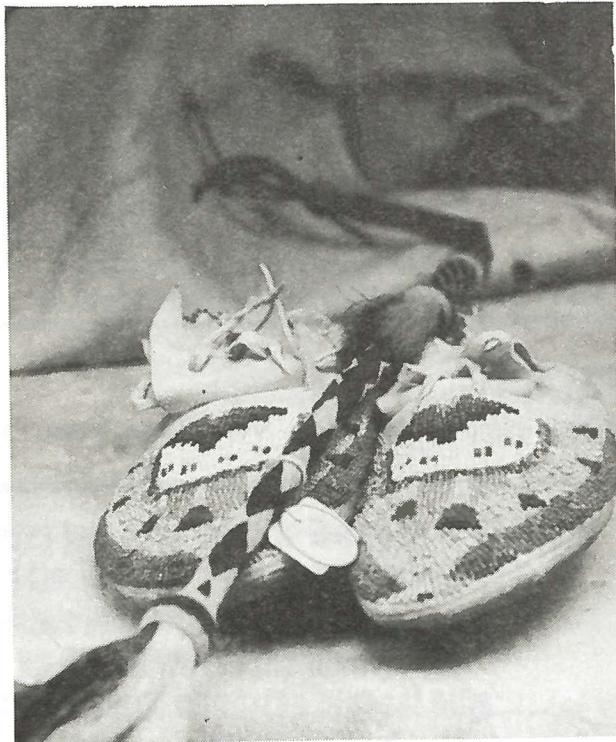
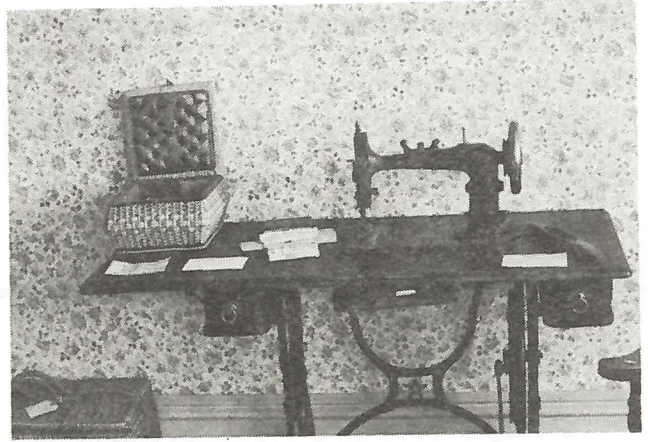
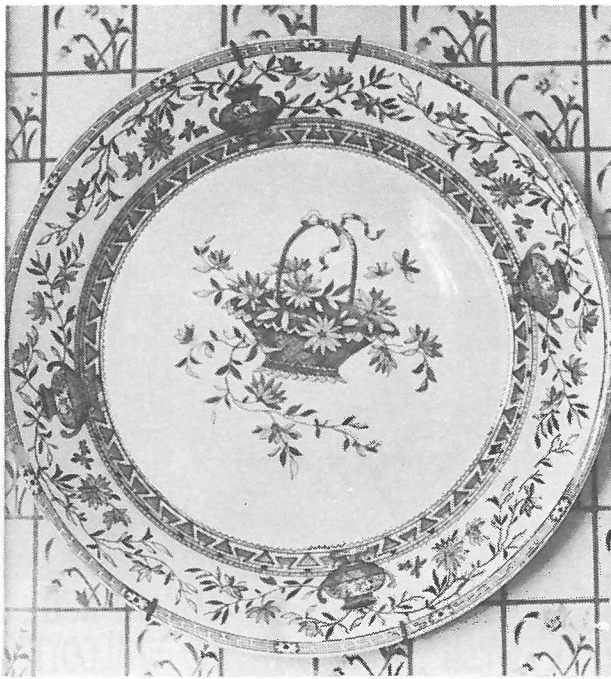


“OF OLD HOMES, OLD NAMES,
AND OLD SPLENDORS.” CYRANO DE BERGERAC.



TREAD OF THE PIONEER MUSEUM.
BY KRISTIN BOSTROM AND GLORIANE LEWIS



A CHINA PLATE THAT IS MORE THAN 100 YEARS OLD.

The Tread of the Pioneers is evident in Routt County by a collection of treasured items from days gone by. Any person visiting the Tread of the Pioneers Museum can walk through history in a viable way to perhaps understand how the past lived in this area. By interviewing Mrs. Irene Padgett and Mr. James Stanko we, (Gloriane and Kristin) found information about the founding of the Tread of the Pioneers Museum.

The museum was instituted in November, 1959, by a group of civic-minded folks who wanted to preserve memories of Routt County. Old items that were owned and used by the people in this area were collected. Many interested persons were willing to organize and collect treasures for the museum. Some of the founders were ex-mayor Claude Leukens, Clay Monson, Mrs. Rossie Homer, Mrs. Lorna Brown, Dorothy Wither, and Maurice Leckenby. Mr. Leckenby was the chairman of the board in the beginning.

In February 1959, the motion began. Ideas were assembled to devote the museum to history and achievement in areas such as natural history, art, and literature. These ideas were developed along the lines of a frontier home with each room containing complete furnishings, such as all the kitchen utensils in one room, and so on. The collection was and is limited to authentic items.

Mrs. Padgett told us, "We try to furnish something worthwhile for the visitors, something they will appreciate and enjoy. We like to have school children come, and we feel that it is an educational project. We are very proud of the museum."

Mr. Stanko told us about another project the museum is involved in. "We operate other than running the museum. We have received a grant to start a Routt County Historical Collection. We're collecting all the materials that we possibly can about Routt County and putting them in the Western Room at the Bud Werner Library. That information will be available to everyone, and still be sponsored by the museum. We're using the library because our building is not a year round facility, and not accessible in the wintertime.

"We are collecting manuscripts and all else available about the history of this area. The work Three Wire Winter and local History Class has done is all being microfilmed and put on file. We have found all kinds of history about Routt County; and all has been indexed and filed. Now when someone wants to do some research, it's not like before when that person had to dig and scrounge for information. Now people can pick out a name or a subject and do the research. For example, in the Western Room at the library there are files on ranching, all filed by subject. We have information about ranching in Routt County, indexed by families and biographies. Actually one could write a book with our files using the background information, then talk with some ranchers. We have had college students who are writing master theses and people who are interested in the past do research here. We just added to the collection the homestead case files of the five original homesteaders, from the day they filed on their claim up to the present.

"We also have the results of the census from the years 1900, 1890, and 1880 on microfilm. We have peoples' names, where they lived, and what house they lived in. The museum actually does more than just collect items. We also try to emphasize the historical data."

Besides the board of directors and concerned citizens there are other people that help with the management of the museum. These people are



THE OLD COOKSTOVE THAT WAS PURCHASED AT THE CHICAGO WORLD'S FAIR IN 1894.

Anna Nay, Frances Wither, Kathy Gourley, Pearl Staley, Hazel Hensen, Natalie Stanko, Irene Padgett, Lessly Yount, Myrtle Gram, and Olive Wheeler.

Mrs. Padgett told us, "The museum has always been in the present building. It was built in 1900, so that makes it 80 years old. Earnest Campbell, the man who built it, was considered to be one of the finest, if not the finest carpenter, at that time. It is beautifully made and very sturdy, and, indeed, will last a long time. The trim around the door is nice, and stairway is especially pretty and ornate. There is a lot of the intricate work all throughout the house.

"The Zimmerman family lived here the longest. They bought it in 1910 and lived here till the late 50's. Mr. Stanko continued, "Then when I was in high school, the principal and his family lived in the house. He was Clarence Gardener, the man for whom the Gardener Football Field was named. When he came to Steamboat in 1958, he had such a large family that they couldn't find a house. So he actually lived there till the time they made the building into a museum.

Mrs. Padgett told us, "We have many interesting exhibits. Many belong to Lillian Crawford who was the first white child born in this valley. We have a grand piano, which was purchased in New York and shipped around the horn to California as a birthday present to Mrs. Crawford from a prominent lady. Mrs. C. Ludson, the lady who gave the piano, later came to Steamboat as a music teacher.

Mrs. Padgett went on, "I think our Indian collection is an outstanding aspect. We got the principal collection of Indian artifacts from Mr. Farryington Carpenter from Hayden. He was a close friend of the Pleasant Brothers who collected them directly from the Indians. And so they gave Mr. Carpenter the collection for his disposal. Since Hayden did not have a museum, he brought the collection to us, and that started



THE GRAND PIANO WHICH WAS BOUGHT IN NEW YORK AND SHIPPED TO CALIFORNIA AS A PRESENT FROM MRS. C. LUDSON.



THE STAGECOACH THAT USED TO RUN BETWEEN STEAMBOAT AND WALCOTT.

our assimilation. We have had many items since then, and we do have a very nice arrowhead collection and several other items.

"We also have many trophies in the ski room. We have one of Mr. Howelson's, the founder of skiing in Steamboat Springs in 1913, and others. We have a large collection of old-fashioned skis and equipment that people used here in days gone by.

"I'm sure you've noticed the old stage. It was one of the original stagecoaches that was used for traveling from Walcott to Steamboat Springs before the railroad was built in 1908. That was the only way to travel here before the train.

"I like all the rooms upstairs. There we have an interesting Mineral Room where we have quite a collection of rocks and ores. It includes Judd Childer's a prominent judge here several years ago, collection. I believe he was a prospector or rock hound, then. We received a good many things from him which added to our mineral repertoire.

"Another interesting facet is the multiplex in the manuscript room. It is a series of frames where families can group their pictures and anything they want together on one page. They can place them on the page in the multiplex. We have done several fine ones, and we would like other pioneer families to feel free to come and use this frame.

Jim Stanko had a fun story which he told us about a recent contribution for the museum. "I just brought in some leg irons. They were the first worn at the Hahn's Peak Jail. They were worn by two outlaws, David Lant and Harry Tracy, after they escaped. These irons have been in constant use by the Routt County Sheriff department up till three days ago. We had to buy then a new pair of leg irons to get the old ones.



GLORIANE AND KRIS LOOKING AT THE LEG IRONS WORN BY DAVID LANT AND HARRY TRACY.

"I know something of those outlaws, Harry Tracy and David Lant, both were original members of Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch. Probably Harry Tracy was one of the worst outlaws in the West; that's why they didn't make a movie about him. He was so mean that even the other outlaws couldn't stand him. They ran them out of the group because they were so obnoxious. Both were cold-blooded killers and didn't have any sympathy or empathy for anyone. They basically ran with the Wild Bunch in Wyoming in 1893, and then moved into Brown's Park. The Routt County Sheriff, Charlie Limon, went down to Brown's Park to serve a complaint, and when he got there he organized a posse to look for them. He was one of the few lawmen that was able to find and capture the group. There was a gun battle, and that didn't go without bloodshed. Another thing that happened was they captured one guy and took him back to the Bassett Ranch and hung him. While the posse was out looking for Lant and Tracy the twenty cattlemen were hanging a gang member.

"This was one of the only two lynchings that took place in Routt County. The gun fight cost the

life of a deputy. Lant and Tracy surrendered, and Liman brought them back to the Hahn's Peak Jail. He knew how notorious these guys were, and he refused to let anyone guard them but himself. So he kept watch for two weeks till one night he just goofed. He was tired and sleepy, so when he opened the main cell door he didn't make sure that both Lant and Tracy were in their cells, and Lant wasn't. He was behind the door, and when Liman walked in he jumped on him. They thought he had beat him to death, but Liman was smart enough to pretend and lay there.

"The outlaws stayed around till after dark and then made their escape to Steamboat. They took the only two horses that were at Hahn's Peak at the time. It was winter, so most people had skis up there, not horses. Liman recovered enough to be able to give them an hour's head start, and then he skied down Elk River to the nearest ranch where there was a horse available. He followed them to Steamboat where he heard they were going to catch a stage and leave the country. He stopped the stage below Steamboat and got in, so he was inside the coach when it pulled in front of a ranch where they were waiting. When they climbed in the stage he was sitting there with a double barrel shot gun, and then captured them again. He put them in leg irons the second time and locked them together and put a big iron boot with an iron ball on them.

"The prisoners after they were rejailed showed their disgust by taking the iron balls and banging them against the cell door at night to keep everyone awake. The local citizens got upset and demanded that Liman do something. Liman transferred then to the Aspen jail, and it didn't take very long till they had killed the



LEG IRONS WORN BY HARRY TRACY AND DAVID LANT.

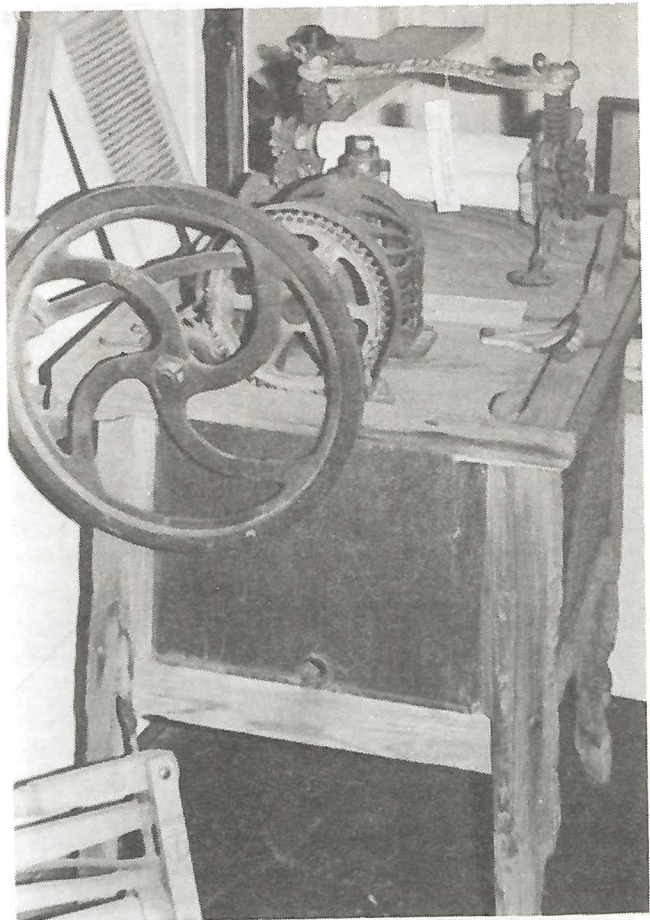
guard and escaped for Wyoming and Utah where they were captured again.

"Harry Tracy got tired of David Lant's company and killed him. Then he went to the West Coast and raised a lot of Cain in Oregon and Washington. There he was captured and later escaped from Washington jail. To show him contempt for the law when he escaped from the jail, he forced a boat captain into a small fishing boat to sail around the prison while he shot at the guards on the wall. He managed to kill two or three. This started one of the biggest man hunts in the northwest territory. They chased him down finally and wounded him in a grain field near Baker, Oregon. He shot himself rather than surrender, but I would say he was notorious.

"Mrs. Liman, the wife of the sheriff, was my first Sunday school teacher, so I had a connection there. We used to have grain threshing in the early 50s, and one of the old timers would come through almost every year that was on that posse. They would sit around and tell about Harry Tracy and David Lant. So at a real young age I got a lot of exposure to those outlaws and got excited. That's one of my favorite stories, still today.



1920 BUTTER CHURNER.



OLD WASHING MACHINE WITH ROLLER AND CRANK.

We would like to take you on a short tour of the museum. Walk in and go by the information desk where many different friendly attendants sit. Take a turn to the left and walk into the parlor where there is an old antique piano, a real-live nickelodeon that still works for only 5 cents, foot pump organ, and various oak chairs that belonged to people that lived here in Steamboat in years past. Next is a room with glass cases containing nknaks, cut glass and hand painted china. The next room is the kitchen, which has a



HARRY TRACY, DESPERADO LAST REFUGE.



EARLY MODEL COMPRESSED ROCK DRILL USED
IN ELKHORN MINE IN 1890.

large black iron woodburning cook stove with pots and pans to match. On shelves around the room there are various plates and kitchen utensils, some of which seem rather obsolete. Walking through one can find an old fashioned washing machine with roller and some old sauerkraut vats and tampers. Continue down stairs where one will find the Indian room that contains many different hand woven baskets, a cradle board for infants, and many brightly colored Indian blankets, along with beaded moccasins, and varied arrow head collections. In this toy room one can find an ornate doll collection, intricate doll house and furniture, a small play stove, an old doll buggy and a pedal horse buggy of wood. Back to the front desk, up stairs and one will find the bedroom furnished with bolster bed and an old fashion treadle



AN OLD INDIAN CRADLEBOARD.



AN OLD ACCORDIAN.

sewing machine, old leather lace-up shoes, and out dated (maybe soon to return) clothes. There is also an old buggy and many costumes from fashionable occasions. Another room upstairs is the ski room where can be found extra long wooden skis, leather bindings and many trophies from past Steamboat skiers and Olympiads. On to the Western room one can find side saddles, a fuzzy bear fur coat, single load guns, leather boots, and a prolific display of brands, metal traps, and big game trophies. Walk slowly on to the mining room where there are many rocks,

types of ores, an old mining hat and many more mining tools and various equipment. From the mining room to the manuscript room one can see old greeting and postcards, antique photos and the multiplex that frames the pictures of families that lived in Steamboat years ago. From this tour one can hope to see and perhaps live the early days in Yampa Valley and glimpse how life must have been for early settlers in this area. Walk through the Pioneer Museum to give a historical perspective to what seems like a modern ski town, U.S.A.

