

Richard [unclear]

Don Valdez

He was born in Spain, Febuary 28th, 1857. His father, Antonio Valdez, was a farmer, who, in quest of a more favorable location, left the Old World for the New during the latter part of the year '59 accompanied by his family, which included the mother and three sons. They first went to Kansas City, where they spent a short while, then to Colorado, crossing the plains to Denver in a covered wagon. Though our subject was too young to remember incidents of the trip, he remembers his father remarking that the Indians gavethem much trouble.

From Denver the family went to Georgetown, where Antonio Valdez found immediate employment in the mines. One of Mr. Valdez's earliest recollections was of the burro pack strings, which carried the ore from the several mines down to the mill. Here he attended school in the winters, and worked, sorting ore, at the mines during the summer. He also found time to fish--every stream teeming with trout; and to gather the lucious red raspberries, which grew so profusely in that section.

(In the fall of '77, our subject, now a young man and master of his own destiny, struck out for Leadville, traveling by stage coach over Loveland Pass to Breckenridge, up the Blue River to Climax, and across the pass to Leadville. It required two days to complete the journey and the stage fare was \$12.)

At Leadville young Valdez went to work at the 'Iron Mine' on Carbonate Hill, remaining there for two years, and receiving \$3 for 10 hours work per day. He then entered the employ of Taylor and Erenton, who operated a stamp mill in California Gulch, receiving \$3.25 per day there. He was employed there during those turbulent days of the strike in 1880.

In 1881, he was happily married to Louise Mangold, a native German girl, who had emigrated to New York and then on to Colorado. Two years later, our subject and a friend,

finding work none to plentiful, and upon hearing the favorable reports emanating from the White Pine district, decided to try their fortunes there; so they packed their outfit on two jacks and hit the trail. The first night found them at Buena Vista;--quite a hike--and on the following night they reached their destination, going by the way of Nathrop, up Chalk Creek to St. Elmo, and across the Alpine Pass to White Pine.)

When the two travelers arrived there they found a town of two or three hundred souls, two general stores, Post Office, two saloons, and a large boarding house, referred to as the hotel. There were two producing mines, the 'Eureka' and 'Evening Star', both fairly rich in lead and silver. The ore was hauled by wagon twelve miles to Sargents,) a loading station on the D&RG R.R., at a cost of \$2½ per ton, and there shipped to the smelters at Leadville and Pueblo.

Mr. Valdez went to work at once at the 'Eureka' mine, where he remained until '84 when the mine was closed down pending the outcome of a lawsuit involving its ownership. He was then employed at the 'Evening Star' for a few months, then, in the fall of '85, he departed for Monarch.

There he joined the working force of the Madonna mine which had just completed the tram from the mine to the loading station on the railroad, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. The following summer his family, wife and two daughters, Jessie and Lida, joined him there, Josephine, the youngest daughter, was born there in 1886.

For a period of four years, the 'Madonna' shipped approximately 30 cars--two trains--of ore per day. Antone Eilers was the owner. Other mines shipping then were the 'Eclipse' and 'Southern Friend'. There were about 300 men employed in these mines alone.

1885 Monarch was a thriving town then with a population of 1,000, two general stores, four butcher, and three barber shops, two boarding houses and a large hotel,--and six saloons. Its heyday was reached in '93, and then it began to fade and wither. It did not become a ghost town, however, as the C F & I Co. is operating its quarries there, employing about 20 men.

Mr. Valdez remained at Monarch for eighteen years during which time he worked up, by successive stages, to the superintendancy of the 'Madonna' mine; then leasing the mine for two years.)

About 1906 he disposed of his leased and moved, with his family, to Salida, where he, associated with the Hampson Brothers, opened a coffee and tea store in the building now occupied by the Law Press. Their business prospered, so they added a complete line of groceries, and later, a butcher shop. Business continued to increase. Finding their quarters was now too small, they moved across the street to the present McKenna Building which they later purchased.

They continued the business until 1926 when they closed out. That year Mr. Valdez retired from active business. He and Mrs Valdez, both in good health, now reside at 645 F St.

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