

Women Dressed as Men submitted by Carl Langford

Charley Parkhurst

Back in the latter half of 19th century, the western stagecoach company's were a big business with freight and passengers. Also hauling gold and silver bullion along with mining company payrolls.

Stages were robbed when they thought the Wells Fargo money box was full and the passengers relieved of their valuables but were seldom hurt. Before the railroad went over Donner Pass in 1868 was by Stagecoach. The stage was power by six wild-eyed horses as they traveled along the steep and narrow mountain trail.

The stage drivers were tough rugged and fearless men who pushed their team to the limit. One of the most famous drivers known as **Charley Parkhurst** and came from New England in 1852 seeking his fortune in the gold fields. For years he ran stages and had a reputation as an expert whip.

Parkhurst chewed wads tobacco, and drank with the best of them. During 1850, Charley had run in with of the most notorious outlaws. In appreciation of his bravery, Wells Fargo gave his a large gold watch and chain. In 1865 growing tired of such demanding job of driving and soon sold his business, retiring to a ranch near Soquel, Calif., at age of 67. Charley a well known stage drivers who could manipulate the reins of those horses.

It was discovered when friendly were preparing him for his final rest, that Charley Parkhurst was unmistakably a well developed woman. Her real name *Charlotte Parkhurst* born 1812. She ran away from home at age 15, finding it easier to find work dressed as a man.

One last thing she did on 3 Nov 1868 was dressed as a man voted in the national election and became the first woman to vote in the United States , 52 years before Congress passed the 19th amendment for women the right to vote.

Loretta Roach

Among the many thrilling events of the civil war were the adventures of Loretta Roach as told in the newspaper, Daily Intelligencer on 16 Mar 1866. She was born in the West Indies in 1838 and now about 28 yr old. Her parents came to the United States and settled in St James Parish, La. where things in her life ran smoothly until the out break of Civil War. Fired up on all the things going on and what she could do for the cause of liberty. She donned her male attire and was the first to rush to arms, raising a company of cavalry and equipping them at her own expense, proceeded to Virginia, where served for eight months on the Peninsula under Colonel Dreux before her sex was

discovered. She was mustered out and ordered home, but being her strong will, proceeded to Columbus KY. serving with General Polk at the evacuation of that place.

She proceeded onto Fort Willow and was elected 1st Lt. in Capt. Phillips Company of Independent Cavalry. The Company proceeded to Corinth and were under General A. S. Johnson. At the Battle of Shiloh Capt. Phillips was killed and command was placed on her. While leading a charge she was wounded twice. They were taken prisoner by the federals and after several months of confinement being, she was paroled and some were exchanged.

She was a determined woman and proceeded at once to Richmond Va. disguised as a soldier, was commissioned 1st Lt. In the Adjutant General's Dept. assigned as Provost Marshall for several months. In serving this capacity she met up with Major DeCamp of the 3rd Ark. Cavalry, they were engaged to marry before the war. A ceremony was performed in Atlanta where the dashing 1st Lt. Roach became a sober Mrs. DeCamp. She was placed into the secret service and traveled all over the States in 1864. Her husband was taken prisoner in fall 1863 while serving with his regiment in Georgia. After a long length of time she was able to get him paroled, but only lived eight days after his release from prison.

After the fall of the Confederacy she remained in the North for awhile, and returned to her home in Louisiana for a short period. She proceeded to Memphis and purchased a stock of goods, which was shipped on the Miami which was blown up on the Ark. River. She was one of the two ladies that was saved, but lost all her goods by an oversight, the goods were not insured. She now lives in a Southern Hotel.

Calamity Jane

During her life Calamity Jane lived fast and hard. She dressed like a man, she cursed like a man, and she drank like a man. She did many things that women of her day could only dream of, such as scouting for the Army, riding for the Pony Express, drinking and gambling with men all over the West. She was a woman who held her own among the roughest characters of the Wild West.