

Making Brick out of Straw: Delegate Hiram P. Bennet

BY JASON H. SILVERMAN

On 28 February 1863 Hiram P. Bennet took the floor of the United States House of Representatives and in an eloquent plea for his constituents declared that "with a country so vast, filled with all the things that go to make up the wealth of a great state, occupied by [the Coloradoans] so patriotic a people, suffering so much neglect . . . is it asking too much of Congress, for the dignity and patriotism of this people, to give this promising young commonwealth the opportunity to become a sovereign State of this Union?"¹ Unfortunately this request went unanswered as Colorado statehood remained some thirteen years away. Nonetheless, during his two terms in Congress, territorial delegate Hiram P. Bennet constantly lobbied for the interests of Colorado Territory and the West. His proposed legislation dealt exclusively with the needs of his own territory and with those of the territories in the Rocky Mountain region. One account of Bennet's performance in Washington, D.C., on behalf of his constituents noted that when "Congress did not recognize [Colorado Territory's] needs, he told it so; when Congress attempted to interfere with its progress, he objected; [and] when he desired the aid of the National Government, he demanded it."²

Despite the restrictions of his office, Bennet accumulated quite a successful record in keeping the interests of his region before Congress.³ He secured the approval of his colleagues on proposals to initiate geological surveys; to protect settlers' and

¹ U.S., Congress, House, *Congressional Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 1:141 (hereinafter cited as *Cong. Globe*).

² Bernhard O.J. Linnevoild, "A Study of the Attitudes on Public Questions of Colorado's Territorial Delegates, 1861-1876" (M.A. thesis, University of Colorado, 1931), pp. 38-39.

³ A territorial delegate to Congress received the same salary as congressmen from the States, was allowed to introduce bills and participate in debates, but possessed no official vote on measures before the House and was prohibited from serving on committees.

Judge Hiram Pitts Bennet—Denver lawyer and first city public prosecutor, first delegate to Congress from Colorado Territory (1861-65), Denver postmaster (1869-74), and state senator from Arapahoe County in Colorado's first legislative assembly—settled in Denver in 1859.



miners' rights against Indian encroachments; to establish mineralogy controls; and to prohibit taxation without representation. Bennet also proposed legislation to provide for the construction of a branch mint at Denver, a public library, a penitentiary, and various post roads within Colorado Territory. To the surprise of his fellow congressmen, he even introduced an amendment that would preserve buffalo from wanton slaughter, and one that would print territorial laws in Spanish. For defending their interests, Bennet won the appreciation and the gratitude of Colorado residents while concurrently receiving the widespread respect and praise of members of the House of Representatives. Nevertheless, historians have perennially neglected Bennet and his role as the first delegate to Congress from Colorado Territory. To this date there has been no substantial, published appraisal of Bennet as Colorado's first official spokesman in Washington, D.C. In this essay, therefore, Bennet's performance as a congressional delegate will be analyzed and evaluated.

By the time he arrived in Denver in 1859, Hiram P. Bennet had acquired a great deal of experience in territorial politics. Born in Carthage, Maine, in 1826, Bennet studied

law in Missouri, practiced his profession and served as circuit court judge in Iowa, and ran as a candidate for delegate in Nebraska Territory—all before he reached the age of thirty. Unsuccessful in that first election in 1854, he prevailed in 1856 and became a member of the Nebraska Territorial Council. In 1858 Bennet was elected to the Nebraska Territorial House of Representatives where he served as speaker. The following year he moved to Denver to resume his law practice.⁴

In July 1861 when the Unionists of Colorado Territory met to choose their candidate for territorial delegate in the first election in the history of Colorado Territory, they nominated a man with a strong background in politics and law, Hiram P. Bennet. According to one noted historian, this choice "indicated both the professionalism of the Colorado political frontier and the middle-class and middle-western backgrounds of many of the Denverites. . . . It was characteristic of him [Bennet]—and many of his constituents—that he had been both a Douglas Democrat and a Free Soiler, but now was shrewd enough to run on a vague 'Union' ticket."⁵ Bennet's opponent in this election was Beverly D. Williams, delegate and lobbyist from the recently defunct Territory of Jefferson. Williams was nominated by the People's party of Colorado.⁶

With accusations of secessionism surrounding Williams, a Kentuckian by birth, the political campaign soon turned from issues of personality and policy to the spectre of regional nativity. William Byers, the staunchly Republican editor of the influential *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, continuously published editorials damaging to Williams. At one point, Byers concluded that Williams's "sympathies are positively known to be on the side of the rebellious states."⁷ The *Denver Weekly Colorado Republican* joined the *News* in assaulting

⁴ For the next fifty-five years Bennet served the people of Colorado in a variety of posts. He was Colorado Territory's initial delegate to Washington; secretary of the state in 1867; Denver's postmaster from 1869 to 1874; state senator during the first Colorado State Legislature in 1876; and "State Agent" from 1888 to 1895, "recovering lands belonging to the State of Colorado which had been wrongfully disposed of." Bennet retired from active duties and from his law practice in 1899 and remained in Denver until his death in 1914.

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 580; obituary, *Trail Magazine* 7 (November 1914):27-28; Jerome C. Smiley, *History of Denver* (Denver, Colo.: Times-Sun Publishing Co., 1901), p. 496; Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 4 vols. (Chicago, Ill.: Blakely Printing Co., 1889), 4:366-67.

⁵ Howard R. Lamar, *The Far Southwest, 1846-1912: A Territorial History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1970), pp. 232-33; Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming* (San Francisco, Calif.: History Co. Publishers, 1890), p. 429n.

⁶ The People's party of Colorado was actually the Peace Democratic party or Democrats predisposed toward compromise rather than secession.

⁷ *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 25 July 1861.



A congressional delegate from the provisional Jefferson Territory, the unofficial predecessor to Colorado Territory, Beverly D. Williams was a superintendent in Denver for the Leavenworth and Pikes Peak Express Company in 1859.

the Williams candidacy and remarked that "Beverly D. Williams . . . is a Union [man] in name [but] secession in principle."⁸ Such adverse publicity severely damaged Williams's campaign, so when Coloradoans went to the polls in August 1861, Bennet overwhelmingly defeated Williams.⁹ Four months later Bennet took his seat as a delegate in the House of Representatives at the Second Session of the Thirty-Seventh Congress and began two successful terms of service.

During both of his terms, Bennet offered and supported key amendments that dealt with the closely intertwined topics of surveys and the rights of preemption. One of his earliest proposals attempted to amend the Civil Appropriations Bill by increasing the allotment "for surveying the public lands and private land claims confirmed in Colorado Territory" from \$5,000 to \$25,000. In partial defense for this action, he submitted that other territories had received hundreds of thousands of dollars for the same purpose. Bennet further noted that if Colorado Territory failed to receive this modestly enlarged appropriation for surveys, it would be a

victim of injustice and discrimination. But, perhaps his strongest argument on behalf of his constituents in this regard stated:

the people settled [Colorado Territory] two years before Congress knew there was such a country. . . . They have expended thousands of dollars there in improvements. They have built towns, and I may say have built a city there. There are hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in the public lands there, and yet Congress has not appropriated one dollar for their survey. The committee is now asked to give us an appropriation for surveying, not unoccupied lands, but lands that have been occupied by settlers two years, who have thousands of dollars at stake in improvements on them. . . . We only ask the sum of \$25,000 . . . and we ought to have it.¹⁰

Clearly, Bennet's intention was not to grid all of the public lands in the territory in order to open the market to speculators. On the contrary, his sole purpose was to survey land that settlers had already inhabited and developed. This latter justification ultimately precipitated Bennet's fight for the preemption rights of Coloradoans.

The preemption law of 1841 gave squatters on public land the opportunity to buy their land first. The law declared that "the head of a family, who had settled 'in person' on land and 'improved' it, had first choice or claim to buy his land, up to 160 acres, at the minimum government price" of \$1.25 per acre.¹¹ Preemption rights actually encouraged settlers to occupy land and to invest in it before government surveyors—and land speculators—arrived. Bennet wished to ensure that Coloradoans who preceded the land surveys would be entitled to these preemption rights. He commented, when asking for more money for surveys of lands already occupied, that "I shall [ultimately] ask that the preemption laws be extended over [Colorado] Territory, in order that our people there may purchase by preemption rights at \$1.25 per acre the homes in which their all is invested."¹² Thus, the appropriation expended to survey the settled lands in Colorado Territory would benefit Bennet's constituents by facilitating their purchase of those lands.

¹⁰ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:235; see also Hiram P. Bennet Biographical File, Documentary Resources Department, State Historical Society of Colorado, Denver (hereinafter cited as Bennet File, SHSC).

¹¹ Lawrence M. Friedman, *A History of American Law* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), p. 205.

¹² *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:235; Bennet File, SHSC.

⁸ *Denver Weekly Colorado Republican*, 3 August 1861.

⁹ Jason H. Silverman, "Confederate Activities in Colorado Territory, 1861-1865" (M.A. thesis, Colorado State University, 1976), pp. 61-62.

MAP OF
COLORADO TERRITORY,

Compiled From Government Maps & actual Surveys
MADE IN 1861

Denver City, Nov. 1, 1861

J. M. C. Case



Ferdinand Vandiveer Hayden (1829-87), a physician by training and a geologist by profession, was the father of the federal government's western surveys, beginning with his geological survey of Nebraska in 1867. From this evolved his U.S. Geological Survey of the Territories, which survived until 1879. John Wesley Powell (1834-1902) organized and led natural history expeditions in the West in the 1860s and early 1870s. From 1875 to 1879 he directed the Survey of the Rocky Mountain Region.



Unfortunately, Bennet's first proposal failed to increase the sadly insufficient apportionment for surveys in Colorado. He then introduced two bills related to preemption rights in his territory, which were referred to the Committee on Public Lands and presumably pigeonholed. A similar bill, proposed by Senator Alexander Ramsey of Minnesota, was passed in May 1864 and gave to squatters in the territories the rightful title to their claims.¹³ Meanwhile, Bennet succeeded in establishing and maintaining a General Land Office in Denver and in moving the office of the surveyor-general from Salt Lake City to Denver.¹⁴ Bennet again broached the subject of greater funds for surveying public lands in Colorado Territory in March 1865. He utilized the same arguments as before, stressing both the need for surveys to allow settlers to purchase their land and the similarity of Colorado to other mountainous territories that required higher costs-per-mile for surveys. Although he did not gain a greater allowance-per-mile, Bennet's efforts realized \$15,000—in comparison with New Mexico's \$5,000—for surveys in his territory.¹⁵

Delegate Bennet offered one other resolution concerning settlement on public lands in Colorado. This motion instructed the House Committee on Public Lands to "inquire into the propriety of so changing existing laws as to legalize the settlement by loyal citizens upon . . . the public domain . . . to which the Indian title has been or may be extinguished." Such a proposal indicated that Bennet's zealous advocacy for the rights of his constituents could occasionally become overextended. Nevertheless, he was routinely following suit in arranging treaties to purchase Indian land for white settlers to inhabit. He supported an appropriation to effect treaties with the Cheyenne and the Arapaho that ceded their acreage in Colorado. He also endorsed the cession of Ute lands. These lands proved especially important to Bennet both because of their size—"about half of [Colorado] Territory is now owned and occupied by these Indians, at least it is claimed by them"—and because of their value—since "that portion of the Territory thus occupied by Indians comprises some of the richest mines in the Territory." He propounded an

¹³ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 1:495; 38th Cong., 2d sess., 1865, 38, pt. 1:435; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 2:1394-95; Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:291; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 2d sess., 1865, 38, pt. 2:1260; Bennet File, SHSC, pp. 8-9.

amendment to the Indian Appropriations Bill that would allow up to \$15,000 in payment for the title to Ute land.¹⁶

In addition to virtually usurping Indian land, Bennet sought to protect the rights of settlers and miners in the territory by further restraining Indian movements. To that end, he introduced legislation creating an Indian agency for two of the larger groups of Ute in the territory, the Grand River and the Uintah bands.¹⁷ Later, Bennet submitted a motion to separate Indian agencies into an autonomous department rather than to have them remain a branch of the governor's office. Such an act would enable Indian superintendents to implement restrictions almost at will. A more insidious Bennet proposition attempted to make Indians amenable to the United States criminal law codes. Bennet probably pushed this proposal because Indians had committed many atrocities in his territory for which they were not subject to punishment under current treaties.¹⁸ He clearly hoped this might discourage more depredations against his constituents. Finally, Bennet advanced a resolution to station one military post in both the southwest and the northwest portions of the territory. This was done "with a view of restraining the Indian tribes . . . and protecting prospecting parties and miners and settlers in that region."¹⁹ Bennet's concern for the physical safety of Coloradoans preempted any humanitarian impulse toward Indians.

Besides the threat of Indian encroachment, Bennet had to protect miners against governmental impingement upon their rights as private citizens. Bennet's argument during a debate on miners' rights could be construed as his singularly most significant contribution for Coloradoans in his two terms of service. The topic of this debate was a resolution, offered by Congressman Fernando Wood of New York, that stated in part that the president should take any necessary measures—including the use of military force—to protect "the

rights of the Government in the mineral lands and mines of Colorado and Arizona."²⁰ That is, Wood proposed to disallow private miners' claims and to have mines worked only by and for the federal government. He expressed Easterners' fears that unless Congress restrained mining activities, the mines would soon be exhausted and the government deprived of its most valuable resource. Wood urged governmental repossession of the mines in these two territories; or, failing in that, he advocated selling the rights to work them.

Bennet promptly and vigorously defended the western point of view. First he commented that the title of the mineral lands never left the government, so it was unnecessary to "repossess" them. The government, he noted, had always allowed private citizens to work publicly owned mines. He thereby inferred that this proposal would be discriminatory toward Colorado and Arizona. But Bennet's most effective counterpoint charged that the government actually benefitted from permitting miners to excavate western mines, which had already yielded "more than five-sixths of the present circulation of gold." Refusing to yield, Bennet railed further that

the gentleman [Wood] talks of putting occupants off these lands. This *cannot* be done. The only thing that should be done is to pass some liberal statute to *aid* the occupant. . . . A reasonable tax . . . should be accompanied with statutory protection to the miner in his possessions. With the same propriety the gentleman might propose to drive the settlers off the agricultural public lands because they are producing corn and wheat, as to drive off those who are producing gold.²¹

Immediate assistance from the influential Congressman Elihu B. Washburne of Illinois—who feared a Civil War in the West should Wood's resolution pass—reinforced Bennet's rationale. Thus, Wood's proposal failed.

Bennet championed the western miners' cause several other times during his tenure in Congress. He introduced a resolution to develop the country's mineral resources at least four times. He especially desired to extract "the precious metals known to exist in great quantities in the Rocky Mountain range and in nearly all the ranges of mountains in the Western part of the continent."²² For this purpose, he urged

¹⁶ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 2d sess., 1865, 38, pt. 1:435; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 8; Linnevoild, "A Study of the Attitudes on Public Questions of Colorado's Territorial Delegates," p. 36; Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:291; *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 2:1009-10.

However, Bennet withdrew the Indian appropriation proposal upon learning that money had already been allotted for such use in a previous amendment.

¹⁷ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:877; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 4.

¹⁸ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 1:658; Linnevoild, "A Study of the Attitudes on Public Questions of Colorado's Territorial Delegates," pp. 22-23.

¹⁹ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:398; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 4; Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:291.

²⁰ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 2:1696; Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:321.

²¹ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 2:1696; author's italics in the quote.

²² *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 3:2415, 2496.



*Bennet
championed
the causes of
the western
miners and
settlers.*



the establishment of a Bureau of Mineralogy. In addition, Bennet successfully requested a substantial appropriation to collect statistics on "the wealth and extent of the mineral resources of the States and territories west of the Missouri River."²³ His proposal for a geological survey of Colorado and other mining territories was finally approved in 1865. Earlier, Bennet interceded for the particular benefit of his Colorado mining constituents when he won the legalization of "all consummated litigations under the miners' and place courts in Colorado Territory which were had and done therein prior to the organization of said territory by act of Congress, February 28, 1861."²⁴ That is, any actions on mining claims taken and completed by the unauthorized courts of "Jefferson Territory" would now be recognized as legal. The administration of justice for miners in Colorado Territory was also furthered by Bennet's amendment to extend the powers of probate courts. Under this bill, the jurisdiction of probate courts covered all litigation involving the titles to mining claims up to \$2,000.²⁵ It facilitated the speedy settlement of disputed ownership, thereby allowing miners to continue their work.

In addition to guarding the concerns of Colorado miners and settlers, Bennet undertook to protect the interests of federal officers in the territory. He initiated several pieces of legislation that emphasized the right of United States judges in the far western territories to receive salaries equal to other territorial justices.²⁶ Noting the large amount of business yet to be transacted by federal magistrates in Colorado, Bennet stressed their need for more pay. Regrettably, he achieved no significant results for his efforts.

However, Bennet ably served Colorado and the other western territories during taxation debates. Three weeks after taking his seat, he protested the right of Congress to tax the territories. He stated that the federal government could not tax a territory until territorial delegates were granted "all the rights and privileges of members of this branch of the national legislature."²⁷ Taxation without representation was

²³ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 2d sess., 1865, 38, pt. 2:1261; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 9.

²⁴ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:877; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 4.

²⁵ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 1:884.

²⁶ Bennet File, SHSC, pp. 5-6; *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1861, 37, pt. 1:168; 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 1:281; 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1863, 38, pt. 1:40; 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 2:1170.

²⁷ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1861, 37, pt. 1:168.

his indictment against Congress. Less than three months passed before he again took the floor of the House and challenged

by what authority has Congress the right to tax the people of a Territory? I have been taught . . . that taxation and representation went hand in hand; that it was because the mother country claimed the right to tax the people of the colonies without their being represented that the war of the Revolution sprung up. Now, we of the Territories are in similar relation with the United States.²⁸

This oratory accomplished little, so Bennet changed tactics. Instead of attempting to eliminate taxes in the territory, he introduced a bill in January 1863 to make Colorado Territory a state. Statehood would mean full representation for Colorado, which in turn, from Bennet's point of view, would exonerate Congress from his previous charge. This bill failed to gain attention during that congressional session.

Nonetheless, Bennet fought on. Again he altered his strategy by offering an amendment that directed that federal taxes collected in the territories be applied toward territorial expenses. Returning taxes for territorial use would have appeased Bennet's ire, because then the federal government could not benefit from their unconstitutional levy. For further support of his case, Bennet cited a report from the commissioner of internal revenue that discouraged federal tax collection in territories. He concluded by declaring that

I have [no] more local feeling or selfishness than is proper for a Representative to have under similar circumstances. . . . I think my Territory . . . [is] entitled to some consideration. . . . And it is with a care for the general Government, as well as for the interests of my constituents, that I urge this so persistently.²⁹

He followed this proposal the next day with a long speech reaffirming his denunciation of taxation without representation for Colorado Territory. But it was in vain.

Goaded by his constituents, however, Bennet continued the battle. If he could not prevent taxation, he would agitate anew for Colorado statehood; he therefore submitted an act "to enable the people of Colorado to form a Constitution and State Government, and for the admission of said state into the

Union on an equal footing with the original States."³⁰ Bennet's efforts for the sake of his constituents finally succeeded since this bill was passed unanimously.

Encouraged by this major victory, Bennet renewed his labors to protect Coloradoans' interests against taxation. Because of the passage of the statehood bill, however, he could no longer objurgate Congress on the issue of taxation without representation. At most he could seek to safeguard his people's special concerns in individual revenue acts. In one case, Bennet inserted the words "ad valorem" that effectually changed the duty on precious metals from three percent of the gross product to three percent on the net proceeds.³¹ This substantially reduced the amount of tax collectable from the territory's mines. In another instance, Bennet helped exempt mining employees, daily operators, and prospectors from being taxed by endorsing a bill that taxed only mining employers. Bennet, thereby, saved large sums for individual miners in Colorado.

In addition to saving Coloradoans vast sums of tax dollars, Bennet proposed to conserve money for his constituents by introducing legislation that utilized federal funds for the construction of a public library, a penitentiary, and a branch mint. In the unusual case of the jail, Bennet asked Congress to reimburse the Coloradoans who had already built it. He emphasized that these loyal citizens,

at the request of your Federal Governor, Chief Justice, and Marshal of the Territory, came forward and furnished means to construct a jail. It was important that this jail should be erected. There was no jail or penitentiary to confine criminals nearer than the State of Iowa, a thousand miles away. Every member of this House knows it is impossible to administer justice in any community without the wholesome restraints of a jail hard by. It is but tardy justice to the patriotic citizens who came forward at the call of these [Federal] officers and furnished money and labor to construct this jail . . . [that] it ought to be paid for by Congress.³²

Congress agreed and it was so ordered.

³⁰ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 2:1335. Actually Bennet proposed an amendment supplementary to the Colorado Statehood Bill already passed in the Senate and subsequently in the House. Nevertheless, he had submitted the first Colorado Statehood Bill and had championed its cause so that his statehood views would be enacted into law. Yet, Coloradoans rejected this enabling bill.

³¹ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 2:1915. "Ad valorem" means "in proportion to the value," so the section would have read, after Bennet inserted his words: "On gold, silver, and quicksilver, . . . a duty of 3% ad valorem on the net proceeds." This amendment was not agreed to.

³² *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 2:1535.

²⁸ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 2:1294; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 4.

²⁹ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 2:1348-49; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 5.

Appropriating funds for a branch mint in Colorado Territory required more work. Twice in December 1861, Bennet proposed resolutions to establish a branch mint of the United States in Denver. Both were referred to the Committee of Ways and Means and temporarily tabled. But partially owing to Bennet's constant agitation, a debate on the necessity of this mint transpired in February 1862 on the floor of the House. Bennet justified his viewpoint with two arguments: first, that the secretary of the treasury recommended a branch mint based on the annual production of gold statistics in Colorado Territory; and second, that geographic isolation prohibited the practicable use of any other mint or assay office. Bennet also proffered concrete documentation of the great reservoir of raw material in his territory by producing a pouch of Colorado gold. Nevertheless, Congress deemed the branch mint for Colorado a low priority project. Nothing more happened until Thaddeus Stevens, acknowledged leader of the House Republicans, received a "gift" of a gold snuff box. Then, "under the combined influences of the [Treasury] Secretary's recommendation, Mr. Bennet's persistent earnestness, the sight of the sack of gold, and the snuff box, the bill which provided for establishing a branch mint at Denver went through."³³ It became law in April 1862.

This law allowed for the creation of the Denver mint, yet it appropriated no funds for its construction. Accordingly, Bennet attempted to push a resolution "to construct public buildings at the capital of the Territory" through the Committee on Territories. Failing once, Bennet tried again approximately two months later and succeeded with a bill "to enable the Secretary of the Treasury to buy property for the erection of the Denver Mint." Once he had secured the monies to purchase the property title, Bennet easily procured \$75,000 for the actual construction or purchase of a building for the mint.³⁴

Bennet also lobbied for funds to facilitate better postal service. He established numerous new post roads at each congressional session, totaling at least twenty-seven during his tenure as Colorado's territorial delegate.³⁵ He conspired

³³ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:950; Smiley, *History of Denver*, p. 814.

³⁴ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:164; Bennet File, SHSC, p. 5; Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:291.

³⁵ See the following citations in the *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 1:360, 398, 407; 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 1:164, 189, 281, pt. 2:1535; 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 1:232, 239, 658, 971, pt. 2:1396. See also Bennet File, SHSC, p. 5.



This sketch shows the Denver City Jail (1861 to 1866), which was located at present-day 1319 Market Street. Originally the plant of the Clark, Gruber and Company Mint, the first Denver Mint (below) was located at Sixteenth and Market streets.



with Congressman James M. Ashley of Ohio to introduce an amendment that allocated \$30,000 for two military roads. One quarter of those funds was to improve the pass between Fort Garland in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado and Fort Lyon in eastern Colorado. The major portion of the appropriation was to be used for construction of a road from Denver across the Rocky and Wasatch mountains to Camp Crittenden, Utah. Bennet believed the cost of construction would be returned threefold to the government by lower transportation costs for military supplies and mail service. He calculated that

the length of the overland line, as the mail is at present carried, is about two thousand miles. The Government pays for transporting the mails on this route \$1,000,000. This is \$500 to the mile. Now, reduce the distance two hundred miles [as this road would] and take a corresponding reduction in the pay, and you save just \$100,000. It is, therefore, plain to any man, to open this shortened route is more a matter of economy than expenditure to the Government—that the Government would save by it annually in this one matter of the overland mail \$75,000, or more than three times the [\$22,500] asked for. I hope, therefore, no man here will vote against this amendment, and "save at the spile and lose at the bung."³⁶

Following the defeat of this resolution, Bennet staunchly defended the right of Coloradoans to receive mail service equal to that of other United States citizens. One section of a bill introduced by Congressman John B. Alley of Massachusetts stipulated that "all mailable matter which may be conveyed by mail westward beyond the western boundary of Kansas, and eastward from the eastern boundary of California, shall be subject to prepaid letter postage rates."³⁷ That is, all mail traveling through the western territories—including plants, seeds, books, tools, and other necessities—would be subject to more expensive rates. Alley's intention was to discourage the transportation of great volumes of heavy commodities by overland mail and to reroute these materials by sea. Both Bennet and Congressman Benjamin F. Loan of Missouri immediately objected because Alley's proposal would act to the detriment of their constituents. To mitigate this discrimination somewhat, Bennet insisted upon



Bennet wanted to end the "wanton destruction of the buffalo."

a proviso to exempt newspapers from the higher tariff. This condition was accepted and included in the final approved bill. Nevertheless, in a letter to the editor of the *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, Bennet complained that "the government ought to increase the service, rather than curtail the mail facilities to our Territories."³⁸

In addition to Bennet's previously discussed legislative record, the Colorado delegate submitted resolutions dealing with two uniquely western problems. First, he attempted to acquire funds for the printing of territorial laws in Spanish and for the salary of an interpreter and translator to the legislature. Bennet cited a case in New Mexico as precedent, where such had been done for fifteen years:

It must be recollected by members of the House that a portion of the Territory of Colorado was formed by a strip from the Territory of New Mexico. Some seven or eight thousand of the old Mexican residents were . . . incorporated into the Territory of Colorado. What are we to do with these people? Are we to enact laws to govern them, and cause them to live up to them, when they are published in a language which they do not understand, which they cannot read, and which will convey no idea to them of what they ought to do? . . . It is a matter of necessity, if we expect them to obey the laws, that they shall be printed in a language which they can read and understand.³⁹

The second resolution astonished eastern members of Congress. Bennet requested the cessation of the "wanton destruction of the buffalo upon the great western plains by the white emigrants during the spring and summer months."⁴⁰ This idea appeared to be inconsistent with his careless attitude toward Indians, but upon closer examination it supported his

³⁶ *Denver Weekly Rocky Mountain News*, 5 January 1865.

³⁷ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 1:212, 257-58; 1862, 37, pt. 1:3.

⁴⁰ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 1:495.

³⁶ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 2:1535.

³⁷ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 1864, 38, pt. 1:971.

western manner of thinking. By appeasing Indian dissatisfaction and perhaps decreasing Indian attacks, Bennet's protection of the buffalo would thereby act as protection for his constituents.⁴¹ However, both these bills were rejected, the former to encourage uniformity of language and the latter because of unenforceability.

Bennet commented on only two national issues during his tenure as congressional delegate. The first pertained to President Abraham Lincoln's suspension in 1861 of the writ of habeas corpus. With a bill before the House in 1863 to indemnify the president for this procedure, Bennet lauded Lincoln's action. He commended Lincoln in a speech, which observed that

I believe the President to be honest, patriotic, and true, and that he believed he was acting for the best in suspending the writ of habeas corpus at the time he did it.

If it is proper to suspend the writ . . . in any case whatever, pray tell me when, in the history of any nation, was there ever more occasion for doing it than when it was done in this instance? . . . Congress is not at all times in session, but the Executive is; and as imminent perils to the State, rendering it necessary to suspend the writ, may arise when Congress is not in session, my opinion is that a fair construction of that instrument would give this power to the President in the absence of Congress.

All honor, we say, to our patriotic President, be he right or wrong in the law of this matter, for he acted from pure motives, and we have as little to fear as a free people from usurpations of his as our forefathers had from Washington.⁴²

The other national matter concerned the raging debate over the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution abolishing slavery. Bennet presented a resolution on behalf of himself and the delegates of six other western territories that approved abolition. This bill read in part: "as Delegates deprived of the inestimable privilege of voting in this House [yet] feeling a deep interest in the proposition to amend the Federal Constitution forever prohibiting slavery within the jurisdiction of the United States, . . . we cannot do less than state that the measure meets our unqualified approbation."⁴³ Ultimately this amendment was ratified, an outcome especially gratifying to Bennet and his western counter-

parts. For in their first successful participation in "national" affairs, the western delegates established a new precedent that their successors would loyally follow: a joint interest in regional and national politics that together would benefit both the West and the nation.

Thus, Bennet had kept the interests of his constituents before Congress in this most trying of times. Hampered by his nonvoting status, the delegate from Colorado Territory, nevertheless, succeeded in appropriating funds for surveys; in opening Indian land to settlers; and in securing preemption rights for both miners and settlers in Colorado Territory. Also, one of his bills established the Bureau of Mineralogy for the benefit of his mining constituents. He won unanimous passage of an act to enable Colorado to become a state. Further, he saved Coloradoans vast sums on taxes by amending various internal revenue acts. Other of Bennet's approved legislation procured federal funds for construction of post roads, a jail, and public buildings, such as the mint and the library in Colorado Territory. Two indigenously western questions received Bennet's attention, but unfortunately his argument for the publication of laws in Spanish and his protest against the merciless destruction of buffalo received little congressional regard and went unheeded. Despite the domination of Civil War issues in Congress, Bennet, nonetheless, kept the concerns of his constituents before the House. Shortly after assuming his seat, Delegate Bennet had stated that his personal objective was to "quietly labor for the interest of my constituents. . . not [neglecting] any measure for their interests."⁴⁴ In this he was surely victorious.

JASON H. SILVERMAN is a doctoral student in history at the University of Kentucky. He holds a B.A. degree from the University of Virginia (1974) and an M.A. from Colorado State University (1976). A research assistant with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education during 1975, Silverman received the University of Virginia Bibliographic Society Award in 1974. His publications include a HISTORIAN'S HANDBOOK TO FORT COLLINS AND LARIMER COUNTY (Boulder, Colo.: WICHE, 1975) and an article in the SOCIAL SCIENCE JOURNAL 14 (January 1977).

⁴¹ Another historian commented that the opposition "welcomed the extinction of the buffalo as a means of subduing the Indians" (see Percy S. Fritz, *Colorado: The Centennial State* [New York: Prentice-Hall, 1941], p. 268).

⁴² *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 3d sess., 1863, 37, pt. 1: 141.

⁴³ *Cong. Globe*, 38th Cong., 2d sess., 1865, 38, pt. 1: 596.

⁴⁴ *Cong. Globe*, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 1862, 37, pt. 3: 2327.

Frank Hall: Colorado Journalist, Public Servant, and Historian

BY WALLACE B. TURNER

Frank Hall is best known for authoring a four-volume *History of Colorado* (1895). In addition to writing this noteworthy work on early Colorado, he was also a journalist, a territorial secretary, and a stellar citizen, whose involvement in and concern for the welfare of the region spanned almost six decades. Hall's career, however, has received little attention from historians.¹

Frank Hall was born in Poughkeepsie, New York, on 4 March 1836, the youngest son of Ira and Emma Hall.² Three years later his father died, and Frank was sent to live with an uncle in Litchfield County, Connecticut. At the age of nine he was enrolled in William McGeorge's Academy in Kingston, New York, "where he received a fair, but not a classical education." Within a few years his mother remarried and settled in Jamesville, near Syracuse. Frank joined her there for a short time and then moved to Syracuse where he resided until 1859. In the spring of that year he moved to Saint Louis, Missouri, where he was employed as a foreman of a harness and saddlery factory.³

In early May 1860 he joined a group of five young men, one of whom had visited Colorado Territory the previous year. Together the group set out for the Pikes Peak region to search for gold. They traveled by the steamer *Minnehaha* up the



During his early years in Gregory Gulch, Hall was a bachelor. He wrote to his mother in 1867 that he would "try to find some pleasant little lady . . . who will sacrifice herself upon the universal altar, in my behalf."

Missouri River from Saint Louis to Leavenworth, Kansas—a ten-days' journey. In Leavenworth they purchased three-yoke of oxen and a wagon and headed westward across the prairie. Forty days later they made their camp in Denver. After a few days they departed for the Gregory gold diggings, in what is now Gilpin County. They traveled over the Continental Divide to Vasquez Ford (Clear Creek), camped several days at the present-day site of Idaho Springs, sold their oxen and wagon, and purchased a claim on Spanish Bar, whose owner declared it was rich. The hardy young men worked this claim for three months, but it never paid. Next they tried Soda Hill. Here they made several hundred dollars that they invested in a quartz mine. In the spring of 1862 they left Clear Creek for Gregory Gulch. Hall settled in Black Hawk and became a quartz miner, employed by the Black Hawk Gold Mining Company until the fall of 1863.⁴

¹ Other than short biographical sketches the only published material on Hall is George W. Collins, "Colorado's Territorial Secretaries," *The Colorado Magazine* 43 (Summer 1966):198-202. There is an unpublished M.A. thesis by Marie M. Shinn, "Sidelights on Nineteenth Century Colorado History as Revealed by the Letters of Frank Hall" (University of Denver, 1960).

² Hall's tombstone in Fairmount Cemetery, Denver, gives his birth date as 1834. In the appendix in volume two of his history, it is 1836. All of the available biographical data use 1836; consequently 1836 is assumed to be the correct year.

³ William N. Byers, *Encyclopedia of Biography of Colorado, and History of Colorado* (Chicago, Ill.: Century Publishing Co., 1901), p. 428.

⁴ *Ibid.*; Frank Hall, "Address at First Annual Re-union of the Colorado Pioneers, Denver, January 25, 1881," *Trail Magazine* 15 (October 1922):12-14.

Hall and his companions had the itch and the unbounding optimism of the typical argonauts. A year after leaving Saint Louis Frank wrote to his brother, Alfred: "I expect to make this country my home for the next five years unless I should be so fortunate as to make a 'big strike' before that time. I feel confident that time Faith & Energy will give me all I want of this worlds goods, & I'm bound to stick to it."⁵ Hall expected to make his fortune and return home quickly. He reminisced later, "I even went so far as to pick out the style of carriage I would ride in, the sort of brown stone front I would live in, and planned all sorts of dazzling expeditions in Europe. . . . they were very real to us then."⁶ But "we were all much younger than we are now, our eyes brighter, our hair untinged with gray, our faces unmarked by the footprints of time and care, but I believe nevertheless, the trials and vicissitudes of those earlier years hardened and fitted us for the grand work since accomplished."⁷

The mining communities in Gregory Gulch in the early 1860s were sparsely settled, and in general life was of the "rough and tumble" mining camp variety. The United States census of 1870 showed Black Hawk with a population of 1,068, Central City, 2,360, and Nevada, 973.⁸ Nevertheless, in 1863 Frank Hall was introduced to journalism when he joined Ovando J. Hollister, an experienced journalist, in publishing the *Black Hawk Mining Journal*, the year after the *Central City Miner's Register* had been established.⁹

Hall and Hollister experienced the usual printing difficulties, including the necessity of printing on brown wrapping paper in August and September 1864 and of being forced to raise annual subscription rates from \$16.00 to \$25.00 to meet the rising costs of production. In February 1864 Hollister and Hall added a triweekly edition, but after one week it was changed to a weekly in addition to the daily.¹⁰ Hall wrote to

⁵ Frank Hall to his brother Alfred, 6 May 1861, Frank Hall Manuscript Collection, Documentary Resources Department, State Historical Society of Colorado, Denver (hereinafter cited as Hall Collection, SHSC).

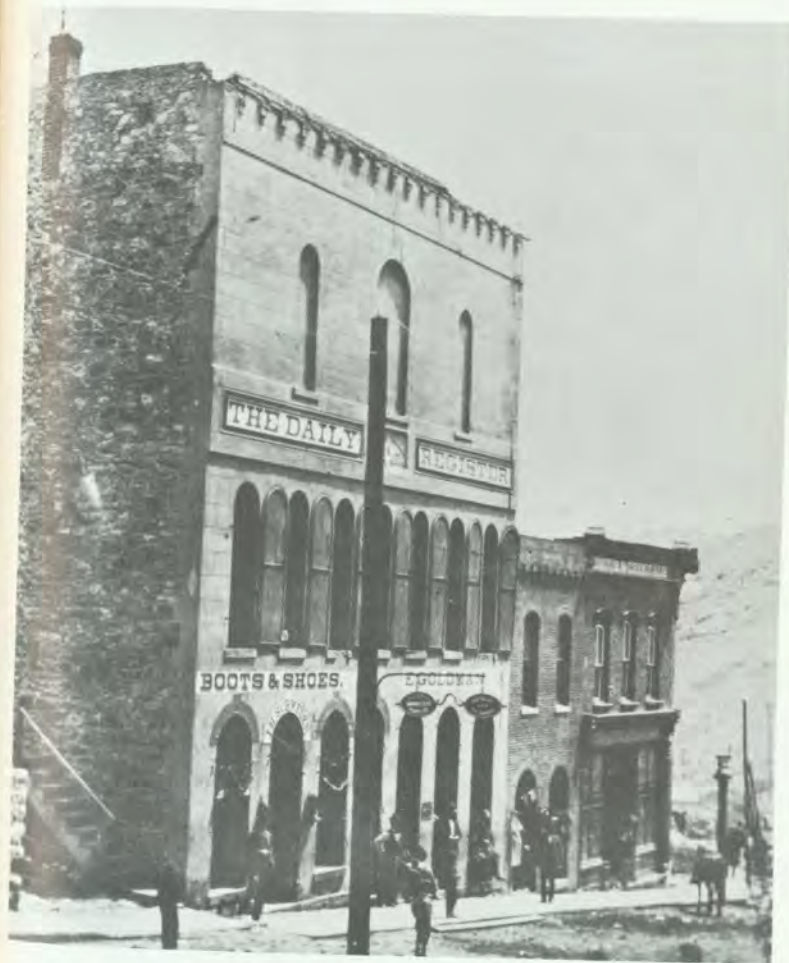
⁶ Hall, "Address at First Annual Re-union of the Colorado Pioneers, Denver, January 25, 1881," p. 12.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

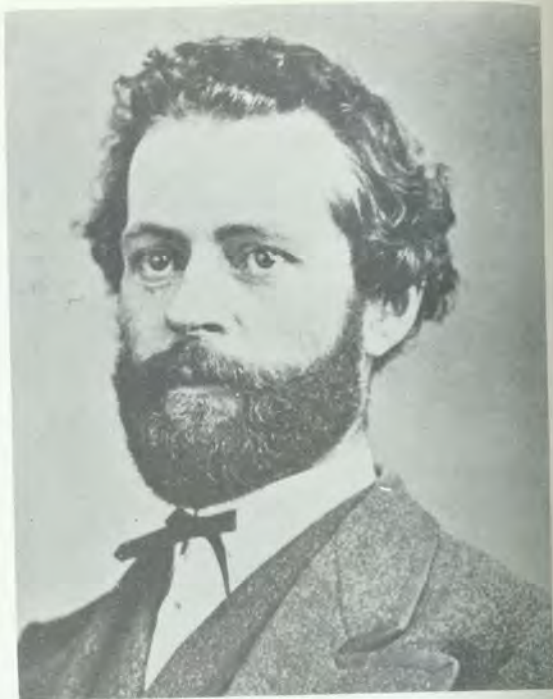
⁸ Jerome C. Smiley, *Semi-Centennial History of the State of Colorado*, 2 vols. (Chicago, Ill.: Lewis Publishing Co., 1913), 1:448.

⁹ George W. Collins, "Colorado's Territorial Secretaries," *The Colorado Magazine* 43 (Summer 1966):199; W. B. Vickers, *History of the City of Denver, Arapahoe County, and Colorado* (Chicago, Ill.: O.L. Baskin & Co., 1880), p. 30.

¹⁰ Douglas C. McMurtrie and Albert H. Allen, *Early Printing in Colorado: With a Bibliography of the Issues of the Press, 1859 to 1876, Inclusive, and a Record and Bibliography of Colorado Territorial Newspapers* (Denver, Colo.: A.B. Hirschfeld Press, 1935), p. 81.



The Central City Miners' Register has had many names during its long life: the Tri-Weekly Miners' Register (1862-63); Daily Miners' Register (1863-68); Daily Central City Register (1868-76); Central City Weekly Register (1876-77); Evening Call (1878); Daily Register (1878); and the Daily Register—Call (1878-92). Today (1977) the paper is published as the Central City Weekly Register-Call.



Ovando J. Hollister introduced Frank Hall to journalism in 1863 when they published the Black Hawk Mining Journal.



his mother on 19 June 1864 and his letterhead proclaimed: "O.J. Hollister—Frank Hall, Newspaper, Book, and Job Printing, Office of the Colorado Mining Journal (Published Daily and Weekly, by Hollister & Hall, Black Hawk, Colorado)."¹¹

The *Denver Daily Rocky Mountain News*, published by William N. Byers and John L. Bailey at that time, enjoyed some good-natured ridicule of their neophyte colleague: "The beautiful, accomplished and virtuous Junior of the Black Hawk Journal, Capt. Frank Hall, came down yesterday to spend a few days with us. Blessings on his little unsophisticated heart, we'll try to watch over him."¹² And again a few weeks later the twenty-nine-year-old bachelor was recognized with this entry: "The G.G.G.G.G. (gentlemanly, genial, govial, greatly-loved-by-all-the-women junior) of the Black Hawk Journal, Capt. Frank Hall, has sold out his interest in that paper and purchased that of Al. Wells, in the *Register*, Frank is a good boy, and will make friends anywhere."¹³ In April 1863 the *Central City Miners' Register* was sold to David Collier, Hugh Glenn, and George Wells. Later Wells bought out Glenn who in turn sold his interest to Hall. Hall wrote about the transaction to his mother: "I sold out of the Journal some three weeks ago, & bought ½ interest in the Newspaper known as the "Miners Register" published in Central City, & for which I paid Fourteen Thousand Dollars. We have a splendid building equal to any in Syracuse. The whole establishment is worth about Thirty Thousand Dollars. My new Partner D. C. Collier Esqr. goes East in about two weeks to be absent six months & on his return, or soon thereafter as possible I shall take my long promised trip. We are doing a splendid business."¹⁴

Hall retained his interest in the *Central City Miners' Register* and did most of the editorial work. In 1868 the name of the paper was changed to the *Daily Central City Register*. Collier and Hall were partners until June 1873 when Collier sold his interest to W.W. Whipple. Later Hall became the sole editor and publisher until June 1877, when he sold the *Regis-*

¹¹ Hall to mother, 19 June 1864, Hall Collection, SHSC. His mother had remarried and had become Mrs. Emma Skidmore Low.

¹² *Denver Daily Rocky Mountain News*, 28 August 1865.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 18 October 1865.

¹⁴ Hall to mother, 30 October 1865, S 22, S 23, Hall Collection, SHSC ("S" numbers refer to pages in the second collection of Hall letters); Virgil V. Peterson, ed., 1946 *Brand Book: Twelve Original Papers Pertaining to the History of the West* (Denver, Colo.: Westerners, 1947), p. 43.



In May 1871 at Caribou, approximately twenty miles west of Boulder, David Collier and Hall established the Caribou Post. The Caribou Post was published until August 1872.

ter to James A. Smith and Dan Marlowe and moved to Denver.¹⁵

When Hall broke his ties with the *Central City Register* in 1877 and moved to Denver he did not abandon his journalistic interests—in fact, for the remainder of his life journalism and literary pursuits were close to his heart.¹⁶ At first he worked part-time at the *Denver Daily Evening Times*—he wrote to his mother: “I am now engaged as Editorial writer for the *Evening Times* and do my work at night after office hours.” In 1878 he became managing editor of the *Denver Daily Evening Times*, which was owned by Roger W. Woodbury. Hall was complimentary about his employer: “Most of my public writing however is done for the *Times* The *Times*, though the smallest newspaper in the City, is the most popular and influential, because of its honesty, and reliability. Its pro-

¹⁵ McMurtrie and Allen, *Early Printing in Colorado*, p. 78; this paper had many names in its long life. It was the *Tri-Weekly Miners' Register* 1862-63; *Daily Miners' Register* 1863-1868; *Daily Central City Register* 1868-1876; *Central City Weekly Register* 1876-77; *Daily Register* 1878; *Evening Call* 1878; and the *Daily Register-Call* 1878-1892. Today (1977) the paper is published as the *Central City Weekly Register-Call* (Lynn Irwin Perrigo, “Life in Central City, Colorado, as Revealed by the Register, 1862-1872” [M.A. thesis, University of Colorado, 1934], p.1).

In May 1871 at Caribou, approximately twenty miles west of Boulder, Collier and Hall established the *Caribou Post*. At the Publishers' Association of Colorado meeting in Denver in July 1871, Frank Hall is recorded as representing the *Caribou Post* as well as the *Daily Central City Register*. It seems unlikely that a separate press was set up at Caribou, and the paper probably was printed at Central City for distribution in Caribou. The *Caribou Post* was published until August 1872 (McMurtrie and Allen, *Early Printing in Colorado*, p. 115; *Boulder Daily Camera*, 18 February 1944).

¹⁶ As early as 1869 he had confided to his mother: “At present I stand well as an editor, and am always welcome in the various offices whether of my politics or the opposite. The work of managing a newspaper though hard and wearing is very exciting and pleasurable. While I would shrink from the task of writing four pages of manuscript letter to a friend, I would write four columns for the press without the slightest hesitation, & do it easier and better, than if writing under the seal of correspondence” (Hall to mother, 18 January 1869, S 54, Hall Collection, SHSC).

prietor has made, and is making more money than the Manager of any other Newspaper Enterprise in the State. He pays me a salary to write whenever, and whatever I please.”¹⁷

During those early years as a Colorado journalist, Hall was also involved in territorial politics. In 1865, when hopes for statehood were high, Hall was elected to the House of Representatives of Colorado Territory. He wrote to his stepfather that “we have adopted a State Constitution & will probably be admitted by next Congress. I am elected one of the members of the next Legislature, got a rousing majority.” He was one of four representatives from the Sixth District, which was Gilpin County. The fifth legislature convened at Golden on 1 January 1866, adjourned to Denver on 4 January, and adjourned *sine die* on 9 February 1866. This was the extent of Hall's legislative experience.¹⁸

During this legislative session Territorial Secretary Samuel H. Elbert resigned, and Governor Alexander Cummings selected Hall to succeed Elbert. At first Hall declined, disavowing any political ambitions, but after the importuning of the governor, he permitted his name to be sent to President Andrew Johnson. Following confirmation by the United States Senate, the new secretary assumed the position on 2 May 1866 and maintained an office in Denver on the corner of Larimer and Sixteenth streets. Part of Hall's hesitancy to accept the post was Cummings's opposition to statehood. Hall was a member of the pro-state faction, but after consultation with Republican leaders, it was agreed that if he refused the appointment, the governor would recommend someone from the antistate group and thus jeopardize the movement for Colorado statehood.¹⁹

Hall served as territorial secretary for almost eight years, twice as long as any of the other four secretaries and for more than one-half of the total territorial period.²⁰ The appointment was for four years, unless removed earlier by the president; the salary was \$1,500 per year to be paid quarterly. The Organic Act that established Colorado Territory provided that

¹⁷ Hall to mother, 24 December 1877, 9 March 1878, p. 96, S 127, Hall Collection, SHSC; Byers, *Encyclopedia of Biography of Colorado*, p. 429.

¹⁸ Hall to “father,” 17 September 1865, S 20, Hall Collection, SHSC; Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado . . . from 1858 to 1890*, 4 vols. (Chicago, Ill.: Blakely Printing Co., 1895), 2:540-41.

¹⁹ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:377-78.

²⁰ Colorado's other territorial secretaries were: Lewis Ledyard Weld, 18 July 1861 to 19 April 1862; Samuel H. Elbert, 19 April 1862 to 2 May 1866; John W. Jenkins, 27 January 1874 to 16 August 1875; and John Taffee, 16 August 1875 to 1 August 1876.

the secretary "shall record and preserve all the laws and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly hereinafter constituted, and all the acts and proceedings of the Governor in his executive department. . . . And in case of the death, removal, or resignation, or other necessary absence of the Governor of the Territory, the secretary shall have, and he is hereby authorized and required to execute and perform all the powers and duties of the Governor during such vacancy or necessary absence, or until another Governor shall be duly appointed to fill such vacancy."²¹ The executive responsibilities of a territorial secretary were much more demanding than those of a secretary of state in a state government. Secretary Hall served under Governors Alexander Cummings, A.C. Hunt, Edward M. McCook, and Samuel H. Elbert; the governors spent much of their time in Washington, D.C., or elsewhere outside of Colorado. Consequently, during his tenure Hall spent almost two-thirds of his time serving as acting governor as well as secretary.

Frank Hall underwent a baptism of fire during his first year as secretary under Governor Cummings, who was palpably unscrupulous and dishonest. In his history of the state Jerome C. Smiley wrote of the governor: "Upon his arrival in Colorado he assumed the airs and manners of a dictator, and his general demeanor toward the people was an aping of that of an autocrat in dealing with his subjects. Although arbitrary and dictatorial, he was a scholarly man and endowed with much ability . . . His qualifications were those of the crafty and scheming order."²²

This demeanor came across in the election for a delegate to Congress on 7 August 1866. The candidates were George M. Chilcott, representing the Union Republicans and a proponent of statehood, and A.C. Hunt, an Independent Republican supported by President Johnson and opposed to statehood. The election returns gave a small majority to Chilcott, and Secretary Hall, as chairman of the Board of Canvassers, so proclaimed. Governor Cummings telegraphed the president and requested the removal of Hall in order to insure the election of Hunt, the administration candidate. The president nominated James R. Hood, a nephew of Confederate John B. Hood, to replace Hall, but the Senate refused confirmation.

Governor Cummings had used arbitrary and illegal methods to intimidate the young secretary, but Hall remained obdurate, and Chilcott retained his post as territorial delegate from Colorado.²³

When word was received in Denver that Hood had been nominated to replace Hall, the *Denver Rocky Mountain News* reacted.

This is the last grain of sand added to the load that Governor Cummings has saddled upon this Territory. Is it possible that the people will submit to this damnable outrage? . . . Be it ever held in remembrance, that Secretary Frank Hall is removed, because he was a gentleman, too honorable, to assist Governor Cummings in his infernal scheme of declaring an Andrew Johnson man, elected to Congress from this Territory, when the majority of the votes was clearly and fairly given for a loyal man, and in support of Congress as against the policy of the President. . . . All honor to the ex-Secretary; the people will not forget to give him due reward, while Governor Cumming's [sic] infamous conduct should receive the condign punishment it merits.²⁴

Frank Hall gave this evaluation of his erstwhile antagonist, Governor Cummings. "After a brief and extremely turbulent reign he passed out of history, leaving no good deeds behind him worthy of even a paragraph in the annals of that period."²⁵

In the late summer of 1868 there was an uprising of Cheyenne and Arapaho in the territory east of the mountains. In the absence of Governor Hunt, who had succeeded Cummings in 1867, Secretary Hall was the acting governor. There was a flood of dispatches into his office demanding assistance and relating the outrages committed by the Indians. There were no organized militia within the territory, and there was no time to create and equip a company to meet the unexpected emergency. Public pressure was brought on Hall to call out the nonexistent militia, to convene the territorial legislature, and to supply funds to arm volunteers, none of which he was able or willing to do. On 25 August 1868 he sent the following dispatch to Major General P.H. Sheridan at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: "A war party of Arapahoe Indians numbering about two hundred, is traversing southern Colorado, commit-

²¹ Smiley, *Seventy-Centennial History*, 1:322-25.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 374.

²³ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:384-92; Will C. Ferrill, ed., *Sketches of Colorado: Being an Analytical Summary and Biographical History of the State of Colorado*, 4 vols. (Denver, Colo.: American Printing & Publishing Co., 1911), 1:37.

²⁴ *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 22 September 1866.

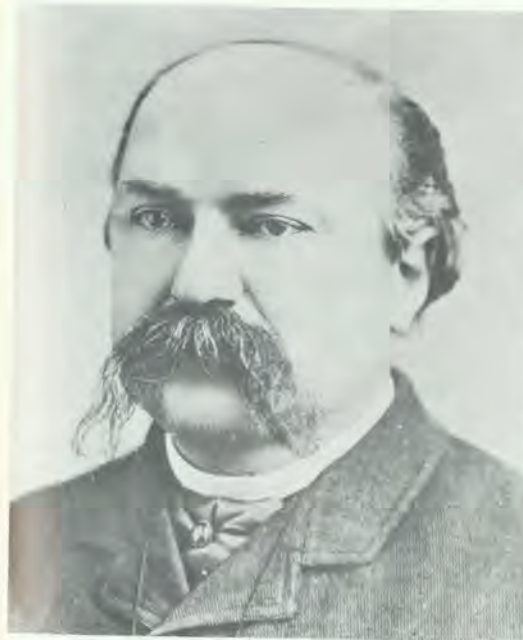
²⁵ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 3:17.

ting all kinds of depredations, maltreating citizens, stealing stock, and stopping travel. My information is perfectly reliable. Gov. Hunt is absent. I shall go to the scene of trouble to-morrow. Please give me authority to call on Fort Reynolds for detachments of troops to check them, if found necessary." This message was followed by an emotional one saying: "The Arapahoes are killing settlers, destroying ranches in all directions. For God's sake give me authority to take your men from Reynolds. I shall arm a party of volunteers to-morrow, and if they meet the Indians some of them will get killed; for the people are thoroughly roused and will not be restrained."²⁶

Sheridan replied granting Hall permission to "call on the commanding officer at Fort Reynolds for troops." That same day the acting governor sent a message to Lieutenant General Sherman at Fort Sanders: "We are completely surrounded by hostile Indians . . . estimated at six hundred warriors. . . . I have sent out sixty mounted men to points most seriously menaced. A woman and child, killed and scalped, brought to city last night. . . . Stages fight their way through from Cheyenne Wells. . . . I have ordered my men not to attack Indians, but to protect the defenceless only."²⁷

Adjutant General Hal Sayer reported that Hall did all that he could do in spite of the criticism he received for the means he adopted to suppress the Indians. The secretary maintained that to convene the legislature, as many people demanded, would have been futile since there was nothing the members could do. Historians have been complimentary to Hall for acting courageously and with sound judgment in his handling of this critical situation. Robert Athearn, for example, concluded that "the fact that Hall refused to go along with the local clamor, and was supported by some of the more solid residents, indicated that Colorado had commenced to grow up."²⁸

Territorial secretaries served at the pleasure of the president of the United States and their tenure was never certain. Potential challengers for the position always seemed to know the right people to make an attempt for the incumbent's job. Before Ulysses S. Grant was inaugurated in 1869 rumors



Born in Ohio in 1837, Edward Moody McCook was twice appointed territorial governor of Colorado (1869-73; 1874-75).

A lawyer, Union brigadier general during the Civil War, and successful financier, McCook held several federal administrative and diplomatic posts before his death in Chicago in 1909.

circulated that Hall would be replaced "not because of any fault with me, but because a fellow here who has a brother on Grant's Staff wants my place. I mentioned the matter to Mr. Colfax's brother-in-law who lives in this city and he immediately wrote Mr. Colfax to put my name on the list of offices to be retained by President Grant. I feel sure that Mr. Colfax will never consent to my removal."²⁹ President Grant chose Hall to continue as secretary in 1869 and reappointed him in 1873, but by 1874 the patronage pressures were too much for the president to withstand.

Hall, then, was to be fired after eight years as secretary of the Territory of Colorado. The president had made up his mind "to make extensive changes in the U. S. officials in the Territory," or so his private secretary, Orville E. Babcock, reported to Hall. The president "has no information in any way reflecting upon you," but "it would take too long a letter to attempt to explain the causes that led the President to decide to make extensive changes in the Territory, but, I do know he had no charges against you." Hall was replaced by John W. Jenkins of Virginia, and Territorial Governor

²⁹ Hall to mother, 18 January 1869, S 56, Hall Collection, SHSC.

²⁶ *Biennial Report of the Adjutant-General of the Territory of Colorado for the Two Years Ending Dec. 31, 1869* (Central City, Colo.: D.C. Collier, 1870), pp. 11-12, Frank Hall Papers, Western History Collections, University of Colorado Libraries, Boulder.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16; Robert G. Athearn, "Colorado and the Indian War of 1868," *The Colorado Magazine* 33 (January 1956):42-51.

Samuel H. Elbert was removed and Edward M. McCook was reinstated. McCook had been fired by Grant less than a year before because of his malodorous administration. McCook was Grant's man, however, and the shakeup in Colorado was primarily the result of McCook's efforts for revenge.³⁰

Ex-Secretary Hall avowed that he was glad to lay down the burdens of his office. "This removal has not made me a sorehead nor will it drive me into hostility to my party. . . . I am anxious to lay aside present duties for those more congenial, that is to say, for my regular editorial work. You can never know how little I have enjoyed the long official term occupied here, or how gladly I would be entirely rid of it."³¹ As usual, Hall recounted the whole affair to his mother, assuring her that there was no negligence of duty on his part and that he had been "a good and faithful officer of the government." He reported how Grace Greenwood had importuned the president on his behalf and that "Gen Grant told her that he had a very high opinion of me: that no charge of any kind had ever reached him concerning my personal or official character and was, she writes, very complimentary in his references to me."³² The *Denver Daily Rocky Mountain News* pointed out that during Hall's eight years almost two-thirds of the time he was acting governor as well as secretary. "He retires with a spotless public as well as personal reputation and leaves behind him a record for integrity, ability, and efficiency which has never been surpassed, and seldom equalled in this or any other territory. It will be years before this territory will have again as devoted and faithful a public officer."³³

During those eight years of public service Hall continued to publish the *Central City Register*, but in 1877 he sold the newspaper, moved permanently to Denver, and became deputy United States marshal under Philip P. Wilcox. Although he continued his journalism interests, as early as 1874 he had confided to Babcock something of his economic reverses.³⁴ And, by 1877 he was sharing some of his financial bad news with his mother.

My residence in Denver and position as Chief Deputy United States Marshal, have thus far been very pleasant though the salary is hardly what it should be. In the settlement of my affairs, after all debts have been paid I shall have scarcely anything left, but I take some satisfaction in knowing that I was compelled neither to make an assignment nor go into bankruptcy. My property is sufficient to meet every just obligation, but it will take some time to pay them all. I arranged yesterday for the payment of nine thousand dollars and hope to get the rest in course of settlement very soon.³⁵

In spite of this affirmation, a few months later in a letter to Harper M. Orahood, marked "Strictly Confidential," Hall revealed that

I have taken your advice of a year ago at last, and today filed a Voluntary Petition in Bankruptcy as the only way out of my difficulties. I found this the clearest and best remedy for past and present ills, the only course through which the *Register* property can be disposed of. . . . I have done everything for the best, struggled along for years under burdens greater than I could bear. There was no other way of bringing matters to a settlement and I took it advisedly. Very few will suffer from their losses more than I have in being compelled to inflict them. Had there been one gleam of light to better results through further waiting and working this would have been avoided.³⁶

On 24 April 1878 the legal bankruptcy notice to creditors was issued. It reported twenty-four creditors with total liabilities of \$14,457.03, ranging from \$7.48 to John L. Daily to \$3,800.00 for Jerome B. Chaffee.³⁷

The next two decades found Hall involved in a variety of short-lived jobs, but never completely removed from writing and publishing. He was interested in the military even though he was never involved in the Civil War. During his early years at Central City he had commanded the Elbert Guards, the county's only militia organization, and for many years thereafter he was known as Captain Frank Hall.³⁸ In 1879 the state legislature changed the name of the state militia to the Colorado National Guard, and the same year Governor Frederick W. Pitkin appointed Hall adjutant general of Colorado for a two-year term. He was tendered a second term but declined the appointment. At this time he

³⁰ Orville E. Babcock to Hall, 4 February 1874, Hall Collection, SHSC; James H. Baker and LeRoy R. Hafen, eds., *History of Colorado*, 5 vols. (Denver, Colo.: Linderman Co., 1927), 2:515-19.

³¹ Hall to Harper M. Orahood, 25 February 1874, Harper M. Orahood Papers, box 4, folder 14, Western History Collections, University of Colorado Libraries, Boulder (hereinafter cited as Orahood Papers, CU).

³² Hall to mother, 18 March 1874, S 97, Hall Collection, SHSC.

³³ *Denver Daily Rocky Mountain News*, 7 April 1874.

³⁴ Babcock to Hall, 4 February 1874, Hall Collection, SHSC.

³⁵ Hall to mother, 11 September 1877, S 122-23, Hall Collection, SHSC.

³⁶ Hall to Orahood, 22 April 1878, Orahood Papers, CU.

³⁷ Bankruptcy Notice to Creditors, Orahood Papers, CU.

³⁸ Caroline Bancroft, *Gulch of Gold: A History of Central City, Colorado* (Denver, Colo.: Sage Books, 1958), p. 149.



Several military and fraternal groups were formed in early-day Central City.

was given the rank of brigadier general and for the remainder of his life he was affectionately called "General."³⁹

In December 1879 Hall relinquished his position as managing editor of the *Denver Daily Evening Times* to establish the Great Western Mining Agency in conjunction with state geologist J. Alden Smith. Their letterhead portrayed them as mining engineers and consultants for expert examination or reports for prospective investors. The Denver Chamber of Commerce was created at a meeting of the Board of Trade and other interested citizens on 15 January 1884. The new name that emerged was the Denver Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade; the first president was Roger W. Woodbury and the new secretary was Frank Hall, who served until 1889. Hall was also elected to serve as treasurer of Denver from 1893 through 1895 and treasurer of Arapahoe County from 1895 through 1897; he was elected with strong majorities as the candidate of the Republican party in both instances.⁴⁰

Frank Hall had shown tremendous versatility in the many public and private roles he had played in Colorado, but he was now on the threshold of the project for which he would be best remembered—his four-volume history of Colorado. As early as 1874 he had written some articles on early Colorado that were published in the *Central City Register*. The response had been favorable, and he planned to incorporate these chapters into a book. He wrote to his mother: "I have done very little book

writing, but hope to make something readable out of this venture. I have liberal offers to write some of the early adventures of gold miners in this country for Harper's Magazine but have not found time."⁴¹

It seems very likely that 1874 may have been the year when Hall began to formulate his plans to write his Colorado history. He had been fired as territorial secretary, and he had more time to reflect about the events in which he had been a conspicuous participant. It was fifteen years later before the first volume was published, and in the meantime he was collecting material, oral and written.

Hall was not a trained historian in the contemporary sense; nor could he turn to archives, historical collections in libraries, or other depositories for his sources. As he explained, "my extended researches through old books, pamphlets, records and files of newspapers in pursuit of data for this work . . . a number of old manuscripts, notes and diaries, scrap books, etc., have been supplied by friends and correspondents in various parts of the country which contain material that is not only historically valuable but extremely interesting." He acknowledged Captain Edward L. Berthoud for notes on early expeditions; Colonel John M. Chivington "for the very complete annals of the First Regiment Colorado Volunteers"; William N. Byers for files of the *Denver Rocky Mountain News* (1859-67); George A. Jackson for his 1858-59 diary and personal interview; and to those who loaned him old books.⁴² In addition to tangible sources, Frank Hall had more than thirty years of journalistic and public service experience to draw upon; he relied upon his reminiscences as well as information and insights from a host of friends and acquaintances. Oftentimes material that was unavailable when one volume was being written was incorporated into a later one—sometimes at the expense of continuity and proper chronology.

In 1890 Hall was secretary of the Rocky Mountain Historical Company and P.M. Wilkerson was president. This agency was used to assist Hall in collecting material for his history. Hall sent the following letter on 8 September 1890: "To Whom it May Concern: This is to certify that Will C. Ferril has been engaged by the Rocky Mountain Historical Company to collect data in the several counties of Colorado, relating to the

³⁹ John H. Nankivell, *History of the Military Organizations of the State of Colorado, 1860-1935* (Denver, Colo.: W.H. Kistler Stationery Co., 1935), p. 494; Byers, *Encyclopedia of Biography of Colorado*, p. 429.

⁴⁰ Vickers, *History of the City of Denver*, p. 455; Hall to mother, 6 July 1881, S 134, Hall Collection, SHSC; *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 19 April 1959.

⁴¹ Hall to mother, 5 December 1874, S 107, Hall Collection, SHSC.

⁴² Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:vii.

history of such counties, for incorporation in the History of Colorado, (4 vols.) now being prepared by the undersigned."⁴³

The first volume of Hall's *History of the State of Colorado . . . from 1858 to 1890* was published in 1889 in Chicago for the Rocky Mountain Historical Company.⁴⁴ The first thirteen of its thirty chapters cover the period from 1528 to 1858, including such topics as Spanish explorations, geological surveys, prehistoric peoples, hunters and trappers, early Colorado settlements, and the panic of 1857. The following seventeen chapters carry the narrative up to 1872. Volume two was published in 1890. The first three chapters, which treat the geological outline of the land formation, were written by Richard C. Hills of Denver, and chapter fourteen, which covers the constitutional convention, was written by Judge Henry P.H. Bromwell. "It being the earnest desire of all the surviving members consulted, that Mr. Bromwell should be selected, because of his prominence in the convention, and their confidence in his desire and ability to give it due and proper consideration for permanent record, he was persuaded to undertake it."⁴⁵ This volume also contains a resourceful appendix that includes such items as the city officers of Denver from 1861 to 1889, the territorial officers from 1861 to 1875, the members of the legislative assemblies during the territorial period, the members of the constitutional convention of 1865, and a lengthy list of Colorado pioneers showing their residence, date of arrival, birthplace, and birth date.

Volume three of Hall's history, published in 1891, extended the Colorado saga to 1887. The first ten chapters are followed by the chronicles of twelve of the sixteen counties organized by the Territorial Legislative Assembly. Volume four, published in 1895, has an unorthodox arrangement. Chapter one is captioned "Political Annals Continued to 1890" and followed by sections (not chapters) with titles such as "The City of Denver," "Scraps from My Note Book," "The Denver and South Park Railway," "The Union Depot," "The Pioneer Ladies' Aid Society," and "The Ute Indians." These are followed by a short history of the forty-five counties that

⁴³ Will C. Ferril Scrapbook, vol. 8, p. 51, Western History Collection, Denver Public Library.

⁴⁴ The complete title was *History of the State of Colorado Embracing Accounts of the Pre-Historic Races and Their Remains; the Earliest Spanish, French and American Explorations; the Lives of the Primitive Hunters, Trappers and Traders; the Commerce of the Prairies; the First American Settlements Founded; the Original Discoveries of Gold in the Rocky Mountains; the Development of Cities and Towns, with the Various Phases of Industrial and Political Transition, from 1858 to 1890.*

⁴⁵ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 2v.



Hall married Susie Mathews in Buchanan, Michigan, on 4 October 1871. He wrote to her on 11 July 1873 saying that "you have been to me a continual blessing. If any thing should come between us to mar or destroy them [sic] the result would be well nigh fatal to me, for even if we should be separated for life I could never forget, nor cease to mourn it while I live. You are the light of my life Susie and if darkness ever comes to settle permanently over our household, God help us for we shall need more than human pity. I love you so entirely, if it is ever uprooted, the consequences would be to leave me without hope in this world or the one to come."

were not included in the previous volume. The second edition of volume four, which began on page 359, had thirteen chapters written by Joseph G. Brown. Brown's work was subject to revision by Hall, and it extended the narrative from 1890 to 1897. The remainder of the volume is an extensive "Biographical Department."⁴⁶

Hall was dedicated to the proposition that his *History* should recognize all of the men who had played significant roles in Colorado's development and also "to insure space enough for every record which properly belongs to the legitimate chronicles of the country, and when these shall have been exhausted, to find a place for interesting reminiscences and personal reviews of the strong hearted men who founded and have been conspicuous in building the State."⁴⁷ In the "Introductory" to volume two he declared that his design was "to embrace everything worthy of record in the chronicles of our State and its people"; and in the "Prefatory" to volume three "the history of the Territory and State is in no small measure that of the men who built it, and such as have taken honorable part in this mighty undertaking have fairly earned honorable mention therein."

With this purpose the *History* became a veritable storehouse of men and events. Hall seemed to have a special fascination for mining and railroads, but much of the history of Colorado revolved around those enterprises during the scope of his writing. Not only was he concerned with politics, economics, and the metamorphosis of Colorado, but little of human interest seemed to escape his pen. He wrote of duels, living conditions of the early miners, pony express and the mail, frontier justice, sensational crimes, Alfred Packer, and Billy the Kid. A reader could readily get the impression that Hall was fearful that something might be omitted—the tendency to oscillate from one event to another almost appeared conversational.

The publication of the first volume of Hall's *History* was enthusiastically received in Colorado. The *Denver Republican* commented about Hall's superb qualifications for such a task because of his long residency in Colorado and his active participation in and observation of many historic events. "No

⁴⁶ Hall's four volume *History* had 2,266 pages; each volume was indexed, contained no footnotes and 242 illustrations—232 were men, 6 remains of cliff houses, 1 dwelling, and 3 women, all of whom appeared in the last volume. There were no chapter headings, but each one had a table of contents.

⁴⁷ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, I:v.

one who has not lived on the frontier can depict Western character. . . . The work cannot be too highly commended. It should be in every Colorado home. The volume shows care in preparation and has a fine literary style. It is one of the most valuable historical contributions of the present age." The *Denver Rocky Mountain News* was equally flattering. "When completed, it will form the most elaborate, accurate and valuable history which has ever been attempted of this state. . . . *The News* has no hesitancy in commending both its fairness, its accuracy, and its general excellence as a piece of historical composition."⁴⁸

In the absence of additional documentary sources about Hall, his *History* is another possible source to try to discern what he was really like. What can be concluded about his character, political ambitions, contributions to Colorado, or his attitude toward some of the frustrating issues of his day? It is obvious that he was actively involved in many of the important events during the period of his *History* and a concerned observer of the total scene. He appeared reticent to elaborate upon his role in historical events. In some cases he referred to "Mr. Hall," used the personal pronoun, or "author," but he never took a harsh stand suggesting it was this way because "I" was there. For example, he disputed Horace Greeley's assertion that it was suicide to cross the plains on foot: "Nevertheless, thousands did cross it in that manner, the writer among them." He did use personal experiences to illustrate a point, such as the following: "A tract of eighty acres lying just southeast of the cemetery on the Hill, which the author purchased for five hundred dollars in 1870, sold since the writing of this chapter began, for eighty thousand dollars, and has been converted into one of the numerous 'additions' to the city. It is perhaps useless to add that I had no share in this enormous advance, else this history would not have been written."⁴⁹

The Belford-Patterson political controversy that erupted in 1876 shook the party faithful both in Washington, D.C., and in Colorado. Hall was a staunch Republican and faced a

⁴⁸ Clipping, *Denver Republican*, 30 May 1889; clipping, *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, 31 May 1889, Mrs. Hall's Scrapbook, Hall Collection, SHSC. During the eighty years since the publication of Hall's *History*, it has remained truly monumental in Colorado bibliography. A random sampling of footnote references in *The Colorado Magazine*, volumes ten through fifty, showed his *History* quoted three times as often as its nearest rival and seven times as frequently as the runner-up.

⁴⁹ Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, 1:197, 495.

difficult task to remain objective in treating this episode in his *History*.

Having had some part in the discussion of these matters from 1876 to 1880, and having since in my present calling of historian taken the pains to search the records and reach the facts, I am now impelled to submit them without the slightest coloring of partisan prejudice, fairly and impartially, according to the result of a careful and deliberate investigation. The conclusion reached may not be in exact accord with those of my political friends, formed in the heat and excitement of the stormy days of 1876, but they are in accord with the record, which is very full and complete.⁵⁰

The murder case of a German immigrant, Theodore Meiers, who was convicted of killing his employer, tested the mettle of Hall's character. The case was appealed and Meiers was to be executed, but an ugly German mob demanded a reprieve from Acting Governor Hall who refused. A telegram was sent to Governor McCook, who replied that if Hall was out of the state, McCook's secretary could issue the reprieve in McCook's name. The Germans were encouraged, brought more pressure on Hall, but again he refused in the absence of a court order. There was great excitement and rumors circulated that the prisoner would be taken from the sheriff on the way to the scaffold. Meiers was executed and justice prevailed because of the courage of Frank Hall.⁵¹

The treatment of an antagonist by an author is suggestive of the caliber of the latter. The removal of Hall from his territorial secretaryship in 1874 by President Grant was treated objectively by Hall. There was no criticism of his successor and the whole affair was recorded as an example of the vicissitudes of territorial politics. The discussion of the conflict between Hall and Governor Cummings in 1866 might be interpreted as vindictive on the part of Hall, but Hall's language, fiery though it was, does not appear to be unduly harsh given the indefensible behavior of "his turbulent Excellency," Governor Cummings. Hall wrote:

Of all the executives ever imposed upon this or any other Territory, Cummings was perhaps the most unpopular because wholly unfitted by the peculiar bent of his disposition to govern a free and radically independent people. . . . He was stiff necked, obstinate, wilful and craftily able; an Aaron Burr in fertility of resource, but lacking his diplomacy; educated, scholarly, a clear and forcible writer and speaker, but pig-headed and dictatorial to the last degree.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:334.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 2:147-50.



Yet he was easily led, twisted and distorted in the wrong direction by those who were, or appeared to be, ready instruments for the accomplishment of his designs. He hated, despised and unremittingly antagonized all who opposed him, and to procure their downfall proceeded to any and every extreme. He was readily approachable when accompanied by the deference and humility which he felt to be due to the dignity of his exalted position, of which, it is needless to say, he entertained a grossly exaggerated estimate. He had come to Colorado to be its Governor, in other words, according to his conception, its commander.⁵²

Frank Hall was politically ambitious and had many friends who would have supported him for public office, but he was never a candidate for a statewide position. He seemed to be flattered by the suggestions of his friends that he become a candidate, but because of legitimate reasons or excuses it never happened. In 1868 he sent some newspaper clippings to his mother with the explanation "you will see that your son is

⁵² *Ibid.*, 1:369-70.

mentioned in connection with Congressional honors. I have repeatedly told these people that I could not become a candidate for the place still they insist upon bringing me forward. It is my opinion that our present member [Allen A. Bradford] will be renominated." In 1871 he wrote to his mother: "The young men talk of running me for Governor, but I don't think their plans will be carried out." And again in 1875: "Our election, for delegates to the Constitutional Convention occurs tomorrow and we expect to choose a majority of Republicans. It was the wish of a great many that I should become a candidate, and I was nominated in the County Convention, but I felt that I had lost quite enough in the public service and must devote all my time to repairing my broken fortunes." The following year when statehood was awaiting only Grant's proclamation: "Though my name is used in all parts of the country, for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Secretary of State. When the time comes I shall decline all political preferment if they give me a chance to do so. My business wouldn't allow me to be a candidate if I were so willing or anxious."⁵³

In 1877 he confided that if he were not appointed marshal in 1878 "I shall probably be a candidate for Governor of the State at the next Fall election. At all events I have very bright prospects for the future." The following spring he had different plans. "We have a State election next fall and I shall most likely be a candidate for State Treasurer, because it pays a larger compensation than nearly any other office."⁵⁴ Fifteen years later (1893) Hall was elected treasurer of Denver and in 1895 he was elected treasurer of Arapahoe County. It is probable that Hall was not temperamentally equipped for the rigors of political campaigning in his day.

In 1899 Hall returned to his first love and became editor of the mining department of the *Denver Post*—a position he held until his death seventeen years later. In 1906 he published a beautifully illustrated folio, *Gathering Gold: An Illustrated Treatise on Modern Methods of Examining and Operating Gold Mines and Marketing Their Product*, and three years later *Colorado's Mineral Wealth*, issued by the Colorado and Southern Railway.⁵⁵

Colorado can be duly proud of Frank Hall. For more than one-half century he was a concerned citizen, a responsible journalist, a dedicated public servant, and an exemplary gentleman. He seemed to be always on the threshold of greatness;

inherently he was modest but expectantly ambitious; he was a romantic but not impractical; he was scrupulously honest and exceedingly stubborn when principles were involved. His letters to his mother reveal a man with close family ties; he opened his public and private life to her in a warm literary fashion, always optimistic like a young son wanting to make his mother proud of him.

Frank Hall died in his sleep during the night of New Year's Day 1917 at his Denver home, 1321 Columbine Street. At the funeral service held in the home, the Reverend B.T. Vincent read the following poem written by Hall's *Denver Post* colleague, Gene Fowler.

It's just a step across the way,
Where once he sat and spoke of gold.
A vacant chair is there today
No more his tale of Empire's told.
He saw the prairies of the West
Bring cities for the Nation's power
He watched the miner's precious quest
From Dawn until the Ev'ning hour.
.....⁵⁶

Professor emeritus of history at Colorado Women's College, WALLACE B. TURNER received a Ph.D. from the University of Kentucky in Lexington. His former teaching positions found him on the faculties of Georgetown College and Union College, both in Kentucky, and at Black Hills Teachers' College in South Dakota. A member of the Southern Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, and other professional groups, Turner has published articles in the FILSON CLUB HISTORY QUARTERLY and the REGISTER OF THE KENTUCKY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, and he also wrote COLORADO WOMAN'S COLLEGE: THE FIRST SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS, 1888-1963 (Boulder, Colo.: Johnson Publishing Co., 1962).

⁵³ Hall to mother, 4 July 1868, S 52, 13 November 1871, S 86, 24 October 1875, p. 89, 16 July 1876, S 111, Hall Collection, SHSC.

⁵⁴ Hall to mother, 24 December 1877, pp. 94-95, 6 April 1878, p. 104, Hall Collection, SHSC. Eighteen days later Hall's legal bankruptcy notice was issued.

⁵⁵ These publications are in the Frank Hall Papers, Western History Collection, Denver Public Library.

⁵⁶ *Denver Post*, 2 January 1917.