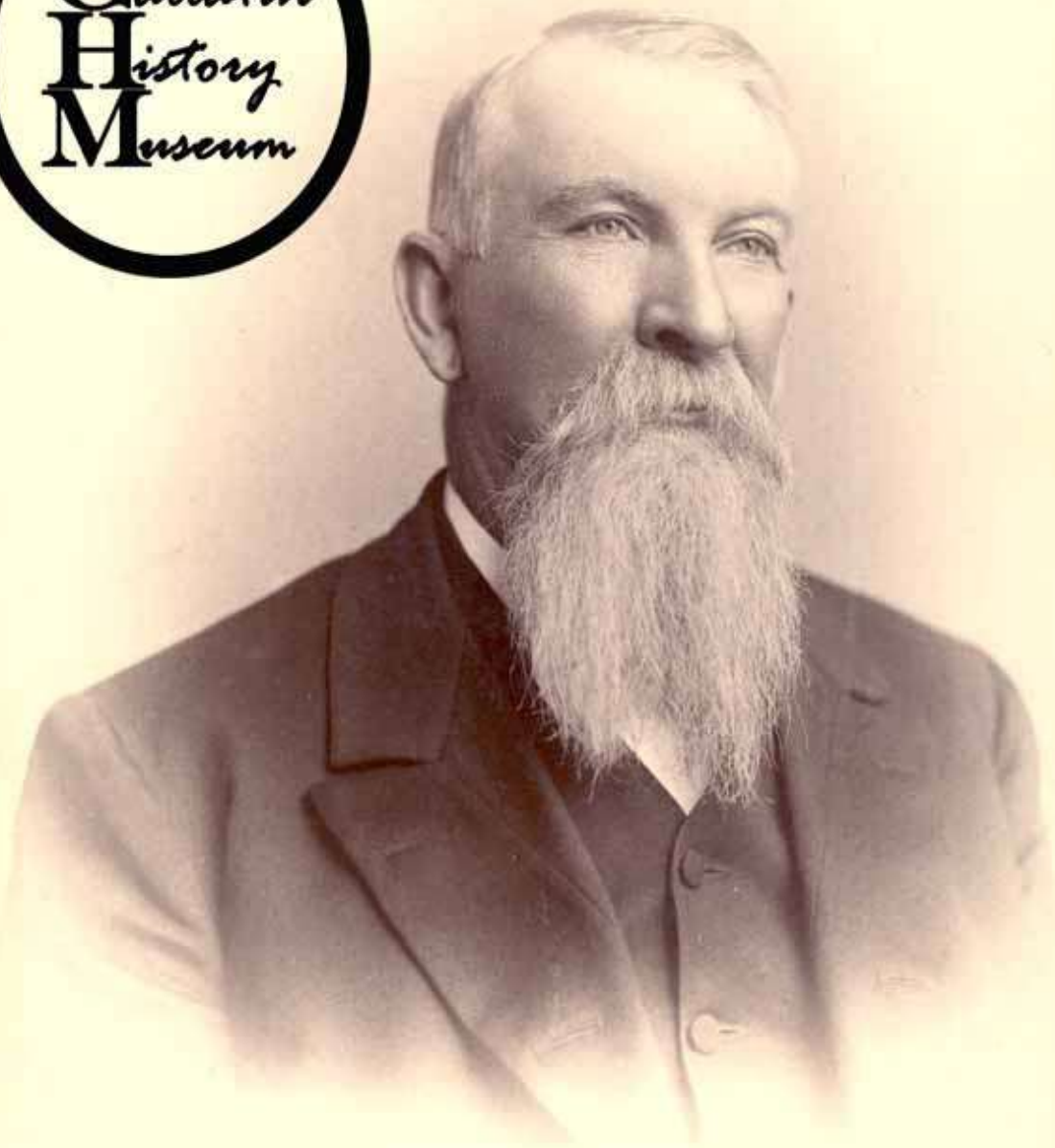


Nelson Story



Lawson,

Billings, Mont.

Story family portrait, circa 1915. Front row (l to r): Rose Story Hogan, Nelson Story Sr., Ellen Trent Story. Back row (l to r): Thomas Byron Story, Walter P. Story, and Nelson Story Jr. In front of the Nelson Story Sr. mansion on Main Street in Bozeman.



MONTANA TERRITORY (1859)

Arrived Brown's Cabins, (now Livingston) about December 3, 1866. Cattle probably held here during the winter of 1866-67. Story proceeded on to Bozeman with the freight wagons and opened Story Mercantile on January 1, 1867.

Held the herd here for two weeks but with winter coming, he decided to travel at night and hide during the day to evade the Army and Indians.

Bozeman

Virginia City

Stopped here by U.S. Army attached to Fort C.F. Smith and told they could not use the Bozeman Road because the Sioux were on the warpath and killing all who ventured into their area.

Lost three trail hands to Indians in Wyoming and Montana between Ft. Laramie and the Yellowstone River.

WYOMING TERRITORY (1890)

COLORADO TERRITORY (1876)

The cattle drive by Nelson Story, immediately following the Civil War, started a cattle movement that flooded the ranges of the plains states - Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, the Dakotas - and Montana, with millions of head of Texas Longhorns.

The Longhorns purchased in Texas from \$4 to \$10 sold in the East for \$50-60 after they were fattened on the short grasses of the plains. Blizzards, drought, barbed wire, the homesteaders, the end of open ranges and the demand for quality beef ended the trail drives.

THE FIRST MONTANA CATTLE DRIVE

Forth Worth, Texas
to Bozeman, Montana
March to December, 1866
1,000 Texas Longhorns
30 Men + 15 Wagons
1,800 + Miles

Scale of Miles

DAKOTA TERRITORY (1861)

Twenty some head of cattle stolen here by Indians but recovered after short shoot out. (repeating rifles were new to the Indians and they fled) All cattle were recovered except for the one killed by Indians.

NEBRASKA TERRITORY (1867)

The cattle drive by Nelson Story, immediately following the Civil War, started a cattle movement that flooded the ranges of the plains states - Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, the Dakotas - and Montana, with millions of head of Texas Longhorns.

The Longhorns purchased in Texas from \$4 to \$10 sold in the East for \$50-60 after they were fattened on the short grasses of the plains. Blizzards, drought, barbed wire, the homesteaders, the end of open ranges and the demand for quality beef ended the trail drives.

Held herd here while he went into Fort Leavenworth to buy 15 wagons filled with assorted merchandise. 150 head of oxen to pull the wagons and several repeating rifles. (Ranlogton rolling blocks?)

KANSAS 1861

Refused passage across Kansas by a band of Jayhawkers because of Tick Fever. Story drove herd west to the Arkansas River then Northeast, by-passing the settled areas of Kansas to Fort Leavenworth.

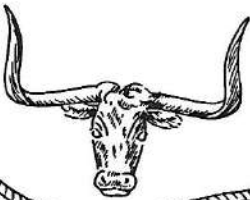
TEXAS 1845

INDIAN NATION (OKLAHOMA) (1907)

Stopped here by Indians and probably paid "wa-tah" (fall) of about 10c per head to cross the Indian Nation.



Nelson Story
from the
History of Montana
Illustrated
Published in 1894



NELSON STORY

1818-1926

Born in Ohio, freighted out of Kansas City, Denver and Utah before joining the gold rush to Bannack, Montana Territory in 1863. Staked a claim in Alder Gulch but it didn't produce so he bought a claim and mined over \$30,000.

Left his wife in Bozeman and took gold to New York City to convert into currency. With \$10,000 sewn in his coat, returned to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas and hired two men. The three went to Fort Worth, Texas, posing as carpenters, purchased 1,000 head of Texas longhorns at about \$4.60 per head. Left in early spring for Montana Territory.

Historical data by Malcolm Story, Grandson of Nelson Story.
Layout and Illustrations: Bud Ehm and Rebecca Betzant
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Western Trails Inc., Bozeman, Montana

McADOW FLOUR MILL WATER RIGHTS & LOCATION

Excerpt from the correspondence between T. B. Story and his son Byron (Budge). Letterbook lent by Malcolm Story, February, 1975

Letter November 6, 1944. NS (Nelson Story) bot from Wm. B. McAdow, his milling water right, appropriated for the McAdow mill in 1866 which was taken out of Bozeman or Sourdough Cr. at Bonn's ice ~~pond~~ pond, - just South of Story St., & just West of the southernly extension of Church St. .. NS pd. McAdow \$2000-- for his 800 inch water right which carried the water to the old McAdow flour & Grist mill which was situated on the brow of the hill about 1/4 mi. SE of the old NP Ry. depot at the N. end of Broadway. NS then built a ditch from the McAdow mill across to Rocky Cr. (which comes out of Rocky Canyon) dumped the 800 inches of Sourdough Cr. into Rocky Cr. and took it out into the main mill ditch with Rocky Cr. waters about 1/4 mi. below where Lillian Gardner lives. Then NS went up Sourdough Cr. about 100 yards S. of where it crosses Story St. cut down about 1/2 doz. big old Cottonwood Trees, hauled in some old building or fough foundation sand stone & built a dam solidly across sourdough Cr. ON JOE LINDLEY'S LAND & THE TREES ALSO BELONGED TO JOE L. This was one of Joe's additional greivances against NS. The above dam was built the fall of 1899. NS at the same time cut a ditch from sourdough Cr. east, about 100 yds. to Mill Cr. and dumped the waters of S. Dough into Mill Cr. All well & good & everything was going fine. I went down to the mill to keep books Jan 1" 1900 (4-5 mos after the blg of the dam.) In March 2-1/2 mos. later a Chinook (warm breeze from the south) set in. Snow began to ~~fall~~ thaw. Water began to run. S. Do. Cr. began to fill up. NS's ditch from S.Do.Dr. to Mill Cr. was not large enough & Mill Cr. was not large enough ~~to~~ to carry the ensuing flood so the water oozed at first over the banks of Mill Cr. where it crossed Church St. then ran & then poured down the gutters on either side of Church St. clear down Main, - along main & into old John Tilton's groc- store just east of the Boz. Hotel. Hell commended to pop and complaints pour into the City Administration.

(City sent men to open Story's dam, but Story drove them out. Finally he opened the dam. Suits were commended for damages, but since the damage had been slight, and perhaps Story made some settlement, the furor subsided.)

He became a second lieutenant in the 1st Cavalry in California from the Presidio of San Antonio from 1848-50. He was on the Gila Expedition, 1849-52, skirmishing with the Apaches and Indians. Stoneman's lieutenant Robert S. Taylor was killed in the California party in the Lieutenancy of the 1st Cavalry surveying party in 1853-54. He was killed on July 25, 1854, and was buried until the Civil War. He was a member of the 2nd Cavalry and surrendered to the Confederacy. He was a member of the D.E. Twiggs who was killed at the Battle of his command. His Civil War record was that of a private becoming a sergeant and brevet major. He became a major on July 28, 1866, in Arizona and commanded a regiment (later the 1st Cavalry) until August 16, 1866. He was killed in line of duty in Arizona and was responsible for the death of a man on April 30, 1871, a man who believed that they had problems and took that to be a sign that they did in the future of scores of men principally non-commissioned officers, California soldiers, a member of the Commission and from January 10, 1866, he died at Buffalo, a widow and their

t. 6, 1894; Dan I. Norman, Univ

1854-Feb. 25, town in Kansas, h Dakota, and d Tombstone.

Arizona, about 1880 where he reopened an ancient grudge-dispute with gambler Luke Short. The two met on the street in front of the Oriental Saloon and Short killed Storms. Bat Masterson, a friend of both men, unsuccessfully tried to prevent their encounter. Storms was described as "gritty," and "had been in a number of shooting affairs, in all of which he showed plenty of nerve."

Ed Bartholomew, *Wyatt Earp: The Man & the Myth*. Toyahvale, Tex., Frontier Book Co., 1964; William R. Cox, *Luke Short and His Era*. Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Co., 1961.

Story, Nelson, frontiersman (Apr. 4, 1838-Mar. 10, 1926). B. in Meigs County, Ohio, he attended college briefly and went west at 20, accompanying the military columns toward Utah in 1858, but became ill at Fort Laramie and, not being a soldier, was left behind. Story eventually reached Montana, profited from Alder Gulch gold mines, and turned to stock raising. He went to Fort Worth in 1866, bought longhorns, and drove them north. He reached Fort Leavenworth, then turned west up the Platte, gaining Fort Laramie and, despite Sioux hostility, took his wagon train and trail herd north into Montana, skirmishing with Indians enroute. One rider was killed by Indians on Clark's Fork of the Columbia, but Story reached the site of present Livingston, Montana. He sold the beef at a rich profit to Alder Gulch miners, but kept out his breeding stock, adding to it where he could, and within four years was a leading stockman of Montana, centering his activities, which had broadened into other fields, at Bozeman. In 1874 he led a party of armed citizens and fought three battles with Sioux toward the southeast, defeating them each time. Story became interested in steamboating on the Missouri, operating a fleet between St. Louis and Montana. He branched out into horse raising, beginning with 200 California mares in 1876, soon having a herd of 1,300 animals which he found readily marketable. By the 1880's Story had become "one of the fabled entrepreneurs of the Northern Plains," had entered the fields of finance and business, and was a millionaire with palatial homes at Bozeman and Los Angeles. In 1892 he sold 13,000 head of beef for delivery within three years, "one of the largest single transactions in livestock recorded in the history of northwest ranching." Story became something of a philanthropist before his death at Los Angeles.

Cowboys and Cattlemen, ed. by Michael S. Kennedy. N.Y., Hastings House, 1964; Dorothy M. Johnson, *The Bloody Bozeman*. N.Y., McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1971.

Stouch, George Wesley Hancock, army officer (Mar. 3, 1842-Nov. 11, 1906). B. at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, he enlisted November 30, 1861, in the 11th Infantry rising to sergeant major by 1864 when he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 3rd Infantry shortly becoming a first lieutenant. He retired as major of the 20th Infantry in 1898 for disability in line of duty, and was made a lieutenant colonel on the retired list in 1904. February 28, 1894, he was appointed agent at the Northern Cheyenne Reservation at Lama Deer, Montana, proving himself a dedicated friend of the Cheyennes and a good agent. May 23, 1897, a white sheepherder, John Hoover, was murdered by Indians north of the agency. White unrest led to dispatch of two troops of the black 10th Cavalry to the agency for protection of the law-abiding Indians there, the force later supported by additional units. Through all the tension and turmoil that followed Stouch proved a calm, mediating influence and his actions no doubt prevented considerable bloodshed. In November 1897 he was transferred to the adjacent Crow Agency but with the outbreak of the Spanish American War he returned to strictly military duties. After his retirement from the army he became for a time agent for the Southern Cheyennes and Arapahoes in Oklahoma. He died at Washington, D.C.

Lonnie E. Underhill, Daniel F. Littlefield Jr., "Cheyenne 'Outbreak' of 1897." *Montana: Mag. of West. Hist.*, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (Autumn 1974), 30-41; Stouch Pension file, Nat. Archives; Heitman.

Stoudenmire, Dallas, lawman (1845-Sept. 18, 1882). B. in Macon County, Alabama, he served in the Confederate army and then went west. He won note as a gunman at Columbus, Texas, and later was named city marshal of El Paso, Texas. On April 14, 1881, Stoudenmire took part in a wild El Paso gunbattle that followed an Anglo-Mexican killing affair near town, Dallas killing three of the four city victims. This brought him into a feuding relationship with the three Manning brothers, influential in El Paso, and their satellites. April 17, 1881, he killed Bill Johnson, whom he had succeeded as marshal, after Johnson

Nelson Story Faced Death Many Times . . .

Freighter, Miner, Vigilante, Catt

By ROLF OLSON
Chronicle Staff Writer
JOHN SAXMAN
Chronicle Photographer

Nelson Story is remembered best for trailing the first cattle into Montana Territory in 1866. But his life included shooting a claim jumper, assisting vigilantes hang a man, helping John Bozeman survive a brawl, and amassing a fortune which touched both coasts of the growing nation.

His grandson, Malcolm, who resides in the old Jack Mendenhall mansion on South Willson, spun the tale from memory of the

family legacy. Malcolm is a grandfather himself now.

Nelson was born April 4, 1838 in Burlingame, Ohio. His mother died when he was young and his father, Ira, remarried. Although his home in Meigs County was the site of Athens University, Nelson never went to college and "lit out" at age 19 in 1857 because there was nothing there to hold him. The slavery issue was bubbling then and John Brown in Virginia was becoming important.

Nelson went to "Bleeding Kansas," which was half slave and half free — a seedbed of dis-

content. At Fort Leavenworth, then a growing community and now better known for a penitentiary than anything else, he courted Ellen Trent for whom the Ellen Theater in Bozeman eventually was to be named.

To make ends meet, he broke sod and saved his money to buy oxen and wagons. Two years later, 1859, he started freighting to Denver which, at that time, was no larger than Gallatin Gateway is now.

But Story ran into trouble at both ends of his world. In Ohio the brother of his girl didn't like the courtship and showed up one night with a friend and invited Nelson outside. The brother started to swing when Nelson produced a pocket knife and sliced his arm. That ended the fight before it really started.

At the other end, in Denver, Story discovered two of his oxen were missing and, after a search, found two fresh carcasses in the butcher shop. Apparently he had little trouble identifying his stock since the shod hooves and hides were still on.

Nelson brought suit against the butcher but lost the case and was ordered to pay court costs. Feeling he was swindled, he hitched his teams and started for Fort Leavenworth without paying. The sheriff soon rode after Nelson but took a wrong fork in the road and that quirk of fate halted what undoubtedly would have been a showdown.

Malcolm recalls as a young man when his grandfather, 75, won a handgun contest with a .38 Smith and Wesson at gophers on Trail Creek. It was about 1915 and the family, including two uncles, had driven out in their \$10,000 Stevens-Duryea limousine. When the contest was over, none had bettered the old man.

After the freighting incident, Nelson went into silver mining in

second sluice constructed in that territory. In June 1863 he headed to Bannack, then territorial capital of Montana, and arrived just a few days after Fairweather discovered gold in Alder Gulch.

Nelson heard about it, went to Alder and staked claims which he did not work. Rather he started freighting again with a mule packtrain.

He returned to Fort Leavenworth to get Ellen who returned to Montana with him. He worked his gold claims and in June 1866, after two years of digging, he had \$30,000 in dust saved. During those two years he employed as many as 50 men.

On one occasion somebody told him several men were jumping his claim at night. Story grabbed his 10 gauge Damascus-steel double barrel shotgun and came upon the claim jumpers that night.

"You're on my claim. Get off," he ordered.

One of the jumpers, Alex Carter, grabbed another man as a shield, whipped out his percussion revolver and cocked the hammer. In the same instant Story fired, blowing Carter's right hand off. Not realizing yet what had happened to his arm, Carter attempted to pick-up the revolver.

Malcolm said the man used as a shield was unscratched. And although Story had ample reason at the time to have killed them both, he voluntarily paid Carter \$5 a month from then on as some compensation for his missing hand.

Story became what Malcolm termed "a prime mover" in the Vigilante in December 1863 when the Plummer gang probe started and the first hanging was scheduled. The intended victim, George Ives, gave a sob story and said he wanted to write his mother before being strung up.

Meanwhile, a dozen of Ives' road agent friends called "Innocents" stood with guns drawn and one threatened:

"We'll shoot the rope in two." Another shouted, "then we'll

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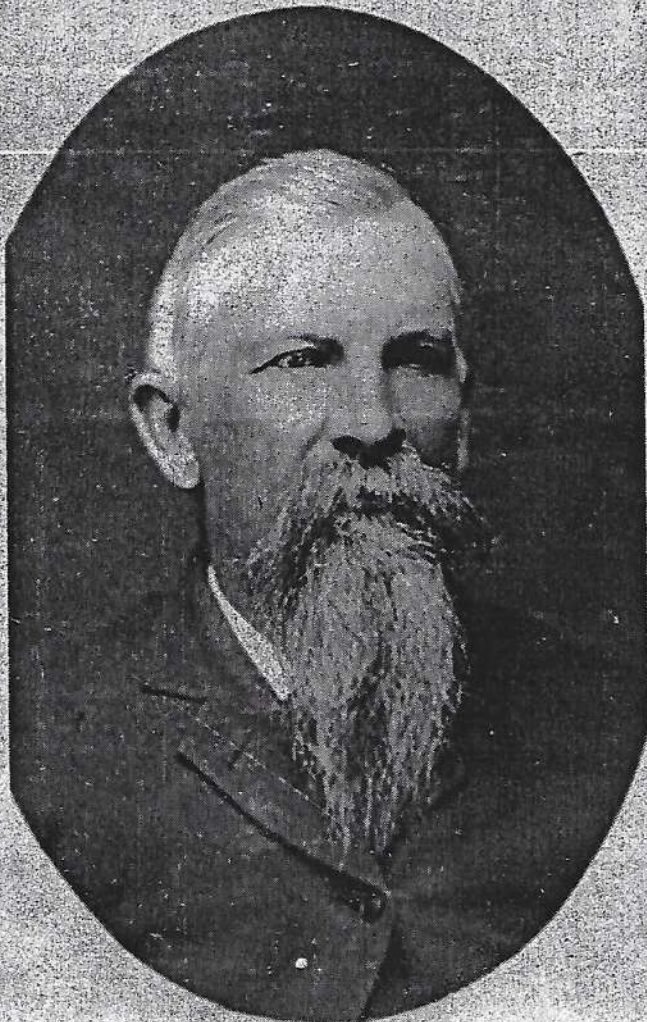
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Wellman, Merchant, Founder ...

\$10 a head, a bargain because he paid cash, one a cattle drive which among the top three can history. The best by a 17-year-old herd safely across the pi to feed Confederate was up against a man-ortage in 1866 because r. According to his-ful Wellman who auth-ampling Herd," noth-ed the drive. Rivers in the spring — which to the phrase "come gh water." The trail to was uncertain at best. Story herd was turned he Kansas border. He kirted the authorities sed Kansas anyway. y did Story endeavor Very simply — free he lost one man to an id. rd ambled into Fleish- eek, Montana, which establishment of two It is now Livingston, ense the Nelson Story gins at this point. That nomic accomplishment

is an end in itself. He opened a mercantile store. He invested heavily in California enterprises. He built his cattle herd to nearly 20,000 head which he sold for quarter of a million dollars when a dollar stood firm. He built flour mills. He built half of Bozeman. He owned ranch land. He was fantastically wealthy.

Story might have been shot by a Denver sheriff trying to catch a man who refused to pay court costs. He might have been killed by a claim jumper who used another man as a shield. He might have died kicking a crate from a strung-up road agent. The cattle drive nearly halfway across the nation would have been a feat for any lifetime.

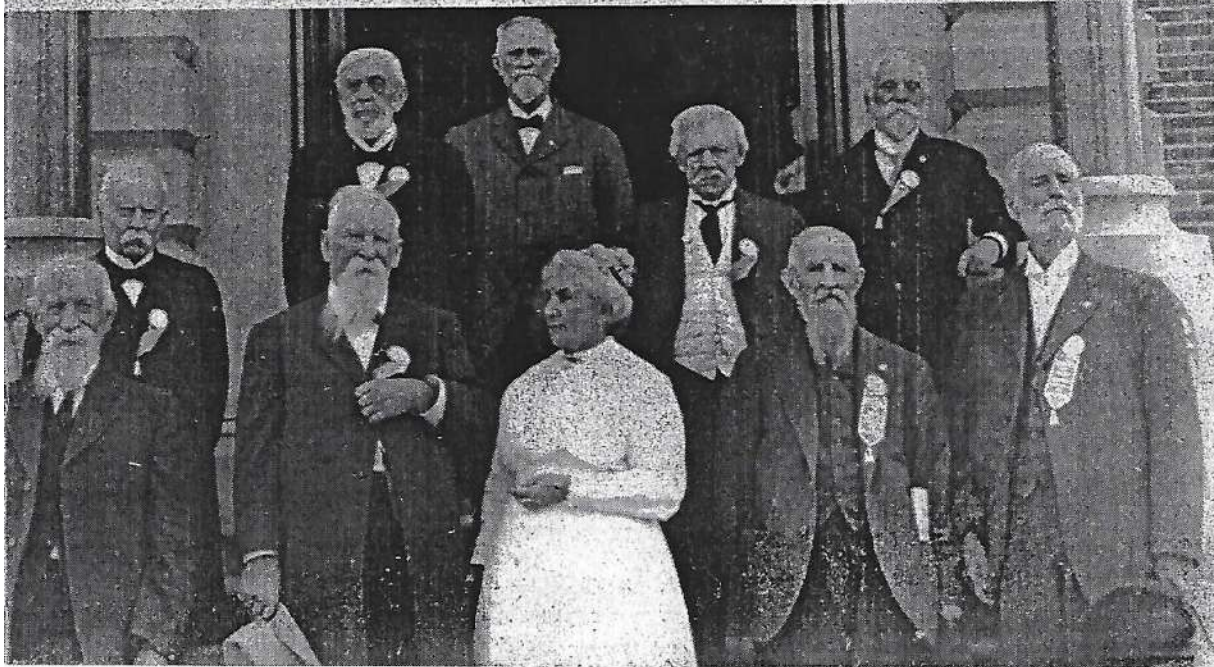
For all his accomplishments, Nelson Story stood only 5-9. He died in bed at 87 in March 1926.

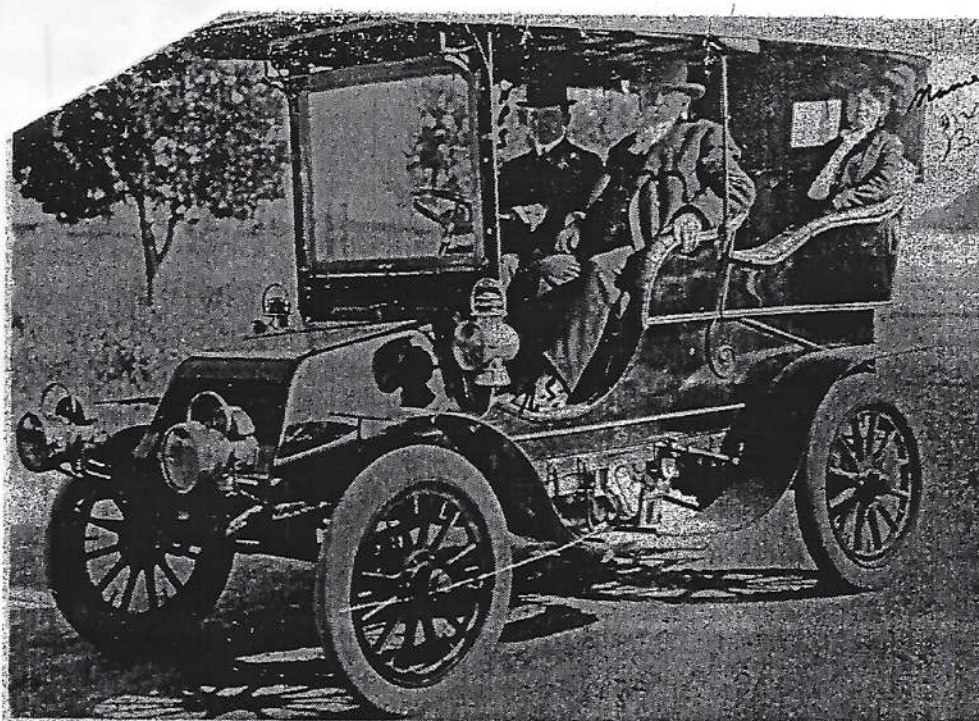
Said his grandson, an ardent admirer:

"He was built like a cedar post. I've seen the old man dab a rope on a steer and make him change ends when he (Nelson) was standing flat footed."



EARLIEST FAMILY PHOTO — Nelson and Ellen Story posed in Salt Lake City in 1866, more than a century ago, for this photograph. The child was named Alice, born that year in Virginia City where Nelson was just finishing his gold mining operations. Alice died in 1869 at age 3. Nelson's next project was to move 1,000 head of cattle from Texas to Montana.





WALTER, NELSON TAKE MAIME BAIRD FOR RIDE



FAMED TIN BOX— When Nelson completed his diggings in Virginia City where he employed as many as 50 men, he took \$30,000 in gold dust back to New York in this tin box. His grandson, Malcolm, who holds the box said

Nelson had a revolver ready at all times while on stage coaches and trains. He made it without incident and traded the dust, which was in great demand, for \$10,000 profit.

Sheriff therefore gaped and with what was described a sickly smile, asked "shall we hang him?"

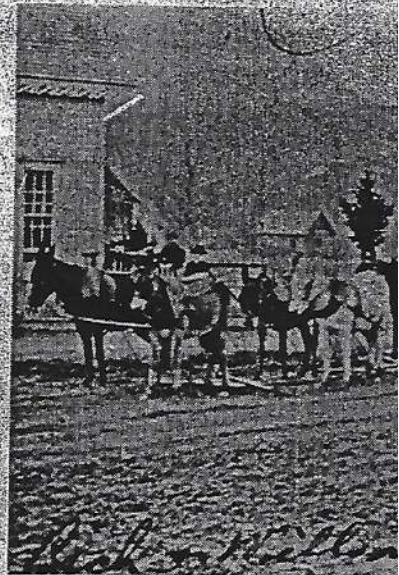
The crowd of an estimated 1,500 miners stood silent in the street. History says Nelson Story, with gun in each hand, pushed his way through from the fringes of the crowd and kicked the box from under Ives. Then he faced the innocents who never fired a shot.

The Story family account of the Ives incident is that Nelson had only one handgun. And he asked a trusted acquaintance, Ben Eziakiel, "come on." Eziakiel knew what Story meant and both of them yanked the box from under Ives with their left hands and stepped back at the ready. Nelson said he could hear revolver hammers cocking in the silence of the crowd. But nothing happened.

That broke the back of the road agents. The ringleader, Plummer, was hanged on Sunday, Jan. 10 with the last plea: "You can't hang me. I'm too wicked to die."

The Story's first daughter— they had three and all died in infancy—Alice was born in Virginia City in 1866. Four other children (Rose, Nelson Jr., T. Byron and Walter) all survived. The same year, 1866, he took his \$30,000 in gold dust in a tin box to New York. There he traded it for \$40,000 in greenbacks because gold was in demand there. He deposited all but \$10,000 which he sewed in his coat lining. He rode a horse to Tennessee to see relatives, then to Fort Leavenworth, then to Texas.

In Texas, Nelson bought a thousand head of Texas long-



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OF IMMORTALS — Rarely were so many who were
 al in Montana history gathered as happened at this
 obably around 1910 or 1915, of Montana Pioneers
 n Story home in Bozeman. The five in the back row
 Pemberton, one time chief justice of the Montana
 irt; Conrad Kohrs, a German who immigrated to
 1866 and ranked among the largest of cattlemen;
 Girl, Yellowstone Valley cattleman; Judge Frank

Woody, came to the territory as a frieghter in 1866 and ended
 in politics; Martin McGinnis, Helena, considered the biggest
 developer of Montana and served in congress. Front row, left
 to right, Byron Story, brother of Nelson; Nelson and his wife
 Ellen, Fred Bartlett, born in New York in 1823 and came to
 Helena in 1862 and was a prominent merchant; Granville
 Stewart, Butte, a gold miner and among the most colorful of
 cattlemen.



DOWNTOWN BOZEMAN IN 1890 LOOKING EAST ON MAIN STREET



MULE STRING ON EAST MAIN PROBABLY IN EARLY 1870S

NELSON STORY

From letters written by T. Byron Story, his son, to Byron Story, T. B's son in Los Angeles who is writing a biography of Nelson, his grandfather.

Character. 4/3/1945. Two distinct sides. Kindly toward children, people who were in trouble through no fault of their own, older people, and particularly toward those who had helped him, worked for him, etc. He took care of a number of people who had worked for them, until they died. W. S. Mackenzie, for instance, he assisted regularly, then buried him beside his friend, John Bozeman, and erected a stone for both of them.

Implacable toward those who opposed him. He and Joe Lindley (Lindley Place) were bitter enemies during life, but NS wept when Lindley died. "He would do things like moving onto old Joe Lindley's ground without permission, cut Joe's big old cotton wood trees & throw a dam across Bozeman Creek."

"After old Carter (who tried to jump NS claim at Va. City & when and where NS shot his, Carter's, hand to shreds) came to Bozeman, NS kept him until he died."

Not profane. "His strongest expletive when he was not mad or on the war-path was GOOD LORD..." When in "a towering rage," that was something else.

His family had almost everything they wanted. Mother always had the best in clothes, jewels, etc. Children could go to Benepe-Owenhouse and get things they wanted and charge to NS. Payment was made once a year. But again, when angry he could be rough.

May 9, 1945. Family has had trouble with his record of what he did in various years in his youth. He wrote to the Montana Historical Society giving an account of his experiences, then gave an interview for the 1885 History of Montana, and the dates do not correspond. T. B. has him leaving home in Ohio at 18 years old in 1856. Went to Leavenworth, and back and forth between Leavenworth and Denver 1859-1862. To Alder Gulch in 1863, remaining until 1866. Must have left Alder early in spring, no one is sure, He purchased a claim in Summit, practically in front of his door. Mother was also working hard, baking pies, ect. He seems to have made his money from the claim in the early spring --March, April, 1866, Had 150 men working at times, and cleared \$50,000. He went to Ohio, Washington, then to Denver where he purchased his cattle. Arrived in Bozeman December 1, or December 7. Brought 700 cattle and 12 wagons of goods. (not clear if cattle came to Gallatin or remained in Yellowstone Valley--probably in Yellowstone).

April 23, 1945. In the winter of 1857 he taught school in Ohio, in 1858 went to Illinois, then to Nebraska City where he worked in a store a short time. He worked for Matt Trent, worked for the government, freighted to Denver from Leavenworth. Started with a government train from Leavenworth for Denver, fell ill at Ft. Laramie with "shakes & fever." "NS told me many times he left home when he was 18 with \$36--which he had gotten from the sale of 2 bull calves which he had broked to work. If he was not born until April 4th 1838, Meigs Co, Ohio, as he always stated he was & which is set forth in the old family bible in his own hand, he would have been

20 years old when he left Ohio for the West as the 1885 Mont. Hist. which I sent you says: "In the winter of 1857 he taught school in Ohio and in 1858 went to Ill., thence to Neb. City. I can't reconcile the dates in the History with what he told me, so I think your best bet will be to follow the History. This says, "He was engaged in breaking prairie in 1861... hauled bridge timbers from Missouri to Little Stranger (R) May 1, 1862, loaded 2 ox-teams with groceries, went to Denver; disposed of goods, returned to Leavenworth. About Aug. 1 reloaded & went back to Denv., arriving late in the fall. This time he took mother along as after this trip he did not go back to Leaven. & the fam. bible states they were married 9-28-'62, Leavenworth, Co., Kas. (So you see the dates do not jibe) "He sold goods there until March 1863." On March 17 he started for East Bannack with 3 yoke of cattle & wagons...etc. (A team of oxen pulling a freight wagon consisted generally of 5 yoke or 10 head. (A yoke of oxen was a pair or two head))"

"I want you to send me a copy of NS letter "which sketches his cattle drive" and contains these words: "Arrived in Bozeman the 4th of December 1867 with 12 wagons & 700 cattle." I know & so does every other GDSB that John M. Bozeman was killed by the Indians on April 18th., 1867 & the night before he was killed he spent in NELSON STORY'S (called by NS his) PERMANENT CAMP (headquarters) situated on the present site of Livingston, Mon. Now if he did not get here 'till Dec. '67, how in hell could Bozeman stop at NS camp 9 mos before it was established? SIMPLY A SLIP OF THE PEN OR LAPSE OF MEMORY OF A MAN PAST 82 YEARS OF AGE. NS delivered 100,000# of potatoes to Ft. C. F. Smith fall of 1867."

"In re- his mining claims,- he never worked the claim which he took up or "staked" out (where he shot Carter) & I do not know what ever became of it. I suppose he sold it. The claim he worked was the one at or near Summit (up the gulch several miles above Va. City) where he had his log-cabin store at which place Mother lived, ran the store, baked pies, etc. etc. This claim was right out in front of & a little way from his cabin & he BOUGHT it from the man who staked it. It had never been worked but the claim on either side of it was being worked and paying at the time NS bot & the reason he bot was because of the paying claims on each or either side."

In the Hist or Mont, p. 1164 it says: "In July 1863 the upper part of Alder Gulch was discovered & Mr. Story taking his effects went to Summit, where he remained till the spg of 1864, merchandising and purchasing mining grounds in Pine Grove district & Summit for \$13,000...He told me he took the gold dust out in a very short time in the early part of 1866 probably Jan.-Feb.-Mar.- Apr. & maybe into May. for he said he spent a week in Salt Lake, stopped off at home, went on to NY, to Philadelphia to Wash. DC. to Nashville & then to Ft. Leavenworth, got Tom Allen & Bill Petty, packed to Ft. Worth, Tex., bot the cattle, drove to near Baxter Springs, then west to Arkansas R up to Santa Fe Trail, to Topeka to Leavenworth. All this would have taken time and he told me he started with the cattle in July. The Hist says he started from Leavenworth July 10th., 1866 - so he must have started from Fort Worth about the middle or earlier in June..."he told me started (from someplace with the cattle) in July in 1866...I know that's the month and year because it would have taken at least 4 mos to drive from Leavenworth to Livingston & he got there (Liv) about Dec. 1. Probably a month from Et. Worth to Leavenworth, taking 5 mos. in all or July.-Aug.,-Sept.- Oct.,- & Nov. & maybe 1/2 June."



The herd and wagon train moved out and Nelson Story and his twenty-six men dared the entire Sioux nation.

Nelson Story was a green kid of 18 when he went west in 1856, but, ten years later, he dared what the United States Army said could not be done. The Army had 300 men penned in a Wyoming fort. The Sioux had more than 3,000 warriors. Story had twenty-six. He marched out to meet the Indians.

No one could have been more American than Nelson Story. A direct ancestor, William Story, landed at Plymouth only seven years after the Pilgrims, and Story was soon pushing into the wilderness of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and New York. But none of his forebears went so far or found such high adventure as young

Nelson. He never dodged a fight or a fortune as he bore the Story banner toward the Pacific coast.

Nelson Story was born in 1838 on a farm in Meigs County, Ohio, and at 14 was an orphan. He taught school and worked his way through two years in Ohio University at Athens, until caught by the growing romance of the West. He walked to the Ohio River, took a steamboat to St. Louis, another up the Missouri, and went ashore at Fort Leavenworth, in Kansas, with \$36.

This was long before the days of buffalo slaughter, of cattle and cowboys north of Texas. The prairie rolled beyond the horizon and across it wandered many Indian

tribes. The young adventurer saw the deep ruts of the wagon trail to Oregon and California, and that trail he determined to follow.

Freighters thought him too young and inexperienced to drive oxen on so dangerous a route, but even then Story's quality of confident boldness was drawing attention. Many men are recklessly daring. Young Story was solidly daring, something wholly different, and this remained a chief characteristic of the man. It soon got him a job bullwhacking over the Oregon trail to Denver, a new settlement.

For the first time in his life, Story went armed all day, had his weapons beside him when he slept, and took his lonely turn as night guard. He practiced shooting, became a good shot, listened to experiences and advice of old-timers, and quickly felt at home on the great plains. The Indians taught him things, too. The freighters traveled in large trains, but even then were attacked by bands that hoped to pick up a few horses, firearms, and scalps. Story also learned what happens when an Indian wins. Several times he found burned emigrant trains and helped bury the horribly mutilated victims, men, women and children.

In less than a year, he drew the last wages he was ever to receive and, with his savings, bought a wagon and six oxen, and began freighting on his own. Soon he could buy another team, and then, in 1858, gold was discovered in Colorado. Men in the Rockies would pay any price for goods and 20-year-old Nelson Story provided them, and learned a valuable lesson: men who profit most surely from a gold rush are the suppliers.

Late in 1862, a big strike was made in Montana. Story loaded his wagons—he had three now—and again started westward. The route was through Idaho and he went at once to Alder Gulch, where the richest find had been made, built a store and began freighting goods.

Thousands of men swept into southwestern Montana. Virginia City quickly grew from nothing to 10,000. Alder Gulch produced many millions in gold, and that drew the West's badmen. Henry Plummer wangled election as sheriff and then organized a large gang of road agents. Stagecoaches and gold shipments were robbed and many men killed. No one was safe. At last, the better people organized a citizens' court, arrested George Ives, one of Plummer's men, for murder, tried and convicted him in the main street.

Nelson Story arrived as Ives was sentenced to be hanged and he quickly joined the hundred armed men guarding court and prisoner. Road agents and their many friends threatened to rescue Ives as he was placed on a large dry-goods box and the noose adjusted. The acting sheriff lost his nerve and ducked for shelter, and Story ordered the man next to him to help jerk the box from under the prisoner. They did, and the sudden execution prevented a bloody battle.

Out of the hanging came a vigilance committee and, because of his prompt, cool daring that night, young Story was made a captain. Many times, grim men rode out and next morning one or more bodies were swinging from a tree. After twenty-two road agents, including Plummer, the leader, were hanged, the lawless element vanished. Nelson Story, though only 26, emerged from the vigilante days as one of the leading citizens of the Alder Gulch district, and his reputation for daring and integrity grew.

The government asked him to haul military freight from Fort Leavenworth to Wyoming, and he began to lose interest in being a merchant. He saw wide plains with abundant grass, bare of cattle. Montana now had 120,000 citizens and practically no ranches. A few cows were

driven in from Utah and Oregon, and miners wanted beef. Story began to think about that.

While freighting to Wyoming, he met Ellen Trent, who was born in Kansas in 1845, and thus a more authentic westerner than Story himself. They married, and in 1865 went to Virginia City. Before leaving Fort Leavenworth, Story heard longhorns in Texas were selling for \$2 a head. At the end of the Civil War, Texas had no money but millions of steers, while the northern states were in great need of beef. The possibility of bringing cattle north profitably intrigued him, but he didn't have capital for so large an enterprise.

Story had been in Virginia City long enough to learn much about gold mining and knew of a claim he did not think had been worked properly. He bought it, and before spring had taken out \$30,000 in gold, which he exchanged for \$40,000 in depreciated greenbacks. He held out enough for his new cattle-buying enterprise, put the rest in a bank, kissed his wife good-by, and with two young men he had hired, Bill Petty and Tom Allen, started for Fort Worth, Texas.

This was quite a horseback ride, 1,500 miles by a route often trailless. They went south across the divide to Fort Hall, turned east and recrossed the Rockies in Wyoming, south again to Denver, on across the Indian Territory into Texas. It wasn't just a ride. No white men lived in much of that land, and Indians were plenty. Story knew the plains, avoided ridges and higher rolls of the prairie, and built fires only at night. The Indians weren't expecting white men in this emptiness and he escaped all of them except a small band.

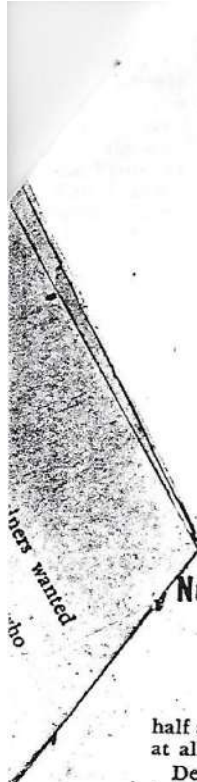
"We'll hit 'em first!" he said, and led a charge of three that so surprised the red men that they turned and fled.

In Fort Worth, Nelson Story discovered all Texas had his idea of driving cattle north. Texans were broke after the war, needed federal money, and only cattle could get it for them. Dozens of herds were being made up. Prices had risen from the low of 1865, but he bought 3,000 head. Texas was a wholly new land to him. Its people had long been isolated until the War Between the States, in which most of them had fought, and now they were still bitter. But in all the nation, Texas alone had cowboys, men who knew how to handle the grotesque longhorns, and Story hired a crew of them. Any Texan worth his salt had started fighting Indians at 12 and Yankees at 16, and Story knew he had a perfect combination.

They went north, angled northeast on the Sedalia Trail that led to Missouri and the Mississippi River at Quincy, Illinois. The Chisholm Trail was not to be used as a cattle route until the next year. A few herds had been driven over the Sedalia Trail to Iowa and Illinois before the war, and it was the only one known. But whatever the trail, Nelson Story soon learned what a wild, unpredictable animal the longhorn was. His herd would stampede on the least excuse, sometimes several times a night, and days were spent in rounding them up. Further, the Southwest had rarely known so wet a season. Rain fell constantly, and every thunderstorm brought a stampede. The ground was so boggy men slept in the saddle or in the mire. Every stream to be crossed was in flood, and the longhorns never had cared for water.

The Texas cowboys were invaluable here. At a riverbank, a point rider would spur his mount into the torrent as a bit of come-on bait and others would urge the cattle to follow. If the first did, the whole herd might. Or they would balk, and whole days would be spent getting the longhorns across. And there were rivers and rivers, stampedes and stampedes, in

[Continued on page 56]



Nelson Story Was a Fighting Man

[Continued from page 14]

half a thousand miles, and often no sleep at all.

Death rode with them constantly. Swirl of current or stampeding hoofs killed many a cowboy that year of 1866, but Story, greenhorn from the north, went on for 500 miles without losing a man. Then he stopped, suddenly and, it seemed, for good. A vast horde of long-horns was massed ahead and on both sides. Grass was eaten to the roots and cattle were losing weight. Story, aroused, rode forward to learn the trouble.

The Kansas Jayhawkers, bitter enemies of the Missouri Bushwhackers in the guerilla edge of the Civil War, saw the cattle herds through brigands' eyes. They demanded \$2 a head toll, and they'd known murder before breakfast

so long they did not hesitate to back up the extortion.

Story's anger mounted when he learned the situation. It wasn't in his scheme of things to be defeated or lose money. It was as if both were immoral.

"We can beat our way through here," he said to a tall, thin Texan owner.

"How?" the Texan asked bitterly. "Take our men away from herdin' cattle, and where'd the cattle be?"

Out of this situation came Nelson Story's revolutionary idea. It was wholly characteristic of the man. He acted quickly and with force, and yet with a clear picture of all he faced. He suddenly switched his destination from Illinois to Montana—though, after having come 500 miles, it meant he would still have 2,100 before him. And he would be trading Jayhawkers for Sioux.

"He got back to camp at suppertime and told his men.

"You Texans didn't agree to anything like this," he said. "I'll pay you off now."

All the Texas cowboys agreed to go.

After all, there was nothing for them at home and they needed the wages. Next morning, the herd was started directly westward in Indian Territory on the second stage of an expedition which, if it succeeded, could be ranked as the most dangerous and remarkable in the West.

At Fort Leavenworth, Story rested the cattle, bought wagons, ox teams, and groceries, and hired dependable bullwhackers he knew from his Denver days. Army officers said he was crazy. A treaty had been made with Red Cloud, Sioux chief, but the Army had immediately started a string of forts across Wyoming and into Montana, and the Indians felt this was a violation of their agreement. They were worked up about it and taking to the warpath.

Story listened, bought thirty Remington breech-loading single-shot rifles and plenty of brass cartridges. These weapons, invented by Philo Remington, were so new that they were unknown in the West. The breech was opened by the rotating-block system, which brought the

and back and made reload-
and easy.
nia City and Ellen Story were still
long, tough miles away when Nel-
hit the old familiar trail northwest
the Platte. Only drudgery marked it
to Fort Laramie in Wyoming, half the
distance, and at the fort, Story was told
by Army officers his chances of getting
through were slight.

"Colonel Carrington is in charge up
there," the commander said, "He is now
building Fort Phil Kearny, beyond Fort
Reno. He has selected sites for Fort C. F.
Smith in Montana and a couple more
toward Virginia City, but nothing has
been done there. At Kearny, the Sioux
are killing his men and running off his
horses daily. He reports more than three
thousand Indians around him. You've no
chance on the Bozeman Trail. The Sioux
are determined to block it."

Nelson Story listened and said nothing.
He knew he could still cut south-
west to the Oregon Trail, cross the divide
into Idaho, and turn north, recrossing
the divide, to Virginia City. But that
meant two high mountain passes, and the
season was late. He could easily lose all
his cattle in deep snow, and lose them
without a fight. The trail pioneered by
his friend John Bozeman was lower and
200 to 300 miles shorter.

While Story rested his stock and men
at Fort Laramie, two young veterans of
the Civil War, John C. Catlin and Steve
Grover, arrived from Leavenworth on
their way from Indiana to Montana, and
when they learned the situation, they
asked Story if they could join his train.

"If all the Army tells me is true, you'll
get a lot of fighting," Story said.

"We didn't do anything else for three
years," Catlin said.

Story grinned.

They went on, the 3,000 longhorns,
a train of oxen and wagons, and thirty
men, and soon learned what to expect.
Several times they found charred re-
mains of freight or emigrant parties, and
bodies fearfully mutilated. They saw
Indians on the ridges and knew they
were being spied upon constantly.

Tension grew as they plodded north.
From Fort Laramie to Fort Reno was 169
miles, but as they neared the fort they
began to feel safe.

They were caught off guard. A large
band of Indians swept over a ridge and
down upon the herd and train. They
came in close at full gallop, released a
storm of arrows, and went on to reform
for a second charge. Two Texas cow-
boys were hit and fell from their saddles.

The white men opened up, and even
they were surprised by the rapidity with
which they could fire. Though greatly
outnumbered, they poured it in. The
Sioux were dumbfounded and didn't stay
for a real test of the Remingtons.

Nelson Story's first concern was for his
injured cowboys, and when he saw their
wounds, he sent messengers to Fort Reno
for an ambulance. When the ambulance
came, herd and train were moved to Fort
Reno. The injured cowboys were placed
in the hospital. Both fully recovered later.

Again, Army officers warned Story he'd
never get through, but after a short rest
he started on to Fort Phil Kearny, sixty-



Historical Society of Montana, Helena.

Virginia City, Montana, end of the trail for Nelson Story.

seven miles north. Indians were seen, but
did not attack. Perhaps word of the Rem-
ingtons had gone ahead.

But soldiers stopped them three miles
from the half-completed fort. They were
ordered not to go closer, as Colonel Car-
rington wanted the pasturage for his own
animals. Story was also told he could not
go farther north because of the great
danger and the fact that troops could not
be spared to protect him. Orders were
orders, especially when Carrington had
300 men to enforce them, and Story
camped.

They'd been in camp two weeks now,
and after breakfast he and Catlin went
to the fort to see Carrington. The colonel
was obdurate. He said it was madness to
think of going north on the Bozeman
Trail. Formally, as commander, he or-
dered Story to remain where he was.

Story and Catlin rode back.

"That fellow's afraid of the Sioux,"
Story said angrily.

"And still fighting the Civil War,"
Catlin said. "Can't he learn how to
handle Indians with only bows and
arrows?"

That night at supper, Nelson Story
told his men the situation and how he
felt about it. He then outlined his plan.

"If we start after dark," he said, "by
morning we'll be so far north, Carrington
won't dare send soldiers after us. I'm not
for getting whittled down here or freez-
ing on this open plain."

"Let's leave tomorrow night," Catlin
said.

This action was unique in all western
history. Thousands of Sioux were all
around them and surest safety was at
the fort. Ahead lay hundreds of miles
of dangerous plains and mountains. No
longhorn had ever been so far north of
his native Texas. But that night of Oc-
tober 22, 1866, Nelson Story and his
tiny band dared the Sioux nation.

All night they went on, and nothing
happened. At dawn, they made camp,
rested herd and oxen, and took turns
sleeping.

Moving north each night, they left
Powder River for the Tongue. Not far
ahead, Custer and his 225 men would be
wiped out ten years later. Behind them,
in six weeks, Captain W. J. Fetterman
and his command of eighty would be
killed at Kearny; all told, 150 soldiers
and civilians had recently died, or soon
would die, around that fort. But Nelson
Story and his little band, with their big

awkward herd and wagon train, marched
on through the Sioux hell.

The Indians were enraged by this
effrontery and soon attacked. It was day-
light, and they swept in by the hundred,
hanging low on their mounts and releas-
ing a barrage of arrows—and never be-
lieving rifle fire could be so rapid.
Story's men mowed down the leaders. If
anyone missed, a quick second shot got
another brave. The Indians whirled
away to regroup for a second charge.

Their method was to make swift at-
tacks within arrow range, and come again
and again as they whittled down the foe.
They were confident they could get away
before muzzle-loaders would fire a second
time, and they knew the range of the
soldiers' Springfield's perfectly. Now they,
and Story and his men, were to learn
something new about the Remingtons.
Not only could they be reloaded quickly,
but they had a far greater range than
Army weapons, or any the Sioux had
known. As the Indians regrouped at what
they considered a safe distance, the
whites continued to pour it on, and men
and horses went down. Still they made a
second charge, and the slaughter was
greater.

Not even enraged Sioux warriors liked
to accept such casualties, and they saw
they could not get in close without taking
huge losses. Soon they withdrew. Story
grinned when he learned not a man had
been scratched.

The expedition went on, turning west
toward the Big Horn River, crossing
where Fort C. F. Smith was to be built,
and heading northwest for the Yellow-
stone. Once more, the Sioux staged a
large attack. Their pride was hurt.

"Come on, boys!" Story yelled, and led
the charge.

It was as successful as before. The In-
dians were thrown into confusion. Story's
men were deadly shots now and delighted
in battle. It was fun taking on fifteen
or twenty to one and winning. The Sioux
soon turned in flight.

Careful guard was still kept and night
marches made, but that was the end
of the fighting. On December 9, 1866,
he reached Virginia City, and Ellen
Story.

Many remarkable journeys have been
made in the West, but for daring and
ability to meet extraordinary dangers
and odds, none can surpass Nelson
Story's drive of Texas longhorn cattle to
the valleys of western Montana. ■

Nelson Story Was an Early Founder

"He always wore a flat top stetson, a long tailed coat and walking boots," said Malcolm Story about his grandfather Nelson Story, who was one of the earliest founders of Bozeman.

"Nelson Story, or 'Old Man Story' as he was affectionately called," said Malcolm Story "was on hand when Bozeman was established as a town on August 8, 1864."

Many businesses, public buildings, and landmarks have boasted the name "Story", and a street in Bozeman also bears this name.

Born in Ohio

The remarkable life of Nelson Story began in 1838, on a corn farm near Athens, Ohio, where he was born.

As a young man, Nelson heard of the discovery of gold in a place called Bannack, and he set out for Bannack on horseback.

When Nelson reached Bannack, which wasn't much more than a few tents and hastily built stacks, he found

that only women and children were inhabiting the dwellings.

After asking around, he found out that the men had gone to "Alder Gulch," where a man named Bill Fairweather had discovered gold.

Nelson Arrived

Gold had been discovered at Alder only about ten days before Nelson arrived, so he was there almost at the very beginning. The date was June 1863.

Although he staked out a claim, Nelson didn't start mining.

Instead he continued in his already established freighting business from Denver, Colorado.

Most of the people who arrived at Alder Gulch, or Virginia City as it later became known, came as quickly as they could.

This meant that they came only on horseback, not bringing extra equipment, food, clothing or any means of transporting such things, whereas Nelson Story had a string of pack-mules,

which proved to be a very valuable commodity at that time.

Nelson and Ellen Marry

In 1864, Nelson returned to Leavenworth, Kansas where he married Ellen Trent, and brought her to Virginia City.

Ellen made and sold pies and bread to the miners thus providing another income.

When Nelson finally got around to mining his claim, he eventually took out almost \$30,000 worth of gold, which was even of more value then, than it is now.

This \$30,000 proved to be the beginnings of the Story fortune.

Yellowstone Transportation Co.

Although Nelson did not actually live in Bozeman until 1867 he still came quite often to manage various business interests in the area.

One of these interests was the Yellowstone Transportation Company which he started in partnership with several others.

At this time Bozeman was not much more than a lot of willows and a swamp, with maybe a building or two.

The company had ten, 30' x 12', 15-ton boats, which they used to transport merchandise down the Yellowstone River.

Many of the boats were wrecked on Wolf Rapids, which along with the coming of the railroad in 1882, put the company out of business.

First Cattle Drive

In the annals of history, perhaps the one thing which Story was noted most for, was for making the first cattle drive farther north than the Platte River from Texas.

Nelson purchased 1,000 cows with calves and in April he started trailing the cattle from Texas.

Eight months later in December, he arrived in the Livingston area with his herd of cattle, however, the town of Livingston was not established until the Northern Pacific came through in 1882.

Story Mill

In 1882 Nelson started the Story Mill in Bozeman, which is still standing near the auction yards.

"For over 40 years the mill had the most consistent payroll and business in Bozeman," said Malcolm Story.

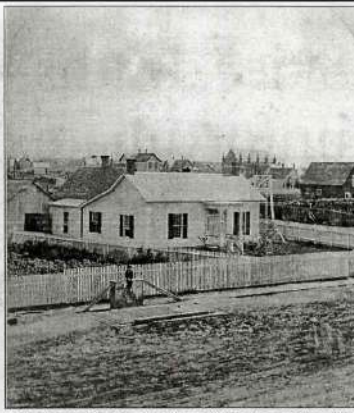
On August 27, 1901, the mill burnt down and Nelson had to rebuild it.

Malcolm Story stated, "Throughout his life he was always wheeling and dealing, and always had several business ventures going at once."

He made business contracts with the government, loaned money, real estate, ranched, and also operated many other businesses in the Bozeman area and elsewhere.

Malcolm stated that at one time after making his million, Nelson commented, "They think I am rich, but I have also lost a million dollars."

Nelson Story's death in 1926 brought to an end an exceptionally unusual life of an exceptionally unusual man.



This photo of Bozeman, taken two years before the Battle of the Little Bighorn, was purchased recently by Kim Scott, special collections librarian in the Renne Library at Montana State University.

Piece of the past

2/18/04

By GAIL SCHONTZLER
Chronicle Staff Writer

Thanks to high-speed computers and e-Bay, Bozeman has regained a bit of its lost history.

A small photo of Bozeman's oldest existing house, built by pioneer Nelson Story, went up for auction last week on e-Bay, and Montana State University won the bidding.

"I got it by bidding like a pirate," Kim Scott, special collections librarian in the Renne Library, said Monday. "This is an ultra-cool photo.

"It's another piece of the puzzle of Bozeman's past."

As the deadline approached, another bidder, who had been silent up to that point, jumped in with 60 seconds to go. Using MSU's high-speed computers, Scott was able to send in the top bid of \$192.

The undated photo was taken on a summery day by Henry Bird Calfee, Bozeman's first superintendent of schools, who took many of the first photographs of Yellowstone National Park. His stamp is on the back. Originally black and white, the 3-inch-wide stereo-images have turned sepia with age, but are still in excellent condition.

The photo shows the wood-frame home at the southwest corner of Main Street and Tracy Avenue, where Miller's Jewelry stands today.

Main Street is very muddy. An unusual swing on the side of the house matches an 1885 sketch of Story's house. A little boy in the photo is unidentified.

Scott said he believes it was probably taken in 1874, two years before the Battle of the Little Bighorn. In the background stands the Methodist Episcopal Church at Willson Avenue and Olive Street, which was completed in January 1874. Beyond that is the bare hill that would someday lead up to Montana's agricultural college.

The seller, an antique stereo-view dealer in Michigan, knew the photo was taken in Bozeman, but not whose house it was.

The Story house is "quite tiny," Scott said, "considering Montana's first millionaire was living in it."

John Russell, Gallatin Historical Society executive director, said he hasn't yet seen the photo but it sounds "quite significant."

Story's wife, Ellen, held ladies' teas, fund-raisers for the church and socials there.

"In its time, it was arguably the finest home in town," Russell said. "This house has seen a lot of history. You really wish its walls could talk."

Nelson Story made money gold mining in Virginia City but realized he could make more feeding miners, so he led a famous cattle drive from Texas to Montana. In Bozeman, he amassed a fortune in cattle, real estate, banking and milling.

Story was investigated by a grand jury for allegedly ripping off the federal Crow Agency, double sacking flour and not delivering the quality and quantity of beef charged for, but was never indicted, Russell said.

The photo will be available in MSU's special collections for anyone who wants to see it or use it for research. It was purchased with money raised by the MSU Friends of the Library and special collections' endowment interest.

"The important thing is the image has come back to Bozeman where it belongs," Scott said.

The Story house still stands on Mendenhall Street, behind the Pioneer Museum.

Gail Schontzler is at gails@dailychronicle.com

First cattle drive preceded statehood Story headed up 1,000-head-drive in 1866

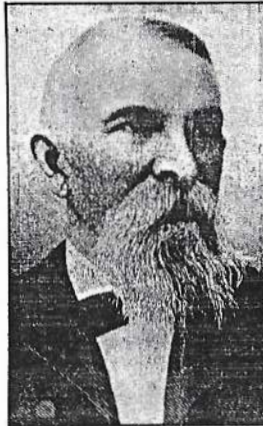
By Mary Ellen McWilliams

Fully a decade before the Battle of the Little Bighorn, 24 years before Wyoming became a state, and preceding the formation of the Texas Trail, a man named Nelson Story trailed 1,000 head of longhorns from Fort Worth Texas, through what is now Sheridan County, and up the Bozeman Trail to the gold fields of Montana. This epic drive is referred to by a number of historians as the largest, longest and first major commercial cattle drive into Montana. According to famous cowboy, "Teddy Blue" Abbott, it was 1880 before the first Texas cattle would reach Miles City, Mont.

Nelson Story was born in Ohio in 1836. By his mid-twenties, he had, according to

his great grandson Peter Story, already tried his hand at silver mining in Nevada; engaged in timbering in Kansas; and brought in the first wagon of goods ever taken to Blue River, near Breckenridge, Colo. In 1860, Story, while hauling goods into Colorado, was stopped by Oteo Indians who stole all of the ox team but one steer. By himself, he hauled a wagon 20 miles with one sore-footed steer and a horse hitched by rope around the horn of a saddle. He was brave, adventurous, and determined, and would remain so throughout his most eventful life.

In the spring of 1853, Story and his wife Ellen arrived at Bannack, soon to be Montana Territory, just days before the discovery of gold at Alder Gulch. Story took 14 pack ani-



Nelson Story

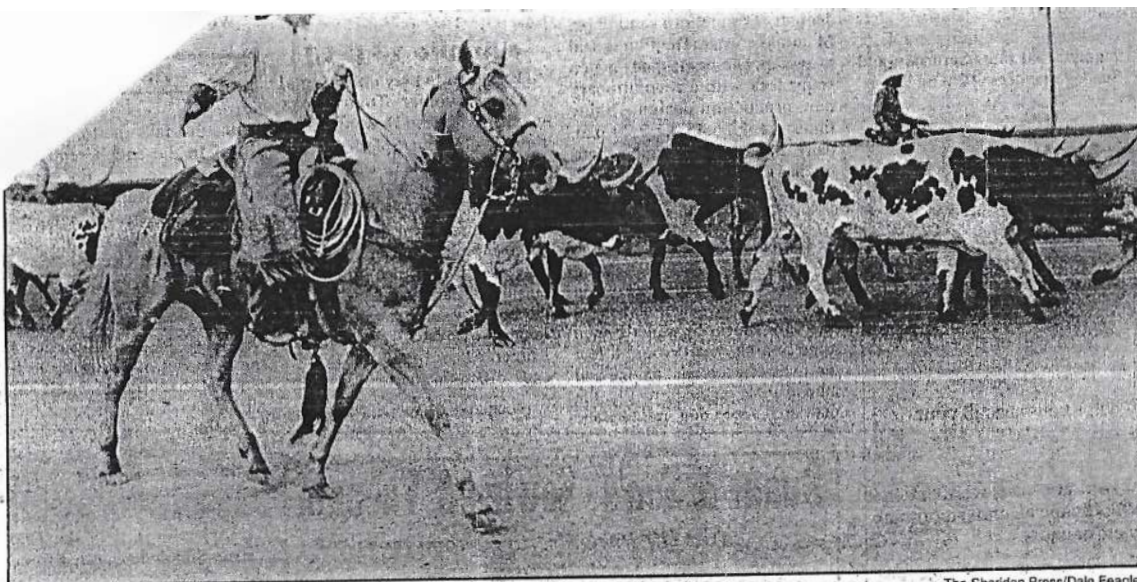
mals to the present location of Virginia City and staked a claim to 100 feet either side of the gulch. He sold merchandise (coffee, flour, goldpans,

bolts of cloth, cured pork, shovels and many other items) and mined gold, netting himself about \$50,000. In the spring of 1866, he left Virginia City with thousands of dollars worth of gold dust sewed into the lining of his jacket, exchanged it for cash and traveled to Fort Worth, Texas, where he purchased about 1,000 head of longhorn cows, some calves and some steers, hired a crew and headed north.

According to historian, David Dary, "the 22 cowboys hired by Story would be first of many Texans to carry the customs and techniques of the Texas cattle culture to Montana Territory." They followed a known trail to the Red River, headed northeast toward Baxter Springs, Kan., hit the Oregon Trail in north-east Kansas. Here Story left

two men in charge and traveled back to Fort Leavenworth, Kan., where he purchased three wagons and filled them with supplies. Here, too, warned of probable Indian troubles to come, he bought new rapid fire rolling-block-action Remington breechloading rifles and ammunition for his crew.

Story traveled on to Fort Laramie, joined some freighters, and started north through Indian country. Near the newly-established Fort Reno, located near present day Kaycee, Wyo., his herd was raided by Indians. Two of his men were severely injured and about 20 head of cows were driven off. The wounded men were taken to Fort Reno, the first of the forts established along the Bozeman Trail. After seeing they were cared for, Story took some men and tracked the Indians about 15 miles to their camp. Here they surprised the Indians who were roasting one



The Sheridan Press/Dale Feagler

STAYING IN LINE — The cowboys of the Great American Cattle Drive kept the steers in one lane of traffic as the herd moved into Wyoming early this summer.

just south of Fort Phil Kearny and were told by riders from the post to camp about three miles from the fort as the grass nearby was needed for army cattle. Post Commander, Colonel Henry B. Carrington, also told Story he could not go on without waiting to combine with another train, as it would be too dangerous. Story camped for almost a week near the post. Finally, considering that it was getting late in the year, that his crew was well trained and well armed, and seeing no solution in sight, he packed up and left in the middle of the night.

This enraged Carrington, who issued new and stringent regulations ordering all personnel of civilian trains awaiting permits to travel, to be quartered within the stockade until given permission to trav-

Please see **First, Page 8**

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"That!" and his song."

Swayde, 1.
Michael Jack-
quite a show-
thing in concert
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all the while
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game is selling
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(Continued from Page 1)
el north. In addition, he
ordered that the stockade gates
be locked at night and that all
soldiers absent from quarters
after curfew be arrested and
unless duly authorized, would
be held to answer to charges
before a garrison or general
court-martial.

Story suffered at least two
more minor Indian attacks and
a total of three men were
killed by Indians on the trip
north.

He travelled through Fort
C. F. Smith, about 90 miles
north of Fort Phil Kearny, and
from there up the Bozeman
Trail to a cow camp about 30
miles east of present-day
Livingston, Mont., arriving in
early December.

Story sold the steers and
kept the heifers and cows for
breeding stock. He ranched for
many years, running his herd
from Yellowstone Park to
Billings, Mont. According to
his grandson, Malcolm Story,
he lost much of his herd in the
brutal winter of 1885-86.

In April of 1867, John
Bozeman (one of the Trail
founders) and Thomas Cover,
stayed overnight at the Story

cow camp on the Yellowstone.
The next day, after resuming
their journey to Fort C. F.
Smith, Bozeman was killed,
supposedly by Indians. (It was
the popular conception at the
time, according to Dr. Merrill
Burlingame, that the initial
investigation of the death of
John Bozeman, done at Nelson
Story's instigation, produced
no evidence of Indian involve-
ment. For more information on
this dramatic story, read John
Bozeman: Montana
Trailblazer.) Story joined a
group of men to bring
Bozeman's body back for bur-
ial, but decided to bury him on
the spot.

Story later arranged to
have Bozeman's body moved
to the cemetery and Story paid
for a monument in his honor.

Nelson Story went on to be
immensely successful. He
trailed hundreds of head of
mustang mares from
California into Montana;
established a trading post on
the Crow reservation; estab-
lished a bank, a flouring mill,
and traded in real estate.

He was a member of the
Montana "Vigilantes" and a
friend of Crow Chief Plenty

Coups. He donated 40 acres
in Bozeman in 1893 for the
Montana State University
campus.

By the time he died in
1926, he had extended his real
estate holdings to business
space in California where he
owned more than 600 office
rental units in downtown Los
Angeles.

A metal sculpture of the
man on his horse was dedicat-
ed by the City of Bozeman in
1984 and stands along the
town's Main Street. His
descendants, into the fifth gen-
eration, still ranch in the
Gallatin Valley near Bozeman,
and two of his great-grandsons
recently re-traveled the route
of the legendary Story cattle
drive of 1866.

*(Note: The writer wishes to
credit the late Dr. Merrill
Burlingame, the late Malcolm
Story, Peter Story, Father
Barry Hagan, Dee Brown and
Dr. Susan Badger Doyle for
helping to substantiate facts
and for providing research
material. In those instances
where there were differing
accounts, Dr. Burlingame was
used as the final authority.)*

Prince

Story's legendary trail drive

(Editor's Note: The following historical account was compiled by Minnie Paugh, special collections librarian at Montana State University from material on file.)

By MINNIE PAUGH

Nelson Story Sr. is regarded as the most colorful of the Bozeman pioneers. His citation at the National Cowboy Hall of Fame says he was a miner, a freighter, and rancher who invested his first capital in Texas cattle and became the first man to trail them north to Montana in 1866.

His profits from this venture were invested in more cattle and by 1866 he had 17,000 head on his range in the Yellowstone Valley.

Story started his career by leaving his home in Burlington, Ohio, at the age of 19, in 1857.

He went to Leavenworth, Kan., where he met and courted Ellen Trent for whom the Ellen theater in Bozeman would later be named.

Nelson Story never did things

and received \$40,000 for his \$30,000 worth of dust. At the end of the Civil War gold was selling at a premium.

Nelson took the \$10,000 his astuteness had earned him and sewed it into his clothes. With Bill Petty and Thomas Allen, two young men he had hired in Ft. Leavenworth, he went to Ft. Worth, Texas. There he bought 1,000 head of cattle at \$10 a head. Various authorities differ on the size of his trail herd. He tried to get cows with calves thrown in. He also bought groceries for his store in Bozeman.

He drove his cattle to the Kansas line where he learned that there was a quarantine against Texas tick fever. He drove west around the edge of Kansas, past the last settlements, then turned across Kansas into Nebraska. He took his herd across the Platte Rivers on a northwesterly route to Fort Laramie, Wyo.

At Fort Laramie he was joined by a group of soldiers who had

been badly enough wounded so that they were butchered to provide beef for the train.

When an ambulance arrived from Fort Reno, the wounded men were moved to the fort and paid off. Story rested his herd briefly under the protection of the Army, then moved on to Fort Phil Kearney.

At this Fort, Story was stopped three miles out to save the grazing for the Army. This was reasonable, but he was also forbidden to proceed into the country ahead where the Sioux under Chief Red Cloud were on the war path. Story built two field corrals; one for work stock, and the other for the Texas herd. He waited two weeks for permission to move on.

When it didn't come, he pulled out his camp at night figuring he could move far enough so that the soldiers would not dare to pursue him. One driver, George Dow, did not agree with the plan. Story kept him under guard, then sent him back to the post alone.

The Story party continued their trip traveling at night over the high ground where they could best see the movements of the Indians and be seen by them. Their camp was attacked several times during the day, but as they moved further from the forts there were fewer Indians. Their only loss was a night herder lost at Fort Phil Kearney while they were waiting for Carrington's orders.

They left the fort on Oct. 22 and on Dec. 21 the army lost more than 100 troopers in the Battle of the Hay Stacks.

Story continued night marches until he reached Fort C.F. Smith on the Big Horn River. There he was in Crow territory and the Crows were always friendly to him.

He forded the Yellowstone River at the projected site of Fort Fisher. This fort was never built because the Sioux victory at the Battle of the Hay Stacks closed the Bozeman Trail.

Story continued up the Yellowstone to the present site of Livingston. There he set up a

HISTORICAL NOTES



From the Museum of the Rockies

permanent cattle camp. Thomas A. Thompson, a Canadian youth, 21 years of age, was left in charge. This young man had proved his worth on the drive from Texas.

The cattle left at Livingston were branded with an ox yoke on their left ribs and a circle on their left hip. This brand is still used by Nelson's great-

grandson, Pete Story of Emigrant.

Nelson Story arrived in Bozeman on Dec. 4, 1866. He left his trading stock there and was in Virginia City on Dec. 9.

This really started the Story legend in Montana, for Nelson Story was one of the most colorful men among the Montana Pioneers.

peaceably.

First Ellen Trent's brother tried to stop his courtship by attacking Nelson. Next, in Denver, a butcher dressed out two of Story's oxen. When Nelson lost his court case, after he identified his cattle, he left Denver without paying court costs.

Bloodshed was avoided because the sheriff never caught Nelson.

Story returned to Denver the following year and went into silver mining. He is said to have built the second sluice in Colorado Territory.

In June of 1863 he arrived in Bannack, the Territorial Capital of Montana.

He heard about Fairweather's strike at Virginia City and staked claims there that he didn't work at that time. At first he made a bigger profit freighting with a mule pack team.

When he had money saved, he returned to Fort Leavenworth and married Ellen Trent, who returned with him to the home he had built her at Summit in Virginia City.

There he worked his unworked claims and took out \$30,000 in gold dust in early 1866.

At this point he turned the claim over to one of his brothers and had a heavy tin box made to carry his gold east. He left Montana Territory by way of Salt Lake City; there he shipped his gold to New York

In this group of soldiers was Major John B. Catlin. It is he and Nelson's son Byron T. Story who provided the newspaper accounts that tell us all that is known about this great cattle drive.

When he left Ft. Laramie, Story had his herd of Texas cattle which he planned to fatten on the Gallatin, and he also had a wagon train loaded with stock for a grocery store he planned to start in Bozeman.

Protecting this investment he had 27 riders with the best Remington breech loading rifles.

He headed into Indian country on the brink of outright war, for General Henry B. Carrington was building a line of forts along the Bozeman Trail through the heart of the Sioux hunting grounds. The train herd traveled safely until it was almost in sight of Ft. Reno. At this point on the edge of the badlands, the Indians charged with a flight of arrows intended to stampede the herd. Instead, the riders controlled the herd and responded briskly with their rifles. Two men were wounded and the Indians drove off a small bunch of stock cattle.

Soon Story lead his riders after these cattle and lost only the animal which was being roasted when he surprised the Indians in their camp. When the lost cattle were returned to the herd, three steers were found to

THE NELSON STORY FAMILY

From Peter Story's "Book of Origins."

The NS story as written by Malcolm Story. Son of Ira Story, Scotchman, who was born in New Hampshire - the original ~~stessesscass~~ Story&s came from Ipswich, England. The Ira Storys came to Meigs County in Ohio in 1835. Nelson was born April 4, 1838. He attended country school, and was about two years in Ohio University in Athens. In 1858 (Another account is in 1856 at death of his father) at age 20 came to Nebraska City. He taught school before going west. In 1858 he started for ~~the~~ Salt Lake City with a wagon train. "He entered Denver on the first rrain ever to run over the "Smoky Hill" route in 1859, and started as a gold miner. He was soon engaged in freighting out of Denver. Came to Virginia City and in Summit had success in mining, having a number of men working for him on the claim - "fifty men" is one statement.

In 1864 he took \$40,000 in gold dust to New Yor, City. Koonce Brothers Bank gave him \$40,000 in green backs for \$30,000 in gold dust. He sewed the green backs in his coats, visited relatives in Meigs Co, Ohio, and went to the Fort Worth area in Texas. He bought 1,000 cattle at \$10, ~~xxx~~ each. This was in 1866 and he drove the cattle to "Brown's Cabins" in the present Livingston area. He also brought a "score" of wagons loaded with mercantile goods, He set up a store on January 1, 1867 on the NE corner of Main & Tracy in Bozeman. His wife who had remained in Summit, (and a child ?) came to Bozeman.

Nelson set up a "cow camp" at present Livingston, and this was a center at the time John Bozeman was Killed. In the summer of 1867 he supplied the Crow Indian Agency (at Mission Creek) with 110,000 pounds of vegetables. In 1868 he bought the furnishings from Fort C. F. Smith which was being abandoned for \$10,000. He sold \$35,000 worth of the stuff, largely in Helena. The Indians burned the fort at this point, destroying the rest of his goods. Since the government has a responsibility for guarding the fort, he was given a settlement after years of nagging the government. W. S. McKenzie assisted in this purchase and sale.

He had contracts to supply goods to the Mission Creek Agency. (This is where the stories of dishonest dealings entered in) He made \$50,000 in two years in buying, subdividing and selling Bozeman property.

In 1871 he went to California and purchased 1,000 head of horses, which were driven to Montana. Indians ~~xxx~~ stole some, the Mormons demanded some for invasion of their area, but some 500 reached the "Lee Place on Fridley Creek, Park County. Bill Lee was his partner in the horse business for 20 years."

.. In 1878 he started a bank in Bozeman,"and his profits in 1882 were \$25,000." In 1882, "At that time he had 10,000 head of cattle and owned 1,200 acres of land in and around Bozeman. His rentals amounted to \$1,000 a month...He added a large flouring mill to his possessions in 1882."

--The above Malcolm took from the Harris History ..Athens, Ohio --
Then Malcolm added from his personal recollection

In 1888 he sold his Yellowstone Cattle, some 17,000 head scattered from Billings to Livingston, to W. D. Story, a nephew, for \$250,000 - and rights to grazing on the Crow reservation.

Nelson took the money from the cattle sale, and purchased lots throughout the Los Angeles metropolitan area. (The story has been told around Bozeman, that Nelson ~~xxxxxxx~~ looked over the young city carefully, and felt strongly that the major rapid development would take place in a certain direction, and he purchased blocks in a staggered location along that path. He was right, and the sale of the lots soon provided a fortune. "This investment yielded large rentals for the next 36 years, the rest of his life. He died March 9, 1926." "He built the W. P. Story Building on the corner of Broadway & 6th, 610 S. Broadway. His son, Walter Perry Story, took the building over in 1910, and worked off about \$750,000 in the mortgage. Walter then owned the building until his death in 1957. Uncle Walter then built the Los Angeles Stock Exchange Building. The lot has been given him by his father.

Nelson had a sumptuous home on Adams Street in L. A. where they wintered from about 1890 until 1910. After that they lived most of the time in Bozeman. Mrs. Story died here.

Story "was more prominent financially in California than in Montana. After 1910 his sons, Nelson, Jr., T. Byron, and Walter, operated his properties." His daughter, Rose, Mrs. Gerrit Lansing Hogan ("Doc" Hogan) had been given ample Bozeman business blocks, and the best L. A. block - on Spring Creek. Dr. Hogan was "an intelligent, bona fide doctor from Boston... He attended my mother at my birth. But he never "turned a wheel" after he "married the girl." Hogan lived to be about 95, and died about 1955. Malcolm continues, "My mother told me that if Nelson, St., had "paid Hogan off" and bot him a ticket around the world - they'd likely have been rid of him forever, and clean. Oh, well!"

Malcolm C. Story 12/30/67

See a long story in the Bozeman Courier, Friday, March 26, 1926, which is copied in this book of "Origins."

Had a company of 27 men to drive his cattle from Texas. Founded the Gallatin Valley National Bank.

Erected stone for Comstock, and for Bozeman and Mackenzie.

Participated in hanging of Ives in Nevada City

Cattle drive encountered Indians at Fort Reno. At Fort Phil Kearny Carrington forbade him to go further because of Indian danger. He left Kearny October 22 by night. On Dec. 21, the Indians attacked the fort and ~~xxx~~ killed some 100 men and destroyed the fort.

(Byron says Nelson took \$30,000 to NYC, bankers gave him \$40,000 greenbacks. Nelson sewed \$10,000 in his clothes "and accompanied by Allen and Petty, set out for Fort Worth,"

(Long story in Rocky Mountain Husbandman, April 28, 1938) (This story notes the conflict on number of cattle, from 250 to 3,000. Storys ~~xxxx~~ hold to from 600 to 1000

Russell Harrison helps Nelson secure lease on Indian reservation. Nelson had helped Russell in a scrape here in Bozeman.

THE STORY RECEPTION

A Brilliant Social Event at Story's Magnificent New
Residence - Upwards of 180 Distinguished Citizens
Present - A Brilliant Affair and Happy
Social Gathering.

On Thursday night last, in response to handsomely lithographed invitations sent out by Mrs. and Miss Story, nearly two hundred ladies and gentlemen assembled in the magnificent family mansion which Mr. Nelson Story has recently completed and furnished in our beautiful city sparing neither time nor expense in the accomplishment of so worthy and noble a purpose.

The guests commenced to assemble soon after eight o'clock and there was scarcely any cessation until nearly ten. In many respects it was an old-time friendly and social gathering, devoid alike of ostentation and court etiquette, although the elaborate preparations and brilliantly lighted and gorgeously furnished mansion, together with the handsome and costly costumes of the ladies and gentlemen and the formal and cordial reception accorded them by Mrs. and Miss Story, indicated a social event of unusual "hightone," refinement and brilliancy. But it is not Mr. Story's nature, or that of his family, to put on or assume any extra style or aristocratic airs, especially in their own elaborate and hospitable home, so with a cordial, old-fashioned welcome the large number of invited guests were at once, and without special formality, accorded the freedom of the entire mansion and felt as much at ease as though they were making an informal call upon nearest relatives.

The young folks - and many of the older ones, with young hearts and nimble feet - were soon ushered up the spacious stairways to the large hall, in the third story of the building, where to the music of Smith and Williams band, the cheerful and gaily-attired crowd "tripped the light fantastic toe" to their hearts content. The remainder of the assembly in the meantime, following without restraint of their inclinations, circulated through the spacious halls, parlors and drawing rooms, admiring their elaborate arrangements; costly furniture and finish, listening to the sweet strains of the piano and the voice of a charming solo, or indulging in social chat, as inclination or occasion might suggest.

Supper was served in the spacious basement from eleven to one o'clock, and it was in all respects an elegant and sumptuous repast - neither pains nor expense having been spared in the selection and preparation of the toothsome viands with which the tables were loaded. The tables were also adorned with numerous bouquets of handsome flowers, their beauty and fragrance adding attractiveness and pleasure to the elegant and bountiful repast.

Altogether it was the largest, most brilliant and enjoyable social event that has occurred in the history of Bozeman. It was given principally in honor of Miss Rose Story, who recently returned from attendance at college in Fairbault, Minn., and has just arrived at the age when it is customary and proper for young ladies to enter the circles of refined society.

The water in question

Nelson Story should share Creek Water with City of Bozeman

On the 3rd inst. Nelson Story filed a complaint against the Bozeman Water Works company in an endeavor to prevent the company from diverting the waters of Lyman creek, with which it is contemplated Bozeman will be supplied. It is a matter of regret to the people of Bozeman that Mr. Story has deemed it advisable and right to take the course he has. Whether he will be successful in establishing a right to the use of the water during the winter months, when not needed for irrigating purposes, or not remains to be seen. His complaint is plausible on the face of it, and yet the fact that Mr. Story has purchased from several farmers their rights to the use of the water during the period stated, shows that Mr. Story is himself in doubt as to his having the right claimed. If his right to the water is inalienable, as he sets up his complaints, then he was wasting money when he purchased the rights of farmers and that, too, after the water works company had commenced laying their mains.

So far as we are informed the question as to whether or not a man who has a right to the use of water for irrigating purposes can make use of it for other purposes during the winter months is undetermined. We believe it is not disputed that the water works company holds a prior right, by purchase, to the use of the water for irrigating purposes. Mr. Cooper, from whom the right was purchased, also made the first claim to the use of the water for manufacturing purposes, but so far as our knowledge extends Mr. Story was the first one to divert the stream for such purpose. Allowing Mr. Story's claim to be reasonable the question will resolve itself as to which of the two men have the right to use of the water during the winter months, the man who first filed a claim thereto or the man who made the first appropriation.

Mr. Story is not only the wealthiest citizen of the city, but has more improved real estate than anyone else in the city, and is therefore, more interested in a good system of water works, especially so in view of the fact that he does not insure his buildings, but depends on the city to

protect them. He gives as a reason for the course he has taken in this matter, that during the winter months so much of the water freezes in his ditches that he needs all the water of the three streams which supply the mill. This objection could be overcome without very great expense, however, as Mr. Story's ditch from Bridger is only about a mile in length and the water could be run in a non-freezable flume or pipes for that distance without difficulty. The amount of money Mr. Story may expend in attempting to down the water company might be used to better advantage in preventing waste, by freezing, of the water to which he has an undisputed right.

Lyman creek is the only source from which the city can hope to get water without going to the West Gallatin river or pumping the supply from beneath the surface, and it would seem that Mr. Story's own interests would prompt him to make a sacrifice, if need be, to assist in having the city supplied with the greatest of all necessities — something to drink and something with which to quench fires that through accident or design threaten our homes and places of business.

So far as we have heard, the expressions of the residents of the city are almost universally in sympathy with the water works company. In this, as in other public matters, Mr. Story has put himself on record in such a way as to give the impression that he was opposed to outside capitalists making investments here, and his actions are all the more noticeable and deprecated because it is known that a man of his wealth and character could be largely instrumental in encouraging outside capital to come to the city and assist in its upbuilding and general improvement. But Mr. Story is essentially self-willed and the opinion of any one individual, or of all the individuals in the city, would not operate to bring about a change of course on his part, after he had once decided what he would do.

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The Weekly Avant Courier

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