

# Park County Local History Archives

ISSUE V

NEWSLETTER

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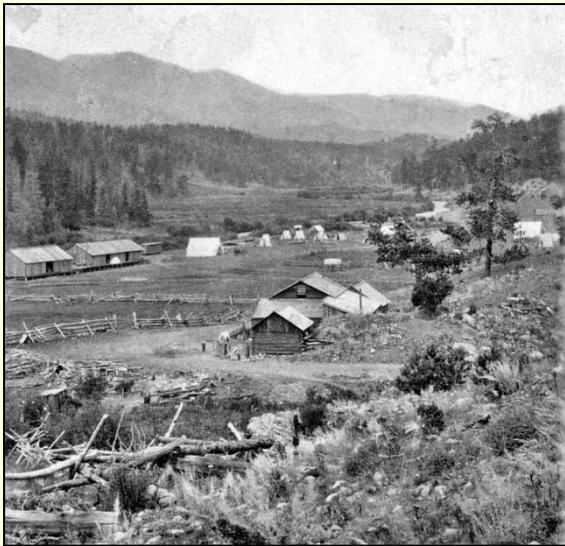
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Bailey 1870s - William G Chamberlain photo from Ed & Nancy Bathke collection

### Archives News:

Archives board members Tim and Linda Balough were presented the 2011 True Pioneer award by the South Park Chamber of Commerce for their support of local non-profits, volunteerism and devotion to enhancing the county's history.

Board president Christie Wright gave a presentation in December at the Foothills Genealogy Society entitled "*Those Dastardly Deeds: Using Criminal Records as a Genealogy Resource.*"

Read about the proposed South Park Learning Center in the attached flyer.

Send comments, requests and suggestions to [parkcoarchives@yahoo.com](mailto:parkcoarchives@yahoo.com)

### Archives Update

During 2011 a number of donors made photos available to add to the Archives collection. More than a hundred came from the Ed and Nancy Bathke collection. The Bathke's have been collecting historic Colorado photos for more than 50 years and have written books and articles as well as given numerous presentations using their collections. Many of the Park County photos were from the late 1800s, some from the 1860s when Colorado was still a territory.

Other photos and information about Park County pioneer families came from Doug Stephens (Weller family), Rick Hague (Snell-Swanson homestead), Roy Wells (Van Dyke family), Kathy Cleveringa (Epperson and Spurlock families), Art Buckley (Buckley family) and Philip McKee (Richards family.) These and others are available on the Archives website.

The Archives greatly appreciates the contributions of those who want to share their family memories and make them available to anyone interested in Park County history. There have been several occasions when family members found out about the existence of other parts of their families through Archives information and were able to get in contact with each other.

Local photographer Bernie Nagy is working on a '*Then and Now*' book featuring Park County locations. Nagy plans to have the book published and available on the Archives website by the end of the year.

Another program that the Archives has done is recording oral histories of people who have memories of their Park County families and experiences. If you know of anyone whose life history would add to the value of our collections, please contact the Archives through our website or by email.

## **The Wild Days of Puma City** *(continued)*

*Submitted by Gary Minke*

The March 3, 1897, shooting that occurred in the Puma Dance Hall left Peter Cox dead and two other participants in the fray either in jail or out on a posted bond. A follow-up article in the Flume on April 2, 1897, gave a bit more information:

*“Mr. James Gregg, who is charged with killing P. S. Cox at Puma City a short time ago, was in Fairplay last week. Jim was wearing the suit of clothes he had on at the time of the shooting and it is very evident he did not do all the shooting that was done at that time. One bullet tore the back of his coat collar and did not miss his neck an inch. Another tore its way across his coat at the small of the back, about half the bullet cutting its way through the skin. Another inch further in and it would have broken his back. Another bullet went through the coat pocket on the left side, while still another went through the lapel of his coat under his chin. If that is not coming all around a man and putting him in a close corner we don’t know what is. It was high time for somebody to get action.”*

The same issue of the Flume made a joke about the killing in another article:

*“**Button Holes With Bullets.** The way they have of ‘buttonholing’ men at Puma City is no trouble. We were thinking seriously of starting a paper down there but after a close inspection of Jim Gregg’s coat we have changed our mind. Now Jim is naturally a quiet orderly sort of a fellow, rather retiring than otherwise in his disposition, and still he wears a ‘four-button-hole cutaway.’ We are a thoroughly progressive moulder of public opinion and be as humble and conservative as our constitution would permit, we are convinced that the very first issue of our paper at Puma, the very first mould as it were, would result in a dead editor! No! No! Puma is not for us. Get thee behind us ambition! We plod along in the*

*columns of the FLUME content with such excitement as is afforded by having an irate populist come into the office, accuse us of ‘slurring the family’ and threaten to thrash the daylights out of us, and occasionally we may take a horseback ride and turn somersets down Red Hill (at so much per set taken out in advertising) broken collarbones and disjointed fingers afford ample recreation for us. No, thank you, we don’t want any of those bouquett ‘flashlight’ buttonholes which a man should wear to be in with the four hundred at Puma City.”*

Approximately four months after the shooting attorneys for Gregg and Harrison would have their bails reduced. Gregg’s from \$5,000 to \$3,000 and Charles Harrison (The Aspen Kid) from \$5,000 to \$500. By October of 1897 James R. Gregg did finally move from Puma City to Como as he had originally promised Peter Cox. Then by November of 1897 James Gregg would be acquitted of any criminal action in the killing of Peter S. Cox. Charles O. Harrison would be discharged without trial because the evidence in the Gregg case showed that Cox was to blame for the shooting incident. It was evident that “the Aspen Kid” was really a good guy because as the Flume of Friday November 5, 1897 mentioned that “Mr. Harrison by his conduct here (in jail) has gained the goodwill of all citizens of Fairplay.” The question of who shot Cox in the back was apparently never answered.

By 1900 James Gregg had moved with his wife and daughter to South Telluride, where he was employed as a laborer.

The village of Tarryall, formerly Puma City, has recently experienced a renewed interest in the mining industry. More than 500 mineral claims have been filed for the production of beryllium near the town site. Beryllium is used primarily as a hardening agent in alloys, notably beryllium copper.

*\*It should be noted that this is not the same Tarryall that was located near Como.*

**Red Light Dance Hall** *Research materials*  
submitted by Christie Wright

In the late 1870s Fairplay was a prospering town, with all the requisite businesses that supported an active mining industry. The local miners must have been delighted to read in the March 20, 1879, Flume:

***“Re-opening of the Red Light Dance Hall.*** *The grand re-opening of the “Red Light” Dance Hall will take place in Coles’ building on upper Front Street, Fairplay, on Saturday evening, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. A general invitation to be present is extended to all the boys. A full band of musicians will be on hand to supply the best of music. The bar will be found to be stocked with the best of liquors and cigars. Stages will be run to Alma for the accommodation of those who desire to come down. Jack Jones will have charge of the house and will take care that everything is conducted in an orderly manner.”*

A dispute over the possession of the property caused it to be offered for sale that summer, ‘cheap for cash.’ But the issues must have been resolved as the Red Light was open for business again the following year. This story came out in the February 9, 1880, edition of the Flume:

***“Ella Betook to the Red Light.*** *Philip Englebright married a wife and took her to live in Alma. On sundry times and occasions he was surprised to perceive several of the manly youths of that virtuous burg issuing from the sacred precincts of his home at hours when he was supposed to be occupied at his work. When this had happened enough times John became suspicious and inquired of a prominent merchant his opinion of the case. ‘Why,’ was the reply, ‘the fact is notorious!’ Not wishing to become notorious in this manner, John protested with his other half and was met by an inquiry as to what he was going to do about it. Shortly after the faithless Ella betook herself to the Red Light dance hall in Fairplay. At*

*this stage of the game John concluded that it was a case of incompatibility of temperament, and applied for a dissolution of the unholy bonds. The case was up before Judge Shelhamer on Tuesday, and will have a secure hearing during the next term of court.”*

Another worker in the same profession made news in the July 7, 1881, Flume:

***“Belle Coine Near Suicide at Red Light.*** *Belle Coine, an inmate of the Red Light dance hall, very nearly accomplished her eternal destruction by means of a conglomeration of drugs known as ‘Dr. Chase’s toothache medicine.’ On being summoned to her assistance late on Saturday night, Dr. Harris found she was in a precarious state from morphine poisoning. After several hours of well directed effort the woman was rescued from the jaws of death. She is a slave to the habit of morphine eating, and in addition to frequent doses of that drug had taken a large dose of the aforesaid toothache medicine, which is found to consist of tincture of opium or laudanum, chloroform and sulphuric ether. The wonder is that she did not die instanter. This is the second or third time she has narrowly escaped death by self-poisoning.”*

Although the town continued to support several other billiard halls and saloons, this one’s time came to an end as reported by a single paragraph in the November 3, 1881, edition of the Flume:

*“After many vicissitudes of fortune the Red Light, in Fairplay, succumbed to the inevitable last Saturday. The building was sold under a trust deed at that time and goes into the hands of S. Rose & Co., Denver. The inmates departed for ‘fresh fields and pastures new.’”*

In May of 1883 the building, now used to store baled hay, caught fire and burned down. The Flume opined, *“Probably some drunken tramp slept there and started the conflagration.”*

## Beginnings of Bailey

*Submitted by Linda Bjorklund*

The Dyer family started out in Virginia, then migrated to Ohio, then on to Illinois and to Wisconsin. John Dyer became the “*Snowshoe Itinerant*,” a Methodist preacher who delivered mail across Mosquito Pass on skis during treacherous winter months as he conducted his ministry in South Park. Father Dyer must have been happy to hear that his family was again moving westward.

Elizabeth had planned to marry a girlhood sweetheart, but her father insisted that she marry a widower with five children instead. After bearing a child that died within a year, the unhappy Elizabeth left Dr. Entriken and went west with the Bailey’s.

Well acquainted with the area, Father Dyer was ready to show his two sisters, Ann and Elizabeth and Ann’s husband, William Bailey, a site half-way between Denver and Buckskin Joe, where the old stage road to Leadville enters Platte Canyon. They arrived in 1864, having come all the way from Wisconsin by ox-train.

Bailey constructed a large corral and a log hotel that became known as Bailey’s Ranche. Elizabeth’s home was built by her brother and brother-in-law on 140 acres just west of the Bailey property.

In 1865 another couple that was to become well-known stopped at the Bailey camp on their way to Buckskin. Elizabeth watched as the young woman built a fire and then put out a sign that read, “Shirts Washed – 50 cents.” As other teamsters entered the yard, they began to remove their shirts and hand them over to the woman who was making soap with left-over table fat, lye and wood ashes.

When Elizabeth went over to make her acquaintance, the woman explained, “Name’s Tabor. I’m making money for us to live on while my husband is prospecting. We’ll be here till he satisfies himself whether any gold’s lying around.” Horace and Augusta

Tabor went on to Buckskin, then later moved to Oro City.

Remembering her own unhappy marriage, Elizabeth was sympathetic to Augusta when she learned of the Tabor divorce.

In 1877 a post office was established in the town of Bailey’s. The ‘s’ was later dropped and the town became Bailey. The narrow gauge railroad came through town in 1878 and Bailey became a stopping place for many travelers.

Elizabeth made numerous visitors welcome, among them Chief Colorow and a dozen of his braves. On one occasion they rode up to her door and gruffly demanded biscuits. As she made pan after pan, they disappeared as quickly as she finished baking them. Finally, low on flour, she told her greedy visitors, “No more, no more. You’re eating me out of house and home.” Colorow responded, “Hungry, hurry!” Elizabeth pointed to her nearly empty flour barrel and refused to make more biscuits. As Colorow attempted to mount his pony and leave, his bulging shirt came out of his trousers and biscuits went tumbling to the ground. Elizabeth picked them up and handed them to him struggling not to show either anger or amusement at the trick. Colorow later referred to her as ‘a heap good squaw.’

The Bailey’s left for California in 1880, but Elizabeth remained in the town they had founded. Her cabin, the only building that remains of the original town of Bailey, was moved to McGraw Park and restored.



*Entriken Cabin in its original location. Source: Park County Historical Society*