

HARRIET SPENCER RUDD (1818 – 1910)



Harriet Spencer was born July 23, 1818, in New Hampshire. After an 18-year engagement, Harriet married Anson Rudd on October 2, 1856, in Davis County, Iowa.

Anson and Harriet traveled for a while early in their marriage. They were headed toward the gold fields in California in 1860 but decided to settle in Cañon City. The population was growing at that time, primarily due to the mining activity in the nearby mountains. However, when the Civil War began most able-bodied men left to fight for one side or the other and the town was almost deserted during the war years.

The Rudd home was visited by prominent citizens of the day, possibly including Territorial Governors John Evans and Samuel Elbert. The Ute Indian Chief Ouray was a frequent visitor and his friendship with Anson probably contributed to the good relations between the settlers and the Indians. Indians often wandered into town and even into the settlers' cabins. There is a story of Harriet's first encounter

with two Indians who entered her cabin while she was ironing. She was standing with her back to the door and when she turned and saw them, she ignored them and they soon left quietly. Harriet made biscuits for the Indians and they loved them, staying and eating until the biscuits ran out. Although the Indians were peaceful, there were a couple of occasions when the settlers prepared for attacks that never came and there were several reports of the Indians stealing food and clothing from time to time.

In 1904, age and illness required Harriet and Anson to move to Denver to be with their son. Anson passed away in 1907 and Harriet died in 1910. Both are buried in the Fairmount Cemetery in Denver.

ANSON RUDD (1819 – 1907)



Anson Rudd, who was born in 1819 in Erie County, Pennsylvania, was a blacksmith. He liked to write poetry and was known as the “Blacksmith Poet.” Harriet kept and treasured the beautiful poetry he wrote to her during their long courtship and engagement.

Anson was one of the first pre-Civil War settlers and was considered Cañon City’s “founding father.” He helped plat the boundaries of Fremont County and served the community in a variety of offices such as Sheriff, County Commissioner and Postmaster. He was the first Warden of the

“new” Territorial Prison that was built in 1871 on the western edge of the town.



Rudd House and Cabin on 6th Street, South of US-50

The Rudds built and lived in a small log cabin on the northwest corner of 6th & River Streets. It was the first cabin in the area with a wood floor and an attic. Their son, Anson S., was born there in 1861. He was the first white child born in Fremont County to survive infancy. Their only other child was a daughter, Flora, who was born in 1857, before they arrived in Cañon City. Sadly, Flora lived only a few months.

*Resource: Royal Gorge Museum & History Center, Cañon City, Colorado;
www.findagrave.com; Spirits of the Past, 2nd edition 2016*