

Colorado Adventure, July 5-7, 1929

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BGHS

Part one of a
three part series

It was July, 1929 and Adrien Richard had just graduated Summa Cum Laude from St. Viator College in Bourbonnais. He was expecting to start work soon for a bank in Chicago, but with the unsure economy of '29 he had the summer free. Travel had always been his dream and he found two friends willing to venture across the continent with him.

As Adrien and friends, Leon and Denis Drolet, set out in a Model T Ford for the west, Adrien found time almost each night to write to his parents, Nellie and Fredric Richard. Often written on small index cards and filled with their experiences, the writing sometimes made a path around the edges of the card.

Following are excerpts from those daily letters:

July 5, 1929, 9 p.m., Silver Lake, KS

Dear Folks: Just a word to let you know we're all alive and having a wonderful trip. Silver Lake is situated 14 miles North West of Topeka. We're spending the night in a cozy little cabin. It sure is swell. Last night we stopped over in St. Charles, MO, 287 miles from home. The hotel we were in was new and very reasonable, but we just about died from the heat. It was 86 in our room. We kept the electric fan going all night.

Today we covered 332 miles. We stopped over in Topeka tonight at 6 p.m.

I looked up Dr. Marcotte's place and found his home in the nicest part of Topeka's residential district. He has a very pretty home, large and very richly furnished. I had quite a nice visit with him. From 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. His wife absolutely insisted on us staying for supper, but I refused, saying we wanted to get to St. Mary's, Kansas tonight. But she refused to listen and finally we consented to let her prepare a lunch to take along for supper. We just ate it about half an hour ago and it certainly was good.

Dr. Marcotte certainly looks prosperous. His wife spent three months in Europe last

year and by looks of things she belongs to all the "elite" of Topeka. They're not taking any vacations this summer but they're going on a long trip this winter. They did not say where. (Dr. Marcotte and Nellie Marcotte Richard (Adrien's mother) were second cousins.) Is it warm at home? The heat in Kansas City was terrible today. No rain today, but the Kansas winds are tiresome. We figure on being in Colorado Springs some time Sunday afternoon. Good night.

Adrien

July 6, 1929, 10 p.m., Mountain Time Cheyenne Wells, CO

Dear Folks: Well we're in Colorado, just about 20 miles west of the Kansas-Colorado state line. Had a fine sleep last night in our cabin. It was cool early and cold towards morning, but about 8 and 9 o'clock it gets very warm again.

Went through the greater part of Kansas today. Saw nothing but wheat fields all day extending for miles all around us. That is all western Kansas raises. There were about five corn fields along the road all day. At some places we could see nothing but barren hills all around us for miles, no houses or trees at all.

We made 400 miles today and tonight we're staying over in a hotel in this town. There were no cabins to be had. The one cabin camp in Cheyenne Wells was full. Tomorrow we will go to church here and proceed to Colorado Springs. We will arrive there early tomorrow afternoon.

The trip has been wonderful. Well good night, will write from Col. Springs. Adrien

July 7, 1929, 9 p.m., Colorado Springs, CO,

Dear Folks: We finally pulled into here at about 4 p.m. and as I said in the wire, not at all tired and glad to get here. What wonderful scenery! Its just breathtaking. We began seeing the mountains (Pikes Peak 75 miles away). It's almost unbelievable. We have a wonderful view right here from our cottage. I'll bring home a picture of the cottage camp. Tonight after supper we motored out to the Garden of the Gods. It

surely lives up to its name. I took some pictures and bought some postals to bring home to show you.

We saw some real Indians this p.m. in the garden. As soon as we got here we looked for Mr. Beique's home and found it in fairly good shape. As soon as we hit the neighborhood I began recognizing landmarks that Mrs. Landroche had told me about such as the big viaduct, the Antler's Hotel etc. This morning we went to mass back in Cheyenne Wells, CO. It was a small mission church where the priest has charge of several parishes, all the way from Bayers, CO, 88 miles from here there was absolutely no town on the road until we got here.

Hills and hills, no vegetation and you could almost count the houses. It was surely lonely for a while. We had quite an experience. Got caught in a sandstorm, something new for us and very thrilling. We're going up Pike's Peak by bus tomorrow morning to see the sunrise. They say it is a rare sight. We'll stay over here tomorrow and go to Denver Tuesday.

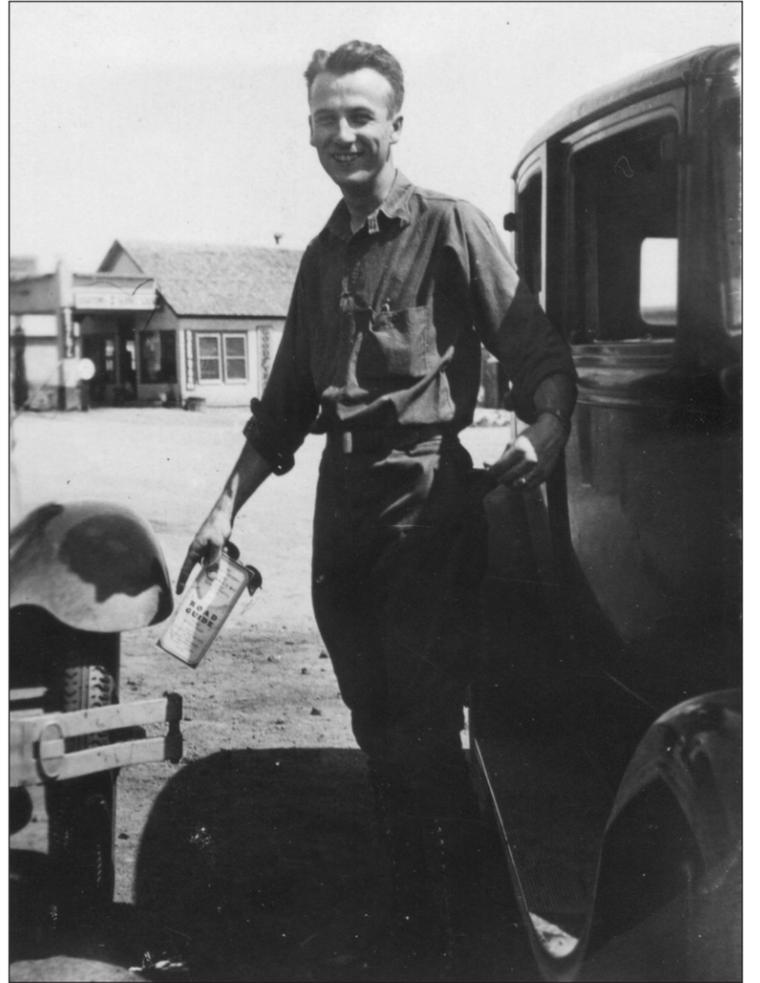
Good night. Adrien

The Bourbonnais Grove Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting local history.

Monthly meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month March to December. Museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m. on the first and third Sundays of each month, March to December or by appointment.

Do you have a topic or story related to local or French Canadian history?

Contact the BGHS at bourbonnaishistory.org, on Facebook at [facebook.com/bourbonnaisgrove](https://www.facebook.com/bourbonnaisgrove) or call 1-815-933-6452.



Submitted photos

After college graduation, Adrien Richard traveled west to Colorado in his Model T Ford (above) with friends Leon and Denis Drolet (below). On the road with the Drolet brothers, the group drove through Kansas (bottom left).



Nicor Gas recognized

Nicor Gas has been named a Top Utility Environmental Champion of 2018 according to a new Cogent Reports survey of utility customers nationwide conducted by Market Strategies International. The results designate the top 43 utilities throughout the country that have shown dedication to environmental stewardship and are published in a report titled Utility Trusted Brand and Customer Engagement™ Residential.

Nicor Gas was recognized based on the study of nearly 63,000 customers, served by 131 of the largest residential gas and electric utility providers, who were asked to rate their utility company's commitment to the environment. To be named an Environmental Champion, a utility needs to show customers its dedication to supporting the environment by promoting clean energy, enabling consumption management, facilitating environmental causes, encouraging environmentally friendly fleets and buildings and consistently seeking ways to protect the environment.

"We are proud to be recognized by our customers as stewards of the environment," said Melvin

D. Williams, president of Nicor Gas. "We believe it's important to protect and preserve the environment and are committed to delivering clean, safe, reliable and affordable natural gas to the homes and businesses we serve each day."

Nicor Gas has made significant investments to modernize its natural gas pipeline infrastructure that has resulted in lower emissions and has helped its customers save energy and lower their carbon footprint through its successful energy efficiency program, energySMART. During the last six years, Nicor Gas has helped Illinois homeowners, renters and businesses save more than 100 million therms of natural gas and earn more than \$90 million in rebates and cash incentives for energy-efficient upgrades. This recent recognition by Cogent Reports compliments the Most Trusted Brand and Customer Champion designations Nicor Gas received in 2017.

Nicor Gas is one of seven natural gas distribution companies of Southern Company Gas, a wholly owned subsidiary of Southern Company. For more information, visit www.nicorgas.com or www.southerncompanygas.com.

