

[Freighting In Silver City]

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Frank Ramsey, age 40 [?]

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Freighting in SilverCity in the Early Days

My father, Frank Ramsey, Sr., was born Evansville, Ind. in 1859. He moved to Arizona in 1893, and finally settled at Woodruff. From the time he was able to walk he was riding horses, he followed the trade of cow-puncher and trade until he came to Arizona then he worked for the railroad for a few years, having acquired a small fortune he moved to Old Mexico in 1896, and went back to trading while in Mexico he went broke, and decided to move to Alma N.M. in 1900.

Father went to freighting from Alma to Cooney Canyon with twelve head of horses. He carried all the machinery and supplies to the Enterprise mine. The road that he was freighting over is the road of today, but there has never been a truck pull a load over the road. When a load must be carried in a caterpillar is brought down the mountain and pulls the load up the hill.

In 1903 father decided that he better move to Silver City and he had ten children of his own and an adopted son that needed to be in school, besides we had a lot of illness in the family and needed to be near a doctor. Monte Reese, the adopted son, was an orphan

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boy this parents were dead and he and his other brother and sisters were [?] by the people of the neighborhood. The last that we heard of the boy he was in South America.

Father after coming to Silver City decided to freight to Mogollon. We went by the following route!

Silver City to Continental Divide Hill down Wind Canyon, so called because of the fact that there was a breeze in the canyon when the air was still everywhere else, we then went across to McKeife Canyon, named after an old sheep ranch owner, across to Mangus, which was named after an Indian chief, we crossed Greenwood canyon, which was named from the fact there was a strip of territory through the district with evergreen trees on it where the surrounding territory was all baren. Then to Duck Creek, this creek was in the old days entirely habited by wild ducks. We crossed to Indian Point, so called because in the early days it was a lookout that the Indians held and was a very dangerous point as many travelers were waylaid at this point by the Indians. The next place [?] that was named was Hells Hill so called by the freighters because it was [?] Hell to get up the hill as many times the mud was from twelve to twenty four inches deep.. we then had to go down Drunk Mans Canyon and up again this place was called by the man for it was said it was so crooked that it took a drunk man to climb out of the canyon. Hard Struggle was another hill that caused so much trouble and received its name from the fact. Many of the hills and canyons along the route was named by the freighters. Devil's Canyon was the next place that we crossed and was named because it was dangerous and if a slip was made the freighters said that the driver would sure go to [thedevelopment?]. We didn't have bridges to cross the canyons as you do today, but had to go down into the canyon and then pull out again. In the old days instead of calling a place in the road a grade we called it a Dugway from the fact many of the roads were cut through the forest and places were dug away for the wagons to go by a unusually bad place, and this is how [S?] Dugway received its name and the canyon that we called [?] was so called because the road made a double S down the canyon and now it is crossed by a bridge.

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Our last dangerous hill was the hill that [athe?] turn Climax turn was on this turn was called by this name as it was a sharp turn and would be fatal to teams and driver if a mistake was made, and from the fact the Freighters said that when they made the turn it was the Climax to the trip.

All the heavy machinery that is in Mogollon was put in by horses for trucks were unable to make the grade and by [theold?] road would be useless today.

When I was nine years old I made the trip to Mogollon with father and while on the trip father fell from the wagon and was injured and had to be returned to Silver City by the fastest method possible. I was left to make the return trip alone. I had to get me an Arbukle coffee box to put the collars on the horses, but I made the trip without any trouble. I drove fourteen head of horses and trailed four wagons. We trip was written up in the Albuquerque Journal and I felt that I had [?] accomplished a great feat, but my joy was short lived for when I returned to school my teacher, Barbara C. Ripley, made me stay after school as I was disturbing the school, about the trip.

On these trips we usually tried to carry one thousand pounds to the [?] animal. We usually allowed ourself about fifteen days [forthe?] round trip if we didn't have any trouble, but many times it took forty-five days when the water was high.

Ernest [Bennetlef?] started from Silver City to Mogollon with two [whWhite?] trucks the first to ever go over the road. It took him six weeks to get to Big Dry Creek, Fifty four miles from Silver City He then Unloaded onto freight wagons to finish the trip. the roads were impossible for trucks until it was changed and bridges were build.

Frank Ramsey, Jr.