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## SANTA FE IN THE '70S

[From Mr. John P. Clum, now over seventy-six years of age and residing on his orange grove in San Dimas, California, come the following reminiscences of Santa Fe in the '70s. His account of the opening of the U. S. Weather Bureau and of the first school conducted entirely in English are of especial interest. —Editors]

In the fall of 1871 I was due back at Rutgers College, Brunswick, New Jersey, for my sophomore year, but finding myself "financially embarrassed" I set about looking for a job. The War Department had decided to establish fifty stations within the territory of the United States for the purpose of taking and recording meteorological observations. This was the beginning of what is now the Weather Bureau. This work was assigned to the Signal Service arm of the department, and an order was issued for the enlistment of fifty men with the rank of sergeant, to be known as "Observer Sergeants." As far as I know this is the only body of men ever enlisted in our army as non-commissioned officers.

I applied at the office of the Chief Signal Officer at Washington, D. C. He informed me I should be endorsed by a congressman. I did not know any. However, I was examined and ordered to report to Fort Whipple (now Fort Myer) at Arlington, Va. The date of my enlistment was September 14, 1871, - just two weeks after my 20th birthday. Each observer sergeant was supposed to take a three months' course in meteorology, signaling, etc., at Fort Whipple. I made the grade in six weeks and was ordered to Santa Fe, N. M.

One Saturday about the 1st of November I was advised of my assignment and that I should be ready to leave for my destination the following Monday. I had never been further west than Fort Whipple. I knew that Santa Fe was the capital of New Mexico; that it was somewhere



JOHN P. CLUM

in the midst of the fastnesses of what we called the "Rocky Mountains," hundreds of miles from a railroad, and at the end of the Santa Fe Trail. It seemed a long, long, long way off. I admit I was a bit nervous, but I felt a genuine thrill in the prospective adventure.

I entered the plains over the old Kansas-Pacific road. Herds of buffalo were to be seen from the car windows, and the picturesque buffalo hunters were posing at every station. I left the train at Kit Carson, Colorado, and embarked upon my maiden stage journey. All of the meteorological instruments for the new station at Santa Fe had been shipped by express — excepting my barometer, which I carried with great care to avoid injury or breakage. This instrument consisted of a slender glass tube about three feet long filled with mercury; the glass tube set in a metal case. The instrument was packed with cotton in a wooden case which was fitted with straps to swing over the shoulder.

The stage was a two-seated affair drawn by four mules, and when we pulled out of Kit Carson I was the sole passenger. It was Sunday morning. The sun was bright, but the road rough. With the strap over my shoulder I was holding the barometer in my arms. A sudden jolt might easily cause the mercury to shatter the glass tube, or, at least, to force an air bubble into the vacuum. My barometer must arrive in Santa Fe in perfect order; so I braced my feet against the front seat and persistently hugged that packing case all the long day as we bumped our weary way to Trinidad.

It was evening when we reached Trinidad. Here I transferred to the big Concord coach with six horses and a shot-gun messenger on the "box" with the driver. Within the coach was a Mexican with sarape and sombrero—smoking a "corn-shuck" cigarette. The odor seemed tremendously offensive to me. Suddenly a Winchester rifle was shoved into the coach followed by a stranger whose strong right hand gripped the deadly weapon. In the semi-

darkness he looked the part of a desperado or a bandit, but proved to be Chief Engineer Morley of the A. T. & S. F. Railway Co., who was then making a preliminary survey for the line via the Raton Pass.

Snow was falling when we left Trinidad and the storm increased as we advanced up the mountain grade. Shortly before midnight we halted at Dick Wootton's station for a change of horses. It would be dangerous to attempt to cross the summit in the night and the storm, so it was determined that we should remain at Wootton's ranch until daylight. In this decision I most heartily concurred. To pass a night with Dick Wootton in his own cabin in the Rocky Mountains! Dick Wootton, the famous scout and the friend of Kit Carson! Was I dreaming? The cabin fascinated me. It was a crude affair of adobes and boulders and timbers, rudely furnished and decorated in mountaineer fashion with skins and horns and heads — trophies of the chase and proof of the prowess of "Uncle Dick" as a hunter. A variety of fire-arms swung or rested on pegs and brackets about the walls. A fire of pine faggots roared within the ample fire-place and the leaping flames flashed reflections along the gleaming barrel of a Colt's forty-five six-shooter resting on a bear-skin flung over an old packing box which was serving as a side table. The "gun" was quite new with ivory handle and nickel plated. On the cylinder I read the following inscription: "Presented to Dick Wootton by his friend Kit Carson." Surely I was touching elbows with some of the most famous characters of the old frontier. It all seemed very wonderful to my youthful imagination as I stretched out in my blanket on that mountain cabin floor for a few hours rest from the fatigue of travel — and the persistent hugging of my precious barometer.

Finally the full length of that old Santa Fe Trail had been measured and we rolled up to the old plaza about midnight. I was deposited at the old Fonda. Tom McDonald was proprietor. Tom gave me a good bed and I was glad to make good use of it.

Johnson & Koch had their store in a two-story building facing west on the plaza at the corner of Palace Avenue. Mr. Johnson rented me quarters immediately in the rear of this store — two rooms, one above the other, facing north on Palace Avenue. Immediately to the east was a building in which Manderfield & Tucker published THE NEW MEXICAN.

A stairway at the rear of my quarters gave me access to the roof — which was flat. Several of my instruments were installed on this roof. My barometer, which I had fondled so affectionately throughout those days and nights of rough riding, had arrived in perfect condition and was conveniently installed in my office. All being in readiness, the taking and recording of meteorological observations began forthwith.

And thus it transpired that, on or about the 15th of November, 1871, the ancient and honorable pueblo of Santa Fe joined with forty-nine other stations in an undertaking that was destined to provide authentic and permanent records relative to atmospheric conditions throughout the United States.

Six observations were made and recorded daily at each station. Three of these observations were made simultaneously throughout the United States and the results forwarded immediately to the chief signal officer at Washington in the form of a cipher-telegram. If I remember correctly, the exact time for making these simultaneous observations at Santa Fe fell at 5:39 a. m.; 2:39 and 9:39 p. m. Mr. Gough (and I think his first name was Thomas) was the telegraph operator during all of the time I was stationed at Santa Fe.<sup>1</sup>

Sometime during 1872 my station was inspected by Lieut. A. W. Greely (later Artic Explorer and now Major General in command of the Signal Corps). An episode of this inspection impressed a vivid picture on my memory — amusing to me, but somewhat humiliating to the lieuten-

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1. Mr. Clum wrote later that he thought the name was "Joseph."

ant. He carried with him a special barometer with which to test the accuracy of the barometers in use at the various stations visited by him. When I hung his instrument beside mine preparatory to making the test I detected an air bubble in the column of mercury. When I asked the inspector how he had carried his instrument between the railroad and Santa Fe, he replied that he had "strapped it to one of the uprights in the frame of the coach." I remarked that his instrument appeared to be defective. He demurred. Then I pointed out the bubble of air. That settled it. Greely was vexed. "We must refill it," he said. "I lack the equipment," says I. "Your 'student lamp' will do," says he. I demurred. He insisted. Notwithstanding it was his barometer, I proceed with the refill under protest. I feared the tube would break. He was confident it would not. I put in an inch of the mercury and "boiled" it; then another inch with more boiling, but when I had added the third inch there was much "knocking" at the end of the tube. I hesitated. "Go ahead," directed the inspector. I added another inch and again inserted the tube in the lamp chimney. The mercury gave a sudden jump upward and came back with a kick that knocked the bottom out of the tube and let the mercury out on the floor. I suppose I laughed. Greely was mad. My barometer was never "tested" while I remained at Santa Fe.

Later I secured quarters on the opposite side of Palace Avenue and about a block further eastward in the "Sena Building." I think the owner's name was José Sena y Baca. These quarters included a large room on the second floor. This I fitted up with suitable seats and desks and forthwith started a PRIVATE SCHOOL. This, I believe, was the first school established in Santa Fe by an American and conducted entirely in the English language. It proved a fairly successful enterprise. I charged three dollars per month per pupil, and at one time I had 75 scholars on my rolls. I found it necessary to employ an assistant teacher. My pupils included a daughter and a

son of General Gregg, commander of the Department of New Mexico. These young people were about sixteen and fourteen years of age, respectively. A daughter of Col. Potter, paymaster. A son and daughter of Surveyor General Proudfit. Two daughters of a Mrs. Shaw — the elder about seventeen, and three well grown boys whose father was a native of Spain and well educated. These are all I can recall at this time — after a lapse of fifty-four years.

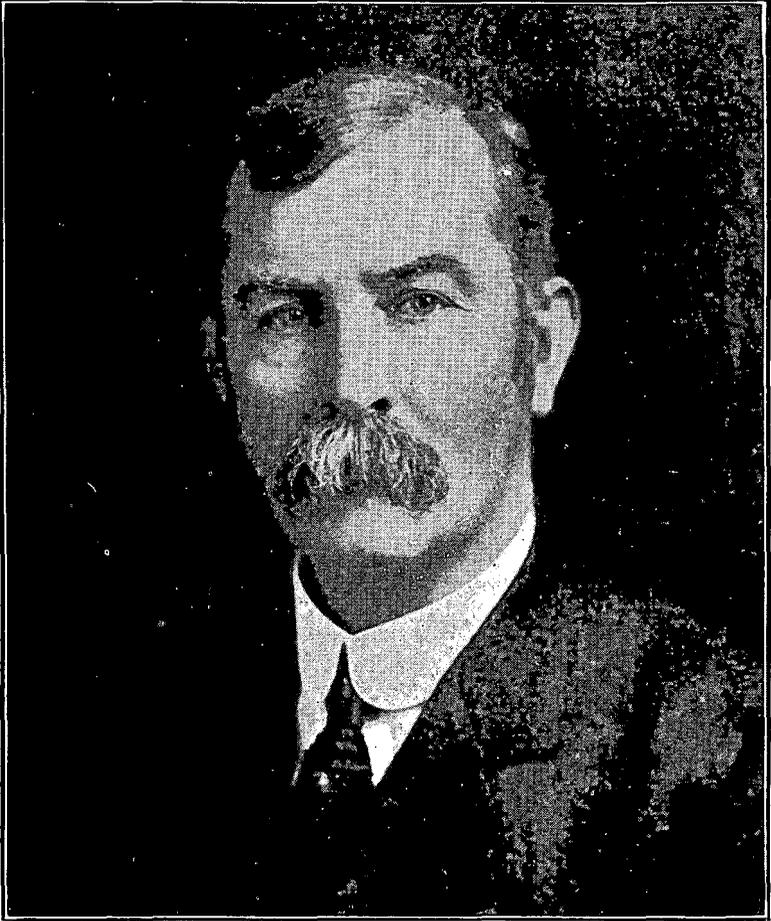
Prior to opening my school I had two other jobs to occupy my spare time. For a while I was a clerk in the office of General Smith, collector of internal revenue, and later I served for several months as night guard at the United States Depository — under Mr. E. W. Little. The Depository was then located in the southwest corner of the Governor's Palace.

And I must not fail to tell you that at one time, for a period of two or three months, I was the sole occupant of the quarters assigned to the chief executive of the territory in the Palace of the Governors, and during that period all of my friends took pains to address me as "GOVERNOR." As a matter of fact Hon. Marsh Giddings was the governor. He found it desirable for him to make a visit of two or three months to "the states" and requested me to take charge of his quarters in the Palace during his absence. And thus it transpired that I occupied the identical bedroom in which Gen. Lew Wallace later completed his marvelous story of Ben Hur.

During the early 70s there was a Presbyterian mission church at Santa Fe presided over by Dr. MacFarland. Notwithstanding my youth (and sins) I was made an "elder" in this church, and was elected as the delegate to represent the Presbyterian church of New Mexico at the Presbyterian General Assembly which met in Baltimore, Md., May, 1873. Again I was delegate to the Presbyterian General Assembly which met at St. Louis, Mo., in May,

1874. At Baltimore I was made a member of the judicial committee of the assembly, and by looking wise, listening much and saying little I managed to "get by" without inviting special attention to the fact that I "had seen only 22 summers." It may be mentioned, however, that I had a mustache and "chin whiskers" in order to give a more mature expression to my personal appearance.

At St. Louis I made a speech that swept me on to fame and confusion within the brief period of ten minutes. The session of the assembly was approaching adjournment and a rule had been passed limiting all speeches to FIVE MINUTES. I was asked to tell the assembly all about New Mexico, but the committee impressed upon me the necessity of condensing my material so as to conform to the FIVE MINUTE RULE. The church seated about 1500. A temporary platform brought the speaker well toward the center of the audience. The fatal moment arrived. The moderator announced my subject and my name. I stepped forward and faced that grand audience. It was a "grand" audience, for it included representatives from all parts of the world, - famous men and men of wisdom, presidents of colleges, eloquent preachers, noted attorneys, captains of industry, etc. With the delivery of my first sentences I felt that that grand audience was listening. I was speaking of a remote, vaguely known, romantic section of the United States. To know that I was holding the attention and interest of that audience was a great inspiration, and so I told my little story of romantic New Mexico with an eloquence born of the environment. Suddenly a sharp tap of the moderator's gavel indicated that my time was up. Immediately I started a retreat, but before I could escape from the ample platform a motion had been carried granting me FIVE ADDITIONAL MINUTES. A grand compliment from that grand audience, — BUT having made a supreme effort to condense my story to fit the five-minute limit, I admit that the "encore" was a trifle confusing to an amateur orator.



DR. FRANK SPRINGER