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DIXON CAME DOWN UTE TRAIL 50 YEARS AGO

Election Day in 1862 Is Recalled By Old Pioneer Who Has Lived Here for Half a Century

Fifty years ago today, William F. Dixon, one of the oldest pioneers of Colorado Springs, a man who has watched the growth of the city from the earliest stages of an Indian trading camp to the full growth of a modern city, famed nation-wide for its beauty and its location, came down Ute Pass, through what is now Manitou, and to Colorado City, then the capital of Colorado, where he spent his first day as a citizen of Colorado Springs.

It was election day in Colorado, then, as it is today, and the young English prospector, who, in his four years in the United States, had grasped but little of politics, found much to interest him in the excitement and political questions that were of great importance to the nation in 1862, as are the big problems of industrial and social betterment that were the issues of the campaign closed last night.

Interested in Civil War.

The Civil war was being fought in the east, and the hardy pioneers of the west, although more concerned in eking out their meager existences, had much interest in the problems that faced the American people that day.

"After having faced heavy storms in the mountains in an endeavor to reach Colorado City, there were many problems more important to me than those of the United States government, which to me seemed far off from the west," Dixon said the other day.

"The problems, whether the state should be all-powerful instead of the nation, and whether the government had the right to legislate matters be-

of his bank account to his far-sightedness in pioneer times. A 280-acre ranch at the base of Cheyenne mountain remains of his territorial holdings of many ago. This property was purchased for about \$6 an acre in 1875. Mr. Dixon buying four quarter-sections for \$250 each, in addition to 160 acres which he purchased.

Property Now Valuable.

The land is now valued at between \$2,500 and \$3,000 an acre. It is in the fashionable Broadmoor residence section, where homes, as beautiful and as costly as any in Colorado, have been built. The Ashton, Potter, palatial bungalow, which cost more than \$200,000, occupies a part of the land for which Dixon paid \$6 an acre 40 years ago.

"I could have purchased Seven Falls and about 40 acres of adjoining mountain land for \$200, 40 years ago," said Mr. Dixon. "The holders of the property then did not realize the value of water power, either for commercial purposes or for scenic advantages. I have always blamed myself for not buying Seven Falls when I could have had it for a song."

Mr. Dixon once owned Stratton park, but disposed of it about 15 years ago to the late W. S. Stratton. He owns property on Cheyenne mountain, where at the present time a number of summer cottages are occupied by Colorado Springs folk.

The Dixon ranch, now used only for pasturage, was a favorite place with Hilda Hunt Jackson and a retreat where she spent much of her time. Mr. Dixon was an intimate friend of the writer and has collected all her poems and many of her writings in prose.

Will Not Leave Old Home.

Fifty years in Colorado Springs has furnished Mr. Dixon with an almost inexhaustible supply of interesting stories and anecdotes of the region. Among his prized mementoes of the early days is a deer skin, the animal having been shot by him on Point Sublime during his first year in the city. He gave an Indian a pair of flowers to tan the hide.

Still robust and hearty at the age of 72, Mr. Dixon refuses to leave his old ranch house just south of Stratton park.

"I have lived here the best part of my life and I will continue to do so," he says. "Cheyenne mountain is my talisman. It has brought me good luck, and I am going to stick by it."



WILLIAM F. DIXON.

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WHO IS—

Frank E. Willis?

WILLIAM F. DIXON.

longing to the people, seemed queer to me. In England I was accustomed to see the government take care of its own affairs and the people take but little interest in great national questions, and the great enthusiasm shown even by the westerners in matters of American politics made a deep impression upon me. It stirred in me a greater love of freedom and of the country I had then but recently adopted as my own.

Went Over Ute Trail.

"I had been freighting for the Wells-Fargo Express Co. with a six-ox team, and decided to come to Colorado. Together with Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Harris, parents of Mrs. D. W. Foster, of this city, and Ben Crowell, a pioneer who died several years ago, we started out. We took the northern route and turned back, coming over the mountains and through Ute Pass. This trip was filled with incidents of encounters with Indians, good and bad, and when we came out of the Pass into the first civilized section we had met, a load of misgiving and fears dropped from our shoulders. I remember distinctly stopping at what is now Manitou for a drink of water. Some prospector had dug out the spring that is now the Soda spring and had attempted to file a claim on it. I remember distinctly the taste of the water, but it was the first water we had drunk for several days and it tasted mighty good.

Interested in Politics.

"Going to Colorado City, we found the capital of Colorado politically enthusiastic. Rough pioneers were talking in little groups of the latest news of politics, then a month old, and were doing a little campaigning for officers they were electing for the territory. It was my first election day in the United States, and today, 50 years after that date, I look back with the greatest of pleasure upon those early days."

Mr. Dixon is now a wealthy man and gives credit for the present state



WILLIAM F. DIXON.