

**THE INDIANS OF THE PIKE'S PEAK REGION,
INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE
OF SAND CREEK, AND OF OCCURRENCES
IN EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO,
DURING THE WAR WITH THE CHEYENNES
AND ARAPAHOES, IN 1864 AND 1868**

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The Indians of the Pike's Peak region, including an account of the battle of Sand Creek, and of occurrences in El Paso County, Colorado, during the war with the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, in 1864 and 1868 by Irving Howbert

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IRVING HOWBERT

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Pike's Peak

From a painting by Charles Craig

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of the
Pike's Peak Region

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By
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Illustrated

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INTRODUCTION

FOR the most part this book is intentionally local in its character. As its title implies, it relates principally to the Indian tribes that have occupied the region around Pike's Peak during historic times.

The history, habits, and customs of the American Indian have always been interesting subjects to me. From early childhood, I read everything within my reach dealing with the various tribes of the United States and Mexico. In 1860, when I was fourteen years of age, I crossed the plains between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains twice, and again in 1861, 1865, and 1866; each time by ox- or horse-team, there being no other means of conveyance. At that time there were few railroads west of the Mississippi River and none west of the Missouri. On each of these trips I came more or less into contact with the Indians, and during my residence in Colorado from 1860 to the present time, by observation and

by study, I have become more or less familiar with all the tribes of this Western country.

From 1864 to 1868, the Indians of the plains were hostile to the whites; this resulted in many tragic happenings in that part of the Pike's Peak region embracing El Paso and its adjoining counties, as well as elsewhere in the Territory of Colorado. I then lived in Colorado City, in El Paso County, and took an active part in the defense of the settlements during all the Indian troubles in that section. I mention these facts merely to show that I am not unfamiliar with the subject about which I am writing. My main object in publishing this book is to make a permanent record of the principal events of that time.

So far as I know, the public has never been given a detailed account of the Indian troubles in El Paso County during the years 1864 and 1868. At that time there was no newspaper published in the county and the few newspapers of the Territory were small affairs, in which little attention was given to anything outside of their immediate localities. The result was that news of tragic happenings in our part of the Territory seldom passed beyond the borders of our own county.

I have thought best to begin with a short account of the tribes occupying the Pike's Peak

region prior to the coming of the white settler, adding to it extracts from the descriptions given by early explorers, together with an account of the game, trails, etc., of this region. All these facts will no doubt be of interest to the inhabitant of the present day, as well as of value to the future historian.

I took part in the battle of Sand Creek, and in many of the other events which I mention. Where I have no personal knowledge of any particular event, I have taken great pains to obtain the actual facts by a comparison of the statements of persons who I knew lived in the locality at the time. Consequently, I feel assured of the substantial accuracy of every account I have given.

In giving so much space to a defense of the battle of Sand Creek, I am impelled by an earnest desire to correct the false impression that has gone forth concerning that much maligned affair. Statements of prejudiced and unreliable witnesses concerning the battle were sent broadcast at the time, but except through government reports, that only few read, never before, to my knowledge, has publicity been given to the statement of the Governor of the Territory, telling of the conditions leading up to the battle, or to the sworn testimony of the colonel in command at the engagement, or