



Gratia A. Countryman and Family Papers.

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THEOPHILUS RUSSELL COUNTRYMAN

Born June 11, 1857, in Mininger, Minn. Lived there until 1865, while his father and uncle served in the Civil War. Then the family moved to Hastings, Minn. in 1866.

Washington
He graduated from Hastings High School in June, 1874, after majoring in surveying. His high school thesis in surveying was a classic. His notebook with drawings and calculations still survives and is in the possession of his nephew, my grandfather. He went to Washington University in St. Louis in 1874 and graduated in June, 1878 with degree of M. E. (Mining Engineer).

After leaving the university Uncle Theo worked with a survey team, mapping the Mississippi River from St. Louis to New Orleans. Shortly after went to Pilot Knob, Missouri, as engineer and assistant surveyor. In January, 1881, he went to Mexico as transitman and topographer for the Mexican National Railway, surveying a line from Mexico City to the California coast. Returning to the United States in the latter part of 1881, he entered the employ of the Great Northern Railway Co. as traveling engineer and draftsman. It was during this time he worked on the stone arch railroad bridge into Minneapolis, and after more than three-quarters of a century, it is still certified for use.

Uncle Theo married Ada Jaquith of Pilot Knob, Mo. January 5, 1882. Children Alta, Russell and Ralph, and Marvin who died in infancy.

In July, 1883, he began working for the Burlington Railway on the location and construction of their line from Minneapolis to Chicago. He was sent by the Burlington to Denver to locate a railroad from Denver to Salt Lake City. In 1889 he went to Uruguay, South America to work on the location of a railroad, and the construction, from Montevideo to Buenos Aires for the government of Uruguay. While still in South America he located and supervised the construction of the then "highest railroad in the world" - 14,000 feet, for the Chilean government.

He returned to the United States in August, 1891, as chief engineer of the Colorado and Midland Ry operating from Colorado Springs to Cripple Creek and other points. While doing this engineering, the new gold mining district offered a combination of his mining and railroad interests. He engaged in general practice of civil and mining engineering, and superintendence of mining and tunnel operations. He was also a consulting engineer and friend of Dick and Spencer Penrose. He opened his first office with his brother-in-law, A. C. Jaquith. Later, in 1896, his partner was J. S. Luckraft. From this point on he was listed in the city directory of Cripple Creek as U. S. deputy mineral surveyor and assayer for the states of Colorado, Wyoming and Utah. He traveled to various mining locations in these states. His permanent location was in Cripple Creek at 445 Bennett St. He was a member of the Elks.

He remained in Cripple Creek until 1925 as engineer for several mines, among them the Cresson. In 1925 a heart attack caused his retirement. His sister, Gratia A. Countryman, librarian for the City of Minneapolis, prevailed on him to live with her for several years before he became a resident of the

Walker Memorial Home in Minneapolis. He lived there happily until his death in 1951m at the ripe old age of 94.

In Marshall Sprague's book "Money Mountain" Chapter XXVII, titled Bert's Tunnel and Aladdin's Cave, he mentions T. R. Countryman "as merely another mining man". On page 271 he makes the statement that Countryman's engineering brought the tunnel's two headings together with an error of less than a quarter inch on the Roosevelt Tunnel. This project described in the book as imperative to the salvation of Cripple Creek's mining operations merely proved how excellent Albert F. Carlton's judgment was in choosing T. R. Countryman as his engineer. Countryman's rich experience prior to this project was reflected in its success.

A candle holder, rock hammer and carbide lamp, and a resume of his life are in the museum in Cripple Creek. He was one of the pioneers of our country, whose life, constantly separated from his family, was dedicated to America's enrichment and well spent in her service.

Most of the above information was taken from the Countryman Genealogy. Other reference Sprague's "Money Mountain".