

Colorado Springs  
August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1901

I am asked to write a history of medicine in El Paso County for the last 30 years, the length of time I have resided in Colorado. I regret that my article must necessarily be brief as I am writing from a sick bed where I have been confined for the past three weeks suffering from an attack of acute nephritis. I was born in the old state of Virginia. Was a soldier in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. – Graduated in Medicine in 1868 and 1869 – University of Virginia and the Washington Medical University (now the College of Physicians and Surgeons) Baltimore. Located in Colorado permanently in 1872 coming here first in 1870. The town of Colorado Springs was laid out in 1871 but owing to ill health (Pulmonary Disease) I did not open an office here until the fall of 1874. At that time the village was small and [had] few physicians, the prominent ones being Drs. W.M. Strickler, J.E. Clutter, C.R. Bissell, Jacob Reed and S.E. Solly. Clutter, Reed and Bissell are now deceased. The Doctors' best patients at that time were the Ranchmen, the cattle and sheep men. Professional visits of from one hundred to 300 miles were not unusual and the fee was always cash and of satisfactory amount. I recall a story told of Dr. Clutter. He was called quite a distance to see a patient who expressed surprise at the large amount of the bill. Clutter said "Yes, it's a sizable bill but I have recently lost money in mines." – Many of us have been doing the same thing ever since. – The antelope were very plentiful in those days and I remember driving through herds of 20 to 30 thousand many times just on the outskirts of the town. But even now they have mostly disappeared and like almost everything else of those times are becoming a tradition.

The town of Colorado Springs, in truth most of Colorado, owes its first existence to the invalid class, high and dry elevations believed then as well as the present time to be quite superior and efficacious for Pulmonary Disease. The Consumption made an empire of this country and primarily all that Colorado is today she owes to the Consumptive invalid and a few medical men who themselves came advanced in disease of the Lungs, recovered and by their intelligent writings induced others like afflicted to come until today Colorado Springs is the best known and most famous Health Resort in the world.

But the early struggles of the medical man were numerous and trying – long distance calls in a wild country; exposure and often hardships, such as being caught in a snow storm on the plains which was about the same as being at sea with a compass. I underwent such an experience on two different occasions and had but little hope of coming out alive, but fortunately in both instances, blindly stumbling upon a Ranch House and thus saving my life. Upon one occasion I lost a horse fifty miles from home but again fortune came to my aid and landed me with a good samaritan Ranchman, who brought me to town. In those days we had no hospital or antiseptic surgery. But I want to call the attention of you medical men who may hear this article, to the antiseptic quality of the atmosphere which obtains today. In those days as now wounds healed quickly and kindly. Kill a Deer or an Antelope and his flesh was as good eating six months after being killed, with no other cure than being hung out of doors, as the day he was killed. Drag an old dead horse out on the plains and he would dry up and blow away – no decomposition except visceral. The foolish talk of some of our pseudo scientists and younger medical men, that we are contracting Phthisis from the expectorated sputum of consumptives is the vilest rot and nonsense. In my 27 years of practice here I have seen not one case of Phthisis contracted in this climate and

I believe firmly when you read this one hundred years from today that your best “stock in trade” will be your antiseptic climate.

As the town began to grow and the Rail Roads built in we were compelled to have hospitals. I was the first chief Surgeon of the Colorado Midland R.R. and started the first hospital, the St. Francis, which has grown from a small shell of a house, situated on Huerfano St. just east of the viaduct, to the present fully equipped brick building situated on the hill overlooking the town and just east of the present Santa Fe Depot. – This hospital treated last year 1254 patients and there were over 200 surgical operations. The operating room in this hospital is the best equipped in the west and nothing finer in any city in the United States; as an instance the sterilizers cost over 1000 dollars and everything in connection with it is modern and up to date. I am at present and have been for years the President of a very efficient staff.

I also had the pleasure of having sole charge of the Glockner Sanitarium for a period of six years. This institution was built by a young woman in memory of her husband, a young man by the name of Glockner who possibly could be alive today had he taken reasonable care of himself, but like so many young people could not put on the brakes and went the pace. I was urged to take charge of the institution, which became very successful but required so much of my time that I after running it six years induced Mrs. Glockner to take charge of it; she being an ardent Catholic deeded it to the sisters of St. Paul de Vincent and they are now in charge and doing as good work as they are capable of. There is another small hospital run by the Methodists and called the Deaconess Home. I want to put myself on record right here in regard to these religious hospitals. There is no institution or hospital for the sick equal to those with a capable matron at the head and trained nurses. With the religious orders my experience has been that when the Physician calls for them they are either praying or eating – invariably one or the other with little care whether the patient dies or gets well during their absence. I have seen Colorado Springs grow from a few Physicians to our present number something over one hundred. The schools are grinding out 15 to 20 thousand per year. How the poor devils manage to exist is a problem I never attempt to dissolve. The prostitution of the profession in many ways by those whose necessities often drive them to such acts; the ignorance and want of self respect in a majority of recent graduates, and the cut throat policy of many of the leaders makes the outlook for the future anything but encouraging.

May the ruler of all destinies and all good work the desirable change and may the profession of 2000 cultivate that pride and self respect, that congeniality and Brotherly Love, so lacking today.

Very sincerely yours,  
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