

William M. Newman.

He was born in Kenosha Wisconsin on Dec. 27th 1855. When he was two years old his parents moved to Dixon Illinois. There he lived and attended school until the spring of 1873. Vacation time was at hand, so when friends of the family invited William to accompany them on an overland trip to Denver, his father gave his consent for the boy to make the trip.

The party, which was under the leadership of Andy Ellicot, numbered 9 men and our subject who was thrilled and overjoyed with the prospects of such a trip. There were only two covered wagons in the outfit but there were plenty draft and saddle horses. The outfit was well armed; and all equipment was of the best.

The trip was more or less a pleasure excursion, and much time was spent hunting and fishing. The Indians were threatening, so when they reached the aborigines' territory they joined a larger party; and each night they "made circle" with them. Although they experienced several scares, they were not attacked. Six weeks after leaving Dixon they arrived safely in Denver.

Shortly after his arrival in Denver, William was employed by Lewis Brothers; and herded cattle for them on the present site of City Park. Often he stalked antelope there, and once killed one where the bear dens are now.

Returning to Dixon in November, he re-entered school, where he remained until the spring of 1876. Upon leaving school, he joined his father in the coal and grain business; but this proved to be irk-

some. Being interested in, and having many friends associated with the railroad, he resolved to follow that business as a career.

In May, 1877, he returned to Denver. This time he came by rail, and reached Denver on the Denver and Pacific Railroad. He was unable, however, to secure a position on a railroad, so he began clerking at the Grand Central Hotel--it is now the Markam--at 17th and Lawrence Streets. At that time Larimer St. was the main business section.

The next year, he was still clerking at the hotel, he seized an opportunity to make the trip to Leadville; on a salary and expenses paid. Our subject's friend, Mr. Ed Gaylord, superintendent of the Wall and Witter stage line, wanted a man to go to Grant--which was then the end of the rails of the Denver, South Park and Pacific R.R.--get a string of stage horses, and take them to Leadville.

William left the Denver the next morning on the passenger train, enroute to Grant. He left there the following morning with the horses, arriving in Fairplay that night. He nooned on Weston Pass the next day, and arrived in Leadville late that night.

There were 40,000 people in Leadville then. Finding it impossible to secure a bed for the night, he returned to the stage barn and slept in the hay. After visiting for a few days in the bustling town and its vicinity, he returned to Denver. Instead of boarding the stage at Leadville, he hiked across the Mosquito Range--there were still many snow banks--to Fairplay. He and the stage departed from Leadville about the same time, yet he found time to play several games of billiards at Fairplay, before the stage arrived.

The same year, his ambitions were partly realized, when he was hired as a brakeman at Como. The next three years he spent on his run between Como and Denver. In 1881 he was promoted to the position of

extra passenger conductor.

On June 16, 1881, an excursion train bound for Dome Rock was standing at the Union Station in Denver. When Mr. Newman shouted, "All aboard," and the train began pulling out of the station; he earned the distinction of being the conductor on the first passenger train to leave from the Union Station. Engineer Jack Horton was at the throttle.

Held up, awaiting the erection of a bridge across the Arkansas just below Buena Vista, the South Park Railroad didn't reach that town until after the D&RG in the spring of 1880. The spring of 1881 found the end of the rails at Granite; and in August 1881, the railroads reached their objective--Leadville. This right of way belonged to the D&RG, but was used also by the South Park.

Meanwhile, the South Park, which had begun to build its line from Nathrop to Gunnison in the early summer of 1880, reached its objective also. In the spring of 1882, Mr. Newman began a regular passenger run over this route from Buena Vista to Gunnison. The distance between the two points was 72 miles, and a passenger train's scheduled time was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours. The passenger rate was ten cents per mile, or \$1.50 from Denver to Leadville; and \$7.20, Buena Vista to Gunnison. A lower berth in those days, however was only \$2 from Denver to Leadville. The trains were always loaded to capacity, and did a "land office business" at each stop.

In December 1883, Mr. Newman decided to transfer to the Denver division. Mr. D.K. Smith, superintendent, however, would not approve the transfer; so he resigned. Visiting Leadville in December 1884, Mr. Newman met George W. Cook, superintendent of the D&RG. This gentleman immediately employed Mr. Newman as conductor.

From December 1884 until February 1924,--forty years--when he was retired, Mr Newman faithfully served the D&RG R.R. During those years, he witnessed the building of the road on to Minturn, to Glenwood,

(He had charge of one of the first trains to run into Glenwood) then up to Aspen in the fall of 1887. and to Rifle the same year.

The joint track--with the Colorado Midland--was completed from New Castle into Grand Junction in November 1890. This was standard gauge. Meanwhile the D&RG was throwing their track over from narrow to standard gauge. Using hundreds of men, this change was made from Minturn to New Castle in the very short time of two days.

On November 16th 1890, the Rio Grande Western was to deliver to either the Midland or the D&RG, at Grand Junction, the first through passenger train for the east. The Western favored neither side, so remained neutral. It was a case of "first come, first served". The winner having the honor of operating the first through passenger train east from Grand Junction.

That evening in Glenwood, after just arriving from Grand Junction on an inspection train, Mr. R.M. Ridgway, supt., informed Mr. Newman that unless the D&RG was there first the Midland would get the train. So he and engineer James Downing, with a 500 class locomotive, scooted for Grand Junction.

When they arrived there, the Western passenger train was standing at the station, awaiting an engine for its trip east. Also, standing nearby with an idle crew, was a Midland engine; but it was headed west. The Midland had lost. They were unable to turn the engine on the wye because the switches were all secured with D&RG locks; and they had no key. Moreover, it was a serious offense to break a switch lock.

So Conductor Newman and Engineer Downing quickly turned their engine. Shortly afterwards, they left town with the first eastward, standard gauge passenger train to run over those rails. The train consisted of 10 cars, and there were 275 passengers aboard.

Mr. Newman resides in Salida, where he has made his home for a number of years. He is now 78 years old, yet active, vigorous, and enjoying life.

*Wm. M. Newman 220. F. St. Salida*