

PARKER'S OLD HOMES

By: Sandy Whelchel, Town of Parker Historic Preservation Commission

No matter where you live in the Parker area, your home has been added to a long line of others in the area. Parker's first homes, landmarked by the Parker Historic Preservation Commission, date back to the 1860s. A short drive around town can lead you to a rich treasure of historic homes and businesses. East of Mainstreet, in the Canterbury subdivision at the corner of Canterbury Trail and Callaway Road, stands the Tallman/Newlin Cabin. One of two remaining log structures in the area, the cabin was built in 1866 by John M. Tallman as a home for his new bride, Elizabeth. Portions of the original logs are visible on the south and east sides of the structure. Tallman, according to his wife, was no stranger to building since he built the first shingled house in Denver.

Tallman is listed in the Colorado Business Directory in the 1860s as the single resident of Pine Grove (the early name for Parker) with an occupation of "rancher." He came to Colorado territory in 1837 when he was 22. According to later accounts by Elizabeth, he engaged in several other businesses in addition to ranching, including cutting, sawing, and selling lumber. In 1878, John was elected as County Commissioner in Douglas County and he sold the snug home to William Gilpin Newlin.

Elizabeth (Pennock) Tallman came to Colorado in 1864 with her sister and brothers in an ox-drawn wagon. She longed to see more of the plains and no doubt met her future husband when she traveled with her brother-in-law, Horatio Foster, to a sawmill on Running Creek. In the twelve years of Elizabeth's residency in the cabin, John frequently left to tend his cattle on Running Creek. Elizabeth had her share of adventures during her husband's absence. Once when Ute Chief Colorow's tribe was in the area, Elizabeth went out to close in her chickens for the night and returned to find a dozen braves sitting in a circle on her kitchen floor. Apparently they had been in a skirmish with the Arapaho. Displaying several scalps, they invited Elizabeth to their scalp dance, indicating that she was a "bueno squaw." She declined the invitation.

The Tallman/Newlin cabin was designated as a town landmark in 1998. The property is also listed on the State Register of Historic Places. The tan sign at the site is an indication of a landmarked property.