**Early History of Beulah (Section IX) by Edith D. Townsend**

The St. Charles River and its tributaries form the life stream of this section’s early history and along their banks were lived the stories which are the subject of this sketch. The rivers are naturally the chief highways, the Arkansas being the great trail that again and again had guided men into this region for exploration or profit or adventure.

After the Indians, it was the trapper who first knew the streams and valleys of the St. Charles. They were the most interesting and the most heroic of frontier figures. They were explorers and makes of trails, while they harvested pelts, which they found in abundance.

Ages before the white men came, the Indians of the plains, and the Utes, who were a mountain tribe, had battled for the game and the fur-bearing animals. Later when the trading posts were established, the Indians rarely opposed the white traders since they gave them an opportunity for the sale of their furs.

Washington Irving mentions Pueblo as “The warm, sunny rendezvous on the Arkansas at the mount of the Fountain, where adventurous bands of American fur traders and free trappers spent the winter.”

There were other minor posts up the river prior to Bent’s Fort extending to the site of Canon City and on up Hardscrabble Creek. The branches of the St. Charles were hunted because they were near these furt stations.

So it must be remembered that the early white settlers in the mountain valleys did not venture into an entirely unknown land. When they reached the foot-hills, they met mountain men, French, Spanish and American, from whom they learned the names of the streams and peaks.

For the pleasing melody of our geographic names in Southern Colorado we are indebted to the Spanish invasion. Here are Cuerna Verde, Sierra Mohada (early name for the Greenhorn range), Rio Nepesta (Arkansas River), Huerfano, San Carlos, Sangre de Cristo.

Pike, with characteristic exactness, charted our San Carlos as “3rd. Fork” and let it go at that. We would like to exchange Spanish euphony for terms like Hardscrabble and Boggs Flat.

Out of the post and trader period, which ended about the late 1850s, there came no constructive development – nothing of progress was planted that took deep root in the soil. Any group to live by hunting must be nomadic.

Beyond doubt the first settlers in the valley, now known as Beulah, were Mexican sheep and cattle men. The romantic history of the section, while somewhat scant in official verification, is rich in tradition.

Trustworthy pioneers say, and it is generally believed that Juan Mace, for whom the valley was named “Mace’s Hole,” was a Mexican outlaw and cattle rustler. Holding the valley as a fastness, he and his band stole cattle and horses from ranches along the streams as well as from overland travelers and drove them into the “Hole.”

On Signal Mountain, a lookout was kept over the narrow entrance through the cliff into the valley. If strangers came, the herds were driven into the lateral canyons. As the herds increased, they were driven into the upper park, still known as Second Mace, and later sold along the Arkansas.

Some records that the wily Mace joined the angry settlers along the St. Charles in search of the cattle thieves. He was counted a fearless man and a dead shot. But a priest, it is said, watching his strange maneuvers, first suspected him. Stories vary as to how he finally came to justice and the truth may never be known. Some say that he was shot – others that he was hung with members of his band.

The laws in those days were the pioneer’s own. As quoted from Judge Stone “The laws were primitive, but equal to the occasion – plastic, drastic and elastic. No appeals, no writs, no bails nor stays. Laws had not reached that point of fineness.” So there are no court records of the Mace case.

Caves abound in the limestone cliffs along the St. Charles. One is mentioned in connection with Mace’s banditry and is supposed to have sheltered him and his stolen stock. It was discovered about 1860, eight miles east from Beulah and about 200 feet from the stream.

During this time the Ute Indians camped peaceably in the valley and its environs, giving the white settlers along the St. Charles little trouble. A pioneer tells of riding into their camp and being asked to join in a feast. Before accepting he observed that the feast was roast dog. They took no offense when he declined, the leader saying “Fat dog no good for white man – good for Indian.” Note: Pioneer was Frank Clarke.

In 1863 they were camped one half mile north of Beulah Hill. During this period a small band of Arapahoe and Cheyenne tribesmen stole some of their horses, and the Utes, hot after them, stopped at the Sease ranch on the St. Charles, and Ula, the leader,, told their story. They were riding to Fort Reynolds on the Huerfano to report their loss to the commander. He advised them to return home as they would be outnumbered. They seemed to assent to his advice, but when out of sight of the Fort, followed the trail of the enemy, as planned. The next day Ula and his people came back to the hill camp with their stolen horses and six scalps.

Again in 1865, the Utes were camped on Spring Creek toward the marble quarries, and here they were so destructive of game that 60 elk were counted in one killing. Wild turkeys were also hunted to extinction.

**Early White Settlers**

As the settlement of Colorado itself has been accomplished within the space of one human life, the frontier is not so far behind. No white settlers came into the valley until after the Civil War. Two main events contributed to this movement toward the West; the discovery of gold, and the broader land policy of the government, following the war. The more liberal laws covering pre-emption, homesteading and timber claims, brought to the Arkansas valley and to Mace’s Hole, their quota of pioneers. During these years Colorado increased its population 60%.

Not alone the desire for riches lured the early settlers into the mountain valleys, but the sunny climate, the longing for adventure and the challenge of the unexplored hills. These pioneers from all stations of life shared the joys and perils of ranch life in common. They were accepted for themselves – fearless, loyal, faithful to their families and great hearted. Many of them had seen service in the War. Theirs lands were large, their views wide, and so was the quality of their hospitality. Thus began the generous, free-from-pettiness characteristic known as the Western spirit.

Pioneer women were especially praised for their patient heroism, resourcefulness, and devotion.

Among the first white settlers in the valley proper, were John Root and Almon Coburn, hunters and trappers. Following them closely in 1869, were Sam Sease and Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Sease, son John and daughter Mary, who had previously settled on the St. Charles in 1863.

Other early settlers coming into the valley from the St. Charles were Perry Murry and family. Both Murry and Sam Sease served as Pueblo County commissioners in the early 70’s.

J. J. Sease pre-empted and later homesteaded in the heart of the valley. At this time the two sons of Juan Mace had a cabin on Squirrel Creek, somewhat above the first cement bridge. Near this spot on Pine Drive stands the target tree used by them for practice with their muzzle loaders. Scars showing where they dug out lead to re-mold their bullets, are still easily seen.

The John L. Boggs family with four sons followed soon, buying the Coburn land and homesteading in the western section of the valley. Other families came to the valley and by 1871 the first school was started, with Eliza Davis as teacher. She later became Mrs. Hammond Pollard.

The Beulah cemetery plot was first used in 1869 for the burial of Mary Sease. On government land at first, it was enlarged later by the gift of an acre from J. J. Sease and one-half acre from L. A. Mansfield.

**Industries in the Valley**

Lumbering was, of necessity, one of the valley’s first industries. The first saw mill was located in 1868 by P. K. Dotson, on Squirrel Creek, in Mace’s Hole at the junction of Pine Drive and the lower village road. Dotson, a leading pioneer of the district, did not live in the Hole but established a ranch on the St. Charles in 1865, which was to become one of the largest in that section, known now and for many years by its brand –3R.

Many mills were set later throughout the valley and continued to cut into the dense forests for 40 or 50 years. Their heavy growth may be judged by this fact.

Dotson is also credited with building the first passable road into the valley to make lumber hauling to the market at Pueblo possible. This road swung to the left of the present highway, and went down the “big rocks”, coming out at the creek, below the more recently built high bridge. Pine Drive is one of the oldest roads in the valley, having been used by both Dotson and Patterson in getting out their timber.

Freighting was done at this time largely with ox-teams, both along the Arkansas and throughout the mountain country. Three yoke of oxen could haul a 5000 pound lad which would require 8 mules. Valley ranchmen broke steers to drive as they brought more than double the price of those sold as beef stock.

Boggs Flat was named for a freighter by that name who wintered his stock there in ’66 and ’67; he had ox teams. A never-failing spring northwest of the present highway, kept his heard within bounds. He was not a member of the valley Boggs family.

With the first mention of Mace’s Hole comes the story of cattle raising. The live-stock industry of Colorado began with the migrations along the Santa Fe Trail. The rangy, long-horn cattle was driven from Texas in herds numbering from hundreds to many thousands, moving slowly, grazing their way. As it began, it has continued to be the chief industry of the valley. Hay and grain are raised, not for market but for cattle feeding during the winter.

“The tradition of these pioneer cattle men are as deeply inscribed upon the hearts of their descendants, as the trails they blazed were cut upon their beloved land,” said Joe Mills.

The early cowboys were more heroic and less picturesque than now. There were feuds over grazing territory, and ranch boundaries. Cowboys were scouts, fighters for the box, riding and fighting for “a dollar a day and chuck.” His heroics were just a part of the day’s work. His gentle side was revealed in his treatment of his mount, where abuse was not tolerated.

“Game was still plentiful”, says Judge Stone, “and the boys frequently indulged in it during the winter, both for food and pastime. It consisted chiefly of deer, antelope, jack rabbit, poker and seven-up.”

As diversion for the family, were the mountaineer’s dances. Perched on a box, the fiddler played and called with a gusto to be heard above the gritty shuffle, while he made the cat-gut howl. Dancers could call their favorite tunes – “Arkansas Traveler,” “Devil’s Dream,” “Soapsuds over the Fence.” The mountain fiddler must have been popular in town also, since a Pueblo news item, 1869, reads “Tom Willey came down from the mountains to play the violin for the dances.”

Hardships were many, here being the story of an ox-team journey of a man who became prominent in Colorado history.

“After a toilsome day’s journey across the flats, we sat on the ground and with sand-worn feet, sun-blistered noses, alkali-chapped lips, dust inflamed eyes, tired children and more tired, but faithful wives, following us for better or for worse, toward the setting sun, we ate our pancakes and bacon from tin plates and sipped the unstrained coffee straight from the tin cups.”

As farming and cattle raising went on in the valley other settlers came. Gust Krenzke, who had the contract to furnish ties for the Rio Grande R.R., then building into and beyond Pueblo, came early in ’71.

The building of this road and also the Santa Fe brought prosperity to Mace’s Hole. Tie cutting made a busy community center on North Crook, at a location somewhat above where Panther Creek flows into it. Here a large log Grange hall was built. To quote an old timer – “The big log Grange hall, with its two stone fireplaces, was built by the people who came from all the country around, for a vacation, and it was a great gathering. Krenzke himself was the champion cutter and got elected justice of the peace, which was needed.

There was a commissary owned by Bartell Bros., and a gambling joint run by a Frenchman, who name is not recorded. He and an outlaw, name Haven Hall, owner of a beautiful black horse caused many spectacular episodes, in which horse stealing figured. This crime was a major offense, since it was deprived the owner of a campion, a means of transportation and of escape, all of which were vital to an outlaw on the frontier.

Here were found all the romance, all the excitement, all the tawdriness of a typical tie-cutting camp. Here came this adventurer, Haven Hall, so good a shot that he could “cut a clothes line at 40 yeards.” So clever that he with a bandit pal, spent an evening securely at a Mace’s Hole school entertainment, as a debate judge, while county officers searched the valley for him in vain.

Krenzke later homesteaded and developed one of the finest ranches on North Creek. Here the Utes were wont to stop on their annual pilgrimages to the territorial capital.

A little later came the Pattons, hotel keepers, whose hospitality included venison on the menu, being at that time both plentiful and proper. The Lyles, the Aquila Davis family, the Myricks, Mr. and Mrs. Job Davis and family, all lending their work and their pioneer spirit toward the development of the valley.

Aquila Davis was the first village postmaster and store keeper, then located on Middle Creek near the upper North Creek short cut. Job Davis was a veteran of the war, where he had been wounded. The Myricks took up land in the lower valley along Middle Creek.

In the early ‘70s, the mail route was carried on horseback between Canon City and Greenhorn, a round trip of 120 miles made twice a week. The route went from Canon City along Hardscrabble, over North Creek pass, through Mace’s Hole, out of the valley near the present entrance, on to the Dotson ranch, then called Osage P.O., and then to Greenhorn. The post rider in 1873 received $1080 a year. In snowy weather it required a week to make the trip as only a trail had been blazed.

The first school building was a one-room log cabin put up in 1875 on the site of the Beulah Country Club, and it now forms one of the rooms within that structure.

C. N. Sellers, a Civil War veteran, came to the valley in 1876, taught for a time at the log school, ranched, and later acquired property, which became the village section. His vision of beautifying the valley resulted in the planting of 4,000 trees which now shade the avenues, orchards and lanes of Beulah and remain a living monument in a landscape. He is the oldest surviving pioneer, who is still a resident of Beulah.

It so happened that Beulah received its name as the result of a vote taken at a social gathering, where the Rev. Gaylor, objecting to Mace’s Hole as an unworthy name for so beautiful a place, asked what more suitable names be suggested. Among those voted upon were “Silver Glen” and “Beulah”, the latter winning by two votes.

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**Pioneers of the Beulah District buried in Beulah Cemetery.**

**Name** **Born** **Died**   
Boggs, John L. Jan. 1828 Mar. 1904

Burns, John Oct. 23, 1832 Aug. 12, 1887

Burns, Mrs. John June 28, 1846 May 21, 1923

Conn, Charles --- 1840 --- 1916

Bigelow, Pat Oct. 12, 1850 Mar. 3, 1920

Cooper, Bob -- 1852 May 10, 1921

Donley, Thos. Nov. 18, 1830 June 20, 1913

Goss, Jane (Myrick)(Fulton) Sept. 1, 1838 Mar. 1888 (died May 1888)

Murray (Mrs. Columbus) --- 1839 --- ---

Patton, Dave Aug. 3, 1840 --- ---

Patton, Fulton --- --- --- ---

Sease, Mary Jan. 28, 1851 June 30, 1869

Sease, Anna --- 1803 Aug. 18, 1872

Sease, John, Sr. May 16, 1827 May 1, 1891

**Name Born Died**

Sease, John, Jr. May 1, 1851 Sept. 6, 1927

Sease, Nora (Sr.) Dec. 21, 1844 Aug. 1903

Sease, Mary (Jr.) Apr. 13, 1854 Feb. 24, 1926

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Since the above article was written, Mr. C. N. Sellers has died, and the following article was taken from a local newspaper:

**Beulah Pioneer Erects Memorial**

A handsome bronze tablet, bearing an inscription that paints an unforgettable picture of the fruits of war, was erected Saturday, May 28, by C. M. Walker, 2725 Elizabeth Street, mechanical engineer, at the Beulah cemetery for Colonel C. N. Sellers, pioneer Beulah resident. It was placed at the head of the Sellers’ plot.

The tablet was cast in Cleveland, Ohio, is eleven by eighteen inches in size, and the inscription appears thereon in raised letters.

The passage that forms the inscription was chosen by Mr. Sellers after much thought and deliberation, and on Memorial Day, May 30, the bronze proved a gallant token in memory of the heroes of 1861-1865, 1887 and 1917.

This inscription:

“They tell us peace has come.

Go then and count upon a dozen battlefields,

Ten thousand nameless graves:

Call upon the ocean waves to give up their dead,

And prison cells to shriek their sickening tales:

Heap broken hearts on broken hearts

Till pity bids you cease;

And then you’ll have not half the price

That we have paid for peace.”

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**The Mysterious Muldoon** – by Edith D. Townsend

Mystery has ever held a fascination for mankind, and the discovery of the petrified man in the hills near the Beulah road, southwest of Pueblo, came into it share of wonderment in the summer of 1878.

The news of the great find was blazoned across the country and described as the “missing link,” and later as the Solid Muldoon.

The finding was romantic. A Mexican herder and his son were tending their flocks on the cedar crowned hill, and the boy played at digging a little shelter cave on the slope. He grasped a stone that was embedded and, as he tugged and scraped, the foot of a petrified man was uncovered.

A geologist named Conant, who was searching the hills for fossils of pure lime, laid claim to the find, as he had been exploring on the mound for some time. Conant was a freight

[…missing text here].

Pioneer residents of Beulah recount a certain Mr. Allen who came as a boarder at the Myrick’s valley ranch in the spring of 1878, and rode off on his pony for days at a time. He never mentioned the nature of his occupation.

No regular stage

No regular stage was operating on the Beulah road at that time. No clue as to how the heavy image had been hauled and buried in secrecy has ever come to light. The road took a slightly different course at that time, but all the traffic of the years has passed along its slopes.

Because it once held a secret at which crowds marveled, it will always be known as the Hill of Muldoon.

End

Respectfully transcribed by Karen Hudgins, April 9, 2020.