

## **SQUAW SUSAN'S SEND-OFF**

<http://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/Repository/ml.asp?Ref=Q1RSLzE4NzkvMTIvMTcjQXIwMDMwMQ%3D%3D&Mode=Gif&Locale=english-skin-custom>

The narrative of the captivity and rescue of Mrs. Meeker, Josephine Meeker and Mrs. Price has served to bring prominently before the public the name of one of the Ute squaws called "Susan," and caused considerable interest to attach to her on account of kindnesses shown the captive women through her influence. These kindly acts on her part are accounted for from the fact that she at one time was rescued from captivity among the Arapahoes by the whites and returned to her friends. Several items have appeared in the papers attempting to give some details of the rescue and subsequent movements of Susan, and we have taken some pains to ascertain the facts, thinking that they may be of interest to our readers at this time. The facts narrated below are obtained from the lips of the officer who commanded the squad of soldiers who rescued her from the Arapahoes just in time to save her from cremation.

Mr. William C. Carroll, who resides on Ralston creek, in this county, was a sergeant in Capt. D. L. Hardy's Company, M, of the First Colorado Cavalry, and with his command at Camp Col-

lins, in 1863, when the affair transpired. He says that Susan had been held as a captive by the Arapahoes about a year, and early in May of '63 the warriors of the band, which he thinks was old Friday's, had been over to North Park and had a fight with the Utes, had lost several men but had taken no Ute scalps themselves. Returning to their village, which was then located on the Platte near the mouth of the Cache-a-la-Poudre, they proposed to take their revenge out of poor Susan, and were making great preparations to burn her at the stake. The settlers thereabouts ascertained what was up and sent a messenger to Camp Collins to report to Capt. Hardy, who detailed Sergeant Carroll to take a squad of men and proceed to the Arapahoe village and rescue the prisoner if possible. He started at once, with a squad of about a dozen men, and reached the Arapahoe

camp with all speed, it being located some ten or twelve miles from Camp Collins, down the creek.

Upon coming in sight of the village the soldiers noticed an unusual commotion, and when they rode in among the tepees no captive was to be seen, but the preparations had been undisturbed, as they found a fence post erected in the centre of the camp, and a quantity of wood around it ready to be ignited. After considerable searching the squaw was discovered in one of the lodges, concealed under a lot of buffalo robes, with her head closely shaved in readiness for the sacrifice, as was the custom of the Indians when about to indulge in the pleasing pastime of cremating a captive. Sergeant Carroll brought her out of the lodge, and although strenuous objections were made to this proceeding by the band of Indians, mounted her behind him upon his horse and rode back with her to his

command at Camp Collins in triumph.

This occurrence took place early in May, and the rescued squaw remained with Sergeant Carroll and his wife for about two months. She was then about eighteen years of age, and unusually bright for an Indian, and Mrs. Carroll took a good deal of interest in her. She always seemed to be very grateful to the soldiers for rescuing her from the old-time enemies of her tribe, and tried in every way to show her gratitude to Carroll and his men. Mrs. Carroll made her several dresses and fitted her out in about as good style as any of the "white squaws" about the camp were able to dress. During her stay with them she learned to speak English quite well, and Mrs. Carroll had all confidence in her, leaving her in charge of her quarters when away. She sometimes appeared to be getting home-sick to return to her tribe, but no opportunity occurred to return her to her friends.

On the 4th of July Sergeant Carroll and his wife went down the creek some miles to attend a dance, leaving Susan in the quarters, and on their return found she had "lit out," taking with her all the clothes that had been made for her by Mrs. Carroll, a piece of meat and a butcher-knife, but molesting nothing



belonging to Mrs. Carroll, although she had overhauled Mrs. C.'s trunk in which her own things were packed, and in which was some forty or fifty dollars in silver which she could have taken had she chosen to do so.

Considerable anxiety was felt by the command for fear she had been recaptured by the Arapahoes, and Capt. Hardy had the country thoroughly scouted the following day in search of Arapahoe "sign," but without success.

The Carrolls have never seen her since, but members of "D" company of their regiment, which was stationed at the time in Middle Park, reported that she came to their camp sometime later, remaining there several days, and then "went west to grow up with the Utes." The following summer some of "M" company saw her with her own people at Colorado City, and talked with her. After that she had effectually dropped out of "white" history at least, until her good offices to the captive agency women brought her again prominently to mind. Mr. and Mrs. Carroll still feel a lively interest in her, and feel well repaid for the kindness they were able to show her sixteen years ago.

The name "Susan" was given her by Mrs. Carroll, and she is quite proud of the fact that her ward has thought

enough of it to retain it all these years.