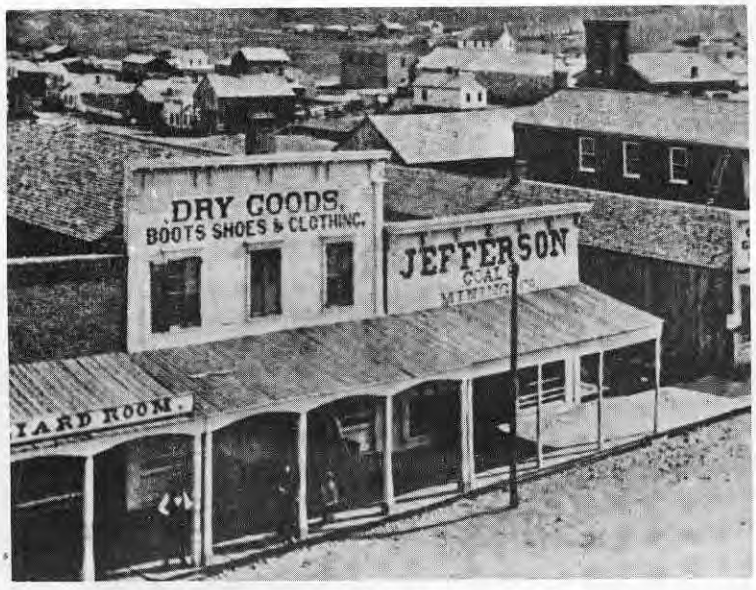
THE PIONEER DECADE 1859-1869

November 7, 1859 Tuesday

The Kansas Territorial Legislature allowed twelve new County governments to be created 600 miles to the west in the old area known as Arrappahoe County. Jefferson County was one of these original twelve Counties. The others were Cheyenne, St. Vrain, Arrappahoe, El Paso, Fountain, Park, Saratoga, North, Jackson, Steele, and Mountain. William Steele, Provisional Governor of the new Jefferson Territorial Legislature headquartered in Steele's home at Mount Vernon (now a monument at Matthew Winter's Park at I 70 and Highway 93), appointed the first twelve Sheriffs today and gave them specific duties and responsibilities to last until the next scheduled election in 1860. Walter Pollard, an original member of the Boston Company who arrived in and founded Golden City in June of this year, was named the first Sheriff of Jefferson County. Besides keeping the peace along the turbulent Vasquez Fork (now Clear Creek) mining camps, Pollard was entrusted in registering citizens to vote in the 1860 election.

The Boston Company Building. Erected by George West in June of 1859 and became the first location for a County Jail. Located in Parfet Park at the corner of 10th Street and Washington Avenue.



Golden City, Kansas Territory in 1861. The Dry Goods Store seen is the orginal Loveland Building on Washington Avenue later used as the County's third Jail.

December 7, 1859 Thursday

The General Assembly of the Provisional Government of Jefferson Territory adjourned this evening at 9:00 pm. They had been in session now for thirty one days and tonight the ink was drying on the first set of established laws for this new land in far western Kansas. Effective January 1, 1860 the Sheriffs of the Territory will serve all civil process, maintain a County Jail, prevent crime, arrest all law breakers, and serve as the coroner. Any Sheriff will be allowed three "constables" to assist in courtroom protection and security, and as many Deputies as deemed necessary. All Deputies, including the Sheriff, would receive wages based upon a fee system. Lastly, all Sheriffs will serve as executioners, or by direction of the Courts, hand out any disciplinary lashes as necessary against the backs of offenders.

January 6, 1860 Monday

One thousand people from six different communities in Jefferson County voted today for their County officials. Walter Pollard was elected to the Office of Sheriff by receiving 187 total votes. Sheriff Pollard would remain in office until the next scheduled election to be held in the Fall of this year when the ballot would contain the issue of establishing a Territorial Government.

April 4, 1860 Wednesday

Mr. R. Fulsom was arrested for suspicion of burglary by Sheriff Pollard ten days ago after Eli Carter complained of having his clothes stolen from a Toll House owned by Colorado Wagon Road Company. Fulsom was sentenced to ten days of hard labor in the streets of Golden City, with a ball and chain attached to his leg. Without a proper jail (Pollard has used the Boston Company building) all prisoners were kept with a ball and chain continually fastened to their leg. Today, when Fulsom's sentence was over, Sheriff Pollard banished the offender from the Territory.

September 18, 1860 Tuesday

In his home at Mount Vernon, Governor Steele decided to hold a Fall election as outlined by the Territorial Constitution

which went into effect last January. The Government was now losing its authority and credibility as the Summer of 1860 progressed. Established District Courts, for instance, were being usurped by local miner's courts, like the one established above Graham's Drugstore in Golden City last July. The next election was scheduled today for October 22, 1860.

October 22, 1860 Monday

On the ballot for today's Territorial elections were three candidates for County Sheriff. Walter Pollard was making his bid to remain in office, while J.R. Gilbert and E.W. McIlhany were his opponents. There were nine precincts in Jefferson County. Henderson Ranch was the last precinct today to be counted, with Gilbert presently holding a lead of 15 votes over McIhany, and 148 votes over the encumbent Walter Pollard. When Henderson's Ranch was counted, McIhany received 73 votes while Gilbert and Pollard received none, and gave the election to McIhany.

The people of the entire Territory also approved a measure which would cause their elected legislature to create a permanent government and hold another future election. All officials, including E.W. McIhany, were to take office on November 11, 1860.

October 28, 1860 Sunday

Sheriff Pollard arrested Charles Simpson for the theft of four cans of peaches, a jar of pickles, and other commodities from a wagon owned by Loveland and Company of Golden City. Simpson pled guilty to the theft, and a jury of twelve men in District Court returned with a sentence that appeared quite fair. Sheriff Pollard took his prisoner outside the courtroom and before a large gathering of curious citizens gave Mr. Simpson twenty one lashes on his bare back. When that was finished, Simpson was banished from the Territory.

November 11, 1860 Sunday

Sheriff E.W. McIhany takes the office of Sheriff today and announces the first Undersheriff of Jefferson County, Mr. Green.

January 6, 1861 Sunday

Today the people of Jefferson Territory responded to the election booths and voted for the men and ideas of their choice, as this election meant the first permanent goverment the Territory could boast. The same three men who ran for the office of Sheriff in October of 1860 ran against each other again. However, J.R. Gilbert would win this election and today introduced his selection for Undersheriff, J.C. Remington.

February 28, 1861 Thursday

The Territory of Colorado was officially created today, and subsequently, each County had to prepare to form a permanent local government under the umbrella of this new Territory. County seats had to be selected for each of the established seventeen Counties, and permanent boundaries for all Counties would have to be decided upon.

May 11, 1861 Saturday

Sheriff Gilbert responded to the Simpson House in Golden City this morning and found the dead body of George Dargen. A Bowie knife was found sticking out the dead man's chest. In the early morning hours, Dargen started an argument with a Mr. Hamilton in this "hotel", which esculated into a more substantial fight. Dargen placed a rock in a slingshot and snapped Hamilton with the stone. Hamilton, in retaliation, stuck his large knife in Dargen's chest killing him instantly. Hamilton was soon released by the Sheriff with no criminal charges filed.

November 1, 1861 Friday

Today, the new Colorado Territory divided its area into seventeen distinct Counties and County seats were selected. Golden City, now hosting the Colorado Territorial Legislature was easily selected to serve as County seat of Jefferson County. An election was planned to held on December 7th of this year to establish a permanent elected government for each new County.

December 7, 1861 Saturday

Today J.C. Remington was elected Sheriff of Jefferson County by receiving 534 votes. He would take office on January 6, 1862 and meanwhile, Sheriff Gilbert would remain in office.

January 6, 1862 Monday

J.C. Remington, blacksmith by trade, takes over the office of Sheriff from J.R. Gilbert and becomes the fourth Sheriff of the new Jefferson County.

May 1, 1862 Thursday

On January 3rd of this year Jefferson County officials assembled to tackle the problem of locating a jail site for Jefferson County. Ex Sheriff Walter Pollard offered his services to construct a new jail for the sum of $700.00. D.K. Wall, the chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, thought the offer was fair and with a vote of confidence from his fellow Commissioners, instructed Pollard to proceed. Pollard was instructed by the Board to have the jail finished by April 1st of this year. On April 8th, the jail was not finished (the location of this site is unknown), so the Commissioners extended Pollard's time schedule to today, and another $300.00 was given Pollard to cover construction overrides. Today, Pollard came before the Board and advised them that he needed more time. The Board relented due to their present financial investment in this project and gave Pollard a final completion due date as December 1st of this year.

January 6, 1863 Tuesday

Today, James M. Johnson took over the office of Sheriff from J.C. Remington. He named as his Undersheriff, Andrew Bacon. Johnson ran unopposed in the election held today by Jefferson County voters. He was born in Hamden County, Massachusetts. In 1838 James married Eleanora Stratton and moved to Illinois, where he became a farmer. In 1859 James and his first son, Jonas Mott Johnson, came to Golden City and began a ranching business and constructed the first hotel in Jefferson County (located on the southeast corner of twelfth and Jackson Streets in Golden). In 1860 James was elected Golden City Alderman and in the October 1860 election was elected Jefferson County Justice of the Peace. Now in the first month of 1863 James M. Johnson becomes the County's fifth Sheriff.

Meanwhile, the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners negated the construction held by Walter Pollard and proceeded in renting "the second door on the second floor" of the building owned by the Chairman, D.K. Wall, for jail space. D.K. Wall would receive $27.50 a month for rent, but at the same time, notices were sent out for architects to submit proposed designs for a new Jefferson County Jail.

August 1, 1863 Saturday

Sheriff Johnson made a bid with W.A.H. Loveland of Golden to rent the second story of the original Loveland building (space now located on the east side of Washington Avenue just south of 11th Street) for jail space. The D.K. Wall building was too small and the County Officials seemed to feel reluctant in renting space from one of their own governmental employees. The negotiations proved positive and today Sheriff Johnson moved his office and the site for the Jefferson County Jail to the Loveland Building at a price of $300.00 a year in rent.

July 25, 1864 Monday

In 1864 County officials needed a bond signed by at least three witnesses before they could take an elected office. The obtaining of these signatures, in many cases, proved more difficult than the struggle to get elected. Therefore, some elected officials could not take office since the bond witnesses were not obtainable and a replacement had to be appointed. Today the office of Jefferson County Probate Judge was left vacant. Who had experience in being a judge who would not have any problems obtaining the proper signatures? Sheriff James Johnson. The Board of County Commissioners selected James Johnson to fill this vacancy and promoted Undersheriff Andrew Bacon into the responsibility of County Sheriff. James Johnson would continue to serve as Probate Judge for the next twelve years, while Bacon would only serve as Sheriff for the next six months.

Sheriff Charles A. Clark

September 1, 1864 Thursday

Charles A. Clark was elected today as Sheriff of Jefferson County to officially take office in January of 1865. Born in Kentucky, Clark arrived in Golden City on June 14, 1859 and became a leading businessman in the County. He named as his Undersheriff, Mr. Brainard.

July 1, 1866

The Board of County Commissioners met today and decided to hold an election on August 1, 1866 to determine if the people of Jefferson County would approve a $20,000.00 appropriation to build a courthouse and jail. The court system in the County convened only ten days out of each year which caused the Sheriff to clear out his entire case load or allow his prisoners their uncontested freedom.

August 1, 1866

Today's election demonstrated that the people of Jefferson County did not want to spend the necessary money to build a new courthouse and jail. The jail would remain in the Loveland building, where bars and clap boards were fastened to the lower level windows to add to security.

D.K. Wall Building. Two story white faced structure in the middle. Far building today is Wood's Mortuary. The Wall Building served as County's second jail. Arrow is pointing to the Jail proper.

December 25, 1866

Undersheriff Brainard was guarding two men in the Jefferson County Jail who were locked up for "skinning a slow elk". (poaching a cow) Sometime during the evening Brainard stepped out of the building leaving his two prisoners to their own devices. The two "skinners" acquired a piece of rope and lowered themselves unnoticed to the street below and quickly took off for parts unknown. When Brainard returned to the jail he found a handwritten note left by the escapees.

It read, "Mr. Clark—sir—we are going out after bail. You need not fear, for we will return, upon our honor, if God spares our lives. So help us God!"

Even though a Posse was formed and gave immediate pursuit, the two fugitives were never found, nor did they ever return.

August 14, 1867 Thursday

Today, the County elections were held, but Charles Clark was not on the ballot. He had purchased a mercantile business on Washington Avenue in Golden City in order to go into the retail market business in this growing community. The Republican Party nominated John Keith as their candidate for Sheriff and the Democratic Party nominated James Boutwell. Keith was elected by 27 votes over his rival and was slated to take office in January of 1868.

February 26, 1868

Sheriff Keith gathered together a Posse and struck out for Mountain City (Central City). Bob Reynolds, murderer, had escaped from the Gilpin County Jail two days ago and Sheriff Grimes of Mountain City asked Keith for his help in tracking the fugitive down.

Just before nightfall, Bob Reynolds, armed with a breec loading Springfield rifle, stopped for a rest about three mile west of Golden City (near Tunnel 3 on West 6th Avenue) Sheriff Keith, with Deputies Bartholomew and Manuel Smith quickly rode down on the surprised fugitive and a gun battl erupted. Reynolds took several bullets in the chest and soon la dying on the Clear Creek Road.

Sheriff Grimes arrived at the scene of the gunfight and wit Sheriff Keith's assistance loaded the badly wounded Reynold into the bed of a horse drawn wagon. Picking his way aroun the rocks and gulleys in the river road, Sheriff Grimes took h prisoner back to Mountain City, only to discover that sometim during the journey, Bob Reynolds had died.

November 25, 1868 Sunday Night

Wrapped in darkness on this chilly night, Sam Dougan, man wanted for a series of robberies in Denver and the minin towns to the north, stood in the back doorway of Jack Hill' Saloon, anxiously waiting for Miles Hill to return with the se cond gun. Miles was not involved in the robberies but was good friend of this man who waited in the alley. Sam Dougan' partner, Ed Franklin, lay asleep in the Overland House (Nov

Tearing down the original Overland Hotel, the scene of the 1868 Ed Franklin shootout.

Eakers Department Store on Washington Avenue), unaware o what was happening less than a block away.

Suddenly Dougan heard the click of a heel on the boardwalk He couldn't wait any longer. Keeping to the shadows in th short alley, Dougan made his way toward Washington Avenue Underneath his long coat he felt for the reassuring grip of hi pistol.

Miles Hill searched under the bar for the gun, and finding it stepped to the back door. Dougan was gone. Hill saw a move ment. A glint of metal reflected at the edge of the alley. Th door shut behind him with a dull clunk. The night air explode

with gunfire as a spent bullet slammed into the wall behind Hill. In panic he ducked and groped for the door handle. Another shot spun Hill around and he slumped to the ground, a pool of blood staining the dirt. He knew he had been shot through the lungs and was dying.

Sam Dougan stopped when he heard the gun shots. Shouts echoed in the night and heard running feet. Someone called, then called again.

"Stop Dougan! Dougan! I tell you stop!"

Dougan saw a figure some fifty yards away. The outlaw raised his pistol at the dark form and fired and made a mad dash toward the Vasquez (Clear Creek). A shot followed, humming through the air, smacking into the brush alongside Dougan's pumping legs. In a moment Dougan escaped into the darkness of the night.

Several blocks away, Sheriff Keith reloaded his pistol and went to the bottom steps that led up the Ed Franklin's room in the Overland Hotel. Marshall Cook of Denver, and M.T. Smith of the Denver Police Department were there with him. No more than five minutes has passed since the shooting of Miles Hill and the escape of Sam Dougan when the three lawmen ascended the stairs to room 201. Quietly they approached the door, and Cook kicked the door, shattering the hinges and forcing the door wide open.

Franklin, startled, sat up in bed. An oil lamp illuminated the features of the outlaw and the protruding barrel of a pistol from beneath his pillow. Keith aimed his pistol at Franklin's naked chest and said, "We want you Franklin. You're under arrest for robberies committed in Denver."

"God damn you! Go slow!" cried Franklin.

Cook walked to the side of the bed and pulled out his handcuffs.

"It's no use making any fuss," cautioned Cook, "I've got to put these handcuffs on you."

On creaking bed springs, Franklin jumped to his feet. Sheriff Keith and Smith leveled their revolvers.

"If you don't give yourself up, Franklin," said Cook stepping back, "we'll have to shoot you!"

Franklin laid closed fists on his chest and bellowed, "God damn you, shoot! There is the place to put it! Right there!"

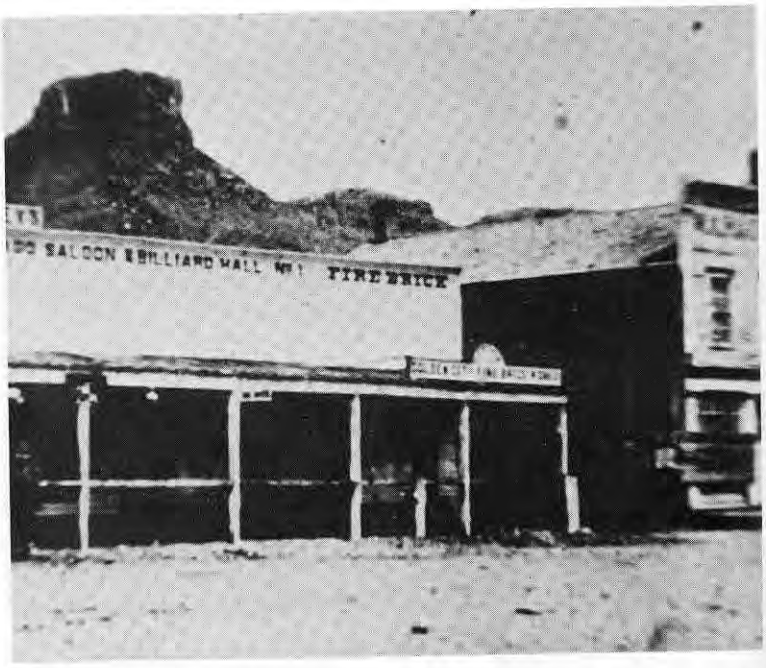
Sheriff Keith lowered his voice, trying to control the moment. "You might as well give up. You can't get away."

Marshall Cook reached up and grabbed Franklin's right arm in an attempt to secure the outlaw. Franklin jerked his arm away and sneered back at the lawmen.

"You sons of bitches! Give me a fair show!"

Smith stepped quickly forward, lifted his pistol over his head and swung it hard agains Franklin's head. Franklin tried to guard himself from the blow, but failed, and fell forward on the bed. Cook lunged for Franklin's arms, pinned them back, and tried to put one cuff on the struggling fugitive. Franklin came off the bed and stumbled back against the wall.

"You'd better give in, Franklin!" yelled Cook. "I've got to get these cuffs on you!"



The Chicago Saloon and the Loveland Jail Building. Note the nailed boards across the windows of the Loveland Building in order to keep the prisoners from escaping.

Franklin lurched forward and swung his fist at Cook. "You son of a bitch" he cried.

Cook stepped back from the bed. Sheriff Keith took a step closer holding his pistol steady on Franklin's chest. Smith closed in behind Cook. There was a moment of hesitation, of silence. Cook pulled out his pistol, brought it to bear quickly, and squeezed the trigger. Before his shot had died away, another explosion filled the room. When the powder smoke began to fade, Franklin lay face up on the bed, blood draining from two large holes in his chest.

Frontier justice has been served.

September 14, 1869

The Democratic Party nomination for Sheriff, James R. Ward, soundly defeated incumbent James Keith for the office of Sheriff today by over 160 total votes. Ward was born in Jersey County, Illinois in 1835. Until he was 16 years of age he worked on the family farm and in 1851 enrolled at Shurtleff College for three years. In 1854 his father died and James quit college to work and care for his family. In 1856 he met and married Adaline Sweetser and in the Summer of 1860 he and his wife moved to Golden City and started a freight hauling business. After eight years of hauling freight, Ward dropped this business for a farm, which he worked until he was elected Sheriff.

He was to take over the office in January of 1870 as this County's ninth Sheriff.