic butte.

"In 1706, when Ulibarri and a party of Spanish soldiers came into the Colorado region looking for Indian slaves who had fled their masters in Santa Fe, they plotted their course by sighting the Huerfano Butte. They followed the Huerfano River a distance and finally came to the Indian settlement of El Guartalejo east of the present site of Pueblo. Finding the runaways, the Spaniards retraced their trail past the butte.

"Ulibarri called the Huerfano River the Rio de San Juan. Later, when Governor Valverde moved northward to punish Comanche Indians for making raids on the New Mexico settlements, he called the Huerfano the San Antonio.

"The Comanches continued their attacks until 1779, when Governor Don Bautista de Anza came northward with a large body of troops. The Comanche had sentinels along the usual route of the Spanish parties. Until that time Spaniards crossed the Sangre de Cristos north of Taos and over the Raton Mountains. Anza took a new route, following the Rio Grande through the San Luis Valley, then across the Arkansas Valley into South Park. Swinging down Ute Pass, Anza's party engaged part of the Greenhorn forces midway between the sites of Colorado Springs and Pueblo. A battle was fought near the location known as Wigwam.

"Anza pioneered the Taos Trail, which was to become the principal route between the site of Pueblo and Taos for more than a century. Travelers turned south where the Fountain empties into the Arkansas and continued southward to the Huerfano Butte, entering the mountains by following the Huerfano River. An alternate path was to leave the Arkansas River at the mouth of the Huerfano and follow that stream past the butte.

"In the early 19th century the Huerfano Butte was in Spanish Territory - the Arkansas River being the northern boundary. Before the Louisiana Purchase

of 1803, a French spy penetrated into the Huerfano Butte region, making notations of the topography and the Indians.

"A Spanish trader named Hernandez came north about the same time expecting to join a trading party. A group of Kiowas rode out from the Huerfano Butte and robbed him of his horses. Fortunately Hernandez was found by Julius DeMun and Auguste P. Chouteau, French traders. DeMun and a few of his group went into Santa Fe but were seized by the Spaniards, who sent Lt. Salazar and some troops to capture the rest of the group at the Huerfano Butte location.

"Before the soldiers arrived, Pawnee Indians captured Hernandez and held him captive for about two years. DeMun and Chouteau finally were released by the Spaniards and reached St. Louis late in 1817 - safe but without their goods. DeMun, in reporting to Governor William Clark of Missouri, referred to the Huerfano River as the Third Fork of the Arkansas River, the name that had been applied to it by Zebulon Pike on his 1806 journey up the Arkansas.

"By 1822 Governor Melgares of New Mexico built fortifications along the passes used by the travelers. Viceroy Vanadito of Mexico had ordered the fortresses because he had been advised that large forces of intruders could be repelled by a few men. The principal fortress was at the top of Sangre de Cristo Pass, at the upper end of the Huerfano Valley portion of the Taos Trail.

"Trader Jacob Fowler visited the fortification in February of 1822 on his way to Taos.

"Stephen Long, although not a visitor to Huerfano Butte, in 1820 passed the mouth of the Huerfano River, which he called Wharf Creek. His guide, Joseph Bissonette, had been in the DeMun-Chouteau party and had corrupted the Spanish name of Huerfano to Wharf.

"Others became confused on the name, among them T. J. Farnham, who in 1839 called the Wet Mountain Range the Wolfano Mountains. His guide referred to the Huerfano River as the Rio Wolfano.

"From 1821 to the early 1850's the Taos Trail was used largely by the Mountain Men going to the pleasant little New Mexico village - not only to trade, but to marry Mexican girls.

"Despite its prominence as a landmark, Huerfano Butte never became the settling site for anyone. One reason was that a more suitable place was found at Greenhorn - the point where the Taos Trail crossed the Greenhorn stream. John Brown chose the Greenhorn region because of its wooded surroundings, lush grass and nearness to the mountains.

"A Frenchman named Beaubois, built a fortification one-quarter mile northwest of the Huerfano Butte. He lived there for several years and travelers knew his abode as Beaubois' Fort. He had been induced to settle there by Ceran St. Vrain to establish ownership to a two-mile strip along the Huerfano River in the shadow of the Huerfano Butte.

"St Vrain and Cornelio Vigil in 1843 obtained a large grant of land from Governor Armijo. It was bounded by the Arkansas and Purgatory Rivers, with

the mountains forming the western side of the triangle. After the United States questioned the Mexican land grants, Congress cut down the St. Vrain grant. To get the Huerfano Valley woodland near the Butte, St. Vrain had to pay Beaubois to act in his behalf. The Frenchman built his abode fort to protect himself from Indians.

"St. Vrain bought the Beaubois ranch in 1865 for his son, Felix, who had been looking after sheep on the large St. Vrain-Francisco-Daigre Ranch near La Veta. Felix lived there for almost half a century.

"Baubois moved his trappings to Greenhorn, where he lived with Zan Hicklin. Within a few months an American who had cultivated crops for Beaubois on a share basis, rode over to the Hicklin ranch and shot Beaubois as the latter stood talking to Hicklin. The wounded Frenchman ran into the Hicklin kitchen. As Mrs. Hicklin tried to protect Beaubois, the irate share-cropper burst into the house and shot his former landlord through the head as he lay on the floor.

"About 1862 ten Frenchmen who had worked as teamsters and hunters for Bent, St. Vrain and Company at Bent's Fort and on the Santa Fe Trail, settled near Huerfano Butte. They called their community Butte Valley. Among them were Antoine Labrie, French Pete, Norbert Berard, Leander Berard, Leon Constantine, and Louis Joseph Clouthier. A John Brown also joined the group.

"During the Civil War Butte Valley residents were sympathizers for the South. Hicklin at Greenhorn also was known to be in sympathy with the rebels. As the Southern miners left the Colorado mines, they made their way to Hicklin's place, where he directed them to Beulah Valley. At one time about 600 men were being drilled and armed there for possible attack on Colorado communities when Federal troops learned of the rendezvous. The rebels fled southward before the U.S. soldiers reached Beulah Valley from Ft. Garland.

"Butte Valley families were accused of harboring rebels - among them members of the Reynolds gang. Jim Reynolds and his band of Texas guerrillas came into Southern Colorado in the summer of 1864. They held up stage coaches, taking gold and letters containing U.S. currency.

"The Reynolds gang struck into the mining country, but was surprised by a posse of armed citizens at the head of Deer Creek in Summit County. One gangster was killed and Reynolds was wounded but managed to escape. Near Canon City another member of the gang was captured and returned to Fairplay. To save his own neck he disclosed plans of the gang. Lt. George L. Shoup and the First Colorado Cavalry of Canon City and a group of Summit County residents set out to capture the robbers. The gang was supposed to be heading for Butte Valley. A runner was sent there telling the settlers to arrest the bandits and hold them until the troops arrived.

"Two of Reynolds gang reached the Butte community, purchasing \$55 worth of merchandise and were allowed to leave. When the soldiers arrived they learned no attempt had been made to detain the bandits. Lt. Shoup had all of the settlers arrested and taken to Denver.

"The group was taken then to Buckskin Joe and charged with aiding rebels, all except Brown who escaped and made his way to New Mexico. The others, however, won their acquittals in the Buckskin court.

"None of the Frenchmen returned to Butte Valley. Their huts decayed with the advance of time, except that of Brown. He worked in a hotel at Ft. Union, New Mexico, for a time - accumulated \$10,000 and returned to Butte Valley. He lived there until 1876, when he moved to Walsenburg.

"Huerfano Butte became important in the national picture in the 1840's and 1850's while Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri tried to get a railroad built to the Pacific Ocean. He advocated a central route through the Rocky Mountains, entering the peaks by way of Huerfano Butte and the Huerfano Valley.

"It was atop Huerfano Butte that Senator Benton would have had the statue of Columbus placed. Ironically, the first American statue of Christopher Columbus was erected in Pueblo, only 40 miles from Huerfano Butte, early in this century.

"On his exploratory trips into Colorado, seeking a route for the transcontinental railroad, John Fremont passed the Huerfano Butte. On the fifth expedition Fremont had in his party an artist named S. N. Carvalho who made a daguerre process picture of Huerfano Butte.

"The Fremont exploratory routes were not used as the path for steel rails, but he made himself famous for making Southern California part of the Union. Artist Carvalho, in writing of his travels with Fremont, stated, 'If a railroad is ever built through this valley, I suggest that an equestrian statue of Colonel J. C. Fremont be placed on the summit of the Huerfano Butte; his right hand pointing to California, the land he conquered.'

"No statues ever have been placed atop Huerfano Butte. No eastwest trail or railroad passes close to it, but it still is the lonely sentinel on the plains, because one of America's principal north-south highways passes almost at its base."

Trinidad

The following account of the City of Trinidad was published in the Denver Post October 31, 1954.

"Situated in a natural bowl at the foot of Fisher's Peak, Trinidad is blessed with an outstanding climate. Although the official elevation of the city is 6,000 feet, winters are surprisingly mild. Cool summer evenings make the area a mecca for tourists from the heat belt.

"Trinidad has one of the most colorful histories of any in the west. Although the town was not officially designated as such until 1877, the history of the community dates back to 1822 when the four Bent brothers and St. Vrain company transported supplies over the famous Santa Fe Trail.

"The trail station at the present site of Trinidad was an important stop on the Santa Fe trail. Both Commercial Street and Main Street, two of the busiest in the city today, are on the original route of the trail.

"Throughout much of its early history Trinidad was in the Territory of New Mexico. When the Territory of Colorado was established in 1861 the community was taken under its jurisdiction. Las Animas County, of which Trinidad is county seat, was created in 1866.

"The first official township was platted in 1877 by General E. B. Soper.

"The 1950 census gave Trinidad a population of 12,204. Another 2,500 persons live within a radius of 1½ miles and 10,000 live within a radius of 20 miles.

"Trinidad has excellent transportation facilities, being on the main lines of the Santa Fe and Colorado and Southern railroads, and a branch of the Denver and Rio Grande Western. Two main bus lines serve the area, and the Continental Air Lines maintains two daily flights at the Trinidad airport.

"One of Trinidad's greatest assets is the Trinidad Junior College, founded in 1925.

"The college operates on a budget of about \$285,000 a year. Present enrollment at the two-year institution is 353 full-time day students, most of them from Las Animas and Huerfano counties, and northern New Mexico.

"Showplace of the coal mining industry is the Allen mine of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation, erected at a cost of five million dollars about 25 miles west of Trinidad. Lloyd Ingles, superintendent of the Allen mine, said 400 miners are now employed there, with 600 employed at the Frederick and 200 at the Morley. Production each 24 hours is 3,000 tons at the Allen, 2,000 tons at the Frederick and 1,000 tons at the Morley. Miners now average \$20 a day. The mines have been operating 3 to 4 days per week.

"A modern filtration plant was built in 1951 at a cost of \$614,000, with a capacity of 8 million gallons per day."

Weston

The town of Weston in Las Animas County, long the center of an extensive farming and lumbering district, now has coal mining as a major industry with the recent activation of the new \$5,000,000, Charles Allen coal mine of Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation. The town first was settled in the early 1890's by the Juan Sisneros family and was given the name of Los Sisneros. The Rocky Mountain Timber Company used the town as a supply base, but it was 1892 before there was a post office in the settlement. Bert Weston, the village blacksmith, was given the post office and the town took his name. From the La Veta Advertiser, April 10, 1953.

Gardner was named for Herbert Gardner, an early settler.

Farisita is the Spanish for "little Faris Lady." The town was originally called Talpa, but because of a New Mexico town of the same name, the post office department asked that the name be changed. The people of the community elected to call the town after Postmaster John Faris' daughter, Jeannette.

Mutual was named from a mine which was mutually operated by several people.

Pictou was named for Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada by a mine superintendent who came from there.

Sulphur Springs was named for the 21 sulphur springs in the area.

Pryor, another coal mining community, now largely agricultural, was named for Matt and Ike Pryor, early day cattlemen.

Tioga is an Indian word meaning "where it forks."

Toltec is another Indian name, a tribe of Indians in the vicinity.

Badito is reportedly another Indian name meaning "the crossing." The once thriving community is also thought to have been the first seat of government in the territory, and the original government building is still standing.

Aguilar was named for another pioneer, Jose Ramon Aguilar.

From the World-Independent, July 27, 1954.

Mount Mestas

Mount Mestas, located along the La Veta Pass Highway, was long known in this area as Veta Mountain and as Old Baldy. In 1949 it was given the name Mount Mestas by the National Geographic Board at the request of civic organizations of La Veta and Walsenburg. Mestas served in World War II and was killed in Italy while holding off a large force of German soldiers in order that his companions could escape. Mestas formerly lived in La Veta and Walsenburg.

Dodgeton Creek

It is possible this name is in error. The area along the lower portion of the creek was homesteaded by James W. Dodgion (also spelled Dodgin) and patented March 1, 1889. It is probable the creek was named after this early settler.

Wildlife

The following article was published in the La Veta Advertiser of January 2, 1951, in the 40-year ago column:

"Tom Martin caught a gold eagle in one of his coyote traps last week. The bird measured six feet and four inches, tip to tip."

A shipment of elk was delivered to the Trinchera Ranch west of the district in 1911.

Five mountain lion were killed in Indian Creek during January, 1950, by Bryan Denton, fur inspector for the State of Colorado.

RECREATION VISITS

The following is a continuation of the table on recreation visitors found on page 87.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Using Recreational Facilities</u>	<u>Other Forest Areas</u>	<u>Merely Passing Through</u>	<u>Total</u>
1948	12,400	6,100	10,000	28,500
1949	15,000	8,000	12,000	35,000
1950	16,820	9,000	15,000	40,820
1951	17,900	10,300	16,000	44,200
1952	20,100	12,500	20,000	52,600*
1953	23,500	9,000	22,000	54,500
1954	25,000	10,000	25,000	60,000**
1955	28,000	12,000	30,000	70,000
1956	30,000	13,000	32,000	75,000
1957	31,000	13,000	32,000	76,000
1958	32,000	14,000	34,000	80,000

*Sharp increase in numbers of recreation visitors due to additions to the Spanish Peaks District in 1952, consisting of the Sangre de Cristo portion of the Huerfano District.

**Further increase in number of visitors due to the addition of the Greenhorn section of the Huerfano District to the Spanish Peaks District in 1954.