On 3 July 1876 good news came to Captain Elliott Coues, assistant surgeon, United States Army. Special Order Number 134 of the Adjutant General's Office relieved him from his duties as surgeon and naturalist of the United States Northern Boundary Commission and directed him to report to the secretary of the interior for a new and most desirable position as secretary and naturalist for Ferdinand V. Hayden's United States Geological Survey of the Territories.

Coues (pronounced "cows") was no ordinary army "sawbones." He was then recognized as one of the preeminent ornithologists of the day. Since childhood in his native New Hampshire and during his adolescence in Washington, D. C., he was an avid student of nature. Under the tutelage of Spencer Fullerton Baird, assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Coues developed into a full-fledged naturalist. He began writing his incredibly large number of publications on birds and other animals while still in his teens. Shortly after receiving a medical degree at Columbian College, Washington, D.C., in 1863, he was made an assistant surgeon in the army and was sent to Fort Whipple, Arizona Territory. For sixteen months, in 1864 and 1865, he performed his risky medical duties in Apache country while simultaneously observing and reporting upon the territory's natural history. Between 1866 and 1872 he served as a surgeon in various military posts in the Carolinas and Maryland. In 1872, not long after the publication of his monumental *Key to North American Birds*, he was sent to Fort Randall in Dakota Territory. In the following year he began his

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1 Elliott Coues, "Book of Dates in the Life of Elliott Coues." This notebook, which Coues prepared in 1896, is a chronology of the significant events of his career. The original is in the possession of William Pearce Coues of Prouts Neck, Maine, who kindly loaned it to Paul R. Cutright for transcription. Professor Cutright provided me with a copy of the transcription.
At the time of his first visit to the Southwest in 1864, Coues described himself as "a slender, pale-faced, lantern-jawed, girlish-looking youth, without a hair on lip or chin and hardly dry behind the ears." (Forty Years a Fur Trader, 2: 227n).

stint with the boundary commission. While in the field he traveled, observed, and collected specimens along the northern borders of present-day North Dakota and Montana. Between 1874 and 1876 Coues and his family (a wife and four children) resided in Washington, D.C., where he compiled the scientific results of his work with the commission.2 Several of his articles and monographs on the birds, mammals, and reptiles of the trans-Mississippi West were published in the reports and bulletins of the federal government's western surveys headed by John Wesley Powell, George M. Wheeler, and Hayden.3 For example, his Birds of the Northwest (1874) was Miscellaneous Publication Number 3 of the Hayden Survey.4


3 George Montague Wheeler (1842-1906) headed the U.S. Geological and Geological Surveys west of the one hundredth meridian, 1871-1879; a West Pointer, he retired from the army with the rank of major in 1868. 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 topographical and geological mapping of Colorado Rocky Mountains that he wished. His group was designated as the fourth or zoological party. The other three parties sent by Hayden to Colorado that year were occupied with

geological and topographical explorations of the southwestern and northwestern areas of the territory and the Sierra la Sal region. The rendezvous for all the parties was to be at Cheyenne (Wyoming).9

One major consideration bothered Coues as he made his preparations for taking to the field. In 1875 Indians had attacked a Hayden party in the Sierra la Sal country. Even more sobering for Coues were the events of 25 June 1876 at Little Big Horn. He had become acquainted with many officers and men of the Seventh Cavalry when a contingent of that famous regiment had served as an escort for the boundary commission's field work. He expressed his anxiety, as light-heartedly as possible, in a letter to the editors and the readers of Rod and Gun, dated 31 July:

Ten or twelve years ago, in Arizona, I used to cut Apache arrowheads out of some of my friends, and not seldom buried others; while at intervals since, the noble red man has caused me to exercise by turns whatever of sagacity, prudence or determination I could muster for the several occasions. In earlier and more heedless, if not more enthusiastic years, I have rather courted risks I would now only take when necessary; for I used to wander about with mustard-seed in my gun, and in my heart a youngster's reckless conviction that I was not to be one of the Indian's "elect." But years mellow us all. To know how the Custer disaster came home to me, you should learn that I lost more than one true-hearted and manly friend, with whom in '73 and '74 I campaigned—with whom I marched and hunted, and ate, drank and slept, and told stories and sang songs, and chaffed, with all the blunt abandon of soldiers' life in camp, when we measured together our hundreds of miles in the "lone land" of Dakota and Montana. They are gone over to the majority! For myself, having lost no Indians, I shall hunt for none. I suppose it makes no difference to a man who is killed whether the message came when he was standing or when he was running; but my impression has grown into a conviction that somehow he owes it to his friends to receive his summons from the front, not from the rear.

"From grave to gay," yet still on this matter: Some graceless wag has taken an atrocious liberty with my name, and the joke is current here. He said that Hayden wisely takes Coues along this year to pacify Sitting Bull! To which I modestly but firmly reply, that as I value my scalp, S.B. shall do no carving, if I can help it.10

It turned out that an Indian scare did not materialize in the Rockies during Coues's western jaunt that year. The lateness of the season, however, presented a definite problem. An anonymous writer in Forest and Stream (Coues believed it was Ernest Ingersoll) explained exactly why it was "an unfortunate time of the year" for ornithology in the Rockies: "the weather is warm, the activity and joy of their nuptial season has abated, their first songs are hushed, their brightest feathers faded." The same writer closed his remarks with the wish that Coues would spend more time observing the region's fauna than in collecting specimens: "We want to know the social life and personal characteristics, so to speak, of the denizens of the Colorado Mountains and valleys. . . . Let us have from Dr. Coues (for no one is better able to begin this new departure) more of the life of the birds of the Rocky Mountains, and less of their death."11

Coues heartily agreed: "I stick a pin in that sound and pithy remark as one well worth heeding. . . . What we need most, in the present stage of the natural history of our country is good-trained observers, as distinguished from the mere collectors, whose names are unremembered; and such observers must furthermore be capable of recounting their observations. A specimen is a fact, no doubt; but an original observation is also a fact, and a more valuable one," Coues also agreed that he was going into his field work at the wrong time of the year. "If, therefore, my friends expect little or nothing from me, they will doubtless not be disappointed."12 Although he did not announce it publicly, the main object of his Colorado trip was the observation of the mammalian life of the area. At this point in his career he was more involved with mammals than with birds.

While organizing his expedition, Coues seemed certain that he would be able to secure the services of Dr. Jerome Henry Kidder, a naval surgeon and an accomplished naturalist.13 For some reason Kidder was unable to join the expedition; but two men were selected to assist Coues in the field: L. M. Cuthbert of Washington, D.C., and W. W. Karr of Memphis, Tennessee.14 It is not known how many persons accompanied Coues, Cuthbert,
and Karr into the West. The party appears to have been quite small; Coues mentioned later that they had at least one teamster, and it is not unlikely that they had a cook. Nor is it known exactly when Coues and the others left Washington, D.C. On 4 August he notified Baird that he would begin the journey "in a day or two." His exact itinerary from Washington, D.C., to the West is not clear either. It is probable that he traveled on the Union Pacific railway, for en route he made note of the Ferruginous hawk (Buteo regalis), which he found "common on the prairies" of Nebraska and Wyoming. 16

Coues’s memory was likewise hazy when, in later years, he tried to recall the date of his arrival at Cheyenne. According to his "Book of Dates," it was "about Aug. 13." Coues began his observations at once. Quite soon after his arrival he recorded a fascinating phenomenon, namely the existence of a village of black-tailed prairie dogs (Cynomys ludovicianus) in which these rodents "were not only tamed, but domesticated." The animals inhabited the yard of Julia S. Gilliss (who might well have been the wife of Coues’s friend, Captain James Gilliss of nearby Camp Carlin), 17 Coues "was so much pleased to see what kindness could do with these timid creatures, that I begged the amiable and accomplished lady . . . to give me some history of her pets." Mrs. Gilliss complied and wrote a brief article, dated 14 August, on her "funny little creatures," which Coues forwarded to Rod and Gun. 18

On 17 August Coues and his party reached Camp Carlin. The post was a supply depot situated on the Fort D. A. Russell military reservation. The fort was located three miles west of Cheyenne, and the camp was midway between the fort and the town. 19 Coues remained at Carlin until 19 August, at which time he and his party traveled westward across the Laramie plains. He recorded the streams and ranches along the way: "Davis Ranch on Owl Cr[eek], Aug. 20; Rogers Ranch, Duck Cr., 22-23-24th Deadman’s Cr. 25; Fish cr. 26th." On 27 August they arrived at the Big Laramie River, at a point near the town of Laramie and about fifty miles out of Cheyenne. They then turned southward and moved up the river on "a road available for wagons." They crossed through the Medicine Bow Mountains and entered Colorado’s North Park on 31 August, "by an easy road from the north." 20

Here they remained for three weeks. Coues had decided that North Park was to be the party’s principal stopping-place because he believed that "this portion of Colorado [was] the one least frequented, and therefore likely to offer the greatest attractions to the naturalist and hunter." The park had a forbidding reputation because of "the massacre of some white men by Indians a few years since." Coues "found it entirely uninhabited, except by a few miners who had gulch claims."

North Park did indeed have advantages for Coues’s purposes: "Large game was more abundant than I have seen it elsewhere in the west; the Park was fairly filled with antelopes [pronghorn, Antilocapra americana], which furnished the principal subsistence of my party during the whole season; while bear, elk [American elk or Wapiti, Cervus canadensis], black-tailed deer [mule deer, Dama hemionus] and mountain sheep [bighorn, Ovis canadensis] were numerous in the surrounding mountains." Regarding the pronghorn, Coues commented that he had "nowhere else found antelope so abundant as they were in North Park during the summer of 1876. They were almost continually in view, and thousands must breed in that locality." The mule deer was "the most abundant of the Cervidae in Colorado." Bears in the area were represented by the grizzly (Ursus horribilis), the black (Ursus americanus), and the cinnamon (Euarctos americanus cinnamomum), now generally regarded as a subspecies of the black bear.

A special treat for Coues was the sighting of a small herd of buffalo, in this case "the woodland buffalo, known to the hunters as ‘mountain bison [Bison bison athabascae],’" which he explained, was only a variety of the more familiar plains buffalo (Bison bison bison), and not a separate species, even though the woodland buffalo was "decidedly darker and more uniformly colored" than the plains variety. 21 Shortly after entering Colo-
rado, he shot a “still ungrown” western badger (Taxidea taxus).22 Also present were beaver (Castor canadensis), which Coues “nowhere found . . . more abundant than on the various mountain-streams which unite to form the heads of the North Platte River, in North Park . . . where some of the rivulets are choked for miles with successive dams.”23 Although he directed his attention largely to mammals, birds of course were noticed: “Wild geese, several kinds of ducks, and no less than four species of grouse, were found in abundance.”24

Many of the party’s specimens were collected on and near Rabbit Ears Mountain, in the southwestern corner of North Park. Apparently Coues and his companions roamed this vicinity from about 21 to 27 September.25 It was here that they crossed the Continental Divide—with surprisingly little difficulty—and entered Middle Park.

We crossed to the foot of this mountain, where we discovered that a way could be found or made into Middle Park, practicable for our wagons. One of the ultimate sources of the North Platte comes down from the Rabbit-ears; but on skirting around the base of this mountain we found ourselves on a head of Muddy creek, one of the side-sources of Grand river. It was but a step from one to the other, and perfectly practicable for a wagon-road, though we had one upset from carelessness of the driver. There was, however, no sign of a road by the way we came for several miles, and probably no wagon had before passed over the ground there. The actual divide was imperceptible, and we only became aware that we had crossed it when we noticed a tiny streamlet running in the opposite direction from that taken by the rivulet on which we had broken camp at daylight.

Although the route they traveled was “scarcely known to be available for wagons,” it presented “no obstacle whatever—in fact, the crossing of the Divide between the Atlantic and Pacific watersheds was decidedly easier traveling than some of the journeys made inside [Middle] Park itself.”26 Coues recollected that their stay in Middle and Egeria parks was from 27 September to “about Oct. 5.” Going in a generally southeasterly direction, they “crossed Middle Park by [way of] Hot Sulphur Springs” and “Made Berthoud’s Pass on the 7th.”27

Through the mountainous portion of the journey, Coues had taken special note of the rodents: the long-tailed weasel (Mustela frenata), which, he explained, was the prevalent species of weasel in the Rockies; the porcupine (Erethizon dorsatum), which he found “extremely abundant in the wooded mountainous portions of Colorado” where, according to “reports given him on the spot, it sometimes becomes a considerable article of diet”; “Say’s Chipmunk” (golden-mantled ground squirrel, Spermophilus lateralis), a “very common” animal “in the pine-belt of the mountains of Northern Colorado”; and Abert’s squirrel (Sciurus aberti).28

From Berthoud Pass, Coues and his associates pressed eastward until, on 9 October, they reached a point which Coues recorded simply as “near Denver.” From there, at the rate of about three-miles-per-hour, they moved northward over the “open prairie” east of the Front Range and crossed “a few affluents of the South Platte.” Going through Boulder, they were somewhere “opp[osite] Long’s Peak the 10th.”29 Evidently it was in this vicinity that Coues found the striped skunk (Mephitis mephitis) both irksome and amusing: “This animal is far too numerous in Colorado, especially about the settlements in the foot-hills and on the prairie.” It seemed strange to him that, in Colorado, the skunk preferred to reside in the populated areas rather than the relatively uninhabited mountainous areas.
This propensity to seek retreats in human habitations is strikingly at variance with the disposition of other Musteline quadrupeds, which instinctively shun man's abodes, except when, in foraging for food, the poultry-yard tempts their appetite and their courage. In travelling in some portions of the West, it did seem as if I never could approach a ranch without being aware of the visit, past or present, of some prying Skunk: and the outhouses I entered were almost invariably scented.

Although Coues had read that skunks "may habitually spare their favors when accustomed to the presence of man," he felt sure "that their companionship would give rise to a certain sense of insecurity, unfavorable to peace of mind. To depend upon the good will of so irritable and so formidable a beast, whose temper may be ruffled in a moment, is hazardous—like the enjoyment of a cigar in a powder-magazine.”

Along this stretch of country Coues became aware of an appalling fact. The party was traveling over a road that paralleled a telegraph wire; and he began noticing that an alarmingly large number of birds, mostly horned larks (Eremophila alpestris), met death or terrible injury by flying into the wire. He discovered that within a distance of three miles about one hundred birds had thus been killed, and he estimated that during a year many hundred thousand birds. For this problem he had no acceptable remedy: "Since we cannot conveniently abolish the telegraph, we must be content with fewer birds. The only moral I can discern is that larks must not fly against telegraph wires.”

Even to the present day the conflict between “progress” and the preservation of wildlife has not resulted in any better solutions than Coues's "moral.”

Coues and his men rolled into Cheyenne, the starting and ending point of the expedition, on 12 October. While there his "friend and genial host," Captain Gilliss, informed him of a group of "wild dogs" about one mile from town. The information excited Coues because for some years he had been fascinated by the relationship of wolves, foxes, and coyotes to domestic dogs. Immediately, he and Gilliss rode out to the spot and Coues was amazed to find a female dog and her three pups living “on the open prairie in a burrow in the ground indistinguishable from any one of the thousands of wolves’ or foxes’ burrows which dot the plains of the West.”

Here, then, was a case pure and simple of reversion of the domestic dog to a feral or wild state. The mother was an ordinary cur, without the slightest trace of wolf lineage, and though the father was not seen, there was nothing whatever in the appearance of the pups to indicate immediate cross with a coyote. Obviously the mother, a domestic dog, became pregnant by another domestic dog, had forsaken human society, constructed, or at least refitted a burrow in the ground of the prairie, and there reared her progeny, the whole family finding their subsistence as any other wild animals might do. They were "wild" in this sense; yet their very fearlessness at the approach of man was additional evidence, however unnecessary, that they belonged to domestic stock. In a word here was a family of domestic dogs living exactly like a family of coyotes; the reversion, even if temporary, was complete.

Since Coues's report on the dogs was dated “Cheyenne, Wyoming, Oct. 16, 1876,” we may assume that he boarded an east-bound train shortly after that date. A letter to Baird from Coues, written in Washington, D.C., on 21 October, indicates that he had just returned from the West. The letter also gave a brief résumé of the results of the expedition. He had made "fair collections, considering the limited time, but nothing novel or very startling. I have among things a good many small fish, which may number some interesting specimens." Coues further in-

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Footnotes:

3 Coues, "Book of Dates.
5 Coues, "Reversion of the Dog to the Feral State," Forest and Stream 7 (9 November 1876): 213.
formed Baird that he had obtained "a good deal of interesting information, especially regarding large mammals."

In a published account of the journey he mentioned that he had been "unexpectedly embarrassed by sickness in camp on several occasions, but no serious mishap occurred"; yet he told Baird that he had "made the acquaintance of the noted mountain bison, nearly losing my life in the attempt to make a specimen of him." Perhaps with reference to a local hunter, Coues said that he knew "exactly to whom to write to get one [for the Smithsonian], if you will tell me how much to offer." Coues deposited the Rocky Mountain faunal specimens he had collected in the Smithsonian's United States National Museum, except for the osteological items, which were given over to the Army Medical Museum. The failure to obtain the buffalo was not his only disappointment. Since 1874 he had advertised for a specimen of the black-footed ferret (Mustela nigripes), an animal "who seems determined to give me the slip." He had hoped to bag one in Colorado, yet he had no luck. Fortunately, the "remarkably fine" collection of stuffed animals of the Rocky Mountains, prepared by Martha Ann Maxwell, a talented naturalist and taxidermist of Boulder, had been taken east as part of the Colorado exhibit for the nation's Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia. In the winter of 1876-77 the collection was displayed in Washington, D.C.; and Coues was a fascinated visitor. Not only did Mrs. Maxwell have specimens of the elusive ferret, she was also able to pass on to a most appreciative Coues much information as to its habits. Among the other Colorado mammals that had eluded his eye or gun during his expedition, but which were represented in Mrs. Maxwell's collection, was the river otter (Lutra canadensis).

Coues was so delighted with the exhibit that he gladly prepared a list of the mammals of the collection, with annotations based partly upon his own observations and partly upon information supplied him by the astute "lady naturalist." The list appeared as an appendix to a book about Mrs. Max-
Another noteworthy event of 1878 was a vacation in the same areas of the Rocky Mountains that he had trekked through two years earlier. This is significant, for at last he found a part of the West appealing. He had acquired a good deal of professional satisfaction in his tours of duty in Arizona, Dakota, and Montana, yet he had no fondness for these areas because he found the landscapes too harsh, and because his scientific work was interrupted by his duties as a military doctor. He chose to vacation in the Rockies because he found the scenery of Wyoming and Colorado enjoyable, and because his trip there in 1876 had provided him with the freedom to pursue science unhindered.

The journey of 1878 seems to have been purely for pleasure. He left Washington on 17 August and arrived in Chicago on the twentieth. There he picked up two of his nephews, E. C. and G. H. Flower (the sons of his adopted sister Lucy). The boys and their Uncle Elliott then set out for the West by rail. They arrived in Omaha on the twenty-first and reached Cheyenne on the following day. Coues and his young companions remained there, with Captain Gilliss, preparing for their excursion into the Rockies. While there, Coues helped Lieutenant George O. Eaton of the Fifth Cavalry embalm the remains of Captain Calbraith Perry Rodgers, an officer who had been killed on the Fort Fetterman road by lightning.40

Coues and the boys left Cheyenne on 2 September; for the next three days they were “at or near” Sherman, Wyoming. On the sixth they made it to the Big Laramie River. During the following two days they crossed over the Medicine Bow Range. From the thirteenth to nineteenth they “occupied my former camp of 1876 . . . near Rabbit Ear mt.” The return to Cheyenne, from the twentieth to the twenty-third, was over the same route.41 Sometime around the beginning of October Coues arrived back in Washington.

Whatever favorable attitudes Coues may have developed for the West as a result of his trips of 1876 and 1878 soon evaporated. In 1879 the Hayden Survey was absorbed into the new United States Geological Survey. In the following year the army dispatched Coues to Arizona where he spent a loathsome tour of routine medical duty in a succession of isolated military posts. After several desperate pleas for a transfer to the East, Coues resigned his commission.

40 Coues, ed., Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri, 2:368n; Cheyenne Daily Leader, 24, 25, 27 August 1878.
41 Coues, “Book of Dates”; Coues to Hayden, 16 October 1876 (transcription), J. Y. Howell Collection, Box 20, Archive of Contemporary History, Coe Library, University of Wyoming, Laramie.

During the 1880s he resumed his teaching position at the National Medical College, served as natural history editor for the Century Dictionary, and delved into theosophy, spiritualism, and various branches of the occult. During the 1890s he experienced a dramatic rekindling of his love for the American West. In this decade he published new or original editions of the accounts of a number of western explorers and travelers: Lewis and Clark, Pike, Alexander Henry, Charles Larpenteur, Jacob Fowler, and Father Francisco Garcés. In retracing their footsteps he crossed over thousands of miles between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean. During his travels in the summer of 1898 he visited Denver, and in the company of Governor Alva Adams and others, he toured the ruins of three fur-trading posts along the South Platte River: Forts St. Vrain, Vasquez, and Lupton.42

By the time of his death in 1899 Coues had achieved a reputation as a distinguished historian of frontier America. It is safe to assume that his early trips to the Colorado Rockies played at least a small part in the kindling of his later fascination with all of western America.

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42 Denver Rocky Mountain News, 30 June 1898.
In 1893 William Dean Howells applauded a popular Colorado magazine as deserving of “the gratitude of the reading world—that portion of it, at least, that is fortunate enough to read the Great Divide. It is one of the most interesting of the American monthlies. Having a field entirely its own, it is intensely American in cast and American culture, and the novelist’s reference to the earnest Americanism of the literary arts as a supportive device for the West demonstrates valuable contributory force in the advertising campaigns of time, but the idea behind the not totally new. Some of the first English settlers to reach the Great Divide’s employment of the literary arts as a supportive device for the West demonstrates the close ties that existed between regional culture and local promotional enterprise. A synthesized and refined booster credo emerged from this intriguing monthly’s literature, making it a valuable contributory force in the advertising campaigns of Colorado.2

The format of the Great Divide was considered unique for its time, but the idea behind the “original, illustrated” journal was not totally new. Some of the first English settlers to reach the North American continent in the early 1600s had their spirits fired by the Virginia Company’s poetic propaganda to aid in a venture where “profite doth with pleasure joyne, / and bids each cheareful heart, / To this high praysed enterprise, / performe a Christian part.” Two and three-quarter centuries later and two thousand miles to the west, William N. Byers, editor of the Denver Rocky Mountain News, voiced his approval of an established American promotional tradition, when in 1875 he pleaded for a distinct Colorado literature that would be “natural and easy in style” and would deal with “the plain facts of every day rather than artificial life.” The development of such a regional literature, thought Byers, would be closely “allied with the prosperity of the state” and would shine as an “advertisement” for the “finest climate and the grandest scenery on the continent.” Within another fifteen years just such a literary concept achieved formalization in the Great Divide. Featuring local-color fiction, poetry, booster essays, and biographies of prominent Coloradans, the magazine began publication in Denver in the spring of 1889 under the editorial direction of Stanley Wood, a former literary chief of the Denver and Rio Grande Railway and an 1878 graduate of Oberlin College, Ohio.5

Echoing Byers’s pronouncements on Colorado literature, Wood, an exemplar of nineteenth-century gentility, noted that the fiction in his periodical was of a “peculiar nature, . . . written by people who do not draw as much on their imagination as is the custom of writers in general, but rather present homely pictures of scenes that actually exist and of events that really occurred.” In his attempt to communicate a positivistic Rocky Mountain culture to the world, the Oberlin journalist and poet had an easier time than most aspiring literary editors of his day, for the Great Divide was partly financed by Harry H. Tammen.


owner of the prosperous Tammen Curio Company in Denver and later coowner and coeditor of the Denver Post. Tammen guaranteed an initial edition of twenty thousand copies of the magazine, and this, coupled with foresighted advertising policies and innovative circulation premiums, skyrocketed the boisterous periodical to a national reputation within a year after its founding. The early part of 1891 witnessed monthly sales ranging from thirty thousand to forty thousand copies; in January 1892 the magazine’s paid-in-advance subscriptions numbered twenty-five thousand; by 1893, with circulation offices in Denver, Saint Louis, Chicago, Boston, New York, and London, the international list of subscribers had grown to thirty-two thousand, not counting those issues sold at newsstands and on trains. With “marvelous inducements” in the form of Tammen mineral cabinets and other gifts, Wood predicted that he would increase the circulation of his digest to one hundred thousand subscribers. The depression that began in 1893, followed by a check on his free hand in editorial policies, made it impossible for him to reach his goal. But before these setbacks, this enterprising editor’s creative promotionalism had enlisted thousands of loyal subscriber-members who instituted Great Divide clubs across the nation from Brooklyn to Los Angeles and from New Orleans to Chicago. “The Great Divide for all the world,” the motto of the magazine, grandiosely reflected its literary direction as well as its continuous drive for additional readers.8

In one of his prophetic and romantic moods, Wood observed that historians would later find a valuable source awaiting them in his journal’s literature. “Many of the customs that are there described,” he said, “will have become entirely extinct; many of the facts that are there recorded will have become entirely forgotten; therefore, we hold that while entertainment may be obtained by reading these stories and legends, information of the greatest value is also presented, and the knowledge of what our great country is, in all its phases, thus preserved for future generations.”9 In one respect, at least, Wood accurately assessed the historical import of his magazine, for his editorial bent toward booster literature had far-reaching effects upon a wide following.

Strengthening Wood’s booster endeavors was the fact that late-nineteenth-century promotional sentiment in Colorado remained strongly in favor of independent action. One historian has claimed that until the early 1900s the only effective, official, state propaganda was the Bureau of Immigration and Statistics 1889 report on natural resources and industrial development.10

5 Tammen & Co., Denver, 1893, the Tammen Curio Company and the Great Divide offices were at 1516-18 Arapahoe.

Looking east down Arapahoe Street from the corner of Fifteenth in Denver, 1893, the Tammen Curio Company and the Great Divide offices were at 1516-18 Arapahoe.

8 Great Divide 11 (March 1894): 60; 4 (January 1891): 92, 98; 4 (February 1891): 100; 6 (January 1892): 92, 96; 8 (December 1892): 208, where Wood comments that the “Great Divide uses more book paper than any newspaper, book or job printing office west of the Missouri river”; 10 (December 1893): 76, which notes that the November and December issues numbered 50,000 each and that the Great Divide has “withstood the financial depression successfully”; 11 (November 1894): 258, claimed that the circulation was over 50,000 for each issue. See also N. W. Ayer & Son’s American Newspaper Annual (Philadelphia: N. W. Ayer & Son, 1890), p. 39, lists the circulation as 22,000 for 1889 and notes that the magazine has become a “literary” monthly, containing about twenty-pages-per-issue.

9 Great Divide 11 (July 1894): 168; see also 9 (July 1893): 102.

10 David M. Emmons, Garden in the Grasslands: Boomer Literature of the Central Great Plains (Ann..
While an accurate determination, this limited governmental view ignores the Great Divide as a capable booster medium in the private sector. Certainly it would be difficult to weigh the force of the magazine in promoting the flow of investment and immigration into Colorado. Nevertheless, an examination of its fiction and poetry is essential, for it enumerates what the less prestigious western writer considered to be the special virtues of his region. Even though evidence from literature is probably less significant when questions of myths and values give way to discussions of social and economic development, in an interpretive sense it remains beneficial to note how firmly an optimistic and opportunistic picture of the West was implanted in the typical Great Divide author's attitude.11

When viewed from a national perspective, popular literature in the 1890s witnessed an increasing veneration of American business tenets, and this development led to a variety of success stories and formulas.12 To an extent, a Horatio Alger editorializing.13

Traditional Victorian humanistic values within a western Succeed magazine moved from Denver to Chicago, where it gradually lost while simultaneously preserving, reshaping, and integrating was published between March 1889 and August 1894, before the uberant frontier childhood. The success-myth literature of the Great Divide, then, was inspired by national literary trends as well as by a desire to promote Colorado, and these tendencies, perhaps, made its booster impact doubly effective. But there was more than a "striking it rich" literary theme in Wood's magazine. Taken as a whole, his periodical helped to create and disseminate an abstract meaning of Colorado in American life, while simultaneously preserving, reshaping, and integrating traditional Victorian humanistic values within a western promotional ideal. This was especially true of the material that was published between March 1889 and August 1894, before the magazine moved from Denver to Chicago, where it gradually lost much of its regional literary flavor to tawdry romance and occultism, light comic sketches, and Populist political editorializing.13

In contrast to the Chicago issues three, major, booster topics permeated the Denver-published numbers of the Great Divide. While categorizations are never wholly adequate, these themes may be defined as laudation of the natural beauty of Colorado; pride in the growth of towns, commerce, and industry; and approbation of the pioneer spirit of the West, which encompassed an idealized image of the western agriculturalist. At least one-half of the poems in the magazine were devoted to the awe-inspiring scenery or the health-inducing climate of the Centennial State. "Mountains are beautiful / Shadows are grand, / Prairies are wonderful, / Showing God's hand," dominated the poetic descriptive phraseology. Usually short stories played upon the grandeur of pioneer life and character, but on occasion the natural beauty theme also surfaced in the fiction. Traveling on a stage from Denver to a mining camp, a young heroine "so admired the scenery" that she asked to ride in the open. "I took her up beside me on the box," the stage driver remarked, "and you never heard a girl go on about the color of the sky, and the trees and rocks, and the wild flowers bloomin' on the mountain-side."14

Setting the stage for this unabashed "wild flower" promotionalism, Wood devised a poetry contest in the late summer of 1890 with parameters requiring participating poets to extol one of twenty-two selected topics, taken primarily from Colorado. Characteristic of the approximately four hundred entries, "Pike's Peak," written by a resident of Leadville, received first prize and praised that "rugged monarch of 'The Great Divide!' " as a "royal peak," a "Child of Eternity!," and a "friend of the stars." Illustrating the general primary effects and tonal qualities inherent in western booster verse, the only eastern talent among the ten contest-winning poems was that of an Amherst, Massachusetts, minister who submitted an entry entitled "Colorado":

Transcendent Goddess! On thy matchless throne
With treasure, all uncounted at command,
What is there that thou canst not call thine own?
What state so favored in a favored land?

12 The Colorado Magazine 16 (Summer 1969):246-56, for a discussion of earlier promotional efforts.
13 From September 1894 to February 1895, the new editor of the magazine was Wesley Sisson. Between March 1889 and March 1896, no name appeared as editor. In April 1896 Wood's name appeared in the masthead and editorial section as the magazine was moved from Denver to Chicago.
In addition to the guaranteed opportunities in Colorado to commune with nature, his final stanza displayed a synthesized booster proposition, blending a commerce and industry theme with that of natural purity:

Fair Colorado! Men, for love of thee,
Shall rear homes fairer still than man has made.
Proud cities shall arise in majesty,
And merchant princes throned thy marts of trade.\(^{15}\)

More typically the climate rather than urbanization was glorified in conjunction with the splendor of the mountains: "Home of the sun god / Glorious and bright; / Home of the invalids, / Giving them light."\(^{16}\) "Colorado Sunshine," a poem by Wild-Bird, the pen name for Denver poetess Almira Louisa Frink, perhaps best exemplifies this style. To most poets it was either "In the morn, when the sunlight / First flashes its rays o'er the range," or else "Over the Range the Sun [was] setting, / Lending the hills a ruddy glow."\(^{17}\) But sunshine had other qualities than merely the poetic to Wild-Bird. Unconsciously or not, she provided a melodic advertisement directed at the health seekers of the nation. More important to her than "exhaustless mines," "hidden jewel-veins," "countless quarries," and "wondrous land" was the state's sunshine:

Sunshine for the pale and palsied,
Sunshine for the chilled and weak,
Giving pallid lips the rubies,
And the rose to Pallor's cheek.
Praise God for the floods of sunshine,
Free as e'en the mountain air!
This is Colorado's glory,
Poured like rivers everywhere.\(^{19}\)

In the realm of nature verse, Great Divide poets expressed some inner calling, a tenuous motivating force that drew them to the mountains or plains but generally remained inexplicable, and thus, for the most part, their poetry merely described the beauty of the landscape. Colorado poet Thomas Hornsby Ferril has criticized such descriptive verse as unrealistic in its unmanageable and overwhelming subservience to the natural terrain, and he and others have since attempted to integrate themselves with the unique influences of Rocky Mountain scenery, a task largely unachieved by the lesser poets of the Great Divide era.\(^{19}\) Nevertheless, a certain positive mood of regional attachment emerges in the booster verse examined here. "Though a palace door stood waiting," one poet would pass "its golden grating / With a smile":

For the forests, with their shadows, hidden springs,
And sunny meadows,
Life is freer here and fuller, all beside the earth grows duller,
And the one whose soul this strong enchantment fills
Leaves all other things when dying, and, like bird
Hurries back to breathe the odor of the hills.\(^{20}\)

The juxtaposition of the "odor of the hills" or nature theme with a literary emphasis on rapid western urbanization and industrialization was another facet of the promotionism of the Great Divide. An important link to modernization and progress, the railroad received considerable attention in fiction, poems, and feature stories. With "Lungs of copper, and breath of steam," the railroad engine of "Hammered iron and tempered steel— / Perfect in beam, and rod and wheel," moved "Up the steeps of the great divide, / Over the chasms deep and wide," and was an unquestioned representative of civilization.\(^{21}\) Aside from the considerable quantity of advertising that the railroads provided for the magazine, the editor found it expedient to include them in several of his subscription campaigns. A contest between December 1892 and August 1893 offered a grand prize of $100 in cash, a first-class railroad ticket from the winner's home to the World's Fair in Chicago, a ticket from Chicago to Denver,
and a 1,000-mile circle trip through the Rockies on rail before transportation back home—all this if the lucky contestant could cajole 498 paying readers to subscribe, each of whom would receive a surprise gift himself.22

Wood's promotional spirit, as evidenced in his contests and booster essays, was a manifestation of Victorian genteel cultural boosterism endemic to the generation of western writers who submitted manuscripts to him. Perspective authors probably realized that a work consumed by overt regional positivism rather than literary symbolism would surely make a sale. But many writers were also sincere in their lauditory style. A poet who extolled the glory of the West's "unrivaled city," Denver, seriously praised the victory of the metropolis of Colorado over competing regional towns:

Through her veins the rich blood flowing,
Sits the queen of all the land,
Strength and beauty at her hand.

All her enemies withstood,
From her trials deep and dire,
Rises she with youth renewed,
Phoenix-like, from out the fire:
Yet triumphant shall she stand
Queenliest city of our land!

With less poetic verve, Cy Warman, dubbed the "Poet of the Rockies" by the New York Sun but discovered earlier by the Great Divide, lauded Colorado Springs, where "Broad boulevards trend toward the hills."

Above the city soars the lark,
And wakes the earth with joyous sounds;
Glad children playing in the park,
And lovers loitering through the grounds

The cities of Colorado rose up within a garden-like setting that made eastern "city beautiful" concepts seem pitiful by comparison. Close to the mountains and thus to God, booster poets envisioned their towns as providing the best of both urban and natural rewards.

22 Ibid., 8 (January 1893):223.

In conjunction with poetic plaudits for almost any of the growing cities in the state, the broader concept of western town building was encapsulated in several passages found in the short stories of the Great Divide. One storyteller remarked that "Pyrites was a typical mining town or 'camp,' far up in the Rocky Mountains. It had grown in six months from one log cabin to a town of a thousand inhabitants."25 In another piece of booster fiction, Mabel Lavdyuck and Jim Johnson, an elderly, unmarried couple living on the plains, were introduced by the writer as having a town project, a universal concept that seemed to hold true for any of nineteenth-century America's unexploited regions. Developing this theme, the author wrote that "the frontier is a land of hope, where people who have nothing else can have a town of their own." Relating her opportunistic dream to a friend, Mabel enthusiastically proclaimed that "the railroad... would cross the Brimstone [creek] at that point, necessitating a bridge. The bridge would of course be the nucleus of a town...."

"There must be a newspaper started... to herald abroad the great opportunities for profitable investment and induce emigration..."

"You see..." broke in the prospective editress, "it may turn out to be the metropolis of the West. There ain't no use of
of [sic] sitting down and giving up with such a chance as that before us—I tell Johnson so. There is a chance for everybody in this world, and here I say is the chance for Johnson and me. And we're going to get married, too; you see ... it would just give room for talk and be against the town if we didn't."

As fate would have it, Mabel and Johnson went their separate ways, but the heroine was as optimistic as ever as she departed for the mountains with her share of the profits from the sale of a cattle herd: "But if I have luck in Leadville, [she said]—and they say the place is booming, so I'm pretty sure to have luck; you most always do when the flush strikes a place like that—I'll hunt Johnse up and go back East and buy a little farm." 26

A "flush" was always striking somewhere in Colorado. Mining was the biggest enterprise in the state and much of the literature in the Great Divide emphasized economic opportunities in mineral exploitation. Poets rejoiced in the precious metals as attested to in "The Goldseekers," who thought "life, without wealth at our command / ... a useless waste and a barren stretch." Every mountain gulch across the state had its "cabin rude / [where] The lone prospector nightly dreams / Of a pay-streak hiding in the seams / Of the rifted rocks." 27

Many short stories also concentrated on mining towns and the life of the prospector, usually with the underlying theme that upward social and economic mobility were pronounced parts of the Colorado frontier. In "The Rainbow's End," a young hero was prospecting in Sorrento Gulch "with a determination to strike a competency for himself, in return for his labors, and for his brother Gilmer in Denver, in return for his tools, the bacon, [and] the flour, he supplied him in the work." Fatigued by fortune hunting, Rudy fell asleep and dreamed that he tunneled into the mountainside where he discovered silver-covered cavern walls worked by friendly, bearded dwarfs who tended the "goose that lays the silver eggs." As the dream unfolded, Rudy became rich to the tune of six hundred thousand silver dollars, only to be awakened by the arrival of his brother and set to work to seek his real fortune. 28 The intimation here and in other mining stories, dealing first with silver and later with gold, was that the spirit of youth was a good accoutrement for striking it rich in the West.

On the other hand, the growth of mining in Colorado created urban-industrial advancement, leading to a deterioration of the natural beauty of the state. Evidence exists that some Great Divide contributors regretted the ever mounting encroachments of civilization on their unspoiled mountains. One poet’s anti-growth sentiment employed a lamenting “Rocky Mountain canary” to decry early tourism:

A lone burro stood near a dark pine wood,
Where the trail was icy and steep,
And sang loud his praise of those stormy days
When the mountains are wrapped in sleep,
When mantles of snow the north wind doth throw
Over canon and mountain dome,
When his heart is glad and his mien not sad.
For the tourists have all gone home.31

In several instances, too, poets abhorred “the cities . . . dusty and dry,” favoring the “pure air of the mountains” instead.32 Flaunting her freedom at eastern and western urban dweller alike, one writer crowed that “The forest shades are green and fair, / The land is wide and free. / Starve in your crowded workshops there— / The wild west woods for me.”33 While this style of nineteenth-century verse that opposed the city was almost as extensive as that praising urbanization, examples of literary material that found disfavor with urban life because it contrasted unfavorably with rural virtues rarely appeared in the Great Divide.34 Achieving an unusual degree of success in attenuating antiurban philosophies, Wood wove into his magazine a colorful pattern of the confident aspects from all segments of western life.

Easily ninety percent of the authors in the Great Divide exhibited a hope that urban-industrial development would bring some chance for a better existence. This more optimistic attitude was alluded to in Emma Ghent Curtis’s poem “Storm Spectres.” Describing a deluge of rain on the mountainside, the last stanza symbolically pointed to the necessary cost of progress:

But they know in their innermost hearts—
The rent pines and the rudely swept hills—
That every scar left by those fingers uncoutch
Some law of advancement fulfills;
They know that their loud shrieking guests
Left blessings harsh seeming, but rare,
Just as the much chastened souls of mankind
Acknowledge the benefits born of despair.35

Not simply content to “scar” the landscape, “those fingers uncoutch” went so far as to adopt the bard’s style in advertising their exploitation of the mineral wealth of Colorado. A Great Divide poem for a Denver broker in mining stocks is ripe for comparison with the Virginia Company’s English verse of the early seventeenth century:

If thou wouldst rich be and weightie bee,
But delve in deepes of deepest sea
The wolf shall haunt thy door.
Go, search the clefts of mountain rocks,
Or buy advancing mining stocks
And vast shall be thy store.

“This poet rhymes with reason,” the advertisement continued. “If you want a safe investment with probabilities of large profits, send for particulars.”36

Concurrent with mining opportunities, another intense display of literary boosterism in the Great Divide was the extollation of the western pioneer, who “won his way with fearless strength / O’er mountain range and plain. / Enduring storms, defeating foes, / His strife his country’s gain.”37 Literature praising pioneer life centered on mining, lumbering, ranching, and farming communities, and always the Turnarian frontier traits of an independent, democratic spirit coupled with community fellowship shone through the Rocky Mountain settler. As an example, one poet reminisced about a pioneer cabin “Built of

Born in Frankfort, Indiana, Emma Ghent Curtis came to Colorado for reasons of health when she was twenty-one.
She married a Canon City farmer, published two novels, and was active in social and industrial reform.

sticks and daubed with clay." He remembered the "noble lessons / Taught by those who felled the trees," whose cabin door was always unlatched in "honest welcome greeting." The poem romanticized frontier egalitarian comradeship and expressed appreciation for the pioneers' martyr lives:

Luxury demoralizes
Many things the fathers wrung
With manly, patient striving,
From the days when we were young.
And the choicest of these lessons,
Large of heart and strong and stout,
Was the hearty soulful welcome,
With the latch-string always out. 38

Romanticization of the pioneer was not unique to the Great Divide. Nevertheless, the magazine’s positivism concerning agrarian life did not constitute a literary trait of the times, which again reveals the booster tone of Wood’s periodical. Generally speaking, in the works of late-nineteenth-century poets "the myth of the western garden violently and dramatically gave place to the myth of the western desert." 39 But in the propagandizing of the Great Divide, poet and storyteller alike refused to strike the consistent note of failure found in agrarian verse from this period. On the contrary, pre-1895 Great Divide authors most often pointed to the rewarding aspects of farming. Even after the tragic death of a child, one tiller of the soil could say "My toil is joy, my strength is love / For wife and children dear; / No master mine but God above— / No wrath but His I fear." 40 Adding strength to this theme were articles dealing specifically with Colorado as an agricultural paradise. A Denver writer claimed that "hundreds of farmers who to-day can hardly make a living further east, could become well-off or independent on a 40 or 80-acre farm in Colorado, without working a bit harder than they must do there." Another promoter boasted that "in no section of our broad land can be seen richer fields of waving grain—wheat, rye, oats, barley, corn—than in Colorado. Nowhere in the Union does the vegetable garden, throughout its entire line of products, surpass in yield, size and flavor the gardens of Colorado." 41

Amazingly, this blatant agricultural boomer philosophy was broadcast by the Great Divide at a time when drought-stricken farmers in eastern Colorado were petitioning Governor John L. Routt for aid. 42 The West as a symbol of opportunity, then, did not end with the official closing of the American frontier nor with the economic chaos of the 1890s; indeed, the synthesized booster argument and the revitalized western ideal in the Great Divide, in many ways, were the beginnings of a new style of western cultural promotion that continued on into the twentieth century. The westward movement and its affixed energies became a directive force for the attempted creation and implementation of a new, vigorous national civilization. The late nineteenth century saw the emergence of a "unique, identifiable West" congruent with that West’s sense of historical impact and importance within a broader national scope. 43 The Great Divide was one manifestation of this process, providing a journalistic, literary forum for its dissemination.

Communicating a vital cultural ideal, the farmer’s compatriot, the miner, was eulogized even more extensively in Wood’s magazine. In his frantic search for wealth, the miner-

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42 Petition from the "Farmers of Yuma County" to Governor John L. Routt, 8 February 1891; Charles Nealley, John Goff, and Francis Goff to Routt, 1881; Routt Papers, Colorado State Archives and Records Center, Denver, cited in Emmons, Garden in the Grasslands, p. 173.
hero never neglected those less fortunate than himself. "A quiet, retiring sort of man," he often fell in love with and married a girl from the East who had come to the Rockies seeking a livelihood to support her ailing parents. Maxwell Brown, alias "Chihuahua," won the heart of Doris by sending money to her poor mother. After accepting "Chihuahua's" proposal of marriage, Doris and her betrothed discovered an eight-foot vein of gold in Brown's mine that ran "at least a thousand dollars to the ton." Other incidents found miners ready to pay the funeral expenses for a lad who died in a dangerous attempt to return stolen, gold-laden quartz to a mine, or like "Placer Jim," miners readily adopted children orphaned by their parents' untimely death. Jim swore off liquor for the child, and suddenly he struck rich. Similarly, the theme of the civilized West was elaborated upon in stories that stressed mining town justice. Innocent, unjured, women; Roger G. Carlino, "The Little Mexican Woman," ibid. 9 (December 1893):74, for comments on the Mexican woman; C. H. Crandall, "A Lady in the West," ibid. (March 1893):13, views the West as a woman.


46 The journalistic literature of Wood's magazine made a special case for the female pioneer, too, and at the same time defended the western lady as a literary artist. The woman in Great Divide poems and short stories was at once both hardy and beautiful. A rancher's wife, with hair of "wine gold, wav'in' down like the fall" and eyes with "that deep kind o'look / That you know allus comes from the squar' and the true," would not leave her husband, though continually enticed to do so by a duke, who remarked that "With her figger and face, she could jist be a queen—." The pioneer woman had "a true heart [that] throbbed under her... dark calico." Female fortitude was essential on the frontier, where "a woman's character mature[d] rapidly for better or worse under the ripening frosts of adversity." The typical mountain girl displayed "a womanliness, a winsome grace and a sturdy self-reliance begot by her... struggle for existence." Naturally, there were also the less virtuous women of the West with whom Great Divide authors had to contend. One hero, a young Denver newspaper editor, died of a broken heart when his sweetheart, Lola Durand, became a variety stage actress and singer, billed as "Mademoiselle X." "That witch of a girl [had]
upset him. She [had taken] possession of his soul.” But even the “corrupted” western woman had a spark of good within her; when she died, Lola left a fortune “to support a home for homeless girls.” In another story a saloon girl, when queried about her fate, calmly replied: “I will marry a million.” Exhibiting her own brand of frontier opportunism, Dolly married a millionaire miner, living in his magnificent Denver home for a short time, divorced him for $400,000 in cash, and ultimately became a German countess.

It was the Great Divide issue containing the story about Dolly, “A Denver Queen,” that Wood publicized as “A Woman’s Number,” with leading articles all penned by western ladies. Praising the work of Emma Ghent Curtis in an editorial lead-in the special issue, the poet-editor noted that “it is emphatically within the possibilities that we shall have, ere long, a woman writer who will gain a national reputation of deserved force and brilliancy which will be a positive gain in replacing the men writers of the Bret Harte and Mark Twain type, much of whose work possesses little, if any permanent value.” Not always an astute literary critic, Wood, nonetheless, desired to publish the work of aspiring western women writers, for a large body of material in the Great Divide was derived from the feminine imagination. Patience Stapleton (an advisory and contributing editor before her untimely death in 1893), Mary Sylvester Padon, Sharlot M. Hall, Callie Bonnie Marble, Alice Polk Hill, and Ellis Meredith, to name a few of the most noteworthy, all advanced their writing careers in the Great Divide. This is highly significant, for it accentuates an increasingly dominant women’s value system, indigenous to the genteel tradition, undergoing transferal and infusion into a revitalized western credo. Wood, then, through the Great Divide, was perhaps partially undertaking the defense of a declining nineteenth-century genteel ideal in a desperate attempt to increase its mass acceptance by restructuring it within a more palatable framework of popular, western literature.

Even more remarkable than his desire to promote the western woman’s creativity and her strengthened frontier values, was his realization that the West was a culturally pluralistic society. It was common in the western literature of the era to portray the mining camp environment as a great melting pot with “an atmosphere determined by the westerner’s easy inclination to take others at face value.” At the same time, however, the Indian especially received a negative reaction from the verse makers who made it clear “that no part of the great western experience was due to the legacy of this noble savage.” But many Great Divide writers saw things differently and often pointed to favorable Indian character traits. Likewise, Wood and his magazine were among the first to take a stand on the need to protect and to preserve Mesa Verde. And while Blacks were rarely discussed, Wood’s corps of authors also portrayed Hispanics and Orientals in heroic roles.

Aside from articles on Indian customs and heritage, it is revealing that in June 1891, soon after the height of the Ghost Dance scare, the Great Divide contained a poem that sympathized with the Sioux and in tone expressed open hostility for the Anglo-American. A comment preceding “The Ghost Dance” explained that the refrain “Hu! Hu! hu-ah-huh!” was a phonetic expression chanted by the Indians:

Mouths are many; deer are few—Hu-ah-huh!

Hu! Hu! hu-ah-huh!

Where the bison fed and grew,

Fence and furrows follow through—Hu-ah-huh!

Far abroad the paleface strew;

And, to face the starving Sioux,

If he tarry, let him rue—Hu-ah-huh!

Let us scenes of blood review!

Come and lead the valiant Sioux!

We have done, and we can do! Hu-ah-huh!”

study of approximately twelve Great Divide poets and authors, women and men, to relate their backgrounds to the western ideal they were propagating.


A somewhat positive characterization of a Black “mammy” is found in Callie Bonney Marble.


Dan De Foe, “The Ghost Dance,” ibid. 5 (June 1891):63; see also Richard McCloud, “Dancing the Ghost Dance: Southern Ute Indians of Colorado at Durango,” ibid. 4 (February 1891):102; “How the Indians Pray,” ibid. 9 (July 1885):101, where the editor remarks that “the Indian may be as religious as is the Presbyterian.”
Even in malevolent Indian verse ("them thievin', sneakin' Apaches / Don't lay their plans like fools"), a degree of respect was accorded to the white settler's opponent. One author wrote of a feud between a white trapper, "Old Ben," and an Indian, "Hungry Pete," and entitled his verse "A Man to Man." Trapped in a blizzard, Ben "thought of his foes, the red man, / Friends they were never quite— / Old grudges had stood too long to die / 'Tween the Indian and the white." Almost dead, Ben dragged himself to a "rude hut's door," only to find Hungry Pete inside. Here the poet produced a surprise ending that left the reader to ponder who was more civilized, the trapper or the Indian:

A moment more two hands had sought
Two knives of shining steel.
Four eyes gleamed out their angry thoughts—
Who'd be the first to fall?
They met; a smile had Hungry Pete,
While Trapper Ben stood dumb—
With outstretched hand the Indian said,
"'Tis Christmas eve, you're welcome."58

In describing another frontier minority, Wood's literary digest occasionally denigrated Mexican-Americans, those "Greaser thieves" who could be "very dirty—even for a Mexican." It was unusual for the magazine to be so flagrantly racist, however, for praiseworthy comments about Hispanics were more frequent than negative ones. A poem dedicated to Don Facundo Malgares, who captured Zebulon Pike in 1807 and took him prisoner to Santa Fe, eulogized that "son of Spain" as one of the founding fathers of Colorado: "Sleep on, Malgares, of the dusky brow, / For other men have enter'd thro' thy gates, / And the golden glory of morning waits / To bid them welcome! Colorado, now, / Sends thee hail and farewell."60

Chinese, too, received criticism in the Great Divide. This included commentary on opium smokers and a traveler's note on the negative points of San Francisco's China Town. Once again, however, affirmative opinion of a minority culture found expression through journalistic literature like the short story "In Pay Dirt Gulch," where Wan Lo and his son Chang industriously worked a find of gold containing "not the liberal supply that had tempted the fevered exertions of the miners fifteen years before, but enough to satisfy the tireless labor of a patient celestial like Wan Lo."

Saving money for his younger son's passage to America, Wan Lo labored to fill a bottle with precious yellow dust. Chang came to love "that bottle and its . . . contents!" He would "hold it where the sunshine could play over the bright gold," and as the author chided, "we must confess that he worshipped that bottle and fondled and patted its fat sides with a feeling of pronounced awe; in fact, that he was in a fair way to become Americanized." True to frontier ethnic hostilities, the Chinese were exploited by a disreputable Anglo, but they overcame their foe, and "richly as he deserved death," Wan Lo and Chang left the criminal for a posse in pursuit of him for a previous crime. Soon reunited with his family in San Francisco, the younger Chinese son saw for the first time the sign of his father's new-found success taken from the gold fields of the West. Above the door of a prominent establishment he read: "Wan Lo and Sons, Importers of Chinese Goods."62

According to the Great Divide, opportunity of economic advancement awaited all peoples in the West. In many of the pre-1895 stories cultural integration within an American dream of equal opportunity gradually developed to the point that the West became the altruistic and comforting receiver of the
world’s hopeless multitudes. This theme, indeed, was the ultimate form of literary boosterism.

Still, another point can be made concerning Wood’s editorial recognition of the cultural minorities of the West. Advocating more diverse and complex western historical research, some of which has already come to pass, one historian recently argued that a realization of western pluralism was apparently displaced by an extension of American exceptionalism to the frontier, and moreover, that the westerner’s desire to create a positive regional identity led him to seek cultural unity with the East.64 While there is some truth in such an assertion, the evidence here suggests that numerous Great Divide authors were cognizant of their region’s pluralism in the 1890s, and that they attempted to incorporate it within a restructured national credo dominated by western ideals. More important, Wood was not patterning a cultural image for his magazine based upon the East. By emphasizing journalistic booster literature, the Great Divide was championing a western cultural cause in opposition to the poor regional identity he spoke out in favor of the western writer, and was astonished, but pleased, that Cy Warman finally gained recognition from the eastern literary establishment.

The contrast between East and West in Wood’s magazine was more than subtle, especially in terms of character traits. In addition to the Great Divide number devoted to western women writers, Wood set aside an issue of his journal for Denver artists to display their illustrations for a number of “short Western stories,” and his magazine also boasted its own music department.65 Emphasizing the greater social and economic benefits in Colorado, Wood was publishing a booster digest, but he believed that the creative talent in his region deserved an audience not just in the East, but throughout the world.

This regional chauvinism extended to another theme of Rocky Mountain cultural promotionalism that portrayed the West as the purifying agent of American characteristics and institutions.66 In the last analysis, however, the conflicts and contradictions between the East and the West were not so difficult to grapple with as was the creation of a formalistic national symbol founded upon those basic American ideals that had been reborn on the frontier and nurtured on the purer fruits of the West. The Great Divide’s promotional spirit attempted to fashion a new wholeness from the paradoxes of American civilization and to bring order to an apparently chaotic late-nineteenth-century value system by providing the nation with a handsomely packaged set of western ideals.

The well-planned format of the magazine—the editor’s technique of presenting an illustrated, booster story followed with an essay on some booming Colorado town, intertwined with poems set off by advertisements to invest in Colorado mining stocks or agriculture—impressed a psychological positivism upon readers. The blending of popular, booster literature with essays and advertisements was a significant part of Wood’s promotional ability. Letters to the editor, participatory promotionalism, reinforced the unique materials and services of the magazine. A Michigan school teacher lent credence to the “delightful climate and beautiful scenery” in Colorado, noting that he derived “pleasure” and “benefit” from Wood’s journal. A New Zealand reader commented that when he returned to the “great republic” he planned to settle somewhere between Colorado and the Pacific, as he liked the “West better than the East.” “To gather up the unwritten history of the great divide, to preserve its legends, and hand down to history the lives and works of its pioneers,” wrote a Missouri farmer, “what a splendid field for a magazine.” Another subscriber summed up a feeling probably shared by many readers when he contributed an anagram: “The Great Divide, Denver, Colorado, / Direct road to heaven gilded over.”70

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66 See “The Great Divide: the Youth’s Companion,” Great Divide 9 (March 1893):10; comments on the conflict with the “Engineer,” ibid. 6 (January 1892):96.
By building a “direct road to heaven” with grossly optimistic regional images, a large number of the literati of the West can be made the targets for criticism. That their work was neither timeless nor universal does not imply that it was ineffective promotionalism, nor, albeit imbued with cultural myths, that it lacked insight into a regional value system. Any attempt to understand the Great Divide’s poems and stories, and broadly speaking, early western writing in general, must necessarily acknowledge its promotional dimension. Stanley Wood, and the authors who sought recognition in his magazine, dramatically characterize the western literary artist’s involvement in urban and regional promotion. Together they delineated and disseminated a hopeful, western self-confidence, its changing scenarios united by an underlying theme that became exceedingly monotonous. Considering the frontier intellectuals’ apparent belief that regional literature stood as an “advertisement” for the locality that produced it, western culture and local boosterism were often integrated entities. In this respect, as a literary synthesis of standardized, nineteenth-century booster themes, the multifaceted Great Divide must be viewed as a singular manifestation of promotional creativity as well as an exponent of what was to become an increasingly forceful western credo that sought infusion with and dominance of a larger American culture.

Dirty Tricks in Denver

BY ELLIOTT WEST

By their rough wool coats and scuffed boots the score of men gathered along the bar appeared to be common workmen or vagabonds. After downing a round of free drinks to gird up their spirits, they trooped out of the saloon and down the street to the polls. There each man in the crowd told the registrar his temporary, fictitious name before casting a straight Republican ballot. Nearby stood a burly policeman ready to toss into the street anyone who might question the procedure. Rumor had it that the liquor dealers of Denver had raised $20,000 to pay for such service and to reward the mobs at the polls at a rate of two dollars a vote. The scene was repeated throughout the downtown precincts, and when the dust settled Republicans had eked out a narrow victory in the mayoralty election of 1889. Howling with rage, the opposition press detailed vividly how the Grand Old Party had floated to victory on a sea of "BEER, BOODLE AND BLOOD."

The election of Republican Wolfe Londoner as mayor in 1889 triggered two years of turmoil rarely equaled in the political history of Denver. Before it subsided the controversy had involved many of the state's loftiest politicians and most notorious characters, yet curiously historians of Colorado have all but ignored the episode. Months of scandals, trials, and journalistic jousting culminated when Londoner became the only chief executive of Denver to be removed from office. Aside from their entertainment value, these events demonstrated that a decade before the turn of the century considerable unrest already was laying the foundations for political reform.

The conflict had been seething beneath the surface during the 1880s as Denver emerged as a major urban center of the West. The city had tripled in population during these years, and

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1 Denver Rocky Mountain News, 3 April 1889.
2 Colorado histories by Percy Fritz, LeRoy R. Hafen, Frank Hall, and Wilbur F. Stone mention neither the controversy over the mayoralty election of 1889 nor Mayor Wolfe Londoner.
almost a quarter of those living in the capital in 1890 were foreign-born. Most immigrants, concentrated in the downtown wards, had come from Germany, Ireland, and England, but more and more were of the “new” variety from eastern and southern Europe. 3 To support the growing populace, almost four hundred manufacturing establishments had appeared by the end of 1888. Smelters dominated the northern reaches of the capital, but substantial neighborhoods reminded them of New York City or even London. 5 But the downtown “tenderloin” left a different impression. The number of Denver saloons increased from about 97 in 1880 to about 322 a decade later, and most of these businesses were crowded into a rectangle bounded roughly by Cherry Creek, Market, Twenty-sixth, and Stout streets. Here bordellos and gambling houses flourished as well. “Nowhere else have I seen such an open, shameless display of vice,” wrote one shocked minister who had visited similar recreational areas in other cities. 6

Such rapid growth, economic maturation, and increasing division of the city into different regions and social groups naturally generated tensions that finally would find expression in Denver politics. In particular, dwellers of the suburbs looked with growing alarm at many of the manifestations of the evolution of Denver into a modern city. The more percipient tourists could sense the coming clash. “We shall see that on its worst side the city is Western, and that its moral side is Eastern,” wrote the visiting Julian Ralph. “It will be interesting to see how one side dominates the other, and both keep along together.” 7

Because its birth and years of adolescence came during the Civil War and its aftermath, Colorado’s political system had been dominated by the Republicans. Just as the economy and the social life of Denver had grown similarly to those of older cities, so capital politics shared many characteristics of political machines in other urban settings. As the ultimate core of their support, GOP organizers depended upon residents of the downtown wards. Often organized by saloon owners, the workers, transients, and gamblers of that region provided a block of votes the opposition found difficult to overcome. By the city election of 1885, the increasingly restive Democrats charged that the long success of the Republicans had bred corruption. The “tricksters and traders” in power were said to have accepted bribes for the granting of franchises, manipulated elections, and robbed the taxpayers with false warrants. 8

By 1888 opposition was mounting against the Republican machine, especially as more voters in the suburbs responded to charges of governmental graft. The saloon, frequently used as the base of operations of the city bosses, gradually emerged as the central issue in the attempt to unseat the ruling Republicans. Particularly galling to many Denverites was the refusal of many saloon owners to close their businesses on Sunday. Drinking houses, it was charged, lured the working man away from his family on a day of rest, robbed the poor of money needed by wives and children, and generally besmirched the reputation of the Queen City of the Plains. Late in 1888 the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and other prohibitionist groups began to organize popular support for Sunday closing. The city council argued that the charter gave the city the power to regulate the traffic in alcohol, so the state law prohibiting sales on the Sabbath did not apply in the capital. The WCTU then demanded a Sunday closing ordinance be passed. When the council refused, the fight was on. 9

The Denver Rocky Mountain News had opposed the Republicans consistently during the 1880s, and now its editors seemed to sense that the ladies had struck a nerve. By February 1889 the oldest newspaper in Denver was championing Sunday closing almost daily in its editorials. 10 Early in March the News...
recommended an independent ticket of all concerned citizens to oppose the Republicans, and the Democrats considered the idea a sound one. By abandoning their name temporarily, Democrats might be able to attract a broader range of voters alarmed over the moral condition of the capital. The Prohibition Party, in a rare moment of compromise, agreed to join the party of Grover Cleveland to field a "Citizens ticket."  

Facing this alarmingly rigorous opposition, the Republicans were bound to respond. First the Denver Republican, owned by Nathaniel Hill and a staunch ally of the party, endorsed Sunday closing, and later the Republican city convention called for an ordinance forbidding the sale of intoxicants on the Sabbath. Just as important, the delegates searched for a mayoralty nominee not closely associated with the GOP leadership, which was now reeling under the bitter assault. Eventually they turned to one of the best-known businessmen of the city, Wolfe Londoner. The choice of the party was born in New York City in 1839 but was well acquainted with the West. At the age of eleven he had traveled alone to San Francisco, and after returning to work in his home town he had walked six hundred miles from Iowa to Denver with the influx of fifty-niners. For five years he worked and prospered in Canon City and California Gulch before returning to the territorial capital in 1864 to open his own grocery firm. Londoner's steadily expanding business made him one of the city's wealthiest merchandisers by 1880. Though a faithful Republican, he was not intimately identified with the present office holders. The portly, mustachioed merchant also had a ready wit that endeared him to the capital press corps; even more

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Ibid., 11, 27 March 1889.

Denver Republican, 26 February, 1, 3, 6 March 1889.
attractive, he equipped a “cyclone cellar” in the basement of his business with snacks and potables, ample and strong, for his journalistic friends. Such popularity obviously would benefit the Republicans in the coming contest.\(^{13}\)

Campaigners for the fusion ticket used all the standard warnings against the dangers of the grog shop. Those “vestibules of Hell” lured the young along a path leading to worthless lives and early graves. More money was spent on liquor than on food and clothing combined, claimed one minister, who went on to calculate that strong drink had poisoned to death 715 Denverites in 1888 alone. The “slimy trail of the serpent of the still” wound its way through the homes of the working class of Denver, blighting their lives and emptying their pockets. Sunday closing would not eradicate such problems but it would alleviate them by denying the drinker on the day of his greatest temptation.\(^{14}\)

The tempo quickened, and as it did the saloon became the focal point of a much broader range of issues. By charging that opponents of the Republicans introduced the question of corruption, owners of barrooms bribed officials and organized illegal voters, restrictions of the saloon, furthermore, involved a deeper urge to improve the image of the city. As one speaker argued, the frontier stage of Denver had passed, and the city should present a more respectable and sober face to outsiders. Such a change was necessary if business was to flourish, for once the flush times were past, “the real prosperity of the city depends upon the moral character of its people.” The saloon was linked to insidious immigrants, “the offal of all foreign lands,” who seemed to reject native American mores. Orators, thus, complained of many cultural and civic problems. The solution was seductively simple: “Strike at the dram shop and every one of these tentacles, anarchy, prostitution, Sabbath desecration, laxity of marriage, political corruption and poverty will begin to relax their grasp.”\(^{15}\)

As election day approached, the Citizens’ candidates attracted increasing support. Large, enthusiastic crowds heard speakers imported by the WCTU fulminate on the evils of the liquor traffic. Charles S. Thomas, later Democratic governor and United States senator, put his youthful talents of persuasion to use on the election platform. “Parson Tom” Uzzell, who presided at the downtown People’s Tabernacle, exhorted rallies on behalf of Elias Barton, Democratic mayoral nominee, with typical flamboyance. Many Protestant ministers eagerly entered the fray, and week after week the churchgoers of Denver heard the city administration condemned from the pulpits. The Republicans seemed incapable of gaining the initiative. Their endorsement of Sunday closing had been a defensive move rather than a bid for leadership, and as the weeks wore on they spent most of their effort fending off the charges of their challengers. Clearly the incumbents were in trouble.\(^{16}\)

The hoopla and mudslinging drew unusually large crowds to the polls on election day, 2 April. The orderly lines of voters in the suburbs threw into relief the scenes of confusion downtown. There, the Denver Rocky Mountain News claimed, Republican ward heelers led illegal voters to the polls “like driving so many sheep to the slaughter.” Policemen and bartenders reportedly made sure the flow of ballots for Londoner remained smooth and uninterrupted. Occasionally a poll watcher complained, only to be ignored or physically abused. When the official canvass had been completed, Londoner was declared the winner over Barton by 377 votes.\(^{17}\)

But instead of subsiding, the controversy remained to fester upon the body politic in Denver until it finally came to a head one year later. Above all, the slashing attacks of the Denver Rocky Mountain News kept the issue before the public eye. The News continued to bedevil the new administration on the issue of Sunday closing of saloons. At a meeting with feminine champions of temperance packing one side of the hall and saloon owners the other, the board of aldermen defeated an ordinance to shut down public drinking on the Sabbath late in May of 1889.\(^{18}\) Such a blatant violation of campaign promises by men the News labeled “political prostitutes” provoked a large indignation meeting of Republicans at the opera house. The next month, however, a district court judge ruled that the capital was

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\(^{14}\) Ibid., 25 February, 1 April 1889; Denver Republican, 26 February, 1 March 1889.

\(^{15}\) Denver Rocky Mountain News, 18, 25 February 1889.

\(^{16}\) Ibid., 11, 25 February, 6, 9 March, 1 April 1889.
not exempt from the state law demanding Sunday closing. Still, Mayor Londoner hesitated to enforce the prohibition—in a "Western town" like Denver, he claimed, the public would ignore it. The News kept up its barrage, hammering at the saloon's corruption of politics, giving spectacular play to a murder committed in a drinking house on Sunday and even linking the grog shops of the city to a foreign syndicate of "beer interests." The dispute remained unsettled throughout Londoner's time in office.

Nor did the News writers allow the public to forget the events of April when, it was claimed, "the pimps, the thugs and bunco men" engineered "the most infamous election in every way that had ever disgraced our oftentimes disgraced city." For the sake of future growth, Denver had to redeem its reputation, for once word of such crimes was abroad, investors and decent families would shun the Queen City.

In fact the newspaper's editor suggested that the election day disgrace was only a symptom of corruption pervading the party that ruled the city and the state. Mayor Londoner was charged with packing city departments so full of political hacks that the city was close to bankruptcy. At the same time the needs of the public were being ignored. The Board of Public Works had no plans for an adequate sewer system, while the monopolistic water company denied the people low, competitive rates. Even the surface of the streets became a point of heated debate, the News pulling for Colorado-produced stone over the asphalt alternative. Charges of extravagance and fraud among state officials strengthened the impression of a rotten Republican system stretching from precinct to statehouse. In the scant thirteen years of statehood, the News wrote, this "gang of unconscionable thieves" had reduced Colorado to as degraded a political condition as any state in the nation.

The county elections in the fall of 1889 showed that the assaults were beginning to take their toll. This time the contest centered on the race for county sheriff. The Democrats, clearly playing upon memories of the spring, nominated Barton, who had lost so narrowly to Londoner. When the Republicans turned to Walter Conway, the Denver Rocky Mountain News predictably dismissed him and the entire slate as puppets of political criminals and saloon men. Just how tarnished the GOP image had become was indicated by the position of the Denver Republican. Although acknowledging a few good men on the ticket, the newspaper called for the defeat of its own party to restore honesty and public confidence. The people agreed. Barton won easily, as did the Democratic candidates for county judge and one of the two district judges.

Some of the defenders of the administration began to trim their sails before this journalistic gale. Hill's Denver Republican, for instance, apparently decided to salvage what it could out of the scandal. By the fall of 1889 its editorials told of a "gang" in the city Republican machine that was supported by denizens of the downtown slums. But the chief executive did not share in this shame, for Londoner, the Denver Republican argued, remained independent of the political grafters and sought only to provide for honest conduct of affairs. The mayor, in fact, did seem to chart his own course. Most important, he replaced Chief of Police Henry Brady and Brady's first lieutenant with his own appointees. Throughout the months of warfare, Londoner maintained a low profile and rarely replied to the continuous barrage loosed upon him. In the end his dignified silence and business-as-usual attitude kept his reputation remarkably untarnished. By rallying around the figure of the mayor, the Denver Republican apparently sought to preserve some part of the fortunes of the party during a strategic retreat.

Just how firmly Londoner rested on his throne, however, was still an open question, for in the meantime an intricate legal web was slowly entrapping the city administration. Soon after the controversial spring election, the district attorney announced a what's-done-is-done policy and refused to prosecute Republican officials for voting frauds. State law provided that a private citizen might then demand redress. Defeated in the mayoralty election, Barton, therefore, asked Judge George W. Allen of the Arapahoe County District Court to remove Londoner from office, arguing that more than enough illegal ballots had been cast to wipe out the mayor's victory. When Londoner's attorneys...
countered with a demurrer denying that the court had jurisdiction, Judge Allen dismissed the case. Round one to the defendants. Then in September the state supreme court overturned Allen’s opinion and ordered the district court to sit in judgment of Londoner’s eligibility to stay in office. The stage was set for a political showdown and one of the most remarkable trials in the history of Denver.

The judicial spectacular began slowly on 12 March 1890. Almost two full days were required to pick a jury because many candidates for the job admitted that they already had formed an opinion on the merits of the case—eloquent testimony to the impact of the journalistic battles during the past year. During these first days Mayor Londoner, the apparent object of the proceedings, appeared only briefly in the courtroom to listen attentively and nervously bite his nails. Thereafter, he stayed away and gave every appearance of a conscientious executive too busy with official duties to be bothered with the assault on his position.

On the afternoon of the fourteenth, prosecuting attorneys Lafe and Charles Pence opened their case. Quick-witted and long-winded, the youthful Lafe cut a dapper figure as he promised the jury that he would prove police officers Henry Brady and James Conners engineered a conspiracy of “tramps and bums and adventurers” to steal the election for Londoner. So great was the fraud, the brothers argued, that only the mayor’s removal would right the crimes against the voters. The middle-aged defense counsel Lucius Marsh countered briefly that he meant only to show that enough legal votes had been counted to keep Londoner in office. The initial volleys set the tone for the trial. The aggressive young prosecutors kept up the attack, while Marsh, peering wryly at the jury through his spectacles, relied on sarcasm, frequent objections, and legal maneuvers to disrupt his opponents’ case.

Once these basic positions were laid down, the next two days were taken up by witnesses laying the foundations for the prosecution’s case. Several described how they had attempted to cast their ballots but were told that persons claiming their identities already had voted. In other cases registration records indicated that votes had been cast by persons who now testified that they had not gone near the polls. Although the testimony was repetitive, the parade of witnesses did provide a rare view of the life that flourished in the ecology of downtown Denver: hod carriers, vagabonds, day workers, bearded Irishmen, a “typical Jew of the Dickens cast,” and a deep-voiced, “queer character” with long gray locks named Ransom Rathbone.

During the next ten days the prosecution attempted to substantiate their detailed charges that hundreds of illegal votes had been cast on election day. Agents of the city administration were accused of engineering frauds in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth precincts, all of which had returned massive majorities for Londoner. First a groundwork was laid. Former police lieutenant James Conners and Samuel “Sheeny Sam” Emrich, it was charged, had compiled special voter registration lists, which included “dead names,” persons who were deceased, out-of-town, or simply fabricated. Armed with such a weapon, GOP organizers reportedly moved into action on election day.

In their charges the Pence brothers brought onto the stage two of the West’s more infamous characters, Jefferson Randolph Emrich and Samuel “Sheeny” Smith.

28 Ibid., Denver Rocky Mountain News, 4 June 1889.
29 Ibid., Denver Rocky Mountain News, 15, 18 March 1890.
30 Earlier, in response to a defense motion upheld by District Judge George Allen, the Pence brothers supplied the court with an extensive list of what they claimed to be the names fraudulently entered on registration books (Colo. Supreme Court, Supreme Court Security Cases, #2873, Motion of Defendant, 17 February 1890; Order of Court, 20 February 1890; Plaintiff's list, filed 4 March 1890; Colorado State Archives and Records Center, Denver [hereinafter cited as CSA]).
31 People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, Abstract of Record, Supreme Court Abstracts and Briefs, vol. 94; case #2873, pp. 7-8, USA (hereinafter cited as People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner. Abstract of Record); Denver Rocky Mountain News, 20 March 1890.
“Soapy” Smith, saloon owner and conman extraordinaire, and William Barclay “Bat” Masterson, gunman and tough late of the Kansas cowtowns. With another saloon owner Charles Conner, Smith and Masterson reportedly prepared hundreds of slips of paper bearing “dead names” from Emrich’s list, then provided squads of cooperative downtown residents with these “tickets” as well as a Republican ballot and a bribe of a silver dollar. Each fraudulent voter then identified himself at the polls by the name on his slip, and the poll judge noted it accordingly in his registration book, so carefully prepared by “Sheeny Sam.”

The prosecution argued further that such a system had to have protection. At the eighteenth precinct, Pence claimed, “Soapy” Smith went so far as to nail planks in front of the voting place (to protect nearby panes of glass, he said) so a voter slipped his ballot between the boards to the unseen poll judge. Whether that official placed the vote in the ballot box, no one could say. Defeated candidate Barton testified that the police were on hand to discourage any protest. At the thirtieth precinct Barton confronted Chief of Police Brady about the blatant frauds:

A. I asked him why as an officer he would stand by and assist and permit such things to be carried on.

Q. What did he tell you?

A. He told me to go to hell.

Barton described how several of his supporters had tried to challenge voters, only to be ignored by the poll judges. Others reportedly were beaten, arrested, and jailed for complaining about irregularities.

One bit of testimony, furthermore, threatened to prove more explosive than all the rest. While on the stand, James Conners told of a meeting shortly after the election in the office of United States Senator Edward Wolcott. In addition to Wolcott and Conners, Senator Henry M. Teller, Otto Mears, Londoner, Chief of Police Brady, and two others reportedly were present. According to Conners, Wolcott asked Londoner if he knew that he lacked 2,000 legal votes of having a majority, and that he had won only through the work of Brady and Conners. Londoner had replied that he had never wanted the job under the circumstances of the election. Here was the only suggestion of the trial that the chief executive had known of the voting frauds. And more, Conners linked the illegalities to the highest Republican luminaries of the state.

Faced with such an array of evidence, the defense was hard put to deny that many illegal votes had indeed been cast. Instead attorneys for the city administration chose less direct lines of attack. First, they charged that there were no legal grounds for bringing the case to court. When the district attorney had refused to prosecute the case the previous spring, the defeated candidate Elias Barton had filed suit to remove Londoner. Later, at the same time it ordered the district court to hear the case, the state supreme court decreed that if Londoner was deposed, he would be replaced not by Barton but by the head of the Board of Supervisors, next in the line of administrative succession. Since Barton now had no direct interest in the issue, the defense asked, who was prosecuting the case? The state law on elections was clear, Judge Allen answered. Any citizen could bring suit on behalf of the people. Although Barton could not gain office, he retained the right to demand justice from the administration. The defense motion for dismissal was overruled.

“If Londoner was a Democrat, they would elect him mayor, then governor, then president, as they did their Bible and God, Mr. Cleveland.” By such charges, Londoner’s attorneys next sought to portray the attack on the mayor as a Democratic vendetta. The prosecution was interested not in securing justice, they claimed, but in replacing Republicans with their own partisans. To document these charges, the defense called Lafe Pence himself to the stand. Pence began by denying he had bribed any of the witnesses for his case. Nor was he expecting any payment for his services. In the beginning, Elias Barton had paid him some six hundred dollars, but once the supreme court had declared Barton could not succeed Londoner, this income had stopped.

Yet, the brothers Pence had continued doggedly pushing their prosecution, apparently satisfied with the pursuit of justice.
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nine questions, the jurors made clear their belief that in all three

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In fact, in a later appeal the defense agreed that

Marsh and his colleagues seem to have made only token denials.

A. Part of it my own money, part of it given to me by another
defense attorneys reviewed their positions in their concluding

maneuvers to keep Londoner in office. 41

At last the trial was nearing its end. The prosecution and
defense attorneys reviewed their positions in their concluding
arguments, and Judge Allen submitted sixty-nine detailed
questions to be answered by the jury in determining its verdict.
The basic issue, however, was simple. "In our form of government . . . the full exercise of the elective franchise by
the qualified voters is a matter of the highest importance," the jurist reminded the dozen Denverites. "All elections should be
free, fair and honest, and conducted to a reasonable degree under
the form of law." With such weighty thoughts in mind, the jurors should shoulder their responsibility with "that courage and
manliness worthy of an American citizen." 42

The following day the jury delivered a devastating blow to
the Londoner administration. In answering Judge Allen's sixty-
nine questions, the jurors made clear their belief that in all three

disputed precincts scores of illegal votes had been cast in favor of
the Republicans. Charles Conner and Bat Masterson, in con-
nivance with police and poll judges, had organized the casting of
illicit ballots. "Soapy" Smith had indeed boarded up the polling
place at the thirtieth precinct under instructions from Chief
Brady. Without question, irregularities had occurred, but the
jury was unable to state exactly how many tainted votes were
involved. By their best estimate, at least 100 were cast in the
eighteenth precinct, 100 more in the nineteenth, and 150 in the
thirtieth—a total of 350 ballots wrongly included in Londoner's
total vote. 43

Virtually every claim made by the prosecution was sustained
in the verdict, and the Denver Rocky Mountain News naturally
crowed over the "stinging condemnation" of the city ad-
ministration. After bagging his prey, a triumphant Lafe Pence
told reporters that he expected the state to pay him under its
scalp bounty law. But the mayor was not ready to be stuffed and
mounted yet. While he acknowledged a certain amount of fraud
in the election, Londoner claimed the jury's inability to deter-
mine the exact number of illegal votes was enough to keep him in
office. The long struggle apparently had steeled his determina-
tion to stick with his job, and he instructed a reporter to "tell the
people of The News that I am still mayor and can be found at the
old stand." 44

Judge Allen felt differently. A week later he delivered his rul-
ing on the jury's verdict, and for the first time since early in the
trial Londoner was present in the court. As Allen began reading a
closely reasoned opinion, the mayor listened intently and rapidly
took notes. The prosecution had proved conclusively that frauds
of massive proportions had occurred the previous April, the dis-

tric judge decided. Once that had been shown, the burden
shifted to the defense to demonstrate that enough legal votes
remained to keep the mayor in office. But Marsh had failed to
produce such evidence. Londoner ceased writing and stared at
the judge. As the facts now stood, Allen continued, the events on
election day had so damaged the integrity of the returns that the
entire vote of the controversial precincts should be thrown out,
thus depriving Londoner of his majority of the total vote. The
mayor's head slowly drooped until his chin rested on his vest.
After his long and dispassionate review of the case, Allen

"Ibid., pp. 97, 101-4.
"Denver Rocky Mountain News, 27 March 1890.
"People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, Petition for Re-hearing, p. 3.
"Colo. Supreme Court, Supreme Court Security Cases, $273, Instructions to the Jury, 28 March
1890, CSA; Denver Rocky Mountain News, 29 March 1890.
"People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, Brief of the Appellant, pp. 18-36.
"Denver Rocky Mountain News, 31 March 1890.
gradually moved to a ringing plea for honesty in politics. "History perhaps does not record more flagrant violations of the law... than by the evidence in this case," he read. Let this example prove to all those aspiring to office "that unless obtained by fair means, in accordance with the will of the majority expressed as freemen... that they cannot enjoy the fruits thereof." Then he officially ordered Londoner's removal.\(^{45}\)

Although Londoner appealed the decision, his days as mayor were clearly numbered. In a spirited brief Marsh fell back upon his earlier attempts to have the case dismissed. Since Barton could not take office upon the mayor's removal, no one was prosecuting the case. Instead the city administration had become a pawn of fiercely partisan demagogues: "The editors had a rallycaboo, and all for what!" Only so "intermeddlers for political and pecuniary purposes" could further their schemes. Moreover, even if the jury's estimate of 350 illegal votes was cancelled, Londoner still would be left with a majority, albeit a tiny one.\(^{46}\)

The prosecuting Pences countered that even with Barton out of the running they still were working for the people of Denver. And the corruption in the three disputed precincts was so widespread that all votes cast there should be eliminated, thus erasing Londoner's majority. Rarely guilty of understatement, the brothers claimed that "no Court in Christendom has been found that would leave standing returns so tainted and discredited."\(^{47}\)

The following September the state supreme court upheld Allen's ruling. Chief Justice Joseph G. Helm roundly condemning such elections in which "corrupt and designing men, almost with impunity, carry out their conspiracies against the rights of the people and the public interest."\(^{48}\) On 13 March 1891, when the court denied his application for a new hearing, Londoner at last turned over his position to D. C. Packard, president of the Board of Supervisors. He was less than a month shy of completing his term as mayor.\(^{49}\)

The troubles of the Republicans were not over. After two years of political upheaval they now faced the upcoming race for mayor with their hopes understandably dimmed. Within days of Londoner's removal, a Committee of Fifteen was organizing rallies in favor of a nonpartisan administration pledged to efficient and honest government. When the Republican convention nominated Billy Milburn for the post, the committee endorsed his Democrat opponent, Platt Rogers, who promised to divorce city affairs from state and national politics. Rogers won the support of both the News and the Republican by assuring voters lower taxes, more paved streets, and improved urban services. Compared to 1889, the election of 1891 was a model of order. Five hundred volunteers, under the Committee of Fifteen, watched for possible violations at the polls, but few complaints were made. By the final tally, Rogers won handily with sixty-two percent of the vote. Again the reformers looked to the outlying precincts for their support. "The residence portion of Denver supported the People's ticket," the Republican reported, "while the slums rallied to the support of the Gang."\(^{50}\)

The repercussions did not end with this transfer of power. Evidence that the police were used as organizers for the Republican machine convinced many citizens of the need to remove law enforcement from city politics. By the time the Colorado Eighth General Assembly convened in January 1891, mass meetings in Denver were calling for a board, named by the governor, to oversee the appointment and the administration of the fire and the police departments of the capital.\(^{51}\) The lawmakers complied, and in March the new fire and police board took control.\(^{52}\)

The scandals, trials, and journalistic hoopla had spawned a political rebellion that drove from power the party that had ruled the capital for a generation. It was great drama, and at its crest it touched the dregs of the gutter as well as the creatures from the ozone of high politics. The spectacle reflected, in part, simple political partisanship, the endless struggle of "outs" to become "ins." But more, the episode reflected deeper tensions among the people of the capital of Colorado. The campaign of 1889 first focused on the issue of the saloon, but the rhetoric of the stump soon suggested a growing discontent with many urban

\(^{45}\) People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, Abstract of Record, pp. 138-45.

\(^{46}\) People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, Brief of the Appellant, pp. 50-51.

\(^{47}\) People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, Brief of the Defendants in Error, p. 17.

\(^{48}\) People ex rel. Barton v. Londoner, 15 Colorado 557 (Sup. Ct. 1889).

\(^{49}\) Denver Rocky Mountain News, 14 March 1891.

\(^{50}\) "Denver Republican, 29, 31 March, 8, 10 April 1891.

\(^{51}\) Lynne Webber Fuller, "The Populist Regime in Colorado" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1933), pp. 224-25.

problems. The frauds of the election day and the swelling controversy that followed brought into focus several issues—abuse of franchises, public works, and the corrupt relationship between police and politics.

The story takes on an added dimension when placed in the context of the next twenty years. After 1900 progressives in Denver would rely upon many of these same issues in their bid for power. The opponents of the Londoner Republicans, moreover, drew their strength from the growing suburbs that would support Ben Lindsey and Edward Costigan more than a decade later. South along Cherry Creek, east of the capital, and northwest toward Highlands, the precincts of middle class professionals, skilled workers, and merchants endorsed Elias Barton for mayor and for sheriff and returned thumping majorities for Platt Rogers. While voters of these areas showed little concern for the poor of the inner city, they seemed to stand ready to support reforms reflecting their concept of morality and "businesslike" government. Seen in this light, the battle of 1889-91, ignored in standard histories of the state, appears as a prelude to the better known struggles after the turn of the century.

After visiting Denver in the spring of 1893, a reporter for Harper’s Weekly assured his readers that a "revolution in politics" had transformed city affairs. The efficient reign of Platt Rogers had left the coffers full, the streets clean, and the police department "fully reformed." This optimism proved somewhat premature. Soon Colorado politics was undergoing a period of turmoil and transition. After the Populist interlude of Governor Davis Waite and the "city hall war," the Democrats came to dominate the statehouse. In Denver the Democratic machine of Mayor Robert W. Speer became as adept at manipulating elections as many of its predecessors. Rather than professionalizing "Denver's finest," the fire and police board simply provided a valuable political tool for the governor. Like so many others, reformers in the capital city found the road to political Utopia far rockier than they had reckoned.

And what of Wolfe Londoner, the chief executive who stood at the eye of the storm? Ironically, he emerged from the trial with his reputation somewhat vindicated, for no one testified that he had known of the frauds at the time they occurred, and only James Conners had claimed that the mayor acknowledged the crimes after the election. By standing aloof he had avoided much of the mud that was slung. Once deposed, Londoner returned to his merchandising and prospered more than ever. Gradually he worked his way back into civic affairs, serving as an organizer and an enthusiastic supporter of the Festival of Mountain and Plain. Once again the doors of his spacious Logan Street home stood open to the members of the capital press. At six in the evening on 23 November 1912 he died of apoplexy in his bed. Of the many articles in Denver newspapers marking the passing of this "well beloved citizen" who "had no enemies," not one mentioned his removal from office.

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Frances Lillian Clelland, the wife of Governor James Hamilton Peabody and the First Lady of Colorado from 1903 to 1905, was a second-generation American of Scottish descent. Her father, James Clelland, was born in Cleveland, Scotland, on 20 September 1823, and her mother, Anne (“Annie”) Bayne Clelland, was born in Sterling, Scotland, on 31 October 1826. They were married on 6 June 1845, and her father immigrated to America in 1848. On arriving in New York City, he booked passage for his wife and her brother on the next trip of the ship on which he had arrived, the Madagascar.

James Clelland had been trained as an engineer in Glasgow College, and on his arrival in New York City he went to Philadelphia where he obtained work with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad as an engineer and a paymaster on the construction of their line to the West. This work took him and his family on to Virginia, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, and Kansas. In Iowa City in 1859, their son, George Clelland, was born, and while living in Saint Joseph, Missouri, on 1 July 1860, their daughter, Frances Lillian, was born. With the outbreak of the Civil War railroad construction came to a standstill so Clelland purchased a farm about eighteen miles from Atchison, Kansas. Besides farming, he operated an overland freighting business between Atchison and Denver, making about six trips a year in ox-and-mule-drawn wagons.1

The next move for the Clelland family was to Denver in the spring of 1865. The journey was made in a “prairie schooner” with all the “conveniences” of the day, such as carpets,

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featherbeds, blankets, and comforters, which helped make sitting and sleeping on the six-week long trip more comfortable. It was a memorable experience for little Frances, who celebrated her fifth birthday on 1 July 1865 en route and received a doll, bought at a “sutler’s store” in Marysville, Kansas, for her birthday present. Her childhood memories were kept alive and vivid through the years by the recounting of the fascinating incidents by her mother. At the suggestion of family and friends Frances Clelland Peabody later published an account of this trip under the intriguing title: “Across the Plains DeLuxe in 1865.” She told of their food of hard bread, salt pork, and dried apples with, perhaps, tea or coffee, for there was no milk. Since wild fowl was plentiful on the prairie, prairie chickens, grouse, quail, or sage hens were a welcome change. She related that for amusement she would sit close to her mother and listen to the stories of her flowers or play tag with her brother—only when her father felt. featherbeds, blankets, and comforters, which helped make day present. Her childhood memories were kept alive and vivid through the years by the recounting of the fascinating incidents by her mother. At the suggestion of family and friends Frances Clelland Peabody later published an account of this trip under the intriguing title: “Across the Plains DeLuxe in 1865.” She told of their food of hard bread, salt pork, and dried apples with, perhaps, tea or coffee, for there was no milk. Since wild fowl was plentiful on the prairie, prairie chickens, grouse, quail, or sage hens were a welcome change. She related that for amusement she would sit close to her mother and listen to the stories of her flowers or play tag with her brother—only when her father felt certain that they were not in “Indian country,” however. Frances described their clothing, in particular a pretty blue chambray quilted sunbonnet she wore to protect her skin from the sun. She and her mother also had bonnets made of straw that were called “shakers,” which had veils attached that could be thrown back or worn over the face. She recalled their excitement at the first sight of the mountains and when their friends met them with a carriage at Sand Creek. She and her mother spent the night at the Broadwell Hotel in Denver, while her father and brother stayed with the train and their household goods. Soon they were settled in their five-room home on Curtis Street, which her father had bought on a previous trip to Denver.2

“Denver, beautiful Denver, our home at last,” jubilantly exclaimed Anne Bayne Clelland on 21 August 1865, the day that they arrived; but Denver was not to be their home for long. The final move for the Clellands as a family was made to Canon City in Fremont County in 1872, the year the town was incorporated. James Clelland had arrived there in 1871 and at once had become permanently identified with the county by purchasing real estate and engaging in the grocery and merchandising business; he later became active in building railroads, public utilities, and in establishing banks. Politically he considered himself a Democrat, and a very active one, for he believed that the citizens of the county and the town, particularly at that early stage, should be vocal in the territorial and, hopefully, the state government.3 He was a member of the territorial council in 1876 from Fremont County and a senator from the Fourteenth District in the first state senate of 1877.4

In 1872 Canon City had a number of churches, including the Christ Episcopal Church, good elementary and secondary schools, and an effort was being made to establish a city library. But the Clelland children (George and Frances) were enrolled in boarding schools in Denver. Frances attended Saint Mary’s Academy for her elementary education and later Wolfe Hall, from which she graduated in 1878, the year of her marriage.5 Wolfe Hall was an Episcopalian college-preparatory academy for young women and was considered, at that time, the best in the West.6

James Hamilton Peabody was also a newcomer to Canon City in the 1870s. He came from Pueblo on 14 February 1875 to take the position of bookkeeper in the Clelland Grocery and Merchandise Store. Unlike the Clellands, who were recent arrivals in America, he was an eighth-generation American of distinguished New England lineage. A Vermonter by birth, he had migrated to Pueblo in 1872 with other members of his family, including his father and mother, Calvin and Susan Peabody.7 The twenty-three-year-old James H. Peabody was tall and handsome—ideally cast for the role of the villain in a Victorian melodrama. However, he failed to display any of the characteristics of one and quickly earned the reputation of being a hard-working, efficient, business man, who gained a partnership in the firm of Clelland and Peabody. And, instead of fleeing during the night with the farmer’s daughter, he married the boss’s daughter on 19 March 1878.8 The wedding was held in the home of the bride’s parents at 403 River Street. Mr. and Mrs.

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3 History of the Arkansas Valley, Colorado, pp. 650, 653.
7 C. M. Endicott, Genealogy of the Peabody Family (Salem, Mass.: J. H. Peabody, 1895), Ranger Rogers papers.
8 History of the Arkansas Valley, Colorado, p. 689; Colorado, Fremont County, Canon City, Marriage Records, Book 14, entry 5706, p. 57.
James Hamilton Peabody left immediately after their marriage for a four-week trip to the East. To complete the story, for a wedding present Clelland gave the couple a charming, small stone house with a picket fence located at 202 Macon Avenue—the dream house of every bride.⁹ A local newspaper in the journalistic idiom of the period commented: “Miss Clelland is a young lady of brilliant attainments, while Mr. Peabody is well and favorably known throughout the State as a young man of excellent business qualifications, and their many friends, we know, will join us in wishing them a safe and pleasant voyage over the sea of life.”¹⁰

The James Peabody family was doing well “over the sea of life” when the Republican Party of Colorado nominated Mr. and Mrs. James H. Peabody with Jessie Anne, Anne Bayne Clelland, Cora May, and James Clelland, Jr. Peabody for governor in the fall of 1902. He was serving his second term as mayor of Canon City and was also president of the First National Bank.¹¹ They now had three children: James Clelland Peabody, Cora May, and Jessie Anne, and were living, since the death of James Clelland on 17 February 1892, in the large, red brick Clelland residence at 403 River Street.¹²

To an alert and curious newspaper reporter pursuing a whiff of gossip, history owes a more colorful characterization of the governor-elect of 1902 and his family than those found in the writings of some well-known Colorado biographers:

I went to Canon City to learn how Peabody was regarded by his home people and although I talked with all kinds and asked all kinds of questions, I could learn nothing to the man’s discredit. . . .

“Who is this Jim Peabody?” Get the answer to the question and you have the campaign arguments of the Republican party in a nutshell. “Jim” Peabody is what Colorado has made him—a warm-blooded Western man. . . . There is a good deal of boy in the face yet. . . . Youth the perennial youth of a man whose heart is clean, to whom life means the pursuit of happiness, not the accumulation of substance, shows in the face, in the erect, muscular figure, and in the alert, accurate motions. . . .

⁹ Denver Tribune, 21 March 1878.
¹⁰ Canon City Avalanche, (?) March 1878, Ranger Rogers papers.
¹² James Clelland Peabody, born 4 July 1882, died 14 March 1965; Cora May Peabody (Mrs. James Grafton Rogers), born 12 March 1884, died 9 October 1969; Jessie Anne Peabody (Mrs. Cuthbert Powell Stearns), born 28 March 1886, died 26 February 1968 (Endicott, Genealogy of the Peabody Family, Denver Post, 15 March 1963, 10 October 1969, 28 February 1968.)
The inauguration ceremonies installing James Hamilton Peabody as the thirteenth state governor on 13 January 1903 have been described as a "royal" pageant. Since the Republicans had been out of office for the past three administrations, they were jubilant. Though the state coffers were still depleted from the money crisis of 1893, the Inauguration Committee of 1903 apparently decided to ignore it. The pageant started in the morning with a grand parade. "Whoops!" yelled a small boy. "It's on!" The inaugural ceremony was enlivened by a display of brass bands, flags, colorful military uniforms, electric displays, and fireworks. According to the gossip columnist Polly Pry: "Governor Peabody was a symphony in black, decorated in his favorite flower, a red carnation. He read his address in a clear, pleasant voice and while he may be 'no orator,' he certainly is an agreeable gentleman." At the inaugural ball, the first and last to be held in the Colorado State Capitol, the stairways from floor to floor were garlanded with fresh flowers and "Dancing 'Neath the Dome" continued throughout the evening. The program called for the grand march to be led by Governor Peabody and Mrs. James Bradley Orman, wife of the outgoing governor, but due to the crowds of guests it had to be eliminated from the program. Twenty-five thousand people attended—ten thousand more than expected. Women fainted in the terrific jam.

As one newspaper reporter viewed the theatrical affair, Governor and Mrs. Peabody were secondary characters. The new first lady presided over this extravaganza in the detached manner of an interested spectator. "Her gown for the occasion was an exquisite creation of white hand-painted tissue, décolleté, with garniture of dull green velvet. The sleeves were elbow length finished with full flounces of mousseline. She wore a necklace with a diamond and emerald pendant."

The three people at the ball who enjoyed themselves to the fullest extent were the children of the new Governor. Miss Cora Peabody is a most beautiful girl—tall and graceful in figure with the most alert expression in her large brown eyes. She has a quantity of sunny brown hair, which seems to rebel against pins and ribbons. She wore a gown of some filmy, yellow material, the skirt made in rows of shirring with corn color ribbon belt and streamers. She carried a huge bunch of violets, over which she occasionally gazed in rapt admiration at her mother, who stood opposite receiving the guests. Miss Jessie Peabody looked sweet and dainty in a simple girlish gown of white muslin made over a pink lining. She is as fair as her sister is dark and both have the gentle expression on their face which makes their mother so attractive. James Peabody, Jr. wore a broad smile during the entire evening and was aiding the constabulary in directing the crowds which way to go in such a genial interested manner as to make everyone who read his name on the reception badge, declare young Jim to be a "jolly good fellow."

The former residence of Dr. Charles Riddick Whitehead at 1128 Grant Street served as the Executive Mansion during the Peabody administration. Mrs. Peabody immediately, on assuming her position as first lady, announced that she would continue the customary Monday "at home" for her friends and official guests but would discontinue the custom of calling altogether, as the many official and social demands on the time of the governor's wife made it impossible to return all of the

13 Clarence A. Lyman, "'Jim' Peabody's Career," Denver Times, 21 September 1902.

14 Denver Post, 13 January 1903; Denver Times, 13 January 1903; Denver Rocky Mountain News, 13 January 1903.
15 Ibid., 14 January 1903.
16 Ibid., 13 January 1903.
Miss Cora Peabody, the eldest daughter who had graduated from Miss Wolcott's school in June 1903, was now at home and assisted her mother at most social affairs at the Executive Mansion as well as serving as her mother's official representative at social and civic affairs when her mother was unable to attend. A custom had been established since the third Routt administration (1891-93), when Colorado had granted the vote to women, for the newspapers to interview the first ladies to ascertain their views on the rights and the duties of women and on current political and social issues. A month after Mrs. Peabody had become first lady, she was so interrogated:

"It is by no means an easy thing to step into a vacant place that has been well filled, and challenge comparison with a woman predecessor. But this Mrs. Peabody has been proving every day her ability to do.

Briefly described, she might be termed a typical American matron, prepossessing in appearance, dressed simply, but in charming taste, intelligent, affable, gracious, and courteous to all. She has made a most favorable impression upon all who have been so fortunate as to make her acquaintance.

"Did you vote, Mrs. Peabody?" was the first question propounded.

"Oh, yes," she replied, "I voted at the first election after the women of Colorado received the franchise and I have never missed an election since. I believe very thoroughly that it is every woman's duty to vote in the interest of good government that we may have good laws and their wise administration. Women realize that good government is to be had only by the united work of good citizens; and that, in Colorado, means women as well as men."

"What is your opinion of placing women on school boards, and in school offices—such as the county and state superintendent of public instruction?"

"It is most fitting and proper," she replied, earnestly...

"But I make this stipulation, that the candidate must be fitted for the place by nature, so far as it is possible, and by thorough training, at all events."

"And now about the clubs?"

"I am a firm believer in the usefulness of women's clubs, also," she replied, "but of course not to the injury of the home. Where club work is not carried to excess it is a benefit in every way. First of all it is broadening; it inculcates a love for study, for books, for art, and particularly does it accomplish this for those who, for one cause and another, have been deprived of educational advantages early in life. Then, the club has a tendency to take women out of themselves—for it is one effect of too close seclusion at home to make them a little...

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17 Newspaper clipping, Ranger Rogers papers.

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intolerant and self-centered. Where a club member is only one of several hundred, she learns to respect the opinions and prejudices of others—to agree to disagree, as we say, and I think it is a wholly beneficial thing—this union of women in a common cause, who differ otherwise religiously and politically. They stand, in the club, on a common footing, one woman’s opinion being just as good as another’s and no better; all, alike, being entitled to the same consideration. In my home town—Canon City—we had a number of clubs, and I know how much they did for women there, furnishing them with new ideas, relieving the monotony of existence, and giving them much to think of—brightening the routine of daily life. Yes, I am a thorough believer in clubs, but, as I have said, not to the detriment of the home which, however, I do not think is in any danger from this counter attraction. The love of husband and children is too strongly implanted in a woman’s nature. Where there seems to be exceptional cases, the club is only an excuse—it is not the cause—of a woman’s neglect of what might be called her natural duties. 20

However sincerely and firmly Mrs. Peabody believed and advocated the ideas revealed in her answers to the questions of the newspaper writer, the facts do not support that, other than conscientiously exercising an intelligent franchise, she was ever in active politics; and, she discriminatingly chose and limited her civic and club memberships. Colorado historians speak of the Peabody administration as one of the most turbulent in the history of Colorado. Likewise, Mrs. Peabody, in retrospect, said that she was hostess of the gubernatorial mansion in a very troubled and unsettled time. These references are to the conflicts between unorganized and organized labor at the Cripple Creek, Clear Creek, Telluride, and the southern coal fields in Las Animas County. This trouble was brewing in 1901 and reached a climax in June 1904 with the intervention, at the governor’s request, of the Colorado National Guard. 21 In the following months, and even years, the lives of the governor and his family were in constant danger from revenge-seeking laborers and their leaders. Understandably, Mrs. Peabody’s mind was occupied with the problems of her husband and not with local organizations. She did, however, accept the presidency of the City Improvement Society. 22

The spirit engendered by these strikes carried over into the state elections of 1904. Governor Peabody was renominated by the Republican Party but was defeated by his Democratic opponent, Alva Adams, who was seeking a third term as governor and was backed by the labor vote. Peabody contested the election. The contested proceedings resulted in the seating of Peabody with the stipulation that he would resign in favor of the Republican lieutenant-governor, Jesse F. McDonald. This unique and questionable settling of a political election was a bitter ending to the Peabody governorship. 23

After the election issue was settled, the Peabody’s returned to their Canon City home, he the poorer in health and in finances. Anne Clelland had remained in the family home while they were in Denver, and she continued to live with them until her death on 20 November 1916 at the age of ninety. 24 Peabody pursued his already established business interests, and they both continued their activities in Christ Episcopal Church, where they were confirmed members and where Governor Peabody was a vestryman and a lay leader. 25 Mrs. Peabody did not lack for interests outside of the home. She was for many years a director in the Library Association, which obtained the handsome city library building given by the Carnegie Foundation. 26 Since she had arrived in Colorado at the age of five in 1865, she was eligible for membership in the Territorial Daughters of Colorado, and the records of the organization show that she was an officer for the years 1916 through 1924. 27

Special note should be given to Mrs. Peabody’s favorite club—the Dickens Club of Canon City—and her contribution to the organization. She was one of the dozen or more charter members who organized the club on 8 February 1892. The Dickens Clubs are an international group with an official publication: the Dickensian. The Canon City club was the first one organized in the United States, and from the time of its founding until its disbandment in 1933, Frances Clelland Peabody was "poetess laureate." 28 When Alfred Tennyson Dickens, son of Charles Dickens, visited Denver, the Denver Women’s Press Club with the Dickens Club of Canon City enter-

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20 Mary H. Knott, "Mrs. Peabody," Denver Times, 6 February 1903.
22 Denver Times, 13 March 1900.
24 "Canon City Fremont County Leader, 23 November 1916; Canon City Record, 23 November 1916.
25 James H. Peabody confirmed 15 March 1896; Frances Clelland Peabody confirmed 13 April 1897 (Christ Episcopal Church, Canon City, Colorado to Helen Cannon, 18 September 1973); "License as a Lay Reader," 30 November 1895, Diocese of Colorado, Denver, Ranger Rogers papers.
26 Denver Times, 13 October 1902.
27 The Trail: Sons of Colorado, 9-17 (October 1916-June 1924).
tained him at a luncheon at the Brown Palace Hotel on 9 December 1911. Mrs. Peabody read an original poem: “Would We Love ‘Our Dickens’ More?” This was published in the Denver Rocky Mountain News and later in the Dickensian. An intriguing pastime of lovers of Dickens is to write an ending to his unfinished: The Mystery of Edwin Drood. Mrs. Peabody’s try at this was published in the Dickensian and she received the coveted award—a bas-relief of Charles Dickens.

After Governor Peabody’s death on 23 November 1917 at the age of sixty-five, the family home (the James Clelland residence) was sold, and Mrs. Peabody used as her Canon City residence a smaller house at 811 Greenwood Street; however, she spent very little time in Canon City, dividing her time between the homes of her two daughters. She died at the age of eighty-five, on 24 April 1945 at Charlottesville, Virginia, at the home of her youngest daughter, Jessie Anne (Mrs. Cuthbert Powell Stearns). The burial services were held at Christ Episcopal Church in Canon City, and she is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Canon City as is Governor Peabody.

The author of a series of historical portraits dealing with the first ladies of Colorado, all of which appeared in previous issues of THE COLORADO MAGAZINE, HELEN CANNON, a resident of Arkansas, is a retired professor of anthropology from the University of Colorado.

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31 Denver Times, 23 November 1917; Denver Rocky Mountain News, 24 November 1917.