



HISTORIC SITE
at Garden of the Gods

JUNIOR DOCENT MANUAL

Rock Ledge Ranch
Historic Site

National Register
of Historic Places



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*“Through interpretation, understanding;
through understanding, appreciation;
through appreciation, protection.”*

- Unknown author, from the park service administrative manual,
Interpreting Our Heritage, page 38, by Freeman Tilden



WELCOME TO ROCK LEDGE RANCH!

2026 STAFF

Thank you for committing to spend part of your summer with us! Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site would not be the same without you. After all, children played a very important role in the historical communities of the Pikes Peak Region! Your presence and enthusiasm help to complete the stories of the people who lived here.

This may be your first season as a Junior Docent (JD) or you may have many years of experience. There are always new things to learn and ways to improve your interpretation skills! The staff is here to support you and we all hope that you will greatly enjoy your time at Rock Ledge Ranch!

JUNIOR DOCENT MISSION STATEMENT

As Junior Docents, our mission is to accurately portray 19th and early 20th century life in the Pikes Peak Region and provide support to the Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site staff. As historical interpreters, we are prepared to meet and greet visitors, learn the Ranch story, develop our interpretation skills, and enjoy doing our best at all times. We are team players and willing to help each other.



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GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Each historic site will have designated staff to supervise Junior Docents (JDs) and provide a memorable visitor experience.

The Rock Ledge Staff will:

- Establish environmental, physical, and behavioral boundaries and guidelines so JDs can develop responsibility, knowledge, and appropriate period demeanor in a safe and educational environment.
- Provide JDs with individualized instruction, encouragement, and assessment in both knowledge and skills so that JDs can grow in their ability to interpret competently and confidently.
- Expect JDs to develop their skills and try their best as individuals and as part of the historical interpreter team.



PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Be aware of and support Rock Ledge Ranch rules and the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services volunteer policies.
- Encourage their JD's efforts to achieve excellence in interpretation, behavior, period appropriate appearance, and work skills.
- Support the JD's uninterrupted performance of his/her duties when friends, family, and acquaintances visit the Ranch.
- Contact staff if you have questions or concerns





JUNIOR DOCENT EXPECTATIONS

At Rock Ledge Ranch, we have high expectations for our Junior Docents (JDs). We hope that you will take your position seriously and have fun interpreting life in the 1800s! In order to create a positive experience for you and our visitors and to ensure everyone's safety, it is important that all JDs adhere to the following rules:

Follow all Rock Ledge Ranch rules and Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services volunteer policies and serve as a role model for other visitors. JDs should not condone or participate in any action or behavior that violates these rules and procedures. These procedures are available at this link: [INSERT LINK HERE, I CAN'T FIND IT]

Arrive to the staff office on time to check in for your shift—not late, and no more than 5 minutes early. Take breaks at the appropriate time, and leave the Ranch on time. JDs and parents will meet at the staff office at the end of the JD's shift. JDs are required to sign in and sign out with office personnel.

Remain at your assigned historic site. Do not take breaks in other historic sites. Do not visit other historic sites in your period clothes unless directed to do so. Break locations are: the General Store, the pond, or the staff office.

Remember that you are still an interpreter when on your break! Visitors might see you from across the pond, or hear your conversations in the General Store. As soon as you are on site, you are an interpreter and need to stay period appropriate in your conversation, behavior, and the items visitors see you with.

Demonstrate good manners, enthusiasm, dependability, and a positive attitude in daily work, interpreter duties, and relationships with others. Work to complete every task to the best of your ability.

Learn the history of Rock Ledge Ranch, your historic site, Colorado Springs, and other relevant U.S. history. As you gain more experience, you will learn the story of each site and other time will be able to interpret those areas as well, helping visitors connect the dots and understand the overall history of the Ranch.

Curiosity is an essential element of good interpretation! Continually increase your knowledge and skills in historical interpretation, task completion, period clothing use, and how to interact with visitors by actively observing adult interpreters and asking questions. Learn the art of interpretation from those around you!



DO'S AND DON'TS

Each Junior Docent should take pride in demonstrating the behavior of well-mannered children of the nineteenth century. Our goal is to provide a wonderful experience for Ranch visitors.

Demonstrate a positive attitude through your work, actions, and words.

Engage with visitors. Greet them, answer their questions, and participate in demonstrations. Encourage, respect, and help your fellow volunteers and staff.

Practice good manners. “Please” and “thank you” should always be used. JDs should not interrupt while others are talking (unless there is an emergency). No slang, offensive, flippant, or vulgar language is acceptable.

Arrive to the Ranch wearing your period clothing. It must be clean, neat, and worn the way you have been told to wear it (for example, clothes must be pressed to eliminate wrinkles). Clothing care sheets are provided by the clothing librarian. The clothing we wear helps tell the story of the people of the Pikes Peak Region—let’s make sure it tells an accurate story!

Refrain from wearing modern accessories, clothing, or hairstyles. This includes, but is not limited to: nail polish, earrings, rings, friendship bracelets or necklaces, etc. Ask the Ranch staff if you have any questions.

ACCOMODATIONS

Notify the staff of any special physical or medical needs that would require accommodations on behalf of the Ranch.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

For intentional displays of unacceptable behavior the historic site staff, Lead Interpreter, and/or Ranch Manager will admonish the JD. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the parent will be called for a conference. If there is still no improvement, the JD will be removed from the Living History Program.

Cause for Immediate Removal:

Continually poor behavior that creates a safety risk will result in immediate removal from the site and the JD will not be allowed to return until a meeting is held with the JD, the parent(s), and the supervisor(s). These behaviors demonstrate that the JD cannot be expected to work with and in front of visitors. Certain behavior deemed dangerous by the staff will result in immediate removal from the program.





EXPECTATIONS cont.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS

We expect JDs to learn about the local wildlife and farm livestock and share what they learn with visitors. This is a crucial part of interpretation—and a favorite for many visitors!

Only the Ranch manager and designated staff are to feed the Ranch livestock, unless otherwise instructed. Wildlife (such as birds, bobcats, deer, mice, muskrats, lizards, snakes, squirrels, and rabbits) may not be fed or handled.

If an animal wanders into an interpretive area, JDs must leave it alone. Animals that need to be removed (such as a rattlesnake) may ONLY be removed by a staff person.

The natural plant life at Rock Ledge Ranch is part of the delicate ecosystem in Garden of the Gods Park. While at the Ranch, JDs should be aware that many animals use plants, flowers, and even dead trees for their homes. Please do not damage or destroy their homes by disturbing or picking flowers.

Stay on the paths to avoid harming the fragile plants and to avoid contact with poison ivy.

EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency or accident, the Rock Ledge Ranch Staff will follow these steps:

1. Attend to the immediate physical needs of your JD and get appropriate help.
2. Call the emergency contact and notify them of the incident.
3. Complete an injury/accident report

FAMILY AND FRIENDS VISITING

It is always special to have friends or family visit the Ranch and see their JDs in action. We encourage family and friends of docents to visit JDs at their sites. Here are some ways you can help your JD during your visit:

We ask that friends and family not remain too long in the interpretive area, as this can distract the JD from interacting with other visitors to the Ranch.

Parents who arrive early to take their JDs home are asked to wait at the staff office or enjoy the wildlife around the pond or other neutral area.

Siblings or friends not in the JD program are welcome to visit the Ranch, but may not come to work with the JD. The staff is not able to supervise them, nor are they covered by the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services insurance for volunteers.

WEATHER

Before your JD comes to work, help him/her anticipate the day's weather and dress accordingly. In severe thunderstorms, the JD will be kept at a safe and dry location with adult supervision. They may be at their work location, the Office, General Store, or shelter in place at another historic site. Depending upon the severity of the weather, the JD may not get a break away from their work area or be allowed to leave their historic site or neutral location. If weather is severe it is at the discretion of the parent if they want to pick up their JD early from the Ranch, or wait out the storm.

HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

“What is Historical Interpretation?”

Normally we use the word “interpretation” in the context of a foreign language. When two people speak different languages and cannot understand or communicate with each other, they need an interpreter with knowledge of both languages to assist them. Historical Interpretation serves the same purpose!

Many of the visitors who come to Rock Ledge Ranch have very little knowledge of the history of the Pikes Peak Region. Our role as “historical interpreters” is to bridge the gap between past and present. Period clothing and manners, demonstrations, and conversations with visitors are all part of this interpretive process. By understanding, evaluating, and comparing past and present realities, we can help visitors understand why people and events in the past are significant to their experience of life today.



Good interpretation requires more than just reciting a list of facts (although knowing those facts is certainly important). An effective interpreter must take the time to learn a little about their visitors so that he, or she, can tailor what he says and does to that specific person. The interpreter also involves the visitor in the activities at the Ranch so that each person can learn by using as many of their senses as possible. Judge how you’re doing by the reaction of the Ranch guests. If they are engaged and asking questions, you are on the right track! Your enthusiasm and interest in the site will be contagious and encourage visitors to learn more themselves.

JDs come to the Ranch with varying degrees of experience interacting with the general public. Our goal is to help each child improve their interpretation skills as they are able. While some may be more comfortable talking and working independently than others, we expect that each child will demonstrate an increased degree of competence each season they return to the Ranch.



HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION cont.

4 RULES OF INTERPRETATION

1, GREET WITH ENTHUSIASM

Wherever you are at the Ranch, greet visitors cheerfully with period appropriate language, use direct eye contact, and engage with everyone.

2, DESCRIBE WHAT YOU ARE DOING

First, be doing something period appropriate! Then, when visitors approach, share your activity with them. For example, if you are braiding a rug, explain how you are making it, where it will go, and where you may have gotten the materials.

3, INVITE PARTICIPATION

Ask visitors to participate in what you are doing. Let them do the laundry or mow the grass. This is the part of their experience they will remember!

4. ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS

Do not do all the talking. Ask visitors if they have any questions for you, think of questions to ask them, and occasionally leave pauses and quiet moments so they can insert a question or comment!

MORE TIPS

It is okay to say, "I do not know." We need to be honest about history! Say "I will find out" and then use this as a learning opportunity! Review your manual, ask the staff, and do some research. Don't forget to share what you've learned and incorporate it into your interpretation!

When talking to visitors, use good posture and avoid distracting movements. Stand up straight and do not shuffle your feet. Speak clearly and use inflection. Speak directly to your audience in your normal tone of voice, loud enough to be heard by all.

Know the facts about the site, but do not memorize the manual word-for-word. Instead, learn the material well enough that you can talk about the subject in a conversational manner. This will require more research and asking questions!

Be brief and to the point. Do not try to tell everything you know.

If you like doing something, tell the visitor that! If it has been a challenge you have had to figure out, share that with them! If you have a talent that is period appropriate, bring it into your interpretation!

DID YOU KNOW?

Originally called "Wranglers", Junior Docents have been working at Rock Ledge Ranch since 1978.





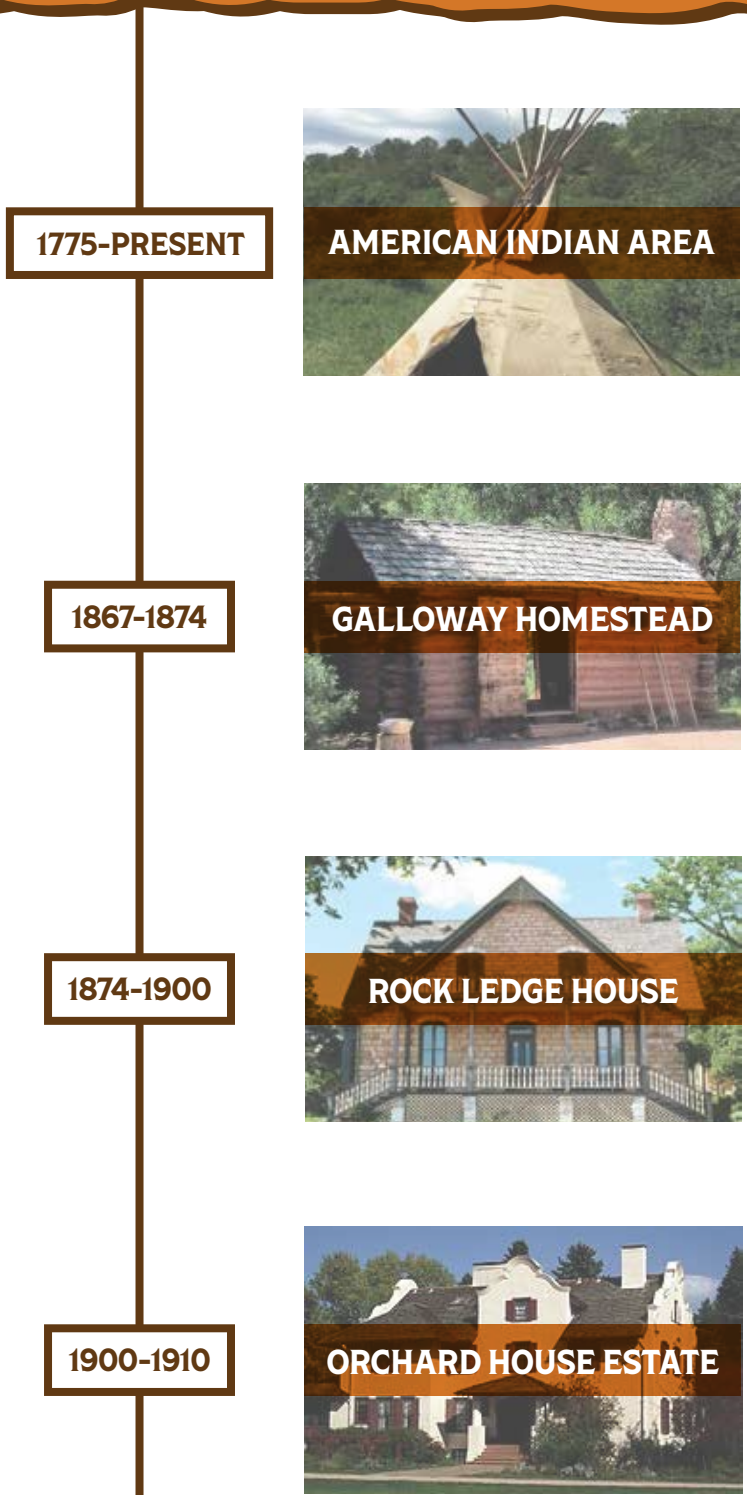
HISTORICAL INFORMATION

WINDOW INTO THE PAST

The information in this section is very important! Each JD needs to be especially knowledgeable about the historic site at which they work. Additionally, you should be familiar with the history of other sites so that you can connect your site to others and the overall history of the Ranch. The people who lived in this area faced hardships and achieved great things, just like we do today. Life in the Pikes Peak Region posed challenges and presented opportunities. As you learn about the history of the Ranch, imagine what life would have been like for you and your family in a similar situation. Comparing today with the past is a great start to a conversation with visitors.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Rock Ledge Ranch is operated by the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department with assistance from the Living History Association, a volunteer support group. The City purchased the Ranch in 1968 for \$300,000 with funds donated from the El Pomar and Alice Bemis Foundations. Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site first opened to the public in May 1978 and has been providing living history education ever since. In 1979, the Ranch was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Unlike many museums, we use a combination of hands-on demonstrations, tours, conversations, and exhibits to tell the story of the residents of this area in four time periods that span from 1775 to 1907. There are a total of six historic sites, including the 1890s Blacksmith Shop, the Galloway Homestead, the 1880s Garden (which represents homesteading and the Chambers farm,) the Rock Ledge House, the Orchard House, and the American Indian Area.



AMERICAN INDIAN AREA

FIRST INHABITANTS

Thousands of years before the Europeans traveled to this continent, American Indians lived on the vast plains, in riparian woodlands, arid deserts, and high mountains. Archaeologists uncovered an ancient hearth in Garden of the Gods Park dating to around 3,380 years ago. Indigenous peoples passed through the central Front Range of the Rocky Mountains in search of game and shelter, and to trade with other American Indian groups. The Ute people, made up of seven tribal bands, ranged across a large area which now includes the states of Colorado, Utah, northern New Mexico, and northeastern Arizona.

THE UTE PEOPLES

The Ute oral tradition says that Colorado is their homeland and they have no migration story. As a nomadic, mountain people, they relied predominantly on the elk for food, shelter, tools, and clothing. Because of their location in the Southwest, they had contact with Spanish explorers and traders who came through that area in the 1600s. After the Ute people acquired horses from the Spanish around 1630, they became skilled horsemen, and this skill, as well as contact with whites, changed their culture forever.

Ute family groups of 20 to 40 people traveled with the seasons, moving into the high country in the spring and summer to find elk herds. In the winter, they returned to the Garden of the Gods and the lower elevations of the Pikes Peak Region. During the warmer months, families lived in shelters made of tree limbs and brush. Elk hide tipis were their dwellings places during the colder months.

The Ute were skilled at tanning antelope hides and making soft leather garments and pouches, which were sought after by the Spanish and other American Indians. An extensive trade network along the Front range of the Rockies allowed the Ute to acquire items from as far south as Mexico and north into Canada. The Ute did not farm but they could obtain corn, beans, and squash from the Pueblos through trade.



Five Ute women posed c 1899, Library of Congress

The years 1775-1825 were good for the Ute; they had horses with which to travel and hunt, and had little competition for the use of their land. As a result of the abundant natural resources in Colorado and the extensive trade networks that they developed, the American Indian people of this area could obtain a wide variety of foods, hides, building materials, and manufactured goods. They used these resources to support their families and honor their cultural traditions.

AMERICAN INDIAN AREA

AMERICAN INDIANS IN THE CAMP CREEK VALLEY

The Camp Creek Valley, which today includes Rock Ledge Ranch, provided the Ute with a temporary home or base camp where they found abundant water and diverse plant life. From here they also had access to the prairie which teemed with herds of buffalo, antelope and other wildlife. Plains Indian tribes, like the Cheyenne, Kiowa, Arapaho, and Apache, passed along this corridor and also appreciated the resources available in the Pikes Peak Region. The Ute Trail passes through Garden of the Gods and the Ranch site. In the mid 19th century, gold discoveries and further western expansion and settlement brought the U.S. government into conflict with the Ute. As a result, the Ute people were removed from this area to reservations in southwestern Colorado and Utah in the 1870s.

INTERPRETING UTE HISTORY

Ute Indian history was passed down from the elders to the youngsters by telling stories, or oral tradition. Ute Indians have a distinctive language, religion, and culture. Although many American Indian groups travelled through the Pikes Peak region, we primarily tell the Ute story. Today, many American Indians live, work, and go to school in the Pikes Peak region, including Ute, Arapaho, and Cheyenne people—among many others.

Ute people are still actively involved in the preservation of their cultural traditions and their homeland—including here at Rock Ledge Ranch Historic Site and Garden of the Gods Park. Leaders of the Ute tribes are consulted when construction is done within Garden of the Gods Park and other areas in the region.

The most crucial thing to remember when interpreting Ute history is that their story is not just history. The Ute people are still here. They are the original stewards of this land, and we get to partner with them to tell their story—one that is ongoing. This is why historical interpretation at the American Indian Area looks different from everywhere else on the Ranch. Interpreters in our American Indian area are not just doing living history—they are doing living past, present, and future.

For more details, we recommend visiting the *Until Forever Comes: This is Ute Homeland* exhibit at the Colorado Springs Pioneer Museum.



Photograph of Chief Ignacio and his horse / by Frank S. Balster, Durango, Colorado c 1904, Library of Congress

DID YOU KNOW?

The Ute people called Pike's Peak "Grandfather" or "Sun" Mountain.

The annual Bear Dance was held after the first thunder clap of spring and was important because it brought all family groups together.

UTE CREATION STORY

As told by Alden Naranjo, a revered Southern Ute Elder and a member of the Mouache and Capote bands. Ute Indians Art and Culture, from Prehistory to the New Millennium, Edited by William Wroth. Published by the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center Copyright 2000

In the ancient times only Sinawav the Creator and Coyote lived on the earth. They had come out of the light so long ago, that no one remembered when or how. The Earth was young and the time had come to increase the people. Sinawav gave a bag of sticks to Coyote and said “Carry these over the far hills to the valleys beyond.” He gave specific directions Coyote was to follow and told him what to do when he got there. “You must remember, this is a great responsibility. The bag must not be opened under any circumstances until you reach the sacred grounds.”

“What is this I carry?” asked Coyote

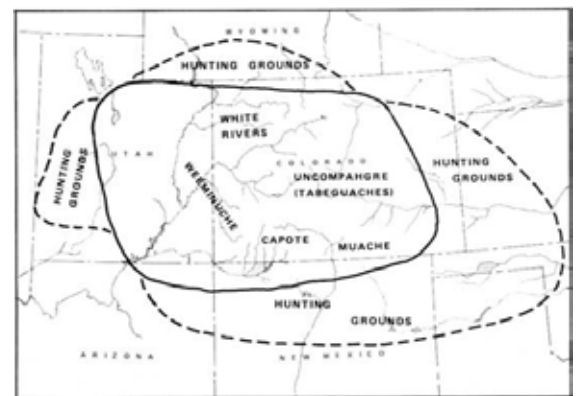
“I will say no more. Now be about your task” Sinawav answered. Coyote was young and foolish, consumed with curiosity. “What is this I carry?” he kept asking himself.

As soon as he was over the first hill and out of sight, he stopped. He was just going to peek in the bag. “That could hurt nothing,” he thought. Just as he untied the bag and opened a small slit they rushed for the opening. They were people. These people yelled and hollered in strange languages of all kinds. He tried to catch them and get them back into the bag. But they ran away in all different directions. From how full the bag was after he had gotten it closed he could tell there was only a fraction of the what he had started out with. He went to the sacred valley and dumped them out there. There was a small number of these people. But those few ones were the Utes, the real Utes from around here. Coyote then returned and told Sinawav that he had completed the task. Sinawav searched Coyote’s face. “I know,” Sinawav sighed. “You foolish thing, you do not know what a fearful thing you have done.”

Coyote finally confessed. “I tried to catch them. I was frightened. They spoke in strange tongues that I could not understand.”

“Those you let escape will forever war with the chosen ones, They will be the tribes which will always be a thorn in the sides of the Utes,” said Sinawav. “The Utes, even though they are few in number, will be the mightiest and most valiant of heart.”

Sinawav then cursed the Coyote “You are an irresponsible meddler. From this time on you are doomed to wander this earth on all fours forever as a night crawler.”



DID YOU KNOW?

The Treaty of Fort Laramie, signed in 1851, established the area that now includes Denver, Ft. Collins, and Colorado Springs as Cheyenne territory. This agreement was ignored once gold was discovered in 1858.

WALTER GALLOWAY'S HOMESTEAD

1859

Pikes Peak or Bust Gold Rush

Colorado City founded

1867

Walter Galloway arrives in the Camp Creek Valley

1871

Galloway files for homestead

Colorado Springs founded

1874

Galloway sells homestead to the Chamber

GOLD!

The first rush of European settlers into the Pikes Peak Region was in the 1859 “Pike Peak or Bust” gold rush. Some of these pioneers started the settlement of Colorado City (now Old Colorado City), about four miles south of Rock Ledge Ranch. These people realized that there was more to be made from commerce and farming than from digging for elusive gold nuggets, and they claimed the land and water in the surrounding creeks and valleys. Colorado City originally served as a supply town for miners but by the late 1860s became primarily an agricultural hub.

DID YOU KNOW?

There were 471 children (aged 5-18) in El Paso County in 1870 but only 73 attended school.

Only half of the individuals who tried to claim land under the Homestead Act lasted the five years necessary to claim the title to their land.

THE HOMESTEAD ACT

The Homestead Act was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln in 1862 and is one of the most important laws in American history. It allowed the federal government to sell land from the public domain to individuals, thus assisting farmers in acquiring land at very low prices. Once an individual filed for a homestead claim (up to 160 acres), he or she had to farm it for five years before officially becoming the owner. During those five years, homesteaders had to build a dwelling at least ten feet by twelve feet in size, make improvements to the land (such as irrigation ditches, corrals, etc.), and live and farm on the land at least six months out of the year. Who could become a homesteader? Anyone claiming land had to be twenty-one years or older, head of the household, and a U.S. citizen (or applying for citizenship).



Colorado gold miner, late 1800s. Photo courtesy of: westernmininghistory.com

HOMESTEAD cont.



FARMING IN THE CAMP CREEK VALLEY

Homesteading was difficult in Colorado because of the dry “high desert” climate—the state receives less than twenty to thirty inches of rain each year! Other natural elements that make farming along the Front Range difficult are the rocky soil and unpredictable growing season. The Camp Creek Valley, on the eastern edge of the Garden of the Gods, was a favorite area for farmers because of its year-round water, flat surface, and plentiful grass. The valley boasts Camp Creek and a number of free-flowing springs that allowed for irrigation. Because of the limited rainfall, irrigation was necessary for a successful farm. The most common crops grown around Colorado City in the late 1860s were corn, grains (wheat, oats, and barley) and potatoes.

Visitor connection questions: Are your visitors local? If so, maybe they can relate to the hardships a Colorado homesteader experienced. Ask if they have grown a garden and what has presented difficulty for them. Can you imagine if you had to grow everything you would need to eat in this climate?

MAN OF MYSTERY

Very little is known about Walter Galloway, the man who originally homesteaded Rock Ledge Ranch. He was born in 1830 in Scotland and emigrated to the United States where he became a U.S. citizen. He was literate and he never married. He arrived in the Camp Creek Valley sometime around 1867, but he could not file for his 160-acre homestead until the land was surveyed, which did not happen until 1871. Working as a day laborer in Colorado City to earn a living wage, he also grew ten acres of buckwheat on his homestead. A half mile of irrigation ditches brought water from Camp Creek to his crops. The only large animals he owned were a cow and a calf. He lived in a timber-frame cabin which was eighteen feet long by twenty-four feet wide—about twice as large as our reconstructed cabin. His house had one door, two windows, and a plank floor. He homesteaded the property for the next three years until November 1874, when he purchased it outright for around \$200.00. He sold it to Robert Chambers the next day for \$1,400.00 and moved “back East.”



HOMESTEAD cont.

HOMESTEAD BOUNDARIES



INTERPRETING HOMESTEADING IN THE PIKES PEAK REGION

Before the arrival of the railroad to the Pikes Peak Region in 1871, farming and settlement were limited because shipment of supplies, equipment, and crops was difficult and expensive. We show visitors what the daily routine would have been like for those pre-railroad settlers. Food was cooked over an open fire because stoves were too heavy to transport in a wagon; laundry was washed by hand with homemade soap; and gardening was accomplished by hand tools. Every member in the family was responsible for certain chores, and children would have spent their free time learning school lessons and playing with handmade toys.



HOW DO WE KNOW?

When historians try to discover facts about the past, they look for primary sources. A primary source is first-hand evidence from the past—something that existed or was created at the same time as the subject we are trying to learn about. A photograph, a letter, a newspaper article, a tax document, a house, a piece of clothing, a dish—all these serve as primary source pieces that help us put together the historical puzzle. When there are more primary sources—and more kinds of primary sources, we usually can know more about a subject. For instance, most of what we know about Walter Galloway comes from tax and land office documents, a newspaper article, and story written by Mrs. Chambers, who lived in the Rock Ledge House. Knowing the primary sources helps us interpret history as accurately as possible.

CHAMBERS AT ROCK LEDGE RANCH

1871

Railroad reaches Colorado Springs

1874

Chambers buy Rock Ledge Ranch

1875

Construction of Rock Ledge House completed

1888

School started in Rock Ledge House

1900

Chambers sell Ranch and move to California

ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD

In 1871, Civil War veteran General William Jackson Palmer brought his Denver and Rio Grande Railroad to the Pike Peak Region. This first train consisted of an engine, one baggage car, and two passenger cars. With this railroad came a number of machines and supplies previously unavailable in this region as well as a means of transporting local crops for sale. The local population increased while the cost of foodstuffs, clothing, and other essentials dropped drastically.

Rather than build the railroad stop in the already existent town of Colorado City, General Palmer decided to found his own settlement close by. Colorado Springs, originally named “Fountain Colony,” was designed to be unique among the mining and farming towns in the Colorado Territory. To prevent the city from becoming a “boom and bust” town, Palmer advertised his settlement back East and worked to attract middle- and upper-class settlers who were Christian and temperate (did not drink alcohol). The sale of alcohol was illegal within city limits until the 1930s.

DID YOU KNOW?

Mrs. Chambers was the first person to call the property “Rock Ledge Ranch”.

CONSUMPTION

The rapid growth of Colorado Springs was largely due to the influx of wealthy health seekers who came west seeking the “climate cure.” One of the major health concerns of the nineteenth century was tuberculosis, known as “consumption.” This disease, caused by a bacterial infection, destroyed lung tissue and caused patients to cough up blood and have difficulty breathing. There was no cure for tuberculosis at that time. Doctors recommended that patients be isolated and receive plenty of rest and sunshine. People promoting Colorado Springs advertised it as the “Sunshine City” in order to entice “consumptives” to come to the new town.

Although she did not suffer from tuberculosis, Mrs. Elsie W. Chambers experienced a respiratory ailment that may have been confused with consumption. Like thousands in the late nineteenth century, the Chambers family hoped Colorado’s dry mountain air and famous sunshine would cure her.



CHAMBERS cont.

THE CHAMBERS FAMILY

Seeking to improve his wife's fragile health, Robert Chambers decided to move his family to Colorado. The couple and their children, Ben and Eleanor, traveled from Pennsylvania to Denver by train in 1874. Once arrived, Robert was persuaded to visit the new community of Colorado Springs along the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. He loved the area and moved his family to Colorado Springs before purchasing Walter Galloway's homestead. He paid \$1,400.00 in cash for the 160-acre homestead nestled between Camp Creek and the Garden of the Gods. The Chambers built a house from stone, constructed a reservoir, and dug irrigation ditches to carry water from Camp Creek to their crops.

Elsie's health was restored by the fresh air and dry climate in Colorado, and she gave birth to their youngest daughter shortly after the Rock Ledge House was finished in the summer of 1875. Between 1874 and 1900, Robert and Elsie Chambers raised their children Ben, Eleanor, and Mary at Rock Ledge Ranch. They were also active members of the growing Colorado Springs community. Mr. Chambers served as school board president and a trustee in their church, and Mrs. Chambers was active in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. The Chambers's years at Rock Ledge Ranch were busy, prosperous, and represented a productive period in which the Pikes Peak Region became world famous for health, natural beauty, and prosperity. In 1900, Robert and Elsie sold the Ranch to General William J. Palmer for \$17,000.00.



Photo of the Chambers family

DID YOU KNOW?

The Pikes Peak region experienced a devastating grasshopper blight during the summers of 1874-75.



CHAMBERS cont.

INTERPRETING FARMING

The Chambers had the money and resources available to make their farm successful. In addition, the railroad's presence meant they could receive better equipment and had access to more markets for their produce than was available to Walter Galloway—even just five years previous! Because of their extensive irrigation system and reservoir, the Chambers developed quite a prosperous fruit orchard and vegetable farm. These are crops which do not grow easily in an arid climate. Some of their produce, along with Mrs. Chambers' jams and jellies, were sold to hotels in Colorado Springs.

We know from tax records that the Chambers kept a number of different animals during their years at Rock Ledge Ranch. In addition to dairy cows, the Chambers also had beef and Texas cattle at different times. They raised poultry and pigs, and they kept horses for transportation and farm work. One of their horses, a gift from Mr. Chambers' sister, is pictured in a photograph of the house from 1881.

Visitor connection questions: Our interpretation of the Chambers Farm and Rock Ledge House focuses on the changes and progress that were seen both in Colorado Springs and at Rock Ledge Ranch at the end of the nineteenth century. Encourage visitors to consider the following questions: How was life easier for the residents of Colorado Springs after the railroad's arrival? What challenges did people like the Chambers still face? What changes in your lifetime have altered the way people do things?

The West Room of the Rock Ledge House briefly served as a local school taught by Mrs. Chambers.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Even before they had their house built, the Chambers knew farming in Colorado wasn't going to be easy. The Pikes Peak region experienced a devastating grasshopper blight during the summers of 1874-1877, and crops were devastated summer after summer as the locusts ate everything green in sight. The fruit orchard they had been planning to start would just have to wait. Undaunted, the Chambers found creative ways to earn a living and begin their farming at Rock Ledge Ranch.

As soon as the house was completed, the family began taking in boarders, guests who paid to stay in upstairs bedrooms and eat their meals with the Chambers. They bought milk cows and ran a dairy business for several years, buying grain to supply the cows with food. They also built a steam-heated greenhouse adjacent to their house in which they could grow vegetables and flowers during the winter—or during a grasshopper plague. Their ingenuity and diversification meant they thrived through the difficult years, building an impressive farming operation at Rock Ledge Ranch.





BLACKSMITH SHOP

APPRENTICE BLACKSMITH

In the nineteenth century blacksmiths made much more than just horseshoes and nails! The railroad was bringing in manufactured items, which drove down costs at general stores. Blacksmiths were the cornerstone of the community as both repairmen and manufacturers. Tools needed to be fixed. Plows needed to be rebuilt. To meet the necessities of agricultural enterprise, farmers invariably sought out a blacksmith at some point.

The blacksmith was a jack-of-all trades. He used iron or steel heated in burning hot coals, hammers, vices, and tongs to shape the metal. The term “smith” originated from the word “smite,” which meant “to strike with a firm blow.” It changed over time to mean “a man who strikes.”

Young men learned this trade by being apprenticed to a master smith. Traditionally, an apprentice lived with the master and became a part of his family, trading his labor for food, clothing, shelter, and an education. This system was breaking down by the 1830s, as some masters no longer took apprentices into their homes but instead paid them a small wage. The length of an apprenticeship was not regulated, although they ended when a boy reached his maturity at the age of 21.

Most blacksmiths were men, but there are records of women blacksmiths as well. By the twentieth century, smiths who had been hammering out agricultural repairs, wagon irons, and carriage parts would find themselves using those same skills to fabricate parts for the automobiles that made carriages and horses obsolete. Fast forward to today, and the market for a blacksmith is on fire!

EXPECTATIONS OF A BLACKSMITH'S APPRENTICE

You will work with the master blacksmith as a traditional nineteenth century apprentice. Your duties include, but are not limited to:

- Turning the blower for the coal fire
- Double striking with the master blacksmith
- Filing and using tools

As an apprentice, do not expect to make personal items, but to learn the basics of blacksmithing from the master blacksmith. Apprentices are JDs at least 16 years old who have previous experience with historical interpretation and/or blacksmithing.





ORCHARD HOUSE

1896

William and Charlotte Sclater marry and move to South Africa

1900

General Palmer purchases Rock Ledge Ranch

1906

Sclaters move to Colorado Springs
General Palmer's riding accident paralyzes him

1907

Construction of the Orchard House is complete

1908

Sclaters spend several months touring Europe

1909

General Palmer passes away
Sclaters move to Great Britain

PALMER BUYS THE RANCH

In 1900, Colorado Springs' founder General Palmer began buying additional land in the Camp Creek Valley. His own estate, Glen Eyrie, nestled into a smaller valley just north of the Chambers' property. Motivated to acquire the Camp Creek water rights attached to Rock Ledge Ranch, Palmer paid them \$17,000.00 for their farm. Palmer rebuilt and expanded the Chambers' irrigation system that diverted Camp Creek's water. He also built additional reservoirs. General Palmer did this to carry the life-giving water to the many acres of hay fields that he cultivated in the valley.

THE SCLATERS

General Palmer's wife, Mary Lincoln Mellen Palmer (known as "Queen"), was part of a large family. In 1906, General Palmer invited Queen's half-sister, Charlotte Sclater, and her husband William to move to Colorado Springs from their home in Cape Town, South Africa. In 1907, Palmer commissioned the construction of a country estate, called Orchard House, on the Rock ledge Ranch property expressly for the Sclaters. The house was designed by architect Thomas MacLaren, who was at the height of his career crafting villas and resort homes for the wealthy

DID YOU KNOW?

Mrs. Sclater had two sons from a previous marriage. She met Mr. Sclater in England at Eton College where her boys were students.

new residents of the city. The Orchard House was a modern country home in the Cape Dutch or South African Colonial style. The interiors were uncluttered and tastefully decorated in Mission and American Colonial styles. Mr. and Mrs. Sclater only lived in the home until the General's death in 1909, after which they moved to England.

William Sclater was a well-known British ornithologist and during his brief stay in Colorado Springs, Palmer encouraged him to write a book on the birds of Colorado. Mr. Sclater accomplished the task while directing the natural history museum at Colorado College. Charlotte Sclater, who had previously lived in Colorado Springs as a young woman, spent much of her time caring for General Palmer who was by this time paralyzed as the result of a riding accident in 1906. She was an excellent horsewoman and enjoyed hobbies such as candy making, lace making, and photography. Some of the photographs in William Sclater's *A History of the Birds of Colorado* were taken by Charlotte.

ORCHARD HOUSE cont.

A SERVANT'S LIFE

Very little is known about the servants who lived and worked in the Orchard House from 1907 to 1909. We have guessed from the number of bedrooms on the third floor that three to five female servants could have lived at the house. Most likely, these included a housekeeper, a cook, and one or two maids. A laundress would have come once or twice a week and a seamstress was employed as needed. Additionally, there was a male groundskeeper who lived in the Rock Ledge House with his family. General Palmer preferred the term “staff” to “servants” and in all probability, these servants were treated very well by him and the Sclaters, for General Palmer was known to be very generous towards his own household employees.

Although we do not know any particulars about the actual servants at Orchard House, the following information is generally accurate for servants of that time period. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, domestic service was one of the most important sources of jobs for women. For example, in 1910, 24.6% of all employed women, ten years or over, were servants. They performed the household chores typically done by a housewife, which allowed the mistress of the house to make social calls, plan and attend parties, and participate in social activities that established and maintained her status in society. The employment of servants allowed the upper class of the Victorian and Edwardian era to enjoy a lavish lifestyle.



Traditionally in America, the servant class was made up of immigrants, but in the West, poorer white women composed the majority of the servant class. The high demand for servants in places like Colorado meant that servants were generally provided with better working conditions and wages than in other places in the country. Usually, live-in servants worked two hours more per day than other working men and women and only received Sunday afternoons and possibly one other afternoon off each week. Overall wages for servants were about equal to other working class jobs—on average about \$20.00 per month. However, servants' wages at General Palmer's Glen Eyrie began at \$30.00 per month, and this may have been reflected at Orchard House.

ORCHARD HOUSE cont.

INTERPRETING ORCHARD HOUSE

The Sclater's occupation of the property represents the culmination of development in the Pikes Peak Region. The Ranch property evolved from a sparse and rustic frontier homestead to a productive late-nineteenth century farm and finally to a modern and elegant suburban home. The Sclaters were a well-educated and well-traveled couple, who socialized easily with the upper class. Orchard House, with its tasteful modern furnishings and domestic staff, reflects this lifestyle which was a prominent feature of Colorado Springs at the turn of the last century.

Interpretation of the Orchard House should tell the stories of both the Sclater family and the servants who supported them. Both of these groups of people lived by rigid social standards and regulations and were mutually dependent on

each other. Ask visitors: would you like to be a servant in a house like this? Would you rather be a family member? Explore with the visitors the role that each member of the household played.

The turn of the century was also a time of rapid technological advancement and many of these new technologies would have been used in the Orchard House. As you become familiar with and learn to use turn-of-the-century tools, think about what freedoms and perhaps even fears they would have brought to the residents of this house. Try to draw comparisons with our dependency on technologies today.

DID YOU KNOW?

Both Mr. and Mrs. Sclater died as a result of separate German bombings in London during World War II.

In 1907, General Palmer gave the children of Colorado Springs free passes to the zoo.

In order to efficiently serve the elaborate evening meal for their employers,



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