

Henry Houseley, Versatile Musician of Early Denver

BY SANFORD A. LINSCOME

An eminent musical historian recently wrote: "Musical life was vastly different in a pioneer settlement like Horse Creek, Nebraska, . . . and in an old established urban center like New York or Boston."¹ He then dismissed music in the frontier settlements with the contention that there was "virtually no contact with the developing cultivated tradition in the eastern urban centers."² The mistake of relegating nineteenth-century western frontier towns as a group to musical obscurity because of their alleged bucolic culture and lack of contact with the cultivated East is lamentable but understandable. It has been the tradition in books on American music to ignore largely any musical development in the West, with the exception of San Francisco opera. Denver, however, does not fit into this niche of musical provincialism which has been fashioned for the rest of the West.

From the first wagons of Green and Oliver Russell, music was a part of the culture that was to develop on Cherry Creek. Because of their separation from the East, residents of Denver had a desire to emulate eastern society in culture despite geographical isolation. In 1881, two years before the Metropolitan Opera House was built in New York, H. A. W. Tabor built a magnificent opera house that cost in excess of \$800,000.³ The Tabor would attract superior musical entertainment to Denver for many years. Dean H. Martyn Hart wanted English organists for St. John's Episcopal Cathedral. The result was a series of musicians whose influence was lasting. Mary Elitch Long desired a symphony orchestra for her gardens, and a fine orchestral tradition was established. Isaac Blake wanted a pipe

¹ H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 45.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Denver Tribune*, September 4, 1881, p. 5.

organ in the new Trinity Methodist Church and in 1888 spent \$35,000 for a Roosevelt which was one of the largest organs in the country at that time. Frank Damrosch, son of Leopold Damrosch, turned from the liquor and cigar business to develop an outstanding choral organization in Denver. With the rich Tabor, excellent church music, superior corps of English and German musicians, glittering mansions, and wealthy patrons determined to bring the fine things of life to their mountain wilderness, Denver became an oasis of culture.

One of the most influential of these leaders in Denver's early musical scene was a young Episcopal minister from Blackheath, England. The Reverend Henry Martyn Hart came to St. John's in the Wilderness in 1879 against the wishes of his English friends who had considered half seriously the propriety of an inquiry before a lunacy commission, so insane did they consider him for going to the wilds of western America.⁴

Dean Hart brought with him a penchant for English organists. By January of 1880 he requested the services of Arthur W. Marchant, bachelor of music, Oxford, and a fellow of the College of Organists, London. Marchant and his successors, Hall and Gower, each contributed much to St. John's and Denver. Marchant designed the Hook and Hastings organ, Opus 1023, which was installed in the cathedral then under construction, but he "could not accommodate himself to the peculiarities of western life,"⁵ according to an interesting note in the cathedral record book, and left after two years.

Marchant was replaced by the second English organist, Walter E. Hall.⁶ The music at St. John's prospered under Hall and the precentor, Arthur H. Winter, whom Dean Hart later called "the most notorious musician I have ever known."⁷ But harmony did not reign, and Winter was gone by March of 1883.⁸ By June 1887 the Methodists had induced Hall to accept the position of organist in preparation for the dedication of their magnificent new Roosevelt organ.

Dean Hart's third choice was John H. Gower, a brilliant organist, said to have taken his doctor's degree in music at Oxford at a younger age than ever before known.⁹ That his was a charismatic talent there is little doubt. But his interests were broad and could not be contained by music alone. David

⁴ Robert L. Stearns, *A Historical Sketch of St. John's Church in the Wilderness* (Denver: Privately printed, 1927?), p. 9.

⁵ St. John's Cathedral, Record Book I, 1860-1877, p. 251.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Henry Martyn Hart, *Recollections and Reflections* (Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing, 1917), p. 147.

⁸ *Denver Republican*, March 28, 1883, p. 8.

⁹ Hart, *Recollections*, p. 147.



The "Choirsters" at St. John's Cathedral, where music quickly became an integral part of the church's activities.



Dean Henry Martyn Hart
at the organ console.

McK. Williams, a well-known organist and composer, now a resident of Denver, remembers that Gower was "a very gifted man, but just as interested in spiritualism as he was in music."¹⁰ There were other diversions. While at the cathedral Gower often produced recitals of the highest order; but the lure of wealth soon drew him from the organ bench, and he became interested in mining claims at Cripple Creek and Central City. It became evident that someone must be available to take Gower's place when he was in the mountains, in England, or in Arizona looking after interests in a ditch company.¹¹

In March of 1888 Henry Houseley arrived as deputy organist. Houseley was less versatile in his interests, less flamboyant, and perhaps less talented at the organ than Gower. But he was of such musical stature that under his influence music at St. John's and throughout Denver rose to new heights. Houseley recognized the potential of Denver's musical ability as few others did, and his career in Denver, until his death in 1925, can be described as a movement from one musical success to another. Organist, composer, choral and orchestral conductor, and teacher, Houseley was responsible for many of the fine musical traditions which Denver now claims.

Houseley's training and experience prior to his arrival in Denver were considerable. He had studied with Michael Costa,

¹⁰ David McK. Williams, interview, Denver, December 9, 1968. Williams must stand as one of the finest musicians Denver has produced. He was born in Wales and came to Colorado at three months of age with his parents. They settled in Denver in 1896. As a choir boy at St. Mark's Church, Williams studied with Dingley Brown and later with Henry Houseley. He was the accompanist for the Apollo Club and Houseley's Select Choir. In 1908 Williams went to New York and afterwards to Paris, where he studied music at the Schola Cantorum. He earned a Doctor of Music at King's College, Halifax. From 1920 to 1947, when he retired, he was organist and choirmaster at St. Bartholomew's Church in New York; he also taught at Juilliard for six years. Williams' compositions have been extensive and include a number of hymns in the 1940 *Episcopal Hymnal*.

¹¹ *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), January 10, 1892, p. 19.

an Italian conductor who held a commanding position in the London musical world, and with E. H. Turpin, organist at St. George's, Bloomsbury.¹² In October of 1874 he was awarded first prize in the College of Organists' composition contest and passed his organ examination in 1876. He was organist at St. Luke's in Derby and at St. James's in Nottingham. In October of 1886 a string quartet by Houseley was performed at the annual meeting of the National Society of Professional Musicians; Anton Dvořák was present and complimented Houseley highly on his composition. The young musician was professor of harmony and composition at the University of Nottingham for five years before coming to Denver.¹³

It is surprising that Houseley, with such an impressive background, would come to America for a deputy's post. Dean Hart's powers of persuasion must have been great indeed, for Houseley's circumstances during his first years in Denver were certainly tenuous. As deputy organist his salary could not have been much. He held a second position as organist at Temple Emanuel, and until November of 1889 he was organist and choir director at the First Baptist Church. Until May 1892, when he officially took the place of the wandering Gower, Houseley was engaged also at St. Mark's Episcopal Church¹⁴ and as director of a chorus club in Greeley, Colorado, to which city he journeyed once a week.¹⁵ But with his appointment to the full-time post as organist at St. John's, Houseley's influence began to spread to almost every facet of Denver's music.

Houseley was a first-rate organist. In addition, he had a deep interest in fine choral programs. For many years Denver's choral organizations had been a mixed blessing. There was a Denver Musical Union as early as 1867, and a Maennerchor Society, or men's chorus, thrived through the 1870s; but in many ways choral activities had not progressed well. When Houseley arrived, Denver was no closer to having an ongoing, healthy choral tradition than it had been in the late 1860s. There seemed, in fact, to be a sort of endemic hopelessness to the situation peculiar to Denver that prevented a sound choral program from developing. Professional jealousy was rampant and with each new schism disgruntled musicians who had supported an ill-fated director would break away until the organization in question collapsed from the accumulated weight of collective

¹² Waldo S. Pratt, *The New Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1924), p. 809.

¹³ *Rocky Mountain News*, November 17, 1889, p. 13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, March 15, 1891, p. 19.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, December 8, 1889, p. 14.

discontent. Louis Schormoyer, T. J. Cook, C. W. Sanborn, Mrs. Lorenzo Dow, W. L. Grebe, W. F. Bennecke, Arthur Marchant, Frederick Stevenson, and John Gower, all had directed various choral organizations in Denver with only temporary success. Frank Damrosch had started a strong choral program in 1882 but did not remain in Denver long enough for it to become firmly established.¹⁶

Only Isaac Blake, president of the Continental Oil and Transportation Company and the Continental Oil Company of Iowa, philanthropist and musician, had the money with which to sustain and control a choral organization of high caliber. His group, the Denver Oratorio Society, produced elaborate renditions of Haydn's *Creation* in May of 1890 and the *Messiah* in the fall of the same year. Of following productions the *Rocky Mountain News* was very critical,¹⁷ and once more a choral organization faltered in Denver. However, in October 1893 mention was made of a "Trinity Oratorio Society" with F. M. English as director. The constituency of the officers indicates, however, that Mr. Blake's downfall had not been complete, for the president of the new organization was none other than the musical philanthropist himself. The group gave a *Messiah* performance in December of 1893,¹⁸ after which success the name of the Denver Oratorio Society was again adopted.¹⁹

Henry Houseley assumed the position of musical director of this organization sometime in early March of 1894, and soon after the *Rocky Mountain News* made mention of a "powerful orchestra and a chorus of over two hundred voices."²⁰ Houseley's musicianship also was evident in a *Denver Republican* article, which stated:

Upon the production of the 'Creation,' by the Denver Oratorio Society late in March, those who braved the inclement weather witnessed the most artistic representation of Haydn's masterpiece perhaps ever given in Denver.²¹

Sometime in the fall of 1894 the society underwent one other change, the last major one to take place until after the turn of the century. The name was changed from the Denver Oratorio Society to the Denver Choral Society. Subsequent programs

¹⁶ For a more thorough discussion of Damrosch's musical contributions to Denver see the author's *A History of Musical Development in Denver, Colorado, 1858-1908* (unpublished Doctor of Musical Arts dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1970). See also Lucy Stebbins and R. P. Stebbins, *Frank Damrosch* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1945).

¹⁷ *Rocky Mountain News*, November 9, 1890, p. 23. See also *ibid.*, December 27, 1891, p. 19.

¹⁸ *Denver Republican*, December 24, 1893, p. 6.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, January 1, 1894, p. 8.

²⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, March 28, 1894, p. 3.

²¹ *Denver Republican*, April 8, 1894, p. 20.

indicate that Houseley's concept of the role and function of the organization went beyond the earlier, more narrow title. Rossini's *Sabat Mater* was the production for the fall of 1894,²² while early in the following year Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* was performed at the First Baptist Church.²³ The last concert of the season was on April 8 when the *Messiah* was performed again. The Reverend Charles Winfred Douglas was organist, and there was a large orchestra.²⁴

Much of Houseley's success must be attributed not only to his musicianship but also to his imagination. Welsh Eisteddfod festivals had been occurring in the Rocky Mountain area since 1881. Yet, Houseley was the first to take a Denver chorus to one. They took Salt Lake City by storm and walked off with the first prize of \$1,000 in the fall of 1895.²⁵ Although concerts by the Choral Society became regular features in Denver's musical scene, again it was Houseley's initiative and imagination that kept the society a vital organization.

The Denver Choral Society was going so well that in the fall of 1896 Houseley obtained one of the truly great singers of the day, Lillian Nordica, for a concert.

Henry Houseley, the noted organist of this city, on behalf of the Denver Choral Society, has been fortunate enough to secure the services of the lady for one concert, to be given at the Broadway theater on the night of December 21. The first part of the programme will be made up of portions of 'The Creation,' which will place the singer before the Denver public to the greatest advantage, and the second part will be devoted to miscellaneous selections.²⁶

In December of 1897 Nordica returned to sing for Houseley.²⁷

²² Appearing on the program were Madam Carlos Sobrino, soprano; Mrs. J. A. Robinson, contralto; Henry D. Martin, tenor; and Adams Owen, bass. The Reverend Charles Winfred Douglas, destined to become a giant in the area of Episcopal hymnology, was the organist. The second part of the Choral Society's first program was in a lighter, more popular vein. Works sung included: "Intermezzo" for piano, organ, and orchestra, by Mascagni; "The Heart Bowed Down," from *The Bohemian Girl*, by Balfe; "Tell Her I Love Her So," by Houseley; a selected song, "Evening Song," by Blumenthal; and "Hail Bright Abode," from *Tannhäuser*, by Wagner. *Denver Republican*, November 24, 1894, p. 4.

²³ *Ibid.*, February 13, 1895, p. 12. Madeline Brooks, Adelaide Beardsley, and H. B. Yuille were soloists.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1895, p. 12.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, February 19, 1896, p. 22. See also the *Rocky Mountain News*, September 26, 1897, p. 24.

²⁶ *Rocky Mountain News*, November 22, 1896, p. 5. The concert was changed to January 30, 1897.

²⁷ Nordica's program included Gounod's "Grand Aria" from *Reine de Saba*; "Aria, Polonaise" from *Mignon*, by Ambrose Thomas; and "Trio" from *Faust*, also by Gounod. Other works performed by the Denver Choral Society and various soloists in the December program were Chopin's "Polonaise"; Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" from *The Messiah*; "Prologue" from *Pagliacci*, by Leoncavallo; "Amour Vienus Aider," by Saint-Saëns; "Lend Me Your Aid," from Gounod's *Queen of Sheba*; "Kind Death," by Henry Houseley, and his arrangement of "Suwanee River"; "Hosanna," by Granier; "Thou Art So Like a Flower," by Chadwick; "Swallows," by Cohen; "Loch Lomond"; and "Love Me or Not," by Secchi. *Rocky Mountain News*, December 7, 1897, p. 8.

Actually, Houseley was just getting started as a leading force in the city's culture. During the summer of 1904 in St. Louis, there was to be a Louisiana Purchase Exposition and World's Fair with choral contests, which drew Houseley's attention. Turning the Denver Choral Society over to another director, Gwilym Thomas, Houseley organized a smaller select choir. By July of 1904 these two groups plus a third, the Colorado Oratorio Society, under C. A. Rossignol, were on their way to St. Louis. The pitch of musical excitement in the "Mile High City" might be gauged by the fact that no other city in the United States could produce more than one choral group to send to the competition. The results were gratifying. The Denver Choral Society, under Thomas, won third place and \$2,500 in the large chorus class. Houseley's own "Select Choir" of sixty voices, facing some of the best small choirs in the nation, came away with first place and a \$2,500 prize. Miss Evangeline Thomas and David McK. Williams were the accompanists.²⁸ Of his small choir Houseley said:

When I saw the ambition and the key to which the members of the Denver Select choir had been worked up during our rehearsals at St. Louis I felt very confident that we would make a strong showing with the best organizations in the country. I knew long beforehand that I had the voices. My great task, however, was to whip them into shape for a chorus, to make all sing as one person with an enormous, still pathetic feeling voice. In some communities these choruses have been in existence for years. Musical societies organize them and when one singer leaves, another is immediately supplied. Hence, they have been in the work years, where we in Denver, have been in it only months.²⁹

As the Denver Choral Society developed other choral organizations and musical clubs appeared in Denver. Denver ladies organized the Tuesday Musical Club and chorus. The men's counterpart was the Apollo Club, which under Herbert Griggs had been a leading musical factor in the city but which between 1901 and 1905 had fallen into entertainment of a perfunctory nature. The men must have looked with a certain amount of envy at the crowds which gathered at Trinity Methodist Church for concerts by the Tuesday Musical Club. As F. W. White, music critic for the *Denver Post* noted, members of the Tuesday Musical Club belonged as a rule "to the leisure class. . . . They have had," he said, "little to do, except to look pretty, appear in flawless white, to sing as well as they can, and to sell tickets with enthusiasm."³⁰ The Apollo Club was a differ-

ent matter. Made up of businessmen, bank clerks, salesmen, and a few professional men, time was scarce, however strong the inclination, to sell their musical wares. So for years they sang on, perhaps not too well, having an annual deficit, going into their pockets to make it up, and then singing some more.

All of this changed when Henry Houseley was elected director in November 1904. Houseley's imagination and initiative were apparent immediately. In order to stimulate interest, the Apollo Club brought in for the 1904-05 season the well-known baritone David Bispham and violinist Eugene Ysaÿe.³¹ Though expensive, the visiting artists provided the impulse needed to get the audiences back and the membership enthusiastic. They were dispensed with during the 1905-06 season, the Apollo Club relying on their own musicians and the best of Denver talent.

But Houseley was never one to let a group settle into a comfortable rut. By the 1907-08 season the Apollos again were importing musical celebrities such as the "High C" tenor Edward Johnson,³² baritones Charles W. Clark and David Bispham, and Janet Spencer, contralto.³³ The Johnson concert gave evidence of the difficulty of their musical literature and of the musical abilities of the club developed by Houseley. Included in the program were an organ prelude, toccata, and fugue, by Bach; recitative and aria from Puccini's *La Boheme*; a Brahms lullaby; "Romance," by Debussy; "In Gloomy Hours," by Tchaikowski; "Twilight," by Nevin; "Pilgrims' Chorus" from *Tannhäuser*; "Les Regrets," by Barthelemy; and "On the Sea," by Dudley Buck.³⁴

Houseley also initiated orchestral activity in Denver. The orchestra there, as in many American communities, was slow to develop. The city's theater orchestras had been perennially troubled even after the Tabor Opera House and the Broadway Theater attracted many talented musicians from the East and Europe. Nevertheless, these two places of entertainment and Elitch's Gardens sustained what classical orchestral literature there was in Denver for many years.

Orchestra conductors who frequented the theaters and Elitch's were numerous. Abe Kaufman, Emil Wolff, Sam Koenigsberg, Ferdinand Stark, and Raffaello Cavallo all conducted orchestras at the various entertainment spots during the 1880s and 1890s. No one, however, attempted the establishment of a community symphony orchestra. Stark and Cavallo both

²⁸ *Denver Post*, July 17, 1904, p. 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, July 18, 1904, p. 5.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, December 10, 1905, Sect. II, p. 7.

³¹ *Ibid.*, December 25, 1904, Sect. II, p. 7.

³² *Denver Republican*, April 22, 1908, p. 6.

³³ *Ibid.*, September 8, 1907, p. 15.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, April 19, 1908, p. 15.



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were capable of leading this type of venture, and Cavallo later proved his ability to Denver; but in the late nineteenth century no one took the initial step. Even visits by Leopold Damrosch and Theodore Thomas with their orchestras did not spur the local conductors to action.³⁵ Thus, the field was left to a person who was not known as an orchestral conductor but who was aware of the Denver pulse and could anticipate a musical need.

Henry Houseley was ready to move into a new field. All Houseley asked was a small, guaranteed fund from the selling of season tickets. A ticket for six concerts in 1900 sold for three or five dollars.³⁶ With Charles Horst as concertmaster and Robert Slack as business manager, the first rehearsal was held on Thursday, October 31, 1900,³⁷ and the first concert on November 30. Playing a program ranging from Schubert's *Symphony in B Minor* to the Nicolai overture to the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, the symphony received some commendation and some criticism. The *Denver Times* remarked that the woodwinds had an uphill job and the brass was uncertain.³⁸

Houseley was complimented highly for his efforts during this first year, but jealousy, which had spelled disaster for so many earlier musical organizations in Denver, appeared in the form of Signor Raffaello Cavallo. This suave and debonair Italian had ignored several chances to organize a community symphony orchestra. His work at the Casino in Colorado Springs, the Tabor, and Elitch's left little time for him to accept the responsibility of such an uncertain enterprise; but Houseley had accepted the challenge and produced a successful season. When Cavallo was faced with a second season of having the "number two" orchestra in town, he decided to act. "I feel sure . . . that I could organize a better symphony orchestra. . . . Mr. Houseley has not his equal in Colorado as a musician and composer, but in conducting an orchestra he is a failure."³⁹ Cavallo proceeded to organize his own. Denver could not or would not support two community orchestras. By splitting the support, Cavallo could expect Houseley's operation to fail. However, Cavallo's first effort met with disaster. With the support of society and a larger orchestra, Houseley produced a second symphonic season of six concerts.

Cavallo in the 1902-03 season bided his time, while Houseley obtained several more musicians, bringing the total to forty.⁴⁰ According to Carl Williams, lifelong resident of Denver and brother of David McK. Williams, Houseley's orchestra rehearsed in the crypt of St. John's Cathedral for their superb Friday afternoon concerts at the Broadway Theater.⁴¹ During this season Cavallo succeeded in enlisting the support of the *Denver Republican*. After two years of excellent reviews of Houseley's orchestra, the *Republican* suddenly found that the organization had "too much ambition and too little rehearsal"⁴² and that there was "slovenly playing in the winds."⁴³

The conflict was one of the first in which segments of the musical public began to take sides. Factionalism had plagued Denver's orchestral movement for many years with one segment of society against another. On this occasion it was "non-society" against society. The elite had supported Houseley's concerts, and subscription sales had been good. But door sales, traditionally the method of purchase for the average Denver music enthusiast, had been poor always. The newspaper *Polly Pry* did not help the situation by introducing a nationality issue:

³⁵ *Ibid.*, June 20, 1883, p. 4.

³⁶ *Denver Times*, October 8, 1900, p. 10.

³⁷ *Denver Republican*, November 4, 1900, p. 25.

³⁸ *Denver Times*, December 1, 1900, p. 10. The original program is in the Denver Public Library, Western History Department, Musician's Society Collection.

³⁹ *Denver Times*, September 27, 1901, p. 5.

⁴⁰ *Denver Republican*, October 12, 1902, p. 24.

⁴¹ Carl Williams, interview, Denver, February 25, 1969.

⁴² *Denver Republican*, January 17, 1903, p. 4.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

Funny little Mr. Houseley, with his early English ideas, has received just exactly what they call his "needings" down in old Missouri. He and his august master, the Dear Dean, have entirely too much of the Divine right idea to suit plain *everyday Americans*.⁴⁴

The battle lines thus were drawn. It was the English residents and society against "everyday Americans." At this point the "everyday Americans" won a great victory. A "Symphony Orchestra Association" was formed with a board of directors loaded with Cavallo supporters, such as Fritz Thies, Frederick Wright, Frederick Schweikher, Mrs. Cordelia Smissaert, and several other members of the Denver German community.⁴⁵ Election of Cavallo as conductor was a foregone conclusion.

As a result of musical antagonisms such as those between Cavallo and Houseley, histories of the Denver Symphony disregard symphonic activity in Denver prior to the organization of the Civic Symphony under Horace Tureman in 1922. Houseley's biographical sketch in *The Lookout* makes no mention of one of his greatest contributions to musical Denver—the organization of its first community symphony orchestra; and *The Lookout* makes no mention of Cavallo's work of about ten years, leaving the completely erroneous impression that Denver had no symphony orchestra prior to 1922.⁴⁶ Houseley did organize the first community symphony of a permanent nature in Denver in 1900. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe that anyone else would have done so for quite some time.

As a composer, Houseley wrote on one hand popular ballads and on the other the pieces for which he is best known—numerous anthems, choruses, and cantatas. Houseley's settings of "Crossing the Bar," "Lead Kindly Light," "Nearer My God to Thee," and a cantata "Omar Khayyam" were very popular in the early twentieth century.⁴⁷

Between the popular ballads and the choral works and hymns lies an area of Houseley's compositions about which little is known. These are Houseley's operas. *Music in Denver and Colorado*, published by the Denver Public Library in 1927, lists six operas by Houseley: *Native Silver*, *The Juggler*, *Love*

⁴⁴ *Polly Pry* 1 (September 12, 1903):3. Italics are the author's.

⁴⁵ *Denver Republican*, September 16, 1903, p. 8.

⁴⁶ Malcolm G. Wyer, ed., *Music in Denver and Colorado*, vol. 1, *The Lookout* (Denver: Carson Press, 1927), pp. 133-34.

⁴⁷ "The scent of roses in the air
The rustle of a silken fold,
A light step crossing o'er the sward
A fair face crown'd with curls of gold."

The lyrics and the accompanying music represent one end of a continuum in Henry Houseley's compositional career. They are from a popular love ballad, "Mine Always," written by Houseley and published by the Wilford Music Company in 1892.

and *Whist*, *Jerraby's Butler*, *Pygmalion*, and *Narcissus and Echo*.⁴⁸

Houseley's *Native Silver* must be considered Denver's first original opera. Although an earlier Colorado opera, *Brittle Silver*, was premiered in Denver, W. E. Hunt, the composer, was actually a resident of Colorado Springs. As with Hunt's work, the libretto was by Stanley Wood, who seemed unable to get away from farcical treatments of the local silver situation.⁴⁹

The opera opens on the day before a state election. Colonel Excelsior Blow is a candidate for Congress and holds a final grand rally of his friends in Denver's City Park, with a "Native Silver" miners' band under the direction of Mendelssohn Mike, who is also the superintendent of the Native Silver Mine. Mike is in love with Colonel Blow's daughter, Pearl, but is opposed by the colonel, who thinks him a poor man. The colonel has betrothed his daughter to the Earl of Kerosene, who claims to be a titled Englishman. Mike is really a rich Bostonian, who came to Colorado to inspect the management of the Native Silver Mine which he owns. Capitola Hill, a spinster of Denver, falls in love with the earl. The first act deals with the complications of politics, love, and ambition. The earl gets into trouble and in the finale is taken to jail for buying mining stocks without having money to pay for them.

The second act takes place in the reception hall of Colonel Blow's mansion on Capitol Hill. It is the evening of election day and reports are coming in. They are unfavorable to Blow, and his friends desert him. Pearl and Capitola talk over their love affairs. Mike tells the colonel of his love for Pearl, and the colonel promises him her hand if he will secure the colonel's election to Congress. Mike devises a plan and, securing votes from the Native Silver Mine, wins the election. The Earl of Kerosene is exposed as an imposter, but Capitola remains true to him. Colonel Blow gives Pearl to Mike and all ends happily.⁵⁰

The *Rocky Mountain News* reported the presentation at the Broadway on April 22 and 23, 1892, as being received with great enthusiasm and commented that, though the satire got in some "pretty hard hits" at local people, the production was good-natured; the fun pure, "clean, rollicking and hearty."⁵¹ The opera was repeated on May 9, 1892.

⁴⁸ Wyer, *Music in Denver*, p. 146.

⁴⁹ The following is a list of the cast of characters and principals: Mendelssohn Mike, played by Winfield Blake; Colonel Blow, by Phil Ray; the Earl of Kerosene, by Harry D. Martin; Barney, by B. Shackleford; General Bluf, by W. W. Williamson; Pearl, by Evelyn Phelps; and Capitola Hill, played by Lillian Landon.

⁵⁰ *Denver Republican*, April 22, 1892, p. 4.

⁵¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, April 17, 1892, p. 15.

Houseley was encouraged by the success of *Native Silver* and shortly after began another comic opera entitled *The Juggler*. The libretto was by Randolph Hartley, also a resident of Denver.⁵² *The Juggler* was a departure from the two previous Colorado operas which have been mentioned. Set in West Africa, the opera did not make use of the coarse puns and local allusions that were prominent in *Brittle Silver* and *Native Silver*. Though classed as a comic opera, the ludicrous situation-type comedy was kept to a minimum; and Houseley's music, as reported in the *Denver Republican*, was a "little dignified" and possessed some tinge of his sacred music style. Hartley's libretto is similar and equal to many used by Sullivan and Offenbach during this period and is vastly superior to the libretto of Houseley's first opera, *Native Silver*. Houseley's writing at this point in his development, however, is an interesting paradox, indeed. While his solo lines and unison choral parts are really effective vocal writing for the most part, his four-part choral harmony is in a completely different style and is reminiscent, as the *Republican* indicated, of nineteenth-century English or American church compositions.

This solo line sung by Mrs. Merrivale in *The Juggler* (Act I, No. 4) is similar and quite equal to many lines written by Arthur Sullivan.

Mrs. Merrivale

Tho' far a-way from Oakland and Aes-thetic cul-ti-va-tion we must observe in
any land the cus-toms of our na-tion We've left our par-ty gowns at home, but
cannot leave behind us The old i-deas of cul-ture and the rules that used to
bind us. I beg you will permit me then to give my ul-ti-ma-tum
That Phyllis must be married as be-fits her social station

His heart is torn with a cru-el thorn, No Joy in life has
he-- To the lad, in blue and his sweet heart true, We give our sym pa -
thy, We give our sym - pa - thy

The choral music as Mrs. Merrivale exits shows a drastic and startling change of style.

The opera was very well received when it opened on May 23, 1895, for two nights. With Miss Adelaide Beardsley as "Phyllis" and Edwin W. Hoff as "Captain Merrivale" with other roles sung by Mrs. J. W. Deane, Miss Lottie Cruikshank,⁵³ Robert Slack, and Charles B. Witter as the "Juggler,"⁵⁴ the production had a cast which brought "expressions of unqualified success from the audience."⁵⁵ A benefit performance for them was requested by nine of Denver's leading citizens, including D. H. Moffat, Thomas Hayden, William Stapleton, and W. H. Bush,⁵⁶ and was given on May 31, 1895.

The Juggler did not go, as most local operatic efforts do, into complete obscurity. After its premiere it was revived in October 1898.⁵⁷ In December of the same year the *Denver Times* announced that the impresario Edgar Temple would take an organization to Chicago for a six weeks' engagement of *The Juggler* and other operatic fare.⁵⁸

⁵² *Denver Republican*, April 21, 1895, p. 17.

⁵³ Miss Cruikshank created the role of "Katisha" in the first American production of *The Mikado*. See the *Denver Republican*, May 12, 1895, p. 12.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, May 12, 1895, p. 12.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1895, p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, May 26, 1895, p. 12.

⁵⁷ *Denver Times*, October 27, 1898, p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, December 10, 1898, p. 6.

In February of 1900 a little one-act opera by Houseley was premiered in Denver. Based on the familiar story of Pygmalion and Galatea, and with George Crampton and Mrs. Otis Spencer (daughter of former Governor Gilpin) in the title roles, *Pygmalion* seems to point to a change in the operatic style of its composer. Said the *Republican*:

'Pygmalion' is so entirely different from any of Mr. Houseley's former productions that no comparison with them should be attempted. . . . Mr. Houseley has thrown the traditions of his style to the winds. There are no more of the churchly "amen" endings and in his modulations he has departed from the forms which he previously seemed to have acquired through long years of church work.⁵⁹

It is unfortunate that no part of *Pygmalion* has rewarded this writer's research efforts. An effort to study Houseley's maturing compositional style in the operatic field is not completely lost, however. A manuscript of the complete piano-vocal score of another one-act opera, *Narcissus*, was discovered in the hands of Carl Williams. Based on a story similar to *Pygmalion*, with the libretto by Houseley's wife, there are strong indications that this opera was written at about the same time as *Pygmalion*.⁶⁰

The first unique and interesting aspect of this opera that one notices is the rare example of German melodrama transplanted into late nineteenth-century American opera. It cannot be mistaken for what was referred to generally as American melodrama, which eventually found its way to the vaudeville stage, but is in the best tradition of the supernatural atmosphere found in such operas as *Der Freischütz*.

The melodrama as such, despite its rarity, does not hold one's attention for long, however, for the radical change that has taken place in Houseley's writing is of greater interest. If *Narcissus* was written about 1900, it is certainly the result of an intensive investigation by Houseley of what had been going on recently elsewhere in the field of composition. It is vastly different from the Gilbert-and-Sullivan effects of *The Juggler* and evidences an acquaintance with many Wagnerian techniques as well as those of Liszt and possibly even Debussy.

The most puzzling question, which probably will remain a Colorado musical mystery, is just how much of Claude Debussy's music Houseley would have heard or seen in 1900. Certainly he either had become familiar with at least some of the French composer's techniques or was anticipating some highly



Above, the feeling of false cadence in *Narcissus* is produced by a technique very similar to much of Wagner's writing; and, below, the same opera shows either familiarity with or anticipation of some of Debussy's techniques.



suggestive points. Pedal harmonies are of especial interest from this viewpoint.

Such brief examination does not necessarily prove influence from the composers named, nor does it do justice to the musical development of a man whose productive life from a compositional standpoint spanned better than four decades. But the look at *Narcissus* and *The Juggler* is suggestive of a strong stylistic change in the late 1890s and the possibility of a unique and eclectic view of new compositional trends. While Houseley's later sacred and secular music also shows this development, it indicates at the same time his ability to adapt his style to serve the necessities of a particular type of music.

Houseley's contributions to musical Denver seem endless. He was an orchestral conductor, organist, church musician, choral director, and composer. Between 1890 and 1892 he was director of music at the University of Denver and taught at the

⁵⁹ *Denver Republican*, February 27, 1900, p. 8.

⁶⁰ Carl Williams, interview.

D.U. conservatory for many years.⁶¹ Houseley's name seldom finds its way into discussions of pioneer American music; yet, history should ignore no longer the little Englishman who left Denver such a memorable legacy of fine musical culture.

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⁶¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, September 7, 1890, p. 21.



Leadville and the Western Federation of Miners

BY MERRILL HOUGH

Leadville, blooming and brooding under the shadow of Mount Massive at the headwaters of the Arkansas River, was considerably more than Colorado's most famous mining camp. Between its rise in 1878 and Cripple Creek's rush to prominence in the mid-nineties, Leadville was Colorado's second largest city. During that span it produced more mineral wealth than any other camp.

Its mines also produced a lively collection of local unions affiliated with a national labor union. The 1890s saw the miners drop one such affiliation, wage a violent strike to cement another, lose the battle, and settle for ties with two unions at once. In 1879 during the transformation of the boom town to a mountain industrial center, an adventurous group of recent immigrants to Leadville created a secret miners' union which quickly sought membership in the then still secret Knights of Labor. During the strike which racked the camp in 1880 this union took in nearly four-fifths of the mine laborers in camp. The strikers' defeat broke the formal existence of the union, but by 1884 miners began to renew their ties with the Knights. Operating openly, the Knights quickly became a major force in the community. During the middle and late 1880s the unions—there were several locals—worked out minor conflicts with the mine owners and engineered the election to the Colorado legislature of candidates who were backed by the Knights.

Despite the prominence of the Knights in Colorado politics,

Illustration above: *Camp McIntire at Leadville in 1896.*

the strength of the union dissolved in the face of the decline of mining prosperity during the late eighties and the early nineties. By 1893 the Knights, with a minority membership locally, participated in a camp-wide wage-cut agreement promoted by mine owners as a means of reopening the mines which had closed in the wake of the panic. This plan, which had offered some workers wages in 1893, struck most as a self-limiting compromise by 1896. The more militant Western Federation of Miners helped the miners in Leadville take an increasingly dim view of the Knights.¹

On the evening of June 19, 1896, twelve hundred members of the Western Federation of Miners' Leadville local voted to strike against those mines in the camp which had not, as had some, restored the three-dollar wage scale which existed prior to the agreement of 1893. The strike began that night, and 968 men left the mines. Within three days the owners of the larger mines united in a lockout against the unionists. For the duration of the strike about 2,250 men were out of work.² Nine months later the last of those strikers who did not leave the camp returned to work.

During this long conflict, the miners' reliance on unions received the severest test to which it had been put since unions first were introduced to Leadville's mines. Much of the intensity of the struggle between mine owners and labor arose from the inequality of the miners' wages and from their working and living conditions. But more important to the precipitation and the duration of the strike was the fervor with which the Western Federation of Miners sought to make Leadville the second of its notable successes on its march to power in Colorado's mining camps.

In 1894 the Federation gained prestige from the successful strike waged by its local in Cripple Creek. Members of the local had fought against the reduction of wages, most of which were about three dollars a day, and the increasing of hours above the generally established eight. Their success was in large measure the result of Colorado Governor Davis Waite's decision to send the state militia to protect the miners from local authorities and mine owners. The regional organization of the Federation was not able to contribute much help because of

the impotency of its executive board. Nevertheless, in the two years which followed, the Federation managed to establish or gain locals in most Colorado mining camps on the strength of the outcome at Cripple Creek.³

For an organization as militant as was the Federation after the Cripple Creek strike, success in Leadville seemed paramount to establishing its power.⁴ In 1895 Leadville was still Colorado's leading total ore producer.⁵ Its Knights of Labor still held the allegiance of some miners, although its strength was ebbing. Some of Leadville's mine owners maintained wages at \$2.50 and nine- or ten-hour days. These wages and hours were worse than those which Cripple Creek's strike had publicized as attainable through vigorous union action.⁶ The Western Federation could not afford to sidestep immediate organization in Leadville.

Cloud City Miners' Union, the Leadville local of the Federation, organized nearly all the men working in the camp's mines in a little more than a year. The union was established in May 1895; by May 1896 it had eight hundred members. In the following month and a half, the unionists induced most of the rest of the mine workers to join them. By mid-June the union numbered twenty-six hundred men on its rolls, of whom it considered twenty-two hundred in good standing.⁷ Many observers thought that the union had over 95 percent of the mine workers enrolled.⁸ Except for the small number of pump-

³ Vernon Jensen, *Heritage of Conflict: Labor Relations in the Nonferrous Metals Industry up to 1930* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1950), p. 57. Colorado, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Seventh Biennial Report, 1899-1900* (Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Co., State Printers, 1900), p. 21. Aspen, Creede, Ouray, and Rico sent delegates to the first annual convention of the Federation in Butte, Montana, on May 15, 1893. *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, p. 36.

⁴ Paul Brissenden, *The I.W.W.: A Study in American Syndicalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1919), p. 41; Jensen, *Heritage of Conflict*, pp. 57-58.

⁵ Charles W. Henderson, *Mining in Colorado: A History of Discovery, Development and Production*, Department of the Interior, United States Geological Survey, Professional Paper no. 138 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1926), pp. 93-94. Aspen (Pitkin County) had rivaled Leadville (Lake County) in production since the late 1880s and surpassed it once, in 1892. Not until 1896 did Cripple Creek's gold production exceed the silver production of these camps.

⁶ In 1892 the hours of work in each Colorado mining camp varied from eight to ten. "Some of the miners in Leadville . . . [had] secured an eight-hour day." There was no change in hours as part of the agreement of 1893; but by 1896 Cripple Creek was the only camp with an eight-hour day, and the miners in Leadville reported a ten-hour day as the average there. Colorado, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Third Biennial Report, 1891-1892* (Colorado Springs: Gazette Printing Co., State Printers, 1892), p. 8; Colorado, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1895-1896* (Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Co., State Printers, 1896), p. 21.

⁷ Colorado, General Assembly, *Report of the Joint Special Legislative Committee of the Eleventh General Assembly on the Leadville Strike* (Denver: n.p. [State Printer], 1897), pp. 8-9. Hereafter referred to as *Report on the Leadville Strike*.

⁸ A state investigator estimated that 97 percent of the miners in the camp belonged to the union and that 80 percent of the miners were thrown out of work by the strike. If all the 2,600 enrolled in the union were miners working in Leadville's mines, there was a total of 2,680 miners working in Lead-

¹ For a more detailed discussion of the labor situation in Leadville, see C. Merrill Hough, "Leadville Colorado, 1878-1898: A Study in Unionism" (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Colorado, 1958), chapters 1-4.

² U.S., Congress, Senate, *A Report on Labor Disturbances in the State of Colorado from 1880 to 1904, Inclusive, with Correspondence Relating Thereto*, S. Doc. 122, 58th Cong., 3d sess., 1905, p. 88. Hereafter referred to as *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*.

men, engineers, and mine mechanics who had their own union,⁹ the Federation had accomplished its initial aim.

Because it had enrolled so large a number of new members in so short a time, the Federation was naturally open to the suspicion that it had used coercion. In fact, it had sanctioned committees of members to visit non-unionists. Occasionally the zealous disciples had suggested that unless the miner joined the Federation, he would be unable to find work in Leadville or in any other camp in the Rockies.¹⁰ They also gave unwilling converts warnings to leave town.¹¹ However, the more judicious solicitors concentrated on the merits of the new union and unpleasant aspects of the existing wage structure in Leadville.

The wage scale established in 1893 was no longer in effect in most of the camp's mines. The agreement had stipulated that the wage scale would be restored to \$3.00 at such time as the monthly average for the price of silver per ounce rose to \$.835. The price then had been \$.735 per ounce, and it did not rise above that figure at any time before the strike. Nevertheless, the agreement had been clearly a temporary expedient which was fully "dependent upon the reductions expected from the railroad companies and upon mining supplies and upon the cost of the necessaries of life."¹² Apparently, the above reductions were realized, for within a few months some operators began to restore the three-dollar wage.¹³

By the spring of 1896, most of the miners and trammers and even some topmen once again received three dollars; the owners claimed that upwards of 75 percent of the men were so paid while the union estimated that only 65 percent had received the pay increase.¹⁴ Most of the mines with higher gold than silver output—especially those some distance out of the city, such as the Little Johnny in Idaho Park—now paid wages on the three-dollar scale. However, the mine owners introduced a distinction, previously never made in Leadville, between the skilled work of the miners and the unskilled work of the trammers and paid the latter only \$2.50. The less prosperous silver mines, including most of those within Leadville itself, clung to

ville. However, another source suggests that 2,250 miners were affected by the strike, and thus there may have been 2,810 Leadville miners (on the basis of the 80 percent figure above). A local newspaper said that there were about three thousand men working in the camp's mines at the time of the strike. *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 13; *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, p. 88; *Leadville Herald-Democrat*, June 20, 1896, p. 1.

⁹ *Leadville Herald-Democrat*, June 20, 1896, p. 1.

¹⁰ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 9.

¹¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, pp. 68-69.

¹² *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 6.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 67.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8; Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, pp. 62, 69.

the lower wage scale.¹⁵ As a result, almost a third of Leadville's mine workers thought themselves underpaid.

The miners considered wages of \$2.50 a day poor, despite the operators' contention that, by comparison to the cost of living, the wages in 1896 were as good as the higher amount paid during the years from 1880 to 1893. The union's fullest explanation of the miners' plight was as follows:

This camp is 65 per cent married men with families, and they are going from bad to worse. It is simply a case of existence. By working thirty days in a month they can only earn \$75. It will cost them \$65 a month to exist; that is, \$30 for groceries, \$10 for rent, \$10 on an average for clothing, \$6 for fuel, \$4 for water, \$3 for milk and \$2 for insurance—\$65. Should they have any sickness in their family, it simply makes dishonest men out of honest ones, for they are unable to pay it. . . . Men on an average do not work over twenty-four shifts to twenty-eight shifts a month, through sickness or something.¹⁶

W. H. Jackson's view of Leadville from the west.



While the union's estimate applied only to those miners with families, their figures seem in accord with the prices for food and lodging in Leadville at that time. The best the Bureau of Labor Statistics could say for the Colorado workingman's purchasing power in 1896 was that the decline in wages after 1892 had been "partially compensated for by a material reduc-

¹⁵ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, pp. 5, 7.

¹⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, p. 72.

tion in the cost of living."¹⁷ Furthermore, the proportion of married miners with families far surpassed that in the mid-eighties. For these reasons some of the miners were seriously concerned about their low wages.

A suspicion held by the Federation's local that the mine owners were about to reduce wages from \$3.00 to \$2.50 could have been both a reason for the heightened membership drive and a significant reason for the drive's success. On the strength of a conversation with one operator, the union leaders reported this possibility of a wage cut to the annual convention of the Federation, held that year in Denver in May.¹⁸ They asked the Federation's president, Ed Boyce, to help them deal with the situation, and they also may have discussed and received permission for a strike.¹⁹

On May 25 Ed Boyce and four members of the local union visited three of the leading mine owners paying \$2.50, but they received little satisfaction. One operator's answer was: "You [came to] the wrong fellow, as we are losing money in Leadville as it is."²⁰ After this initial sally, the union did not take any recorded action until June 10, when it delegated a committee of four to visit all of the companies paying the lower wage to their workers. For some reason, the committee did not carry out this commission until, after another meeting of the union on the seventeenth, they were given two days to do so. On June 19 the committee presented its requests to some but not all of the offending owners. A few seemed willing to accede, but the larger concerns did not. The committee reported its findings to the union that night.²¹

In a meeting which may have been rather confused and for

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55. Comparing figures for Denver and the rest of the state in 1888 and 1892 with those for Denver, Leadville, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, and Cripple Creek in 1896, there does seem to have been a reduction of prices in most areas for rent, coal, flour, and potatoes. However, the earlier figures cover fewer items and in some cases different quantities of those items than do the later figures. Furthermore, comparing the cost of certain items in 1892 throughout the state with the cost in 1896 in Leadville not only is difficult but also does not indicate as clearly the reduction in prices noted above. In 1892 rent for a four-room cottage varied from five to sixteen dollars throughout the state. In 1896 the rent on a six-room house in Leadville was twelve to fifteen dollars per month. But lard was up two cents per pound, and pork, sugar, eggs, and butter cost about the same on this basis of comparison. Flour was seventeen cents cheaper per hundred pounds. Potatoes cost considerably less. If Leadville's prices in 1892 were a bit higher than the state average, as they might well have been on produce despite service by railroad, the reduction in prices could have been commensurate with the decline in the miners' wages, as the operators claimed.

¹⁸ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 10. See also the remarks of William D. Haywood, subsequently the secretary-treasurer of the Western Federation of Miners, commenting on the development of the organization to a federal investigating committee in 1915. U.S., Congress, Senate, *Industrial Relations, Final Report and Testimony submitted to Congress by the Commission on Industrial Relations*, S. Doc. 415, 64th Cong., 1st sess., 1916, vol. 11, pp. 10, 570.

¹⁹ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 13.

²⁰ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, p. 88.

²¹ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, pp. 10-11; Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, pp. 69-70.

which the union could produce no official minutes, twelve hundred of the union's members voted to strike and to call out all mine workers receiving less than three dollars a day. Article V, section 1, of the Federation's constitution required a three-fourths' majority vote of the members in good standing, after having received the official sanction of the Federation's executive committee, in order to legalize a strike.²² It appears that the Federation received enough foreknowledge at the annual convention, for Federation support of the strike came quickly, and none of the local's members balked at the hastiness of the decision to strike.²³

That night 968 men left 13 of the mines. All but one of these mines were paying less than three dollars; the exception was a mine owned by an operator who paid the lower wage in another of his mines.²⁴ Here, as at Cripple Creek, the union was apparently attempting to support the strikers financially by having many of the union men stay on the job and to gain sympathy for the strike by emphasizing the fact that the wages they sought were in effect elsewhere.²⁵

Within three days the operators closed all of the larger mines in the district, thus locking out more than thirteen hundred additional men. The lockout was but one part of the owners' adamant refusal to recognize, deal with, or in any way assist the Federation. While the owners were probably sincere in their repeated expressions of faith in the ability and the good nature of most of the district's miners, they were determined not to recognize any labor union.²⁶ Since the owners had been willing to recognize the good offices of the Knights of Labor in 1893, their position in 1896 must have stemmed in part from their better financial position and in part from their reaction to the militancy and growing power of the Federation. Their attitude also was different from that of the mine owners in 1880. At that time the owners largely were absentee and probably thought of the strike as a break in production resulting from the uncertainty of conditions in Leadville. In 1896 there seems to have been very little, if any, eastern control as such.²⁷ The

²² *Western Federation of Miners, Constitution and By-laws, Adopted at Butte City, Montana, May 19, 1893, Amended and Revised* (Denver: n.p., 1902), p. 11.

²³ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 12. The miners' union later published a defense of its meeting in which it stressed the fact that the meeting was large and all were fully aware of the issues. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, pp. 87-89.

²⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, p. 61; *Leadville Herald-Democrat*, June 20, 1896, p. 1.

²⁵ Benjamin M. Rastall, *The Labor History of the Cripple Creek District: A Study in Industrial Evolution* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1908), p. 52.

²⁶ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, pp. 18-20.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35. For a general discussion of this trend in ownership of Colorado mines as early as 1880, see U.S., Interior, Census Office, *Report on Mineral In-*

mine owners were still men of business and finance, but they were also Leadville residents. To them it seemed, perhaps for convenience's sake, that the Federation was intruding and did not represent the true interests of Leadville's miners.

The Federation did manage to represent the interests of almost all of the camp's mining workers for most of the strike. Very few of the twenty-two hundred men put out of work by the strike returned to work during the summer. So strong was the union's hold on its members and its ability to intimidate strikebreakers that none of the major mines managed to resume production during June and July.²⁸ In fact, some of the mine owners could not foresee the time when they could get enough men to resume production, and, strapped by the expense of two months of pumping, they allowed their properties to flood. The flooding of a few mines allowed others to fill as well; most of the downtown mines were soon considerably damaged.²⁹ Its power to maintain the strike and the owners' difficulties seem to have heightened the union's obstinance; throughout the summer union members refused to allow Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics William Klett to arbitrate on the question of wages. The union was supremely confident that it could win the strike.³⁰

But as the summer passed, the tension of the strike began to tell on both the union's leaders and the strikers. Since the beginning of the strike, the management of the union's plans and actions had been the responsibility of a committee of twenty. During the first two months of the strike, the committee ordered one hundred Marlin rifles, supposedly to help keep the peace, set up two union halls to dispense financial and material aid to the strikers, and delegated subcommittees to keep lawless individuals from entering the country.³¹ Behind these avowed purposes probably lay the knowledge that the importation of arms would frighten the mine owners and that the members of protection committees would find it hard to avoid using force on a likely strikebreaker. The tension and the occurrence of threats and beatings increased, and as the summer passed the prospects for an early conclusion of the strike grew dim.

industries in the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), p. 111.

²⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, p. 80. The owners did not seek new men until it became clear in August that the union would not soon give in.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71, 78.

³¹ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, pp. 13-14.

Both the union and the mine owners had taken stands early in the strike which precluded easy settlement. It was common knowledge that the union felt confident that it could win the strike and that it had nothing to submit to an arbitrator. The public and the union may have guessed the existence of the mine operators' pact not to deal with the union.³² However, despite their respective positions, both the owners and the union made new offers to end the strike.

On August 13 the operators said that they would reopen the mines at the existing wage scale but that they would put all mine workers on a three-dollar scale when the price of silver reached seventy-five cents per ounce. The union answered by issuing a counter proposal with no mention of the operators' offer. It recognized that the stagnated business conditions in Leadville, and possibly the campaign of Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, would be aided by the immediate conclusion of the strike. Therefore, union members agreed to return to work if all of the miners and trammers received a three-dollar wage; they would accept the lower rate for topmen. On August 18 the operators pointed out that the strikers had not answered their offer and that, furthermore, there would be no work in the three-dollar mines until the men returned to the lower-paying ones. The operators set August 22 as a deadline for the miners to return to work. The strikers did not bother to answer.³³

During the exchange of proposals neither side had suggested a way in which the other could compromise on wages without settling the question of union recognition. Neither side would work under a wage structure which was more than a token acceptance of the conditions which the other side sought. After the failure of these very tentative attempts to bargain, each side recognized the other's determination and began to plan for a longer, grimmer struggle.

The owners made plans to import workers to reopen those mines not already flooded. While a few men from Leadville and other Colorado camps now were willing to work if protected, the owners' plans included bringing men from the lead mines near Joplin, Missouri.³⁴ Word of this plan, the fence about the Coronado and the Emmet mines, the rumor of three hundred rifles at the Little Johnny, and accounts of bands of

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19, 22-23, 37-38.

³³ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, pp. 78-80.

³⁴ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 21; Joseph P. Gazzam, "Leadville Strike of 1896," *Missouri Historical Society Bulletin* 7 (October 1950):39.

marching men, presumably strikers, all added to the tension felt by everyone.³⁵

While all elements of Leadville's society were disturbed by the conditions developing during August and September, the mine owners feared the possibility of greater violence more than did certain civil authorities. During these months the operators had become more insistent that the governor intervene.³⁶ Even as early as July 21, Governor Albert W. McIntire had telegraphed the sheriff of Lake County, M. H. Newman, to check on reports reaching him of intimidation by groups of strikers. The sheriff, whose sympathies clearly lay with the miners, assured the governor that there was little violence and that he would quickly deal with any which arose. After issuing a proclamation the following day to the latter effect, he again reassured the governor. McIntire, perhaps remembering Pitkin's misjudgment of the earlier strike in Leadville, was not anxious to intervene and took the sheriff at his word.³⁷ Within two months, though, the governor's intervention was required.

Between 12:00 and 4:00 on the morning of September 21, some two to three hundred men attacked the Coronado and Emmet mines. The owners of these two mines had learned of the possible attack, and the properties were prepared to resist.³⁸ Eighteen men defending the Coronado were unable to keep the attackers from firing the mine's oil tank and fled unhurt while the mine's buildings burned. The twenty-five defenders at the Emmet repulsed the attackers, killing three or four of them, who were identified as Federation members.³⁹

In answer to hurried telephone calls and telegrams from both the sheriff and the district judge of Lake County, also previously sympathetic to the miners, Governor McIntire immediately dispatched the entire state National Guard. Before the arrival of the Guard in Leadville on the evening of September 21, local businessmen had formed a military body to keep the peace. On September 22 there were in Leadville 653 guardsmen,⁴⁰ who took positions defending the major mines.⁴¹

³⁵ *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, pp. 91-92.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-91.

³⁸ Gazzam, "Leadville Strike of 1896," pp. 89-90. Gazzam was the superintendent of Small Hopes Consolidated Mining Company which owned the Emmet and was one of the mine's defenders.

³⁹ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, pp. 16-18; *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, p. 93. Sources differ on the number of men known to have died. The latter source suggests that many more may have been killed but that their bodies were carried away by the attackers.

⁴⁰ *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, p. 94; John H. Nankivell, *History of the Military Organizations of the State of Colorado, 1860-1935* (Denver: Kistler Stationery Co., 1935), pp. 108, 109, 111.



*The dump of the Little Johnny Mine,
"the highest military camp in the world."*

Mayor Nicholson and the city council, now quite frightened, called for martial law, but the governor did not think it necessary to replace the city police with troops to enforce the law. The presence of troops about the major mines proved to be sufficient to prevent a recurrence of the first attack. However, it did not quell the passions aroused by the summer-long strike.⁴²

Some of the unionists held fast to their strike, but many did not. The presence of troops made it possible for the owners to carry out their plans to import strikebreakers from Missouri. With heavy protection from the National Guard, the operators managed to bring four groups into Leadville by mid-November despite the taunts of strikers.⁴³ While most of the strikers refused to return to work that fall, upwards of one thousand others left to seek work elsewhere.⁴⁴ But by the end

⁴¹ *Biennial Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Colorado for the Years 1895 and 1896* (Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Co., State Printers, 1897), pp. 54-57.

⁴² *Report on the Leadville Strike*, pp. 31-33.

⁴³ *Biennial Report of the Adjutant General for the Years 1895 and 1896*, pp. 55-56; *Historical Sketch, Denver City Troop* (Denver: App Engraving Company, 1902), pp. 8-9.

⁴⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Fifth Biennial Report*, p. 65.



Life with the National Guard.



The troops.



of January the mines were operating with about twelve hundred men, of whom only four hundred were imported strikebreakers.⁴⁵ By February almost all of the remainder of the strikers had returned to work at the wages which existed before the strike. The size of the National Guard detachment in Leadville was cut in half in January and again to less than one hundred men in February. The last of the troops were not removed until March 10.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ *Report on the Leadville Strike*, p. 36. Only three hundred of the strikebreakers were from Missouri; one hundred more were from Colorado camps.
⁴⁶ *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, pp. 96, 101.





Breaking camp.

It is difficult to determine whether the strike ever was brought to an official close. In the months after the arrival of the Colorado National Guard, various prominent men—the new governor of Colorado, Alva Adams; the Federation's president, Ed Boyce; and Eugene Debs, a national labor leader—endeavored to get the miners and the mine owners to arbitrate their differences. The chief obstacle was the operators' refusal to recognize a labor organization by bargaining or entering into arbitration with it.⁴⁷ The Colorado legislature sent an investigating committee to Leadville in January. While this committee found considerable guilt on both sides for the course of the strike, it suggested that settlement of the strike necessitated recognition of the union.⁴⁸ Apparently the mine owners never altered their position, and the strike simply dissolved as the strikers left or returned to work.

The failure of the strike and the union's efforts to gain recognition left the Cloud City Miners' Union in sore straits.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 99. There is no adequate treatment of the ubiquitous Mr. Debs's efforts in Leadville. Ray Ginger, *The Bending Cross: Eugene Debs* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1949), pp. 193-95, offers the fullest description, but this seems based largely on a passage in David Karshner, *Debs, His Authorized Life and Letters* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1919), pp. 69-70, which deals with Debs's memories of a visit to the Cripple Creek strike in 1903. Debs's own account elsewhere merely mentions the tense situation and hostility of the local press to organized labor in general and to himself in particular. See *Comrade* 3 (November 1903):34-35.

⁴⁸ Report on the Leadville Strike, pp. 38-45.

Throughout the strike it had received money from the Federation with which to support the strikers.⁴⁹ The aid was apparently sufficient to keep the active strikers from destitution.⁵⁰ But strike benefits alone could not maintain the spirits of many of the union men as the conflict dragged on interminably. Many members left the union, even though it had supported them throughout the strike.⁵¹

Although the Cloud City Union was reduced greatly in membership and was without funds of its own, it fervently desired to regain its power in the years following the strike.⁵² It grew confident of reenlisting some former members, who returned to Leadville in 1899 and 1900 when the camp enjoyed a revival of production.⁵³ In 1901 a resolution was submitted to the Federation's annual convention requesting delegates to visit Leadville and thereby to encourage greater interest in the local union, which had been fighting for its existence since 1896.⁵⁴ So while the union did recover somewhat from its condition immediately after the strike, it was able neither to resuscitate the interest of all the camp's non-unionists nor to break the growing power of a trade union of miners which was joined in a city-wide trade assembly.⁵⁵

During the strike some of Leadville's miners were impressed with the extreme zeal and purpose of the Western Federation. It was an organization which in the coming years was to lead even more violent strikes in Colorado's mining camps in an effort to break the power of the mine owners and to establish better working conditions and greater economic opportunity.⁵⁶ The absence of any conflict similar to that of 1896 and

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁰ "Leadville's Determined Strike," *Harper's Weekly* 40 (December 12, 1896): 1217. The miners generally paid their bills on time. Few were forced out of their lodgings.

⁵¹ *The Miners' Magazine* 1 (February 1900):9-10; *ibid.* (March 1900):24-25.

⁵² Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Seventh Biennial Report*, p. 21.

⁵³ *The Miners' Magazine* 1 (January 1900):33; Henderson, *Mining in Colorado*, p. 176. After the value of production varied from roughly six to nine million dollars from 1891 to 1898, it reached \$9,882,559 in 1899 and \$10,691,954 in 1900.

⁵⁴ *Official Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of the Western Federation of Miners of America, Denver, Colorado, May 27 to June 6, 1901* (Pueblo: Pueblo Courier Print, 1901), p. 58.

⁵⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Seventh Biennial Report*, pp. 21, 32.

⁵⁶ Other recent studies of the Leadville strike of 1896-97 treat it in different lights. See first Melvyn Dubofsky, "The Leadville Strike of 1896-1897: An Appraisal," *Mid-America* 48 (April 1966):99-118. Dubofsky focuses on the impact which the mine owners' firmness and the American Federation of Labor's wavering assistance had upon the outlook of the leadership of the Western Federation of Miners. In another article, "The Origins of Working Class Radicalism, Labor History, 1890-1905," *Labor History* 8 (Spring 1966):131-54, Dubofsky argues a larger theme, that radicalism arose more swiftly in the West than elsewhere in the country because of a more rapidly changing relationship between labor and capital, rather than from emotional frontier individualism. In yet another place Dubofsky makes use of the Leadville situation but less concisely. See his recent work *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), pp. 20, 37, 61, 64.

Two other related studies exist: George Suggs, Jr., "Catalyst for Industrial

1897 in Leadville in the years to follow did not indicate that the miners were satisfied with conditions there. Leadville was to become by 1904 the only mining camp in Colorado where an eight-hour working day had not been established generally.⁵⁷ In the face of fairly adequate working conditions and adamant opposition of proven strength, efforts to generate the self-sacrifice necessary to chance a strike were less likely to succeed.

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Change: The Western Federation, 1893-1903," *The Colorado Magazine* 45 (Fall 1968):322-39; and Paul T. Bechtol, Jr., "The 1880 Labor Dispute in Leadville," *The Colorado Magazine* 47 (Fall 1970):312-25. Interestingly, since Suggs's focus is on the changing role and image of the Western Federation of Miners in the eyes of Coloradoans, he attributes little of the significance to Leadville that Dubofsky did, at least in his initial article.

⁵⁷ *Labor Disturbances in Colorado*, p. 101.

Wanted: The Honorable William H. Cushman

BY CHERYL FREEMAN

Early in 1864 Georgetown, Colorado, had four cabins. By fall it was a booming city. Discovery of the Anglo-Saxon Lode in 1867, whose silver ore assayed \$23,000 a ton, brought more men to the mining town, now known as the "Silver Queen of the Rockies." Concord coaches loaded with miners, merchants, and families arrived daily from Denver, and Clark and Company of Central City established a branch of their bank. The bank's manager was William H. Cushman, a young man from Illinois, who within fifteen years' time became one of the most famous—and infamous—personages of Clear Creek County.

William H. Cushman was born in Ottawa, Illinois, in 1839 to William H. W. Cushman and his second wife, Harriet Gridley Cushman. The father had moved to Ottawa from Middleborough, Massachusetts, in 1834 and became one of the most prominent men of the city and county, being successful as a merchant, miller, banker, and manufacturer and serving for two terms in the state legislature.¹

The son William, the oldest of three boys,² left home in 1858 to try his luck in California. After four years of prospecting he returned to Ottawa without a dollar to his name. He was at home for only a few months before marrying sixteen-year-old Ada Douglas in Lake Forest on September 28, 1862.³

In 1864 Cushman caught "gold fever" again, and, leaving his young wife at home temporarily, he left for Central City, Colorado. Whether he found gold or not is not known, but he returned to Illinois in the fall for Ada, intending to go back to

¹ *Ottawa Old and New, 1823-1914: A Complete History of Ottawa, Illinois* (Ottawa, Ill.: Republican Times, 1912-14), p. 21.

² William's mother died in 1841, and his father married Anna Rodney. They had two sons, Hal and Charles. *Seventh Census of Illinois, 1850*, National Archives Microfilm Publications, vol. 12.

³ *Ada D. Cushman v. W. H. Cushman*, no. 2029, Clear Creek County Court, filed October 24, 1878. Clear Creek County District Court Series, Colorado State Archives and Records Service, Denver.

Colorado. Enlisting for service in the Civil War, on November 30, 1864, the younger William served until his brigade was discharged from service on July 10, 1865.⁴ Upon his dismissal from the army, Cushman became the cashier of the First National Bank of Ottawa. He held that position for less than a year before gathering up his wife and her sister Ella and departing for Colorado.

In Central City Cushman became an agent for the Eureka Gold Mining Company. Soon after celebrating the birth of their first child, Douglas, in November 1867,⁵ the Cushmans moved to Georgetown, twenty-five miles away, where Cushman became the manager of the newly established banking house of George T. Clark and Company.

Georgetown as it appeared in 1867.



In June 1869 Jerome B. Chaffee and Company⁶ took over the bank. Cushman remained with them for eighteen months, then bought Chaffee out, and continued the bank as a private

⁴ Military Record of William H. Cushman, General Services Administration, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

⁵ *Central City Weekly Register*, December 3, 1867, p. 3.

⁶ Chaffee later became a United States senator from Colorado.

firm until 1872. In that year he organized the First National Bank of Georgetown, which by 1876 had gained a reputation as "one of the most reliable banking houses in the West."⁷

The bank opened for business in August of 1872, with William H. Cushman as president, William Spruance as vice president, and Thomas Phelps as cashier with capital of \$500,000 stock, all owned in Georgetown. Besides honoring coin, gold dust, and gold and silver bullion, it boasted sight drafts on the principal cities of the United States, England, Ireland, Scotland, and Continental Europe.⁸ The *Rocky Mountain News* commented that the officers and directors of the bank were the "really solid men of Clear Creek County."⁹

Cushman seemed both generous and unselfish in giving his time and personal wealth to the town. Green Lake, two and a half miles from Georgetown, was William Cushman's private property, but in 1873 he made it into a mountain resort and

Green Lake



opened it to the people of Georgetown and the territory. He brought a small mountain stream into the lake at great expense to keep the water fresh and stocked the lake with mountain trout. In 1875 he added a private hatchery, earlier begun in the cellar of his home. This was probably the first fish

⁷ *Denver Tribune Supplement*, February 14, 1876, p. 1.

⁸ *Colorado Miner* (Georgetown), August 22, 1872, p. 2.

⁹ *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), June 16, 1872, p. 4.

hatchery in the state. In October 1876 the *Colorado Miner* reported that Cushman had received an addition to his stock of fish at Green Lake—three crates of salmon eggs from California, “which should hatch at least 200,000 little salmon.”¹⁰

The year 1873 also saw the erection of the Cushman Building at the corner of Alpine and Taos streets. The two upper floors of the three-story brick building were the opera house, with a beautiful stage and orchestra pit. Traveling theatrical companies coming to Denver took the trip to Georgetown just to perform at the Cushman Opera House. One such company was that of Buffalo Bill Cody, who brought his Indians and Wild West Show. The house was used until 1880, when Madame Janauschek gave a performance to such a packed house that it strained the beams supporting the auditorium, and the place was condemned as unsafe and closed.¹¹

The year marked difficulties in Cushman’s business affairs, for in 1873 the whole country was hit by a monetary crisis. The East was the hardest hit, but repercussions were felt everywhere, including Colorado. On Thursday, September 25, 1873, Cushman wrote a letter to the editor of the *Colorado Miner*.

I regret to be obliged to state to our customers that, owing to the very unexpected financial troubles in the East, and the consequent locking up of currency, I this morning deemed it prudent to close the doors of this bank.¹²

Cushman went on to assure his customers that no losses had occurred or were expected to occur. He asked for “indulgence” from the bank’s depositors for a short time.

On Saturday evening, September 27, a citizens’ meeting was held in McClellan Hall. It was one of the largest ever held in the town and, according to the *Colorado Miner*, also one of the most harmonious.¹³ Mr. Cushman was requested to make a statement concerning the condition of the bank. He was escorted into the hall and “his presence was the signal for prolonged cheering.” After an introduction Cushman again was “greeted with renewed and long-continued cheering.”¹⁴ When the noise had died down, Cushman assured the depositors that the bank was entirely solvent and had not been engaged in speculation or peculation. The bank, he stated, both would and could pay all its indebtedness as soon as greenbacks could be

¹⁰ *Colorado Miner*, October 21, 1876, p. 3.

¹¹ Muriel Sibell Wolle, *Stampede to Timberline* (Boulder: Privately printed, 1949), pp. 117-18.

¹² *Colorado Miner*, September 25, 1873, p. 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*, September 29, 1873, p. 2.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

obtained in exchange for bullion, bonds, loans, and discounts held by the bank.

When Cushman had concluded his remarks, Joseph Guannella, on behalf of the businessmen, presented the following resolution:

Resolved, That, as a business community and as citizens of Clear Creek county having intimate business relations with the First National Bank of Georgetown, we have the firmest confidence in the solvency of said bank, and in the honesty and good faith of its management, and that we deem it both our duty and our interest, and esteem it a pleasure to sustain it in our midst, by continuing our accounts and business therein without any change.¹⁵

George Teal proposed a similar resolution, and both were adopted unanimously. The *Colorado Miner* noted among the people “an implicate [*sic*] confidence in the ability of the Georgetown Bank to meet all engagements . . . and a determination to do everything possible to aid it in the present emergency.”¹⁶ Mr. Cushman stated that the bank would open its doors again Monday morning and asked, in view of the stringency of the money market, that the call on deposits be as light as possible.

On Monday the *Miner* wrote that they were extremely glad to announce:

The people have taken a sensible view of the situation and acquiesce in the reasonableness of the course pursued by the First National Bank of Georgetown. . . . The same course is being pursued by the banks of Chicago and Cincinnati. No other course could be pursued without bringing ruin head-long upon almost every kind of business.¹⁷

The following day the *Miner* commented that the panic appeared to be substantially over in the East and that the disaster was not as bad as first had been supposed. The *Miner* also attempted to theorize on the reasons for the monetary failure in the East:

Eastern banks failed because of speculation. Not one dollar has been lost by any Colorado bank. This speaks well for our bankers who are bankers and not speculators. . . . The system of inspection adopted by the government as to National banks makes it almost impossible that there should be any heavy losses by bank failures. The holders of certificates and currency of National banks feel safe.¹⁸

A month later, with the bank restored to its exalted position

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, September 30, 1873, p. 2.

and all the depositors happy and confident, the Cushmans left on an eastern trip which lasted several months.¹⁹

When they returned Cushman seemed more anxious than ever to improve and embellish the "Silver Queen of the Rockies." In June of 1873 the annual stockholders' meeting of the Empire and White River Wagon Road Company had announced that the company was out of debt and that new officers had been chosen—O. J. Stewart, president; J. A. Love, vice-president; William Clark, secretary; and W. H. Cushman, treasurer.²⁰ While the company had been climbing out of debt, John Quincy Adams Rollins had built the Rollins Road over the South Boulder Pass from Rollinsville to Tabernash. Jealous of the traffic attracted by the Rollins Road, the Georgetown men now decided to build their own road over Berthoud Pass. The new Georgetown, Empire, and Middle Park Wagon Road Company, formed in 1874 to replace the older Empire and White River Company, was primarily financed by William Cushman; and work commenced immediately.

In September J. B. Chaffee and J. F. Seymour joined with Cushman to form a stage line, the Colorado Stage Company, from Central City and Floyd Hill to Georgetown.²¹ One of the

A Colorado Stage Company coach at Idaho Springs' Beebe House.



company's coaches left Georgetown on November 18, 1874, to make the first run over Berthoud Pass. The coach's occupants included Cushman; J. L. Brownell, president of the Miners' National Bank; Colonel J. F. Seymour, superintendent of the Colorado Stage Company; and W. M. Clark, president of the Georgetown, Empire, and Middle Park Wagon Road Company. The coach reached Fraser, twenty-six miles away, in only six hours, and the wagon road company was on its way. By 1876 the stage company had set up regular stations between Georgetown and Hot Sulphur Springs and ran the route twice every week.²²

In connection with the wagon road enterprise, and partially dependent upon it, was the Western Colorado Improvement Company, designed, according to the *Rocky Mountain News*, "to aid and encourage settling up and improving the agricultural and pastoral lands of the Middle Park, build mills and manufactories, open and work mines, and promote the general interests of this underdeveloped region."²³ Naturally, Cushman was involved—this time as a trustee.

Cushman and his friends didn't stop with the wagon road. In May of 1874 he and four other Georgetown notables—William Spruance, Erskine McClellan, Charles Fish, and A. R. Forbes—organized a water company and put in mains large enough to supply the entire city with water. Also, in July William Clark, J. R. Hambel, and Cushman started a prospecting association with a capital of \$10,000 whose purpose was to prospect systematically for new mines and to develop them. According to the *Rocky Mountain News*:

Mines which might otherwise remain unproductive for years will be immediately developed. There are many mines in the county belonging to men who have not the means to develop them properly, which will be taken hold of by this association . . . and developed to an extent that will render them valuable properties.²⁴

The *News* was assured that this was not a speculative affair but a legitimate and commendable enterprise, conducted by men familiar with mining. In recognition of his contributions, Cushman was elected honorary vice president from Clear Creek County of the State Industrial Association in 1874.²⁵

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, November 11, 1873, p. 3.

²⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, June 1, 1873, p. 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, September 11, 1874, p. 4.

²² Louise Harrison, *Empire and the Berthoud Pass* (Denver: Big Mountain Press, 1964), pp. 267-69.

²³ *Rocky Mountain News*, August 30, 1874, p. 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, July 23, 1874, p. 4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, September 25, 1876, p. 4.

Development of the town continued with Cushman's encouragement. In September 1876 the Georgetown Gaslight Company was founded, and within a year every reputable house and business in town was lighted by gas. The townspeople were more than grateful to the three organizers—Clark, Spruance, and Cushman.²⁶

Cushman not only was an ever-present member of most Georgetown business ventures but also seems to have been quite active in social circles. In fact, he was a member of the elite "Forty Liars' Club." The upstanding members of this prank-playing, rowdy outfit were quite an impressive group—Senator Edward O. Wolcott, E. H. N. Patterson ("Sniktau," owner of the *Colorado Miner*), Stephen Decatur Bross, Frank E. Page, Dr. Lewis E. Leman, Samuel Watson, Don Frothingham, and Cushman. At the club meetings, held in the dining room and card room of the elegant Barton House, the men forgot their business speculations, their day's work of juggling thousands of dollars, their public image, and just relaxed. They entertained, at "typical bachelor dinners," Grace Greenwood (Sara Jane Clarke Lippincott), the well-known writer, and the even more widely acclaimed Helen Hunt Jackson. They were always in attendance at the theater and sometimes staged impromptu badger fights. Billy Barton, owner of the Barton House, once claimed: "This club should adopt the Little Busy Bee as its emblem. The bee, when once full, makes a straight line for home, while, I am pained to say, the members of this club, when once full, stay around and whoop it up all night!"²⁷

Georgetown was not the only growing town in the territory. By 1875, after three unsuccessful attempts, Colorado citizens again petitioned for statehood. When the federal government accepted the petition, Colorado Governor John L. Routt responded by proclaiming an election to be held October 25, 1875, for delegates to a constitutional convention. The results of the election in Clear Creek County found William Cushman and William Clark the delegates, each receiving 705 votes. William Clark, a strong Republican, later became Colorado's first secretary of state. Cushman was a Democrat, the leader, in fact, of the Democratic party in Clear Creek County. In the constitutional convention he was chairman of the revenue and finance committee and also helped prepare articles on the legislature, state institutions, and public indebtedness.²⁸ After

months of hard work the proposed new state constitution was passed, and a weary Cushman and Clark returned to Georgetown, which was to become the third largest town in the soon-to-be-created state of Colorado.

The rest of the year 1876 found Cushman occupied with the bank, the newly established gas company, Green Lake, and his numerous other business enterprises. Late in the year he left on a lengthy trip to the East.

Before his return in May of 1877, an article appeared in the *New York Times*. Entitled "The Colorado Silver Mines" and written by Eli Perkins, a *Times* correspondent, the article gave a lengthy description of mining in the area, emphasizing the growing practice of salting mines. It ended with the following "personal" interview:

Below Georgetown I saw a doorway in the rocks, a tramway for ore, and a good-looking brick quartz mill at the base.

"What is the history of that mine?" I asked Lawyer White, of Georgetown.

"Well, that is the Zuglar Mine. It was started and did not pay. Mr. Cushman, who owns it, is rich, and it is being 'salted' now preparatory to being sold out. All the poor ore is being taken out, and all the bright paying ore is left. By and by some Eastern capitalist will come on, go through the mine with some scientific man like Professor Silliman, of Yale College, or Superintendent Linderman, of the United States Mint, and then go home and form a joint stock company and buy the mine."

"Will they work it?"

"Yes. They will stock the mine, lose money, assess stockholders, and drain every dollar that can be drained from friends, and then burst up, and the Zuglar Mine will be for sale again."

"And Cushman?"

"Oh, he'll be selling claims up in the Black Hills then!"²⁹

Four days later, the following reply to the article was printed by the *Times*:

A letter appeared in your edition of Tuesday [sic], . . . written by a party from Georgetown, which does gross injustice to the name of one of the best-known citizens of Colorado—Hon. William H. Cushman, President of the First National Bank of Georgetown—and is from beginning to end full of gross misrepresentations. Mr. Cushman has for many years been a resident of Colorado, and for some ten years of Georgetown, during which time he has taken the deepest interest in her prosperity, and undoubtedly has done more toward making Georgetown

²⁶ *Colorado Miner*, September 30, 1876, p. 3.

²⁷ Benjamin Poff Draper, *Georgetown* (Georgetown: Privately printed, 1940), p. 19.

²⁸ Donald Wayne Hensel, "A History of the Colorado Constitution in the Nine-

teenth Century" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Colorado, 1957), pp. 94, 408, 410.

²⁹ Eli Perkins, "The Colorado Silver Mines," *New York Times*, May 13, 1877, p. 2.



The Cushman Building, the three-story brick structure slightly to the right of center, has survived into modern days.

what she is at the present time—one of the most enterprising and prosperous towns of Colorado—than any other person. His reputation for strict business integrity and fair and honorable dealing is not surpassed by that of any gentleman in Colorado or elsewhere.³⁰

By the spring of 1877 almost every Georgetown citizen felt the same way about William Cushman.

A *Rocky Mountain News* correspondent wrote in April 1877:

The financial portion of Georgetown is carefully looked after by two very reliable and substantial banks, the First National and the Bank of Clear Creek County.³¹

But three months later, on Monday morning, July 30, 1877, when the First National opened its doors as usual, Cashier William L. Hadley declined to do any business. According to the *Colorado Miner*:

The announcement occasioned no excitement, [since] the majority of the depositors have the utmost confidence in the integrity and business capacity of the Honorable William H. Cushman."³²

The depositors seemed to take the closing of the bank just as calmly as they had accepted the bank's closing in 1873.

According to a sworn statement on the condition of the bank made on June 22, the assets were largely in excess of the liabilities. The *Miner* felt that if Cushman had pushed those who owed money to the bank, there would not have been even a temporary suspension. According to the county court docket

book, Cushman did file about fifteen cases against persons delinquent in loan repayment between 1869 and 1877.³³ Obviously this was not enough. The *Miner* stated that Cushman confidently expected to make certain business arrangements which would prevent the necessity of crowding the bank's debtors. In fact, it appears that his numerous trips to New York City may have been for this very purpose. He not only spent six months there in the early part of the year but also went east in June for a month.³⁴ His attempts failed, however, according to the *Miner*, and it became necessary to suspend business operations temporarily.

The *Miner* had nothing but praise for Cushman:

Mr. Cushman has long been recognized as a man of indomitable energy and is one of the most public-spirited men in the State. He has done more than any other one man to build up our city and to develop the mining resources of the county. There are few among our miners who have not found him a friend when a friend was needed. If a public enterprise was to be pushed through, Mr. Cushman was generally expected to give it a start. And it is this general recognition of his public spirit, added to the knowledge that, outside of the Bank, he has abundant resources, which make people feel perfectly easy as to the ultimate issue of affairs.³⁵

According to the *Georgetown Courier*, "Cushman has scores of staunch friends and warm sympathizers." The *Courier* continued:

One reason for the quiet way in which the suspension was received is the almost universal opinion that "Cush" has been the most public-spirited man in town. While he has made money rapidly for himself, his enterprises and taking chances, his liberality and his forbearance . . . have been of incalculable advantage to the town and county.³⁶

Cushman was trusted and respected not only in Georgetown but throughout the state and even as far away as New York City. According to the *Denver Rocky Mountain News*, "Mr. Cushman is a gentleman whose personal integrity has never been called in question. Georgetown owes more to him than to any other of her citizens."³⁷ Also, Denver's *Democrat* believed the bank's suspension was caused by Cushman's liberal investments in mining enterprises around Georgetown and city

³³ Docket Book, 1869-77, Clear Creek County District Court, nos. 328, 385, 386, 427, 1079, 1106, 1767, 1485, 1524, 1656, 1693, 1753. Clear Creek County Courthouse, Georgetown.

³⁴ *Colorado Miner*, July 21, 1877, p. 2, and May 26, 1877, p. 3; *Georgetown Courier*, July 19, 1877, p. 3, and May 24, 1877, p. 3.

³⁵ *Colorado Miner*, August 4, 1877, p. 2.

³⁶ *Georgetown Courier*, August 2, 1877, p. 3.

³⁷ *Rocky Mountain News*, as quoted in the *Colorado Miner*, August 4, 1877, p. 2.

³⁰ Anonymous letter, *New York Times*, May 17, 1877, p. 4.

³¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, April 4, 1877, p. 4.

³² *Colorado Miner*, August 4, 1877, p. 2.

improvements, until he found most of his capital tied up. The *Democrat* assured its readers, that the suspension was only temporary.³⁸

The *New York Times* stated that the bank's closing had "created no special excitement in [Denver] financial circles, as the event had been partially expected for some time."³⁹ According to their sources, the failure was due probably to the personal embarrassment of the president, W. W. (sic) Cushman. "Unfortunate investments in mines and various local enterprises and improvements have carried down the bank and banker."⁴⁰

The *Denver Tribune* wrote that Cushman always had been "liberal and generous, ever ready to aid the struggling and deserving, and in his present embarrassment will likely receive in turn something of the consideration he has been accustomed to show to others." The item also reported that Cushman had left for the East on Sunday, July 29, the day before the bank officially closed, for the purpose, it was felt, of making some financial arrangements which would help him out of his predicament.⁴¹

The First National advertisement continued to run in the *Miner*, listing the condition of the bank as identical to that of January 1877. The *Miner* stopped running the advertisement on September 2 with no explanation. In fact, neither Mr. Cushman nor the bank were mentioned again in either Georgetown paper until early October, when it was noted that Cushman had arrived from the East for a brief visit.⁴² After this point the subject was avoided again until December, when Cushman made an assignment and turned over the bank and its effects to Colonel L. C. Ellsworth of Denver.⁴³ In the judgment Cushman stated that he owed the sum of \$51,111.10. In a promissory note dated October 8, 1877, in which he promised to pay Ellsworth \$50,000 and interest at 10 percent a year, Cushman listed his address as 33 Major Block, Chicago, Illinois.⁴⁴ Judging from this date, Cushman had given up trying to save the bank as early as October, although he actually did not make the assignment until December.

³⁸ *Colorado Miner*, August 4, 1877, p. 2.

³⁹ *New York Times*, August 5, 1877, p. 7.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Denver Tribune*, as quoted in the *Colorado Miner*, August 4, 1877, p. 2.

⁴² *Colorado Miner*, October 6, 1877, p. 3; *Georgetown Courier*, October 11, 1877, p. 2.

⁴³ L. C. Ellsworth v. William H. Cushman, no. 1864, Clear Creek County District Court, filed September 26, 1877. Clear Creek District Court Series, Colorado State Archives and Records Service.

⁴⁴ Promissory note from W. H. Cushman to L. C. Ellsworth, October 8, 1877. Federal District Court, Federal Building, Denver.

During the period from August 1877 to July 1878 there seems to be little knowledge of Cushman's activities. The *New York City Directory* for the period May 1877–May 1878 listed him as a treasurer (the organization is not specified), with offices at 17 Broad Street and home address in Colorado.⁴⁵ His residence in Colorado was not Georgetown, however, according to divorce proceedings filed by Ada Douglas Cushman in October 1878 and concluded in January 1879. Instead, according to Mrs. Cushman, during the winter and spring of 1877-78, "he lived with another woman of notorious reputation from Ottawa, Illinois, her name was Frank Cogswell now Mrs. Loomis; that he resided there before I left Colorado to make a visit in California [in January 1878]; he was with her there [Idaho Springs] but I did not know it at the time."⁴⁶

Mrs. Cushman's story was supported by William L. Hadley, Cushman's former cashier, who testified that Cushman's life at Idaho Springs became quite notorious "on account of his stopping at a place with persons in disrepute." Hadley thought this had occurred between November 1877 and June 1878. When asked if his knowledge was derived from public information, Hadley replied: "Yes, general report. Nothing I knew of personal knowledge, except that I once spoke to Mr. Cushman about it, and he told me it was none of my business or anybody else's."⁴⁷

After months of hard work Colonel Ellsworth, the assignee for the First National Bank, reported to the federal court that very little of any value could be secured for the creditors of the bank. In the meantime the facts of Cushman's management had been laid before the court officials, and a number of depositors petitioned for an investigation. This was conducted by Judge Decker and the U. S. grand jury at the July term of the U. S. District Court for the District of Colorado. An indictment charging Cushman with embezzlement was returned on July 10, 1878. The indictment charged that Cushman did "embezzle, abstract, and wilfully misapply, the moneys, funds and credits of said association" on eighteen separate dates between August 1876 and July 1877 for a total of \$104,254.55.⁴⁸ The same day a notice was issued to U. S. Marshal P. P. Wilcox to bring Cush-

⁴⁵ *Trow's New York City Directory* (New York: Trow City Directory Co., 1878).

⁴⁶ Ada D. Cushman v. W. H. Cushman, no. 2029, Clear Creek County District Court, affidavit of July 11, 1879. Clear Creek County District Court Series, Colorado State Archives and Records Service. See also, *Colorado Miner*, January 26, 1878, p. 2.

⁴⁷ Ada D. Cushman v. W. H. Cushman.

⁴⁸ United States v. William H. Cushman, no. 116, D. Colo., criminal capias, filed July 10, 1878. Records of District Courts, Record Group 21, Archives Branch, Federal Records Center, Denver.

man before the district court to answer the bill of indictment on July 14.⁴⁹ Armed with a copy of the warrant for Cushman's arrest, Wilcox left for Georgetown only to find that Cushman had left town. In the divorce proceedings Mrs. Cushman stated that Cushman had left the state in the latter part of June or the first of July 1878. When asked if he ever had told her that he intended to leave the country, she replied that he had stated that he expected to be obliged to leave.

On August 1, 1878, two circulars were issued from the office of the U. S. marshal. One read:

WILLIAM H. CUSHMAN—A FUGITIVE

Description

Rather below medium height.
Weight about 135 pounds.
Complexion, Fair.
Forehead slopes back considerably from eyebrows.
Mild-mannered Countenance.
Small, quiet eyes.

Although married, may associate with the better class of fast women.⁵⁰



In October 1878 the court issued a second warrant for Cushman's arrest. The warrant was returned with the following comment:

I have made diligent search, and I am unable to find the within named William H. Cushman in my district so that I may have him before this court.

P. P. Wilcox⁵¹

Many were of the opinion that Cushman had gone to Canada, where he remained for several months and returned to the United States only after the excitement had blown over. In the following months he was traced to Ottawa, Illinois, his home town, a dozen times, but because of the protection of his many friends officials never could find him. It was rumored that in his disguise—a wig and a pair of black whiskers—he even ventured into Colorado. The *Rocky Mountain News* of April 3, 1879, claimed that they were informed by a "well-known detective" that Cushman had been in Georgetown in March for two days.⁵²

For almost a year Cushman had been watched, traced, and followed by P. P. Wilcox, Colorado U. S. marshal since 1877. Ironically, Wilcox also had been a delegate to the State Constitutional Convention in 1876, where he was described as being "in contour of the greyhound order, with a keen dark eye, and lock profusely sprinkled with grey."⁵³ It is too bad that he was not more like a bloodhound, for after seven months of search, he still had not located Cushman.

One explanation is the inadequate reward being offered for Cushman's arrest, which gave no incentive to anyone—including Wilcox—to engage in the search. Another is the support and aid given Cushman by his numerous friends. Whenever Wilcox received any information about the banker's whereabouts, Cushman would manage to get word of it and cross over into Canada.

On April 3, 1879, the *News* proudly announced that they were able to point out the whereabouts of the defaulting banker and gladly would turn this information over to Detective Crane of the Rocky Mountain Detective Association and Marshal Wilcox. The information received was a letter from C. W. Stuart of Ottawa, Illinois, dated March 31, 1879. In the letter

⁴⁹ Ada D. Cushman v. W. H. Cushman.

⁵⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, as quoted in John Willard Horner, *Silver Town* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1950), pp. 274-75.

⁵¹ *United States v. William H. Cushman*, no. 116, D. Colo., criminal capias, filed May 26, 1879.

⁵² *Rocky Mountain News*, April 3, 1879, p. 4.

⁵³ *Denver Tribune Supplement*, February 14, 1876, p. 1.

Mr. Stuart stated that Cushman had been hiding in Ottawa at the home of relatives of his "paramour," Miss Frank Cogswell, and currently was staying with his friend Lathrop Perkins. According to Stuart, Cushman also had been in Chicago, trying to raise loans by consulting with prominent bankers.⁵⁴

The *Georgetown Courier* felt that there were many Georgetown citizens "to whom it would be an exquisite pleasure to see the accomplished rascal captured and justice meted out to him, for there can be little or no question but he is guilty of all that he is charged with."⁵⁵ It appears that the *Courier*—and many others—had drastically changed their opinion of the Honorable William H. Cushman.

The staunchly Republican *Courier* could find but one redeeming result in Mr. Cushman's failure.

Since he skipped the country, the Democratic party has been steadily losing ground, until now it has become one of the solid Republican counties of the State. Cushman not only furnished the brains for the Democratic party in this county, but he also had the money that was confided to his care by both Democrats and Republicans to assist him in keeping the Democratic party in good fighting trim, but since his departure the party has found no one fully qualified in all respects to fill his shoes.⁵⁶

In the meantime Ada Cushman had secured a divorce from her husband. The hearing was held January 11, 1879, Cushman being represented in his absence by his lawyer, Samuel Ross. Ironically, Mrs. Cushman's lawyer was Edward Wolcott, a member of the Forty Liars' Club with Cushman, and the court reporter was H. H. Atkins, Cushman's brother-in-law. Mrs. Cushman's case was based on three points: Cushman had not lived with or supported Mrs. Cushman or her two children for eighteen months, he had been indicted for embezzlement, and he was a fugitive from justice unfit to be entrusted with the care and custody of the children. On January 29 the divorce was granted, Mrs. Cushman receiving custody of the children and the annual sum of \$1,800, to be paid quarterly.⁵⁷

After the publicity given Cushman's presence in Ottawa in the *Rocky Mountain News*, Marshal Wilcox telegraphed inquiries to Ottawa with no results. In July 1879 another warrant was issued by the federal district attorney for Cushman's arrest. Again on April 6, 1880, a warrant was issued, and Wil-

cox returned it with the brief comment, "After diligent search I am unable to find the within named."⁵⁸ It is curious that Wilcox did not go to New York City in his search for Cushman, for it appears that Cushman was living quite openly in that city. In the New York City directories for 1878-79 and 1879-80 he is listed as a superintendent (the organization is not noted), with offices at 17 Broad Street and home address still listed as Colorado.⁵⁹ The most probable reason is that Wilcox was offered no reward or other incentive, and he had more important things to do than spend his life hunting down Cushman.

On April 6, 1880, the fourth warrant for Cushman's arrest was issued. He was ordered to appear in the U. S. district court in early May, so Wilcox was forced to resume the search for the missing banker. That same month the marshal received a tip that Cushman was in New York, and he immediately left for that city and Cushman's office on Broad Street. According to Wilcox, however, the banker evaded him, for he had shaved his beard and grown a mustache which altered his face so that he was completely unrecognizable. He also had dyed his grey hair to dark brown or black.

Cushman stayed away from his office for several days, and Wilcox returned to Denver. Ten days later, however, he left secretly for New York. The following is Wilcox's own account of what transpired:

I arrived at 7:30 a.m. and went straight to his office. I had the janitor let me in, read the paper and waited. About 9 a.m. Cushman arrived. When he finally noticed me, I exclaimed, "Cush, I've come for you and I've got you this time. Now it's peace or war; if you want to come with me quietly and peaceably and give me no trouble, it's all right. Which shall it be, Cush?"

"Let it be peace," was the faint and meek reply. "I want to go. I'm anxious to go. This is perfect hell here; I've got to keep dodging you fellows all the while and I'm sick of it. I'll go with you and willingly."⁶⁰

A conflicting account of the capture was given in the New York papers, which stated that Cushman, knowing a warrant was out for his arrest, went to the Federal Building, introduced himself to Assistant Marshal Kennedy, and gave himself up. One paper wrote:

We know that Mr. Cushman is now anxious to have a trial, and

⁵⁴ *Rocky Mountain News*, April 3, 1879, p. 4.

⁵⁵ *Georgetown Courier*, quoted in Harrison, *Empire and the Berthoud Pass*, p. 282.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ada D. Cushman v. W. H. Cushman*.

⁵⁸ *United States v. William H. Cushman*, no. 116, criminal capias, filed July 12, 1879; *ibid.*, filed April 6, 1880.

⁵⁹ *Trow's New York City Directory* (May 1879; May 1880).

⁶⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, August 5, 1880, p. 5.

he believes he can explain a great many transactions in an altogether different light than they are now understood.

We saw Mr. Cushman almost daily in New York the past winter, and know that he was not hiding from anyone. His office was at 17 Broad Street, and he could be found there at almost any time during the business hours. He was at the Fifth Avenue, St. James and other leading hotels during the evenings.⁶¹

According to the August 4, 1880, issue of the *Rocky Mountain News*, Cushman could have been captured long before this time had the officers of the law wanted to, since he had been living openly in New York City. The *News* continued: "It has been hinted that the ex-president desires to come back and stand trial, having powerful friends here whom he expects to receive aid from."⁶²

Wilcox arrived on August 4, 1880, with his prisoner, "who acted like a gentleman the entire trip." Waiting for Cushman in Denver were Horace H. Atkins, his brother-in-law, who placed bond for \$2,500, and William Spruance, Charles W. Pollard, Julius G. Pohli, and Frank H. Aicher, who with Atkins placed a second bond for \$2,500.⁶³ Cushman was taken to the American House and released from custody.

Cushman's return to Georgetown was greeted with the same calmness as was the closing of the bank three years previously. The *Courier* merely stated: "William H. Cushman is spending a few days in town."⁶⁴ There were no comments on his crime, no name-calling, no hard feelings. The *Miner* went even further: "We are pleased to see William H. Cushman in our midst again. He arrived from New York last week. He looks well."⁶⁵ It appears that the Denver *Rocky Mountain News* was right when it commented that Cushman had a large number of friends in Georgetown and elsewhere who were ready to stick by him, no matter.⁶⁶

Cushman appeared before the district court in October 1880, when his trial was set for May of the following year. He then returned to New York, where an order was issued in November by which he was given fifteen days to "enter into recognizance with goods and sufficient surety in the sum of \$5,000" before the District Court of the United States for the

⁶¹ *Colorado Miner*, August 7, 1880, p. 2, quoting several New York City newspaper accounts of Cushman's arrest.

⁶² *Rocky Mountain News*, August 4, 1880, p. 5.

⁶³ *United States v. William H. Cushman*, no. 116, bonds posted, filed September 14, 1880.

⁶⁴ *Georgetown Courier*, August 12, 1880, p. 3.

⁶⁵ *Colorado Miner*, August 14, 1880, p. 3.

⁶⁶ *Rocky Mountain News*, August 5, 1880, p. 5.

Southern District of New York to assure his appearance in Colorado in May 1881 to answer the pending indictment for embezzlement.⁶⁷

When Cushman returned to Colorado in May, he and his counsel, the renowned lawyer and judge, Thomas Macon, introduced a motion to quash the pending indictment. The motion contended that the indictment and every count in it were informal, defective, and insufficient since: (1) it was at no time alleged when the supposed offenses were committed; (2) there was no description of the property alleged to have been embezzled, abstracted, and wilfully misapplied as to its amount, kind, or value; (3) the indictment was double; (4) there was no description of any of the supposed offenses; and (5) there was no sufficient averment of the character in which he had custody and control of the supposed money, credits, and funds which he allegedly embezzled, abstracted, and wilfully misapplied.⁶⁸ The case was continued until July, and Cushman returned to New York. Upon his return to Colorado in the middle of July 1881, the *Georgetown Courier*, with a not-too-surprising, cordial tone, noted: "He has a host of friends who are pleased to see him back again."⁶⁹

The trial began on July 21, when the *Denver News* commented that Cushman's main points of defense were the "general insufficiency of the contents of the indictment and the remarkable sameness in the nineteen counts of that instrument."⁷⁰ The case came before Judge Moses Hallett on July 21, 1881, when it was argued and taken under advisement. One week later, on July 28, the motion to quash the indictment was denied. The attorney for the defense was allowed to alter the indictment, striking out the words "embezzle" and "funds and credits." Cushman was granted leave to renew his bail to January 1, 1882, of the October term, at which time the trial was to be resumed.

Curiously, the records of Cushman's case show no further action after this point. The trial was never resumed in January 1882 nor at any other time. Cushman was not hiding, his address being listed in the 1882 *New York City Directory* as 53 New Street with no specific occupation given.⁷¹

In the Federal District Court docket book on December 24,

⁶⁷ *United States v. William H. Cushman*, no. 116, recognizance to appear at May term 1881, filed November 26, 1880.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, motion to quash indictment, filed May 6, 1881.

⁶⁹ *Georgetown Courier*, July 21, 1881, p. 8.

⁷⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, July 21, 1881, p. 8.

⁷¹ *Trow's New York City Directory* (May 1882), p. 354.

1883, a *nolle prosequi* is entered after Cushman's case number. The prosecution dropped its complaint and the case was thrown out.⁷² The reason is not given.

Perhaps it could not be proven that Cushman actually committed the crime. Perhaps the case had dragged out so long that the prosecution was disinterested. Although we probably will never know whether Cushman was guilty or innocent, the author tends to agree with John Willard Horner, who wrote in his book *Silver Town*:

Banking in a mining community was a perilous business, requiring an icy heart and a fishy eye. To be sure, the interest rates were high, varying from 12 percent a year to 2 percent a month, but the risks were proportionately great. It is probable that the failure of the First National Bank was due to unwise loans predicated on friendship without collateral, rather than to defalcations.

It is certain that Cushman did much for the advancement of early Georgetown, and he probably was too much the friendly type to make a Roths child [sic].⁷³

His story is yet to be told in full. Further investigation may yield one day the clues to the real explanation of why the bank failed and why Cushman was not pressed for restitution. In the meantime one can only guess what business, political, or personal associations may have played a hand in this chapter of Georgetown history.

Cushman never returned to Georgetown. He spent his remaining years as a broker in New York City and lived in Nyack, a small commuters' town about twenty-five miles away. A chair in the now famous Opera House in Central City, Colorado, named by his son Douglas in 1937,⁷⁴ is the only recognition given to William H. Cushman—the banker, the philanthropist, the fugitive, “the man who did more for Georgetown than any other citizen.”

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⁷² Docket Book, no. 116, D. Colo., filed December 24, 1883, Federal District Court, Federal Building, Denver.

⁷³ Horner, *Silver Town*, p. 259.

⁷⁴ Central City Opera House Association, *The Glory that Was Gold*, 3d ed. supp. (Denver: University of Denver, 1937), p. 13.

White River Forest Reserve: The Conservation Conflict

BY G. MICHAEL McCARTHY

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century one of the most critical problems confronting the state of Colorado was the widespread, often irresponsible exploitation of its natural wealth by westward-moving pioneers. But as serious as this problem was, for years it was ignored by the people of Colorado. After all, the primary consideration of the pioneer was to build a sturdy, prosperous state by homesteading and mining the wilderness, by building businesses and industries, by erecting cities peopled with hardy, liberty-loving men. If the forging of civilization out of the wilderness resulted in the waste and destruction of the land, so be it. The pioneer's American heritage decreed that the land was "his" with which to do

A homesteader's cabin near Pyramid in the early 1900s.



as he pleased. To deny him the land and his right to exploit it was to deny him his freedom.

Beginning in the late 1880s, a new idea began to make inroads. The idea was that the nation's natural resources were not inexhaustible and that the federal government should assume the responsibility of conserving what was left of America's natural heritage—principally the nation's forests—for the benefit of "future generations." Nowhere in America was this new concept more bitterly debated than in Colorado. In the fall of 1891 the establishment of the White River Forest Reserve triggered two decades of intrastate warfare between the pioneer who wanted to utilize the land and the conservationist who wanted to preserve it.

The White River Forest Reserve—Colorado's first one—sprawled across 1,198,180 acres of timberland along the Western Slope of the Rocky Mountains in northern Colorado. The reserve consisted primarily of the massive White River Plateau, which rose like a wall above the headwaters of the White River and which extended sixty miles east and west, ranging from six to ten miles in width and sloping from twelve thousand feet down to ten thousand feet at its lower elevations. On almost all sides the plateau was bounded by perpendicular rock cliffs, but here and there gentle slopes gave access to the plateau's interior and invited a handful of enterprising pioneers. The northern part of the reserve contained the source of the White River which flowed westward into Utah to join the Green River. It was here also that the tributaries of the Williams and Yampa rivers formed and moved northward. The southern part of the reserve was slashed with a half-dozen important streams which rushed southward off the plateau to empty into the Colorado. In and near the reserve were scattered a few primitive settlements, such as Marvine, Buford, Pyramid, and Pagoda; and growing towns, such as Meeker, Rio Blanco, Rifle, and Glenwood Springs, lay adjacent to the new reserve. From these struggling towns the first stirrings of protest came once plans for the reserve were put into action.

The first steps toward the establishment of this reserve had been taken on April 18, 1889, when joint memorials to create a timber reserve on the Western Slope of Colorado passed both houses of the state legislature as a result of public clamor coming out of the White River area, where raging fires, wasteful timber cutting, and excessive grazing had alarmed settlers. Here, indeed, "many citizens were afraid that, unless some action were taken to protect and administer these lands, they

would eventually be ruined."¹ The main goal sought was protection from fires, many of them ascribed to unfriendly Ute Indians who wished to drive the settlers out. Fires had raged periodically and blackened millions of acres of precious land.²

The memorials were sent to Colorado's congressmen in Washington for introduction into Congress; but, due to an ensuing flood of letters bitterly denouncing the plan, the memorials were buried and never introduced. In addition to the memorials a bill for a reserve was requested by Colorado Senator Edward O. Wolcott, drafted by Edgar Ensign, and sent to Wolcott in Washington; but Wolcott discreetly pigeonholed the bill when his mail regarding the project became abusive.³ In June of 1890 additional memorials requesting a reserve were sent to Washington, this time by Ensign and a new group called the Colorado National Park Association, composed of J. C. Osgood, W. N. Byers, D. C. Beaman, and C. H. Toll of Denver, W. H. Clark of Meeker, William Gelder and J. C. Clark of Glenwood Springs, J. H. Crawford of Steamboat Springs, and Eugene Taylor of Axial. Again the memorials were discarded. Ensign speculated on the reason:

During the last year some local opposition to the proposed reservation has been manifested. It is alleged that in the adjustment of certain private claims against the Government, likely to arise in this connection, injustice would be done to individuals. This may be true; and any such results should be duly guarded against.⁴

In July of 1891 Secretary of the Interior John Willock Noble through an intermediary informed Colorado Governor John L. Routt that if Routt would supply him with memorials regarding the White River project and with figures on the proposed boundary, on the amount and type of timber there, and on the extent of homesteading done, he would "draw up a proclamation for the President to sign and take it to him"; he would, in short, put through the project. Routt's correspondent added: "If you should live a hundred years longer you would look back . . . with as much pride and gratification as for any act of your estimable public career."⁵ But Routt an-

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, *Golden Anniversary, White River National Forest*. (N.p., n.d.), p. 4

² Lewis R. Rist, "Historical Sketch of White River National Forest." Type-script in CWA interviews, Rio Blanco County, 1933-34, 342:158, State Historical Society of Colorado Library.

³ *In It Daily Avalanche* (Glenwood Springs), November 9, 1891, p. 3.

⁴ Colorado, Forest Commission, *Biennial Report of the Forest Commissioner of the State of Colorado for the Years 1889 and 1890* (Denver: Collier and Cleveland Lith. Co., Printers, 1891), p. 112.

⁵ Charles Denison (Royalton, Vermont) to Governor John L. Routt, July 11, 1891, General Correspondence, 1890—Telegrams, 1891, John L. Routt Papers, Colorado State Archives and Records Service.

swered that the people of the White River country were not in favor of the scheme, and he would do nothing to comply with the proposal.⁶ In a last-ditch effort to attain success, the proponents of the idea sent a third memorial to Washington on September 26, 1891. This time their persistence was rewarded. Commissioner of the General Land Office Thomas H. Carter sent agents to Colorado to investigate, and from the investigations finally came the withdrawal of the private claims.⁷

During the weeks just prior to the creation of the reserve, opposition toward it began to intensify; as far as the opponents of the reservation idea were concerned, what had been only a disturbing concept was now about to become a reality. The opposition first began to crystalize at Meeker, near the western boundary of the reserve, under the leadership of the *Meeker Herald*. Early in September when the news first had broken that a third and final memorial pleading for a reserve was being sent to Washington, the *Herald* had asserted that the residents of Rio Blanco County were greatly opposed to the reserves because they did not know what their rights would be in or near it. In criticizing the proposal, the *Herald* clearly had reflected the concerns of much of the pioneer class:

This scheme has thus far been worked through quietly, but it is not too late to defeat it. Citizens of Rio Blanco County arise in your might and protest against this damnable outrage. Will you sit still and let that Osgood summer resort outfit drive you from the homes that you have acquired by years of toil and the liberal expenditure of money? . . . We think not. Then be up and doing!⁸

When it was apparent that their cause was lost, the *Herald*,

Osgood's "Cleveholm" contrasted sharply with most pioneer dwellings.



conceding defeat, promised to harass Congress about the issue: "We'll kick, and it will be felt, too."⁹

In years to come the little town of Glenwood Springs, perched on the banks of the Colorado River, was to become perhaps the most vehement anti-conservation center in the state, but in 1891 it was a town strongly divided on the issue of the reserve which soon would lie to the north. Some of its citizens eagerly welcomed federal guardianship; but others, deeply proud of their long-standing independence or simply motivated by special interests, were repelled by the idea. For example, many citizens of Glenwood agreed with James Riland, a White River pioneer, who said:

The land set aside contains some of the finest mineral lands in the state, and the agricultural, grazing, and coal lands will be of use to the people someday. . . . If that great domain passes into the hands of the general government, we people of the West will not be considered, but the capital of the East will make the laws and we will have to follow them.¹⁰

On the other hand, many citizens, such as W. B. Devereaux, president of the Colorado Land and Improvement Company of Glenwood, staunchly supported the scheme:

As a protection for the many against the few . . . I am in favor of that strip of land being turned into a national park, for if that will not be done, everyone's rights will be subservient to the man who wants to build a cabin and claim sixty acres of land.¹¹

The city's three newspapers also disagreed among themselves. The *Glenwood Echo* and the *Glenwood Springs Republican* had come out in favor of the reserve. On the other hand, the *In It Daily Avalanche*, soon to become the most vociferous of all the critics in the state of the reservation policy, strongly opposed the White River Reserve. The *Avalanche* contended that the new reserve would carve out some twenty-five miles of the best farming and grazing land in Rio Blanco County, a county only three years old and badly in need of tax money, which could come only from settlement. The newspaper advised: "Let everyone who can express himself speak out against this national park scheme, for a number of years at least, until the county is on more solid terra firma."¹²

⁶ Routt to Denison, July 23, 1891, Letterpress Book, April 16, 1891, to January 30, 1892, p. 303, Routt Papers.

⁷ *Meeker Herald*, February 20, 1892, p. 1.

⁸ *Ibid.*, October 10, 1891, p. 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, October 17, 1891, p. 1.

¹⁰ *In It Daily Avalanche*, October 19, 1891, p. 4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, October 23, 1891, p. 1. The term "national park" was used interchangeably with "forest reserves" by conservationists and anticconservationists.

¹² *In It Daily Avalanche*, October 15, 1891, p. 4.

Elsewhere in the state, if newspapers took note of the issue, as few did, they were generally favorable to the idea. Most could afford such a position, since they were far enough away from the reserve that it did not affect their communities directly. The Colorado Springs *Republic and Telegraph* said:

The state of Colorado will have achieved a rare gift if it succeeds in securing White River Park. Such a tract of land . . . will find large appreciation with the present generation of the state even though it will be set apart for the perpetual benefit of the whole people.¹³

In Denver, although the proclamation of October 16 received little immediate attention, editorial opinion would be forthcoming later.

Despite all the furor that had marked the days prior to the proclamation, the creation of the reserve itself on October 16 still had come as a shock to many, primarily because the boundaries of the reserve were much larger than had been anticipated even by its friends. Opposition turned to alarm; commented the *Meeker Herald*: "The figures are appalling, and it is no wonder that the people are aroused."¹⁴ So battle lines began to form, and the sporadic infighting which had characterized the early fall began to develop into an all-out contest.

The leader of the antireserve element was H. H. Eddy, speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives and powerful Bear River cattleman. Behind Eddy the antireservationists quickly prepared to act. On November 8 the *Rocky Mountain News* reported that Eddy was preparing to come down to Denver on November 11, "loaded with oratorical explosives," to deliver a denunciation of the new White River Reserve idea before the Denver Chamber of Commerce. The *News* was scornful of his effort, noting that there were only eighty-five permanent settlers in the entire reserve in the first place, and concluding:

On the question of the value of such a park to Colorado . . . there can be but one opinion. . . . It is a region set apart for men to go into and leave the world behind, rejoicing that so much loveliness has been preserved by wise legislation. Colorado is fortunate in holding such a trust for the race and if the state fails in its duty mankind will be so much the poorer.¹⁵

Public opinion in general seemed to be against Eddy from the start; even Dr. Charles Denison, the promoter of the meeting, felt that "there is every argument in the world in favor of

setting aside this park and there is no argument of any consequence against it."¹⁶ But Eddy, undaunted, went ahead with preparations for the trip. As November 11 approached, the conservationists, apprehensive that Eddy somehow might manage to upset their hard-earned gains, began a campaign in support of the reserve. The most obvious manifestation of this effort was a stepped-up tempo of favorable newspaper editorials in the capital city. The *News*, true to form, declared:

[We are] very decidedly of the opinion that the highest considerations of state policy require the maintenance of this park as it has been established. . . . Local objections will have to go down before the doctrine of the greatest good for the greatest number.¹⁷

And for the first time the *Republican* took an unequivocal stand on the issue:

The public interest is superior to private interests. The wishes of a few men who may desire to cut timber on this reservation or acquire a little agricultural land within its limits ought not to be allowed to interfere with a course which would promote the general welfare of Western Colorado.¹⁸

The most disheartening blow of all to the Eddy forces, however, came not from Denver editorials but from decisive action taken by the people of the White River country. On November 10 a huge meeting sponsored by the Board of Trade was held in Glenwood Springs, attended by people from miles around. There, under the leadership of Edward Taylor, state senator from Glenwood, a resolution was passed that completely shattered Eddy's claim to represent the consensus of opinion in his district: "Resolved . . . that we favor the establishment of the national park."¹⁹ This rebuke, couched in unmistakable terms, was to have a powerful impact on the proceedings in Denver the next night.

Early in the evening of November 11 the largest crowd ever to attend a Chamber of Commerce meeting in the city of Denver jammed into the Chamber's building to witness one of the first serious face-to-face clashes between Colorado's conservationists and their opponents. What the spectators and delegates were to see was a decisive victory for the conservationists.

When the meeting was formally opened, the first order of business, as was the custom in most meetings of its type, was the consideration and passage of a resolution, one either con-

¹³ *Republic and Telegraph* (Colorado Springs), November 12, 1891, p. 1.

¹⁴ *Meeker Herald*, October 24, 1891, p. 1.

¹⁵ *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), November 8, 1891, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Denver Republican*, November 8, 1891, p. 6.

¹⁷ *Rocky Mountain News*, November 10, 1891, p. 4.

¹⁸ *Denver Republican*, November 9, 1891, p. 4.

¹⁹ *In It Daily Avalanche*, November 11, 1891, p. 1.

demning or commending the creation of the White River Reserve. Psychologically this resolution would be most important, for its purport would handicap the argument of one side or the other at the start. As it turned out, the result was a swift defeat of the Eddy forces. The resolution, which was proposed by Ensign, was adopted overwhelmingly:

Resolved, That we most heartily concur with the president in this behalf, and earnestly hope that other needed reservations of a similar character will be established. . . . And we pledge ourselves to sustain in all proper ways a movement fraught with such great and general benefit.²⁰

Following the passage of the resolution, Eddy, piqued by the action of the assembly, rose to deliver a fiery speech, which he foolishly prefaced with a vow to see that the White River Park idea would be "thrown out of Congress," despite the fact that Congress had no direct jurisdiction whatsoever over the matter. But after this threat, Eddy presented several sharp and logical points. First, he suggested correctly, no one really knew what kind of a reservation this was to be, whether it was to be a forest reserve or a national park or some other type of reservation; consequently, no one really knew what kind of restrictions would be placed upon the White River country. Second, he argued, there was far too much nontimbered land included within the boundaries of the reserve, and it was unnecessary for the boundaries to extend twelve to fifteen miles beyond timberlands toward Meeker. And, finally, he empha-

Meeker in 1887.



sized the futility of trying to protect game that would constantly stray across reserve limits to private territory. With a concluding burst he charged that President Harrison's proclamation contained "infamous provisions which have not been equalled since the days of William the Conqueror"; and, in defining his own personal position, he concluded that reserves would tend to discourage settlement:

Too many of the people in Colorado are pioneers, too many have struggled with adversity to permit such an outrage to be perpetrated as the establishment of this park on the lines laid down.²¹

Generous applause greeted Eddy's speech; but just when it seemed that he had won considerable support, a delegate from Rio Blanco County rose to read a telegram outlining the resolutions adopted at the Glenwood meeting the night before. This dramatic reading completely changed the complexion of the Chamber meeting. It was reported later that "the audience heartily applauded and Senator Eddy looked like a club had struck him."²² The meeting then quickly adjourned.

For many months Eddy vainly tried to keep the White River issue alive, for if he failed with this case there might be others which would follow. On into 1892, for example, he wrote Denver newspapers many letters documenting in detail the purported evils of the new reserve. His efforts had little effect, although Eddy did manage to achieve a slight modification in the editorial stance of the *News*. The *News* still defended the reserve while beginning to agree with Eddy that perhaps the reserve was too big after all. The paper declared:

We have been and are strong advocates of these timber reservations, but always with the express understanding that no injustice be done to the individual settler. It appears that injustice will be done by maintaining the present boundaries of the reservation.²³

Not satisfied with this small concession, Eddy decided to take his case to the second session of the first annual meeting of the Western Colorado Congress, a commercial group which was convening in Aspen on December 16 and 17, 1891. The first session of the congress had favored reserves. Eddy's intention was well publicized, and the response to it proved that the Denver meeting had in no way diminished interest or con-

²⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, November 11, 1891, p. 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²² *In It Daily Avalanche*, November 12, 1891, p. 4.

²³ *Rocky Mountain News*, January 7, 1892, p. 4.

cern regarding forest reserves. When Eddy appeared at the opera house in the afternoon of December 16, the auditorium was filled to capacity. He spoke for an hour, carefully and forcefully outlining the reserve situation:

While not directly charging anyone with ulterior motives in defining the boundaries as they are, . . . he attributed the setting apart of the land [which included all of the timber resources] to ignorance on the part of officials.²⁴

After Eddy's speech the congress, without hesitation and with only a single dissenting vote, passed a resolution which, for Eddy, must have atoned for the humiliation suffered in Denver. It read, in part:

Whereas, There reside within the limits of said tract [the White River Reserve] from 275 to 300 bona fide locators, many of them families, whose rights cannot otherwise than be seriously affected [sic] by the said reservation, . . . Resolved, That the congress, believing it to be of material interest to the western slope, [urge] that the boundaries of said reservation be so reduced as to not interfere with the acquired rights of settlers, and leave without the boundaries thereof, a sufficient timber supply to meet the growing demand of the same.²⁵

The action of the Western Colorado Congress was not a chance response; rather, it reflected a change of attitude which in late 1891 and early 1892 was beginning to spread along the entire Western Slope, even in areas such as Glenwood Springs, where many citizens had favored the reserve. Speaking of the White River Reserve in November of 1891, the *In It Daily Avalanche* had reported:

It is a mistake to suppose that all the residents in the vicinity are opposed to the measure. The residents of Glenwood Springs and the settlers up the Grand river are decidedly in favor of it.²⁶

Only two weeks earlier the *Meeker Herald* had reported that Glenwood's enthusiasm had faded quickly and that "a noticeable change has taken place inasmuch as hardly a person in the Grand Valley can be found but what opposes the reserve."²⁷ The Grand Valley was not the only area where Colorado opinion displayed modification. As a petition to the president and the secretary of the interior, printed in the *Herald*, stated: "The people of this section of the state . . . are practically a

²⁴ *Denver Republican*, December 17, 1891, p. 1.

²⁵ *Aspen Daily Chronicle*, December 17, 1891, p. 3.

²⁶ *In It Daily Avalanche*, November 8, 1891, p. 3.

²⁷ *Meeker Herald*, October 24, 1891, p. 1.

unit in strenuously opposing, not the reservation, but the extent of the same."²⁸

Eddy, of course, fanned the flames of discontent by incessantly playing on the theme of bigness. In February of 1892 he sent a petition to Land Office Commissioner Thomas H. Carter asking for a new investigation of the reserve boundaries. Carter responded that "in view of the allegations set out . . . and in view of the adverse criticism made in the local press in various parts of Colorado," special steps should be taken to protect the rights and interests of the settlers near the reserve.²⁹ When nothing was done to follow up this proposal, resentment became bitter. By mid-1892 there was no mistaking the hostile attitude of the people of the White River country. Wrote one Meeker resident some fifty years later:

Well indeed do I recall the bitterness with which the cattle and sheepmen of Colorado greeted forest reserves. The words "Hitlerism" and "regimentation" had not been written into our language in those days, but they are characteristic of the reception which was accorded federal intervention in the early 1890's in the name of conservation. At that time I doubt if a hundred votes could be secured for the federal control of forests in Colorado.³⁰

Throughout the 1890s on the White River hostility continued, and when the government sent a handful of unqualified rangers to the "locked up" area, protest increased. When no change of policy resulted, many of the people of the area, pioneer settlers and petty spoilsmen alike, began to evade the law. In this particular reserve the most overtly contemptuous of the violators, according to the 1897-98 Geological Survey report, were timber cutters with portable sawmills which chewed up timber in every valley despite reserve rules prohibiting the cutting or sale of timber. It was nearly impossible to catch these men because the settlers generally refused to report them. Either they feared implication with "criminals" or they sympathized with the activities, available evidence indicating that the latter was the case. As one investigator for the Survey reported:

Nearly all illicit lumbering and other timber depredations are looked upon by settlers as blameless ventures. Such operations furnish a limited amount of employment to the poorer classes, and but for occasional sore enmities toward the richer mill operators, the latter are considered to be taking only what rightfully belongs alike to them and all other settlers. The de-

²⁸ *Ibid.*, June 11, 1892, p. 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, February 20, 1892, p. 1.

³⁰ *Golden Anniversary, White River National Forest*, p. 12.

predator's good name is not thought to be sullied by the veritable theft of timber from the national domain. The spirit of some landless settlers of the poorer class is well illustrated in the following remark made to the writer by a party suspected of selling dead building logs: "This timber belongs to us settlers and we're going to get it! The government officials can't prevent us, either, with an army! If they attempt to stop us, we'll burn the whole region up."³¹

This attitude, belligerent as it was, seemed to be pervasive.

Another problem was overgrazing. Despite the fact that range use also was under federal control, herbage and new grass were stripped, and millions of conifer seedlings were killed until the future worth of the range was in danger. Conservationist Gifford Pinchot wrote of the White River area:

The most important economic use possible for the reserve at present is for pasturage. . . . Since, however, the spread of the forest depends on the protection of the scanty young growth, it would be decidedly unwise to open the whole area of the reserve to pasturage except under suitable regulations properly enforced.³²

Yet, the regulations were not enforced at all. Although much of the fault lay with lax administration by the rangers, the unfavorable attitude of the settlers also was significant.

Near the end of the decade, the Geological Survey reported:

The immediate concern of law-abiding settlers is whether or not they are entitled to dead timber for fuel, fencing, and ranch buildings. Nearly all believe this right to have been denied them when the reserve was proclaimed. . . . "Timber agents" are severely censured as acting maliciously.³³

If there was any progress made in preserving the natural resources of this reserve after 1891, it was nearly impossible to measure. Nevertheless, the White River controversy brought into clear relief for the first time the issues of the conservation movement. It is interesting to note the constituents and rhetoric of the two "factions." On one hand were the conservationists—settlers who desired protection from fire and "monopolization" by large landowners, sportsmen who wanted a "game preserve," and promoters who saw in the proposed "park" a lucrative tourist attraction. All of them, of course, also spoke of "the greatest good for the greatest number" and of



Salt Lick Mountain pasture in White River National Forest.

providing for the future "welfare" of the area by protecting its timber. On the other hand were the opponents of conservation—newspapers purportedly speaking for the welfare of their communities and bemoaning the loss of projected tax dollars and population, ranchers arguing that desperately needed resources would fall into governmental hands and not be used by the people, and the bulk of the settlers and some exploiters ignoring the law and doing as they pleased.

Their ideology may have been summed up by Eddy's statement that "I am in favor of parks but I am more in favor of people." This, significantly, was a philosophy accepted by many of the pioneers. Their behavior was a pattern followed again and again in Colorado in the turbulent nineties.

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³¹ U.S., Department of Interior, Geological Survey, *United States Geological Survey, 20th Annual Report, 1898-1899*, 7 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 5:143.

³² U.S., Congress, Senate, *Surveys of Forest Reservations under Act of June 4, 1897*, S. Doc. 189, 55th Cong., 2d sess., 1898, 11:117.

³³ U.S., Department of Interior, Geological Survey, *United States Geological Survey, 20th Annual Report, 1898-1899*, 5:179.