

AN ABBREVIATED, MINIMUM WORD HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF FLAGLER FROM THE BEGINNING TO INCORPORATION. Written for those who tire of authors descriptive details. Generally chronological.

Lyle W. Stone

1762, Flagler's site, claimed by treaty by Spain.

1800, given to Napoleon of France by secret treaty.

1803, this area was purchased by the U.S., called the Louisiana Purchase.

As the frontier pressed west, it became known as Arapahoe County, Kansas Territory.

About 1842, Kit Carson tramped through this area, trading with Indians and served as a guide, escorting Lt. Fremont and others across a hostile prairie. Kit Carson died in 1868.

In 1848, Horace Greeley traveled by stage through our area, he wrote while stopped at Boyds #22 stage station, (Crystal Springs), a very terse and uncomplimentary assessment of this place.

During 1861, the New Territory of Colorado was separated from Kansas territory, in 1876, Colorado became a state and our area located in Elbert County.

1860-80 was an era of large cattle ranches, hardy cowboys, dwindling buffalo and few settlers. Beachers Island Battle, 1868, marked the end of Indian hostilities in the area.

A round-up law was passed in 1872 to aid the cattlemen.

Charley J. Farr came to the area in 1877, working for large ranches, filing a claim in 1888. Albert Fisher was an early cowboy, filing a claim in 1887.

Simon Rumming, another early cowboy came to Colorado from the Chicago area in 1873 and filed for land at Crystal Springs.

A first homesteader in this county, J.R. Miskelly, filed in 1884.

Ben and John Doughty settled near the more recent Claude Verhoeff place in 1886. His wife, Rachel seems to be the first recorded death here, buried "on the prairie."

T.J. Huntzinger walked a long trail from Independence, Kansas and filed claim in October, 1886.

Steven S. Strode came in the winter of 1887, buying a piece of land south of Crystal Spgs, his children attending Crystal Springs School, another near first.

W. H. Lavington and new wife bought a claim near Crystal Springs in 1887.

Mail for this area was picked up at Hugo, Colorado.

Some Bowser, Crystal Springs names in 1887-8 were Doughty, Strode, Fisher, Rumming, Stark, Hunt, Lynde, Miller, Farr, Matthias and Moore, among others.

Mr. Neff, father of Mamie Neff Strode walked from Kit Carson, Co. in 1887 to a claim 17 miles north of our town.

"Doc" Hoyt shot the last buffalo in the summer of 1887, 6 miles north of Vona, Colorado.

Mr. McGonigal platted a town site west of Bowser, few hardly noticed.

H.W. Brown and family settled near the site of our town in 1888.

P.J. Murphy won the grading contract for a new railroad, apparently underbidding W. H. Lavington.

Mike and Anna Quinn arrived at rail head March 28, 1888 after a long tedious trip with wagons, horses and equipment from Kit Carson, Colorado.

Stephen S. Strode and his neighbors platted a townsite, Crystal Springs in 1888.

John Verhoeff served as hunter for the railroad men, shooting anything edible.

A post office was established at Bowser. Mr. Bennet Robinson was appointed postmaster June 9, 1888.

The first known issue of the "Weekly Register" was published at Crystal Springs on July 4, 1888. The next issue was published at Malowe.

Rails of the Rock Island passed Seibert in August, 1888.

Rail Workers began digging a well and constructing a tank and pump house--right beside Mr. McGonigal's location! Best guess this occurred in July, 1888.

Rail workers named the new depot location, Malowe, to honor a railroad attorney, M.A.Lowe.

Seeing a bustle of activity, Mr. W.H. Lavington pitched a horse tent, part of his railroad paraphernalia, establishing a general store. This was done in partnership with John W. Augustine.

A hotel was hastily erected by Mr. Keegan, owner of a livery stable. Site of his hotel was where the present IOOF Hall now stands.

The name, Malowe was changed to Flagler to Honor a visiting stock holder of the railroad. The name of Mr. Keegan's hotel was changed to Ponce De Leon, an act to impress Mr. Henry Flagler on his visit.

Mr.H.W.Brown built a fine new frame house on his homestead. This house was later moved to Flagler, now it's oldest house.

October 13, 1888, the post office was moved from Bowser to Flagler.

Jelsche Olthoff was appointed postmaster at Flagler, Dec. 12, 1888. (Thanks, Laurel Niemann!)

A soddie was erected west of the present IOOF Hall in a gully to serve the community as a school. Miss Crofteri was their teacher.

Joseph S. Whitney was appointed postmaster March 18, 1889. (all P.O.Info by Laurel).

W. H. Lavington was appointed postmaster October 31, 1889.

In 1889, W.H. Lavington built a first frame house 2 blks. no. and 1 block west of the water tower.

In 1889, Kit Carson County was established. This year, Flagler got a new lumberyard, operated by a man from Hugo, George Cornell.

Colby Hefnew built the Cottage Hotel on the present site of the Stop and Shop Grocery.

1889, Flagler citizens hand dug their own well (just northeast of the power house) for use by everyone including live stock. A windlass was used to raise water.

"The Messenger of Love" was published by C.W. Smith at his homestead.

Henry Hatch was murdered in his shack west of Flagler a couple miles. This was the first recorded murder in Kit Carson County. Dr. P.B. Godsman conducted the autopsy.

In October, 1889, the first child was born in Flagler, Leon E. Lavington. He was a son of W. H. Lavington.

Charles Bernard opened a hardware store, we are told at the present location of the First National Bank.

"The Flagler Advance" news paper was established by C.W. Smith in the basement of a new house, located just north of the present Max Heger home, in 1891.

School was held in a newly constructed Congregational Church until 1893.

In 1893, a fine new school, supporting an elegant bell tower was completed.

In 1894, The Flagler Advance "Died of Starvation!"

The first class to graduate under a recognized course of study, occurred at Flagler in 1895, under the direction of Mrs. P.B. Godsman (Lottie Rose).

Leon E. Lavington finished his first year of school in 1895.

M.F. Roberts built a general store in 1900, operating it until he sold it to W.H. Lavington in 1902. This located just north of the present Stop and Shop Grocery.

Seal Hall was the center of community events, silent movies and an outlet for gasoline and hardware.

Dr. H.L. Williams bought a store from Dr. Schroyer, who had been practicing as a physician and surgeon in 1906. This was located where Don Jones now operates his dairy products business.

The National Bank was established in 1908, a first banking institution in Kit Carson County.

The Flagler Hotel was built by W.H. Lavington and W.L. Price in late 1908 or early 1909.

First proprietor of the Flagler Hotel is believed to be Mr. Clyde Fuller.

A next proprietor of the Hotel may have been the Lucas Family, also performing an aerial trapeze exhibition about the country.



The Flagler Progress news paper was established by Charles E. Gibson in 1908.

W.H. Lavington built the first grain elevator in 1909.

In 1909, there is evidence of a flour mill located on main street.

C.M. Smith and Charles Bernard operated a real estate business just north of the present municipal building. (An earlier office, Smith and Evans, may have operated in the IOOF Building earlier).

In 1913, the Allen Family operated Flagler Hotel. Mr. N.J. Allen was murdered here by Mr. Schlyer of Vona, later acquitted. (Seldom mentioned).

The Flagler News was established by Edward Krutchen in 1913.

H.B. Blanken was proprietor of the Flagler Hotel in 1915.

William A. Borland purchased the Flagler News. This reported in the April 26, 1915 issue.

The Simpson Clothing Store opened February 20, 1915 in the old pool hall, a couple doors south of Dr. Williams Drugs Store.

Gromer Brothers established a new lumber yard in 1915.

In October, 1915, Dr. F.M. Thomas, Osteopath, began his practice.

J.C. Straub sold his lumber and hardware store, buying then the Seal Hardware stock.

E.S. Johnson Lumber and hardware was in operation.

E.A. Malbaff broke ground for the building now used by Lark Lowe. It was 24 by 50 feet, he vacated the building west of Main Avenue where Lyle Plumb operated a shoe shop.

Jack Lipford began operating the grain business in Mr. Lavington's elevator.

Early 1915, Dr. H.L. Williams built the present Williams Pharmacy building, operated now by his grandson, Larry Williams.

W.E. Hall built the present Otteman Cash Store, operated by Mark Otteman.

Flagler Post Office was located just south of the W.E. Hall building.

Dr. Williams sold his Drugs Store to the Beatrice Creamery company and Wm. Knies, local manager.

Flagler Commercial Club was active in the village, promoting incorporation

October 17, 1916, an incorporation election was held at the Waters Hotel.

November 22, 1916, Flagler was incorporated.

December 12, 1916, Leon E. Lavington was elected Mayor, trustees were A.J. Lockwood, J.H. Seal, H.B. Blanken, W.W. Reynolds, I.N. Moberly and J.W. White.

*DR NEFF ADDED - BURNING OF  
PONCE DE LEON HOTEL AT IOOF  
SITE ADDED. - OK IN COMPUTER.*