

**THE SECOND WILLIAM PENN; A
TRUE ACCOUNT OF INCIDENTS
THAT HAPPENED ALONG THE OLD
SANTA FE TRAIL IN THE SIXTIES**

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The second William Penn; a true account of incidents that happened along the old Santa Fe Trail in the Sixties by W. H. Ryus

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W. H. RYUS

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The
Second William Penn

A true account of incidents that happened
along the old Santa Fe Trail
in the Sixties.

BY
W. H. RYUS
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

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PREFACE

By Col. Milton Moore



COL. MILTON MOORE.

to the truth. Truth is, sometimes, "stranger than fiction," and is an indispensable requisite to accurate history, yet it may sometime destroy the charm of fiction.

The author of this book had a real and exceptional knowledge of Indian character and Indian traits, and his genuine tact in trading and treating with them, and the success which he had in sustaining friendly relations with them was one of the wonders of the West, and was a circumstance of much comment by those who had occasion to use the Santa Fe Trail.

It is small wonder, then, that "Little Billy of the Stage Coach" won for himself the title of the "Second William Penn."

In the early Sixties, the region through which the Old Trail passed was an unexplored territory where constant struggles for supremacy between the Wild Red Man and the hardy White man were carried on.

Many and tragical were the hardships endured by those who attempted to open up this famous highway and estab-

YOU who take the trouble to read these reminiscences of the Santa Fe Trail may be curious to know how much of them are literally true.

The writer of this preface was intimately acquainted with the author of this book, and knows that he has not yielded to temptation to draw upon his imagination for the incidents related herein, but has adhered strictly

lish a line of communication between the East and the West. The only method of travel was by odd freight caravans drawn by oxen or the old-fashioned, lumbering uncomfortable Concord Stage Coaches drawn by five mules.

The stage coach carried besides its passengers the United States mail and express.

An escort of United States militia often accompanied the stage coach in order to protect it against attacks of the Indians at that time when the plains were invested with the Arapahoes, Comanches, Cheyennes, Kiowas and other tribes, some of whom were on the warpath, bedecked in war paint and feathers.

The Indians were often in search of something to satisfy their hunger, rather than the scalps of the white men. The author of this book won their confidence and friendship by dividing with them his rations, and showing them that he was willing to compensate them for the privilege of traveling through their country. He had so many friendly conferences and made so many treaties with them while on his trips across the plains that he came to be called the "Second William Penn."

He came into personal contact with the famous chiefs of the Indian tribes, and won their good will to such an extent that their behavior toward him and his passengers was always most excellent.

The author has, in these pages, told of many encounters between the whites and the Indians that were narrated to him by the Indians. He holds the Indians blameless for many of the attacks attributed to them, and calls attention to the Chivington Massacre and the Massacre of the Nine Mile Ridge, related in the following pages.

He begs the readers not to censure too severely the Indian who simply pleaded for food with which to satisfy his hunger, and sought to protect his wigwam from the murderous attacks of unscrupulous white men.

I gladly recommend this tale as sound reading to all who desire to know the truth concerning the incidents which actually occurred along the Old Trail, and the real friendly relations which existed between the Indians and the white men, such as our Author and Kit Carson, who were well acquainted with their motives and characteristics.

Respectfully submitted,

MILTON MOORE.

“Bathe now in the stream before you,
Wash the war-paint from your faces,
Wash the blood-stain from your fingers,
Bury your war-clubs and your weapons,
Break the red stone from this quarry,
Mould and make it into Peace Pipes,
Take the reeds that grow beside you,
Deck them with your brightest feathers,
Smoke the calumet together,
And as brothers live henceforward.”

(Hiawatha.)

**REMINISCENCE OF THE OLD SANTA FE
TRAIL. BY W. H. RYUS, MAIL AND
EXPRESS MESSENGER AND
CONDUCTOR.**

Introductory.

W. H. Ryus, better known as "the Second William Penn" by passengers and old settlers along the line of the Old Santa Fe Trail because of his rare and exceptional knowledge of Indian traits and characteristics and his ability to trade and treat with them so tactfully, was one of the boy drivers of the stage coach that crossed the plains while the West was still looked upon as "wild and wooly," and in reality was fraught with numerous, and oftentimes, murderous dangers.

At the time this story is being recalled, our author is in his seventy-fourth year, but with a mind as translucent as a sea of glass, he recalls vividly many incidents growing out of his travels over the Santa Fe Trail.

Having the same powers of appreciation we all possess, for confidences reposed in him, he lovingly recalls how his passengers would press him to know whether he would be the driver or conductor to drive the coach on their return. Some of these passengers declare that it was really beautiful to see the adoration many Indians heaped upon the driver, "Little Billy of the Stage Coach," and they understood from the overtures of the Indians toward "Billy" that they were safe in his coach, as long as they remained passive to his instructions, which were that they allow him to deal with whatever red men they chanced to meet.

Sometimes a band of Indians would follow his coach for miles, protecting their favorite, as it were, from dangers that might assail him. They were always peaceable and friendly toward Billy in exchange for his hospitality and kindness. It was a by-word from Kansas City to Santa Fe that "Billy" was one boy driver and conductor who gave the Indians something more than abuse to relate to their squaws around their wigwam camp-fires.

The dangerous route was the Long Route, from Fort Larned, Kansas, to Fort Lyon, Colorado, the distance was two hundred and forty miles with no stations between. On this route we used two sets of drivers. This gave one driver a chance to rest a week to recuperate from his long trip across the "Long Route." A great many of the drivers had nothing but abuse for the Indians because they were afraid of them. This made the Indians feel, when they met, that the driver considered him a mortal foe. However, our author says that had the drivers taken time and trouble to have made a study of the habits of the Indians, as he had done, that they could have just as easily aroused their confidence and secured this Indian protection which he enjoyed.

It was a hard matter to keep these long route drivers because of the unfriendliness that existed between them and the Indians, yet the Old Stage Company realized a secureness in Billy Ryus, and knew he would linger on in their employ, bravely facing the dangers feared by the other drivers and conductors until such a time as they could employ other men to take his place.