

# Silver and Gold

## Chapter Two – by Kay Hively

Molly stood on the porch with her mother as the army scout jumped off his horse and raced into the headquarters building. Other soldiers took the scout's horse and led it to the stables.

All around the fort, Molly could see other women and children watching and waiting for news. Everyone worried when some of the soldiers left the fort to go on patrol or to chase after Indians. Now that her father was off on patrol, she and her mother worried more than usual.

Missing her father when he was gone from the fort was the only thing Molly didn't like about living out west. She didn't miss all the fine shops and schools in the cities. She liked the little school on the post, and it was fun to swim in Crow Creek or go on picnics with her family and friends.

Sometimes Molly went horseback riding with her father. They could not ride army horses so they rented horses from a stable in Cheyenne, a new town about three miles from the fort.

Captain Hankins was a fine horseman, but Molly was just learning to ride. Her father was a good teacher who made her do everything "the army way." When they first started riding, Molly and her father rode out to watch the building of the new railroad.

Hundreds of men were working there. The men dug out the roadbed to make it smooth. They laid cross ties and lined up steel

rails. Molly liked to watch the men who drove the big spikes that held the rails in place. With just three swings of their sledgehammers, they drove the spikes into place. She liked the sound of the hammer head slamming down on the steel spike. Sometimes in her sleep, Molly could hear the ping, ping, ping of the hammer striking the spikes.

But now the railroad line had passed on west of Cheyenne and Fort Russell so Molly didn't visit the railroad camp anymore. She did see supply trains running back and forth with men and supplies.

On his patrols, Captain Hankins often went to the end of the line. When he returned, he would report on how things were going and how far the track had moved. As Molly thought about her father visiting the railroad camp, she hoped he was there now.

Suddenly the door to the headquarters building opened and Molly saw the scout and two officers come out onto the wooden porch. The three men talked for a moment and then the scout walked away toward the stables.

The two officers spoke to other soldiers who had come out of their barracks. Molly and her mother heard the men say that Indians had burned a settler's house and kidnapped his family. Captain Hankins and his patrol had been sent to find the family and bring them to Fort Russell. Molly could see the fear in her mother's face.

Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Goforth-Stewart both live in Neosho, Mo. Produced by the Missouri Press Foundation. Copyright 2007.

## Things to Think About and Do

- Make a poster by drawing the tools and supplies used by the men who built the railroad. Label each item.
- Fort Russell was located near Cheyenne, Wyoming. Find out these things about Cheyenne: 1. population; 2. main industry; 3. average temperature; 4. average annual rainfall; 5. average annual snowfall; 6. distance from Washington, D.C.
- When reading a serialized story, it's fun to predict what will happen in the next chapter. In your newspaper, you can do the same thing with headlines. With a friend, pick five headlines and each of you predict what each story will tell. See who is the most accurate.

