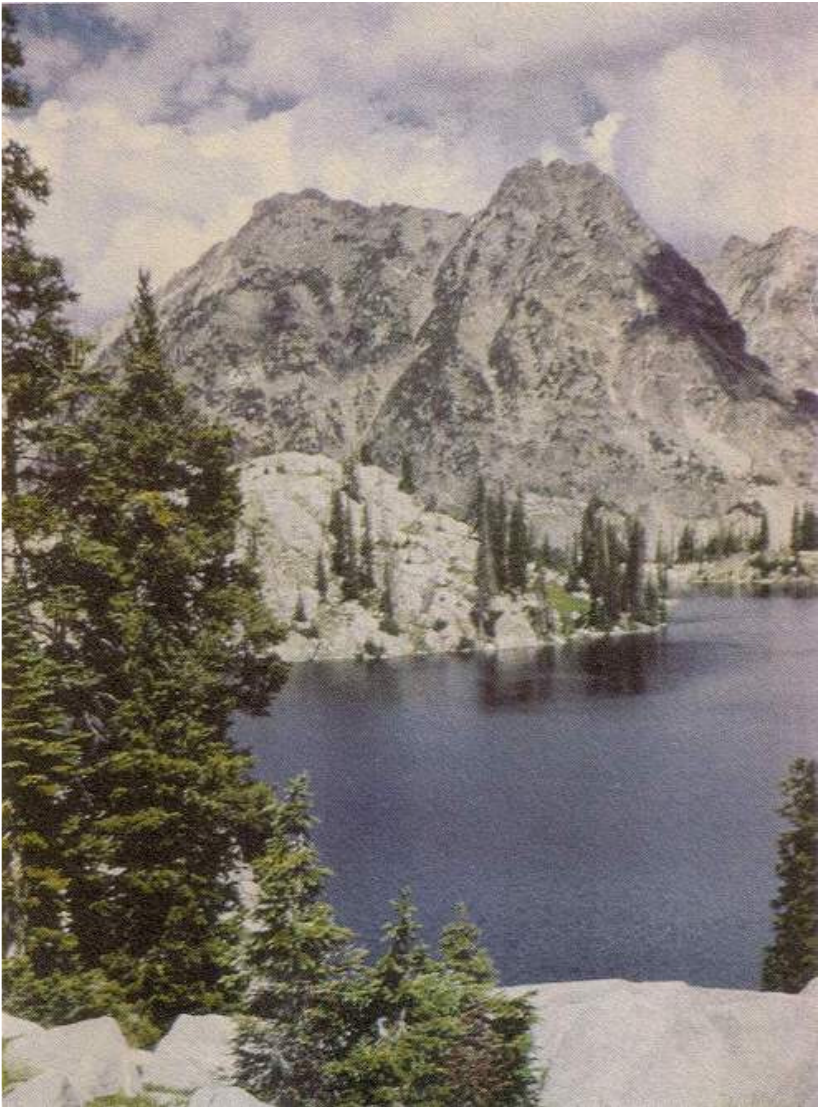


GILPIN GOLD

By: Lulita Crawford Pritchett



GILPIN GOLD

And

OTHER TALES

by

Lulita Crawford Pritchett

COVER PICTURES COURTESY OF JOHN AMBOS

Front Cover – Gilpin Peak viewed across Gilpin Lake

Back Cover – Mt. Zirkel, viewed behind Gilpin Peak, looking
northeast from Iceberg Lake

Published for the Tread of Pioneers Museum, Steamboat Springs, Colorado

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Last Modified March 27, 2007

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**Young Carr Pritchett of Glasgow, Missouri
(Copied from a tintype)**



Carr Waller Pritchett, Jr., Mining Engineer, 1888



C. W. Pritchett, surveying in Arizona, early 1900's

FOREWARD

*"Who dreams shall live! And if we do not dream
Then we shall build no Temple into Time. . . ."*

— Dana Burnet

Pony Whitmore dreamed of finding a lost gold mine. What he found has much to do with this story.

During the rush to the Hahn's Peak placers in the late 1860's or 1870's, a Frenchman, with three other prospectors, visited northwestern Colorado. As the men were resting one noon near a small tributary of Bear River, one of them shoveled some gravel into his pan and was rewarded with a nice string of colors. Greatly excited, the prospectors worked up the creek till they determined that the gold came from a dry gulch. Where a rim of rock crossed the gulch, they dug down to bed rock and found the richest kind of nugget gravel.

Before they could clean out the pocket, a band of Utes dropped upon them, ordered them to leave the country, and threatened to scalp them if they ever came back. Some months later in Laramie City two of the prospectors were shot in a gambling row, and a third died of natural causes. The Frenchman drifted into New Mexico where, at every opportunity, he talked about the nuggets he had seen with his own eyes. Pony was one who listened.

In the late summer of 1879 the Frenchman, joined by Pony and several others, risked a trip to Bear River to retrieve those nuggets. That was the year the Utes went on a rampage that ended with the Meeker Massacre. They set fire to timber all along the range. Mountains were scarred and blackened, landmarks obliterated, and the whole face of nature changed. Hopelessly bewildered, the Frenchman and his friends searched for two seasons and finally gave up — all except Pony.

Summer after summer Pony tramped the gulches and hills. Sometimes he carried the mail to and from Hahn's Peak. One winter he "holed in" with the Crawfords in Steamboat Springs. James Crawford told this writer that the prospector's real name was Elzy Whitmore and that his nickname had been given him because he was small, chunky, and strong like a mountain pony, and he liked to run foot races. Pony Whitmore was remembered as a good natured, generous, sociable fellow, fond of children.

He promised that when he found those nuggets, he would give a handful of them to a little girl named Lulie Crawford to spend on dancing lessons — the nicest thing he could think of!

Several years went by and he was never able to bestow that gift. The Frenchman's gold continued to elude him. Eventually, he and a man named Gristy filed on a claim on Gilpin Peak in the Sawtooth Range, which they hoped would prove to be a rich vein or mother lode, even better than nuggets. For some reason Gristy dropped out of the picture, and W. H. Dever (pronounced like beaver) became Pony's partner. But before the Gilpin prospect could be developed, Pony took sick, was brought to the Crawford cabin, and died within a few days.

Lulie, now a young lady school teacher, dismissed school so that she and her nine scholars could attend his burial services. The date noted in Lulie's SCHOOL REGISTER was September 17, 1886. The *Routt County Pilot* reported that a considerable gathering of settlers paid their last respects to their old friend, that two hymns were sung, and that the funeral sermon was preached by Parson Swinney.

James Oswald Swinney, whose name hereabouts was generally corrupted to Sweeney, was also a dreamer. He was not a regular preacher since he did not stay in one place long enough. Maybe he should have remained in Missouri where he was a successful tobacco farmer. He still owned his farm, returning now and then to oversee it. He was a graduate of Yale and had studied for the ministry though he had never "located." Gold fever had sent him west. In a mine near Elkin, Nevada he had lost a fortune, and now at age fifty-eight he had wandered into Routt County. He had happened to be in the neighborhood and had been summoned to comfort Pony Whitmore on his deathbed.

As he had listened to the prospector's mumbled fancies and hopes about his gold prospect, he had seen the guiding hand of Providence, and as soon as Pony had been laid away, had made haste to become Mr. Dever's new partner by investing three hundred dollars in the Gilpin Mine.

Parson Swinney knew little about mines and minerals, but he was acquainted with a young man currently studying at Washington University in St. Louis, who, if all went well, would earn his degree in mining engineering by next spring. The lad's name was Carr Waller Pritchett, Jr. Mr. Swinney wrote to him and offered him a job at twenty-five dollars a month if he would come to Routt County immediately upon graduation, and work the Gilpin Mine. The Swinneys and



"Where we laid the old prospector"

Pritchetts had long been neighbors in Glasgow, a town on the Missouri River. Mr. Swinney had helped to fund a small interdenominational college run by Carr W. Pritchett, Sr., who was also an ordained Methodist minister.

Carr, Jr. accepted Mr. Swinney's offer and in the summer of 1887 traveled more than a thousand miles by train and then by stagecoach over Berthoud Pass and on to Yampa Valley, where his employer met him and as soon as possible took him to the Gilpin prospect. Young Carr was a dreamer if ever there was one. He fully expected to make his fortune on Gilpin gold.

This is mainly Carr's story, but woven through it, is the story of Steamboat Springs in its infancy, and an account of homesteaders in Elk River valley as they began to tame the wild meadows.

The book is based on excerpts from letters that Carr wrote to his sweetheart after he left Yampa Valley. In a clear, flowing hand he recalled many happenings of his sojourn in Routt County in 1887 and 1888. I have tried not to betray the privacy of those letters. The book also includes a few society items

clipped from issues of the *Routt County Pilot* (Volumes 3 and 4) and pasted in Lulie Crawford's scrapbook.

As I began to piece the story together, I sought information on Gilpin Peak from the U. S. Forest Service office on the outskirts of Denver only to be told that there was no Gilpin Peak!

John Ambos, of course, knew better. A veteran of the Forest Service, now retired and living in Glenwood Springs, he probably is better acquainted with this corner of the West than any other living person. A native of the McCoy region, he is the author of a book entitled MCCOY MEMOIRS. He immediately sent me a front-view picture of the peak overlooking Gilpin Lake, and another rear-view picture. Furthermore, he put me in touch with a fellow forester named Dan Gibson, who remembered some old mine workings in the vicinity.

Dan gave me the name and address of Hannah Larsen of Rawlins, Wyoming, formerly Hannah Murphy of Elk River, whose husband used to graze his herds of sheep in the lush high pastures of the north and middle forks of Elk River.

Though her fingers were now so arthritic as to make writing difficult, she sent me, with obvious delight, several pages of her memories of horseback rides and summer camps. . . .

She, in turn, referred me to Milbank Franz, in Fruita, Colorado. Milbank was unable to write, and died before this book was published, but his wife Doris wrote for him and even enclosed a picture of a log cabin supposedly built by George Franz, Milbank's father, and later torn down by sheep herders for firewood. Doris suggested that it could have been a much earlier cabin used by Carr Pritchett and crew. . . .

And so this modern version of a gold rush spread like wildfire. The mere mention of GOLD rejuvenated the lot of us. I am sure we all wished we were twenty years younger and could climb those mountains and probe their mysteries. The magic is still there!

My sincere thanks to you who so kindly tried to answer my questions.

Lulita Crawford Pritchett



Summit of Berthoud Pass, 1887, looking west. Picture by John D. Crawford, Sr. of Sedalia, Missouri, brother of James H.



GILPIN LAKE

Picture taken by Carr in 1902 while on a reconnaissance for David Moffat

CHAPTER ONE

THE GILPIN MINE

The Gilpin Mine was located in the rugged Sawtooth Range about 25 miles northeast of Steamboat Springs. To reach the mine a traveler took the road up Elk River till he came to the Hahn's Peak turnoff where he left the main thoroughfare and followed the right-hand road that continued up the river a short distance to John Hoover's ranch.

Beyond Hoover's the road frazzled to a trail that paralleled the stream. Several miles on up past Box Canyon the river split. Miles farther, it split again. Elk River has three forks North, Middle, and South. A traveler to the mine crossed North Fork, eventually came to what is now a campground called Slavonia, and followed Middle Fork the rest of the way.

On his first trip to the mine Carr must have been breathless not only from the high altitude but from what he saw. Used to gently rolling Missouri hills, he was now confronting stupendous formations near the Continental Divide. After climbing through tangles of brush and rocks he and Mr. Swinney finally reached an opening and Carr stared down into a blue hole — Gilpin Lake. It has been said that Gilpin Lake is the most beautiful natural body of water in all our mountains. Across the lake at the water's edge rose a miniature Matterhorn, an up-thrust granite tooth of a mountain, hacked and scarred by eons of geologic history. Gilpin Peak!

Skirting the lake, the travelers climbed part way up the east side of the peak to a surprise stretch of grass on a small bench where a cabin had been built. Two hundred feet above the cabin was the mine. Carr barely managed to claw his way up the almost vertical climb. Braced against the wind, ears pounding, he beheld a pile of rubble, hardly more than a chicken scratch in the vastness. This was what he had been hired to make into a gold mine.

* * *

As soon as Carr had got his mountain legs under him, he took samples on the outcrop, which he and Mr. Dever carried across country 20 miles or more to Hahn's Peak where Perry Burgess had an assay furnace. Hahn's Peak, a small placer mining community, was at that time the county seat of Routt



Back of Gilpin Peak, looking a little east of north, John Ambos took this picture August 8, 1949. Mountain to the left is Big Agnes, and mountain to the right is part of Mt. Zirkel.



**Looking southeast toward Agnes Mountain.
Photo by U.S. Forest Service 1941.**

County.

The travelers were dead tired when they reached the boarding house, but after they had eaten steak smothered in onions, which Dutch Carl, the cook, set before them, they were revived enough to sit up most of the night burning a pit of charcoal to be used in the furnace. Next day Mr. Burgess kindly let Carr make the assay. The results showed only slight mineralization.

Carr vowed he was not discouraged. Since general conditions looked good, he began to run a tunnel to cut the vein, working a crew of men hired from Elk River ranches. John Hoover furnished horses to pack heavy tools, bedding, and grub to the cabin. He may also have owned the three burros Mr. Swinney and Carr used from time to time to bring mail from Steamboat and replenish provisions.

Why Mr. Swinney walked and led a string of burros instead of riding horseback is not clear. Perhaps he believed it easier to take care of burros than horses in the high country. They required less pasturage and seemed better able to cope with the deerflies, horseflies, and mosquitoes that plagued men and beasts this time of year. Also, the burros knew where they were going when Mr. Swinney did not. The parson had no sense of direction. He could become lost just walking around a bush. One day, as he was trying to show Carr a shortcut to town across Hot Spring Creek east of Elk River, he floundered into such a jungle of willows that burros and lead ropes became hopelessly entangled. When Carr finally got the mess straightened out and turned the burros loose, they easily found the trail. All the men had to do was follow them. Nearly all trails led to Steamboat Springs where mineral licks had undoubtedly enticed wild game since the beginning of time.

The burros were named High-Up, Music, and Toddiekins. High-Up was the biggest and balkiest; Music had a terrible voice, which he used often; and Toddiekins was a little bit of a white furry creature — everybody's pet. They never had to be hobbled or tethered but would stay around the cabin near the mine because there was good feed and a miniature creek to drink from. At Steamboat they would graze near the pond west of town. The children going to summer school in the little log cabin across Soda Creek could ride them at recess. Alma Woolery (who became Mrs. Charles E. Baer) was one of the children. She remembered those burros with affection to the end of her days.

In late summer of 1887 the ROUTT COUNTY PILOT

carried the following news item:

"The Pritchett & Hoover pack-train arrived from Camp Whitmore Monday. It takes two men and a whole drove of jacks to keep Dever, Hank Campbell, and Ad Keller from starving."

By that time Carr had become a very creditable mountaineer. His long legs served him well. He had had a brief acquaintance with the Rockies the previous year when Professor Potter had escorted the entire class of aspiring mining engineers from Washington University to study large scale operations at Leadville and Central City. But mining in those booming, noisy towns had little in common with what went on at Gilpin Peak. Nothing in Carr's excellent scientific training had taught him how to shoot and dress a deer and cook the venison, or how to start a stubborn burro. Or even how to temper tools.

He bluffed about the tools. He asked the crew if any of them knew how to temper drills. John Tharp said he did. Carr said, "Let me see you do it," Thus he learned. There was a hole beside the fireplace in the cabin where the fire could be blown up hotter with a bellows. Tools were sharpened right there on a broken anvil. They could be tempered in the little creek till it froze solid, and then they had to be tempered in snow.

Carr did the bossing, blacksmithing, and cooking. He had two Dutch ovens and a frying pan. There were usually four men in the crew — two to a shift — and they slept in bunks one above another on mattresses of pine boughs.

Mr. Swinney stayed around most of the time. Every so often he would send Carr to Steamboat Springs for provisions and mail. Among the mail was the weekly issue of the ROUTT COUNTY PILOT, a single folded sheet, James Hoyle, publisher who had brought out the first issue on July 31, 1885, reflected the dreams of his subscribers when he stated that, in spite of the fact that at present there were only three buildings on Lincoln Avenue, Steamboat had "very extensive suburbs" and was destined to be the "future emporium and metropolis of Routt County."

The newspaper office was one of the buildings on Lincoln Avenue. Next to it was a cabin erected by Harvey Woolery and across the street Emery Milner's "store of mixed goods." West of Soda Creek in the near "suburbs" was the big Crawford cabin under the hill. The Crawfords had recently moved to their new cottage house farther up on the hill. The Henry Monson family

was temporarily occupying the Crawford cabin except for the west room where Mr. Dever maintained bachelor quarters, which he shared with Carr.

When Carr was in town he was never lonesome. Clay Monson, age three or four, was in and out of the west room along with Mary Hoyle, small daughter of the publishers of the PILOT. Mary's parents were so busy setting type and trying to put news in their paper that they somewhat neglected their child. She was a neighborhood tramp. Her usual greeting was, "Got any pie?" Carr and Clay talked of going on a bear hunt. (Some eighty years later Clay said to this writer with a crinkle of a smile, "We never did get that bear hunt!")

The Monsons had a ranch in Pleasant Valley and Mr. Monson was building a house in Steamboat also.

Since Carr was equipped to do surveying, Mr. Swinney allowed him time off from the mine to accommodate several settlers. The young engineer surveyed Frank Hull's ranch and ditch and A. E. Baker's preemption claim. He surveyed the Steamboat Springs & North Park wagon road from Summit Lake west (Buffalo Pass), a distance of 11¼ miles. According to Clay Monson, this was supposed to be a state road but the state refused to spend any money. Just what the arrangements were is not known to this writer. At any rate, the viewers were James H. Crawford, F. E. Milner, and W. H. Dever. Carr reported to James Crawford.

It was probably on the day that Carr went to the cottage house to submit his road report to James Crawford and was sitting in the parlor visiting a while when a tall, slender girl with dark hair and eyes walked in. She was wearing a blue and white checked dress. Lulie Crawford, older daughter of James and Margaret Crawford, founders of Steamboat Springs, had just returned from spending several months with kinfolks in Missouri and was no doubt curious to see the new man in town who was developing the Gilpin Mine.

Carr was suddenly conscious of his frayed flannel shirt and disreputable overalls — bright blue where they had been tucked into his boots, and faded and streaked above. He wished he had left his boots on instead of changing to shoes. And he wished the girl would quit trying to entertain him by handing him specimens of rocks and fossils. He was ashamed for her to see his work roughened fingers.

After this initial encounter Carr found himself doing very strange things. Though the cottage house was finished, the barn was not. Mr. Crawford had hired a young man named Jacob



W. H. Dever, Civil War veteran, prize fighter, and practical joker. He had a ranch up the river where "Billy" Williams later lived. He also built a makeshift cabin on Slate Creek.

Groesbeck to nail shingles on the barn. Jake, lately from Boulder, was the only one who had any business up on that barn roof, but Carr one day took it on himself to help, on the chance that Miss Crawford might come out in the barnyard to feed the chickens and might glance up at him! When she did come out to hang a washing on the near-by line and he saw Jake smile to himself, he wanted to throw the Boulder fellow off the roof!

Whenever Mr. Swinney said Carr could stay in town over Sunday, the manager of the Gilpin Mine would march into church and sit down next to Miss Crawford as if that were the only vacant seat in the small frame building. The church had been built in 1884 by Horace Suttle who, the previous year, had set up his sawmill on Soda Creek. It was a nondenominational Union Church without a permanent minister. Dr. John A. Campbell, a recent comer to Steamboat, generally presiding.

So smitten was Carr with this girl of the mountains that within a matter of weeks he proposed and was gently turned down. Any of the half dozen young ladies in Yampa Valley could have told him that he was behaving according to pattern. Almost every day some lonesome cowboy or prospector, or a yearning homesteader came riding out of the sagebrush. The *Routt County Pilot* may have over-estimated the situation when it stated that there was a "preponderance of 400 bachelors in the county and all have ranches and want to marry."

By actual count in her tally book (diary) a certain young lady had already had thirteen proposals this year. The only applicant she had somewhat favored had been vetoed by her parents. Most of the rejected suitors had borne up bravely and had remained her friends. Carr, who did not know he was Number Fourteen, gave no indication of fading into the background or of remaining just a friend.



Crawford Cottage House on the hill. Note bay window and upstairs porch.

CHAPTER TWO

BEAUX AND BELLES

The PILOT of August 31, 1887 carried this bit of news:

"Mr. C. W. Pritchett has secured a lot and will build a house this fall. He has an assay furnace on the road in and will spend the winter with us."

Actually, Carr had taken up a preemption claim of 160 acres in Sheddeger's Park (now called Strawberry Park). At the end of a year he could acquire ownership by "making proof" and paying \$1.25 per acre. In the 1880's here in Routt County almost everyone over 21 took up a claim as a good investment. A person could either live on the place or sell a relinquishment.

Of more immediate interest to the manager of the Gilpin Mine was his membership in the Ladies' Union Aid Society of Steamboat Springs and Vicinity. What sport his fellow classmates at the university would have made of that had they ever got wind of it! The society had been organized to raise money to build a larger church and hire a regular minister. Attached to the original constitution were signatures of thirteen ladies and ten gentlemen. Since Carr could not be present at the first meeting, he had directed that his name be signed by proxy. This was done in a feminine hand, presumably by Miss Crawford, who had not yet learned how to spell *Pritchett*. Dues collected at 25 cents a head came to \$5.75.

Carr was personally able to attend the second meeting of the Ladies' Aid Society, as attested by the following report (date not noted), which had been clipped out of the *Pilot* and pasted in Miss Crawford's scrapbook:

"About seventy-five of the good citizens of Steamboat Springs and vicinity met at the residence of Major Graham, and all seemingly enjoyed the occasion to the utmost. During the evening the guests were entertained a carefully prepared programme consisting of an address of welcome by the host, readings, recitations, tableaux, and several fine pieces of music. Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the exercises was a dramatic representation of "The Gipsy's Warning," by Mr. C. W.



View from Crawford cottage looking east

Pritchett and the Misses Crawford and Suttle. Miss Crawford sustained the character of the Gipsy in a particularly able manner, both in song and costume, while the two remaining characters rendered their parts to the intense satisfaction of all present...."

Receipts of the evening were something over \$18.

* * *

As the short summer ended and autumn blazed through the scrub oaks and aspens, work at the Gilpin slowed. The crew of ranch boys took off to round up the horses and cattle that had roved afar, to dig potatoes if they had any, to haul in provisions before snow made roads impassable.

Mr. Swinney returned to Missouri temporarily to look after his farm. He suggested that Carr also go home for a while since nothing could be accomplished here in the winter. But Carr said he needed to remain in Steamboat so he could resume tunneling at the Gilpin as early as conditions warranted. No doubt Mr. Swinney thought the lad's devotion to duty most commendable. Carr had his own ideas about what might be accomplished!

The Social Club met often at Suttle's long house at the foot of Storm Mountain. Carr, having walked from necessity to and from the mine, now discovered that walking could be a pleasure. Especially with Miss Crawford. Even in the rain. The distance to Suttle's was an easy mile or so east across Soda Creek and through a pine grove which in summer was a favorite picnic spot. Rain was falling in a quiet, steady drizzle late one October afternoon as Carr escorted Miss Crawford home from Suttle's. A bench between two trees in the pine grove afforded shelter and a place to rest. The couple sat on the bench. They drew pictures in the mud and sailed two little chips down the creek and talked of the future — he in earnest, she in jest. . . .

The bench on the trail proved preferable to the parlor in the cottage. When Carr called at the cottage of an evening, if he stayed too long after the family had retired upstairs, someone would pound on the floor with a shoe. He suspected it was Mrs. Crawford.

Carr bought lumber from Horace Suttle and began to build a house on his claim as part of the improvements required by law. He expected to spend Thanksgiving Day working on the house.



Horace Suttle house and barn at the foot of Storm Mountain



Parlor of Suttle house. Seated, left to right: Horace Suttle, Mrs. Suttle, son John, George Suttle (brother of Horace), Lucretia "Cushie" (daughter of Horace), unidentified, and Jacob Groesbeck



Sawmill in Soda Park built and operated by Horace Suttle

Thanksgiving morning was cold and gray, and as he plodded the couple of miles to his claim through a skiff of snow, he was feeling pretty blue. He could not help thinking about pleasant gatherings of family and friends in Glasgow. Here he was, a long way off, winter nipping at his heels, and for his dinner one cold flapjack and a piece of cold venison wrapped in a scrap of brown paper.

Worst of all, he had not seen Miss Crawford for a whole day — not since he had taken the bold step of asking her parents for permission to court their daughter. Until that permission was granted, he considered himself banished from her presence.

About eleven o'clock he saw Jake Groesbeck coming on horseback. The horse was at a gallop, and Jake was waving his hat and yelling at every leap of the horse. He shouted that he and Carr were both invited to eat dinner at Crawfords' and spend the day!

Carr interpreted this invitation as the permission he had hoped for. What a glorious Thanksgiving after all!

* * *

Then it was Christmas Eve, and the Steamboat Springs Social Club put on an entertainment. The PILOT, issued soon after, carried a detailed account as follows: (The reporter forgot to mention where the entertainment was held, but the readers knew anyhow because everybody was there.)



Soda Creek Valley 1887, looking north



Gypsy fortune teller, posed by Lulie Crawford

The entertainment as given by the Steamboat Springs Social Club Christmas Eve was quite a success. The only drawback of the evening was the music, which, on account of the low ceiling, did not meet with the success it deserved.

The address by A. E. Baker, president of the Club, was pithy, to the point, and well delivered.

An instrumental solo, "The Old Oaken Bucket," by Miss Suttle, was finely rendered.

A tableau by Misses Milner and Suttle and Mr. Groesbeck was well executed and caused much laughter...

Dr. Bamber in his comic song, "Jerusha Jane and I", fairly brought down the house.

A drama, "All's Well That Ends Well" as acted by Misses Crawford and Suttle and Messrs. Pritchett, Whyte, and Logan Crawford, was well received, Mr. Pritchett and Miss Crawford doing their parts exceptionally well.

A recitation, "Rock of Ages" was well rendered by Miss Suttle.

A duet, "Ship Ahoy" was a difficult piece sung with great effect by Misses Crawford and Suttle.

The closing piece was the discussion of a scientific point by several blacks of all shades, presumably Messrs. Pritchett, Suttle, Groesbeck, Whyte, and Logan Crawford. After much discussion and various grave attempts to start a song, it was unanimously decided that Noah built the ark.

In the next column the reporter noted:

A few friends enjoyed an elaborate and tastefully served Christmas dinner as the guests of the Hon. J. H. Crawford on Sunday last. A very pleasant though appropriately quiet time was enjoyed by those present.

Carr was among those present.

CHAPTER THREE

OUT OF HIBERNATION

In March south hill slopes began to show bare spots, and skies were cluttered with ducks, geese, and sandhill cranes returning. Woodchucks crawled out of hibernation to whistle from the rocks again on the hill that had been named for them. Carr, too, came out of hibernation. He could wait no longer to learn what was in the Gilpin Mine. Mr. Dever agreed that travel might be easier now than a little later during spring "breakup" when streams would be over their banks.

Carr hired a man with a bobsled to haul supplies to Hoover's. The rancher packed them on horseback to the crossing at North Fork, which was as far as a horse could wade the snow. The plan was for Carr, Mr. Dever, and Bill Williams to divide the load and drag it the rest of the way on trail sleds. The three men camped at North Fork that first night, and early next morning started for the mine, walking on frozen crust. In a few hours the sun melted the crust, and the travelers broke through at every step. By the time they reached the glassy lake, they were exhausted.

Before tackling the final ascent to the bench where the cabin stood, they lay in the snow and rested. Then they cached most of what they had been hauling, and by tying the sled ropes around their necks and shoulders crawled on hands and knees the last few yards — and stared in disbelief at empty white expanse.

The cabin was gone!

The three thumped around with poles where it should have been and finally found it intact under four feet of snow. They cleared the snow away enough to pry open the door, and that night slept in the cabin. Even with the door wide open the room was smothering hot.

* * *

In the following weeks Carr had a variety of helpers. One of them was William Constantine Shaw, lately from Bates County, Missouri. Mr. Dever, who hailed from the same place, had persuaded Mr. Shaw to come to Routt County and look over this fast developing region with a view to settling here.

Carr was still somewhat a greenhorn, but not so green as Mr. Shaw, who gave porcupines a wide berth because they could "throw their quills." Carr explained that porcupines could not throw their quills and could inflict damage only by slapping with their tails.

However, he advised his companion to give bears a wide berth. Just waking up from a winter's sleep, they were lean, hungry, and unpredictable. This country was full of them – black, cinnamon, or grizzly. Mother bears with cubs were reputed to be particularly dangerous.

One morning as Carr and Mr. Shaw were heading down to the meadows hoping to get some venison to replenish the larder, they almost ran into a black she-bear who was trying to cuff four cubs — *four!* into behaving. Hardly daring to breathe, the men froze in their tracks and watched till the cranky lady and her offspring disappeared across a ridge.

A few days later the tables were turned. Carr and his companion were again traveling the trail when they happened to glance up and there on a point of rock not a stone's throw above them sat bruin — a great big cinnamon male, observing two human beings.

Said William Constantine Shaw, "It's a bear! What'll we do?"

Said Carr Waller Pritchett, Jr., "Pretend we don't see it!"

They walked on. The bear sat and watched. If bears can chuckle, maybe this one chuckled.

More to be feared than wild animals was wild water. As the season progressed and the sun's warmth increased, winter relaxed its grip on the high country and tons of melting snow came crashing down every creek and gully. Carr and Mr. Shaw were almost drowned as they tried to go to Steamboat.

The footlog over Elk River had been washed away. The stream, choked with mush ice was foaming wide and treacherous. The men would have to swim. They stripped off all their clothes except their overshoes and tied them around the backs of their necks. Carr caught his companion by the wrist, and the two started. The water got up to their waists. Mr. Shaw stepped on a slick boulder and grabbed Carr, who had to smack him to keep from being pulled under. Fortunately, both men were able to flounder back to shore.

They dressed and walked up the creek till they came to a narrow place where a big tree stump had fallen. Carr found some dead "quakers" and threw them in beyond the stump. Though the limber branches swayed in the current, he could



Box Canyon of upper Elk River

walk on them and by using his snowshoe pole could vault the remaining distance. Mr. Shaw was finally persuaded to do the same thing. The two reached Hoover's about dark.

Eventually, creeks subsided and trails dried out. But there was no end to adventures day or night. John Hoover was often at the mine. He and Carr, who was riding one of the Hoover horses, had come down from the diggings late one cloudy evening and reached an abandoned cabin where they decided to sleep. They had only their saddle blankets for cover except for an old, crinkled, dried, elk hide that they found in the cabin and spread on top of their blankets to keep off the rain that began to drip through a hole in the roof. They slept on the dirt floor. In the night something walked across the hide and stuck its nose in Carr's ear. Thinking it was a porcupine, Carr did not strike it. Next morning a great big skunk was sitting six feet away. Moving cautiously, John Hoover took a stick, nipped a little dirt at the skunk, and got it outside by degrees. When it was at a safe distance, he blasted it with his gun.

Another time, Carr was sleeping in the spare room at Hoover's ranch. John and his family were in another room. The chickens roosted in a third room that had only an outside door.

In the night Carr heard a commotion, lighted the candle he always carried, and went to see what was the matter. A skunk was running around snapping at the chickens. Some of them had fallen off the roost. Carr pulled down with his rifle. His aim was good, and the skunk did not smell at all.

* * *

By now Mr. Swinney had returned from Missouri. This season instead of paying Carr a salary, he gave him part interest in the mine. Perhaps he thought this might spur the young engineer to greater efforts.

As Carr traveled between the mine and town, he became well acquainted with Upper Elk River and the people who were just beginning to subdue the wild meadows to the plow. His favorite stopping place was Mr. Keller's ranch about half way up the valley. Dora, the oldest girl, made biscuits with dimples in them. He liked to tease her and her two younger sisters, May



Dora Keller, grown into a young lady. Picture probably taken in Sedalia. Missouri where she attended business school.

and Maud. Those girls could go out and kill and dress a deer and bring it in as skillfully as any man. Ad, their brother, almost grown, worked sometimes at the Gilpin mine.

Miles farther on at the head of the valley, as we have already seen, Carr spent many a night and ate many a meal at John Hoover's ranch. John's wife, Rissie (stone deaf as a result of mountain fever) was an older sister of Cushie Suttle's.

So far, this book has focused on Steamboat Springs and on the Gilpin Peak region. Upper Elk Valley deserves a chapter all its own. Thanks once more to the PILOT reporter, we who travel that valley today can see it exactly as Carr saw it almost a hundred years ago. The reporter discovered so much of interest that he was able to fill an entire page of the newspaper. His article, in part, is reprinted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROUTT COUNTY PILOT

James Hoyle, Editor and Proprietor
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Wednesday, April 25, 1888

UPPER ELK VALLEY

ITS THRIFTY INHABITANTS AND WHAT THEY ARE DOING

Your correspondent's eyes feasted upon the beauties of the landscape as he passed up and down Elk River Valley recently, a distance of 15 or 20 miles. He also lent an ear to what might be heard from the inhabitants, scarcely any of whom have matured their homestead claims.

The milch cow that was driven to the camp where the settler first set his stakes so short a time ago is now the bellcow of a herd, while the two fillies that hauled in the family and equipage are part of a productive band of horses. . . Long lines of ditches and regular plats of fields break the monotony of the primary verdure. Plows, mowers, corrals are seen on every hand. Soon the emigrant or prospector that passes up or down this country will be unable to locate himself with marks that he blazed before this change began.

When we reached the entrance to Hoover's Pass we faced about and began gathering news and pulling the latch-string on every cabin door from the head to the foot of the valley.

Mr. John B. Hoover, his estimable wife and little family, has settled at the head of the valley not far from Elk River. His ranch is on a southern slope where the rays of the sun in spring give an early warmth to the soil, and the warm air of the canyon protects tender plants from frost during the nights. Mr. Hoover cultivates wheat, oats, barley, and potatoes this season, about 40 acres of crops all together besides a model garden.

Mr. Charles Wheeler's ranch is just below. . . .

Next, Mr. A. S. Hutchinson, who says he has lived and prospected at Hahn's Peak for the past 14 years, concluded this spring to locate a home. . . .

Mr. Fred Akhurst, who made his first claim about 4 years ago, now cuts 100 tons of tame hay, and has alfalfa that prom-

ises well, besides his acres of winter and spring grains. He has an extensive herd of cattle and horses. Everybody around knows Fred and his comfortable but lonely bachelor home. . . .

Across the river is the ranch of Mr. Rufus Clark, who located last fall on a very desirable claim. He is a veteran soldier. His wife spent the winter with friends in New England but will soon join him and take part in the improvement of their new home.

Then comes our genial friend, Mr. C. J. Franz, with 320 acres in the finest of locations and soil. He always meets you with a smile. His lonely cabin displays the want of a companion, but Charley will get there in time.

From here we meandered on to the expansive lands of the most prominent and social Missourian of the valley, Mr. I. H. Robinson. Here we were greeted by the generous and happy spirit of his better half and two bright little girls. He cut 75 tons of hay last year and raised 40,000 pounds of potatoes on less ground than it would take an eastern farmer to bury them.

Mr. W. R. Swope purchased his ranch about a year ago and is now engaged in putting it in shape for a large hay and grain producer. He feeds quite a herd of cattle and is the owner of a fine band of horses, which rustled their own living about the hills during the winter. Mr. Swope's wife and child spent the past winter in Fremont County but will spend the summer at their home on Elk River.

Down around Moon Hill we reached Mr. Luis Flegill's ranch. Luis is out earning money to make his improvements. He is expected in soon with new lining in his purse and, as usual, loaded for "bar."

William A. Keller occupies the next ranch, which is considered the best natural hay ranch in the valley. He cuts a hundred tons of hay a year and feeds about that number of horses and cattle. He drove his stakes here about 4 years ago, bringing with him his four motherless children, a boy and three girls. His oldest, a son, being now of age, has struck out for himself. People who have passed along the Elk Valley have been impressed with the cheerful and kindly greetings of Dora and May and Maud, who have within a short time grown to be young ladies. They are all helpmates for their father, who deserves great credit for keeping his family together and furnishing them with fair opportunities for schooling. Mr. Keller is a worker and one of the foremost ranchmen on the river.

Adjoining is C. C. Graham's ranch, located last fall. . . .

Mr. Peter C. Bergen owns a good hay ranch farther down, and has lately filed a timber claim on the mesa above. Peter tore up the ground at a great rate this spring, but has now engaged to assist Mr. Akhurst during the season. . . .

We now crossed the river again to the residence of Mr. E. R. Burnett. He has located in the apex of the lower bottom a preemption and a timber claim. His dominions reach from bluff to bluff. He is sowing and planting this spring and will cut about 50 tons of hay. For the accommodation of the public he built a boat which ferries the traveler over the Elk during its high tide. The only thing about the craft that bothers Ed is whether to call it "The Water Lily" or "The Belle of Elk River." Adjoining on the right as you pass up is the ranch of the ever genial and generous Billy St. John. Billy is a bachelor but is willing to divide one half of his stock and ranch at the first favorable opportunity.

Sam Curry and Hank Campbell have taken claims on the west side of the Elk. They have been out during most of the winter and have accumulated means to make some improvements. . . .

As we turned homeward, we paused for a retrospective view of the white crowned summits of the range, the bare slopes of the foothills, the azure blue of the sky, the winding stream, the herds of cattle and horses, the deer and antelope skipping from draw to draw, the swaying and curving lines of wild geese and ducks in flight, the equestrian, the plowman, the axman, the hunter — all aiding in a transport of nature and a scene of the march of civilization. We said. "'Tis grand; 'tis well."

CHAPTER FIVE

ONE APRIL EVENING

About a week previous to the Pilot reporter's leisurely journey of exploration through Upper Elk Valley, Carr had made a trip from the mine to town. His trip was anything but leisurely. He had business that required immediate attention. He did not even take time to stop for a bite to eat at Hoover's, and barely nibbled on a biscuit at Keller's.

The urgency of this business had grown in the month since drilling had been resumed at the Gilpin Mine. Tunneling through solid rock was difficult at best, doubly slow and tedious when attempted by inexperienced help. Carr, laboring alongside the crew, knew the importance of cutting the vein as soon as possible and proving dreams of Mr. Swinney and Mr. Dever, and himself.

But this trip had nothing to do with the Gilpin. Carr needed to deal with another problem that could no longer be put off. For a month he had been marooned on a craggy old peak, isolated from society and from one person in particular. His whole future might depend on what happened when he reached Steamboat.

Ordinarily, on arriving in town, he would have been more than willing to sit down and rest. Not this time. At this day's end he had another trail to walk.

It was a little trail, a favorite path that he and the girl had often sought before. It led through sagebrush and sprouting greenery on the side of Woodchuck hill above Bear River. Not so long ago Indian moccasins had patterned it, and boots of the first trapper and trader. Wild game still used it.

There on this April evening Carr and the girl walked. From the mineral marshes, a short distance below, rose a chorus of frog music and bird jargon, joined by a soprano solo from the hill. Yampa Valley was on the brink of summer. In mountain pockets such as this the seasons came and went so fast there was no time for wild creatures to waste. No time for Carr to waste either.

He and the girl walked slowly, and paused, and walked a step or two. . . . It is doubtful if they saw Elk Mountain yonder in the west and the sunset glow behind it. There in the dusky embrace of the valley, under a young moon, once more the lover pleaded his case.



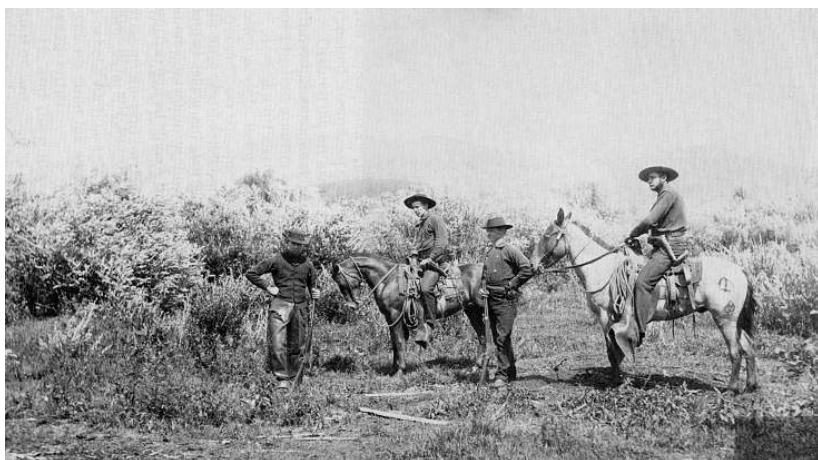
A Certain Girl

And this time the answer was "Yes!"

* * *

All the jubilant young engineer needed to do was dig enough gold from the Gilpin to replenish his wallet (which was very, very flat) so that he could provide a comfortable home for this girl of his dreams, and he and she could be married and live happily ever after.

Only a few more feet of drilling to cut the vein, and then. . . .



Left to right: Charles Groesbeck (brother of Jacob), Dr. Lucien Campbell on smaller horse, Jacob Q. Groesbeck, standing, and Carr Pritchett on “Broncho Dick”

CHAPTER SIX

FOURTH OF JULY – 1888

The Fourth of July in 1888 turned out to be the biggest "Doin's" Steamboat Springs had ever experienced, culminating in a surprise long to be remembered.

Carr would probably have stayed at the mine and worked except for one very special reason, as we shall see. He and the Gilpin crew laid down their tools and came to town the day before the festivities. By then Carr had bought himself a horse, "Broncho Dick," to make travel easier.

Other people had already begun to gather from the surrounding country. Teams from Yampa (now Craig), Hayden, Hahn's Peak, and neighboring communities, hauled family after family to swell the crowd. The innumerable bachelors of the region rode in on well-groomed horses.

The day had dawned pleasant, and though the air was soon warm in the sun, it was cool and comfortable in the Crawford Grove on Soda Creek. The grove had been decorated with nags and bunting, and comfortable seats had been provided. There the people congregated at 11 o'clock for opening ceremonies. Dr. John A. Campbell, president of the day, announced the singing of the "*Red, White, and Blue*," which was rendered by the glee club of the Springs with spirited effect, after which President Campbell introduced James H. Crawford as orator of the day. As the PILOT reported: "Mr. Crawford spoke about 40 minutes in an able and eloquent manner. He had the close attention of his audience, and his remarks met with frequent bursts of applause. The glee club then sang "America," the entire assembly swelling the chorus in a manner which created great enthusiasm. . . .

"The dinner was free to all and it was a splendid one. At 3 o'clock the glee club opened the afternoon exercises with patriotic selections, followed by a piano solo by Miss Snyder (Mrs. Bennett's niece), and a comic solo by Dr. Bamber. Miss Laura Monson at the organ and Monson brothers, violinists, gave very pleasing and entertaining selections." At conclusion of the program visitors strolled about the mineral springs on both sides of the river. When dusk fell there was a grand display of fireworks from Mrs. Bennett's residence and store at the east end of town and Emery Milner's place at the west end. Then the sound of fiddles being tuned drew the crowd toward the newly



Town of Steamboat Springs as it looked on August 10, 1888
Far right: Office of ROUTT COUNTY PILOT; across the street, just
completed Sheridan Hotel; a short distance beyond,
Emery Milner's cluster of buildings; and barely visible at the east end
of Lincoln Avenue, Mrs. Bennett's two-story variety store and rooming
house.
(Picture taken by Henry S. Pritchett, Carr's oldest brother)



**Camp on North Fork of Elk River near canyon. James O. "Parson" Swinney, with gray beard; Henry S. Pritchett standing in front of tent with fishing pole; and two Missouri friends — Irwin and Kennett
Picture taken Aug. 2, 1888**

built Sheridan Hotel where dancing would be the feature of the evening.

Someone had built a bonfire near-by on the east bank of Soda Creek, which attracted momentary attention. Then suddenly all eyes were riveted on an object above and beyond the smoky bonfire. Across the creek on the hill a short distance back of the Crawford house appeared a dazzling light. It came from a torch held high by a figure in flowing garb. None of the watchers had ever seen such a silver-white light. It grew in brilliance that stabbed a hole in the mountain dark and illuminated the golden crown on the figure's head.

The Statue of Liberty! No doubt about it! Right there on Woodchuck Hill.

A cheer rose from the crowd. Afterwards, a few people who, for some reason, had not been able to come to Steamboat, vowed they had seen the light 25 miles down the river. Not even the forest fires set by the Utes a decade before had burned with such intensity or created such a stir. Spectators in the street below could not discern the face of the statue, but had they been in the Crawford yard they would have recognized Miss Lulie, and might have noticed a tall fellow immediately behind her, who had lighted the torch with a spirit lamp and was helping to hold it.

Two years previously, in 1886 when the real statue, a gift from France, had been formally dedicated on America's eastern seaboard, it was said that more than a million people had lined the streets to celebrate the colossal figure that rose 305 feet above New York Harbor on Bedloe's Island. It is doubtful if those New Yorkers had been any more impressed than the two or three hundred Routt County folks who beheld their own Statue of Liberty that Fourth of July in Steamboat Springs in 1888.

The secret of the splendid light was a length of magnesium wire. Professor Potter had trained his engineering students well in the properties of different metals. How Carr happened to have the wire is not known. Maybe he sent for it specially; or maybe he had been using it for a chemical determination in connection with assaying. No matter. That night he made magic with it. And as a bonus, the Statue of Liberty rewarded him with a kiss!

CHAPTER SEVEN

DAY OF RECKONING

Though Carr might work magic on a Fourth of July crowd, he could work no magic on old Gilpin Peak. When the vein was finally cut the middle of August, he took samples, brought them to town, and assayed them with the utmost care. The assay showed barely a trace of gold. Nothing of value. The day of reckoning had come.

The Gilpin Mine was only another hole in the ground.

Carr wrote to his father: "I am now out of a job. I think I will go to Leadville where I may be able to pick up some work. If not, I will go to Denver and hunt for a job. Some of the best and most influential men in the county and friends of mine want me to stay and run for county clerk and recorder, a place which brings about \$2500 a year. But I have chosen a profession and I am going to try to succeed in it if I have to go down as deep as the bucket goes in a mine and push an ore cart to begin with. . . . It is going to be very hard for me to leave this place. I have grown to love these mountains and lovely streams and perfect days and nights. Here has been my first work as a man among men. . . . and here, Father, I have loved and won the love of a girl. . . . Her parents gave their consent, and she has promised to marry me when I am able to offer her a home — which will undoubtedly be some years. . . ."

Carr closed his letter with a request for a loan of money, to be sent by express, to tide him over till he could get on his feet.

* * *

While he waited for the money, he did two more surveys: one, for Perry Burgess — a ditch out of the arm of the river that encircled the Island; and the other, a much longer ditch out of Soda Creek and around the base of Jackrabbit Hill to the Crawford frame house. A well had been dug near the house, but the water in it was so hard and unpalatable that James Crawford was glad to go to almost any trouble and expense to bring good Soda Creek water back to his table.

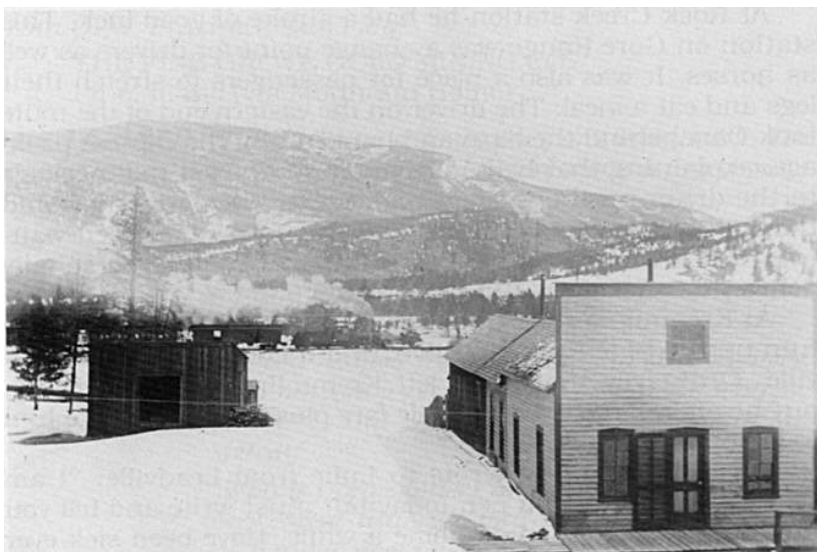
The express package failed to come. Carr was not feeling well. His head ached, and he was afraid he was coming down with mountain fever. He dared wait no longer. On October 9 he boarded the outbound stage wearing a little bouquet of flowers which Lulie had pinned on him.



**Rock Creek Station on Gore Range
McDonald's Roadhouse
(Picture by J. D. Crawford, Sr., of Sedalia, Missouri)**



"The Palisades," Kremmling, 1887
(Picture by J. D. C., Sr., Sedalia)



Colorado & Southern train leaving Dillon, Colorado in the 1880's.
(Picture from State Historical Society of Colorado)



Chestnut Street, Leadville, Colorado in the 1880's. Photo by Joseph Collier (Western History Dept., Denver Public Library)

At Rock Creek station he had a stroke of good luck. This station on Gore Range was a change point for drivers as well as horses. It was also a place for passengers to stretch their legs and eat a meal. The driver on the eastern end of the route took Carr behind the barn and handed him the express package, explaining that he had been afraid to trust that package to the driver on the western end. Apparently, every now and then, drivers switched routes and this fellow had been waiting his turn to drive to Steamboat so he could personally deliver the package.

At Kremmling Carr transferred to a stage that would carry him up the Blue River to Dillon, and thence by train to Leadville. Ordinarily that stage left Kremmling in the morning, but he offered the driver double fare plus a bonus to take him to Dillon that night.

On October 13 he wrote to Lulie from Leadville: "I am scarcely able to hold a pen today but must write and tell you that I have decided to go home a while. Have been sick ever since I came and don't seem to get better. It's mountain fever. I leave for Denver tonight. Address me after this at Glasgow."

CHAPTER EIGHT

OUT TO WIN

A very ill Carr finally managed to reach home in Glasgow, Missouri and was nursed back to health by his two sisters and his father. (His mother had died when he was only nine years old.) It was several months before he fully regained his strength.

This chapter is a very brief sketch of his struggles to establish himself in his chosen profession. He need not have worried about finding work. Mining was booming, and mining companies were seeking qualified young engineers among university graduates. Professor Potter kept his former students supplied with jobs.

Carr's first job after leaving the now defunct Gilpin Mine was in Altura County, Idaho, and he rejoiced that it was only 500 miles from Steamboat. The company was based in St. Louis. Letters by the dozen addressed to *Miss Lulie M. Crawford* arrived at the Steamboat Springs post office.

From C. W. Pritchett, Gen'l Mgr.

THE PINE GROVE GOLD MINING CO.

Pine, Idaho (via Mountain Home)

Jan. 14, 1889 *"This is the most lonesome place imaginable. The town is very small. There are a dozen or so houses scattered around but only about two or three families living right in town. The saloon-post office is the only business house. I am in charge of a mine and a large mill, and I am going to do my best to succeed. . .*

"So you walked from church with Milt Woolery. I am not going to get jealous of him or Mr. Whipple either. . . And you went to Brooks's with Mr. Metcalf. . .

"Who is Dora (Keller) in love with now? She is a very sweet little girl but is compelled to meet such rough men on terms of equality. . .

"So Jake (Groesbeck) is boarding at Suttle's. That does settle it. I know they (he and Cushie Suttle) will get married now"



Laura Monson, born May 30, 1872 in Sutter County, California. Oldest child of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Monson, who came to Routt County in 1886 and settled in Pleasant Valley. The Monsons owned the first piano ever brought into Routt County.

Laura was an accomplished musician. Generous with her talents, she brightened the lives of music hungry settlers. She also taught many country schools. In 1899 she was elected superintendent of schools in Routt County.

*"How is that giddy little Miss Monson (Laura)?
Oh, how mad that girl used to make me!"*

*"I shaved off my sideburns today. I look like a
kid again."*

Feb. 27, 1889 *"By this time Cushie Belle Suttle is, I presume, Mrs. J. Q. Groesbeck. I suppose, Dr. Campbell performed the ceremony. So Jake's hitching days are over. I wonder if, 6 months from now, he will take as much pleasure helping her wash the dishes as he used to. (NOTE: Jake and Cushie were married Feb. 21, 1889.)"*

Oct. 10, 1889 *"Tomorrow you prove up on your ranch and even now I guess you are at Hahn's Peak, 25 miles nearer to me."*

NOTE: During that spring, summer, and fall Carr most certainly did succeed in his work but not financially. He ran a

tunnel that revealed a big vein of gold which eventually made the mine a good producer. However, this was a "stock" mine, depending for profit or loss on fluctuations of the market. Poor market conditions no doubt accounted for his last entry from Idaho:

Dec. 19, 1889 *"After instructing me to prepare for carrying on the work all winter, the company has suddenly seemed to forsake me owing my men nearly \$2000 and being indebted to me about \$800. . . . This does hurt me . . ."*

* * *

From Carr W. Pritchett, Surveyor
CHAPIN MINING CO.
Iron Mountain, Michigan

April 3, 1890 *"This is said to be about the largest iron mine in the world, employing around 2000 men. . . . The office is heated by steam. There are bathrooms with hot and cold running water. Quite took my breath away after living for 3 years in log cabins with dirt or plank floors. The men with whom I am associated are mostly young fellows and quite congenial. I hope soon to make myself worth more to the company than the \$75 per month I am now getting as a surveyor.*



Lulie Crawford's preemption cabin on the hill across the river south of Steamboat, overlooking the present race track.

Aug. 9, 1890 *"I was quite proud of my work last week. I engineered and laid out an intermediate level in the mine and started two parties at different parts of the mine working toward each other. When they met you could not tell where the sides of the two drifts came together they joined so nicely.*

Feb. 3, 1891 *"Thursday night just at 6 o'clock as we were all starting to supper the fire alarm sounded and the main shaft was found to be on fire. Fortunately, most of the miners were at supper and only a few underground. The assistant superintendent and I ran to another shaft and went down to warn the men and got as far as the 7th level when we met smoke and gas rolling toward us and had to run for our lives. By then smoke was pouring out of every shaft. . . . The shafts were all sealed up to change the direction of the air current so that it would descend the shaft near which 4 men were thought to be. Volunteers were called for. Three parties went down. The first time they brought up one man barely alive; the second time they brought up two men, one dead and one alive; and the third time the assistant superintendent and I brought up the last miner — dead." (NOTE: There were no gas masks. A rescuer had to take a big breath, run as far as he could, and try to get back.)*

Carr had inhaled so much gas and smoke that the doctor would not allow him to go underground for a while, and so he began helping Brewster, the company chemist. When Brewster had to leave unexpectedly, Carr was able to take full charge of the laboratory, still at a salary of only \$75, less than the amount paid assistant bookkeepers.

About that time new managers took over the mine. Carr applied for the job of chief chemist but was turned down because the new managers had brought their own chemist. Disgusted and discouraged, Carr was about to enlist Professor Potter's help again when he received a letter from the professor stating that the University had been asked to recommend a man as assayer for the Philadelphia Smelting & Refining Company to attend to their assaying in Old Mexico. This company, one of the largest in the country, was owned by the wealthy and already famous Guggenheim Brothers. Would Carr be interested



Picture of Lulie sent to CWP in Old Mexico

in the job? Carr telegraphed immediately that he would accept the place!

Oct. 15, 1891 NOTE FROM CWP IN ST. LOUIS, TO LMC, VISITING IN SEDALIA, MISSOURI:

"I leave here tonight and will arrive in City of Mexico about noon Monday. . . I send you some rose buds by express tonight and you should get them in the morning. . ."

* * *

In the City of Mexico Carr was met by Mr. Barron, general overseer for the Guggenheims, who sent him to a small place called Potrero for testing and training. Three months later he was given full charge of the important agency at Pachuca, a mining town in the state of Hidalgo, 60 miles north of the City of Mexico.

From Carr W. Pritchett, Agent
PHILADELPHIA SMELTING & REFINING CO.
Apartado 84
Pachuca. Mexico

Jan. 8, 1892 *"I think I shall like the work here though Mr. Barron warned me it would not be easy. Pachuca has about 40,000 inhabitants and is surrounded by high mountains veined with silver which the Spaniards began to mine 375 years ago. The big industry, besides mining, is the making of pulque, a white, thickish sort of liquor derived from the maguey plant. There are acres and acres of maguey. Out of the leaves the Mexicans make ropes, string, and cloth.*

"The weather is very pleasant. Flowers are blooming and leaves are still on the trees.



**Typical maguey plant (pronounced MA-GAY).
The little girl is Margaret Pritchett, born in Pachuca on July 11, 1893.**

"Pachuca is a great place for business but has very little society and refinement. I am afraid it would be a lonesome place for a woman. I wonder whether you would care to come here. . . ."

Feb. 21, 1892 *"The company told me to buy a horse and saddle. I took a ride out in the country. For over a mile the road is bordered with large pepper trees. Away off in the southwest I could see a snow covered volcano. I am told there are some grand sights near here, and you and I could have lots of nice rides. . . ."*

Mar. 23, 1892 *"Jesus (pronounced Ha-soos), my 23-year-old servant, companion, and bodyguard, which the company provides, asked me if I was married. I told him not yet but I hoped to be this year, and I showed him your photo. It tickled him half to death and he said he and his wife would be delighted to serve you. His wife does my cooking and washing. Now everything dates from the time 'cuando viene la senora' (when the lady comes). . . ."*

CHAPTER NINE

PONY'S GIFT

Would Lulie care to go to Pachuca? She would!

She did not change her mind even when she read the description of her future home in Carr's letter of May 2, 1892:

"My company has bought the sampling works of another company, a large stone warehouse with crusher, rolls, etc. for sampling ores. The whole thing covers about an acre and is surrounded by a high stone wall with broken glass on top to keep thieves from climbing over. There is a three-room house in one inside corner where we will live, and a single-room house in another corner for a servant. The two big doors in the wall are closed and locked at night. The place looks something like a prison. It is not in a nice part of town. . . I would not want to live here too long, but I believe I have a good field and good start with opportunity for advancement. I am fast learning Spanish. . .

"I had a long talk with Mr. Barron. I told him I was thinking of getting married. He said he would arrange for me to take a leave of absence in October."

* * *

The wedding date was set for October 18 — a little too late in the fall to insure good weather. Time, that had dragged for so long, now flew by. Lulie went by stage to Wolcott and thence by train to Denver to buy her wedding dress. She selected material at Daniels and Fisher's, and a dressmaker sewed it. Her other clothes Lulie sewed herself. From her cousin, Eva Yankee, she borrowed a veil.

Carr ordered his suit by mail from a tailor in St. Louis and hoped it would fit. He had it sent to his father in Glasgow, who brought it to Steamboat when he came to perform the marriage ceremony.

The Rev. Carr Pritchett, in his 70th year, stood the wear-



Crossing State Bridge over Grand River, summer of 1892, Bob Cushman stage driver. Lulie Crawford, passenger, on her way "Outside" to purchase her trousseau.

some trip from Missouri by train and stagecoach very well but almost created a scandal on arrival in Steamboat Springs. Though he gave the appearance of a dignified patriarch, he smelled like a drunkard. His physician had given him a small bottle of whiskey to be used as a stimulant if needed in the high altitude. The stage ride from Wolcott had been so rough that the bottle had broken in the minister's hand grip, causing the owner of the grip untold embarrassment.

Carr left Pachuca the evening of September 30. On October



Hotel at Wolcott, Colorado, where stage made connection with D&RG railroad.

Picture taken by Elmer Brooks, 1907 (Routt County Collection)



Wolcott was originally called Russell. This picture from the Library of the State Historical Society of Colorado is labelled "Russell Station, 1887—D&RG train." (See Supplement for more information.)

5 at noon he reached Pueblo, Colorado where he stayed a day and a half and bought "collars and cuffs, etc." He took the D&RG train out of Pueblo about midnight, and next morning transferred to the stage at Wolcott, reaching Steamboat Springs October 8.

During the next busy week there were mutterings of storm in the high country, but open weather held in Yampa Valley.

And then it was October 18.

The white carnations ordered from Denver for the bride's bouquet never did come. Small white button chrysanthemums clipped from Margaret Crawford's potted plants were a happy substitute.

The bridal party rode to and from the church in a stagecoach drawn by four horses and lined with sheets to protect the pretty dresses of bride and bridesmaids.

The ROUTT COUNTY PILOT, published the day after the ceremony, reported as follows:

PRITCHETT — CRAWFORD

Miss Lulie M. Crawford, daughter of Hon. James H. Crawford, was married to Carr W. Pritchett, Jr. Tuesday evening, the ceremony taking place at the Union Church and being performed by the father of the groom, Rev. C. W. Pritchett of Glasgow, Missouri. The church was



Lulie's wedding dress, modeled by a kinswoman many years later.
www.LulitaCrawfordPritchett.com



Union Church, Steamboat Springs, Colorado

handsomely decorated with flowering plants (from Steamboat homes) and evergreen, the latter being formed into an arch, studded with the bright red clustered berries of mountain ash. From the center of the arch hung the initials C and P interwoven, and back of it, banked against the wall, were masses of evergreens.

The best men were Logan B. Crawford and Rev. J. W. Gunn and the bridesmaids Miss Dora Keller and Miss Sadie B. Pritchett, sister of the groom. (NOTE: Sadie had been visiting in Steamboat for several weeks.) They wore respectively scarf pins and hair ornaments of silver filigree brought by the bridegroom from the City of Mexico.

The bride entered upon the arm of her father, by whom she was given away, and the bridal procession was preceded by two little girls, Mary Crawford and Lizzie Schnauber, who opened a low gate of evergreen branches to let the bride walk through. The ushers were J. M. Woolery, Charles J. Franz, George Milbank, Jr., and Philip M. Brasher. The bride's costume was of



**Rev. Carr W. Pritchett, minister, from Glasgow, Missouri,
who performed the ceremony on October 18, 1892.**



**Front room of Crawford Cottage House, where wedding reception was
held. Bay window was something to be proud of!**



Mrs. C. W. Pritchett on her way to Old Mexico

crepe de Chine, trimmed with embroidered chiffon with train, and veil of tulle. Miss Keller wore a dress of cream albatross trimmed with embroidered chiffon with train. Miss Pritchett was costumed in pearl gray serge, trimmed with crepe de Chine, with short train.

After the ceremony there was a reception at the home of the bride, followed by a wedding supper. Miss Laura Monson rendered the wedding march, and later in the evening she favored the company with selections both instrumental and vocal. Among those present from out of town were Mamie Yankee of Denver and Miss Gertrude Niles of Boulder.

On Friday Mr. and Mrs. Pritchett will start on their wedding trip and will proceed to Pachuca, Mexico, where will be their home.

* * *

The day after the wedding, visiting kinfolks departed on the outbound stage to try to beat the threatening storm. When the

newlyweds left on Friday, rain mixed with snow had moved in. Roads were increasingly bad. Billy Welch, the stage driver, had all he could do to deliver his passengers to Wolcott in time for them to catch the train. The little leather trunk, that had been lashed on the back of the stage, was covered with mud. That trunk held only necessities. The many handsome wedding gifts of silverware, china, and linen had had to be stored in Steamboat temporarily.

* * *

Back in the high country at the head of Elk River, winter had wrapped a white blanket around Gilpin Peak and hidden the hole that should have been a rich mine. That hole had been the end of a dream for Mr. Swinney and Mr. Dever and Carr.

But the great granite tooth of a mountain still stood at the edge of the lake, inscrutable, ageless, beautiful. Down the years Carr would remember that mountain with nostalgia, almost affection. If it had not been for old Gilpin Peak, a young mining engineer probably never would have been summoned to Routt County, never would have met a certain girl.

And if it had not been for Pony Whitmore, who had started the whole chain of events, this story could never have been written.

I like to believe that Pony, squatted by a campfire somewhere in the Great Beyond, was smiling because, in a roundabout way, he had finally delivered that present he had promised a little girl so long ago. Not a handful of gold nuggets and dancing lessons, as he had originally dreamed, but something much better — an adoring husband and a lifetime of happiness!

SUPPLEMENT

SUMMIT OF BERTHOUD PASS

This roadhouse, described as "forty feet by eighteen, of hewn logs and with a ten-foot story," was built by Captain Louis Dewitt Clinton Gaskill, one of the leaders of Grand County. The road over Berthoud Pass was completed in 1874. Captain Gaskill and his family lived at the lodge for nine years and sheltered many a weary traveler before they moved to Fraser.

This building was on the opposite side of the road from the present lodge. (Picture taken in 1887 by J. D. Crawford, Sr., brother of James H.)

NAMING OF MT, ZIRKEL

Clarence King, geologist in charge of the U. S. Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel, named this 12,180-foot peak in the Park Range of northwestern Colorado in honor of Ferdinand Zirkel, a German scientist. Ferdinand was the world's leading authority of what has since become the science of microscopic petrology. In the late seventies he came to America at King's invitation and studied rock specimens collected by the survey crews. He and King discussed the links between American and European rocks and problems of nomenclature. . .

Ref.: *Great Surveys of the American West* by Richard A. Bartlett

BACK OF GILPIN PEAK — August 8, 1949

John Ambos took this picture, which he called "Iceberg Lake," during an advisory council meeting of the Routt Forest Service. He and Gordon Moffat and Lynn Jones were the camp tenders. The man in the picture is Lynn Jones. Gordon was a short distance behind the photographer having fun sliding down a snow bank.

HENRY SMITH PRITCHETT

Carr's oldest brother first came to Routt County in 1886 probably at the suggestion of Mr. Swinney. Henry and a small group of congenial friends (I think teachers at Washington University where Henry was Professor of Astronomy) found northwestern Colorado a paradise in which to spend a vacation — camping, hunting, and fishing.

In 1889 Henry built a neat frame house across the draw

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from the Crawford cottage and for a season or two brought his wife and three small sons to enjoy Steamboat Springs.

In years to follow, Henry gained considerable importance: 1897-1900 — Supt. of U. S. coast and geodetic survey; 1900-1906 — Pres. Massachusetts Institute of Technology; 1906-1923 — Pres. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, etc., etc.

As he grew older, health problems kept him from Colorado's high altitude, but he loved Routt County to the end of his days.

LULIE CRAWFORD'S PREEMPTION

Lulie proved up on her claim and became the owner of 160 acres, which she sold to a Kansas City company. This company was interested in mining the very fine onyx that was found on the claim. However, the onyx was never mined to any extent. Perhaps transportation was a problem, or onyx went out of style.

CARR PRITCHETT'S PREEMPTION

According to Clay Monson, Carr sold his claim to Dr. Kernaghan, who married Blanche "Trix" Monson.

WOLCOTT, COLORADO (Described in the *Denver Republican*, Nov. 22, 1889)

"Wolcott is the terminus of the Steamboat Springs Stage and Star Mail Route to Hahn's Peak, Sidney, and Egeria Park. There is a fine hotel, presided over by Peter Peterson and an extensive livery station in connection with the hotel. The Eagle River Mining & Fuel Co. have erected a large store and warehouse where one can buy anything from a toothbrush to a steam thresher. There is also a large blacksmithing and horseshoeing shop. The railway company have put a telegraph office in the store until they can erect their depot. . . . The D&RG have built expensive stockyards here, capable of holding 2000 head of cattle. . . ."

MORE ABOUT PEOPLE IN THIS BOOK

William Constantine Shaw liked this young land in spite of its hazards, and the following year moved his family to Routt County. He drove a span of mules from Missouri to Steamboat Springs, coming by way of Wyoming. He was eight weeks on the trip. He brought his wife and two children, William Clay and Mary. Hoyt Shaw was born in Steamboat Springs in Janu-

ary 1890. The Shaw family were valued and much loved members of the community for many, many years.

Dr. L. E. Bamber was a dentist, but it seems he could turn his hand to almost anything. He advertised in the July 18, 1888 PILOT that he was "prepared to do all classes of Dental Work; also Repair Watches, Clocks and Jewelry." He even worked at the Gilpin Mine for a week or so while the regular crew took time off for ranching. He brought up a banjo and must have enlivened things considerably at old Gilpin Peak.

But his days were numbered. During the winter of 1889-90 there was a bunch of cronies living on upper Lincoln Avenue. **Major Charles C. Graham**, Civil War veteran, justice of the peace, and later Populist state senator; Dr. Bamber, and one or two others all bachelors who loved the dew of Old Kentucky. One unfortunate night in the spring of 1890 Dr. Bamber went to the Dunfield saloon located a half mile below town. The next morning his companions missed him and a search was started. He was found in the bayou at the east side of the island and a few feet below the road. He had stumbled off into the ice-cold water. His fingers grasped a branch of a tree, holding his head above water, but he had chilled to death.

Ref.: "Tread of Pioneers" by Charles H. Leckenby

Dr. John A. Campbell was one of the most highly respected people of early Routt County. Born in Indiana in 1831, he came to Steamboat in 1887 and for 30 years served the needs of this community as preacher, teacher, and friend. He was an ordained minister of the Christian church, and also a graduate of a medical school where he gained a good knowledge of medicine though he was not a licensed physician. He had a wife, Charlotte, and two children, Lucien and Lucy. When Lucien grew up, he also did a little doctoring. Dr. John Campbell presided in the Union Church before there was a regular minister in Steamboat.

Rev. J. Wallace Gunn was the first regular minister in Steamboat Springs. His name was Joseph, but he signed himself J. Wallace Gunn. He arrived early in the summer of 1889 — a young, likeable, theological student straight from "Yan-keedom" and sponsored by the Congregational church. He held services in the Union Church till the Congregational church on the hill was built.

He was an usher at the wedding of Carr and Lulie in 1892, and received an invitation to their golden wedding in 1942. In

answer to the invitation he wrote, "Certainly I remember the occasion well fifty years ago, with Mr. Pritchett's father there in the little Union Church saying the marriage service. And I can still picture the happy faces of good friends and neighbors of Steamboat Springs as it was then, who made up the wedding party. . . ." By then, he had become a minister of the Episcopal church with a parish in Nampa, Idaho.

Lizzie Schnauber, a niece of the Schaffnits, had been brought from Germany as a small child and reared by "Auntie" Schaffnit. I knew her when she was Elizabeth Manker and lived in Vernal, Utah with her daughter Amelia. Lizzie and Mary Crawford were about the same age and were lifelong friends. Both filed on ranches far up Soda Creek. By that time Lizzie had become a naturalized citizen.

She helped with the work at the Sheridan Hotel. She vividly remembered when the outlaws Lant and Tracy escaped from the Hahn's Peak jail in March 1898. Sheriff Neiman recaptured them at the W. J. Laramore ranch, returned them to Steamboat, and brought them to the Sheridan for breakfast. They were log-chained together by their necks. Lizzie waited on the table.

She told another tale about the Sheridan: In early days the hotel customarily closed during winter months when there was no business. "Auntie" Schaffnit had already gone to Denver where Henry, Jr. was clerk of the legislature. She told her husband to be sure to take the chest of hotel silverware over to the Pilot office for safe keeping. He got it as far as the back door of the hotel and left it just outside, intending to carry it across the street, but forgot it. It stayed there all winter, and was still there under a big drift of snow when the Schaffnits returned in the spring.

This writer can think of only two descendants of the original homesteaders who still live in Elk River Valley: **Katherine Sandelin** (Mrs. John E. Sandelin), daughter of May Keller (who married Jack Ellis); and **Ruth Wheeler** (Mrs. Clarence Wheeler), daughter of Ad Keller (who married Lulu Viets).

Dorothy Bergen Rule (Mrs. James H. Rule) is a granddaughter of Peter Bergen, and a daughter of Fred Bergen (who married Katie Hangs). Dorothy now lives in St. Helena, California but maintains a lively interest in Routt County.

**PICTURES TAKEN
BY JOHN AMBOS
1949-1951**



**Gilpin Lake looking southwest
This picture was taken when Routt County Forest Service had its first
Advisory Council meeting, August 1949.**



**Roxey Ann Lake on the east slope, probably a mile and a half northeast
of Mt. Ethel, August 1949.**



Alpine Lake, 11,500 feet, at foot of Mt Zirkel, August 1951



**Fall colors, not far from Diamond Park on North Fork
of Elk River, October 1951**



**View on Middle Fork of Elk River near Seed House
Camp Ground, June 1951**

