

Ray Bryan Western Collection

This collection consists mainly of saddles that were made by three leading Pueblo saddle makers.

Samuel C. Gallup was involved in the trade from 1870 until 1900 when he died. Following his death, his business was operated by others until it closed in 1930. Gallup is thought to have been responsible for the design of the Pueblo Saddle, which became the standard for the working cowboy. The high swell and deep cantle made riding safer when working with herds of rough animals in difficult terrain. The saddles were often double-cinched, which increased the stability for the rider.

Robert T. Frazier joined Gallup in 1880, and the two became partners until about 1890. The partnership was somewhat stormy due in part to differences in temperament. **Frazier went into business alone after 1890**. His wife, Kitty, was his able assistant in this enterprise. According to Kitty's niece, she helped in the manufacturing of the saddles by doing the quilting on some of the lady's saddles. When Frazier died in 1931, Kitty Frazier carried on the business until 1958. Frazier is remembered here as a man with a dynamic personality.

Thomas Flynn opened his saddle business in 1880 in Silvercliff, Colorado. He then moved to Trinidad in 1890. Following a prediction made to him by a gypsy, he moved his business to Pueblo in 1892. The 1921 flood was a disaster for Flynn. Although Gallup's firm aided him, he died shortly after, losing so much of his business on Union Ave. His son, Frank, carried on the business until 1935. Local belief holds that Flynn did 90% of his business by catalog sales.

The display horse belonged to R.T. Frazier at the time of the 1921 flood. It was washed away in the flood and later found in a tree. In 1989, the horse belonged to Mack's Saddlery. It was rescued from the fire that destroyed that business. Frank McConnell, the owners of Mack's Saddlery, has allowed us to borrow this horse.

All of the saddle makers mentioned published catalogs or "Cow Punchers' Bibles." The fact that Pueblo was a railroad center contributed to the success of all three saddle makers because saddles could be shipped all over the United States.

From Pueblo County Historical Society



From Pueblo County Historical Society

