

FIRST BIENNIAL REPORT  
OF THE  
STATE HISTORIAN  
OF THE  
STATE OF WYOMING

For the Period Ending  
September 30, 1920

WITH  
WYOMING HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS

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EUNICE G. ANDERSON, STATE HISTORIAN

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LARAMIE, WYOMING:  
THE LARAMIE PRINTING COMPANY  
PRINTERS AND BINDERS  
1920

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# Interestiug Facts Incident to the Writing of the Song "Wyoming"

AS GIVEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THE LYRIC

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In 1902 and '03 there were eight or ten young men in the then thriving copper mining camp, Grand Encampment, in the southern part of Carbon County, forty-five miles south of the Union Pacific Railroad, who were wont to gather and exercise their voices and good fellowship in song. Among these was Earle R. Clemens, editor of the Encampment Herald and the possessor of a very fine tenor voice. It was often commented upon that there was not, but should be, a State song.

In the summer of 1903, while traveling on a train in Pennsylvania, down the Lehigh Valley, having been away from home and family for several weeks and feeling somewhat lonesome—the Muse arrived—the Spirit moved—and I jotted down in my vest pocket memorandum book the five verses and chorus of the song "Wyoming". On my return home to Encampment I wrote out the words on the typewriter, tucked them in a pigeon hole of my desk and promptly forgot all about them for several months. However, on a day when Mr. Clemens happened to call at my office I recalled the writing of the verses and handed them to him, saying, "I have done my part, here are the words, you compose the music and we will have a State song." Again I forgot the matter for several months, as did also Mr. Clemens. But one day he ran across the words in his desk—the Muse returned—the Spirit moved—and he composed the music. The first copy was made by hand with pen and ink for a solo verse and quartet chorus, and later a quartet arrangement for the entire song.

Just about this time, which was prior to the organization of our State Fair Association, the State Industrial Convention, the predecessor of our State Fair, was held at Sheridan, Wyoming. Mr. Clemens and myself attended as delegates. Hastily securing the assistance of two Sheridan gentlemen, we practised the song once or twice and sang it before the Convention. It was immediately greeted with great enthusiasm and was by the convention declared to be the State song. The newspaper editors were also holding a meeting at Sheridan at the same time, and they likewise adopted a resolution to the same effect. Many thousands of copies of the song were immediately purchased throughout the State and used particularly in the schools. The song was also presented with marked success on Wyoming Day at both the World's Fair at St. Louis in 1904, and the World's Fair at Port-

land, Oregon, the following year, and again at the Panama Exposition, San Francisco, 1915.

Although the song proved a great success, it seemed to be especially adapted for cultivated solo voices and quartets and did not lend itself readily, because of its rather extreme range, to popular singing, except as to the chorus.

In the early part of the year 1920, Prof. George E. Knapp, Professor of Voice in the State University at Laramie, Wyoming, composed new music with march time and with a lesser range, which immediately proved itself adapted to and was enthusiastically received by popular choruses and group or assembly singing. The fact that the new music lent itself to the march and dance, secured for it general acceptance.

The edition with the new march music was brought out by the Richter Music Company of Casper, Wyoming, in attractive form with the title page in red, white and blue, bearing the State Flag and State Seal, and entitled "Wyoming March Song" to distinguish it from the old song "Wyoming". The lyric is the same in both compositions.

CHARLES E. WINTER,  
*Casper, Wyoming.*

November, 1920.