

STATEMENT OF KNIGHT WAMSLEY MADE JULY 18TH, 1933.

My parents came to Colorado from Indiana in 1859. They came from Indiana by ox team with their two children, a boy named Eliphet and a boy named Richard. The journey took them about three months. They first came to Pike's Peak on account of the gold excitement there. They camped at the soda spring where Manitou is now, and were there for about three months. They moved from there to Golden City on Clear Creek. I was born there in Golden City on October 23rd, 1859. While my father was at the soda springs, now Manitou, he was engaged in prospecting and placering. He built a two-room cabin out of Cottonwood logs on Clear Creek, where Golden City now stands. The cabin which my father built and in which I was born was still standing six or seven years ago. We lived there a little over a year, and then we moved in to where Golden is now.

My father and a man by the name of John Pipe then built a tannery on the place where Coor's brewery now stands in Golden. My father and Mr. Pipe were both tanners, and made tanned hides at this tannery for six or eight years. My father sold out to Pipe along about 1868, and my father then ran a butcher shop in Golden. My father ran this butcher shop for about two years, then sold out to a man by the name of Chamberlain, and my father then moved up to where Evergreen now stands. There he engaged in farming and truck gardening for about two years. In June, 1873, my father and mother and the family, which then consisted of six children, moved to South Park. We moved onto a place on what is now Highway 40, about seven miles from the salt works and four miles from Hartsel, and there my father ran what was called a road ranch. He sold hay to the freighters, and we served meals to freighters and others who came through on the route. We ran that place until 1880. There were regular stage routes from Colorado Springs through Hartsel to Fairplay and Alma at this time, but there were no regular stages

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run to Leadville through the place run by my father. However, there was a great deal of traffic on this road, and the traffic was by means of ox teams, and the wagon traffic was largely hauled by mule teams, and some times there were as high as ten teams to a wagon. There were just as many tramps along the road at this time as there are at the present time comparatively, and while my father and mother did a great business they served so many free meals that they never accumulated anything during the years they ran this road ranch.

There were never any buffalo in South Park, except that I did see two buffalo once. One I tried to rope, but fortunately was unable to do so. There were a good many buffalo in Lost Park, that is, a park between South Park and Denver. Here antelope and bear were very abundant all over the park.

The salt works was a land mark at that time, but had not operated for some years. It was my understanding from a Mr. Hall, an old-timer in the Park, that they drilled about 1500 feet at the salt works and got salt water, which they evaporated, but there was so much oil in the water that the salt was not good and would not keep meat; so the place was abandoned as a salt-producing property.

While at Golden my father hauled stone for the foundation for the first buildings erected at the School of Mines. Professor Arthur Lake was there at the time and helped quarry the stone near Golden. I became very well acquainted with Professor Lake, and knew him for many years.

In 1881 my father ran the hotel at Hartsel. In 1881 my father moved back to the old ranch four miles west of Hartsel for a couple of months, and then went to Gunnison, where he stayed about three years. He built the first bridge above Gunnison on the Gunnison River. I stayed with the rest of the family on the road ranch, or old Hodge Place, as it is sometimes called, Hodge having built the house there before we moved into it.

In 1882 we went over to Gunnison County where my father was and lived at the townsite that was laid out, called Castles, about sixteen

miles north of Gunnison on Ohio Creek. I stayed about a year and during most of that time hauled coal. Then I went down to Gunnison. At Gunnison I bought two teams and teamed some, and then went to work for Barlow and Sanderson, running a stage from Poncha through Otto, Mears, Shirley and over Marshall Pass and down to the head of the Tomichi to Sid Byers' road ranch. I drove the stage over that route for eleven months and three days without missing a single day. We used four and six horses on the stage. The stages used were Concord coaches. The trip was made from Byers' to Poncha in one day, and the next day the trip was made from Poncha to Byers'. On opposite days another stage ran the opposite direction. Other stages ran from Byers' to Gunnison. Poncha was the end of the railroad at that time.

Poncha was a very live town at that time. There were two good-sized livery stables, a bank and the old Jackson Hotel, which did a big business; in fact, generally had more business than it could take care of. Gunnison was just a new town, and a great many people were going there. A great deal of freight was being hauled over this road during the time I drove the stage. As a matter of fact, there would seldom be more than thirty minutes that one was out of sight of a big freight team. These freight teams would consist of six to ten mules.

I quit driving the stage and went back to South Park, where I worked with teams, cattle, breaking horses, etc.

In December, 1882, I drove from South Park to Montana. We took eight head of horses, and a man by the name of Biggerdyke, who later became my brother-in-law, went with me. We drove through Denver, Greeley, Cheyenne, and from there to Deadwood City, South Dakota. During the winter we camped on the Little Missouri in Montana and hunted buffalo most of the winter. In about four months the two of us had 586 buffalo hides to sell and had 45,000 pounds of dried meat. We sold the hides to a man from Mile City, Montana, who paid us an average of \$3.00 a piece for them. We sold all of the dried meat to the same man for 12¢ a pound. This buyer from Mile City had his

own ox teams and wagons, and came down and loaded the hides and beef up and drove it into Dickerson, South Dakota, where he sold a considerable amount of it. We dried and smoked the buffalo meat in a shed made of buffalo hides. We just used the hind quarters, shoulders and the hump strip of the buffalo.

In the spring of 1884 I went to work for the Continental Land and Cattle Company, who had extensive interests in Montana along the Little Missouri River. This was near what is now Camp Cook, Montana. In the spring of 1885 I had to come back to Colorado to take care of a pre-emption claim I had in South Park. I rode horse back from Montana back to South Park, and after taking care of the business, rode back to Montana. The trip took about three weeks each way. I went back and went to work for the same Continental Land and Cattle Company, where I stayed until the latter part of 1887. Then I went down into Nebraska and worked for a cattleman by the name of Shedey for about a year. Then the Cattle Association of Custer County, Montana, wrote me to come back and ride the range for them. My job was to watch the cattle and horse thieves. I stayed with that job for two years. While the current wages for a cow-man was \$30.00 a month and board, I was, at that time, getting \$125.00 a month and board. I was out in all kinds of weather. Any cattle ranch or camp was home to me, and there I could get food and shelter and a fresh horse if needed. I worked and was out in all sorts of severe weather, and there my health broke to such an extent, on account of the hardships endured.

On one occasion I found some cattle rustlers and went back to the ranch of the Continental Land and Cattle Company and got Bill Laforce and a bunch of men, and we trailed the rustlers and a bunch of cattle and finally captured them at Wyoming.

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On another occasion I left the ranch about six o'clock in the evening on a colt that had only been ridden four or five times and road from the ranch to Spear Fish, South Dakota, a distance of 125

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miles, and arrived there at about four-thirty in the morning. My purpose was to obtain the services of a doctor for Mrs. Laforce. I told the doctor when I arrived that he was wanted at the ranch, and harnessed and hitched up his team for him and he left. I told him there would be a change of horses for him at Indian Creek, another change at Camp Cook. He left and arrived at the ranch about eight o'clock that evening, a distance of 125 miles.

I came back to South Park in 1888. I have been in South Park and in Chaffee County practically ever since that time continuously. I worked at the cattle business and in the timber, getting out timber, hauling and team work, most of the time since then. The stock raising in South Park was practically all cattle, and there were no sheep until along in the early nineties. Sam Hartsel was one of the big cattlemen. He used to run somewhere around 2500 head of cattle. The Gamars owned the old I. M. Ranch at the head of Badger Creek, and used to run around 3,000 head of cattle. The Eddy-Bissell Cattle Company on Black Mountain used to run a large number of cattle, I think about 2,000 to 3,000 head, mostly steers. John Witcher used to have from 1800 to 2,000 cattle on Four Mile. There were a great many more cattle in the country then ^{and} there are now, and at the same time the feed was a great deal better. I think there was a great deal more water than there is now, and that accounts for the fact that there was more feed, and that the country supported a great many thousand head more live stock than it does at the present time. At the same time, I feel that the fact that so many cattle were run during the eighties in this sections ^{tramped} out and destroyed a great deal of feed. In the early nineties the number of cattle began to diminish. Eddys sold their last herd about this time to Sy Pollock, and it became very noticeable that the amount of cattle was decreasing fast.

Knight Walmsley had brothers & sisters
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