

WOMEN FROM OUR PAST

since well-behaved women rarely make history...



Have you ever stopped by Auntie Stone's?

You pass her place every time you drive by Fort Collins Library Park. It's a tiny cabin, but Elizabeth "Auntie" Stone was a small woman with a big heart and energy to match it who spent her years in Fort Collins working to improve the city and the lives of those who lived here.

You'll find her name connected to a number of firsts in Fort Collins: owner of the community's first private home in 1864, encouraged the city's first school to open in that home in 1866, opened Fort Collins' first hotel in 1867... and the list goes on.

She arrived in Colorado after crossing the plains in a Conestoga wagon pulled by milk cows. She was widowed twice, ran an officers' mess hall and boarding house and earned the title of "Auntie" Stone from the men she fed there. Auntie Stone promoted temperance, visited jails and solicited funds for unfortunate souls. She raised eight children and saw to it that Fort Collins had a place for children to learn.

The Fort Collins Courier published a tribute upon her passing, "Every evil cause had in her a relentless foe. Her life was a long story of persistent efforts to do well, of striving to do her duty. She was a faithful and devoted wife. She was the steadfast, enduring friend of her children... The weary... will take fresh courage and renewed trust in recalling the plain simple but earnest life of this brave good woman."

When she died at 94 in December of 1895, local businesses closed their doors for the afternoon as a sign of respect and church bells rang 94 times to mark her years on earth. In 1991, the city dedicated "Auntie Stone Street" in her honor. ❖

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PAST ARTICLE BY MARYJO FAITH MORGAN ❖ JOURNEY CONTRIBUTOR

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