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Pathbreakers and Pioneers of the Pueblo Region

Milo Lee Whittaker

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Milo Lee Whittaker (1879 - 1942) was a historian, college professor & minister who in 1917 wrote the book "Pathbreakers and Pioneers of the Pueblo Region." Whittaker writes: "To have been permitted to write the story of the evolution of the Pueblo region from a barren expanse of prairie, teeming with bison and red men, to a magnificent district containing the metropolis of the southern Rocky Mountain region, is a rare privilege indeed. "For the past year the writer has trapped with Kit Carson, explored the head waters of the Arkansas with Fremont, fought Indians with Chivington, and engaged in city building with Pueblo pioneers. During this time many long forgotten trails have been rediscovered and new ones have been blazed. The weariness and discomfort of the trail have been more than compensated for by the pleasing companionship with those who travel thereon." Regarding the early trappers and mountain men of the Pueblo, Colorado, region Whittaker writes: "The story of the Rocky Mountain trapper and his influence upon the destiny of this land beyond the Mississippi has never been written, nor has the debt, which the nation owes this brave man, ever been fully appreciated. They would make a mean appearance in our social circles of today, but in the fundamentals of character—in loyalty, in faithfulness to friend, in honesty of heart—these men as a class were not wanting. "It was the trapper and the trader who were the real discoverers of the great West, yet posterity has erected no monuments to their memory. It was the trapper and not the government official who knew the geography of the West and to whom appeal had to be made when boundary lines were in dispute, yet he was never pensioned or his services in any other way recognized. It was the trapper and hunter who had wellnigh taken possession of this western empire before the nation had gained a title to it. "Their lives of solitude were broken only by an occasional meeting with one of their kind, and it was not unusual for a trapper to go for weeks without seeing a human being. For this reason he was gruff in demeanor and of few words. His life was in constant peril as he went about his daily tasks. He never knew at what moment he might be ambushed by some treacherous band of savages. His living depended upon his ability in pitting his wit against the keen instinct of the beaver, but his life depended upon his being able to outwit the wily savage. All this made of him a bold but silent man. His eye was keen, his nerve tense, his mind always alert to anything that betokened danger. Sometimes a savage would follow him for days or even weeks, awaiting an opportunity to ambush him. Although many a trapper lost his life at the hands of these savages, it more often occurred that the trapper was more than a match for his crafty enemy." Table of Contents I. AT THE BRANCHING OF THE TRAIL. II. TRAPPERS AND TRADERS OF THE VALLEY III. THE CITY ON THE BOILING FOUNTAIN. IV. THE BATTLE WITH THE WILDERNESS. V. THE BATTLE WON. VI. INDIAN ADVENTURES IN VALLEY AND PLAIN. VII. THE ROMANCE OF RAILROADS. VIII. INDUSTRIAL PUEBLO. X. AROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

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