

(THE FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF AN OLD PAPER WRITTEN WITH PENCIL BY SOME PARTY UNKNOWN, WHICH WAS FOUND BY JUDGE NEWITT IN HIS OFFICE FILES IN 1931)

In the early days the Hortense Hot Spring was known to very few ~~persons~~ off any trail. The only evidence of its existence being the steam arising from it on cold frosty mornings. The main part of its volume found its way by underground channels to the flat where the C. & S. Y now is, being sufficient to make two pools there and keep Chalk Creek open down as far as the Heywood Springs so called then, now The Mt. Princeton Springs. Heywood Springs were named after D. H. Heywood, for many years in the show business on F Street in Denver. Hortense springs was almost covered by debris from the Chalk Cliffs at the foot of which it debouched. The Cliffs were the habitat of the mountain sheep that roamed on Princeton and Yale, occasionally crossing to Antero. Came Professor Hayden and his corps of assistants with their train of pack mules doing the field work that resulted in the great Hayden Atlas of Colorado and they camped for some time with Keyes, Merriam at the Hot Springs. They Keyes Merriam cabin built after the location of the Hortense mine was about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile east of the Hortense spring on what was then called Silver Creek, now Merriam Creek. To that cabin in the fall of 1876 came Bob and Darwin Ray. Major Merriam had purchased a third interest in the Hortense mine and production had begun. All three of the partners in the mine had gone east to their home and to take in the Centennial at Philadelphia in 1876. The first one of them to return was Major Merriam who got back in February of 1877. The previous month Bob and Darwin had moved on up the creek to Jake Wilseys from which point Bob went to freighting with two yoke of American cattle from Colorado Springs. The first ore shipped from the Hortense mine was hauled to a smelter at Malta owned by Loescher. It was hauled by bull teams from the Indian Territory, small wire cattle, much in contrast with the cattle that Ray freighted with. The hauling charges was \$50 a ton and the smelting charges \$100 a ton. Among the first miners mining in the Hortense mine were W. W. Fletcher, W. H. Pointdacher and Smith Steele. They were for some time puzzled by the disappearance of meat and other supplies at the mine, until they succeeded in killing a pair of wolverines or Mountain Devils as they called them. Game of all kinds was plentiful ~~in~~ those days, Sheep, Deer Antelope, Grouse and an occasional mess of Beaver tail soup. Trout were abundant. Doctor Wright, John and Oliver Royal, both from Pueblo had located the Mary and Pat Murphy, the Black Hawk and other claims at the head of Chalk Creek, and done considerable work on the causing investigation of all that country at the head of Chalk Creek, and the country was filling up with prospectors. Major Merriam conceived the idea of a stopping place, a sort of road house, in connection with Hortense spring, and erected the necessary buildings, consisting of a Hotel, a Bath house having the water piped from Hortense spring a Post Office and a saloon. The Hotel he placed in charge of Steve Passine, former Chef at Sam Thatcher's Reno Hall, Blake and F. Streets, Denver. The saloon was presided over by a Major Kendall from the land of Mint Julip. The Post Office was intrusted to W.W. Fletcher or Fletch as he was called. The Bath House was patronized to full capacity from the first and many wonderful cures of Rheumatic ailments resulted. Its fame spread to the Black Hills, the San Juan and even to Texas, parties from those localities coming to the Baths for treatment when all other remedies had failed. When Leadville was booming ~~xxx~~ scores of its hard drinkers came to the springs to boil out and it was on the occasion of one of these trips, that a young fellow by the name of Ardinger, a Texas boy, slipped out of the house in the night, and his body was found the next day in Chalk Creek. Bob Ray had one peculiar notion. On New Years day he would take one drink whatever it happened to be, a glass of wine or a mug of Tom and Jerry, but never another until the New Year rolled around again. He always seemed to figure that the man who could not control his appetite for liquor was more to be pitied than cursed. When he stepped into the Sheriffs office he was up against as hard a proposition as could well be imagined. The lawless element had the upper hand and were used to doing as they pleased. Cattle and horsestealing was in a flourishing condition and the County was full of undesirables.

In the matter of the killing of Ben Couch, for holding up the U.S. Mail at Alpine, Bob had with him as deputies, Nate Ray, who had freighted with him from Colorado Springs and Bill Teague. It was generally understood at that time, that Teague was responsible for Couch's death. It was only a short time after Bob's taking office that the Cow Thieves began to realize that they were going to be put out of business as he gathered them in one by one, and although some were able to give Bond and escape jail, their activities were at an end, and the gangs were broken up, with the loss of but one Deputy, Baxter Stingley, killed with his own gun by Frank Reed, in a Salida saloon. Reed was never captured altho every effort was made to apprehend him, large ^{REWARD} ~~reward~~ offered, and an Illinois Sheriff almost had him. Reed stripping the harness off a plow horse and disappearing from that section; Retiring from the Sheriff's office Bob took up his residence at the Hortense hot spring, content to end his days in the same quiet way he had always lived, a host of friends, the tribute to his personality and methods."