

The Louisville Historian

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PRELUDE TO SAND CREEK

by Ron Buffo

The history of Louisville, Colorado is replete with stories about mining, farming, and business but little is said about the early settlement of our community. What was it like before this small settlement became populated with individuals and families seeking their fortunes from the gold strikes of 1858 and 1859? Before the discovery of coal what events passed over the front range of Colorado that made a lasting impact on the people of this state and this country?

Previous to the gold discoveries in Colorado in 1858 and 1859 the front range was bypassed by pioneers making their way to Oregon and California. With the discovery of gold in Colorado the white fortune seekers made their way to the front range via the North Platte River Road to the various locales.

The autumn of 1862 was a time of fear and uncertainty along the front range of the Colorado Territory. The white settlers in this area had an inherent fear of Indians based on rumored or actual occurrences of stealing and brutality. The Indians, Cheyennes and Arapahoes mainly, in turn lived in fear of the white man for many of the same reasons.

Reaction to the "Indian problem" near Boulder and Longmont led to the convening of a mass meeting on October 12, 1862 in Boulder for the purpose of deciding what to do about protection. The major forces behind the meeting were the Honorable David H. Nichols and George Chambers of Boulder. At this meeting it was resolved that Boulder county would contribute thirty, one hundred day volunteers to serve in the 3rd Regiment. Since jobs were scarce it was relatively easy to recruit the needed volunteers and each received a \$25 bonus. It is not recorded who led this thirty man company but should be noted that their services were not required in 1862. They did travel to Denver for display but nothing more was done.

An integral part of this scenario is the role of David H. Nichols. Nichols was born in Vermont in the late 1820's and moved to Illinois ten years later. He attended an Illinois college and later served in the Mexican-American War. He went back to Illinois but later left in 1853 for California and the gold Rush. After California, Nichols moved back to Illinois and was engaged in the mercantile business until he left for the Gold Rush in Colorado. Making his home in Boulder Nichols was extremely active in territorial affairs. In 1859 he was elected county judge in the Jefferson Territory and would later serve in the territorial legislature and serve as Speaker of the House. David Nichols would also become instrumental in the creation of the University of Colorado and would serve as a trustee. He was, for all intents and purposes, a respected leader of the community. An alternative perspective of Nichols, as espoused by Dr. Patricia Limerick of the University of Colorado, is:

"We can see him as a determined, energetic, courageous, enterprising pioneer, the sort of fellow who built his country, or we can see him as an unstable, flighty, opportunistic, self-interested adventurer, the sort who unsettled his country."

Limerick would further state, "Apparently the founding of universities and killing of Indians represented service in the same cause."

Whatever David H. Nichols stood for it is imperative to, at least on the face of factual evidence, see him as those around him viewed his status in society.

The next two years saw a worsening of the Indian situation and early in 1864 Fort Chambers was built on the ranch of George Chambers. The adobe fort was 150' x 200' and was built expressly for the protection of nearby residents. (Remnants of the fort can still be seen in Boulder.)

In 1864 Governor Evans, seeing hostilities increase, called for more volunteers to defend the Platte River Wagon Road and Colonel John Chivington commissioned David H. Nichols as captain of Company D, 3rd Colorado Cavalry. He was instructed to recruit and lead 100 volunteers (with 100 day enlistments) from the Boulder area. The men were officially mustered into service on August 18, 1864 and began training at Fort Chambers with supplies and ammunition sent from Denver. The troops, made up of men from the Boulder and Longmont area, continued training until September 16, 1864 when they received orders to march.

The make-up of Company D was as varied as most military units of volunteers at the time. Some members were adventurers, others held prominent positions in the community, some were farmers and ranchers who had families, a few were in it for the money or prestige, and others were hungry for a fight and looked forward to bloodletting. The common bond for all, though, was the blatant distrust of Indians and their duty to extinguish them from the Colorado Territory.

The mission of Company D was to defend the Platte River Wagon from hostile and marauding Indians. Subsequently a march was made from Fort Chambers northeast to Valley Station (Sterling). Even though the terrain was flat this was a great distance to travel. Riding this distance on horseback required tough, hearty individuals. Apparently the rest of the company stayed at Fort Chambers.

While at Valley Station a report came in from a local ranch (the Wisconsin Ranch) indicating that an Indian in war dress and paint had been spotted. This apparently, was all that was needed for Captain Nichols to ride out with forty of his men and deal with the hostile. (This action took place on October 10, 1864 and would prove to be an eerie prelude to the Sand Creek Massacre). Captain Nichols, after hearing of the Indian in war paint, gathered his men and tracked the Indian to a location twelve miles from the ranch where he was spotted. This was an area of bluffs with a spring nearby and was ideal for an

encampment. According to Nichols his party left at 2:00 a.m. accompanied by two civilian guides. Having arrived at the encampment it was observed that there were two lodges of, according to Nichols, the "red devils" that included six warriors, three squaws, one fifteen year old male, and two small children. Nichols claims he really didn't see the two small children. The Company proceeded to fire into the group and, in Nichols letter to Chivington, states that the Indians returned the fire with "a hearty good will" and appeared to have the advantage to begin with. Company D soon overwhelmed the Indians and everyone was killed. Upon investigation the men found the bloodstained dress, undergarments and scalp of a white woman. Upon orders from Nichols his men confiscated eleven Indian ponies, one mule and assorted paraphernalia. Included in the group of Indians was the Cheyenne Chief Big Wolf.

A member of D Company, Morse Coffin, would later write of this same event and his version would carry a much different tone. According to Coffin shots were fired through the lodges and the Indians quickly scattered. In short order all were dead including the two children with their mothers. One child was still alive and a civilian guide killed the child at point blank range with a pistol. The squaws tried to crawl away but were quickly dispatched. Coffin mentions that while some of the soldiers disapproved, the majority were in "high glee." Upon return to Valley Station three cheers were given for Captain Nichols and the troops were quite satisfied with the results of the days work. (Coffin claims that he would have nothing to do with the jubilation the others were showing).

The slaughter of Big Wolf and his people was, in fact, a direct violation of standing orders issued by Major General Curtis on July 27, 1864. General Field Orders #1 stated, "Indians at war with us will be the object of our pursuit and distinction, but women and children must be spared." It was Nichols view that all of the Indians were aggressors and were thought of as combatants. Additionally, Colonel Chivington approved of Company D's actions.

The event at Valley Station becomes crucial in explaining the actions of Company D at Sand Creek on November 29, 1864. The men were now "initiated" and had a taste of combat. In their minds there was no distinction between Indian warriors, old men, squaws, or children.

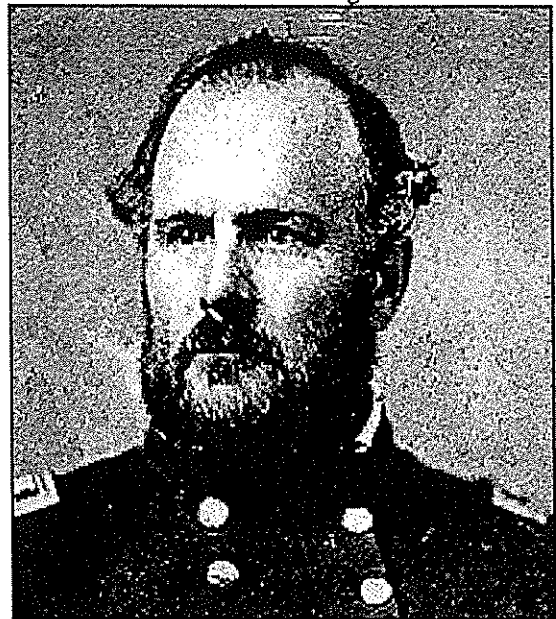
Company D later received orders to proceed to Denver and then southeast to Sand Creek where Cheyenne and Arapahoes were encamped. At Sand Creek Company D was fully involved in the attack and early in the engagement Captain Nichols and his troops pursued a band of Indians that were trying to escape. He overtook them and punished them severely, killing 25 or 30 and capturing some ponies. According to Morse Coffin, "On looking over the field I did not see a solitary warrior not scalped. I noticed about the scalping in particular; for to tell the truth, I was prepared to remove any Indians top knot found intact. I know this is not to the credit of myself and others who did it: but it is the truth, and I am disposed to shoulder my share of it. At that time it was deemed all right and proper, and I may as well add that on the return trip to Denver these trophies were rated at an average of 10 dollars each among the boys."

After Sand Creek, Company D was quietly disbanded but

a further mustering of troops would later take place because of the escalation of hostilities. Later on Julesburg would be the focus of an Indian attack with estimates of 1,500 Indians surrounding the small town. The effects of Valley Station and Sand Creek would be the increased anger of the Indians and conflicts would continue. Captain Nichols would later say, "No man of sense will doubt the necessity for this campaign against the Indians."

(Source: "What's in a Name? Nichols Hall: A Report" by Patricia Nelson Limerick)

Colonel John Chivington



Nicknames

Americans probably use nicknames more than any other peoples today. We give them to our spouses, children, friends, and enemies. Throughout history notable figures have been given unofficial titles or nicknames that help to set them apart from people who are less familiar. For example, Ronald Reagan was "The Great Communicator," Henry Clay, "The Great Compromiser," William Bonney, "Billy the Kid," Leroy "Crazy Legs" Hirsch, "Honest Abe" Lincoln, and Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower. Along with these great names in history the Louisville Historian would like to offer the following nicknames of past and present Louisville residents.

Lemoine Bammer	Lemons	Terry Barday	Tiger
Gary Beranek	Tank	Josh Bosco	Blisquit
Dominic Buffo	Poosh	Bill Buffo	Buff/Carrots
Ken Buffo	Buff	Don Buffo	Buff
Sharon Arroyas	Shadow	Eugene Caranci	Chooch
Lawrence Caranci	Long Jack	Ed Channel	Dizzy
Richard Channel	Diz	Bill Checkus	Fatty
John Chiolino	Johnny Boy/Chl	Tom Cisneros	Greek
John Coet	Red	Charles Coet	Peanuts
Harold Cornelius	Kanobs	Randy Cummings	Muffy
Tony Dalema	Gram Pa Dalema	Gary Damiana	Gooch
Yvonne Damiana	Duke	Sheri Delier	Peri
Al Delpizzo	Mex	Frank Delpizzo	Konkle
Tony Delpizzo	Dago	Dominic DeSantis	Satchel
Dean DeSantis	Gunga Dean	Eugene DiCarlo	Geno
Pasqual DiGiacomo	Packy	Frank DiGiallonardo	Shampoo
Tom DiGiallonardo	Ginger Rabbits	Nick DiGiallonardo	Ginger Rabbits
Bob DiGiallonardo	Ginger Rabits	Linda DiLorenzo	Deeley
John Dionigi	Ring	Artrey Dionigi	Blackie
Alex Domenico	Hammer	Frank Domenico	Buzzy
Frank Domenico	Gooch	Stephanie Domenico	Stevie
Charles Eberl	Dutch	Roy Elliot	Oats
Frank Elliot	Little Oats	Duane Elrod	Shotgun
Herman Fauson	Herm	Dave Ferguson	Ferg
Dan Ferguson	Ferg	David Ferguson	Ferg
Dean Ferguson	Ferg	Bob Ferrari	Boots
Dave Ferrera	Turk	David Allen	DD
Daryl Forbis	Bars	John Franchini	Musty
Dick Franchini	Dickle Bap	Harry Frause	Junior/Ham
Ed Frause	Hammer	Dixie Frye	Diz
Don George	Smokle	Joe Giorzelli	Pip
Gilbert Hawkins	Barney	John Hefton	J.T.
August Hioco	Auggle	Larry Hudson	Pee Wee
Pasqual Jacoe	Packy	George James	Red
Jim James	Shorty	Barbra Junior	General Junior
Wilbur Kasenga	Webs	Anthony Lacovich	Wings
Anthony LaSalle	Boney	John LaSalle	Bum
Jack LaSalle	Jackie Bum	Mickey LaSalle	Little Bum
Frank LaSalle	Yap	William LaSalle	Buck
Lawrence Lasnik	Pee Wee/L.T.	Jim Lastoka	Mokes
Ardith Lawrence	Duff	Ron Leggett	Legs
Jack Leslie	Slew Foot	Bill Leslie	Slim
John Madonna Jr.	Bug Dust	Wilbur Madonna Jr.	Squeak
Wilbur Madonna Sr.	Squeak	Glen Manning	Gooney
Ed Martella	Fatty	Al Martella	Chlco
Clarence Martella	Groucho	Bob McHugh	Joe
Lorraine McNulty	Bubbles	Duane Mellecker	Tiny
Jerry Merceiz	Harve	Dave Martella	Marty
Dick Milano	Sam	Kathv Mrzlikar	Teensev

Al Mudrock	Moody	John Mudrock	Moody
Tom Mudrock	Moody	Mike Negri	Blackie
Shirley Newell	Shirl	Frank Patete	Butch
Al Perella	Al Pie	Joe Petrelli	Joe Puff
Florin Polluconi	Flash	Albert Porta	Boots
Art Porta	Spud	George Poydock	Poots
Anthony Poydock	Poots	Albert Prewitt	Betso
Alfonse Ray	Forty/Cannon Ball	Charles Rickman	Duke
Don Ross	Archie	Bob Ross	Little Arch
Pasqual Scarpella	Halo	Carmen Scarpella	Chooch
Chuck Scarpella	Scraps	Frank Scarpella	Scarpie
Gary Scarpella	Spider Monkey	Louis Schmeltzer	Luck Bush/Peggy Bush
Louis Schmeltzer	15454	Dave Schreiter	Butch
Pete Scott	Piccolo	Bud Smith	Clancy
Jimmy Smith	Smitty	Bob Sneddon	Snerd
Jim Steinbaugh	Spider	Glen Steinbaugh	Bandy Rooster
Naborn Takemoto	Takie	George Tavado	Shorty
John Tavado	Goon	Robert Tavado	Tivvy
Gary Tesone	Fluffy	Fred Tesone	Gike/Testa
Robert Varra	Fuzzy	Linda Varra	Twinkle
Clyde Walters	King Fish	Leroy Warembourg	Perk
Klubert Warembourg	Dink	Walter Warembourg	Dutch
Daryl Webster	Puggy	Bernard Winkler	Ham
Motoye Yamamoto	Mote	Minoru Yamamoto	Meech
Gerald Zancanelli	Zank		

(Many thanks to Bill Buffo for compiling the nickname list)

PIONEER AWARD

The Louisville Historical Commission is pleased to announce that Eliseo Jacoe is this year's recipient of the Louisville Chamber of Commerce Pioneer Award. The Pioneer Award is presented annually to a person or persons who contributed to the welfare and interests of the community. On January 20, 2000, Virginia Caranci received the Pioneer Award on behalf of her uncle, Eliseo Jacoe, at the Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet.

Eliseo Jacoe came to the United States from Italy in the early 1900's. Along with his brothers Frank and Robert, Eliseo settled in Louisville. Eliseo and Frank were skilled musicians who combined their talents and formed the Louisville Band. The Band performed weekly concerts in the current location of Miners Baseball Park on Highway 42. Eliseo's musical talents earned him the nickname of "Professor." His music students, friends, and family commonly called him Professor Jacoe.

Eliseo and Frank married sisters, Ann and Kate Jordinelli, respectively. The two brothers built their homes next door to each other and lived in them until their deaths. Eliseo's home was at 1101 Main Street. Today, Eugene and Virginia Caranci live in this home.

Eliseo was actively involved in the Louisville community. He was a volunteer fireman; a member of the Louisville Lion's Club, a leader and member of the Louisville Band, a music teacher, and a businessman. Eliseo owned a pool hall on Main Street and, later, the E. Jacoe & Son grocery store. The Louisville Historical Museum presently occupies the grocery store building at 1001 Main Street.

As the owner of E. Jacoe & Son, Eliseo was sympathetic to his customers who had difficulty paying their bills. Many of his customers were miners who struggled to pay their bills during the summers when there was little or no work at the mines. The Depression brought more customers who were unable to pay their bills. Eliseo helped many of his customers by accepting a minimal payment on their bills. He also accepted labor on his home as payment for groceries. For others, Eliseo merely gathered the accumulating bills with rubber bands and separately stored them. He then started new billing records for his customers who promised to make payments on both their current and past bills. Unfortunately, Eliseo rarely received payments for the past bills. Years later, Eugene and Virginia Caranci discovered boxes of unpaid bills in their garage attic at 1101 Main Street.

Eliseo lived with his son, Pasqual, and Pasqual's family during his later years. At the time of Eliseo's death, his will stated that no money was to be collected on the unpaid bills from E. Jacoe & Son. The unpaid bills were to be destroyed so that no one would be criticized for not paying their debts. A generous and kind man, Eliseo shared his talents and means with his family and friends in Louisville. Eliseo's generosity and influence would be felt long after his death. The Pioneer Award recognizes and celebrates Eliseo Jacoe's contributions to the welfare and interests of the Louisville community.

THE MUSEUM CORNER

By Carol Gleeson

Happy New Year! The year of 2000 finds us looking forward to continuing our mission to preserve the history of Louisville. Your donations to the Museum are essential to our mission and provide rich resources for future generations. We welcome your support in continuing to donate materials and information to the Museum. We also appreciate your membership in the Louisville Historical Society. We invite you to visit the museum and view our new displays of artifacts, information, and historic photographs.

Our Open House during the Louisville Parade of Lights was a big success. Both Museum buildings were open for tours, refreshments, and entertainment. We estimated that over two hundred visitors joined us in our holiday Open House. Pangea provided music in the Museum building while Commission members served wassail and cookies in the Miner's House. Marion Junior's Christmas decorations were sold to appreciative patrons. The evening of celebration was a wonderful opportunity to share our museum and to visit with many of you.

The Museum continues to benefit from the extended public hours. Approximately one hundred visitors tour the Museum each month. In addition to daily visitors, scheduled tours are being conducted for school children, cub scouts, Senior Citizens, and other interested groups. Preservation and registration projects continue, providing weekly challenges for Carol Gleeson, Betty Buffo, and Isabelle Hudson. One of our projects includes the organization of hundreds of historic photographs. We would greatly appreciate help in identifying photographs of people and places. If you think you could help in identifying historic photographs, please visit or call the Museum. We would love to have your help!

The Louisville Historical Commission has experienced some recent changes. On January 1, 2000, Mayor Tom Davidson appointed Don Ross, Dave Ferguson, and Frank Domenico to serve on the Louisville Historical Commission for four more years. Marion Junior, a Commission member for fifteen years, chose not to seek reappointment on the Commission. Marion has been a productive member of the Commission, serving as chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee and providing the seasonal displays in the Museum windows. Marion also has made the beautiful Christmas ornaments that are sold annually at the December Open House. She has promised to continue the tradition of making Christmas ornaments even though she will no longer be serving on the Commission. We will miss you, Marion! The vacancy on the Louisville Historical Commission has been filled with Louisville resident, Elle Cabbage. Mayor Tom Davidson appointed Elle Cabbage to the Commission on January 18, 2000. Elle is an active member of the Louisville community, organizing the City's 4th of July and Labor Day events. Welcome Elle!

LOUISVILLE HISTORICAL MUSEUM
1001 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027

MUSEUM HOURS
Tues., Wed., & Thurs. - 10AM to 3PM
First Sat. of every month - 10AM to 3PM
303-665-9048

Historical Footnote

The Louisville V.F.W. Post 7206 was named in honor of Ben Fiechtl in commemoration of him being the first local man killed in action during World War II.

Fiechtl was inducted into the United States Navy on June 15, 1934 and received his training at San Diego, California. Ben Fiechtl served in Hawaii and in the West Indies before embarking for more action in the Pacific aboard the light cruiser U.S.S. Juneau. The Juneau escorted the carrier Wasp when that ship was sunk by a Japanese submarine on September 15, 1942. The Juneau also operated with the carrier task group involved in the Battle of Santa Cruz. On November 12, 1942 off Guadalcanal, Juneau helped to repel Japanese air attacks against transports landing reinforcement troops on the island. During the night of November 12-13 she took part in the cruiser night action that formed the first portion of the naval battle of Guadalcanal and was severely damaged by a torpedo. While retiring from the area shortly after 11:00 on the 13th, she was hit by another torpedo, this time from a Japanese submarine. Her magazines exploded, and she quickly went to the bottom with all but 10 of her crew. Ben Fiechtl lost his life in this engagement as did the five Sullivan brothers, George, Francis, Joseph, Madison, and Albert. The loss of the five brothers was probably the greatest ever suffered by a single family in American naval history.

DONATIONS

The Louisville Historical Museum has received the following donations during the months of October, November, and December. We appreciate these recent contributions to our museum's collection.

Thomas Rizzi Framed photographic print of women members of St. Louis Catholic Church preparing a chicken dinner (Circa 1940)
Framed photographic print of members of the Holy Name Society of St. Louis Catholic Church (Circa 1940's)

Louisville Library Several poster boards depicting 100 years of the Saturday Study Club, including eighteen yearbooks, photographic prints, and newspaper articles

Virginia Caranci 1923 Louisville High School Diploma of Minnie Jordinelli. Satin bedspread belonging to Rose and Frank Jordinelli

Rudy Slavec Hoover Cleaner, model 115

David Ferguson Framed prayer card for the Jacoe family

Monarch High School Monarch High School Volume 1, 1999

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

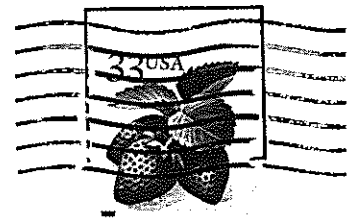
In Memory of

Chuck Hudson

And

Olive Sneddon

Louisville Historical Commission
749 Main Street
Louisville, CO 80027



Louisville Public Library
950 Spruce Street
Louisville CO 80027