

PIONEER STORY.

Narrator Mrs. Mary Burleson, Carrizozo, New Mexico, Age 78.

Our family left West Port Mo., which is Kansas City, Mo., now, in April 1865, and arrived in Mora, New Mexico, in September 1865, we came over the Santa Fe, trail in a prairie schooner drawn by six oxen and our milk cow for this was the only way we had of bringing our milk cow with us, we were in a Government Train guarded by soldiers, as the Indians were on the war-path at that time and were always on the look out for settlers that were moving out to the west.

Mr. Boggs, the Foreman of the Government train told us that there was a band of Indians just ahead of us and that they had attacked a wagon train, killed all the people, stole the horses and food and burned the wagons. The Government train that we were with was hauling supplies to Fort Union and Fort Craig. In those days the Indians used to hold up the stage coaches, kill the drivers and all the people and take the horses. Sometimes they would burn the coaches and mail and then again they would leave everything and just take the horses.

We came by way of the Raton Pass and left the Government train there. Mr. Tipton and some friends met us there and escorted us to Mora, New Mexico, for the Indians were bad in New Mexico in those days. We saw many large herds of buffalo on our trip. It rained a lot that summer and we had no hardships as to feed and water. It took us from April to September. I remember the great

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event in our home was the arrival of the St. Louis Globe Democrat and when it came all the neighbors would come to our house and my father would read the paper to them by candle-light. We made all our own candles in those days. Sometimes it happened that we would not get the paper on time and then we would hear that the Indians had held up a stage coach and burned the mail. How we would miss the paper. My father took this same paper for 50 years. There were no schools much in those days. Sometimes a teacher was hired by private subscription and all the children in a neighborhood would go to school and often the children would know as much as the teacher.

I was married to Mr. Pete Burleson July 21, 1878. My husband was sheriff in Colfax County for four years. He hanged the first man by law in New Mexico in the year of 1878, at Cimarron Colfax Co., N.Mex. He had the chaplain come from Fort Union and offer a prayer for the prisoner.. He was a negro and was sentenced to be hung for killing a white man and his son 12 years old.

We came to Lincoln County in 1890. We lived at the V Rancho where Mr. Burleson was foreman for several years. Then we moved to Lincoln, New Mexico, where my husband was deputy sheriff for years. He drove the second spike on the Santa Fe Railroad when it crossed the line from Colorado into New Mexico.