

The History Company building at 721 Market Street, San Francisco, which housed Hubert Howe Bancroft's publishing ventures, was erected in 1886 after a disastrous fire destroyed the earlier 1870 building. It is seen here decorated in honor of a Knights Templars' convocation, an organization of which Bancroft was an honorary member.



Hubert Howe Bancroft in Colorado

BY BENJAMIN DRAPER

Hubert Howe Bancroft's reputation as a collector of historical materials has long been assured. The Bancroft Library at the University of California in Berkeley was founded with sixty thousand books and manuscripts which he gathered for his thirty-nine-volume *Works*,¹ of which volumes 17 to 37 are devoted to the history of the Pacific states. Volume 25 in this series covers Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming.

These Bancroft writings have been both the despair and the joy of scholars. His work has been variously characterized as opinionated, inaccurate, prejudiced, and unworthy.² Yet, tucked away here and there, especially in the twenty-one volumes devoted to the history of the Pacific states, planned in 1880 and published over the next decade, there are valuable accounts of men and women and exploits of local history. Bancroft and his agents gathered firsthand material, much of which today is to be found nowhere else. Not for his skill as a historian so much as for this assemblage of "footnotes" to the history of the American West can modern scholars be grateful to Bancroft.

His Colorado activities between 1883 and 1889, typical of his procedures elsewhere, are better documented in surviving records than are those of other places. Consequently, the unpublished manuscripts from Colorado provide a study of his methodology as well as historical data and opinion.

Traveling throughout the thirteen western states, Bancroft's men were charged with two inseparable functions: selling books and gathering notes on local history. Prominent citizens, the new rich, pioneers, and any other likely prospects were approached and told they had been selected by Dr. Ban-

¹ *The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1882-90).

² John Walton Caughey, *Hubert Howe Bancroft, Historian of the West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946), *passim*.

croft as important persons whose achievements he wished to record (and immortalize) "in his great work." During the course of an interview a flatteringly worded subscription blank was introduced. This document offered the subject "an opportunity to become Dr. Bancroft's partner in this long and arduous historical labor in a new field." If the interview was successful the signed order blank was forwarded to the History Company, 721 Market Street, San Francisco. The interview notes and other historical materials were sent to Bancroft's library at 1538 Valencia Street, San Francisco, to be dealt with by his writing staff. The publishing house, founded in 1855 by Bancroft and his brother, would ship the volumes as they came off the presses.

The original Bancroft Library at 1538 Valencia Street, built in 1880. To guard against fire, the structure was erected a safe distance from its neighbors and fitted with iron shutters.



As prospective subscribers to the volumes indulged in recollections, agents took dictation or made briefer notes, depending on the progress of the interview. Also, newspaper editors invariably were asked for current issues of their papers. Local historians delightedly offered copies of their publications as did promoters of land sales, railroads, and town companies. Meanwhile, Bancroft proceeded to "buy, borrow, and beg . . . important papers."³

Although Bancroft's methods were roundly criticized in his own time and although R. D. Faulkner, in charge of Montana activities, added that the place was a hotbed of criticism with agents being called "swindlers,"⁴ the allegation occasionally heard that Bancroft borrowed materials and never returned them appears to be incorrect. Henry L. Oak, his chief literary agent, wrote that such charges were unjust.⁵ Moreover, among the miscellaneous History Company records are two notes:

October 28, 1886

Would you be kind [enough] to ask the gentleman in charge of Colorado data to take therefrom the dictation of Amos Bissell, a subscriber, and return the same to us at his earliest convenience.

The History Company
D. R. Sessions

Another letter sheds light on the same problem:

Last June the History Company sent out to the Library a dictation of W. H. Nicholson, Sunshine, Colorado. The *Dictator* desires it returned to him for revision. Will you kindly send it here in order that we may comply with the subscriber's request.

The History Company
D. R. Sessions

Neither Bancroft nor his agents appear to have borrowed and failed to return any "priceless diaries" or other documents. The only evidence in the library today of manuscript materials is the interviews, or "dictations" as they were called.

Bancroft's modus operandi for selling and interviewing in Colorado was described in an account which he wrote for the volume *Literary Industries*:

³ That material relating to Colorado, gathered in the 1880s, consists of more than one thousand separately listed interviews (one-third of which are substantial), one hundred issues of newspapers (indexed as "Colorado Newspaper Miscellany"), and upwards of one hundred town and county histories, statutes, and other printed pamphlets. Bancroft also made substantial purchases of historical materials both here and abroad.

⁴ Caughey, *Hubert Howe Bancroft*, p. 294.

⁵ Henry Lebbeus Oak, "*Literary Industries*" in *a New Light* (San Francisco: Bacon Printing Co., 1893), pp. 14-16.

From Utah we went to Colorado, stopping at Canon City, Leadville, Pueblo, Colorado Springs, and other points of historic interest and importance. We were everywhere received with the utmost cordiality. It would be difficult to find anywhere pleasanter people, or a more intelligent or refined society than at Denver. I shall never forget the kindness of Doctor [Frederick J.] Bancroft, governors [Frederick W.] Pitkin, [James B.] Grant, and [John L.] Routt and judges [Wilbur F.] Stone, [Hiram P.] Bennett [sic], [William E.] Beck, and [Joseph C.] Helm.

Colorado was at this time in a very prosperous condition, and the people were justly proud of their state, of its history, its resources, and its possibilities. By supplying myself pretty freely with help in the form of stenographers and statisticians, I secured the experiences of several hundred of those who had the most to do in making the early history of this region. Among the manuscripts thus resulting was one which must ever constitute the corner-stones of Colorado history. Nearly two months were occupied in writing it, and the work on it was done in this way: Taking a full file of the *Rocky Mountain News*, the first journal published in the country and still running, I sat down before it with a stenographer and its first editor [William N. Byers], who, while I questioned and commented, told the history of the state, turning over the leaves of the newspaper to refresh his memory, and give him the desired information.

Judge Stone's ideas and experiences form a very interesting historical manuscript. He assured me that the topography of Colorado was in his mind's eye as clear as if seen at one view from the corner of a cloud; and I found his knowledge of political and commercial affairs, and the resources and industries of the state no less lucid and interesting.⁶

On this 1884 journey Bancroft hired agents who were to carry on the work locally in his absence, although he remained some months in Denver. Mrs. Bancroft was with him, and they stopped at the St. James Hotel on Curtis Street. Part of the winter of 1884-85 was spent in New Mexico, and there was a side trip to Cheyenne. Bancroft was again in Colorado in 1886, as indicated by a letter written at the Hotel Monte Cristo in Salida,⁷ where the wife of the proprietor, he noted, was Emma Homan Thayer, a painter of Colorado wildflowers. He also went to Gunnison that year.

Bancroft's invariable technique was to get his name in the local paper soon after his arrival. Many of the one hundred issues of Colorado newspapers he gathered contain advertisements for the *Works*. Others note the presence of Bancroft or



Hubert Howe Bancroft

an agent in town. Bancroft wrote to Mr. Faulkner of the History Company from Denver, October 20, 1884:

The articles I made read bang up. I wish you could make up a dozen or 15 and always have some on hand to place in the hands of agents going into new fields. The papers almost anywhere will publish them simply for the asking. These articles were absolutely essential to the success of the agents here, and the same will apply I believe to solicitors in Wyoming, Texas, &c.⁸

When in late 1884 a complimentary article about the *Works* appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, "HHB," as he invariably signed his memos, wrote again to Mr. Faulkner from Denver:

A good notice like that in the *Chronicle* sent to a man who has just subscribed and didn't want to & is a little weak-kneed about it still, will do him a lot of good and make him feel he hasn't been swindled.

In Denver, in addition to the subscribers, send to: Mrs. Alice Polk Hill, Dr. J. Tracy Edson, Dr. S. A. Fiske, Dr. F. J. Bancroft, A. deP. Parker, Mrs. Augusta Tabor, Dr. A. J. Russell, Judge [Samuel] Elbert, Ex. Gov. [John] Evans, and Judge N. J. Bond, Council Bluffs, Iowa.⁹

Bancroft hired at least eleven men to canvass Colorado. Three different lists, found among the History Company miscellaneous records, indicate names of agents, towns visited, and

⁶ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Literary Industries*, vol. xxxix: *Works* (1890), pp. 761-62. It is worthy of note that Judge Stone published his own four-volume *History of Colorado* in 1918, almost forty years later.

⁷ Miscellaneous History Company records.

⁸ Ibid. The Bancroft Library today has five boxes of miscellaneous records of the History Company relating to the Pacific states volumes. These include correspondence with agents, printed instructions for interviewing, order blanks, and sales summaries. Materials relating to Colorado were made available to the writer by Mrs. Julia H. MacLeod and Miss Estelle Rebec of the library staff.

⁹ Ibid.

the number of sets sold. A composite of these records, although obviously incomplete in some instances, follows:

Colonel L. S. Hatch, whose name appears on History Company letterheads as "Manager, Department of Colorado," visited twenty-eight larger cities and towns throughout the state, mostly centered on railroad routes. He also called on thirty-seven "prominent doctors" in Denver and on all of the legislators in session in 1886. Hatch is listed as having sold 349 sets of Bancroft's *Works*.

Professor E. W. Fowler, who covered thirty-five towns in northeastern Colorado and the Western Slope, sold 252 sets. J. R. Campbell, who frequently signed himself "Secretary to Hubert H. Bancroft," operated in Rocky Ford, Las Animas, McMillan, Prowers, South Pueblo, Trinidad, and Springfield. Records indicate that he sold thirty-seven sets. He had also solicited in California.

John M. Long, whose sprightly comments, written on order blanks and enclosed with dictations, endear him to a researcher, visited sixteen places in the Wet Mountain Valley and east of Denver and Colorado Springs as well as Breckenridge and Leadville. No total sales are given for Long, although there is a letter he wrote from Red Cliff on September 2, 1886: "I have seen everybody in this camp that is able to buy Mr. B's work. Have sent you thirteen orders which is a great surprise to myself." His correspondence extends over a considerable period of time, and one assumes that he would not have stayed with the company had he not continued selling in other places.

Other agents include R. D. Bemiss, in Greeley and Akron, who sold five sets; T. C. Devlin, who had worked for Bancroft in Texas, now operated out of Denver to Evergreen, Arvada, Morrison, and Semper [sic], and sold fourteen sets; Charles F. Fishback, who reported from Crested Butte that "[even] one dollar for books seems abnormally large," sold none; H. V. Johnson, canvassing fifteen towns, fifty-seven; J. A. Nelson, seventy-four; and J. C. Sherwin, Denver, one. The combined lists indicate a total sale in Colorado of 882 sets, subscribed for in 139 different cities and towns. At a minimum of \$4.50 a volume, thirty-nine volumes to a set, these sales project to \$150,000 gross for the state. Doubtless, there were numerous defaults and cancellations, but this remains a remarkable publishing venture. Bancroft's reputation as a successful businessman seldom has been challenged.

The History Company issued elaborate instructions for interviewing. One such set lists fifty-six questions to be asked.

These include birthplace and childhood, such as whether the interviewee was "nurtured in elegance," opinions, memberships in fraternal orders, business attitudes on such things as "manners maketh the man," moral nature, and habits. Other questions were: "What do you think of the Battle of Sand Creek?" "Of Chivington?" "Have you held political office?" "Are you a political aspirant?" "Health qualities of Colorado?" There were also report forms requiring agents to list each person seen as well as those from whom dictations and orders were obtained. A unique contract form, one of several used, was replete with endorsements of the *Works* and measured twelve by forty-eight inches. It advertised all thirty-nine volumes.

San Francisco, Cal. Aug. ¹⁶ 1893

To Hubert Howe Bancroft.

Dear Sir

In token of my high appreciation of the value to the Pacific Coast, and to the world, of your long and arduous historical labors, in a new field and after a manner peculiar to your self, I herewith tender my subscription to a complete set of your literary works in thirty nine volumes in number and style of binding as designated below: payments to be made at the regular published prices as the volumes are issued and delivered.

J. S. Larwin

It is difficult to ascertain from the records how Bancroft's men were paid. There is no indication in the miscellaneous papers that money was advanced or paid to them by the company, nor is there mention of requests for advances in the correspondence. Such letters, if any, probably were addressed to the History Company, very few records of which are in the Bancroft Library. Existing records indicate that agents ordered books from the History Company and that these were delivered to them and billed at "agent's price," which in 1890 was \$2.25 for the Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming volume. A printed price list for subscribers indicated \$4.50 for sheep bindings; \$5.50, half-calf; \$8.00, Turkey or Russian; and \$10.00, full calf. The volumes, of seven hundred pages each, were a standard size

which doubtlessly had something to do with the efficiency of the manufacturing process, since there is evidence that some manuscripts were cut to fit this length. By 1884, when solicitations began in Colorado, there were already a dozen volumes in print. Presumably, commissions on sales as these volumes were delivered kept agents going.

Here and there brief addenda to dictations and occasional pieces of correspondence from agents make reference to problems of selling. A letter from "HHB" at Denver, November 26, 1884, also requested: "I wish you could find out what promises have been made by canvassers about people in the book." The History Company, records also show, apparently acknowledged every order and dictation with a personal letter. Agents frequently forwarded suggestions: "In your letter to him, please touch him up a little on his extensive travels"; or "He has gotten on very fast since coming to Colorado. Touch him on this point."

Bancroft, in a letter to Mr. Stone at the History Company on September 13, 1883, also called attention to the necessity of keeping customers happy. (Subscribers at that time were receiving three or four volumes a year.)

I don't know what course you adopt with regard to writing your subscribers occasionally. I mean having a nice letter written to them, but the continuance of the sets here in Mexico will depend largely upon how they are looked after from San Francisco.

What they want is occasionally a nice letter speaking a good word. Not long but something that will make them feel we remember them in some other way than simply the price of a volume. For instance you could put in a word at first saying that I was much pleased with the manner in which my request for information was met by them, &c.

Another time say something else. Send them a marked paper and then write a few lines saying you hope the work is giving them satisfaction. I believe it to be important that our subscribers everywhere should be kept in good humor.

On another occasion when Bancroft was pressing Humphrey B. Chamberlin of Denver to subscribe for his biography in the *Chronicles*, he (Bancroft) sent a laudatory letter to the *San Diego Union*. He commended in extravagant terms Chamberlin's foresight and great faith in the West for his promotion of the Denver, Colorado Cañon, and Pacific Railroad. This proposed line was to run from Grand Junction along the floor of the Colorado River to its mouth in California.

The Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming volume was completed probably by the end of 1885; nevertheless, agents still

were busily soliciting dictations and orders in 1886 and 1887.¹⁰ Caughey has asserted that the plan of the volume was Bancroft's and that his interpretations pervaded the entire set of the *Works*. "He inserted the adornments." The plan was logical: gold discoveries, need for government, town planting, agricultural accomplishments such as irrigation and stock raising, constitutional convention, and statehood. The Colorado section of the work concluded with the early eighties.¹¹

There is considerable evidence that in the preparation of volume 25 Bancroft's literary staff¹² made an effort to include somewhere in the footnotes the names of subscribers, but this effort did not always relate information to its source. Added to such mention there was often a flattering phrase such as "a prominent physician," "a well-to-do business man," "a cultured and refined leader," or "a man of Christian character." One footnote merely enumerated twenty-five pioneers. Another, eight pages long, was a catalog of Colorado newspapers. One of the "biographical" footnotes ran to nine pages. Altogether in the Colorado portion of the volume there were 336 footnotes, but it must be concluded reluctantly that Bancroft's most frequent use of footnotes appears to have been to butter up subscribers, while a large share of the information was offered without direct citation. As Bancroft himself wrote from Colorado Springs on October 7, 1884:

Some of the Dictations don't amount to much but I would like to use them for all they are worth, and more too, putting them in lists of authorities, quoting them freely, and giving biographical notices.¹³

Nevertheless, only about one-third of the dictations furnished by Colorado men and women appears to have been used, the major part of the text coming from printed sources.¹⁴

¹⁰ There is some evidence in the miscellaneous records that a total of about 450 dictations were on hand in the library on December 19, 1885.

¹¹ Volume 25 contained 322 pages on Nevada, 336 on Colorado, and 147 on Wyoming. Of the volumes on the Pacific states seven were devoted to California and the others to neighboring states.

¹² Frances Fuller Victor is credited by Caughey with sixteen-seventeenths of the Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming volume. Her authorship and career are detailed by William Alfred Morris, "The Origin and Authorship of the Bancroft Pacific States Publications: A History of a History," *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, IV (December 1903), pp. 287-364. Bancroft, according to Caughey, wrote the first two chapters. See also *Literary Industries*, p. 259, in which Bancroft himself frankly describes these activities and gives much credit to various workers. Caughey has reported that Bancroft directed the preparation and outlining of the Colorado volume and in 1884 sent Mrs. Victor a series of letters containing such advice. *Ibid.*, pp. 265-351. See also Oak, "Literary Industries." Hazel Emery Mills, Washington State Library, has recently prepared a brief biographical sketch and a selected list of Mrs. Fuller's works, "A Dedication to the Memory of Frances Fuller Victor, 1826-1902," *Arizona and the West*, XII (Summer 1970), pp. 111-14.

¹³ Miscellaneous History Company records.

¹⁴ A handwritten "inventory" in the miscellaneous History Company records lists seventeen books used in the writing of the Colorado section.

The Bancroft interviews totaled more than ten thousand in the West, of which more than fourteen hundred were from Colorado alone. The longer of these, less than one hundred, were done almost entirely by Bancroft himself.¹⁵ Since the earliest Colorado gold seekers had arrived only twenty-five years before and the state of Colorado was not yet ten years old, practically everyone interviewed had had some part in local history. Compiled as "detailed statements respecting early times," they constitute today firsthand, original source materials, descriptions, and views, the value of which has grown immeasurably with passing years. As personal recollections of "living witnesses," prominent and vigorous at the time of interviewing, the material has gained a primary importance far beyond recollections of "old-timers." Fortunately, a few of the interviews have been published in recent years,¹⁶ and useful indexes of the Colorado dictations have been made, rendering them readily available to scholars.¹⁷

One of the lengthy dictations, titled "Colorado Notes," contains Bancroft's own opinions and appraisals, which were perhaps biased:

About ex-Governor Evans and his son-in-law Judge Elbert, there is much humbug. They are cold-blooded mercenary men, ready to praise themselves and each other profusely, but who have in . . . reality but little patriotism. I never met a railroad man who was not the quintessence of meanness in more particulars than one.

Samuel H. Elbert gave a great many opinions on public figures, labeling them "not to be quoted!"¹⁸

Franz Fohr, who supplied information about Leadville, was characterized:

¹⁵ These lengthier manuscripts, sixty-eight in number, were earlier known as the Bancroft Library as the "L" series and for the most part had been bound. Varying in length from three to eighty-nine pages, they are dictations from such men as Charles Boettcher, William N. Byers, John Evans, William Gilpin, John M. Chivington, Richard Sopris, and H. A. W. Tabor. Some are handwritten and some are typewritten. Many are in Bancroft's handwriting and others have his often pithy or acrid comments appended or have indications of his editing.

¹⁶ LeRoy R. Hafen, who completed his doctorate in 1924 under Dr. Herbert G. Bolton and moved to Colorado to become state historian, published some of the longer Bancroft dictations, such as those of Mrs. Augusta Pierce Tabor, Governor John Evans, and Wolfe Londoner and those relating to the Sand Creek Massacre in *The Colorado Magazine*.

¹⁷ During World War II years, at the suggestion of Dr. Bolton and with the assistance of Mrs. Eleanor Bancroft and Frank Brezee, the writer prepared an extensive check list and summary of 1,387 Colorado manuscripts in the library. This handwritten, annotated calendar has been in use for many years in the Western History Department, Denver Public Library. In 1963 Dale L. Morgan and George P. Hammond compiled *A Guide to the Manuscript Collections of the Bancroft Library* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), which listed 1,010 Colorado manuscripts, usefully rearranged by counties and well indexed.

¹⁸ Bancroft, "Colorado Notes," Colorado Manuscripts, P-L 13, Bancroft Library.

Fohr is manager of some smelting works and is a very good & learned gentleman—pity he is such a fool. Nevertheless I got from him all I care to write. HHB.¹⁹

Fortunately, Bancroft's strong, often outrageous opinions did not find their way into print, or he might have found himself in hot water for some time to come. Governor Evans is mentioned only briefly, but not antagonistically, several times in the Colorado section. In speculating on this slight to a notable Colorado figure, it can be surmised that perhaps Evans declined to provide the Bancrofts and agents with railroad passes, which Bancroft invariably sought.

That Bancroft was able to revise his opinions quickly and handsomely when advantage appeared is illustrated by his attitude on the Tabor. His interview with Augusta Pierce Tabor, "Cabin Life in Colorado," is one of the most readable early-day accounts among the manuscripts. Of Senator Tabor, however, he wrote in 1884:

The Tabor people here are very bad eggs [and] although he is very wealthy and has long been a public [figure] he is very generally despised. He put away his wife for some cause & married a disreputable woman. The least said about any of them the better.²⁰

By the time Bancroft had completed the thirty-nine-volume *Works*, there was so much material left over and he had uncovered so many lucrative prospects that he began a series of biographical accounts, the *Chronicles of the Builders*, "in which events were subordinate to men." These seven volumes were planned in 1888 and published in 1891-92. Horace Austin Warner Tabor subscribed, at one hundred dollars a page, for the inclusion of sixty-six pages of his life story and a steel plate portrait.²¹ Tabor's own dictation began: "I was born in Orleans county, Vermont Nov. 26, 1830. I do not know but little of my ancestors." In the published account Bancroft described Tabor as "a young Kansas Lawyer" whose ancestral seat was Rochford Hall, Essex. This is the only record of Tabor's having been a lawyer. His own dictation records that he was a stonecutter by trade. The lavish and laudatory life story mentions Tabor's marriages as briefly as possible: "On the first of March 1883,

¹⁹ Franz Fohr, Dictation, Colorado Manuscripts, P-L 25.

²⁰ Bancroft, "Colorado Notes," Colorado Manuscripts, P-L 13.

²¹ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Chronicles of the Builders*, 7 vols. (San Francisco: The History Company, 1891-92), IV, 273-339. Caughey in *Hubert Howe Bancroft*, p. 322, reported that fees paid for the *Chronicles* amounted to \$219,255, several times the cost of preparation and manufacture. There were four other Colorado men included in this new work: ex-Governor William Gilpin, sixty pages; Senator Nathaniel P. Hill, twenty-one pages; Isaac Elder Blake, president of the Continental Oil Company, seventeen pages; and Jerome B. Wheeler, of Macy's and Aspen, twenty-four pages.

Springs, asked him to adopt her views on the Colorado Indian wars. Unfortunately, Mrs. Jackson had earlier incurred disfavor:

She wishing a thing done would be the very reason I would not do it if I could help it. . . . I do not care about mentioning her name one way or another in the whole work. She has been polite enough here although she has a broken leg, but I don't care for politeness. I should have had fair recognition for the service I did her in the matter of her California articles in the *Century* which I never got. Everybody in Colorado is against her on the Chivington Massacre.²²

Bancroft's interest in the Battle of Sand Creek and his gathering of interviews from Chivington, Governor Evans, Lieutenant Anthony, and others have provided later historians with much valuable material, though often contradictory and much of it agreeing with Mrs. Jackson, despite what he wrote above.

Peter Dotson, a former Utah gentile, who was interviewed at Pueblo and who has long disappeared from history, was characterized by Bancroft at the bottom of his dictation:

Dotson had so many lies to tell about the Mormons & occurrences during his residence there that I regard them as hardly worth writing down. If he was shot at once, he was fifty times. The great chief of the Danites often warned him that he was to be killed that day &c., &c.²³

But two minor dictations taken by J. H. Long are typical of the kind of information obtained from many, many prospects. These biographical notations appear, if one is candid, to lean more to sales gimmicks than history gathering,

August 24, 1886
Gus Cohen
Red Cliff

Born in Poland, 1848. Came to U.S. in 1866, in 1867 went to Montana Territory. Went to Calif. in 1876 & from there to Sandwich Islands. Returned in 1880 and came to Colorado. Was in general merchandising at Fairplay for four years. In same business in Buena Vista one year. Came to Red Cliff June '86 & continued in same business.²⁴

Silver Cliff, Custer Co.
Dr. Samuel Ellis
May 22, 1886

Has a daughter living, raising a family and two sons dead. I brought tears to his eyes when taking dictation. But could not get money from his pocket. Touch him on death of his sons. Not pious though for he is a confirmed infidel. Thinks he is

²² Caughey, *Hubert Howe Bancroft*, p. 326.

²³ Peter Dotson, Dictation, Colorado Manuscripts, P-L 19.

²⁴ Gus Cohen, Dictation, Colorado Manuscripts, P-L 353.



On one of his steel-engraved letterheads, H. A. W. Tabor scrawled upside down an addendum to his biographical sketch.

being then divorced from his former wife, on whom he had made a handsome settlement, Mr. Tabor was married to Elizabeth Bonduel McCourt, at Washington." The biography continues with encomiums to Tabor's wisdom, foresight, acumen, and great stature in Colorado history.

Helen Hunt Jackson, whom the Bancrofts saw at Colorado

getting too old to buy a large work. I tried to make him think it could be a monument to his sons.²⁵

Such one-page interviews, with brief but often character-revealing observations, account for more than half of the Bancroft manuscripts relating to Colorado people. Beyond preserving the names of early-day residents and town builders, many of these documents, obtained by flattery and cajolery, contain perhaps a useful sentence or two of local history. In the case of Gus Cohen, who later was a well-known justice of the peace and general store proprietor in Guffey, Park County, a clue in his dictation was followed by this writer to Hawaii. The state archives there contain a record of Cohen's having purchased citizenship for five dollars from King Kalakaua. Interviewer T. C. Devlin concluded several dictations with "Has never been sued in his life." And Carlton C. Calkins, one of the original Longmont colonists, told HHB's man: "Our country school was the best in the state, has two teachers, and costs about \$25 a month to run."

Genealogists and local historians will find hundreds of useful items in the Colorado dictations. There is a great deal of "local color" and other detail heretofore unused. The writer, for his "Colorado Theatres, 1859-1969," gleaned more than a hundred references to opera houses and theaters and much biographical data on the men who built them. In addition to extensive accounts and opinions on Sand Creek, the Tabors, town building, and statehood, there are personal accounts of gold and silver discoveries, Colorado as a health refuge for tuberculosis sufferers, the history of irrigation and fruit raising, cattle towns and stock raising, vigilance committees, and many other aspects of history, some of which information was later used in volumes 36 and 37, *Popular Tribunals*. A significant point about the Bancroft material is that it contains opinions of men and women who lived during the state-making period, playing larger or smaller roles in the times. It further reveals facts of history and forces which they held to be important, not always in agreement with published accounts. As such, these observations have new value for historians who are continually reassessing the recorded past.

As soon as it appeared the volume on Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming engendered criticism as well as praise. David Boyd, the "gloomy historian" of Greeley, wrote: "The numerous misstatements made in Hubert Howe Bancroft's Volume XXV,

²⁵ Dr. Samuel Ellis, Dictation, Colorado Manuscripts, P-L 356.

which treats upon affairs with which we are familiar show how worthless is history as sometimes written."²⁶ An anonymous critic penned in careful Spencerian in the San Francisco Public Library's volume 25: "This historian Bancroft is prejudiced and unworthy of being an historian." But, to Bancroft's credit, the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association in 1919 reported: "His labors . . . endow the States and people of this coast with a priceless heritage of historical treasures."²⁷ Dr. John W. Draper, scientist and Civil War historian, wrote Bancroft, prior to 1882: "Your work needs no praise from me. It will be consulted and read centuries after you are gone."²⁸

Indeed, in these middle decades of the twentieth century the materials gathered by Bancroft and his agents ninety years ago have a new and emerging value. They are original and largely untapped source materials describing events men thought important in their own time. Moreover, Hubert Howe Bancroft appears to have anticipated, whatever his reasons, the present-day emphasis on the importance of gathering oral history.

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²⁶ David Boyd, *Greeley and the Union Colony of Colorado* (Greeley: Greeley Art Press, 1890), pp. viii-ix.

²⁷ *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1919*, 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1923), I, 114.

²⁸ Caughey, *Hubert Howe Bancroft*, p. 346.

Of Lager Beer and Sonorous Songs

BY ELLIOTT WEST

The popular conception of early Colorado would have it that hard-drinking argonauts, once they arrived at the Rockies, threw off eastern restraints and spent as much time at saloons as at the sluices. Without question, alcoholic refreshments have been a familiar part of Colorado society ever since "Uncle Dick" Wootton carried his first load of "Taos lightning" to Denver in 1858.¹ Yet, after 1900 one of the nation's strongest campaigns against liquor was waged in Colorado, and citizens of the state outlawed the production and sale of intoxicants five years before national prohibition was adopted. This crusade was not without foundation, for Colorado had a temperance² tradition which some of the first settlers struggled to implant with the rest of their concept of "civilization."

Many initial arrivals came from areas swept periodically by prohibitionist reform. Hostility to alcohol naturally was brought as part of the cultural inheritance of those seeking new fortunes. To some, such as the preacher and colony builder, the Rockies represented a land suited to raise man to a level closer to perfection, a country where air, water, and motives were equally pure. Merchants, professionals, and artisans also sometimes believed intoxicants threatened stable, prosperous growth, and the farmer and his wife often considered whiskey a danger to their family and well-being. Such elements organized to preserve and spread their beliefs, but their political energy largely was wasted in a third-party effort, although at-

tempts to restrict saloons by raising license fees were more successful and promising.

In the last two decades of the century, a crucial development opened the way for final victory. As Colorado took part in a national transition to a more complex, urban society, its citizens also shared an uneasiness and feared the problems arising from a new way of life. Prohibitionists' warnings took on broader implications as they were applied to crime, poverty, and general turbulence, and the movement appealed to a growing segment of persons concerned about the direction in which America was moving. A brief survey cannot capture the full extent of Colorado temperance work before 1900, but it can indicate the arrival and evolution of the crusade against liquor.

Throughout the years between 1859 and 1900 the bulk of immigrants to Colorado came from the Northeast and the valley of the Ohio River. New York, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana especially contributed to the population of the territory and state.³ Between 1851 and 1869 eighteen of the states and territories providing Colorado with its settlers passed or narrowly rejected prohibitory laws,⁴ although many of these measures later were repealed or declared unconstitutional.

All of the residents of the earliest camps did not leave their temperance beliefs at the Missouri. Nevertheless, in a community dominated by lonely bachelors longing for companionship, relaxation, and a warm place to sit, the saloon fulfilled a social need. The saloon usually was among the first businesses to appear in the mining camp, and grog shops often far surpassed any other type of establishment in both numbers and

One of the tent saloons which quenched miners' thirsts in Creede.



¹ *Denver Post*, March 7, 1904, clipping in T. F. Dawson Scrapbook IV, 73, State Historical Society of Colorado Library.

² In this paper "temperance" and "prohibition" both will describe a person or group desiring the ultimate end of the importation, manufacture, or sale of intoxicating liquor.

³ Colin B. Goodykoontz, "The People of Colorado," *Colorado and Its People*, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 4 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1948), II, 82-85.

⁴ Ernest H. Cherrington, *The Evolution of Prohibition in the United States of America* (Westerville, Ohio: The American Issue Press, 1920), pp. 135-82.

traffic. In response the first prohibition referendum in the area was held at Gold Hill, where miners voted to outlaw the sale of liquor.⁵ Whiskey selling also was forbidden in the Climax and Nevada districts and in Lump Gulch along the Front Range.⁶ On the Western Slope, the Craig Townsite Company provided in its deeds that anyone dispensing liquor must forfeit his property. Until the clause was removed in 1894, citizens seeking refreshments stronger than water or milk had to journey east of town to a saloon located on the aptly named Fortification Creek.⁷

Liquor was permitted in most towns, but its sale was regulated as a potential social danger. The saloon keeper often was liable to fines for opening on Sunday or election day, selling to a minor or habitual drunkard, or allowing women, "lewd or otherwise," to assemble in his establishment.⁸ People in such towns responded enthusiastically to attacks on alcohol, as when Horace Greeley, visiting the mountains in the flush of the first boom, had delivered a temperance lecture to an overflow audience in Denver and advised two thousand cheering miners at Gregory's Diggings to avoid the temptations of drink. Other temperance lecturers also toured the territory in its early years.⁹

Central City's Cornish families, described as "hard-working, temperate, good citizens," illustrated that islands of foreigners could oppose the liquor traffic by example.¹⁰ Matthew Dale, who came from Pennsylvania seeking both health and riches, apparently drank little or no whiskey and felt no desire for it after he arrived: "We brought no liquors of any kind with us and needed none." Nor was he alone in his preference. With a note of relief, Dale told his father of finding a place to stay with the brother of abolitionist Joshua Giddings. "He is very energetic," Matthew wrote of his landlord, "& uses no profanity or liquor, a very remarkable feature in this country."¹¹ To another youth, H. S. Hawley, Central City offered practical

examples of the dangers of overindulgence about which he had been warned in nightly prayer meetings back in Wisconsin. A convicted murderer repented enough to advise those around the scaffold to beware of "old Bourbon," the cause of his present predicament.¹² On other occasions when a criminal did not point an accusing finger at demon rum, a preacher might call a meeting and do so.¹³ Equally sobering was evidence that liquor impeded the all-important business of prospecting. Hawley's diary entry for New Year's Day 1861 reflects such an observation as well as the slight self-righteousness of a man above the temptations of the saloon:

A beautiful day—I enjoyed my-self—tip-top working hard—as the mode of recreation in this country does not suit my style. *Vis drinking fighting whiskey.* I heard of a few parties but as I am living a rather retired [sic] life did not indulge in any of them. On my way home saw any amount of men about as rich as they genely [sic] get or as old *Bourbon* will let them.¹⁴

If the miner harbored such sentiments, he usually left them in his diary, but preachers were eager to broadcast temperance ideas and carry them to the saloon itself. The well-known vice of the mining town increased its attractiveness to the young and adventuresome minister. While descending to new depths of depravity, the gold seeker might be lifted instantly to salvation if he could be shown how close he had come to the devil. A minister could receive fulfillment from words like those of a drunkard, enticed from saloon to prayer meeting, who listened intently to a blistering sermon, then approached his enlightener with an offering and a promise to mend his ways: "Now give us your hand, pard, you've done me proud."¹⁵

In the Boston slums Francis Byrne had seen poverty and suffering which he blamed on intemperance, and Byrne preached his beliefs in churches and Good Templars' meetings around Central City.¹⁶ Others also considered whiskey the most important breeder of crime.¹⁷ The American Home Missionary Society noted the national danger posed by the liquor interests and warned its western representatives that the relative power of the saloon was 250 percent greater in their area;¹⁸ yet, by its

⁵ Percy S. Fritz, "Was 'Mountain District No. 1, Nebraska Territory,' the First Mining District Organized in Colorado?" *The Colorado Magazine*, XV (May 1938), p. 88.

⁶ Thomas Maitland Marshall, ed., *Early Records of Gilpin County, Colorado, 1859-1861*, University of Colorado Historical Collections, vol. II (Boulder: University of Colorado, 1920), pp. 139, 172, 176.

⁷ Elladean Pierce, "Early Days of Craig, Colorado," *The Colorado Magazine*, V (August 1928), p. 156.

⁸ See, for example, *The Ordinances of Georgetown* (Georgetown: Jesse S. Randall, 1877), pp. 87-89, 93-94.

⁹ *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), June 18, 1859, p. 1; Kathryn Mehl DePew, "The Temperance Movement in Territorial Colorado" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Colorado, 1953), pp. 39-40.

¹⁰ Emma Teller Tyler, "Personal Reminiscences of Early Day Central City," p. 8, Lynn Perrigo Collection, Western History Collection, Norlin Library, University of Colorado, Boulder.

¹¹ Robert G. Athearn, ed., "Life in the Pike's Peak Region: The Letters of Matthew H. Dale," *The Colorado Magazine*, XXXII (April 1955), pp. 89, 86.

¹² Diary of H. S. Hawley, April 13, 1861, p. 105, typescript, James F. Willard Collection, Western History Collection, Norlin Library.

¹³ Diary of A. T. Rankin, October 7, 1860, p. 7, typescript, State Historical Society of Colorado Library.

¹⁴ Diary of H. S. Hawley, p. 80.

¹⁵ *American Home Missionary*, LI (April 1879), pp. 288-89.

¹⁶ "Memoir of Rev. Francis Byrne," pt. 1, p. 44, Francis Byrne Collection, State Historical Society of Colorado Library.

¹⁷ See, for example, diary of A. T. Rankin, October 9, 1860, p. 8.

¹⁸ *American Home Missionary*, LX (January 1888), p. 362.

STONEFIST, OF BIG NUGGET BEND;

Or, OLD KETCHUM'S TUG OF WAR.

BY CAPTAIN MARK WILTON,

AUTHOR OF "CACTUS JACK," "DON SOMBRERO," "LADY JAGUAR," "THE SCORPION BROTHERS," "CANTON DATE," ETC., ETC.



"Back, you degraded wretches," cried dime-novel crusader Stonefist.
"Not one drop of this vile stuff goes down your throats."

influence the church could mobilize the God-fearing against the whiskey seller and drive him out.¹⁹ Indeed, churches in the Rockies could be molded into a moral order superior to any, for "one's environments are inspiring and crowd him on to great undertakings," wrote a western minister of the opportunities awaiting. Strong, enterprising men were needed, "rustlers" for souls corralled by Satan.²⁰

Thomas Uzzell was perhaps the best example of such a crusader. Uzzell understood instant conversion, for he had seen the light at a Methodist revival in Illinois where he had gone to heckle the parson and shoot peas at the worshippers. After

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, LXII (November 1889), p. 308.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, LV (September 1882), pp. 133-35.

graduation from Asbury University, he began his career at Fairplay, later following his flock of black sheep to Leadville. There he built the town's first church and carried his message to the saloons, brawling if necessary to gain attention and respect. After serving at Georgetown, where he campaigned for local candidates with temperance beliefs, "Parson Tom" in 1885 founded the "People's Tabernacle" in the midst of Denver's brothels and grog shops. Later he opened a home for alcoholics and narcotics addicts. For years he delivered sermons and temperance lectures to a growing congregation of workers, vagrants, and prostitutes and worked actively in political attacks on the saloon.²¹

In the crusade to abolish alcohol, the most active of the religious organizations were the Methodists, who proposed, first, restrictions and, next, the end of liquor sales.²² Occasionally churches joined in cooperative groups, such as the Christian Temperance Alliance, formed in 1872.²³

The most important temperance organization of the mountains, the Independent Order of Good Templars, appeared first in Denver in 1864 and soon established lodges in nearby towns.²⁴ In 1866 these local groups formed a territorial Grand Lodge, and three years later the Order boasted twenty-four lodges and 1,051 members, most of them in the mountains.²⁵ Pledged to total abstinence and eradication of the saloon, the Good Templars strove to educate the young on the dangers of alcohol, lectured with the aid of scriptural views, and for a while published their own newspaper.²⁶

Although miners belonged to the Order, professionals and merchants apparently provided a large part of the leadership. Officers and delegates to conventions included a postmaster, mining engineer, tailor, dentist, carpenter, publisher, wagon maker, doctors, and lawyers, as well as several ministers. Participation by wives and daughters of members also stresses that

²¹ *Denver Post*, January 17, 1909, clipping in T. F. Dawson Scrapbook XXXIV, 195; *Denver Post*, December 18, 1910, clipping *ibid.*, XXXVIII, 31; *American Home Missionary*, LVII (April 1885), pp. 482-83; *Rocky Mountain News*, October 28, 1892, p. 3.

²² The annual Methodist Conference included a temperance committee which by 1886 recommended full prohibition as the only effective remedy of the liquor problem. *Journal of the Twenty-Fourth Session of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church Held at Greeley, Colorado, July 15-20, 1886* (Denver: John Dove, 1886), p. 148.

²³ *Journal of Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Session of the Grand Lodge of Colorado, I. O. G. T.* (Georgetown: Jesse S. Randall, 1875), p. 27.

²⁴ "Colorado," in *Standard Encyclopedia of the Alcohol Problem*, 5 vols. (Westerville, Ohio: American Issue Publishing Co., 1924), II, 657.

²⁵ *Journal of Proceedings of the Third Annual Session of the Grand Lodge of Colorado, I. O. G. T.* (Georgetown: Jesse S. Randall, 1869), pp. 6, 9.

²⁶ *Journal of Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Session of the Grand Lodge of Colorado, I. O. G. T.*, pp. 7-11.

Good Templars often were family men.²⁷ Merchants, artisans, and professionals hoped to build a stable community attractive to permanent settlers. Liquor bred crime and rowdiness and thus threatened secure, prosperous growth.

A brief examination of one mining town perhaps can indicate the extent and nature of temperance activity in the mountains in general. Response to the Good Templars of Georgetown was strong enough to necessitate two lodges and, in addition, a "juvenile temple" was founded with eleven members in 1875.²⁸ The Order's activity was restricted mainly to public lectures and weekly meetings, though it occasionally dabbled in politics if liquor became an issue. As in many towns, the Good Templars was the largest but not the only temperance organization. Georgetown Catholics could join the Father Mathew Total Abstinence and Beneficial Union with a pledge to abstain from liquor unless under orders of a physician. Violators of the pledge paid fines which, along with dues, were given to members if they fell ill.²⁹ A Murphy Club supported a temperance hall and reading room, and the Sons of Temperance and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union also founded local chapters. Activity in Georgetown was great enough to merit comment at the national convention of the WCTU in 1878, though the claim of eleven thousand abstinence pledges signed in the mining town obviously is distorted.³⁰

However, temperance opinion rarely, if ever, dominated a mining town; and even where liquor laws were passed a yawning gap almost always separated intent from reality. Only nine months after Nevada District banished liquor to "promote understanding between man and man," an election-day observer reported free whiskey and more drunkenness and fighting than he had ever seen in the mountains.³¹ Regulatory ordinances sometimes seemed more honored in the breach than in the observance. Environment of the camps generated a public demand for whiskey that could not long be ignored. Yet, some miners attempted, however futilely, to quarantine themselves from alcohol.

On the plains other believers in temperance were attracted

²⁷ See *Gilpin County Directory* (Denver: Colorado Directory Co., 1897) and *Colorado Business Directory and Annual Register for 1877* (Denver: J. A. Blake, 1877).

²⁸ *Journal of Proceedings of the Third Annual Session of the Grand Lodge of Colorado, I. O. G. T.*, pp. 20-21.

²⁹ *Constitution and By-Laws of the Father Mathew Total Abstinence and Beneficial Union of Georgetown, Colorado* (Georgetown: Jesse H. Randall, 1877), pp. 3-5.

³⁰ Copy of national minutes, State WCTU Papers, Western History Collection, Norlin Library.

³¹ Marshall, ed., *Early Records of Gilpin County*, p. 139.

to Union Colony at Greeley, Longmont, and Fountain Colony at Colorado Springs, where the founders sought to cultivate rich soil, flourish in a healthy climate, and build a society to their own moral specifications. The land along the base of the Rockies seemed to fit these requirements admirably. Nathan C. Meeker, sent out to find a spot for the Union Colony group, reported a well-watered region which could support a variety of crops and a bracing atmosphere which would strengthen the body and lungs. Both qualities would contribute to a stimulating moral climate.³² Agriculture was the work of the upright, the "basis of wealth, of power, of morality" stated the constitution of the Chicago-Colorado Colony which founded Longmont.³³ A person often was looking for moral as well as physical well-being. "I arrived at Greeley, having come from the Far-East to the then Far West, in pursuit of health," one settler recalled, "so, I brought my heart along with me bounding with enthusiasm concerning many lines of reform work, one of the most noticeable the temperance cause."³⁴

Most important, the unpeopled plains formed a blank slate upon which colonists could draw plans for a new way of life. In building such a new order, liquor, a corrupter of body and spirit, had to be excluded. Constitutions of the colonies limited membership to men with temperate habits, and deeds provided for forfeiture of land if alcoholic beverages were manufactured, sold, or given away by the owner.³⁵

The requirement that ardent spirits shall neither be sold nor manufactured on the Colony grounds, brings together an organized and select body, the moral part of mankind, who hitherto have always lived disassociated, and there can be no doubt but that they will exercise a power with reference to moral and religious affairs much greater than ever before exhibited.³⁶

Only the best of life in eastern communities would be carried with the migrants:

One great advantage gained by the members of this colony is, an emancipation almost as great as that enjoyed by the slaves.

³² "A Western Colony," December 4, 1869, in James F. Willard, ed., *The Union Colony at Greeley, Colorado, 1869-1871*, University of Colorado Historical Collections, vol. I (1918), p. 1; "The Organization of a Western Colony," *ibid.*, p. 9.

³³ Quoted in James F. Willard and Colin B. Goodykoontz, eds., *Experiments in Colorado Colonization, 1869-1872: Selected Contemporary Records Relating to the German Colonization Company and the Chicago-Colorado, St. Louis-Western, and Southwestern Colonies*, University of Colorado Historical Collections, vol. III (1926), p. 141.

³⁴ Annette Fairbanks Manuscript, State WCTU Papers.

³⁵ Union Colony Minutes, May 12, 1870, in Willard, ed., *Union Colony at Greeley*, p. 23; Union Colony Constitution, *ibid.*, p. 162; "A Colony Deed, With Liquor Clause," *ibid.*, p. 201.

³⁶ *Greeley Tribune*, March 8, 1871, p. 2, quoted in Willard and Goodykoontz, eds., *Experiments in Colorado Colonization*, p. 266.

Wherever we have lived, and through our whole lives, we have been obliged to associate with drunkards and tipplers, who swarmed in every rank of society and who met us at every turn. . . . New York, with its wealth and immense business; Boston, with its high culture and its prohibitory law, and Philadelphia with brotherly love, are equally cursed with rum; and in western towns, Chicago, Davenport, St. Louis, St. Paul, & Omaha, are the Germans with their lager beer, and sonorous songs, and Sunday pic-nics. Even in small country towns, were the lager beer saloons, and ragged hangers-on—on all railroads were the Irishmen with their whiskey and shellahas, and everywhere young men of promise were growing red and bloated. All these are left behind. We have been emancipated, and we breathe freer. The day of Jubilee has come.³⁷

Colony leaders claimed success. Without liquor, the crime rate and cost of paupers were low in towns of sober, energetic, intelligent citizens. There were few indications of immorality.³⁸ Not only whiskey dens but also gambling halls and billiard parlors were excluded. Sabbath desecration and even profanity reportedly had almost disappeared.³⁹ The combination of "potatoes, lyc[e]ums, sugar beets and moral ideas," wrote a Greeley editor, soon would attract fifty thousand inhabitants.⁴⁰ Even Greeley's entertainment reinforced the founders' beliefs, as when the colonists were treated to the temperance drama *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room*.⁴¹ Any cracks in the moral wall of the town were quickly patched. When a German saloon keeper leased a building on the outskirts of Greeley, about two hundred persons gathered, and during a discussion the owner discovered his establishment was ablaze. Prosecution of several suspects began after the incident, but the matter was dropped.⁴² The proprietor of a billiard parlor also was run out of town, and Longmont residents awoke one morning to find that a saloon in their midst had been put to the torch. Nor did the citizenry seem repentant. "None are sorry, and all cry 'good,'" one supporter commented. "It should be the duty of every person to make war upon it [liquor] until it is driven from our land."⁴³

Soon after the first colonists arrived at the Union Colony, a Good Templars lodge was founded and other temperance

groups were organized in the churches.⁴⁴ Such zeal where the battle against liquor apparently had been won seems ironical. "While some said what is the need of a temperance organization in a temperance town," the founder of the Greeley WCTU recalled, "I replied to keep it so."⁴⁵ The tension between lofty ideals and danger of decay replenished dedication among the colonists and kept them constantly alert. As predicted, this "moral part of mankind" provided articulate leadership and support for prohibition far out of proportion to their numbers.

Like temperance colonists, farmers usually had families to shelter from the lawlessness, immorality, and personal degradation blamed on intoxicants and the saloon. With the farmers came women and their civilizing hands, which often had been raised in anger or clasped in prayer against the dram shops of the East. Colorado's WCTU always found its most consistent support in the small towns dominated by agriculture.⁴⁶ Proponents of the few temperance bills considered before 1900 could depend on backing in most farming communities, though support certainly did not come exclusively from representatives of such areas. The farmer's attitude was expressed through the Colorado Grange. In 1875 its convention resolved to encourage sobriety and never to elect as an officer anyone of intemperate habits.⁴⁷ By 1890 the Grangers endorsed state and national prohibition, a stand reaffirmed at future conventions.⁴⁸

Although temperance support thus could be found in varying degrees in both mountain and plains communities, political and legal accomplishments before 1900 were meager. The attempt to build a statewide movement for reform through the Prohibition party had little impact. Supporters often were former Republicans who felt that the party of Lincoln had sold its crusading zeal for support from the "liquor interests." "I loved that grand old party and its principles . . . but I will not now bow with it at the shrine of Bacchus," one campaigner pledged.⁴⁹ Hopefully, the Prohibitionists were to grow from an attack on the liquor traffic to a bid for national power, just as the Republicans supposedly had built upon the antislavery impulse to

³⁷ *Greeley Tribune*, December 14, 1870, p. 2, quoted in Willard, ed., *Union Colony at Greeley*, p. 321.

³⁸ *Denver Daily Tribune*, May 9, 1879, p. 3.

³⁹ *Greeley Tribune*, November 23, 1870, p. 3, quoted in Willard, ed., *Union Colony at Greeley*, p. 314; *Greeley Tribune*, December 21, 1870, p. 3, quoted *ibid.*, p. 325.

⁴⁰ *Greeley Tribune*, January 25, 1871, p. 2, quoted in Willard, ed., *Union Colony at Greeley*, p. 328.

⁴¹ *Denver Tribune*, February 2, 1871, p. 2, quoted *ibid.*, pp. 330-31.

⁴² The incident may be followed in documents printed *ibid.*, pp. 296-307.

⁴³ *Denver Daily Tribune*, June 8, 1871, p. 2, quoted in Willard and Goodykoontz, eds., *Experiments in Colorado Colonization*, p. 306.

⁴⁴ *Daily Rocky Mountain News*, September 28, 1870, p. 4, quoted in Willard, ed., *Union Colony at Greeley*, p. 280.

⁴⁵ Fairbanks Manuscript.

⁴⁶ More local unions were founded in agricultural areas, but the largest unions were in the cities, such as Denver and Pueblo. See, for example, *Minutes of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Colorado, Tenth Annual Session* (Denver: John Dove, 1889), pp. 43-44. Hereafter cited as *WCTU Minutes, 1889*.

⁴⁷ *Proceedings of the State Grange of Colorado, Patrons of Husbandry, at the Second Annual Session* (Denver: Colorado Farmer Printing, 1875), p. 46.

⁴⁸ *Proceedings of the Colorado State Grange P. of H. Sixteenth Annual Session* (Denver: Colorado Farmer Publishing, 1890), p. 62.

⁴⁹ *Denver Republican*, April 1, 1889, p. 7.

achieve victory in 1860. Indeed, prohibition was considered part of the same crusade against evil that earlier had been directed toward slavery.⁵⁰ To vote for liquor, according to an article reprinted in a Colorado newspaper, was to honor the memory of Jeff Davis, the "whiskey-god of the nation."⁵¹

The Prohibition party of Colorado was founded in 1884, fifteen years after the birth of the national party.⁵² In its first year the Colorado group failed to field a state ticket but did demand the abolition of the manufacture and sale of liquor.⁵³ Because the national party experienced a surge of strength that year, which may have thrown the presidency to Cleveland, the Colorado Republican convention responded by deploring crime and poverty spawned by whiskey, recommending a popular vote to ascertain feeling about prohibition and nominating for governor Benjamin Eaton, well known as an abstainer.⁵⁴ The *Rocky Mountain News* commented: "This mockery was gone through with for the purpose of capturing the temperance people in the fall campaign, and it has no other meaning."⁵⁵

The editor seems to have been essentially correct. Once victorious, Republicans ceased endorsing the basic aims of the Prohibitionists or even seeking the promised referendum. The Prohibitionists then began to run a state ticket but never approached victory or polled enough votes to demand concessions. Their basic error was a refusal to consider anything but total prohibition. Perhaps by keeping such a final goal but working for less sweeping steps, they might have furthered what was necessarily going to be a long process. But they "do not want success as much as they want martyrdom," one commentator wrote with contempt.⁵⁶ As new issues arose in the 1890s to dominate campaigns and the Prohibitionists sank even deeper into insignificance, they only emphasized more their rigid sentiments. A Boulder paper reported of a local ticket in 1888: "While they did not expect to elect any of the candidates, they demonstrated to the public they acted from principle."⁵⁷ They also wrote unintentionally the epitaph of any hopes for political gain.

For temperance advocates the years before 1900 were not wholly barren of successes at the state level. In addition to

earlier laws regulating the sale and production of liquor and the licensing of saloons, two measures were passed in the late 1880s which were steps toward total prohibition.⁵⁸ State legislators in 1887 passed a scientific temperance instruction act which made mandatory the teaching in public schools of the effects of alcohol and narcotics on the human system.⁵⁹ Responsibility for this law probably belongs less with the Prohibition party than with other temperance groups, especially the bill's staunchest supporter, the WCTU.⁶⁰ From the start the national WCTU urged such legislation to save youth from the dangers of liquor and to cultivate future sympathizers of prohibition. State and local unions were encouraged to take up the fight, and Colorado white-ribboners⁶¹ accepted the challenge. The active Boulder union began pressuring schools in 1882 to use temperance texts, and when teachers proved receptive the union supplied the books. By 1884 the state convention was advising local unions to petition both parties to seek a temperance instruction law, and pressure continued in the following years.⁶² In addition, the Colorado State Teachers' Association endorsed such instruction in 1886.⁶³

Once the bill passed both houses with little opposition, the WCTU acted to insure vigorous enforcement. A canvass was made of state schools to ferret out violators, and by the next year almost universal observance was reported.⁶⁴ At the local level unions sought prohibition candidates for school boards so the law would be applied enthusiastically. Copies of the law and temperance texts were supplied to teachers.⁶⁵ Two years later, in 1889, a "high license" law was passed, designating minimum costs of saloon licenses: six hundred dollars annually for licenses issued by city governments, five hundred dollars for towns, and three hundred dollars for counties.⁶⁶ Again the margins were comfortable, twenty-one to two in the

⁵⁸ *Laws Passed at the Sixth Session of the General Assembly of the State of Colorado* (Denver: Collier and Cleveland Lith. Co., 1887), pp. 378-79; *Laws Passed at the Seventh Session of the General Assembly of the State of Colorado* (Denver: Collier and Cleveland Lith. Co., 1889), pp. 228-31.

⁵⁹ Colorado, General Assembly, Senate, *Journal*, 6th sess., 1887, pp. 1235-36.

⁶⁰ The party did endorse the bill. *Rocky Mountain News*, May 1, 1884, p. 5.

⁶¹ WCTU members pinned white ribbons on their dresses.

⁶² Minutes, Boulder WCTU, book 1, pp. 32, 46, 79. Western History Collection, Norlin Library; *Minutes of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Fifth Annual Session* (Colorado Springs: Daily State Republic Printing House, 1884), p. 12. Hereafter cited as *WCTU Minutes*, 1884.

⁶³ *Colorado School Journal*, I (January 1886), p. 1.

⁶⁴ *Ninth Annual Report of the Convention of Colorado Woman's Christian Temperance Union* (Denver: Challenge Publishing Co., 1888), pp. 26, 42-46. Hereafter cited as *WCTU Annual Report*, 1888.

⁶⁵ Minutes, Boulder WCTU, book 2, pp. 3, 5; book 4, pp. 27, 32; book 6, November 16, 1897.

⁶⁶ Colorado, General Assembly, Senate, *Journal*, 7th sess., 1889, pp. 930-31; *House, Journal*, 7th sess., 1889, pp. 1911-12.

⁵⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, December 14, 1884, p. 14.

⁵¹ *Boulder News and Banner*, April 5, 1887, p. 1.

⁵² Cherrington, *Evolution of Prohibition*, pp. 165-66.

⁵³ *Rocky Mountain News*, May 1, 1884, p. 5.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, May 2, 1884, p. 1; *Boulder County Herald*, September 24, 1884, p. 4.

⁵⁵ *Rocky Mountain News*, May 2, 1884, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Fitz-Mac (James MacCarthy), *Political Portraits* (Colorado Springs: Gazette Publishing Co., 1888), p. 140.

⁵⁷ *Boulder News and Banner*, April 3, 1888, p. 1.

senate and twenty-six to eleven in the house. Although the Prohibition party opposed such measures as ineffective, some temperance groups endorsed high license as a method of reducing the number of saloons and eliminating the most disreputable ones. Moreover, many citizens not associated with the temperance cause favored strict regulation of the liquor traffic and high license.⁶⁷ The 1889 law paralleled local campaigns and restrictions of the saloon.

Other legislative attempts came to nothing. In 1881 a local option bill to allow a community to vote saloons from its midst passed the senate but stalled in the house.⁶⁸ Another local option measure was pressed in the wake of the 1884 election, and temperance leaders reportedly brandished the threat of a third party to secure its passage.⁶⁹ The Republican-dominated legislature showed its disregard for such a danger by smothering both the local option measure and an innocuous bill to protect Colorado Seminary from the liquor traffic.⁷⁰ Petitions from the WCTU for a prohibition amendment were ignored.⁷¹

Even the bills passed were hardly great strides toward a dry society. The temperance instruction act did little more than to restate a vaguer provision of an earlier statute,⁷² and the minimum fees of the high license law were not much higher than existing costs in most areas. Yet, the first act gave impetus to the teaching of the ill effects of alcohol by its more explicit demand. Temperance morale, particularly in the WCTU, was boosted by achievement of a traditional goal. From a longer perspective, it is impossible to gauge the effect of school anti-liquor lectures on a generation which eventually would vote Colorado dry. It seems reasonable, however, to assume such instruction had some impact. The high license law was significant not so much for its results as for its approach. Citizens who thought full prohibition was fanatical often considered, nevertheless, the saloon a potentially evil institution. By 1900 temperance reformers realized assaults on the saloon might offer a productive preliminary campaign toward the final goal. The route would lead from high license to local option to prohibition.

The liquor question often influenced local politics in various ways. Because local councils could grant or refuse liquor

⁶⁷ Fitz-Mac, *Political Portraits*, p. 134.

⁶⁸ Colorado, General Assembly, Senate, *Journal*, 3rd sess., 1881, pp. 423-24; House, *Journal*, 3rd sess., 1881, p. 378.

⁶⁹ *Rocky Mountain News*, March 13, 1885, p. 8.

⁷⁰ Colorado, General Assembly, House, *Journal*, 5th sess., 1885, pp. 300, 310, 1179.

⁷¹ *WCTU Minutes*, 1889, pp. 63-64.

⁷² *Colorado School Journal*, II (April 1887), p. 4.

licenses, a community might vote to limit or banish traffic in alcohol by electing councilmen with the proper beliefs. The national upsurge of political prohibition in 1884 had its counterpart in Loveland and Longmont where candidates opposed to all saloons were victorious.⁷³

More often lines were drawn between advocates of high and low license, as in Fort Collins, where men promising the former triumphed in 1884 and set the annual license fee at one thousand dollars.⁷⁴ The issue also aroused temperance reformers in cities and mining towns.⁷⁵ Denver prohibitionists organized and nominated a slate for city offices the same year and elected one alderman.⁷⁶ Regardless of their label, however, they proposed not prohibition but high license as the only practical course for the time being.⁷⁷ In the hotly debated 1884 election in Georgetown, a Citizens' Ticket was formed after Republicans refused to nominate men with high license sympathies.⁷⁸ Backed by the *Georgetown Courier* and "Parson Tom" Uzzell, supporters of the third ticket appealed to the growing middle class, "men who are property owners," to limit saloons, which raised taxes, deprived drunkards' families of money, degraded the community, and corrupted children passing by on their way to school.⁷⁹ Returns, however, showed that such sentiment was still in the minority. Polling twenty-one percent of the vote, the Citizens' mayoralty candidate came in last, and soon, in fact, the saloon license was lowered.⁸⁰

Boulder elections clearly revealed the stronger appeal of high license compared to prohibition. When the Prohibition party arose in 1886 to challenge Republicans, even local temperance men admitted the program was impractical.⁸¹ Some citizens feared the end of the liquor trade would be followed by abolition of other enjoyments until men had to live on cold water and oatmeal.⁸² More often it was argued that a prohibition victory would only create "low groceries" on the outskirts of town, and income from licenses would be lost.⁸³ Greeley, Colorado Springs, and Longmont, an editor observed, had not banished liquor but had only driven it underground.

⁷³ *Rocky Mountain News*, April 4, 1884, p. 5; April 8, 1884, p. 3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, March 14, 1884, p. 8.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, April 4, 1884, p. 5.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, April 2, 1884, pp. 4, 8.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, March 26, 1884, p. 8.

⁷⁸ *Georgetown Courier*, April 3, 1884, p. 2.

⁷⁹ *Georgetown Miner*, April 12, 1884, pp. 2, 3; *Georgetown Courier*, March 27, 1884, p. 2; April 3, 1884, p. 2.

⁸⁰ *Georgetown Courier*, April 10, 1884, p. 3; May 8, 1884, p. 3.

⁸¹ *Boulder Weekly Herald*, April 9, 1884, p. 5.

⁸² *Ibid.*, April 2, 1884, p. 5.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, April 9, 1884, p. 5.



Behind the partition was a revolving wheel, whereby Colorado Springs residents could evade the prohibition against saloons.

Boulder voters seemed to think the same would happen in their town, for all but one alderman post was won by incumbent Republicans pledged to high license.⁸⁴ In 1888 fees were raised so that more than half of Boulder's saloons closed.⁸⁵ When the liquor issue cropped up in future elections, results were the same. Campaigns by the Boulder's Citizens' Reform League in the 1890s to elect anti-license aldermen failed consistently, but licenses remained high.⁸⁶

These events taught important lessons, if temperance forces were willing to learn. By lowering their sights from the total end of liquor to tighter restriction of saloons, they could attract much broader support. Hostility to saloons is suggested, for example, by demands of property owners in Denver and Boulder

to limit the number of dram shops in each block.⁸⁷ Other citizens felt too many saloons endangered community morals and prosperity. Once such allies were gained, the temperance crusade might be expanded and pressed.

Denver's mayoralty election of 1889 showed how limited goals and cooperation with others could bring success. Opponents of Republican candidate Wolfe Londoner based their campaign on the city fathers' failure to enforce an ordinance to close saloons on Sunday.⁸⁸ Democrats eager for power united with temperance reformers behind a Citizens' Ticket.⁸⁹ The WCTU brought in Major George Hilton, a famous lecturer for their cause. An election-eve crowd heard Hilton, Thomas Uzzell, and Charles S. Thomas, later Democratic governor and senator, attack Sabbath desecration and corruption of municipal government by the saloon.⁹⁰ Although the coalition lost the election, Republican officials appeased their challengers by enforcing the Sunday closing law vigorously.⁹¹ The strength of such tactics was proved, but Prohibitionists did not apply this approach to other issues but again began to run a separate ticket.

Thus, in 1900 those desiring a dry Colorado looked back on a limited and mottled record of achievement. The Prohibition party, one group which might have provided coordination among temperance supporters found throughout the state, lost itself amid fuzzy dreams of state offices and immediate abolition of all liquor. In politics opponents of alcohol as a whole often failed to realize that they were an interest group which would have to organize, cooperate, and take one restrictive step at a time. High license campaigns indicated that local attacks on the saloon might be a successful preliminary strategy.

Concentration on concrete political gains, however, obscures a more significant development in the Colorado temperance movement. This evolution appears most clearly in the WCTU. When the first local unions were founded in 1878 and the state union organized in Longmont in 1880, activities were directed mainly toward temperance lessons in churches, public lectures, and the securing of individual abstinence pledges.⁹² As throughout their history, white-ribboners showed concern over the

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, April 2, 1884, p. 2.

⁸⁵ *Boulder News and Banner*, January 10, 1888, p. 1.

⁸⁶ *Boulder County Herald*, March 26, 1895, p. 1; March 29, 1895, p. 2; April 3, 1895, p. 1.

⁸⁷ *Rocky Mountain News*, April 29, 1884, p. 8; Boulder, City Council, Minutes, May 2, 1898, book 5, p. 381.

⁸⁸ *Rocky Mountain News*, March 31, 1889, p. 4.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, April 1, 1889, p. 1.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, April 4, 1889, p. 4; *Denver Republican*, April 1, 1889, p. 7.

⁹¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, March 16, 1891, p. 2; March 20, 1891, p. 3.

⁹² Minutes, Boulder WCTU, book 1, pp. 43-44; Minutes, Longmont WCTU, book 1, p. 37, Longmont WCTU Home; *WCTU Minutes*, 1884, pp. 13, 26-27, 36.



Tippling in a Boulder saloon.

effect of alcohol on family life. Liquor's most devastating influence was on the child and wife forced to endure the neglect or beatings of the irresponsible husband who left his money and character at the saloon.⁹³ From the first, their approach was profoundly religious. Problems caused by alcohol in the present were insignificant compared to eternal damnation facing the drunkard. Intoxicants debased the imbibers' moral life and lured him from the Lord, and to flirt with such a fate even through candies made with liquor was inexcusable. The fight against liquor, then, was a holy one: "Prohibition is God-born."⁹⁴

During their first decade, WCTU members began to realize also that women and children faced new problems not apparent in the small town. Women arrested in Denver were placed in a jail filled with corrupt males and were watched over by male jailers. The city council allowed the Denver union to pay wages for a police matron, who cared for the needs and morals of women inmates. The experiment was so successful that the city began to pay the salary of Sadie M. Likens, the second such matron in the nation.⁹⁵ Members of the WCTU also were shocked by an unprecedented rate of illegitimacy in the city. To provide a haven, unions around the state financed a Cottage Home for wayward girls in Denver. Recruiting doctors to donate their time, women in charge of the home cared for the "sick ones" and found families for the offspring, at the same time trying to save the souls of those coming for help.⁹⁶

⁹³ *WCTU Annual Report, 1888*, p. 24.

⁹⁴ *WCTU Minutes, 1889*, p. 34.

⁹⁵ Anna Wolcott Vaile and Ellis Meredith, "Woman's Contribution," in *History of Colorado*, ed. James H. Baker and LeRoy R. Hafen, 5 vols. (Denver: Linderman Co., Inc., 1927), III, 1107.

⁹⁶ *Twelfth Annual Report of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union [1891]* (Colorado Springs: Republic Publishing Co., 1892), pp. 41-42, hereafter cited as *WCTU Annual Report, 1891*; Mrs. C. C. Lunsden to Mrs. C. F. Grant [April 1933], State WCTU Papers.

Cheap kindergartens were provided for the children of women who, "by the curse of strong drink," were forced to work as domestics.⁹⁷ "Starvation wages" of the shop girls were deplored.⁹⁸ Harsh conditions, the members recognized, sometimes drove young girls to prostitution, and unions even in smaller towns such as Boulder pressed local councils to close down brothels so the fallen women could be rehabilitated.⁹⁹

To save the family, the WCTU began a vigorous program of "mother's work," which included personal visits and distribution of literature on child care, the dangers of drink, and "everything and anything pertaining to the weal and woe of the home."¹⁰⁰ In addition, a "kitchen garden" was begun to teach poor children the virtues of homemaking unlearned in the slums. "Little ones, some from the home of the Dago, some from the drunkard's hut," spent the day setting tables, making beds, washing dishes, and practicing genteel manners.¹⁰¹ At the police court each Sunday afternoon another school was held for boot-blacks and newsboys to offset the erosion of character suffered on the street.¹⁰²

Wretched living conditions in the mountains also undermined family life and drove the worker to relief in drink. After toiling in darkness all day, miners naturally sought the well-lighted warmth of the saloon at night. Shocked when a drinking man in Ouray told her the saloon was the only place where a bachelor could find a place to sit, a WCTU organizer established a reading room with refreshments and temperance literature.¹⁰³ Similar places were provided in Denver, Boulder, Pueblo, and other towns.¹⁰⁴ Members occasionally supported specific labor grievances, such as an anti-screen law, and a strong endorsement was given the Colorado Knights of Labor, which in turn expressed sympathy for temperance and the WCTU.¹⁰⁵ Labor radicalism, however, was denounced as another product of the saloon, "the home and the promoter of anarchy."¹⁰⁶ White-ribboners desired for the worker a life in which adequate wages, wisely used, supported a religious, temperate home.

⁹⁷ *WCTU Minutes, 1889*, p. 41.

⁹⁸ *WCTU Annual Report, 1888*, p. 21.

⁹⁹ *Minutes, Boulder WCTU*, book 3, July 21, 1891.

¹⁰⁰ *WCTU Annual Report, 1891*, pp. 52-53.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁰² *WCTU Minutes, 1884*, p. 24.

¹⁰³ Fairbanks Manuscript.

¹⁰⁴ *WCTU Annual Report, 1888*, p. 30; *Minutes of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Eleventh Annual Session* (Pueblo: W. J. Jackson Publishing Co., 1890), p. 63.

¹⁰⁵ *WCTU Annual Report, 1891*, p. 52; *Minutes, Boulder WCTU*, book 1, pp. 22-29; *WCTU Bulletin* (Pueblo), May 1892, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ *WCTU Bulletin*, March 20, 1893, p. 3.

Immigration, especially of the "new" influxes, posed another threat. "Italians are very ignorant and are on the increase," one member warned, and the state president of the WCTU in 1889 attributed the lack of a prohibition amendment to the "foreign vote."¹⁰⁷ North Europeans demanded beer, those from the south drank wine, and all defiled the Sabbath with their "continental Sunday" of recreation rather than rest.¹⁰⁸ Temperance tracts in Italian, German, Chinese, Spanish, and French were distributed in an attempt to assimilate the growing tide of persons who did not fit the desired pattern.¹⁰⁹

The changing American environment thus conjured up fears of an urban society blighted with "miserable looking wretches, men and women with souls dead, children old, but not with years, gaunt hunger and woe, the victims and results of the liquor traffic in all our large cities." The family faced unprecedented peril. Through all these dangers ran the theme of alcohol:

The world is moving, and a new era is beginning to dawn. What means the agitation of the wage question? The unrest and distraction of political parties? Why did Edward Bellamy write a wondrous book? Why a new party? Are not all these and more because the world is out of time? . . . We think the new era will come when the saloon is annihilated.¹¹⁰

The Prohibition party expressed similar fears. Liquor was responsible for urban poverty, crime, radicalism, child labor, the clash of worker and employer, and even insanity; immigration should be restricted to eliminate the ignorant and criminal.¹¹¹ Apparently sharing the Populists' sense of danger, the party in 1895 endorsed free silver and government control of railroads. Sympathizers used similar rhetoric.¹¹² The power of rum accounted for ninety percent of inmates of prisons, asylums, and poorhouses, the Methodist Conference claimed.¹¹³ Not only individual souls but "the perpetuity of our Government and the peace of our cities" were at stake.¹¹⁴ In this new feeling of alarm lay the basis of the ultimate victory of prohibition.

The struggle for a dry Colorado had been and would be an arduous one. Not so much frontier individualism as the con-

¹⁰⁷ WCTU Minutes, 1889, p. 34; WCTU Annual Report, 1891, p. 43.

¹⁰⁸ WCTU Minutes, 1889, p. 35; WCTU Annual Report, 1891, p. 27.

¹⁰⁹ WCTU Annual Report, 1888, pp. 64-65.

¹¹⁰ WCTU Minutes, 1889, pp. 36, 38-39.

¹¹¹ Colorado Temperance Bulletin (La Veta), March 20, 1893, p. 3; April 3, 1893,

p. 3.

¹¹² Prohibition Globe (Denver), October 10, 1895, p. 1.

¹¹³ Journal of the Twenty-Sixth Session of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Denver: John Dove, 1888), pp. 50-51.

¹¹⁴ Journal of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Denver: Shattuck Printing Co., 1891), p. 61.

trariness of men everywhere worked against it. "When you tell a man, you shall not do such a thing," one editor wrote, "he generally replies 'I'll be d—n if I don't' and straight way makes it his business to do the thing forbidden."¹¹⁵ Moreover, since the saloon filled an emotional and social need, especially in the mining towns and cities, prohibition seemed tinged with fanaticism and impracticality.

Limited legislative successes were achieved in the temperance instruction and high license laws not because of but despite such political prohibitionists as preferred uncompromising high-mindedness to practical gains. Votes for temperance measures came from all areas of the state. Widespread backing certainly was found in farming regions, and temperance colonies like Greeley and Longmont provided articulate and ardent encouragement. But despite greater, more consistent support in these areas than in others, prohibition cannot be dismissed as a solely rural phenomenon. A foundation was laid for a broad temperance movement, which would produce majorities in the plains, mountains, and cities in the triumph of 1914.

Organizations, churches, and political events demonstrated that many voters would respond to restrictions on the saloon through higher licenses. More important, by addressing themselves to other social evils in a complex, urban, industrial way of life, prohibitionists offered a reassuringly simple solution to the bewildering problems of poverty, crime, political corruption, labor discontent, socialism, immigrants, and a vague feeling that control was being lost. Action combined the practical with the pitifully naïve. For example, in the jail boasting the nation's second police matron, WCTU workers distributed small bunches of flowers and cards bearing scripture messages. It was a period of panaceas, of single taxers, and slogans like "Uncle Sam Is Rich Enough to Buy Us All a Farm."

The student can look to Colorado's crusade for insights into that many-faceted attempt known vaguely as "progressivism."¹¹⁶ Denver, in its period of rapid growth at the century's end, is an instructive illustration of urban expansion and the tensions it produced. The pattern of prohibition support there as well as in the mining towns, changing in their population and outlook, also invites investigation. Interaction of dry advocates from city and country as well as the social makeup and motivations of prohi-

¹¹⁵ Georgetown Courier, June 13, 1889, p. 2.

¹¹⁶ Such an approach is developed most suggestively in James H. Timberlake, *Prohibition and the Progressive Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

bition leaders should fill in further the story of a remarkably effective movement.

For the seekers of a prohibition law in Colorado were successful. Enough voters were willing to listen to the temperance solution that the social experiment was given a chance. The third party eventually was jettisoned, and the Anti-Saloon League of Colorado, founded in 1897, spearheaded an attack which concentrated on the evils of the grog shop. A local option law, passed in 1907, allowed the successful culmination of an increasing number of community campaigns. Finally, after a false start in 1912, a prohibition amendment was adopted in 1914, when the public rejected “. . . the flowing cup from out whose depths, in tides of shame, a flock of human evils came.”¹¹⁷

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¹¹⁷ From "The Drunkard's Dream" by William E. Pabor of Greeley, printed in *Journal of Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Session of the Grand Lodge of Colorado, I.O.G.T.*, p. 48.

El Moro: Failure of a Company Town

BY MORRIS F. TAYLOR

About four miles down the Purgatoire River from Trinidad, there are a few scattered farmhouses and outbuildings, a massive stone schoolhouse dating from the Great Depression and the Public Works Administration, and the multicolored, geodesic domes of the hippie colony known as Drop City. Hardly anything remains at that spot on the north bank of the river to recall the busy settlement of El Moro, established in 1876 as a track-end town for the Denver and Rio Grande narrow-gauge



The stone schoolhouse and Drop City's geodesic domes now stand on the site of El Moro.



railroad and a development of the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company.

The site had been potentially important in earlier days. There the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail, locally known as the Bent's (Old) Fort Road, had crossed the river at a point probably near that used by Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny and his Army of the West in 1846.¹ Extending north from the site in response to the Pikes Peak gold rush had been the Fort Union and Denver Road. By the spring of 1861 James S. Gray, a Kentuckian, had settled on the south bank of the Purgatoire across from the site about a half-mile below the confluence of the Purgatoire and the Rito San Lorenzo, better known today as Gray Creek.² Gray's Ranch, a station on the stage line from Independence, Missouri, to Santa Fe, had obtained a post office as early as 1863.³

The town which developed here competed for a time with Trinidad. Permanent settlement at Trinidad dated from 1861, and it was a growing town of about two thousand people when, instead of surveying the line into Trinidad, in December of 1875 the engineering corps of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway brought it to the site of El Moro about four miles downstream.⁴ The possible challenge of a new town was by no means obvious to residents of the older one, many of whom believed that the broad-gauge Kansas Pacific Railroad in the spring would build southward to Trinidad from La Junta on the Arkansas River.⁵ Their confidence was strengthened by the appearance among them of people from the Kansas Pacific's declining, former railhead town of West Las Animas (presently Las Animas), who were hoping to locate in Trinidad.⁶

By 1874 a movement to incorporate Trinidad had become immersed in the problem of cloudy titles to town lots occasioned by Thomas Leitensdorfer's derivative claim to land along the Purgatoire River from the Vigil and St. Vrain (Las Animas) Grant. The claim was advanced by John Hallum, Leitensdorfer's

assign.⁷ Into the extraordinarily involved matter walked Alexander Cameron Hunt, a former territorial governor (1867-69) and business associate of General William Jackson Palmer, founder of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway and its attendant land development schemes.⁸

As an active real estate promoter,⁹ the former governor today would be described as a land developer, and it was mainly in that capacity that he was associated with General Palmer. At a meeting in the hall over the post office, Hunt discussed the prospects of the narrow-gauge railroad and its relationship to Trinidad. He was reported as saying: (1) the Denver and Rio Grande Railway did not want Las Animas County bonds, which would be unsalable; (2) the citizens of Trinidad could help by grading the road from Cucharas to their town; (3) the narrow-gauge would come to Trinidad; and (4) the depot would be as near to Trinidad as land with a perfect title could be obtained.¹⁰

The last point sounded the alarm. Trinidad could not give a perfect title; therefore, a rival town was inevitable unless Trinidad could buy out Leitensdorfer and Hallum and proceed with incorporation. Editor John C. Fitnam stated in the *Enterprise* that Hunt and the railroad company really preferred their own townsite, where they would have unrestricted opportunity for speculation in town lots, just as they had in their South Pueblo project outside the established town of Pueblo.¹¹ The Trinidad newspaperman also might have mentioned as further illustration Colorado Springs and Colorado City, or he could have pointed to the towns of West Las Animas and Las Animas, a rivalry brought about by the Kansas Pacific Railroad.¹²

In late 1875 the Las Animas Improvement Company was incorporated, headed by David C. Dodge, general freight and pas-

⁷ *Trinidad Enterprise*, December 17, 1874, p. 2. Thomas Leitensdorfer was a well-known Santa Fe Trail trader associated with his brother Eugene, who had been a member of the first American government in New Mexico under Governor Charles Bent. It was Eugene Leitensdorfer who first obtained the derivative under the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant; the grant was an alleged 4,096,000-acre tract secured from Governor Manuel Armijo in 1841. On July 1, 1873, Thomas Leitensdorfer quit-claimed his interest to John Hallum, of St. Louis, Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 4, pp. 526-27.

⁸ Herbert O. Brayer, *William Blackmore: Early Financing of the Denver & Rio Grande Railway and Ancillary Land Companies, 1871-1878*, Vol. II of *A Case Study in the Economic Development of the West* (Denver: Bradford-Robinson, 1949), p. 17. Referred to hereafter as *William Blackmore*.

⁹ *Ibid.*; Herbert O. Brayer, "History of Colorado Railroads," *Colorado and Its People: A Narrative and Topical History of the Centennial State*, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 4 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1948), II, 648.

¹⁰ *Trinidad Enterprise*, December 17, 1874, p. 2.

¹¹ *Ibid.* The remarkably outspoken editor of the *Enterprise*, Trinidad's first newspaper, gave warning about the complicated title issue. Taylor, *Trinidad, Colorado Territory*, pp. 113, 123-24, 133, 141. An early Colorado historian stated flatly that Palmer and Hunt planned El Moro as "a rival town that was intended to sap and destroy Trinidad." Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 4 vols. (Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1889-95), IV, 202.

¹² Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 80-84; Brayer, "History of Colorado Railroads," p. 643.

¹ Ross Calvin, ed., *Lieutenant Emory Reports: A Reprint of Lieutenant W. H. Emory's Notes on a Military Reconnaissance* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1951), pp. 35-37; Plat of the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant Surveyed by Thomas Means, 1863, photostatic copy in the writer's possession. The road also was known as the Fort Leavenworth Road, according to the Map of the Territory of New Mexico compiled by Lieutenant Park, Topographical Engineers, 1851.

² Means' survey of the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant; obituary of James S. Gray, December 1884, clipping in the State Historical Society of Colorado Library, Denver.

³ Morris F. Taylor, *Trinidad, Colorado Territory* (Trinidad: Trinidad State Junior College, 1966), p. 36.

⁴ *Daily Colorado Chieftain* (Pueblo), December 21, 1875, p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, December 18, 1875, p. 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, December 23, 1875, p. 4.

senger agent for the Denver and Rio Grande Railway;¹³ Denver banker George W. Clayton;¹⁴ and Hunt. Trustees or directors for the first year were, in addition to Clayton and Hunt, Trinidad merchant-banker Frank G. Bloom, pioneer Trinidad settler Albert W. Archibald,¹⁵ and Fred Walsen, founder of Walsenburg.¹⁶ Incorporated for twenty years, the company's articles mentioned its aims of farming, dairying, stock-raising, manufacturing, mining, construction of wagon roads and bridges, and irrigation; special reference was made to a proposed ditch from the Purgatoire River's north bank, opposite Long's Canyon above Trinidad, at least to the Chicosa Creek and as far beyond that as water could be carried.¹⁷ Far from lasting twenty years, the Las Animas Improvement Company apparently was succeeded within a few months by the El Moro Improvement Company, whose articles of incorporation listed only Hunt, Palmer, and James R. De Remer;¹⁸ trustees for the first year were Alexander Hunt, Walter C. Hunt, and James S. Gray, the old settler from across the river at Gray's Ranch. Objectives and capitalization were similar to those of the Las Animas Improvement Company.¹⁹ Although these two companies were not a matter of further record, they appear to have been predecessors of the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company, which was incorporated on May 16, 1876, with a \$1,000,000 capitalization. This enterprise undertook to develop company townsites at Cucharas, east and north of Walsenburg, and at El Moro, as well as coal lands in Huerfano and Las Animas counties held in trusteeship.²⁰

One of the most prominent men in promotion of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway's towns and coal lands in southern Colorado was William S. Jackson, Colorado Springs banker and secretary-treasurer of the company.²¹ As trustee of the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company, Jackson had been extremely active in buying up land, particularly homesteaders' claims,²² which along with railroad securities, financed construction of the Denver and Rio Grande southward to the Trinidad vicinity.²³

¹³ Jerome C. Smiley, *Semi-Centennial History of the State of Colorado*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913), II, 51.

¹⁴ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, II, 210.

¹⁵ Taylor, *Trinidad, Colorado Territory*, pp. 20, 21, 54.

¹⁶ Smiley, *Semi-Centennial History of the State of Colorado*, II, 93.

¹⁷ Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 6, p. 257.

¹⁸ De Remer was assistant general engineer of the railway company. *Chronicle-News* (Trinidad), June 19, 1937, p. 4; Brayer "History of Colorado Railroads," p. 649.

¹⁹ Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 6, p. 423.

²⁰ Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 178, 243-44. The company had participated in several contracts in 1875-76 before it was formally organized, *Ibid.*, p. 178n.

²¹ Smiley, *Semi-Centennial History of the State of Colorado*, II, 290-91.

²² Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 5, pp. 261-446, 521-59, 607-14, *passim*.

²³ Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 178, 180.



William S. Jackson

These lands were placed in trust through a Declaration of Trust, the Trinidad Pool,²⁴ dated September 5, 1875. Included were lands in Huerfano and Las Animas counties quit-claimed later by Jackson to the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company.²⁵ Another coal land tract adjacent to the railroad right-of-way was put under the trusteeship of Ernest P. Stephenson, who quit-claimed to the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company on July 3, 1876.²⁶

Originally the railroad promotion planned a trunk route from Denver to Mexico City with feeder lines along the way to help develop the local economies. The Trinidad coal field and the New Mexico trade, which was funneled through the Raton Pass to Trinidad, were practical attractions in southern Colorado.²⁷ However, to tap this region the railroad did not plan in the summer of 1875 to put the terminus in Trinidad but at a point fairly close by.²⁸ The decision was explained weakly by the restrictive narrowness of the Las Animas (Purgatoire) Valley which made adequate facilities for the railroad impossible.

²⁴ The Trinidad Pool was an arrangement for encouraging investment in the Union Contract Company, the construction company which would build the Denver and Rio Grande extension to Trinidad, by offering land or stock of the coal and town company as incentives to subscribers. Jackson acted in the dual capacity of trustee for the lands acquired and as secretary-treasurer of the railway company. The Trinidad Pool was inaugurated in 1875. *Ibid.*, pp. 179-82.

²⁵ Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 6, pp. 487-89, 510-11.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 511.

²⁷ Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 11, 185-86.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

Also, the company could not get clear title to land for a station.²⁹ However, it was a case of the railway company's usual policy to build new towns, as editor Fitnam had pointed out. One historian has said that "the people of Trinidad experienced much the same disappointment their friends at Pueblo earlier had known. . . . But the General had not time to worry about local annoyances."³⁰ Financial problems of his entire railroad may have occupied Palmer's attention, but it seems extremely unlikely that he would have done differently had the line been in the best of shape.

How the new town received the name of El Moro is a matter of uncertainty and conjecture, a not uncommon circumstance in this vicinity. The word is a Spanish one meaning a Moor, a person from Morocco,³¹ but knowing that does not answer why. There is a version which says that A. Cameron Hunt named the place El Moro because he thought the summit of the nearby Raton (Fisher's) Peak resembled Moro (*sic*) Castle in Cuba, presumably Havana.³² If that is right, the problem is one of spelling because El Morro, in reference to the fortress, comes from



the Spanish word meaning headland or bluff, putting the common spelling of El Moro for the Colorado town (and, of course, the derivative meaning) in error.³³

Opponents of a competitive town created a "Committee of Safety" in February 1876, members being John W. Terry, Thomas C. Stevens, Sam Jaffa, Colonel George Swallow, and Henry A. Barraclough, all prominent Trinidad businessmen.³⁴ The committee hoped to convince John Hallum to release his hold on the Leitensdorfer claim, at least to the extent of clearing up titles to town lots in Trinidad.³⁵ They also hoped that the voters of Las Animas County would assist financially the Arkansas Valley and New Mexico Railway Company, a local effort to entice the broad-gauge Kansas Pacific Railroad to build to Trinidad.³⁶

However, the Pueblo *Chieftain* noted on April 12, 1876, that the narrow-gauge was within fifteen miles of Trinidad and building as fast as it could to Solomon Young's coal mine on Grey (*sic*) Creek.³⁷ In other words, although the new town would be on the north bank of the Purgatoire, the railroad was planning to cross the stream to exploit the excellent coal deposits in the foothills of the Raton (Fisher's) Peak. Allegations of fraud in Trustee William S. Jackson's acquisition of coal properties had been heard as early as January,³⁸ and in late March John C. Fitnam, then editor of a new paper, the *Trinidadian*, was frank in making such a charge in a letter to the *Chieftain*.³⁹ He asserted that President Ulysses S. Grant had invested in the enterprises of General Palmer and his associates and that there would be an investigation by the Committee on Public Lands, probably that of the House. Fitnam expressed his opinions in a letter to Hiester Clymer, Democratic representative from Pennsylvania, but there is no explanation of the choice of correspondent.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, the Denver and Rio Grande's plans continued

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 192; *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, December 28, 1875, p. 4.

³⁰ Robert G. Athearn, "The Denver and Rio Grande and the Panic of 1873," *The Colorado Magazine*, XXXV (April 1958), pp. 225-26.

³¹ "Place Names in Colorado," *ibid.*, XVII (November 1940), pp. 225-26.

³² *Chronicle-News*, June 19, 1937, p. 4, quoting from a sketch of El Moro written July 13, 1892.

³³ El Moro is the spelling used over William J. Palmer's signature, May 14, 1876, accompanying the town plat. Plat Book no. 1, Las Animas County Clerk's Office, p. 2.

³⁴ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, January 26, 1876, p. 4, and February 9, 1876, p. 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, April 2, 1876, p. 3.

³⁶ Record Book no. 3, Board of County Commissioners, Las Animas County, pp. 116, 120, 129-33; Articles of Incorporation, Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 6, pp. 365-67.

³⁷ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, April 2, 1876, p. 3.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, January 4, 1876, p. 4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, April 1, 1876, p. 4.

⁴⁰ *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1961* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 710.

for the new townsite. One of the first developments was an artesian well for irrigation;⁴¹ and soon thereafter the narrow-gauge tracks reached the company townsite on April 6, 1876, over a month before the actual incorporation of the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company.⁴² That was the real beginning, and within a few days Denver and Rio Grande trains were bringing in lumber, machinery, household equipment, and other items.⁴³ Official recognition of the new community was given on April 17 when El Moro received a post office, with Mrs. Helen E. Walburn as postmistress.⁴⁴

Creation of the new railhead on the Purgatoire below Trinidad attracted the big mercantile (commission) houses which had been migrating westward as the Kansas Pacific and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroads laid tracks across the plains. For a while there was uncertainty about whether outfits like Otero, Sellar and Company or Chick, Browne and Company would move down from the railroad town of La Junta on the Arkansas River.⁴⁵ But the Santa Fe Railroad persuaded them not to move their warehouses through a secret plan of rebates, which was alleged to be a violation of the Tripartite Agreement among the Santa Fe, the Kansas Pacific, and the Denver and Rio Grande.⁴⁶ Consequently, the wagon trade to and from New Mexico would continue to go through Trinidad to La Junta, the eastern terminus. Many Trinidad businessmen, who were angry about El Moro and felt that the Denver and Rio Grande also discriminated against them in freight rates, supported the arrangement. Telegrams were sent from the Trinidad Board of Trade to La Junta urging that goods consigned to Trinidad should be forwarded by the Kansas Pacific and the Santa Fe from La Junta by wagon, rather than by the Santa Fe Railroad to Pueblo and thence south to El Moro on the Denver and Rio Grande.⁴⁷ Not all Trinidad businessmen were in agreement with their Board of Trade, as local coal merchants, for example, saw no point in sending their commodities by wagon to the Kansas Pacific at West Las Animas for delivery to Denver. Instead, they used the direct line of the Denver and Rio Grande from El Moro.⁴⁸

⁴¹ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, April 2, 1876, p. 3.

⁴² Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 176n, 188, 191.

⁴³ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, April 26, 1876, p. 4.

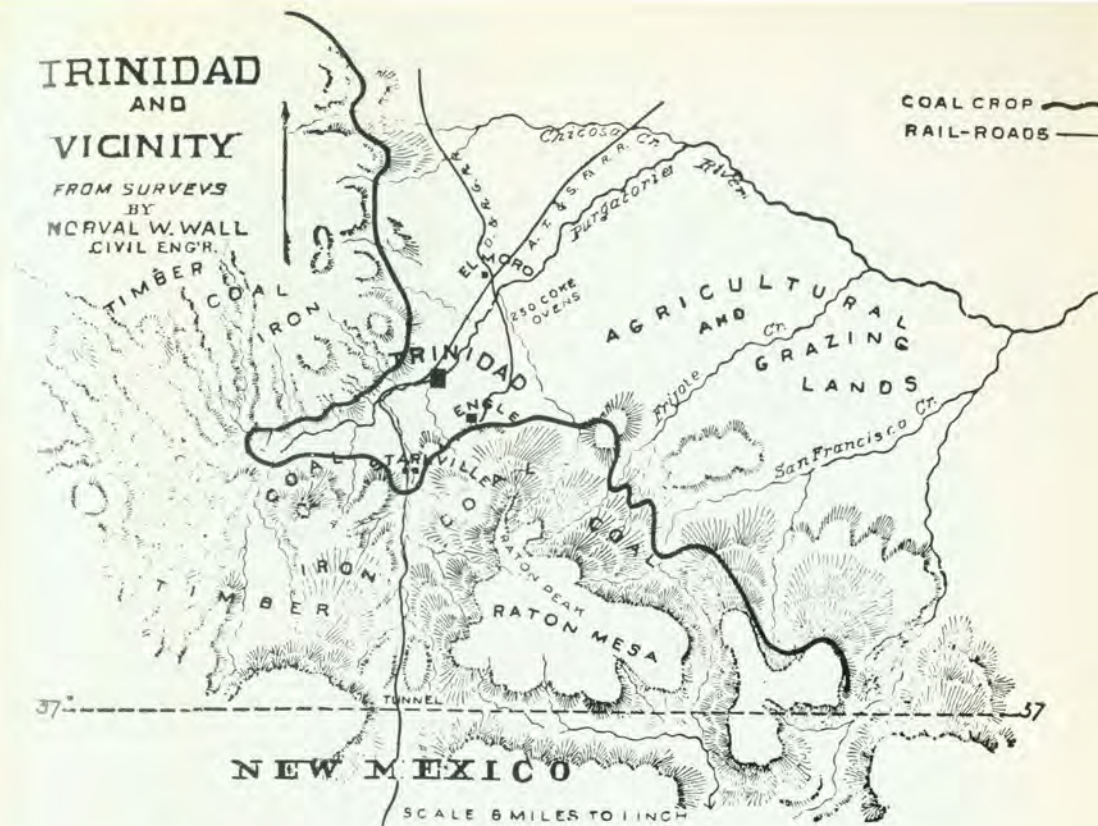
⁴⁴ Records of Appointments of Postmasters, vol. 30, p. 188, Record Group no. 28, Records of the Post Office Department, National Archives.

⁴⁵ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, April 25, 1876, p. 4.

⁴⁶ Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 194-95.

⁴⁷ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, June 10, 1876, p. 4; *Las Animas, Col., Leader*, June 9, 1876, p. 2; Brayer, "History of Colorado Railroads," p. 652.

⁴⁸ *Las Animas, Col., Leader*, May 5, 1876, p. 2.



But undercurrents of discouragement for the new town were in motion; one was a report that the banking house of Collins, Snyder and Company was cautious about opening a branch at El Moro.⁴⁹ Although the new town was not without its spokesmen in Trinidad and the *Enterprise and Chronicle* was pro-narrow gauge, the citizens of Trinidad and Las Animas County voted overwhelmingly for a \$200,000 bond issue in favor of the Kansas Pacific Railroad,⁵⁰ which General Palmer tried to quash by seeking a court injunction to invalidate the issue.⁵¹

Throughout the competitive maneuverings the little town of El Moro showed signs of growth and prosperity, but there always was a strain of misgiving about the long-range prospects of the place. Four blocks were laid out and alternate lots sold, and the main streets were graded.⁵² The *Enterprise and Chronicle* changed its masthead to read El Moro instead of Trinidad.⁵³

⁴⁹ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, April 25, 1876, p. 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1876, p. 1, and May 25, 1876, p. 4. The *Las Animas, Col., Leader*, May 19, 1876, p. 2, said Trinidad voted 169-0 in favor of the bonds.

⁵¹ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, June 21, 1876, p. 4; *Las Animas, Col., Leader*, June 9, 1876, p. 2; Brayer, *William Blackmore*, p. 195. The *Chieftain*, May 5, 1876, p. 4, carried a story alleging attempted bribery of a Las Animas County official by anti-railroad-bond people.

⁵² *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, April 8, 1876, p. 4, and April 12, 1876, p. 4.

⁵³ *Las Animas, Col., Leader*, May 12, 1876, p. 2.

Then in early August it was rumored that the newspaper would move back to Trinidad, that the Denver and Rio Grande would move its main depot there, and that El Moro was practically dead.⁵⁴ A more reasonable speculation, almost as indicative of an early decline for El Moro, was the report that the Denver and Rio Grande might build up the Purgatoire River (through Trinidad) and then up Long's Canyon to Red River and the Vermejo in New Mexico, thence down Van Brimmer Canyon to a point about twenty miles north of Maxwell's Ranch at Cimarron. Such a move would end El Moro's advantages as a railroad town.⁵⁵ Confidence in the town continued to be shaken as the Pueblo *Chieftain* reported in June that houses were being sold at El Moro for 33½ percent of their investment and that the Denver and Rio Grande lost from ten to fifteen thousand dollars in May because of freight diversions from it.⁵⁶ Meanwhile, Trinidad was experiencing a building boom and being referred to as the coming Pittsburgh of the West, although at the time only about a half-dozen small coal mines and no iron works were operating in the vicinity.⁵⁷ On the other hand, Trinidad businessmen were upset over rumors that neither the Kansas Pacific nor the Denver and Rio Grande would build beyond El Moro. Furthermore, a good wagon road could be built through the Raton Mountains south of El Moro into New Mexico, which meant that freight wagons would bypass Trinidad.⁵⁸

Despite a lack of certainty about the future, by midsummer of 1876 residents of El Moro could point to about one hundred buildings, which, in addition to a large railroad depot, included three commission houses, several smaller stores, three hotels, several restaurants, a blacksmith, the newspaper, a drugstore, a dance hall, a few saloons, a planing mill, and about a half-dozen coke ovens,⁵⁹ the latter apparently located across the river at Gray Creek. A large sign on one of the mercantile establishments across the square from the commission houses advertised "La Tienda Mexicana" (the Mexican Shop) run by a Wightman from Pueblo. The El Moro House, close to the depot, was run by F. A. Nye and Company, while the Southern Colorado Hotel was kept by Samuel Burr, another Puebloan.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, August 8, 1876, p. 4.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, June 4, 1876, p. 4; Brayer, *William Blackmore*, p. 208.

⁵⁶ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, June 21, 1876, p. 4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, May 25, 1876, p. 4; August 7, 1876, p. 4; and August 16, 1876, p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, June 4, 1876, p. 4, and August 16, 1876, p. 4.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, August 16, 1876, p. 4; M. Beshoar, *All About Trinidad and Las Animas County: Their History, Industries, and Resources* (Denver: Times Steam Printing House and Blank Book Manufacturing, 1882), p. 61, says only four coke ovens were in operation in 1877.

⁶⁰ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, August 17, 1876, p. 4, and May 7, 1876, p. 4.



Alexander C. Hunt

A third hostelry, known as "The Log Cabin," was a hotel-boardinghouse operated by Mrs. McDowell, the sister of ex-Governor Hunt. She previously had run a place by the same name in Colorado Springs and had the reputation of serving first-class meals to the hungry.⁶¹ Evidently there was a bar in La Tienda Mexicana, and James Gregory ran a saloon and billiard hall. The Narrow Gauge Saloon was operated by John Burke. John Bruen had a similar establishment facing the railroad tracks, and Messrs. Weil and Bergerman kept a place known as the Keg Saloon. George Close's dance hall stood on a side street around the corner from the New State Hotel and the New State Saloon, which were side by side on Main Street and run by J. W. Winkfield (of the Overland Hotel in Trinidad) and Rufe Harrington, respectively. The names of the latter two places, of course, reflected the fact that Colorado had attained statehood on August 1, 1876.⁶² The planing mill was operated by the lumber firm of Halleck and Webber—the latter being the local manager—connected with Halleck and Brothers, of Denver. Joseph Fager owned the largest blacksmithy, which did much work mainly with Mexican freighters. And there was a grocery and bakery owned by W. C. Hunt, who succeeded Mrs. Walburn as postmaster. J. M. Rice was the publisher of the transplanted *Enterprise and Chronicle*, with G. M. Hoover as printer; and Henry F. Moore, a notary public, dealt in real estate and insurance.⁶³ Former Governor Hunt, who made his home in El Moro maintained a livery stable, which was the terminus of

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, April 29, 1876, p. 4, and May 7, 1876, p. 4; Miguel Antonio Otero, *My Life on the Frontier, 1864-1882: Incidents and Characters of the Period when Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico Were Passing through the Last of their Wild and Romantic Years* (New York: Press of the Pioneers, 1935), p. 98.

⁶² *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, August 16, 1876, p. 4; Otero, *My Life on the Frontier*, p. 98; Smiley, *Semi-Centennial History of the State of Colorado*, I, 487.

⁶³ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, August 16, 1876, p. 4.

A. G. W. Thornhill's regular omnibus service between there and Trinidad.⁶⁴

The managers of the commission houses set up in business at El Moro after all; the place did look commercially promising, and General Palmer made the decision easier by offering them free sites at El Moro with favorable freight rates on the Denver and Rio Grande.⁶⁵ Both Otero, Sellar and Company and Chick, Browne and Company put up warehouses and other facilities near the railroad depot on the river bottom. They were joined by Bartel Brothers and Company (of Pueblo) and the Walsenburg partnership of Walsen and Levy. Otero, Sellar and Company's building was more than 200 feet long (smaller than their La Junta house); and that of Bartel Brothers, moved from West Las Animas and managed by Philip Holzman, was a structure of 175 by 30 feet with additional wagon shed, hay corral, and lumberyard.⁶⁶ When the wool trade from New Mexico became a main feature of business in the period 1876-78 hundreds of wagons loaded with wool, hides, and pelts often were camped in the vicinity; it has been said that in 1877 more wool was shipped from El Moro than any other place in the world except one point in Australia.⁶⁷

Several young men, who later became prominent in the economic and political affairs of New Mexico, gained part of their experience in business at El Moro. Working for Otero, Sellar and Company were Miguel Antonio Otero, who was a son of the senior partner and later became governor of New Mexico; Harry W. Kelly; Jacob Gross; and Arthur M. Blackwell.⁶⁸ C. N. Blackwell, Arthur's elder brother, was employed as chief clerk by Chick, Browne and Company.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Ibid., May 7, 1876, p. 4, and August 16, 1876, p. 4; Otero, *My Life on the Frontier*, p. 99. Otero names the omnibus operator as Greenstreet. This is almost certainly an error of recollection; all other sources indicate it was Thornhill. Otero also erroneously refers to Hunt as Governor Albert C. Hunt.

⁶⁵ Otero, *My Life on the Frontier*, p. 94; Brayer, *William Blackmore*, p. 208. The Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 6, pp. 610-11, records a deed to El Moro lots from the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company to Miguel A. Otero dated August 17, 1876, and similarly in vol. 7, pp. 284-86, to Fred Walsen, April 16, 1877.

⁶⁶ *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, August 16, 1876, p. 4; April 8, 1876, p. 4; May 7, 1876, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *Chronicle-News*, June 19, 1937, p. 4.

⁶⁸ Daniel T. Kelly, "Frontier Merchants: A Brief Sketch of Gross, Kelly and Company," *El Palacio*, LXV (February 1958), pp. 7-8. According to this source, Gross, Blackwell, and Kelly bought out Otero, Sellar and Company in 1881 and operated as Gross, Blackwell and Company until Blackwell's retirement in 1902, when it was reorganized as Gross, Kelly and Company. Daniel T. Kelly, of Santa Fe, is the son of Harry W. Kelly, and was the head of Gross, Kelly and Company at the time of its purchase by the Kimbell Company in 1954. There is a biographical sketch of Harry W. Kelly in Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *Old Santa Fe: The Story of New Mexico's Ancient Capital* (1925; reprint ed., Chicago: Rio Grande Press, 1963), p. 471.

⁶⁹ Chick, Browne and Company's El Moro emporium was managed by Francisco A. Manzanares, one of the partners. *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, August 16, 1876, p. 4. C. N. Blackwell later became a banker in Raton, New Mexico. Letter to the author from Daniel T. Kelly, dated July 1, 1970; *Chronicle-*

Those young men sampled the night life and excitement of the new town,⁷⁰ which was said to have been comparatively less rough than many other towns because only five persons were killed there in the early days.⁷¹ If that figure is correct, one of the five was a dance hall girl named Jennie Lawrence, recently come from Pueblo. The circumstances of her death were very unusual. Festivities were in full swing at George Close's dance hall one night when a half-breed known as Navajo Frank came in and wanted to swap his rifle for a bottle of whiskey. He was refused because it would have been illegal, and he already was rather drunk. Navajo Frank strode outside angrily to the railroad across the street; there he sat down on a cross-tie and deliberately fired his rifle through the glass door of the hall. His bullet pierced Jennie through the heart, passed through the coat sleeve of the fellow with whom she was dancing, and slightly wounded a fiddler in the orchestra before imbedding itself in the wall. Navajo Frank escaped.⁷²

The notorious New Mexico rancher-gunman Clay Allison "frequently added to the gayety of life in El Moro." Memorable incidents often occurred when he was on a big drunk. Once in Rufe Harrington's New State Saloon Allison began a drinking contest with one "Buckskin Charlie," which ended in a quarrel and agreement to a fight without guns or knives. Buckskin Charlie ended up in the Trinidad hospital. A man of emphatic opinions and prejudices, Allison on one occasion shot a stove-pipe hat from the head of a Dr. Menger, then bought the physician a new Stetson, and insisted on buying him a drink in Harrington's place, according to Miguel Antonio Otero.⁷³

Through all the activity it was evident that El Moro's growth was far from being spectacular. Even financial trouble for the Kansas Pacific Railroad, which was reported in receivership in July 1876 did little to stimulate El Moro.⁷⁴ El Moro's chances were tied increasingly to the mining operations on the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company's ten thousand acres of coal lands and the production of coke.⁷⁵ An extension

News, January 24, 1908, p. 5. The company subsequently became Browne and Manzanares. Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *The Leading Facts of New Mexican History*, 2 vols. (1911-12; reprint ed., Albuquerque: Horn & Wallace, 1963), II, 488n.

⁷⁰ Otero, *My Life on the Frontier*, pp. 94, 98, 99-101, 125.

⁷¹ *Chronicle-News*, June 19, 1937, p. 4.

⁷² Otero, *My Life on the Frontier*, pp. 98-99.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 125. Two Jewish brothers, Drs. Charles and Oscar Menger, had practiced in Trinidad since 1872. Taylor, *Trinidad, Colorado Territory*, pp. 129, 140-41.

⁷⁴ It went into receivership in November. Brayer, *William Blackmore*, p. 194; *Daily Colorado Chieftain*, July 8, 1876, p. 4, and July 19, 1876, p. 4. Confidence even remained high in Trinidad that the broad-gauge railroad would reach there by autumn.

⁷⁵ Brayer, *William Blackmore*, p. 244.

of the Denver and Rio Grande was needed across the Purgatoire River to the coal deposits in the foothills of the Raton (Fisher's) Peak. Because the effects of the nationwide depression of 1873 still lingered significantly in Colorado in 1877, the Denver and Rio Grande Railway Company was unable to build the two-or-three-mile extension. Consequently, the job was accomplished by organizing the El Moro Railway Company which, with the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company, arranged for assistance from Philadelphia capitalist Edward Lewis; the Denver and Rio Grande was to lease and operate the El Moro Railway.⁷⁶

The first red brick coke ovens of the beehive type were built by a Scottish stonemason, Charles Innes, but recently come to the United States, working for Captain William Anderson.⁷⁷ Anderson was one of the incorporators of the Trinidad Coal and Coke Company; that firm was organized March 17, 1876, with its principal office in Denver, and A. C. Hunt was among those who signed the articles.⁷⁸ The first coal was taken from a

In 1888, when this view of Engleville was published in a Trinidad directory, the mines were said to have a capacity of 1,200 tons per day.



shaft east of the later big mine at Engleville (also occasionally referred to as Engleburg), named for George Engle, an engineer and surveyor brought to Colorado by General Palmer from the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia to supervise the opening of the Engleville Mine.⁷⁹ Engle later became agent for the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company.⁸⁰ The mine and camp belonged to the Colorado Coal and Iron Company after 1880.

Nothing came of a move to incorporate El Moro. On June 7, 1877, a petition, written in both English and Spanish and signed by twenty-nine persons, was filed with the Las Animas County Commissioners; and on the same day a remonstrance, also in English and Spanish, was submitted to the board.⁸¹ No further reference to the petition has been found, so it may be presumed that the commissioners let it die. In the meantime, the difficulty over clear titles to Trinidad town lots had been overcome, and a U.S. patent to the Trinidad townsite dated August 7, 1877, was issued to Dr. Thomas E. Owen, president of the town board of trustees.⁸² That action had become possible through a relinquishment made by John Hallum and Thomas Leitensdorfer—claimants under the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant—to the United States of America on August 3, 1876.⁸³

Of great importance to the older town was the approach of a broad-gauge railroad—not the Kansas Pacific but the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe. The temporary benefits of being a railhead town could be enjoyed, and it appeared that Trinidad ultimately would be on a transcontinental line. The incredible blunder by the Denver and Rio Grande's management in letting the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe seize control of the Raton Pass in 1878⁸⁴ was very much to Trinidad's advantage. Arrival of the broad-gauge Santa Fe Railroad in Trinidad in the autumn of 1878 perhaps was the chief reason for Trinidad's eventual supremacy, and projection of the Santa Fe into New Mexico the following year set new perspectives for the region. Wagon freighting and stagecoaching on the last remnant of the Santa Fe Trail disappeared. Trinidad's expansive future in terms of railroading and the coal industry seemed assured, and the

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 244-45.

⁷⁷ "Charles Innes—Pioneer Builder of Trinidad," *Chronicle-News*, November 10, 1929, p. 4.

⁷⁸ Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 5, pp. 774-75.

⁷⁹ *Chronicle-News*, November 10, 1929, p. 4.

⁸⁰ Record Book no. 3, Las Animas County Commissioners, p. 456.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

⁸² Honora DeBusk Smith, "Early Life in Trinidad and the Purgatory Valley" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Colorado, 1930), pp. 124-25.

⁸³ Las Animas County Deed Record, vol. 6, pp. 584-85.

⁸⁴ L. L. Waters, *Steel Trails to Santa Fe* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1950), pp. 98-99.

challenge from El Moro faded accordingly. General Palmer's hope for a great narrow-gauge trunk line to Mexico City was destroyed as broad-gauge, east-west railroads built across southeastern Colorado, turning the attention of the Denver and Rio Grande's promoters increasingly towards the San Luis Valley and the mountainous mining country in the southern part of the state.⁸⁵

It is possible that the declining El Moro townsite program might have been revived when financial conditions of the Denver and Rio Grande and the Southern Colorado Coal and Town Company improved,⁸⁶ but the evidence available strongly suggests that the El Moro project failed in any valid criteria of comparison with Colorado Springs, Durango,⁸⁷ or even South Pueblo. From 1,500 tons in 1877 coke production in the ovens associated with El Moro increased to 29,300 tons in 1881; but with establishment in 1880 of the Colorado Coal and Iron Company's plant at Pueblo, which took the El Moro coke, El Moro's life became regulated by the fortunes of that company. The resultant lack of economic diversity stunted the town's growth, it being estimated that only five hundred people lived there in 1882.⁸⁸ First place definitely had been yielded to Trinidad before 1888, when the Denver and Rio Grande finally extended its tracks to the flourishing Las Animas County seat.⁸⁹

After El Moro experienced a disastrous fire on the night of July 5, 1888, the town was rebuilt, some of it more substantial (brick instead of frame) than before, but recovery did not extend to a renewed rivalry with Trinidad.⁹⁰ As early as 1890, the Denver Fuel Company's mine at Sopris, several miles up the Purgatoire from Trinidad, surpassed the Engleville Mine in annual coal tonnage extracted; the Sopris Mine became the largest producer in Colorado, a distinction previously enjoyed by the Engleville.⁹¹ Correspondingly, El Moro settled into the undistinguished position of being merely one of a growing number of coal and coke camps in the vicinity of Trinidad. Its

⁸⁵ Brayer, *William Blackmore*, pp. 268-71.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 270-71.

⁸⁷ Durango, another Denver and Rio Grande town established in southwestern Colorado in 1880, came from the old formula of bypassing an existing town—in this case Animas City, which quickly withered. Hafen, ed., *Colorado and Its People*, I, 413.

⁸⁸ Beshoar, *All About Trinidad and Las Animas County*, p. 61.

⁸⁹ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, IV, 202. About that time a third rail was added to the Denver and Rio Grande between Pueblo and Trinidad to accommodate the broad-gauge trains of the Denver, Texas and Gulf Railroad. *Ibid.*; Brayer, "History of Colorado Railroads," p. 669.

⁹⁰ "Tom Cook of El Moro—Pioneer Citizen," *Chronicle-News*, August 3, 1930, p. 4.

⁹¹ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, IV, 197, based on the 1890 biennial report of the state coal mine inspector.

original place in General Palmer's integrated scheme for railway, coal lands, and new towns had become a memory of unfulfilled expectations.

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"Where's Manhattan?"

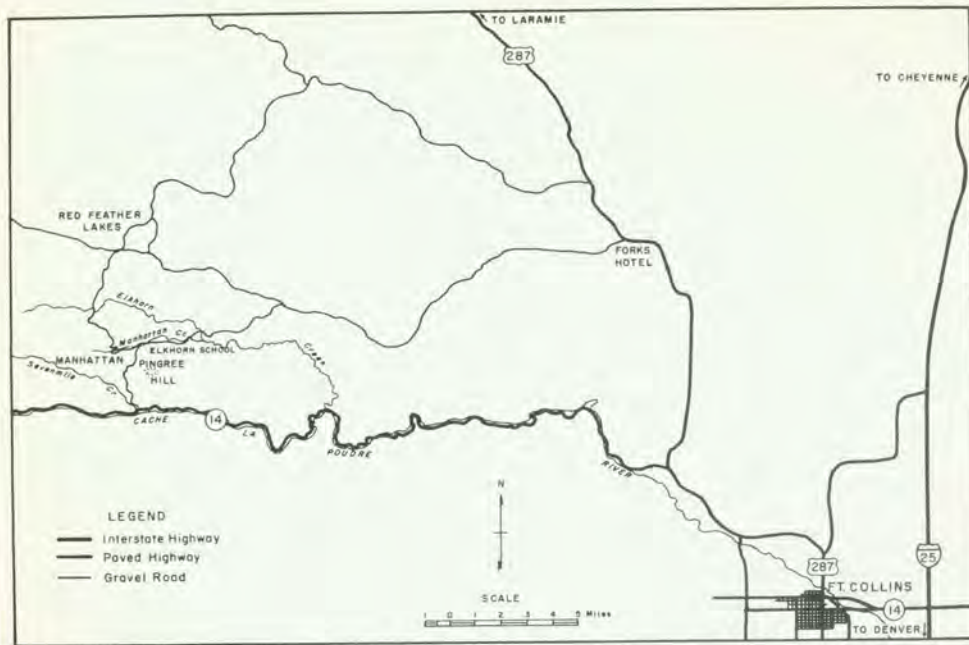
BY EVADENE BURRIS SWANSON

Many a western history fan has read the Larimer County highway sign on the Red Feather Lakes Road, "Manhattan—6 Miles," and has followed the arrow south, driving right through the site of the gold-mining town of the 1880s without identifying it. There's no other sign nor any building to mark the original settlement. Some cabins were moved away and used in other places. Most were burned by unsentimental Forest Service officials in the 1930s, for in those days "fire hazard" was the name for what we now call romantically "picturesque ruins."

In May 1970 some Fort Collins history buffs set out to explore the county's most famous ghost town before it was permanently lost. They copied the two old photographs of Manhattan in the Fort Collins Pioneer Museum and got a copy of the Manhattan town plat, dated 1887, from the county courthouse. The documents and photographs helped, but it took three guides, descendants of pioneer miners and investors, to solve the mystery of where the town had been. Their reminiscences established the sites of specific buildings and made the early mining days come alive for participants in the tour.¹

Oldest of the three guides was Elbert Robinson, who still lives within a few miles of the site. His father, Dayton Robinson, came to Colorado with tuberculosis in the 1880s. He worked first at the Forks Hotel. That popular inn, still a gathering place for ranchers in the neighborhood, is located where the road from Fort Collins divides, one way continuing northwest to Laramie, Wyoming, the other leading west into the moun-

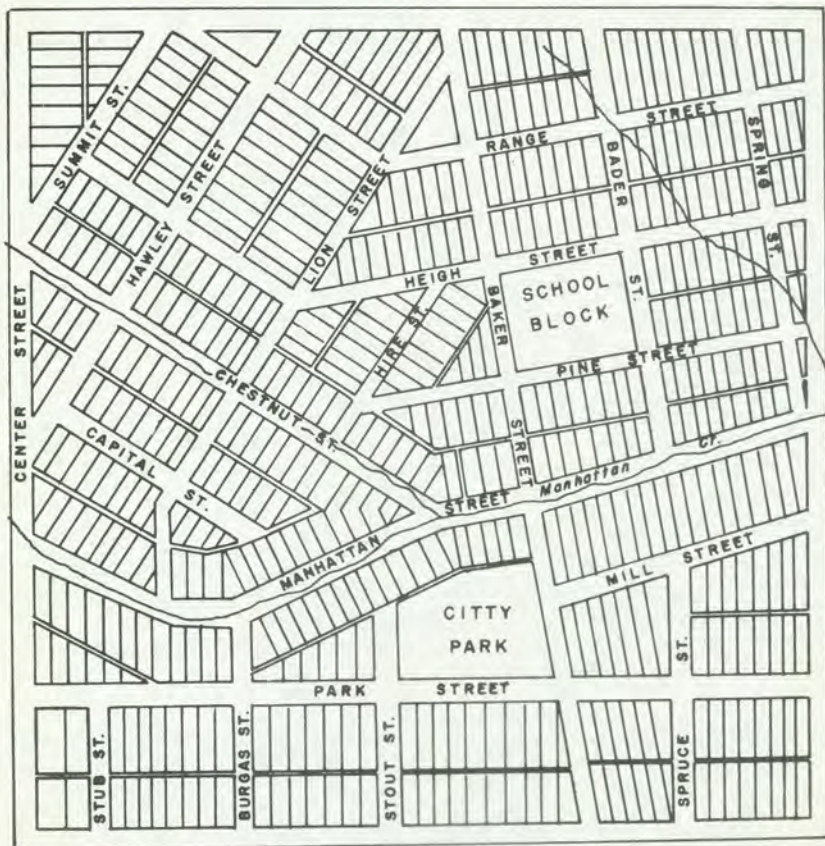
¹ Elbert Robinson and Frank McConnell toured the site of Manhattan with the author on May 16 and May 23, 1970. Many incidents which they recalled have been confirmed by newspapers, county records, and published reminiscences. These are identified by footnotes. The optimistic spirit and excitement of the pioneer miners in the little village were characteristics which only a visit to a historical site by two "oldtimers" could convey. The third guide, John Curfman, knows Manhattan through family stories and records kept by his father and grandfather. Their account books were loaned to the author for this study.



Elbert Robinson, son of a Manhattan pioneer, guided the 1970 explorers.



Manhattan, from the 1887 town plat with original spellings retained.



tains. Robinson caught the enthusiasm for raising cattle, chose the westward route, and settled in a cabin in the foothills. He was barely getting a start in ranching when the news of the gold strike broke and he joined the excited miners. Working by the day for one of the companies, he was in the group photographed in 1888.

Elbert was born in 1889 while the search for rich veins was keen. By the time he was old enough for school, the hopes for Manhattan had dimmed. The population was 150 in 1887, 60 in 1890, and 40 in 1896,² although a few optimists never gave up hope. New flurries continued, and the excitement of the original discoveries was often recalled by the faithful.

"There's 'Hangman's Tree,'" Mr. Robinson pointed to a magnificent ponderosa pine. "It never was used for a hanging, but it was always ready just in case." He led the group along the present highway to a "road" of sagebrush between the pines, all that distinguishes "Chestnut Street" today. It was Manhattan's main street along which the first settlers built their cabins. Many of these had tiny front yards with fences and gates to give a bit of protection from the grazing horses. Mr. Robinson identified the longest building appearing in the photograph on the right side of Chestnut Street as the dance hall, whose crumbling foundations now enclose several young trees which have grown up on its site. A lumber mill operator cutting wood in the vicinity gave the timber for this building, and the miners furnished the labor, nails, and hardware.

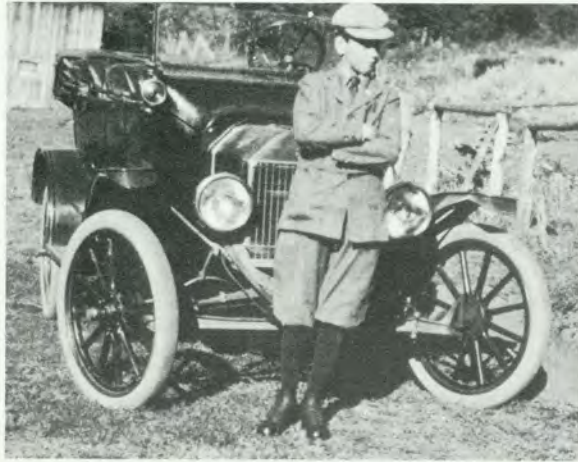
"One building was a post office, another a school," Mr. Robinson pointed out the sites, "but along about 1900 both were closed, when a school building was opened down the road a couple of miles towards Fort Collins. It was called the Elkhorn School."

The short school term at Manhattan was not really confining for the children—just kept them inside a few weeks in the summer. Clark Goodell, Mr. Robinson's uncle, stubbornly held out for wooden benches instead of newfangled seats and desks when the Elkhorn School was outfitted.³ It remained one of the district's "mountain schools" until autumn 1970. Mr. Robinson noted regretfully: "They're closing Elkhorn. My grandchildren will have to go to the Red Feather Lakes School."

² Estimates of population vary widely. One local account envisioned a "tent city" of ten thousand! Mr. McConnell guessed that the maximum was under five hundred. The figures selected here, from Colorado business directories of the period, are even more conservative, but probably represent the "permanent" population, as distinguished from summer visitors.

³ Larimer County Stockgrowers Association, 1884-1956 (Fort Collins: Don-Art Publishers, 1956), p. 93.

The second guide, Frank McConnell of Fort Collins, ranks as an old-timer in the Manhattan area too, for he lived in the ranger station near one of the mining tunnels from 1909 to 1917 while his father was a ranger for the Roosevelt National Forest. He gave the museum the two valuable photographs, a miner's pan and candlestick, and other items from the area. The McConnell family album depicts scenes of young Frank leaning against Hangman's Tree, of a Stanley Steamer overturned on the road near the ranger station, and of cabins in Manhattan almost buried in winter snows.



Frank McConnell and his father's touring car about 1915. The McConnell home and ranger station are shown below in 1913.



A new flurry of hope in 1911 caused more cabins to be built along a small road to "Slaughter's Addition" where Manhattan expanded when new people came to try their luck. He picked out the spring house for John Rigdon's cabin on the old road which the men followed to reach many of the mines. Here and there on the hillside were leveled bits of ground, terraces just big enough for cabin foundations. Gravel and disturbed soil gave evidence of recent bottle-hunting activity.

At the corner of Chestnut and Manhattan streets near the creek, the photograph showed three little shed-like structures adjoining a central two-story building. Just why it was built in that style, Mr. McConnell couldn't say, but its special shape gave the miners a good name for their saloon: the Ace of Clubs.



The Ace of Clubs was located at the corner of Chestnut and Manhattan. Clark Goodell, a homesteader whose cabin still stands at Goodell Corner down the road near Pingree Hill, hauled timber for the miners and often joined them for the social life in the saloon. He was a short, stocky man famous for his physical strength. Once he was annoyed by a bystander's watching his card game, so he picked him up and hurled him toward the window, knocking out two logs from the side of the Ace of Clubs with the force of his toss. The damage to the building was repaired, and

it was later moved down Pingree Hill and incorporated in a summer home in the Poudre Canyon.

As buildings were moved, odd bits of furniture were salvaged by nearby residents. One of the most grandiose pieces was the "barback" said to be from the Ace of Clubs Saloon. It was collected by Lou Young of Red Feather, and from his family it went to the bar of the High Country Club at Red Feather Lakes where it can be seen today. It is a mirror framed with red plush and nail heads and decorated with horns on all four sides.

The McConnells still own a mining claim back in the hills, taken out while they were living in the area. Like the persistent prospectors of old, Mr. McConnell maintains: "There may still be something worthwhile there."

The third "guide" for the tour was John Curfman, a talented young art professor on the faculty of Colorado State University. He put aside his work on the stage sets for a local production of Beethoven's *Fidelio* to dig into his personal "archives" and help on the search for Manhattan. John doesn't look like a mine owner in his snappy rust-colored, turtle-necked sweater and matching striped slacks, but he is! For he is now the sole owner of the Emily, Monte Cristo, and Empire mines, claimed and patented in the rosy days of early Manhattan digging.

The process by which an artist became a mine owner illustrates an important phase of Colorado mining history. The Monte Cristo lode was certified by Abner Loomis and Perry Bosworth of Fort Collins in March 1888. By December 1896, although their faith in the mines was still strong, their money had run out, so they transferred their interests to a new firm incorporated in Larimer County, the Missouri Mining and Milling Company. The capital for the enterprise came mainly from a group of investors in Missouri. This helped buy timber to brace the tunnels, to pay day laborers to dig, and to purchase a new steam hoist and boiler.⁴

In 1898 the directors decided the ore output justified proceeding to the second stage in securing title on a mining claim. They hired Dayton Robinson and George Ragan, the Manhattan postmaster, to represent the company in securing patents on the Monte Carlo and the Emily. Ragan had tried the goldfields in



George Ragan (center, with two horses and dog) was photographed with other Manhattanites on Chestnut Street in 1888.

California before settling in Manhattan, and his buckskin pouch for gold dust is one of the relics of that era in the Fort Collins Pioneer Museum.

The federal mining laws after the Civil War encouraged prospectors to search federal land for ore. The system provided that claims might be staked for a year, then renewed annually if work valued at one hundred dollars was done on the claim. This did not give title or require tax payment but it favored exploration. If a lode was productive, the owner of the claim could patent it and receive permanent title.

John Curfman's grandfather bought stock in the Missouri Mining and Milling Company in 1897 and played a vigorous part in the final push to exploit the vein. He traveled from Missouri to Manhattan and reviewed the prospects for the board of directors. He made an inventory of the Emily Mine's equipment and paid the bills for labor like Clark Goodell's charges for hauling timber. He struggled to keep the company from going under, but gradually the stock began to appear worthless. He and, later, his son kept careful records of the transfer of ownership and paid the taxes. Finally, after Abner Loomis and the Fort Collins investors died, the Curfmans in Missouri were the only ones left sufficiently interested in this strip of land in the Colorado mountains to keep up the taxes.

The first part of the "forest reserve" (now the Roosevelt National Forest) was set aside in 1902, and many additions were made later. The process of reducing the number of old mining claims began. Holdings like the McConnells' and Curfmans' became unusual. So today, because his grandfather and father patiently kept records and accumulated "worthless" stock, John owns three mines from old Manhattan.

⁴ Entries in ledger, November 20, 1896, p. 36; September 22, 1898, p. 40; Annual Report, 1902, p. 292; miscellaneous accounts of Missouri Mining and Milling Company, all in the personal collection of John Curfman, Fort Collins; company incorporation records, county clerk's office, Larimer County Court-house, Fort Collins; *Denver Times*, December 31, 1899, p. 2; September 23, 1901, p. 9.

The photographs of the rough cabins, the inventory of the crude equipment, and the overall disappointing results of the mine output make Manhattan's history sound bleak, but the folks who lived there had fun. Even with only 150 residents, Grant Snyder decided to publish a newspaper, the *Manhattan Prospector*. Tidbits in its columns reveal the social life. Heavy snow in the timber made successful deer hunting. One man had an organ brought up from the Forks Hotel, and the editor maintained that "every other man can play the violin, organ, piano, or mouth harp." On one occasion the ladies of Manhattan served "a bountiful repast at midnight for a grand ball."⁵

A dedicated booster of Manhattan was Benjamin Franklin Burnett, the owner of a store and butcher shop in Fort Collins. In 1879 Burnett had built a store for prospectors of Lulu City, a mining camp named for his daughter at the headwaters of the Colorado River (then called the Grand River). Its day was over by the time the Manhattan excitement developed, and Burnett turned to the new town for business opportunity. In 1890 he displayed in his Fort Collins store crude gold brought in from the Elkhorn Mine near Manhattan. It was in six retorts valued at two thousand dollars each. He opened a general store in Manhattan and "did quite well until the boom played out," according to the reminiscences of his son, which were published many years later.⁶

Burnett owned the lots on which the Ace of Clubs Saloon was located, and in 1891 he sold the quitclaim deed for that property for fifteen hundred dollars.⁷ This was quite a tidy sum for less than half an acre. One of Burnett's mining claims was titled "Laugh-a-Lot" in the county records, and the same name was used for his summer cabin down in the Poudre Canyon, another indication of the good spirits with which the people faced the hardships of mountain living.

One Manhattan miner, Frank Gartman, was divorced by his wife who then married Cecil Moon, a wealthy Englishman in the neighborhood and heir to a title. As Lady Moon, she bought a whole ranch near Manhattan in 1901 for twenty-five hundred dollars, complete with horses, cattle, ranch machinery, and household furniture, including a grand piano.⁸ She registered

⁵ *Manhattan Prospector*, February 17, 1887, p. 3; May 26, 1887, p. 4. Two issues of this rare newspaper are on display at the Fort Collins Pioneer Museum.

⁶ Frank Jones Burnett, *Golden Memories of Colorado* (New York: Vantage Press, 1965), pp. 155-61, 109; Ansel Watrous, *History of Larimer County* (Fort Collins: Courier Printing and Publishing Co., 1911), pp. 153, 461; *Denver Republican*, October 26, 1890, p. 14.

⁷ Quitclaim Deeds, vol. 73, p. 85, entries for May 9 and 12, 1891, in Larimer County Clerk's office.

⁸ *Denver Times*, September 29, 1901, p. 11.



The building over the shaft of McConnell's Gold King Mine.

one mining claim in Manhattan called the Minnehaha and another called Katy's Pet.⁹

The big prosaic-looking old ledgers in the county clerk's office preserve in their entries of claims a surprising range of fanciful names. Besides the Laugh-a-Lot, Burnett entered the Esmeralda, Bacon, Bullfrog, David Moffat, Bridal Veil, Wedding Bells, and Honeymoon. John Rigdon had the Prodigal, Opal, and Gold Bug. George Grill's was the Little Topsy. Clark Goodell chose the Joker, Evening Star, and Morning Glory. George Ragan had the Eclipse. Dayton Robinson had the Tidal Wave and the Elbert, named for his little son. Many used the names of wives or sweethearts or older states. Variations on gold were numerous: Gold King, Gold Queen, Gold Nugget,

⁹ Index to Mining Claims, Larimer County Clerk's office.

Golden Spike, Golden Eagle. Some tried birds like Pelican or Phoenix. One chose politics—Roosevelt. They even ventured into the classics with Ben Hur, Claudius, Quo Vadis, and Iago.

The first need for a cemetery at Manhattan arose in November 1892. George Grill, ex-mayor of Manhattan, and Lawrence J. Mahar, his partner, were killed in an explosion at the Black Hawk tunnel, where they were working under contract for a Greeley company. The accident occurred southwest of the mining town not far from Curfman's mines. "The whole country for miles around turned out to attend the last sad obsequies."¹⁰ A rude cross still marks Grill's grave today in a small enclosure on National Forest land, north of the present highway and east of the site of the old town. Mr. McConnell observed: "We never called it a cemetery—just Graveyard Draw."

No one recalls that any of the cabins was used for a church, but one story describes Grill's widow as "the staunchest Christian in Manhattan." She did laundry for the miners after the explosion but was short on both cash and firewood as winter approached. Her prayers were overheard by a crusty miner, Mat Ragan, brother of the postmaster. He was an outspoken atheist who had often challenged her views. He went down the road after the firewood to prove to her how wrong she was to depend on God. She always insisted that God could soften the hardest of hearts and added: "I'm thankful for the wood too."¹¹

Mat Ragan's good turn was done just in time, for he was killed in a runaway the next year and his body was buried near Grill and Mahar. The *Denver Republican* reported the accident with all the grisly details: "When found he was still fastened in the wheels and hind axle of the wagon."¹²

If others were buried there, no record was kept, and the question seemed unimportant till March 1970 when the request to dig a new grave came to the district office of the Roosevelt National Forest. The body of Joseph Brinkhoff, popularly known in Larimer County as "Rattlesnake Jack," a veteran of World War I, awaited burial. The family hit upon this old cemetery as the proper place because of his love of the mountains.

"Rattlesnake Jack" bore some resemblance to the miners of early days. He staked his claim on government land some distance south of Manhattan, renewed it every year, and did the annual hundred dollars' worth of work on it. The ore extracted never amounted to much, so he never advanced his claim to

¹⁰ *Fort Collins Courier*, November 17, 1892, p. 1.

¹¹ Burnett, *Golden Memories*, p. 111

¹² *Denver Republican*, June 10, 1893, p. 2.

legal ownership. This never worried Jack. He preferred his wilderness cabin and isolated life.

Roan Anderson, district ranger, was faced with a difficult decision to adjust national policy to local needs. The bodies of Grill, Mahar, and Ragan had been placed in that ground when there was no national forest. The present program of "multiple use" does not have cemeteries on the list. But Graveyard Draw is not hedged in by the rigid regulations of an official historic site or landmark. The Forest Service allows its staff some authority. Anderson finally acquiesced: "Jack had always lived on hard rock. He ought to be put to rest on hard rock, and they promise not to put up a conspicuous marker."

Digging the grave in March was not an easy task for Brinkhoff's sons, and uncertainty about where the old graves were added to their nervousness. Neighbors claim they were encouraged by the widow: "You'll know the right spot, just go ahead and dig—and if you do hit something—well, then, just say, 'Move over, Jack's comin'.'"

The burial service on the wintry mountain slope matched in dignity and western style those of long ago. The snow drifts were so deep that only a horse-drawn sled could carry the casket. The pallbearers, Jack's three sons and three friends, had six-shooters strapped to their sides. Of the thirty cars in the funeral procession, only those with four-wheel drive could continue the last mile to the cemetery. At the conclusion of the graveside ceremony, the bearers drew rifles from cover, pointed



"Rattlesnake Jack"
Brinkhoff lies
near others buried
in Graveyard Draw.

them skyward, and fired a final salute to "Rattlesnake Jack." A bugler hidden in the trees played taps, and Jack's widow was presented an American flag. As members of the spring excursion gathered about the cemetery to listen to the description of Brinkhoff's funeral, some of the children dug in the grass around the new grave and were thrilled to find rifle shells.

Not all the participants on the tour dared to drive on the rough, rocky old mining road to the height of land where the pile of tailings from the Emily still lies exposed. Those who persevered saw the beautiful valley of Sevenmile Creek where a stamp mill once crushed rock taken out of the tunnels. They looked across at the snow-capped Mummy Range in the distance.

One person timidly inquired of the owner of the Emily, "What will you do with your land, John?" To this Curfman responded with a twinkle, "Well, I enjoy my view!"

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