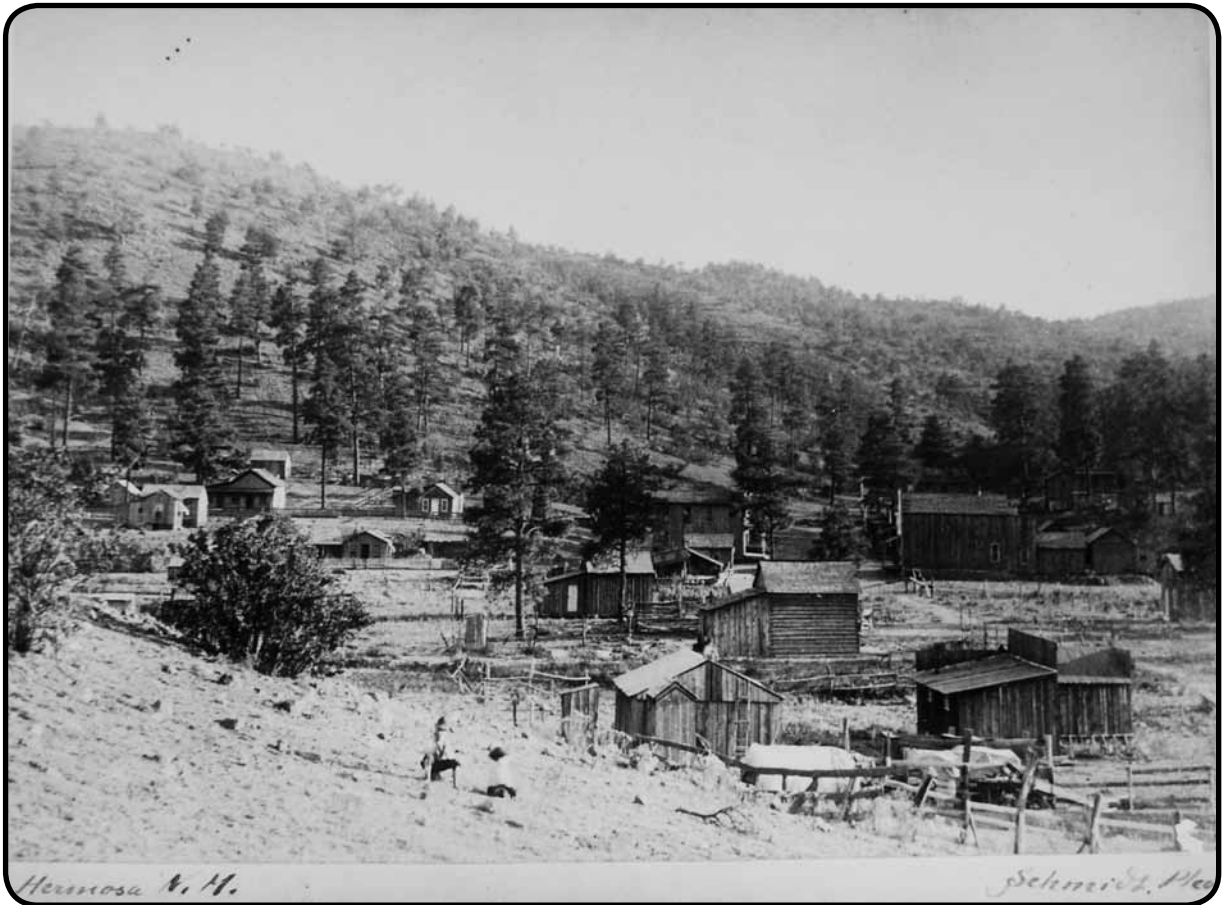


Guajolotes, Zopilotes y Paisanos

Vol. 13 No. 1 Hillsboro Historical Society February, 2020



EARLY HISTORY OF HERMOSA

**Annual Meeting of Hillsboro Historical Society to
be held on April 4 at the Black Range Museum.**

New Spring and Summer Program Series

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I am pleased to take the helm of HHS as your president for a second term and am looking forward to helping to forge a greater future for the Society, the Black Range Museum and the Courthouse properties.

I thank Joe Ficklin for his longtime service as Treasurer. He has helped sustain a steady financial course for our organization that has brought us to greater heights as a local society. I welcome our new Treasurer Linda King who with Joe's help has hit the ground running through the transition.

I wish to thank the Board of Directors for their confidence in me as President, and for the input and guidance that each one offers. This is truly a team effort and I can report that the team is working as a "well oiled windmill" to advance our mission and meet our goals.

We have some exciting projects planned for 2020 that include working on the outside of the museum, such as a proposed deck and courtesy ramp for the entrance, landscaping and developing the outdoor exhibit space thanks to Steve Morgan and Nichole Trushell. We also will be moving forward with the proposed protective roof over the Jail and are getting bids on the project.

Our focus is now on finding a shop manager for the museum gift shop (see position description) and additional volunteers as docents. Thanks to Garland, Leah, and Nichole we have an informative visitor guide to the exhibits and a guide for docents in training. I am grateful for all of the volunteers who have given their time to help run the museum. You play an essential role in its operation and the Board of Directors applaud you. Thanks to our members and visitor donations, the museum is prospering. Going forward, we will be forming committees to address various needs with your help. Please consider what you might be able to do to participate.

I remain proud of HHS and our progress to date and can visualize a great future for the properties. As always, your support is greatly appreciated.

Thank you! Steve Dobrott

Guajolotes, Zopilotes y Paisanos
is the quarterly newsletter of the:

Hillsboro Historical Society

P. O. Box 461, Hillsboro, New Mexico, 88042

hillsboronmhistory.info

The mission of Hillsboro Historical Society is to preserve, collect, and protect the history of Hillsboro, Kingston and the surrounding area. We are an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible.

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Publications: Harley Shaw, Robert Barnes, and Garland Bills.

Programs: Harley Shaw and Sandy Ficklin

Courthouse: Nichole Trushell, Steve Elam, Steve Morgan, Steve Dobrott.

Exhibits: Leah Tookey, Nichole Trushell

Collections: Leah Tookey, Garland Bills

Anyone who might want to serve on one of the committees, please contact any of our board members.

Hillsboro Historical Society News

Black Range Museum

Volunteers needed. Even though the museum is open only three days per week, it requires a heavy load of volunteers. Ideally, we need two people present whenever the museum is open, one to run the gift shop and another to function as a docent with people touring the museum. As we develop the outside displays the demand for docents may increase. Note also the announcement below. We badly need someone to take responsibility for the gift shop.

Volunteer Position Open Museum Gift Shop Manager

Gift shop manager duties:

GThe Gift Shop Manager is a volunteer position that reports to the Board of Directors of the Hillsboro Historical Society and is a member of HHS. The manager will be responsible for procuring and maintaining gift shop inventory preferably of items of regional relevance and salability, and the scheduling and training of gift shop volunteer workers.

Program Series:

PWe are shaping up a series of programs to be sponsored by HHS. This was stimulated in part by the fact that five HHS members, including three of our board members, have been selected to make presentations at the **2020 Conference of the Historical Society of New Mexico**. The conference is being held in Silver City on April 17-18. These members have agreed to give their presentation here in Hillsboro as well, over the spring and summer, so that locals who don't make the conference can observe our members in action. Actually, the local presentations will be more relaxed and provide time for questions and discussion--something that is always limited at conferences. In addition to our "academic four," we have two other interesting presentations lined up. All will be held at the community center. Below is our tentative schedule. We may have a couple of additions. We'll send out announcements as the dates draw near.

March 21 4 PM. Steve Dobrott Horses of History.

April 19, 4 PM. Leah Tookey Livestock Brands.

May 2, 4 PM. Julie Seton. Ernest Thompson Seton's "Obsession with Wolves".

Joe Britton May 31, 4PM. Ann Bucher of Hillsboro.

June 26. 4PM. Alan Dart. Old Pueblo Archaeology Center. Archaeology's Deep Time Perspective on Environment and Social Sustainability

July 25. 4 PM. Garland Bills. Tom Ying of Hillsboro.

Hillsboro Historical Society board meets on the second Sunday of each month at 2PM at the Black Range Museum. HHS members are encouraged to attend.

Hillsboro Historical Society Presents
"Horses of History"



By Steve Dobrott

"Horses of History" is the remarkable story of the discovery of the Wilbur-Cruce Spanish Barb Horse. Although this non-feral rancher strain originated in southern Arizona, the breed played an important role in the development of the greater Southwest including New Mexico. On **March 21st, at 4:00 pm at the Hillsboro Community Center**, Steve will present the amazing discovery of this remnant herd of horses, their struggles to survive and the wild west drama between a women rancher and a greedy cattle baron.

Steve and his wife Janie participated in this breed conservation project carried in part to the Ladder Ranch in New Mexico. This fascinating story will be presented by Steve with power point photos of the horses, their capture, distribution and their subsequent recognition for their genetic and historical importance.

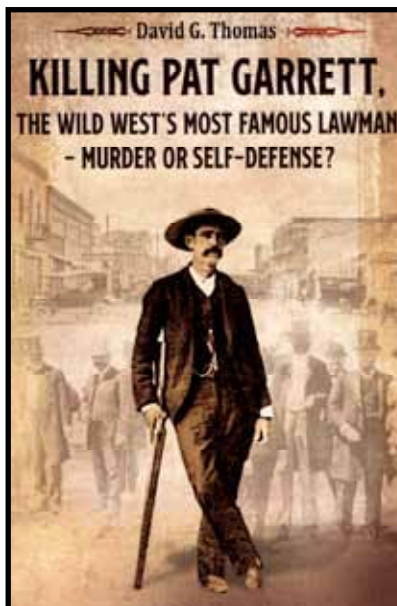
Steve is a long-time member and past president of the Spanish Barb Horse Association. He was a Wildlife Biologist on the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. He was the Manager of Ted Turner's Ladder Ranch for 24 years. He was the Ambassador for Ted Turner Expeditions before retiring in Hillsboro, New Mexico. He is a co-author of *River of Spirits, an Ecological History of Las Animas Creek*. He is the current President of the Hillsboro Historical Society, Hillsboro, New Mexico.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Hillsboro Historical Society and the Hillsboro Community Center. A five dollar donation at the door is suggested.

The Black Range
Museum and Gift
Shop are open Fri-
day, Saturday, and
Sunday.

11 AM to 4 PM

Three new books about our area. Available in the Black Range Museum Gift shop



Tracking Nana

Following the violent trail of one very
tough old man through New Mexico
Territory in the summer of 1881

R.M. Hagan

SILVER-PLATED DECEIT THE STORY OF MINING IN LAKE VALLEY, NEW MEXICO

by Homer E. Milford

Contributions by Elias Clark, Charles R. Keyes and Robert Exler

HISTORY OF HERMOSA

By Richard Mansfield White

From the Sierra County Advocate May 24, 1907

This month's feature article is an early history of Hermosa, written by one of the town's supposed founders. It was found in the files of the Ladder Ranch. In truth, the full history of Hermosa has yet to be researched, and the accuracy of Richard White's account remains uncertain. Other than White, we know nothing of the "long nine" of this story. Nor do we know how the group formed. White came from a respected New York family. His father, Richard Grant White was a successful author, journalist, and musician in New York City. His brother, Stanford White was perhaps the best known American architect of his time. Although Stanford was younger than Richard and had a lifestyle that kept him deeply in debt, he supported Richard financially. Richard had training in hydraulics, hence considered himself a geologist and engineer. Although it isn't clear in the article, Richard was in New Mexico at the behest of Stanford and some of his associates, presumably seeing to their mine investments. Stanford himself made two trips to Hermosa during the 1880s to check on Richard. Richard, always the wantabe miner, drifted to Alaska and finally settled by 1890 near Seattle, Washington, where he spent the remainder of his life dependent upon his brother and the family estate. He died in obscurity in 1925.

Stanford remained in New York and eventually become the victim of one of the most famous murders in American history. He was killed on June 25, 1906, by one of the New York elite, Harry Thaw. Several books have been written about this murder and the love triangle that caused it. The movies Ragtime and The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing were based upon it as well.

In its heyday, Hermosa had a hotel, postoffice, and general store. However, initially tied to mining of silver, its status as a townsite was shortlived. It evolved into a headquarters for a working cattle ranch, then morphed into a dude operation before going into decline and near-ruin. Its remains now belong to Turner Enterprises and the buildings that remain have been restored. Its main use now is as a field camp for university students, as well as a base of operation for a hunting guide. However many details of the years it was active are unknown. White's story, presented here, covers only the very early years of its settlement. The timing of its publication, some 20 years after Richard left New Mexico and 11 months after his brother was murdered seems curious. As with so many historic articles, this one raises more questions than it answers.

The Palomas Mining District, of which Hermosa is the principal town and supply depot comprises all that territory from Monument Creek on the north to the Rio Seco on the south, and from the line of foot hills in range 8 west, on the east, to the crest of the Black Range on the west. The discoverers and locators of this district were the "long nine" as they were called because of their stature, only two of them being under six feet in height and the others ranging up to six feet four inches; so that when they started out, mounted, equipped and armed they looked like a veritable crew of Norse Vikings who had been stranded on some foreign shore and had to take to horses and pack animals instead of boats and ships, changing their mode of travel and suiting it to the trackless prairies and mountain ranges instead of the trackless ocean.

The similitude of the Hermosa "long nine" to Vikings was three fold, for not only were these men unusually tall but they were blue eyed and fair in complexion, only one of them being a brunette; and they were also all in search of fortune, braving the dangers of exposure to the rigors of the climate and to the deadly bullet of the ambushed Apache; for Victorio had been defeated in a severe fight with the scouts at the Palomas Falls and just before the "long Nine" went to locate the Palomas Mining District the attack upon Chloride had been made by the Apaches and two of the prospectors at that place were killed and several others wounded.

There were no tenderfeet in the long nine. All were experienced prospectors and frontiersmen, all rocky mountaineers of experience. They were Edward C. Johnson, John H. Roach, Jay C. Dirla, W. L. Crooks, James M. Moody, Thomas M. Kitterell, J. Allen Chase, William D. Nourse, and Richard Mansfield White.

Johnson and Roach in coming over the plains and through the mountains from Arizona, where they had been prospecting, stopped in the canyon between where Hermosa now stands and the falls of the Palomas for a short time, and discovered the mines which are now the property of the Pelican Mining Company. The Indian signs were all around them and they sought a place where they could secrete their camp and then go for a fresh supply of tools, ammunition and food. They started north and reached Chloride in March, 1881, where they remained a few days outfitting for their return to their find on the Rio Palomas, and trying to induce others to go down with them to locate a mining district, so that there would be safety in numbers working in the same part of the country, and to build a stockade for mutual protection. They showed the ore which they had found to members of the "long nine" and had it assayed. The ore was pronounced good but the assays were disappointing, only returning 12 ounces in silver and 40 percent lead; nevertheless their description of the country was such that they formed the party which they wished to locate the District and the nine men, who

afterward held down the central camp of the Black Range, held it against all raids of Indians, of blackmailing schemes, and of jumpers, started from Chloride with good wishes for their success and warning against the perils of attacks by the way from their fellow prospectors who had located in Chloride.

On March 15, 1881, the party which had been got together by the description given to them of the mining country on the Palomas River, by Johnson and Roach, and who had decided to explore the country, started from Chloride in the morning and taking the trail south along the contact of the conglomerates with the first lime foot hills of the Black Range, camped on Monument Creek for the first days journey's end. The progress was slow, the trail dim -- in places overgrown and obliterated -- the constant watch for hostile Indians who might at any time shoot, as they had done at Chloride, from the hillsides covered with trees and underbrush, necessarily made the march slow; so it was decided better to make camp early in the evening than to run the risk of reaching the North Fork of the Rio Palomas, the next stream to the south on the way, in the dark.

The next day an early start was made and the rough country between Monument Creek and the Rio Palomas was cautiously traversed, for numerous little gulches made most advantageous lurking places for ambuscades, just such a country as would fill with fiendish delight the minds of thieving, treacherous, murderous Apaches who had just made a successful murdering, plundering raid and were expected back at any moment.

When the first flat below Palomas Falls was reached, there, hanging by a rawhide thong from the limb of a large juniper tree, which now stands upon the Embolite Millsite, was a scalp, one of the signs and results of the Victoria camp and fight, for it was here that Dr. Parker, commanding the scouts, had surprised Victorio and defeated him, routing him completely with severe loss. Two or three of the "long nine" examined the scalp and little wicky-up of willow bush poles which was near the hanging scalp in passing; jokes were made over the ghastly trophy as it was passed, as one member of the exploring party asked the other how he would like to have his hair hanging as an ornament to a juniper tree and have braves, squaws and paposses circle around it dancing and whooping with demoniac joy. The scalp was left undisturbed swinging in the light air and brilliant sunlight. The prospecting party took the ridge to the south of Palomas Falls crossing the depression at the southern entrance of the lime canyon. As the top of the pass was reached the long lines of the stratified rocks broken here and there by great faults which split the mountains on either side of the canyon from the river bed to the sky line, the numerous tilts, contortions and changes which had taken place, the discoloration of portions of the country rocks, the juxtaposition of the different and intruding formations told to the experienced eyes of the explorers that they had reached an ore bearing country whose riches needed only to be diligently exploited

to become very prolific; they paused on the ridge at the entrance of the canyon to take in the situation both as to the formation of the country and the probable presence of the Apaches, being satisfied of the absence of the latter they descended into the canyon, proceeded up it, camping where the Embolite Mine is and its corral stands.

Immediately upon making camp the near slopes of the hillside were prospected, and W. L. Crooks made the discovery and location of the now famous Palomas Chief Mine, within sight and within three hundred yards of the camp. He brought down some of the ore, threw it into a campfire, let it get cherry red, then threw it into a tin cup full of water; on taking out it was found studded and besprinkled with silver globules. Johnson and Roach had already located the Jose and the Hilda, the claims from which they had taken the ore to show and induce their comrades to make the trip, and which were afterward abandoned in order that they might be relocated. Other claims were located by members of the party; altogether it was a most satisfactory and successful exploring trio from its beginning - in fact not one member of the party was without an interest in a claim the first evening at the setting of the sun.

This made a happy, hilarious party around the first camp fires a joking, story telling laughing crowd as they prepared a simple evening meal. The meal was even more simple than was expected, for in packing up at Chloride the baking powder and salt were forgotten so the flapjacks had to be made without these necessary ingredients. Direful were the consequences; for one of the members of the "long nine" was a Philadelphian, a Heidelberg student, and was used to the delicious cooking of Western Europe and Eastern America. Most of the blankets were spread down under the blue vault of Heaven, for only one tent was in the party, a small "A" tent barely sufficient to cover the two men that owned it; and the Hermosa nine stretched their long lengths for the night at an early hour, for the first streak of dawn must not shoot the stars out of the sky before the rocky mountaineer is up and stirring, in Indian times.

Just at what time in the night it began to snow is not known, but it was shortly after the party had covered themselves with their blankets for the night; and snow kept falling without cessation all night.

About two o' clock in the night the sodden flapjacks made without baking powder, the salt pork, the coffee without sugar or milk got to raising "hail Columbia" within certain parts which went to make up the mortal frame of J. Alleine Chase, the Heidelberg member of the "long nine" producing bodily contortions and illusions which culminated in his kicking his blanket from himself and his partner, Dick White, jumping to his feet in the snow and yelling Indians! Two shots up the canyon. The expressions of wrath and incredulity with which the members of the "long nine" gave vent to as they seized their rifles, cartridge belts and tumbled out of their warm blankets into the snowy night were not of a kind to indicate that they were about to attend church or picnic, and were sufficient as to force

and expression to have split the rocks, blasted the tress, and scared all the Indians or Indian Benevolent societies in the country. In fact one of the reasons given for the split and serrated appearance of the cliffs in the immediate vicinity of the Embolite mine is said to be caused by the astonishment of the natural repose of the Hermosa nine on being awakened from the dreams of oppulence and enjoyment to find they were not real and to the reality of the cold snowy night, the dangers of attack from a lurking, ambushed, murderous foe.

White who had gone to bed prepared for any emergency was completely dressed even to his overcoat in a few seconds, and went to the ridge between the Embolite and the Albatross claims as this was a vantage ground overlooking the camp. Johnson followed in his underclothes coat and boots, not taking the time to dress completely, telling White to stand guard and would scout up the canyon, so off he went through the falling snow like a coat with a pair of moving boots under it, an apparition sufficiently weird to have struck terror to the stoutest Indian breast. In the meantime the other members of the nine were guying Chase about the absurdity of his starting them all up on the defensive, when it was well known that Apaches do not attack in the night, he however stoutly adhered to his declaration, so on the return of Johnson from his scout, though no signs had been discovered by him, it was decided to keep watch all night, if for nothing else than to protect the horses, mules, and burros. White volunteered to stand watch as he was already prepared to do so and the offer was accepted. That yell of "Indians-two shots up the canyon" has become proverbial around Hermosa and in the Black Range. Some say that on the eighteenth of March, at two o'clock at night, the recurrence of the yell can distinctly be heard as a faint echo, and in looking up the canyon the phantasmal shapes of Apaches on the war path can be momentarily seen.

Before the light of day White had built campfires and awakened his comrades; after a hearty breakfast a consultation was held as to where permanent camp should be made and a stockade fort or cabin built. It was decided to explore the canyon for a suitable place if there was a better one than the camp already made, so the nine proceeded up the canyon until a beautiful park was reached where Hermosa now stands. It was decided that the claims already discovered were the reason for a place of defense, in order that they might be worked and no better place for making permanent camp than Hermosa Park, that a crib fort of earth and logs be made as a temporary place of refuge in case of danger, so a rough crib of oak logs reinforced by an embankment of earth three feet high was made at the Embolite stable which now stands on its site. After prospecting the claims already located it was decided to prospect in the neighborhood of Hermosa Park and the result was the location of the Massive and the Nourse which afterwards became the American Flag and Flagstaff. Here were discovered the stakes and monuments of a party of prospectors who had visited the country in October, 1880,

coming over the range from Silver City; but of the claims staked by them only one was located and recorded and has been held until the present time; which is the Silver Brick which was located by Lothian and Leighton. The party from Silver City were Edwards Fookes, G. M. Lothian, E. W. Leighton, Andy Hughes and John Wright; but they did not make a permanent camp or form a mining district. H. W. Elliott and Borbes had been in this part of the country just before the former party making a flying trip of observation. The finds made by the continued prospecting and development work decided the formation of a mining district and notices were posted that a meeting would be held for that purpose, to bring in the prospectors who might be in the country to the meeting.

J. C. Diriam in his exploitations had run on a camp which he described as a "prospector's camp" which had been attacked by the Indians with the results of the prospectors being killed. This dampened the spirits of the "long nine" somewhat and it was decided to investigate the matter on the day after the meeting. He described the destroyed camp as being about a quarter of a mile north of where the scalp hung on the flat below Palomas Falls and up the first gulch to the east of the flat at the head of which he had found two human skeletons. This gulch was immediately given the name of Skull and Bones Gulch, and is so called to the present day. The meeting for the formation of a mining district and the election of officers was held at night and the results were put down by the light of a huge campfire which was kept brightly blazing with pinon and juniper wood during the proceedings. It was held on March 31, 1881. It was at this meeting that the district was named the Palomas Mining District, the prostown^{*}, Hermosa, for the beauty of the park in which Hermosa is situated gave the suggestion of the fitting name for the place to J. H. Roach, at whose suggestion it was named.

As the ores which had been found on the mountain to the north of the river were chiefly of carbonate character, and the mountain chiefly composed of lime, it was called Carbonate Hill, the mountain to the south, Treasure Hill in expectation of the treasure which was to come out of it; and the regularity of the steep sloping sides of the mountain to the north of Hermosa caused it to be called Cone Peak. James Moody was elected president and R.M. White secretary of the district and the meeting adjourned to a townsite meeting with the same officers.

It was a joyous, gladsome crowd after the meetings were over shouts, laughter, stories and song were indulged in and went ringing through the canyon each one seemed to have lost a whole tribe of Apaches and would be ready to hunt for them on the morrow. J.C. Dirlam and J. Alliene Case were unanimously appointed a committee the next morning to investigate the camp discovered by the former and see if it was a prospector's camp or the place where Victorio had camped and had been surprised and routed.

* I believe the author intended "post town". These are towns designated to receive mail and distribute it to smaller settlements in an area or hold it as general delivery.

The "long nine" packed up and taking their ore samples with them to have them assayed started for Chloride. Case and Diriam were to proceed by a direct route to the camp and signal their comrades as they passed by on the trail. This was done and as the party halted on the trail at the point where it leaves the Dry Fork of the Palomas, in obedience of the signals, they saw their two comrades descending from the old Victoria Battle ground, one with an oat sack over his shoulder, and the other with something white and globular on the other end of his rifle; when they reached the party these proved to be a sack of human bones, some clothing, two scalps and a skull. They were undoubtedly Indian and were buried by the side of the trail, and the march continued to Chloride.

When the ore brought by the Hermosa "long nine" to chloride was assayed, the returns caused great rejoicing, for assays demonstrated the fact that a district of great value and productiveness had been discovered. The ore tried by assay was all from the surface or from open cuts and the bottom of shafts. In returns the Palomas Chief led the others, grass root ore returning as high as 958 ounces in silver to the ton. All the assays averaged 371 ounces. The Jose, Hilda and Hero, which were subsequently relocated as the Pelican and Albatross gave returns of 40 to 60 per cent lead and 15 to 40 ounces in silver to the ton. The Massive and the Nourse, subsequently relocated as the American Flag and Flagstaff, gave returns of 120 and 150 ounces in silver. The Chloride, which was afterward perfected in location as the Embolite, returned 39 and 132 ounces in silver.

The news of the richness of the new district spread in Chloride and the surrounding mining camps of the important discoveries made at Hermosa, and the Socorro Sun, of April 9, 1881, headed an article: Hermosa, a camp with a bright Future, calling attention to the new and rich finds made by the "long nine". The publication of this article caused quite a boom for the new district in spite of the continuous Indian raids made by the Apache chiefs Nana, Geronimo and Chatto, who were expected in this section at any time with their band of cut-throats and robbers. At this time the "buffalo soldiers" as the colored troops were called, their incompetent commander, Col. Hatch, and his subalterns were looked upon with contempt by the Indians as well as by the settlers of the country, the officers being more noted for drunkenness and gambling than for courage in the field or attention to duty. The consequence of this state of affairs was that the United States Regulars merely acted as guards to the Indians when they returned from a scalping and robbing bee, and prevented the outraged communities from following the thieving and murdering Apaches to their reservation and their doing just vengeance on them for their crimes. The troops by their presence thus only over-awed the law-abiding citizens and served as a foil to these red outlaws.

It was under such a state of affairs that the Black Range

country, now Sierra County, was settled by prospectors and miners. In those days if a man went from camp for a pail of water or for a stick of wood he carried his rifle in his hand and, if prospecting, he looked twice for Indians and once for float, blossom rock or out crops. It was this vigilance, a vigilance exercised to the fullest extent by the "long nine" which carried them through the early days without the loss of one of their number, and which caused the Indians to rue the day they attacked Hermosa.

Many propositions were made to the "long nine" in severalty and collectively for their discoveries on the Rio Palomas, and finally two schemers, by dint of promises and a little ready cash succeeded in gaining interests in all of the properties, with the exception of those located and owned by Crooks, Dirlam, White and Chase. This arrangement proved most disastrous, as it afterward turned out, for the welfare of the new district. The men who gained the interests by making promises of development and sale did not carry out their agreement, only contributing the small amount of two to five hundred dollars -- the reports vary between these two extremes, furnished in tools and supplies -- leaving the owners of the Jose, Hilda, Hero, Massive, Nourse and other fine claims to do their own development work and at a time when freight and supplies were the highest and most difficult to obtain.

Relic hunters also made their appearance at Hermosa and visited the Victoria battleground on the ridges below and surrounding the Palomas Falls and Skull and Bones gulch to seek out and carry away with them cartridges, rifles, bones, skulls bits of dress, scalps, blankets or anything of interest that the routed Apaches had abandoned in their flight. The little curved walls of rock built as a cover from which to shoot the Apaches, and which stand to this day on Carbonate and Treasure hills and on the point below the falls, proved productive to these relic hunters, every one of these walls having from ten to fifty cartridge shells in the pit showing that lively firing had taken place. The Apache camp and Skull and Bones Gulch had everything from a complete skeleton to the various parts of what had been the supporting frame for the flesh and blood of an Apache brave or squaw; also from a moccasin to a scalp. The burying place where the "long nine" had deposited the two skulls and parts of skeletons on the point opposite the battle field was visited, the grave dug open, and the remains carried away for museums and collections of curious, perhaps for some Boston or Philadelphia crank to weep and moralize over.

The spreading of the news of the richness of the ores of the Palomas mining District brought many prospectors and miners back to Hermosa with the discoverers of the district by the middle of April, the founders of the camp brought back with them the necessary supplies and mining tools for developing their properties, and on the 15th of April they set to work to build a substantial cabin with a stockade front and port-holes to serve as a place of dwelling as well as of

defense. It stood in the middle of what is now American Flag Avenue, opposite where now stands the store of J. C. Plemmons. After its completion, the builders went upon the hill slopes nearby and tested its resistance to rifle balls. The rifles of the "long nine" were all of great carrying power, being Sharps specials and Winchesters of 40 and 50 caliber and 70 to 90 grains of powder; and they penetrated clean through the logs of which the cabin was built, and proved that it was of little protection against arms of this character, although clear that it would stop rifle balls with light charges of powder. It was recommended that the cabin be banked with earth, but it was never done.

The mining claims thus far located were within two miles of this cabin, which had been built for a starter for the new town of Hermosa. Everyone remembers the scarcity of water in the spring of 1881; yet the Hermosa men had all they could use - the Rio Palomas was a never failing supply of fresh water; and most of the mining claims were upon its banks or within half a mile of it. Some of the mines had springs or streams of their own; from which an ample supply of good water could be obtained.

The development work of the district went merrily and rapidly forward for a few months. The outcrop of the Palomas Chief was stripped for seventeen feet, showing ore of a very high grade. Two other open cuts were made and two adits were begun on the vein west of the outcrop, all showing ore. The lowest assay from these workings gave a return of 38 ounces and the highest 16,000 in silver to the ton. An adit was driven on the Jose, and also an open cut was made which showed up ore running 152 ounces of silver and 40 per cent in lead. The Hero and Hilda were similarly opened, and showed ore running from 55 to 140 ounces in silver and 20 to 50 percent in lead. The noble quartz outcrops of the Silver Brick, the Massive and the Nourse stood up above the surrounding country rock promising good returns to their owners. Open cuts and shafts were made upon them.

All at once the bottom dropped out of the purses of those who had represented themselves as capitalists; so there were no funds to pay for the necessary supplies, etc. A madder lot of men than those who had listened to the fair promises of the "fake" capitalists from Kansas and Colorado would be hard to find in any camp. At this time there was no road into the camp, and the only outlets east by way of the canyon and the trail north to Chloride. The former trail circled around Palomas Falls which dashed through a perpendicularly walled canyon, where blasting would be necessary before a wagon could be pulled up or down; the latter trail a wagon could be pulled over into Hermosa, four horses pulling a ton, but the safe team had to scratch to pull the empty wagon back. Without a road it was foolish to undertake to ship ore, and the deception, practiced upon certain members of the "long nine" decided them to let the claims run out for want of work, and then relocate them leaving out the names of the men who had obtained interests by false promises.

Just about this time in the summer of 1881, the Apaches began one of their most bloody raids, and the United States soldiers were, as usual, just a day or two behind, in some instances, while at other times the Indians had full sway. Outriders were sent through the country by the prospectors and miners to warn the isolated and small camps, where there were but few men, of the danger. The few men who had remained at Hermosa to look after the prospects quietly packed up and went to Chloride and assisted in fortifying and guarding that place, in consequence the work of developing the mines at Hermosa ceased for the year 1881.

The year 1882 opened gloomily for the Palomas Mining District and Hermosa. The fake capitalists of Kansas City and Colorado who had gained interests in the greater part of the new discoveries, promising capital, etc, for development still failed to come forward with the money and supplies necessary to carry on the development work of their part of the new camp; so the larger number of the mining claims remained with no work being done on them and Jumpers began to appear, like turkey buzzards hovering over a dying horse, putting up their location stakes at a safe distance from the good claims already located, and running their lines over the ground located by the "long nine." These efforts of the jumpers were futile, not one of their locations ever bringing them anything, for the Hermosa men were ever ready with powder and leaden pills which are the terror of all jumping parasites. The overlapping claims came to naught as the original locators held on until the time for re-location came when the claims were properly located.

However, the Palomas Chief and the mining claims owned by White were not encumbered with the detrimental fakes, who had gained interests in the other properties; and early in April, 1882, White went down from Chloride with a party to inspect the Palomas Chief district and do some work. Crooks, hearing of this through the newspapers, started from Lake Valley, arriving in Hermosa shortly after White, to develop the Palomas Chief. White's party consisted of five men besides himself, being Tatham, of Tatham Bros. lead merchants and manufacturers, of New York and Philadelphia, and Stanford White of New York who were visiting New Mexico and Mexico, with a view of examining mines and mining properties and three men to do work on the mining claims.

News came over the range that the Indians were out; so Charles Tatham and Stanford White made the return trip in the night, that they might continue their journey to Old Mexico. They afterward just escaped the savages on the warpath, the stage just ahead of them being attacked and all the occupants slain.

During the spring, Quimby Vance came to Hermosa and built himself a stockade cabin on the dry fork, which is now the ranch owned by Mr. Ben Peers. Mr Burfield, afterwards the superintendent to the smelter also came

through Hermosa on his way to Kingston. He stopped long enough to examine the mines of the Palomas Mining District. He afterwards found that it took four days to travel in the labyrinth of gulches and canyons between Hermosa and Hillsboro in order to reach the latter place when the traveling was done by one unacquainted with the country. The trip at that time took one day for a good cross-country rider -- this before the Hillsboro road was built, and nothing but dim and disconnected trails to travel over.

In May, the assessment work in the Palomas Mining District on the claims owned by White and Crooks was completed; the Kansas and Colorado men were still delinquent in the matter of money and supplies and as no new discoveries were made the district was left to be returned to by the long nine in the ending of the year. In June, Stanford White returning from Mexico, Hermosa was again visited by him and his brother to examine and purchase the Palomas Chief. The trip resulted in the purchase of the two-thirds interest owned by D.H. Jackson and J.C. Durlam

In October, B. F. Herndon prospected the porphyry and lime contact to the north of the Hermosa Cabin, discovering and locating the Antelope Hill, about one-fourth of a mile north of town; this was the first important discovery made by anybody but the original locators of the district and has proved a steady producer of high grade ore ever since its location; ore running up into the hundreds and thousands being found at the grass roots. In December the locators of the Hermosa mining claims began to collect at Chloride, making preparations to go to the district and relocate all of their properties that had been abandoned by the "fake" Kansas and Colorado capitalists. Several parties of prospectors to explore the Palomas Mining District were formed at this time.

White cut out a wagon trail from the Hermosa cabin to the Palomas Chief Mine, and started regular development work with two shifts of miners. Prospectors began to come in from all directions, J. C. Plemmons visited Hermosa with the intention of locating and starting a store with the money he had received from the sale of the Colossal mine at Chloride, so altogether the outlook for the year 1883 was bright and encouraging.

As the hour of midnight, January 1st 1883, came upon the Palomas Mining District, it found the members of the

"long nine" upon their claims, as sentinels, ready to take advantage of the lapsing of their former locations to re-locate them as new mining claims. Mr. Samuel P. Foster was taken in as a partner by Roach, Johnson and Nourse, re-locating the Jose, Hilda and Hero as the Pelican and Albatross. Moody and Kitterell attended to the re-location of the Massive and Nourse as the American Flag and Flagstaff, with Moody, Kitterell, Johnson and Nourse as locators. This was done in the first moments of the first hour of 1883, and from that time Hermosa progressed in improvement and production, as work was begun and

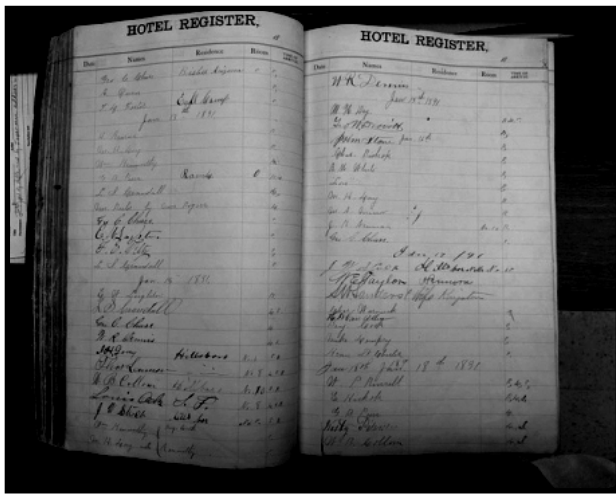
continued on these properties, together with the Palomas Chief, Embolite and Antelope, with but little interruption caused by hostile indians, law suits, etc, which are almost always incidental in the starting of a new mining camp, through the incompetency of the United States in protecting its citizens from Indian raids and the ignorant rascals who infest every newly-discovered country, and hope by jumping, blackmail-

ing and lawsuits, to make money. Neither the Indians, the jumpers, nor the blackmailers have made anything by their operations around Hermosa. The Hermosa men were made of proper stuff for good citizens and resented in a proper manner any encroachments upon their proper rights. The Indians were met with force and arms, while the jumpers and blackmailers were quickly told to stop their vain and foolish attempts or they would go to jail.

As supplies were needed to carry on the work of the camp, and as the old Indian trail was fit only for pack animals, the citizens of Chloride and Hermosa met, agreeing to cut out and make a passable road between the places; Chloride being then the supply point for Hermosa. This was done: the miners of Hermosa, the business men and others of Chloride building the wagon trail, which afterwards with very little improvement, became the county road. On the 21st of January a miner's meeting was called, to elect officers for the district and organize the district regulators. the following officers were elected: Richard Mansfield White, president; S.P. Foster, vice-president; Edwin C. Johnson, secretary; Janes C Moody, treasurer. The organization wisely thought the United States law was good and sufficient and did not encumber its records with any foolish or useless rules or regulations. A vote of thanks



J. C. Plemmons General Store at Hermosa. Plemmons also became the town's first postmaster.



Hermosa Hotel Ledger

was unanimously passed to the Black Range newspaper in recognition of the able and valuable services which that paper was rendering this part of the range.

The New Developments on the mines proved the wealth of the District. Ore was discovered on the American Flag and Flagstaff which ran way up in the thousands; the Pelican and Albatross showed great bodies of galena and cerussite; the Antelope was showing sulphide ore running hundreds of ounces to the ton, and the Palomas Chief was keeping up its record with three shafts taking out ore day and night. This created quite a boom and demand for supplies having increased J.C. Plemmons built the first of his stores, also the first store in the camp with James Dalglish as partner. On the first of March, in compliance with a notice a meeting was held in Hermosa for the purpose of taking up a townsite and forming a town company. Almost everyone in the district was present in person or by proxy. J. T. Thorne was elected president, Richard Mansfield White secretary and treasurer. The following committee for the town company was elected.

J. T. Thorne, Richard Mansfield White, James C. Moody, Edwin C. Johnson, F. J. Miller; and another committee composed of B. P. Herndon, E. J. Doran and F. J. Miller was appointed to obtain for the town company quit-claim deeds for the surface ground of any mining claims conflicting with the proposed townsite. People from other parts of the country, principally from Grafton, Fairview and Chloride, hearing of the boom, came down to take up lots and improve them.

Then the demon of cupidity and rapacity entered the minds of Thorne and Doran. These two with several silent partners who had been interested on the committee with

Thorne as president, started to jump the townsite going around with their Winchesters in their hands, running "blazers" on the community and trying to intimidate the newcomers from Grafton and the northern towns of the County. They did not succeed; for the rest of the members of the committees, as well as the long nine quietly told them to put up their guns, stop their stale bluffs and behave themselves. Thorne and Doran, after some vain bluster, posing as "bad men" concluded this was the only alternative conducive to their welfare; so the advice of the "long nine" was heeded by them. This action of Thorne was one of the chief reasons for his defeat as Democratic nominee for the office of sheriff of Sierra County some three years later.

The camp continued to prosper, the ore coming out in quantities and being of good grade. As the wagon trail to Chloride was practically in an impossible condition for ore teams, a meeting was called, to consider the building of a road to Cuchillo Negro, to connect with the road to Engle. James Dalglish was appointed as a commissioner to confer with the citizens and business men of Cuchillo Negro and Engle to get them to contribute towards building the road. The road was finally built some years later.

The fame of the richness of the ores at Hermosa being widespread through the newspapers, the camp was visited by parties desirous of purchasing or leasing and bonding the properties; and Alex Bentley with Congressman Laird of Nebraska took a bond for purchase on the American Flag and Flagstaff. This purchase was finally consummated. The mines steadily produced ore all summer with but a few men working on them.

In November the first lot of ore was taken from the Palomas Chief by Mr. White to the Billings smelter at Socorro, it returning 120 ounces of silver and 5 percent lead to the ton. This was soon succeeded by a lot from the American Flag and Flagstaff. The charges for wagoning the ore were ruinous; \$20 and \$22 a ton being charged for taking the ore over the circuitous route by way of Chloride the only wagon road at that time into Hermosa. Three shipments from the Palomas Chief and several from the American Flag and Flagstaff had been made when it was determined by the owners of the properties at Hermosa to cease or lessen work in the mines for a time until a road could be built direct to Engle or a concentrator or reduction works could be erected in the camp.

HILLSBORO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Membership Application

The Hillsboro Historical Society is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve, collect, and protect the history of the Hillsboro, Kingston, and Lake Valley region. Memberships are on a calendar year basis (January 1 to December 31). Dues are \$25 annually for individual or family. All contributions are tax-deductible.



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Registration information will be available soon on the HSNM website at www.hsnm.org. Please note, Silver City is hosting another event at the university the same weekend; consequently, hotel rooms are limited, so make your hotel reservation early!