

Interesting Facts From Denver, Col.

(From Page 1.)

This poem is famous around the world as defining the spirit of the West more effectively than anything yet written. It was written by a reporter on a Denver newspaper on the occasion of a dispute as to the real boundary of the West.

When I left Mount Joy, the first Monday in June at 9:46 A. M., I changed to a fast train at Harrisburg and arrived in Chicago on Tuesday morning at 7:30. I waited there until 11.30 A. M. and then left over the Burlington Lines for this city. I reached Omaha, Neb., about one o'clock in the morning and went through a terrible thunder storm before we got into Council Bluffs, Iowa, at the east bank of the Missouri river and opposite Omaha, Neb., which is on the west bank.

I was awake at the time and saw a wonderful display of lightning over the level plain south of the train, and, believe me, it was some rain. I finally reached Denver on Wednesday afternoon at 3:30.

Recently I was in Salt Lake City, Utah, for a week and I will also try and write you something about that city and the trip over the Continental Divide, as the Rocky Mountain Range is called here.

Coronado, a Spaniard, was the first white man to touch Colorado, late in 1540, forty-eight years after Columbus discovered America in 1492, and eighty years before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth in 1620.

Colorado, in Spanish, signifies color red. Coronado's followers were astonished at seeing many red rocks, dirt red rivers and red soil—also the Red Man, in what is now Colorado. The Spaniards' quest for

treasure resulted in a futile search for the city of Quivira, mythically resplendent in its streets of turquoise and palaces of gold. This traditional city, shown on old Spanish maps, was supposed to be some where near to where Denver sprung up like magic, three hundred years later, when gold was discovered in marketable quantities near by in Clear Creek Canyon.

Coronado was perhaps the first white man to set foot upon what Coronado's historian, Castenada, called: "Colorado of the colored rocks." Now, after a lapse of nearly four hundred years, billions of organisms, half plant, half animal—as if carrying out Coronado's color scheme, are borne on Chinook winds from the Arctic and, covering the surface of large snow patches in the heights of Rocky Mountain National Park, transforms them, to the wonder of tourists, into red snow in summer.

The first American known to put foot upon Colorado soil, was in 1803 and the first known log house was erected in 1816 for a troop of Spanish cavalry patrolling the Arkansas, near the site of Pueblo, Col.

This State was the thirty-eighth to enter the Union, and is called the Centennial State, having been admitted in 1876 during the time the Centennial was held in Philadelphia.

There are arrow-market cabins of prospectors for gold still standing. Days of the ox team, and the historical stage coach, are associated in memory by some of the old-timers, who live again the romantic days in tales to tourists. The stories center in Col. W. F. Cody (Buffalo Bill), whose grave is on the summit of Lookout Mountain, about six or seven miles from this city. The other Sunday I was up there and copied the following from a bronze tablet on the monument:

In Memoriam
Colonel William Frederick Cody
"Buffalo Bill"

Noted Scout and Indian Fighter
Born February 26, 1846
Scott County, Iowa.
Died January 10, 1917
Denver, Colorado.

The grave is covered with a marble slab and standing on the four corners is a miniature buffalo in bronze, and the grave is inclosed by an iron fence about five feet high. Not far from Buffalo Bill's grave, is his memorial museum, called Paha-ka Tepee, in which Buffalo Bill's relics are kept. I was in there and what I saw was very interesting.

This State has the deepest canyons in the world traversed by railroads; the highest passes in the world crossed by standard tracks; the highest summits in the world reached by rails; lakes innumerable, watering places uncounted, including the most potent radium springs in the world and pools of warm sulphur water; ruins that puzzle history; the relics of a forgotten people; two National Parks, and phenomena of lava, ashes, glaciers, boiling mud and sculptured cliffs and a great many other scenic attractions.

The air of this wonderful Rocky Mountain State is thin, dry and crystalline, invigorating body and mind. The sky throughout the summer and fall is blue and cloudless, except for brief thunder storms of rare grandeur. The thermometer occasionally climbs into the eighties, but the dryness of the atmosphere makes it seem much less and it is always cool in the shade. Humidity is almost a minus quantity. Heat prostrations are unknown. Cool breezes from the snow-capped mountains make blankets at night a necessity. This Colorado climate is unusual. Within its boundaries you can journey from Temperate to Arctic climes within a few hours, or slip across the street on the warmest day in summer, from a heat-baked sidewalk into the shade and enjoy the cool atmospheric refreshment with which the air seems permeated.

Denver, "The Paris of America", and city of Mountain Parks, one mile above set level, is the leading gateway to the Colorado Rockies. The city has a population of 270,000. Among the public buildings are the State Capitol, the Public Library, of Greek design; the State Museum, which contains the finest collection of cliff-dwelling relics in the world; the United States Mint the new Post Office building built of Colorado marble; and the Colorado Museum of Natural History in the City Park. In the Municipal Auditorium, having a seating capacity of 12,000, an immense organ has been installed, and here free recitals entertain thousands every noon during the summer season. Denver's Civic Center covers nine acres. Its principal feature is a Greek open-air theatre with a stage adequate for every sort of free entertainment.

This city has thirty-five parks within her borders. A municipal band plays in the principal park every afternoon and evening during the summer.

Denver is not far from the mountains and an extensive view is afforded of 200 miles of the Snowy Range, from Long's Peak on the north to Pike's Peak on the south.

A seventy-mile circle trip embraces Denver's unique mountain parks. Through the recent completion of a new highway one can visit a hitherto almost inaccessible region lying westward from this city. Leading through picturesque canyons, giant forests, and beautiful glacial valleys. This road reaches some of the highest mountain lands in the United States. On a trip over this highway it is possible for one to stand on the ridge pole of America where the water from one glacier flows toward the Pacific and the waters of another one flows toward the Atlantic, and behold the great forested areas of this wonderful region.

Colorado Springs, which has an altitude of 5992 feet above sea level, is seventy miles south of Denver and is the gateway to the Pike's

Peak region. Six miles from Colorado Springs lofty Pike's Peak dominates the city. It was discovered by Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike, of the United States army in 1806, but it was not until many years later that the hardy American pioneers made permanent settlement in that locality. Lieutenant Pike did not climb the peak; he made an attempt, but failed, and stated in his diary that "no human being could have ascended to its pinnacle."

A number of years ago some railroad men conceived the idea of a railroad to the summit of Pike's Peak (altitude 14,109 feet) to supersede the horse and the burro; and the spectacular Cog Road, following the old-time trail, was the result. Some years ago there was an automobile road constructed to the peak, so one can either go to the top by the Cog Road or by automobile. The automobile road is eighteen miles long and at some places fifty feet wide. I got the greatest thrill of my life when I was on the peak two years ago. In addition to the scenery along the route, the great granite blocks on the summit, the accumulation of everlasting snow, the view out over Manitou, Colorado Springs and the plains beyond, also backward over the neighboring ranges, together with the floating clouds close at hand and far below, produced an impression I will never forget.

Recently I was on a week's trip to Salt Lake City, Utah, via the Denver and Rio Grande railroad. I left Denver late at night and entered the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas some time in the morning. This railroad enters the canyon west of Canon City. Here the train rounds a long curve and rushes into the canyon. The steep, saggy hills, between which hurries the dashing green water, give place to rock, and following the immense breach in the granite the train seemed to be penetrating the very bowels of the earth. This, the Grand Canyon, through which the Arkansas river pours from the high country to the lower, is ten miles long. Clinging close to every twist the train rushed on. There is hardly space between wall and river for the single track. The narrowest portion of passage, the famous Royal Gorge, was reached later. The red granite walls tower aloft on either side 2,677 feet; the sky looked like a thread and almost obliterated by the jagged sides and stars could be seen at midday by looking up into the sky. At one point, the hanging bridge, the width is about ten yards and the roadbed has been built out over the water. The river runs madly through this part of the canyon.

After leaving Salida on this trip the train went over Marshall Pass, 10,856 above sea level. In making the ascent of the mountains two engines took the train in tow. In a serpentine trail the track goes wriggling on, seizing every advantage, weaving in and out and doubling on itself. Each turn occupies higher ground than the preceding, and thus by a series of loops the Continental Divide was scaled. It was up, up, up, with the air growing rarer and the view over the tops of the timber steadily expanding, until, having climbed over 200 feet per mile for many miles of the advance. Upon the "Top o' the World" the train paused more than two miles in the air, and almost at timber line. At such a great height vegetation is stunted; below are tracks, successive steps like terraces; from the summit all the mountains of the Rockies seem visible—range after range, dark green, gray or snow white.

After the halt, the train rolled down the farther slope by gravitation, and with brakes set and finally we were west of the Continental Divide and traveling northward over the great-tableland toward the Grand Mesa Lakes and later on we reached Glenwood Springs. This town is one of the best known resorts in the west. Here are located hot sulphur springs with extensive bathing pavilions and an immense outdoor swimming pool.

After a short stop at Glenwood Springs, the train headed for Utah—"The Land of Surprises." At Castle Gate, Utah, a remarkable fountain of red sandstone rises 500 feet on either side of the track, here the train entered Price Canyon. There are about ten miles of this, the sandstone changing shade and shape about every mile. It was called by the pioneers, "Entrance to the Promised Land." After going through this canyon the train made the ascent of the Wasatch Range and the top is reached at Soldier Summit, from this point there is a gradual descent to the fertile Utah Valley.

There is only one Salt-Lake City, its situation and surroundings are certainly picturesque and beautiful. It sits enthroned, like a queen of the mountains and valleys, upon an ancient beach of the Great Salt Lake. The star attraction is ten-acre-square Temple Block, surrounded by a ten-foot-high, five-foot-thick wall, in which stands the Mormon Temple, Tabernacle, and Assembly Hall. The Temple was begun in 1853 and completed in 1894 at a cost of \$4,000,000. The tabernacle is an architectural curio. It resembles half of a monstrous egg shell, cut in two the long way, is built of stone, iron and glass and is without post or pillars. It seats about 8,000, and its acoustic prop-

erties are so perfect that a whisper can be heard all over it. It contains one of the largest organs in existence. A free organ recital is given every day at noon during the summer season.

Saltair Beach is about one-half hour ride from Salt Lake City. The water of this inland sea is a brine so dense that no animal life can exist in it, with the exception of a minute shrimp. I went bathing in the lake and, believe me, it was full of surprises. It is possible to float on the water without the slightest exertion and it is not necessary to be a swimmer. The water holds one afloat for any length of time.

There is an island in the center of the lake where ocean bird life abounds. Seagulls, pelicans, and cranes and the sight of thousands of birds which inhabit it is a remarkable one. These birds must

carry food for miles from the mainland rivers as none is available on the island nor in the waters of the lake.

West of Salt Lake City are the Natural Salt Beds, sixty miles long, eight miles wide one to sixty feet thick and almost pure salt. The railroad crosses near the center, and the salt being perfectly white, hard and level, the appearance is that of a great Polar ice-field, while mirage-like images of lakes and land merge into the very real distant mountains. There is a great deal more to see in this State but I did not have the time as I was only gone from Denver about a week. On my return trip. I traveled via the Union Pacific through Wyoming to Cheyenne and from there south to this city where I arrived about 2 A. M. on a Saturday, from this wonderful trip.
S. A. RICKER



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