

A giant of the West dies/16

High Country News

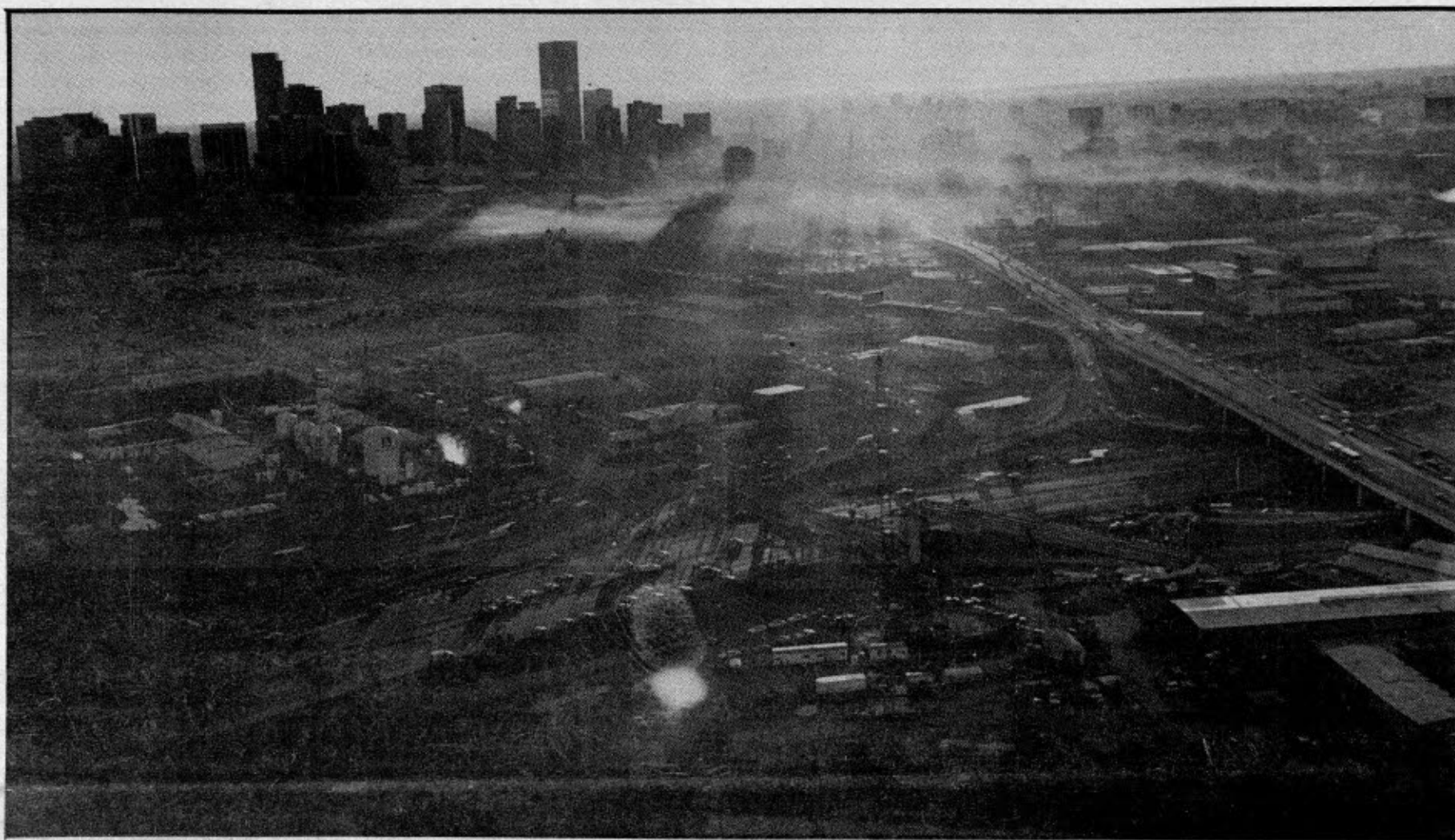
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Vol. 25 No. 9

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar and fifty cents

Now that Denver has abdicated ...



Morning in Denver

Jim Preston/The Denver Post

Who will coordinate and inspire the West?

by Ed Quillen

Once upon a time, there was a city with a vast hinterland. Out on the plains east of this city, farmers had fallen upon hard times.

The leading merchants of the metropolis were worried because the city needed these farmers as both suppliers and customers. And so the merchants loaned money to the farmers to carry them through the tough times.

Moreover, when farmers elsewhere in that city's hinterland feared that their peas and pinto beans would wither from a drought, the merchants gathered and said unto each other:

"Yea, let us join and support these farmers in their petition to the national government for dams and canals to bring water to their fields, for unless those remote farms have water, our city will not thrive."

Today this sounds like a fairy tale, but in 1912, the Denver Chamber of Commerce did indeed lend money to hard-pressed farmers in eastern Colorado, in order to "turn them into permanent producers which businessmen in Denver could not afford to see depart."

Were *High Country News* to cease publication, this would be the perfect issue to end on.

Staff thinks of *HCN* as a book, with issues every other week representing a new chapter in the saga of the modern West, or as pointillistic art with each article adding another dot to a portrait of the region.

Now comes writer Ed Quillen with his attempt to synthesize and place in a broad context much of what *HCN* has been reporting on for the past 23 years.

His 7,000-word article started with a single question: Is Denver necessary?

To answer that question, he talked to scores of people and read hundreds of books and articles.

Without ruining the article for you, we can reveal this much: While Denver may not be necessary to the West, some city — some center — is. Quillen argues that we are now engaged in a contest as to which city will become the capital of the region, and what the terms of its future relationship with rural areas will be. According to Quillen, much of what we are experiencing in the rural inland West is a result of Denver's shrinking from its former leadership position. Other cities are moving to fill the vacuum.

Quillen ranges widely in this article, back to the 19th century giants who built Denver, and up to the latest national election, in which he reveals why Bill Clinton was able to capture Rocky Mountain states that in the past voted Republican.

— Ed Marston

Several years earlier, in 1896, the Denver Chamber had sent a delegation to Washington, D.C., to lobby for an irrigation project in the San Luis Valley of Colorado. The chamber wanted to develop the valley as an agricultural community.

This wasn't altruism. The chamber acted out of

"purely selfish reasons"; its directors believed that the "city would grow and prosper by being a service center for a thriving hinterland."

Nor was it altruism in 1991, when Denver interests, acting through American Water Development Inc. (AWDI), spent \$30 million trying to destroy the San Luis Valley as an agricultural community. The plan, rejected by a state water court, was to pump 200,000 acre-feet of groundwater out of the valley each year and send it to the city through 250 miles of pipelines, reservoirs and canals.

Denver once believed it would prosper if its hinterland thrived; its leaders supported rural development projects every way they could.

But modern Denver doesn't believe it will make money if water grows potatoes or barley in some distant town. Denver now sees only

one way to prosper from water — use it to grow suburbs and shopping malls. Denver once knew how to enjoy economic growth without physical growth; today, it doesn't.

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Dear friends,

Wallace Stegner, 1909-1993

Toward the end of his life, Wallace Stegner found new readers among young people who discovered an authentic Western voice and an elegant writer in his many books. Shocked by the news of his death, several called to talk about him and to share some of his wonderful quotes. Our favorite is from the introduction to *The Sound of Mountain Water*: "The West is still nascent, still forming, and that is where much of its excitement comes from. It has a shine on it. Despite its mistakes, it isn't tired."

Albuquerque Tribune reporter Tony Davis sent us a brief story describing the accident that fatally injured Stegner. He died April 13, about two weeks after he drove his rental car out of a side road into a car heading north on U.S. 84-285, the main road from Santa Fe to Taos. Police cited the writer for failing to yield at an intersection, according to a police report. His wife, Mary, was not injured.

The previous night, he had been a guest speaker for a Mountain and Plains Bookseller Association awards banquet in Santa Fe. He read from his 1992 collection of essays, *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs*. In a front-page obituary, *The New York Times* said his ability to find heroic virtues in his novels' characters "separated Mr. Stegner's writing from the despair and alienation in the work of many of his contemporaries."

Quintessential Quillen

Writer Ed Quillen commandeers this issue with his provocative treatise on the decline of Denver as a Western force. We ran out of room before he ran out of words; missing are his two pages of thanks and a sidebar comparing the top 100 movers and shakers in Denver, as seen by the *Rocky Mountain News*, to a shorter list of regional leaders put together by *Newsweek*. There was zero overlap between the two lists, which Quillen cited as further evidence of the gap between Denver and the West it once was intimately connected to.

Questions and challenges can be sent to Ed Quillen at Box 548, Salida, CO 81201.

Inadvertent contributor

The genesis of this project lies with an anonymous Research Fund gift two years ago that allowed Quillen to do a few hundred hours of research. When that ran out, the Research Fund in general kept him going for a while longer.

But for the last 18 months, Quillen

has been working on this article as a labor of love, financed by his paid assignments. We hope he gets it back as speaking fees (he's very engaging behind the podium) or as spin-off articles (he has a wealth of unpublished material). In the meantime, he is one of this year's largest Research Fund contributors.

Babbitt comes West

Because Ed Quillen's article takes up so much room, there is no Bulletin Board page and relatively few Hotlines. So we are pressing this space into service to tell readers about four livestock grazing hearings scheduled for Bozeman, Mont., April 30; Reno, Nev., May 1; Grand Junction, Colo., May 5; and Albuquerque, N.M., May 6. For more information call Mary Helen Thompson, 202/208-6416.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt said, "I want to hear from those who live with these issues every day. No single group or point of view should dominate this discussion." The day-long hearings will include both panels and open-mike discussions.

The fate of the first few miles of the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness area in western Colorado rests with a state permit for a controversial marble quarry three miles inside the area. Public comments on how vehicular access and mining would affect the area will be taken until May 10. A pre-hearing conference will be held in Glenwood Springs on May 19, and the state will consider the proposal at a May 26-27 meeting. Comments can be sent to the Colorado Division of Mining and Geology, Attn. Bruce Humphries, 1313 Sherman St., Room 215, Denver, CO 80203 (303/866-3567). Although the wilderness area is federal land, the Forest Service says it has no authority over the project.

The Western Area Power Administration will sponsor a workshop in Delta, Colo., May 17 on "Keeping Energy Dollars in the Local Economy." Keynote speaker will be Wes Birdsall, the former utility manager of Osage, Iowa. The registration deadline is May 10. For information, call ERG International in Golden, Colo., at 800/769-3756.

New intern

Last year new intern Peter Mali worked in Moab, Utah, as an intern for Canyonlands Field Institute, a non-profit group that teaches people the ways of the

desert landscape. He says serving on the local ambulance squad also gave him the opportunity to drive at high speeds through Moab during the early hours of the morning.

After receiving a bachelor's degree in English in 1990 from Yale University, Peter traveled in Ecuador and Chile before working with the Student Conservation Association. He supervised a high school trail crew in Arkansas and also worked with a backcountry hut crew in New Hampshire for the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Raised in New York City and Connecticut, Peter says he can't pretend to pass as a native of the Intermountain West. But an interest in mediating environmental conflicts and a love for this part of the country have combined to keep him here. He hopes to be pursuing an environmental studies degree by fall 1994.

He also loves trees, his family, cooking, and playing guitar and says he's fascinated by landforms, unfamiliar cultures and Western conservatism.

Surveys wanted

If your *HCN* survey is still around, we would very much like to have you fill it out. They are all read, appreciated, and distilled for advice and information. We



Intern Peter Mali with papers headed for the post office

were especially taken by Claudia Whitnah of Martinez, Calif., who wrote:

"I am the wrong sort of reader to have any opinion on computer media — I am 68 years old, and know very little about electronic data sources. My typewriter is a manual Underwood, I can drive a Model A and can wind a wristwatch. Nonetheless, I couldn't live happily without *HCN*."

A young person in the office, upon reading the survey, asked: "What does 'wind a wristwatch' mean?"

— Betsy Marston, for the staff

HOTLINE

Forest team is hard at work

The president's Northwest forest team has set up shop in Portland, Ore., the site of the timber summit. The team has until June 1 to develop a strategy for the president that both protects forests and waterways without overlooking its impact on working people and communities. Leaders picked by Clinton include Forest Service biologist Jack Ward Thomas, who will direct work on ecosystem management; Peter Yu of the National Economic Council, who will head a community assistance group; and Jim Pipkin of the Interior Department, who will lead a group seeking more cooperation between federal and state

agencies in the region. "They couldn't find a better team," says Rick Johnson, a Sierra Club staffer in Seattle, Wash. Jack Ward Thomas led the study of the northern spotted owl, which rocked the timber industry in 1990.

Hurry-up predator control

In Wyoming, the Bureau of Land Management is scrambling to implement an emergency predator control program following an agency-wide ban on predator controls. BLM officials banned the federal Animal Damage Control from operating on most of its lands in the West last month in response to a legal challenge from the Humane Society. But the Wyoming BLM is moving ahead with emergency plans that allow killing of

predators within three miles of an area where livestock loss or damage has taken place, reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*. The killing can continue for five days after the livestock losses stop. Aerial hunting is permitted, but the use of M-44s — baited cyanide devices that explode in predators' mouths — is not. Although ranchers said they need help to protect livestock during the lambing and calving season, Susan Haygood of the Humane Society called the new plans too liberal. "We would be concerned again that coyotes that aren't responsible for damage are getting killed," Haygood said. Wyoming's ADC director Bill Rightmire criticized the three-mile limit as "arbitrary." Said Rightmire, "... let's not tie this down so that a field man carries a pedometer and when it reads three he goes home."

WESTERN ROUNDUP

A big gold mine wants to get bigger

The Little Rockies rise abruptly, mirage-like, out of the prairie north of the Missouri River in central Montana. For the Assiniboine and Gros Ventre tribes, this island of squatty young peaks is a sacred site.

For miners, the range holds a fortune in gold, and the conflict in values is playing out once again in the Little Rockies. A Canadian company, Pegasus Gold Inc., which first began mining gold in the area in 1979, plans to expand its heap-leach operation for the 11th time.

This latest expansion plan is massive. The company proposes to up its disturbed acreage from 400 acres to more than 1,000 acres on a mixture of private and federal land. The expansion would include a 60 million-ton waste rock disposal area, crushing facilities, a two-mile conveyor system, a 200-acre, 80 million-ton leach pond, new processing plant and ponds, and a limestone quarry.

The expansion would tap into deeper sulfide ore bodies, which opponents say will greatly increase an already existing acid drainage problem.

For years Pegasus has denied that acid drainage is a problem, but federal monitoring of wells in the mine area recently turned up increased levels of acid and metals. The Bureau of Land Management and the Montana Department of State Lands say they suspect the acidity originates from the waste dumps and possibly the mine pit. The company has begun retaining discharge water and treating it with limestone to raise the pH levels.

Will Patric, who heads the non-profit Mineral Policy Center office in Bozeman, Mont., says the BLM should deny Pegasus' planned expansion because the company's permit and \$1.8 million bond were approved under the assumption that it would not mine sulfide ores.

Patric says the Department of Interior used the same assumption to deny an appeal by environmentalists and tribal activists of Pegasus' last expansion in

1990. Now that the BLM has documented sulfide pollution, "It's a totally different ballgame," says Patric.

In response to public concern, the BLM is doing a full-scale environmental impact statement for the first time in the mine's history. The BLM's Scott Haight says the agency's monitoring of the mine in Zortman, Mont., has been "adequate," but he says the agency will increase its monitoring of nearby streams, including those that flow through the Fort Belknap Reservation below.

Some tribe members who live on the reservation say the agencies are just waking up to what has been an ongoing environmental disaster.

"It's a long time overdue for the BLM and the Department of State Lands to finally open their eyes to the problems going on here," says Joe Azure, founder of the reservation-based Red Thunder Inc., a group which is fighting the proposal. "We've been losing our sacred mountains to mining, and now our streams are being destroyed as well."

Azure says the health of the people living on the reservation is at risk. A New York doctor who visited the reservation last summer and conducted a small-scale blood test on children and elders found elevated levels of lead, he says, but calls to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for follow-up studies have been ignored.

Azure says for years the BLM and the state have relied on Pegasus to monitor its own drainage. Not surprisingly, the company has turned up no evidence that its mine is polluting the reservation, he says. At the tribe's request, the EPA is now conducting water tests on the reservation.

But the tribe's battle against Pegasus goes far beyond pollution. According to tribal members, it is the continuation of a 150-year-old fight to retain their land and cultural identity.

The United States moved the tribes onto reservations in the 1850s. In 1893, prospectors stumbled upon veins of high-

grade gold ore and set up shop on reservation lands. The discovery prompted Congress to cut the choicest 40,000-acre chunk of the mountain range out of the reservation. Within a few years, the easy-to-get gold was played out and the rush died.

But the pillage and plunder legacy of the early years didn't die. Soaring gold prices and a new technology spawned a second gold boom in the late 1970s, with Pegasus leading the way.

Tribal members say Pegasus' latest proposal threatens traditional sacred sites. A list of endangered sacred sites submitted to Congress by the Association of American Indian Affairs Feb. 23 included the Little Rockies.

Pegasus lobbyist John Fitzpatrick told a Montana State Senate committee in February that there were no native religious sites affected by the expansion. The tribes say the sites exist, but they refuse to specify exactly where to outsiders. In any case, the Fort Belknap Community Council says the entire Little Rocky mountain range is sacred, and it has passed resolutions asking that the range be returned to them. Fitzpatrick later said he never denied the significance of the range, just that no specific sites exist in the acreage involved in the mine expansion. The tribal council says flatly that Fitzpatrick should apologize and resign.

Pegasus is not famous for its public relations skills. The Mineral Policy Center, a mining industry watchdog organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., awarded Pegasus a grade of "F" in community relations on its "Mining Report Card" of the company last fall. The report card, part of the center's Mining Accountability Project, says the company deserves a "C" for site selection and planning, an "incomplete" on reclamation and a "C-minus" on regulatory compliance.

"Pegasus has demonstrated a clear pattern of hostile insensitivity to citizen concerns, and an inconsistent environmental compliance record," says the center's Jim Lyons. Pegasus' Fitzpatrick says the watchdog group is not objective and merely "exists to repeal the 1872 Mining Law."

Meanwhile, the long, involved process of permitting the mine expansion chugs along. The agencies will do more environmental monitoring this year, complete an ethnographic overview to determine the depth of traditional religious values, and continue to solicit public comment.

At an April 15 BLM public scoping meeting at the reservation village of Lodgepole, residents criticized the ethnographic overview done on the Little Rockies by a private contractor hired by Pegasus. They called it cursory and superficial.

"They never got the people together," said Virgil McConnell Sr., a tribal elder. "We'd be more than willing to share knowledge, but it would take a year to make a good survey. I ask the mining company and the BLM to hold off until a full cultural survey is done. Otherwise, Pegasus will just pay somebody to come in and say nothing's there."

For more information about the EIS process, contact the BLM at 406/444-2074 or 406/654-1240.

— Pat Dawson

The writer free-lances from Billings, Montana.

HOTLINE



Leo Holub

Wallace Stegner Soon, a Stegner chair

Montana State University has raised nearly one-third of the \$1.5 million it needs to establish an endowed Wallace E. Stegner Chair in Western American Studies. Stegner, who died April 13 from injuries sustained in a car accident in Santa Fe, N.M., wrote such highly acclaimed books as *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, *Angle of Repose* and *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian*. Stegner began the fund-raising drive last September in Bozeman, Mont., where he read from his works to a standing-room-only crowd of 600. The university says those who sit in the Stegner chair will focus their work on fundamental questions facing the West and reinterpretations of Western history. Stegner called the chair "a splendid way to inform the West about itself." To help reach its financial goal, the university will hold a five-day bus tour of "Stegner's Montana" June 26-30. For more information, contact Jane Ratzlaff of the Montana State University Foundation, Bozeman, MT 59715 (800/842-9028).

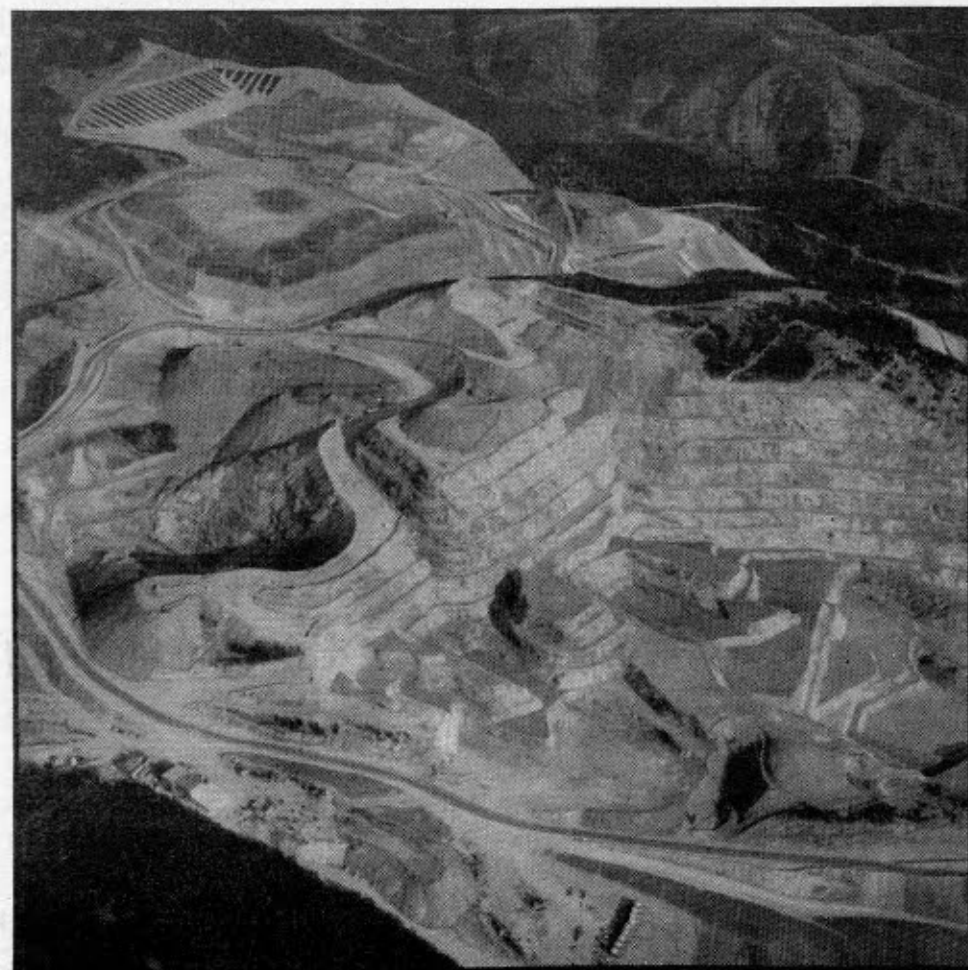
Three more at Interior

President Clinton nominated environmental lobbyist Brooks B. Yeager as director of the Office of Program Analysis, a new position at the Interior Department. Yeager, most recently a vice president for the National Audubon Society, will focus on overall policy development for the agency. The president selected Thomas B. Williams, a senior staff member on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Williams will serve under Assistant Secretary Nominee George T. Frampton Jr., who will have primary responsibility for the nation's national parks and refuges (HCN, 3/8/93). Clinton also nominated Kevin J. Sweeney to the post of communications director in the Interior Department. Sweeney, a former television journalist, served as press secretary to former U.S. Sen. Gary Hart. Most recently, he was public affairs director for Patagonia Inc., the California outdoor clothing company.

BARBS

It's not easy being green.

Moab resident Stan Ferris recently discovered why people called him at 7 a.m. to tell him to drop dead. His phone number was mistakenly listed for Scott Groene, an attorney with the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance.



Rob Badger

Pegasus gold mine in eastern Montana wants to double its size

HOTLINE



James E. Rich

Sika deer bucks in late velvet
Game farmers corralled

Game farmers Jim and Anita Rich, who raise exotic deer in northwest Washington, say the state could cost them their farm. The Washington Department of Wildlife issued a six-month moratorium last summer freezing the importation, sale and transfer within the state of most game-farm animals. On Dec. 9, Jim Rich and 22 other farmers sued the Washington agency for \$5.7 million in lost sales and damage. Although the agency lifted the ban Jan. 15 and approved regulations allowing limited game-farming, farmers say their industry has been damaged beyond repair. "The intent of the Department of Wildlife is to take away the right to own or make it so difficult to own wildlife that it's not worth it," Rich says. Agency spokesman Jeff Weathersby says the moratorium and restrictive regulations were necessary to prevent the spread of disease and interbreeding (*HCN*, 2/25/91). Weathersby points out that Canada destroyed 2,500 game farm animals in 1991, after a major outbreak of tuberculosis. Rich, who charges the agency is overreacting, petitioned the Washington Legislature to turn over regulation of the game farm industry to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

BARBS

The chief doesn't want people to think that the U.S. Forest Service would willingly prepare a scientific report.

Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson said of a report on old-growth ecosystems: "This is a scientific report in response to a court order. It is not a policy statement," he told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*.

HOTLINE

Disastrous deluge

Southern Arizona farmers are glum because winter floods drowned their crops. But river enthusiasts are equally upset because Pinto Creek, one of the state's few perennial streams, has become polluted. Mining wastes from the Magma Copper Co. overflowed retention barriers, depositing tailings and other wastes into the stream. "We had an overwhelming of our facilities," said Evelyn Bingham, chief environmental engineer for the mine. "It's been a nightmare." According to Jerry Nelson of the Sierra Club, fish were wiped out. "There were no signs of life whatsoever eight miles downstream," he said. U.S. Forest Service



Ed McCullough

Flooding along the Gila River near Yuma

hydrologist Rich Martin says mine tailings have a "very detrimental effect" on wildlife.

and has hired an environmental consulting firm to study effects of the spill.

He says Magma has a history of spills, although the recent one was the largest. "If this were one isolated incident, it would be viewed differently," he said. But, he added, "There are lots of mines in Arizona, and they're not having this trouble." Magma Copper Co. has been cleaning Pinto Creek since 1991, because of previous discharges. Under federal EPA and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality supervision, Magma says, it will continue cleaning

by the agencies and interested Indian groups.

Bush said he hopes that can be done within 30 days. But Keown is not so sure, noting his agency would need to hire rangers and print brochures before summer.

Frances Brown, a director of the Medicine Wheel Coalition of Indian tribes, said he also was disappointed that "it looks like we have to start all over again."

— **Michael Milstein**

The writer works for the *Billings Gazette* in Cody, Wyoming.

Utah lawmakers enact wise-use agenda

They rode into the Utah statehouse and proudly declared themselves the Cowboy Caucus. When the conservative, rural lawmakers rode out at the end of the session 45 days later, they left behind environmental chaos.

"It is safe to say that it has been a tough session on environmental issues," said Jody Allen, a lobbyist for the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club. This was the session that produced a bill, later signed into law, which allows the indiscriminate killing of skunks and red foxes by anyone, at any time, and for any reason. Another bill makes it legal to hunt red fox, skunk and raccoon at night with spotlights. Still another bill gives farmers and ranchers the right to kill big game animals if they're not removed from a field within 72 hours of a demand by the property owner.

Utah lawmakers also passed a law similar to "takings" legislation in effect in other states and disbanded the Division of Energy.

"The takings bill (called the Property Protection Act in Utah) comes out of the whole wise-use movement, and it was passed to intimidate the action of state agencies as related to private property rights," said Ken Rait, issues coordinator

of the Southern Utah Wilderness Association.

Utah lawmakers, who have always had a poor reputation in regards to wilderness and environmental issues, added some strange twists to the bill, however. The bill's initial form was almost identical to takings legislation in other states, requiring agencies to go through expensive and time-consuming steps in order to enact health and public safety regulations. But, after agencies complained about the costs, lawmakers wrote in a back door to the bill that exempts agency actions for which a takings analysis would cost too much.

"Now we have a bill that requires extra red tape and bureaucracy of state agencies, while it exempts their action," Allen said. Allen believes conflicting messages in the bill require state agencies to adopt guidelines that have no teeth.

Utah lawmakers want a classic rural/urban rift, said Dick Carter, coordinator of the Utah Wilderness Association. "What better way to prevent a broad-based environmental vision and maintain mistrust and divisiveness in Utahns?"

Despite the bias against wilderness, some bills emerged that benefit the land and wildlife. A bill that would have reau-

thorized the spring bear hunt died in the Rules Committee of the House. The bill's sponsor, Democratic Rep. Tom Math, ignored dozens of hours of public testimony that was overwhelmingly opposed to the spring shootings.

Democratic Rep. Dave Jones sponsored HB150, which establishes a Wildlife Heritage Advisory Committee to advise the wildlife board and Division of Wildlife Resources regarding a program for non-consumptive wildlife management. Heritage certificates may be purchased for \$15, with all proceeds going to the Wildlife Heritage Program.

Lawmakers also authorized a statewide management system for used motor oil and increased the cost for dumping out-of-state hazardous waste in Utah. And an innocuous-sounding bill that would let a person "take certain protected wildlife if it is endangering human life" died in committee. The bill would have allowed people to kill a cougar, black bear or rattlesnake if they felt threatened by it.

— **Lance Gurwall**

The reporter free-lances from Salt Lake City, Utah.

Medicine Wheel remains unprotected

SHERIDAN, Wyo. — After moving to protect a mountaintop stone structure Native Americans say is sacred, managers of northern Wyoming's Bighorn National Forest reversed the action.

Attempts to safeguard the Medicine Wheel National Historic Landmark from a rising tide of tourists are now caught in a tangle of red tape. Authorities still hope to have it unraveled, and the ancient site protected, before the summer tourist season starts.

"We've lost a lot of valuable time and wasted a lot of taxpayers' money to dot i's and cross t's," said Bighorn Forest Supervisor Larry Keown.

Debate over management of the Medicine Wheel, a wagon wheel-shaped stone structure of unknown origin, has dragged since the U.S. Forest Service launched an environmental impact statement on the subject three years ago. Managers later shelved that document due to continuing criticism.

In February, forest managers called a Billings, Mont., "summit" of Indian tribes, state and federal officials and leaders of area communities, which consider the wheel a local attraction. During the

emotional meeting, Native Americans demanded that Keown block vehicle access to the site to limit tourist impact, and local leaders acceded.

Visitation to the windswept stone structure, accessible only in summer months when snow melts, has risen from about 12,000 to 70,000 over the last three years. Such booming crowds have turned paths around the wheel into "cow trails," said Jerry Flute, executive director of the Medicine Wheel Coalition, an alliance of Indian tribes.

Two weeks after the Billings gathering, Keown announced plans to halt vehicles about a mile from the wheel. Travelers would have to walk the rest of the way to the site, though through traffic would still be allowed to permit loggers, ranchers and others access to the backcountry.

As part of his short-term action, the forest supervisor also pledged to restrict pedestrians to established paths around the wheel and set aside 12 days each summer for "traditional ceremonial use" by Indians.

Native Americans generally praised the action.

But it quickly drew criticism from two historic preservation agencies, the

federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office. Officials admitted they had pushed Keown to make just such a decision, but complained he did not first consult them in writing, as required.

Native Americans should have been invited to comment, they said. "We're not talking about the particulars, we're talking about the process," said Robert Bush, Advisory Council executive director. He said Keown's decision "was the right step at the wrong time, even though it may have been for the right reasons."

The forest supervisor said he had acted quickly to get protective measures in place before the coming tourist season, thinking he had properly consulted with the agencies at the Billings meeting. Following the criticism, however, he withdrew the order.

In March, the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation unveiled a written agreement of its own. It was based largely on the plan Keown had approved and rescinded, although it allows for twice as many days of exclusive Indian use. That agreement is to be reviewed and signed



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The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance
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HOTLINE

Is Babbitt for Badger?

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt will
review the BLM's approval of oil-drilling
two miles from Glacier National Park,
Mont. Fina Oil and Chemical Company
hopes to find oil in the Badger-Two
Medicine roadless area (HCN, 2/22/93).
Interior spokeswoman Stephanie Hanna
said Babbitt will review that decision
along with every other decision made by
the Bureau of Land Management during
the last 90 days of the Bush administra-
tion, reports the *Missoula Independent*.
Environmentalists and Sen. Max Baucus,

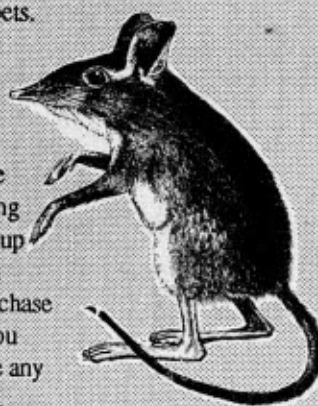
D-Mont., sent letters to Babbitt urging
that he revisit BLM approval. The
116,000-acre Badger-Two Medicine area
is part of the Glacier Park ecosystem and
is revered by the Blackfeet Tribe.

Don't breathe the carpet

A testing lab exposed mice to nine
carpet samples from around the country
— samples that people said made them
sick. Most of the mice died, after first
suffering gross breathing and sensory
reactions, reports *Econews* in Arcata,
Calif. The researchers could not pin-

point the problem, but speculate it is a
volatile compound produced during the
manufacture of the latex backing of
many carpets.

Consumer
advocates
suggest
getting a
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and sleeping
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you could make to the RMEF's work to Dan
Crockett, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation,
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trar, National Audubon Society, 613
Riversville Rd., Box H, Greenwich, CT
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TION seeks Campaign Director to work with
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education in natural resources or related
fields highly desirable. Experience in public-
lands management, public speaking, fund-
raising and environmental policy/advocacy
also desirable. Send résumé to Darrell Knuf-
ke, TWS, 7475 Dakin St., Suite 410, Den-
ver, CO 80221. (2x7p)

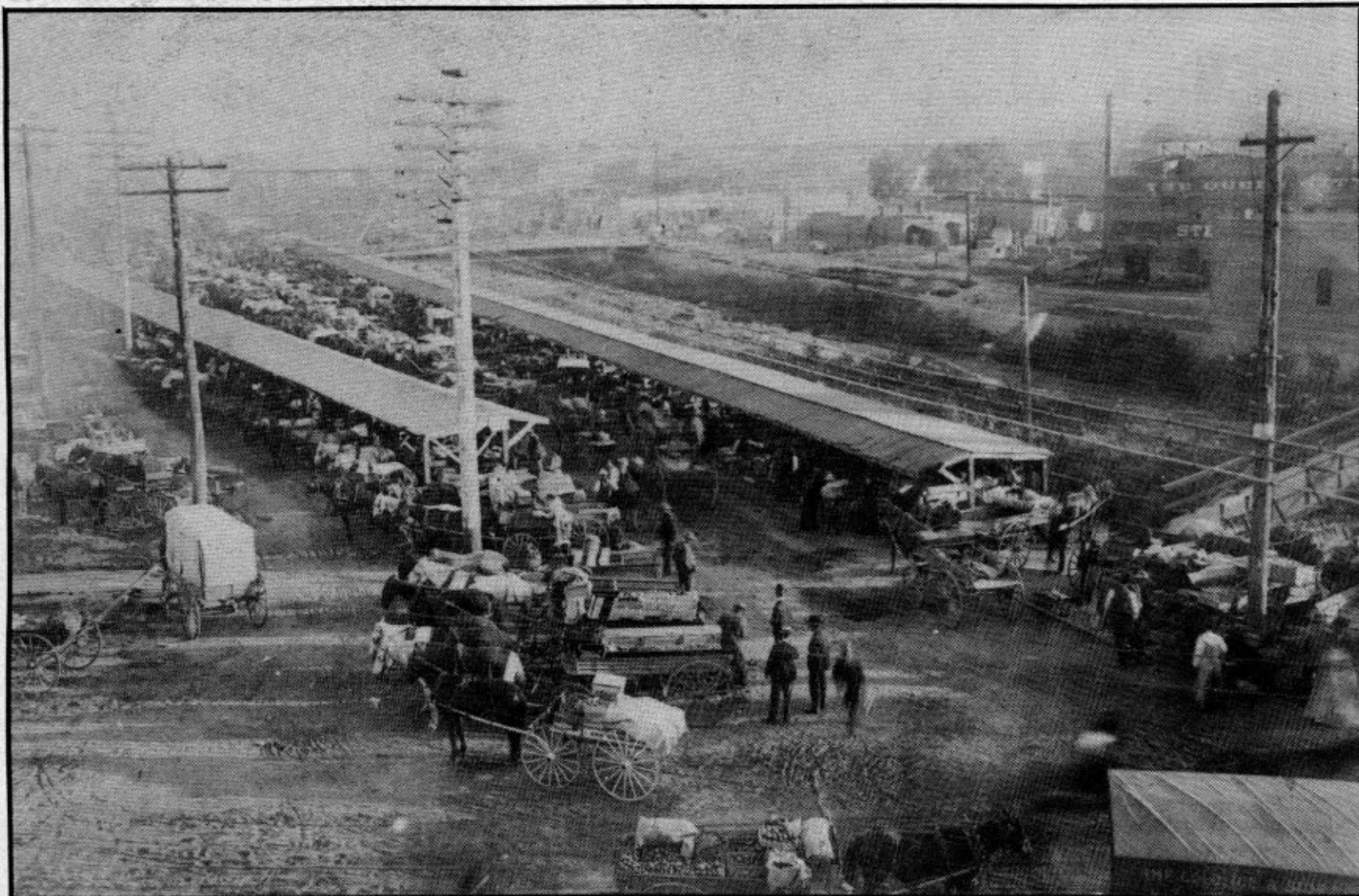
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THE GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALI-
TION holds its 10th anniversary annual meet-
ing at the Federation of Fly Fishers Building in
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theme is "Turning Point for Greater Yellow-
stone: The Last Decade, The Next Frontier."
Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., will deliver the
keynote address Saturday and Interior Secre-
tary Bruce Babbitt is an invited speaker. The
two-day conference includes dinner each night
and costs \$40 for members, \$45 for non-mem-
bers and \$25 for students. Greater Yellowstone
Coalition can be reached at P.O. Box 1874,
Bozeman, MT 59771 (406/586-1593).

THE SOUTHERN ROCKIES ECOSYSTEM
PROJECT needs volunteers who enjoy hik-
ing to help map the vegetation, topography,
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and biodiversity management plan for the
region. Contact project coordinator Roz
McClellan, 483 Marine, Boulder, CO 80302
(303/447-9409).



Colorado Historical Society

Denver markets around 1892

Now that Denver has abdicated ...

continued from page 1

The recent water conflict between Denver and the San Luis Valley raised emotions well past shouting. But the clash is ironic, because that valley's agricultural industry is largely a creation of Denver.

Although the San Luis Valley has been home to Hispanic farmers since the founding of San Luis de Culebra in 1851, their farming was for subsistence, not export, until 1860.

By then, Denver held enough prospectors and settlers to create a market for the soft flour that Anglos preferred to the coarse stone-ground Mexican meal; new mills arose in San Luis and Saguache to grind local wheat for the emerging Front Range market.

Getting the flour to market required 250 miles of new roads to tie the valley to distant Denver, rather than its old outlets at nearby Taos and Santa Fe.

Organizing the valley into a supplier and market for Denver accelerated in 1878, when the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad reached its namesake river at Alamosa. Denver investors provided some capital, and Denver financiers raised additional capital from as far away as the Netherlands, so that they could promote and build towns, reservoirs, canals, refineries, sawmills, mines, mills, smelters, spas, stores, elevators, creameries, ice houses and more railroads.

Among those railroads was the San Luis

Southern, 29 miles of uncertain track from Blanca to Jaroso, a few yards north of New Mexico. When the company founded in 1928 and shippers feared the line would be scrapped, Charles Boettcher came to the rescue, not only with back taxes and operating funds, but with ambitious plans for an extension that would connect Denver to Taos.

This was nothing new for Boettcher. He spent his long life building ties between Denver and its hinterland; he was the leader of the Denver capitalists who took profits from one regional enterprise and invested them in another.

An emigrant from Prussia, Boettcher opened a hardware store in Leadville during the boom of 1879. Deepening mines needed explosives by the ton, and railroads were reluctant to haul the new "giant powder" because nitroglycerine is temperamental. So Boettcher built the Union Powder Works at Leadville, eliminating the need to ship the explosive, and when the mining camp's proposed electric company fal-

How John Evans helped build a Rocky Mountain empire centered on Denver

Medical doctors are known for their ability to make money treating patients and to lose money on investments. John Evans was different.

Almost everything financial this Illinois doctor touched turned out well.

His investment career began in earnest in 1845, when he joined the faculty at Rush Medical Clinic in Chicago. By 1850, he owned a lot of real estate in that rapidly growing city; soon he was developing rural areas around Chicago with the help of railroad links that played the development role then that interstate highways play today.

Then as now, real estate development required political connections; he served in local office and campaigned for candidates who shared his views.

Among the candidates Evans supported was Illinois acquaintance Abraham Lincoln, which is how Evans became governor of Colorado Territory in 1862.

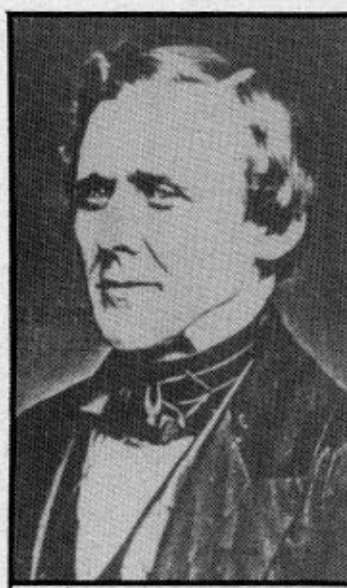
He lost the post three years later, in the wake of the Sand Creek Massacre. Evans, who believed in developing land to reach its full potential, said it was "ridiculous" that "a country 1,000 miles long and 500 miles wide, one of the most fertile in the world, should belong to a few bands of roving Indians."

Although no longer governor, Evans stayed on for a replay of his Chicago route to fortune.

He organized the Denver Board of Trade, which promoted the Denver Pacific Railroad, a 106-mile connection north along the Front Range to the Union Pacific main line at Cheyenne.

Local financing was impossible, so Evans raised some money from Chicago and hustled a land grant from Washington.

By 1870, Denver had its railroad north to Cheyenne, with the line's midpoint bisected by the town of Evans. But he continued to build railroads —



Colorado Historical Society

John Evans

the first line into the mountains was his Denver, South Park & Pacific, and his adopted city got a Gulf Coast connection with his Denver & New Orleans.

Evans put up office buildings in Denver's growing commercial district, and made sure people could get there from his suburbs by assisting the Denver Tramway Company. He invested in the First National Bank of Denver, run by two other Midwesterners, David Moffat and Walter Cheesman. Nor did he neglect education: He founded the University of Denver, just as he had earlier founded Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.

He also started a dynasty. His son, William Gray "Napoleon Bill" Evans, ran the Tramway Company. His grandson, John Evans Sr., was president of the First National Bank.

His great-grandson, John Evans Jr., died at 77 on March 16, 1993. The obituary noted that he had been on the board of the University of Denver, and a director of the First National Bank of Denver, the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, and the Winter Park Association — a sort of *Who's Who* of the old regional power structure.

The obituary did not say that the original John Evans amassed a fortune in Chicago, and applied precisely the same techniques in building another fortune, and a dominant city, in Colorado. —E.Q.

tered before a single lamp incandescenced, he bought it and operated at a profit.

In 1890, he moved permanently to Denver. A decade later, on vacation in his native Germany, he saw a prosperous sugar beet industry — something that hadn't yet worked in the West, despite several expensive efforts promoted by the Denver Chamber of Commerce.

Boettcher made it work, and soon there were sugar mills operating in Colorado from Ovid to Delta, an empire that spread to Billings, Mont.; Lovell, Wyo.; and Scottsbluff, Neb.

Like a successful TV sitcom, Boettcher's sugar industry inspired spin-offs. Leafy beet tops contained no sugar, but steers found them fattening — a start for the cattle-feeding industry. Boettcher used his clout with the West's congressional delegations to promote his interests, which were also the region's interests: irrigation projects such as the Colorado-Big Thompson for cheap water, lax immigration policies like the bracero program for cheap labor, and a stiff tariff on imported sugar to keep domestic sugar beet prices high.

During construction of the Loveland sugar factory, Boettcher saw that mortar cement came from distant Germany at considerable expense. So he founded the Ideal Cement Company, which had plants and quarries in Colorado, Montana, Wyoming and Utah by 1924. Other Boettcher interests included packing plants, stockyards, grocery wholesale houses, banks, utilities and railroads.

Boettcher personifies the approach that built Denver into the dominant city of the Mountain West: Organize a connected hinterland of raw materials, processors and markets, with Denver as the head and heart of 300,000 square miles of "Rocky Mountain Empire."

It's easy to see where Denver's attention was in the past. Our question is: Where is Denver's attention now?

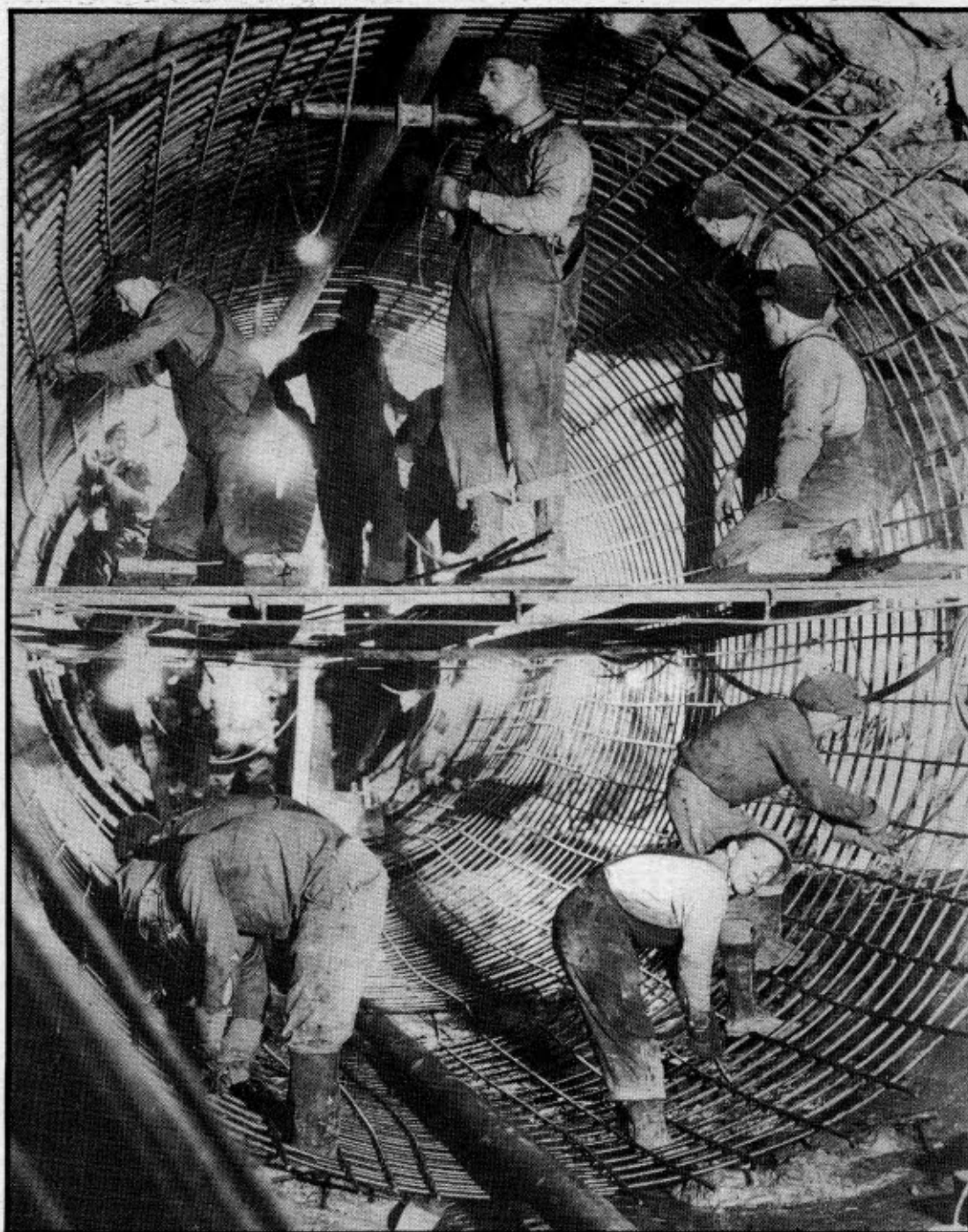
There's a new convention center, built with state money, so that Denver hotels can operate closer to capacity. There's Two Forks, a stalled effort by the metro area to take more water away from the hinterlands. And there's the new Denver International Airport, which Colorado Gov. Roy Romer called the most important regional economic development effort of the century.

The new airport may improve Denver's connections to Tokyo and Munich, but it will also weaken the city's connections to its hinterland.

That's the view of Jeff Wendland, manager of Walker Field, the airport which serves Grand Junction, 250 miles and several mountain ranges west of Denver.

"We send two kinds of passengers to Denver — commuters and connectors," Wendland said, "and Denver International will probably diminish both."

Commuters fly to Denver and back for a day or two of business. "Most of ours are bound



Workers ready the Moffat Tunnel for its concrete lining in the early 1930s

either downtown or to the Tech Center," Wendland said, "and the new airport is much farther away from both than Stapleton is."

"So if you fly from here to Denver on a business trip, you're looking at increased travel time once you land, as well as additional ground-transportation costs. Driving will compete effectively on a cost and time basis, especially now that Interstate 70 has been completed through Glenwood Canyon. And you've got to consider that Western Slope people like having their cars, which provides even more reason to drive instead of fly."

Not only will commuters pay more for car rental or cab fare at the new airport, but air fares will rise because landing fees will be higher to pay the airport's construction costs.

Every ticket involving a landing and take-off at Denver International will rise by about \$25. Thanks to the hub-and-spoke structure of air routes, this means that someone going from Durango to Billings will change planes in Denver, so the \$25 amounts to a tax on regional com-

merce to finance Denver's new airport. Technically, of course, this isn't a tax, and the politicians are thus keeping their promise that no general tax money will be used to build the airport.

From Grand Junction's perspective, these increased fares amount to "another incentive to driving and increasing the congestion and pollution along I-70," Wendland said.

So a new airport will discourage Wendland's commuters. His connectors fly from Grand Junction to Denver, where they catch a flight to their ultimate destination.

But they don't have to go to Denver if they can catch a flight elsewhere; Wendland has developed Grand Junction connections to Phoenix, Salt Lake City and Albuquerque. If it costs more to change planes in Denver, he says, the connectors will use another regional city with a big airport.

"We've worked to give the connectors options," Wendland said, "so we can keep their business no matter what happens in Denver. But I worry that we're going to lose a lot of our commuter business after the new airport opens."

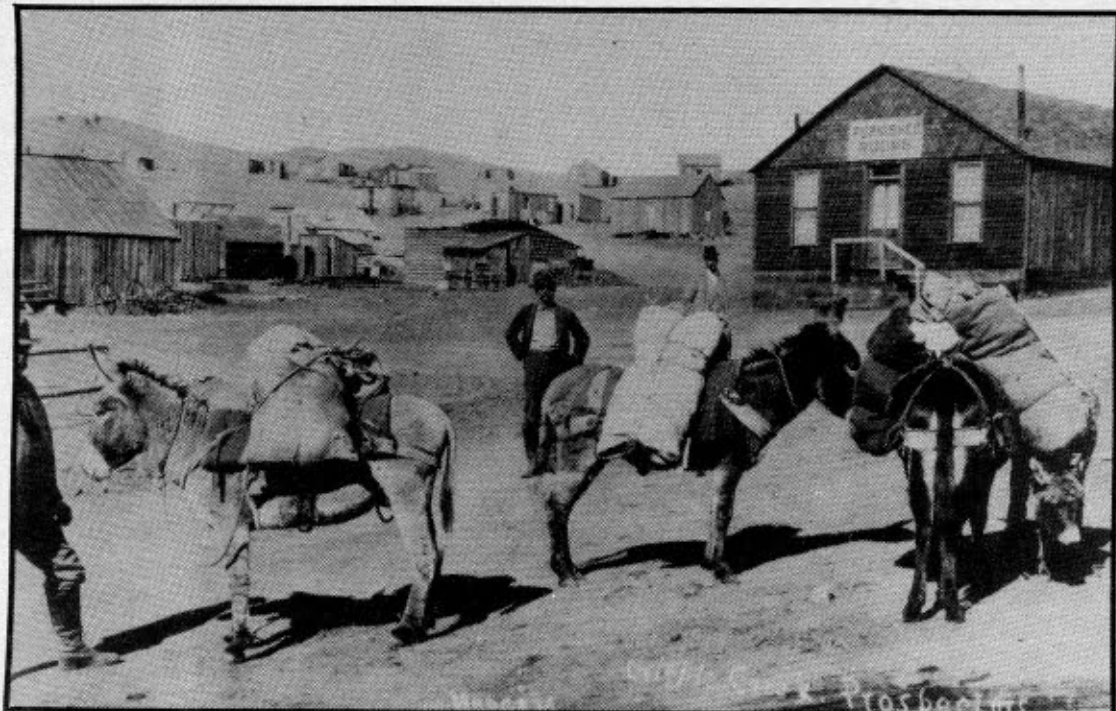
But won't a big new Denver airport function as an improved import-export gateway for the region?

"Keep in mind that at least 60 percent of the passengers there will never leave the airport — they're just changing planes," Wendland said. "They could be anywhere."

As for the other 40 percent, some, such as skiers bound for the slopes, are important to the regional economy. But in the future, they're less likely to deplane in Denver and take a car to the ski resorts.

Direct flights to Aspen, Vail (Eagle Coun-

It's easy to see where Denver's attention was in the past. Our question is: Where is Denver's attention now?

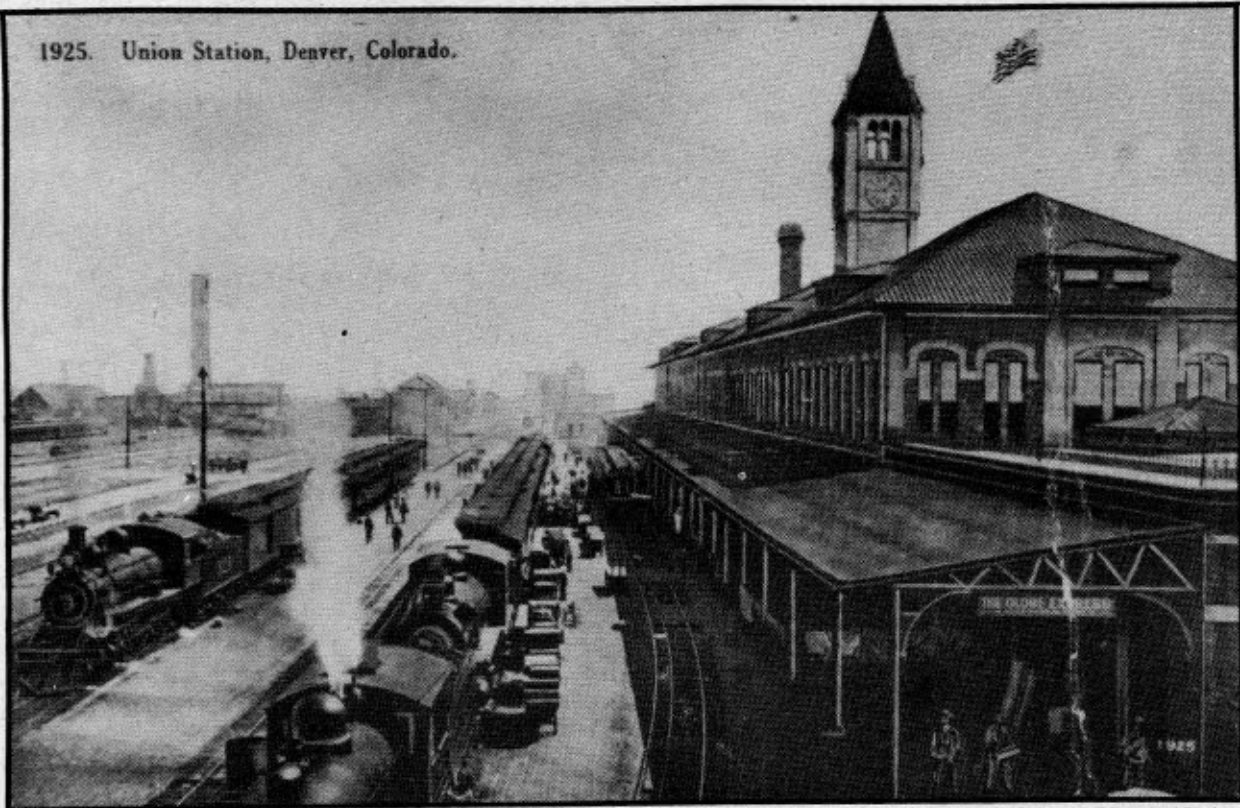


Miners in early Teller County

Denver Public Library Western History Department

continued on next page

1925. Union Station, Denver, Colorado.



Colorado Historical Society

Simplot and Coors: Westerners to their cores

*Some companies put down roots;
others leave us with the shaft*

When it comes to big companies, the West has two types: rooted and unrooted. When adversity hits, rooted companies adapt their assets and skills to stay in business in the region. Unrooted companies move on.

In good times, rooted companies put their profits into new regional enterprises; the profits of unrooted companies go elsewhere.

Among the most firmly rooted is the J.R. Simplot Company, a \$1.5 billion-a-year firm based in Boise, Idaho.

Jack Richard Simplot's empire started in 1924, when he raised hogs on the meat of wild horses he shot. But Idaho was potato country, and he entered that business after he bought an electric potato sorter in 1932 for \$250.

Simplot saw that hungry soldiers would eat a lot of potatoes in World War II if there were a way to store and ship them. So he bought the biggest vegetable drier in America and became a major supplier to the military.

During the war, he backed a chemist who discovered that it was possible to freeze potatoes without turning them to mush; the trick is to blanch and cook the potatoes first to stabilize the starch.

The result was the frozen french fry, Simplot's biggest moneymaker with about 80 percent of McDonald's fries coming from Simplot. But manufacturing frozen french fries is wasteful. On average, Simplot's 10 processing plants require a ton of raw potatoes to make 1,000 pounds of frozen fries. In the past, the residue was dumped into the river. But Simplot discovered that cattle would gain weight if fed potato peelings.

"I didn't know a lot about environmental concerns," he said in 1989, "but I figured I could make a helluva lot of money by feeding the cattle cheap. It takes 150,000 head of cattle just to eat the potato peelings."

The Simplot path to expansion was vertical integration based on regional resources.

As a result of following this path, by 1990, the Simplot empire included five potato processing plants, five processing plants for other vegetables, cattle-raising and beef-packing operations, a hydro-electric plant, a cogeneration plant, two ethanol production units, three phosphate mines, a natural-gas field, the Best and Simgro fertilizer brands, 75 Soilbuilders stores to sell them to farmers, 150 trucks, 700 rail cars and a unit that designs and builds refrigerated rail cars.

Another company with deep regional roots is the Coors Brewing Co., which began in 1873 when Adolf Coors, who emigrated to dodge the Prussian draft, started making beer in an abandoned tannery in Golden.

When Midwestern righteousness in the form of Prohibition swept the nation in 1916, most of America's

1,568 breweries went out of business. But Coors held on until repeal in 1933 by diversifying into malted milk, cement, a near-beer called Mannah, industrial alcohol and ceramics.

He had started the ceramics enterprise in 1894, when the brewery had trouble finding good suppliers of glass and ceramic stoppers. It expanded during World War I, when Britain blockaded Germany, which had supplied ceramics to American laboratories. Eventually, Coors Ceramics became a world leader making electronic and structural ceramics such as missile nose cones.

A decade ago, then, Coors was similar to Simplot. There was its Golden brewery, Coors Porcelain, coal mines, gas fields, an aluminum company, a glass company, a packaging company, a transportation company and cogeneration that heated Colorado School of Mines.

However, the non-brewing enterprises have since been spun off, explained John Fellows, a Coors spokesman. "We're not nearly as vertically integrated as we were at the start of the '80s."

Fellows attributed that to changes in the beer industry. "The name of the game now is marketing. To stay in business, we've got to compete effectively against Anheuser-Busch and Miller, and that means the company has to focus on market share, rather than on energy, transportation or ceramics."

Coors, the third largest brewer in the world, remains a major regional food processor. In 1992, it bought 10 million bushels of barley from farmers in Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Colorado. Washington and Idaho supply hops. A former subsidiary in Johnston, Colo., converts farm crops to the 100 million pounds of starches the brewery consumed in 1992.

Simplot has taken one course. Coors has changed from an integrated developer of regional resources into a national brand, which means it is unlikely to stay as rooted in the West as it has been.

What about an unrooted company?

The most prominent is Exxon, which was pumping \$1 million a day into western Colorado until May 1982, when the directors met in New York and decided that this wasn't the time for oil shale.

Exxon was part of a panicked rush out of the Rockies. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, natural-resource companies like Chevron, Asarco and Amoco employed almost 30,000 people in the region, inspired about 55,000 other jobs, and spurred the construction of office buildings in Western cities.

When oil prices dropped in 1982, they didn't look around the region for other opportunities. They left, and the slamming of their doors reverberated in the region for much of the 1980s.

That's the difference between rooted and unrooted companies.

—E.Q.

Now that Denver

continued from previous page

ty), Steamboat Springs (Hayden), Crested Butte (Gunnison), etc., have tripled since 1985, and now provide about 15 percent of the ski traffic. Overall, air traffic has risen 45 percent since 1986 at these mountain airports. Wendland predicted that the trend will continue, even though direct flights cost more.

"For most people, a ski vacation is a major production. They want to maximize the time they're on the slopes. If it means spending a few more dollars, they'll spend the money to bypass Denver."

Interstate 70, the primary land route to Summit County, Aspen and Vail, is a major contributor to both time and hassle, Wendland said. "It's already congested from Denver to Copper Mountain, and it will get worse — more traffic jams and more delays."

The Mountain West is not only tourist territory. Aside from old standbys like farming, logging and mining, the region produces high-tech medical equipment, computer software, book manuscripts and similar items whose value is high in relation to their weight — perfect candidates for air freight, which carries more than 75 percent of the dollar value of Colorado's international exports.

Even though air freight is vital to the region's economy, "it got treated like a stepchild at Denver International," Wendland said. "For a while, it looked as though another airport would get the freight terminals because Denver hadn't really considered the needs of United Parcel, Federal Express, etc. Beyond that, they need good highway access, and that's still questionable."

Whether we look at agriculture or transportation, water allocation or telephone service, Denver today has a different agenda than its hinterland.

Denver and its hinterland are a couple who were once intimate; each provided for the other and supported the other. Now they appear to be going their separate ways. Instead of cooperating, they compete. In fact, some would argue that Denver is attempting to cannibalize its hinterland, taking water, making transportation more expensive, and failing to invest in rural activities.

Can we measure how their interests have diverged, or even become antagonistic?

When I began to tackle such measurements, I had a foolish notion: I would find *The Great Formula Book of Urban-Hinterland Interactions*, written by an esteemed political geographer or economist.

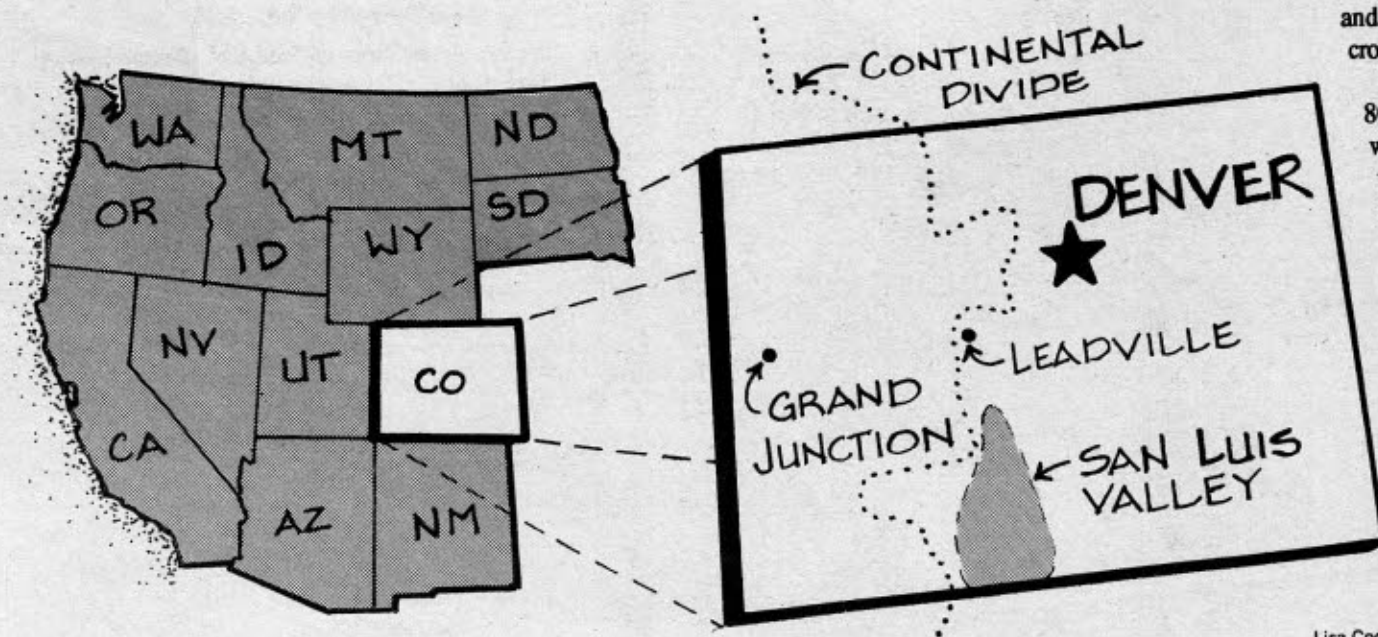
I would enter the appropriate numbers — wholesale trade, postal receipts, freight volume, telephone and telegraph traffic, etc. — from 1900, 1950 and 1990. Then I could explain in tedious detail just how the relationship between Denver and its hinterland has changed.

It seemed like a classic approach. After all, the first great political economist, Adam Smith, observed in *The Wealth of Nations* that "the great commerce of every civilized society, is that carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country."

Certainly someone had studied and explained that "great commerce" in the ensuing two centuries. Unfortunately, I couldn't locate it. But I live in an isolated town with a small library. So I asked experts — Randy Russell, who holds a master's degree in urban planning; Patricia Nelson Limerick, a Western historian who knows the importance of cities; Tom Noel, co-author of *From Mining Camp to Metropolis*, the best modern history of Denver; and William Cronon, author of *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*.

They were all quite cordial to a rustic non-scholar, but they had never run across *The Great Formula Book of Urban-Hinterland Interactions*. They asked me to tell them about it if I found it, because they, too, had often needed that text.

Denver has abdicated ...



and plants to process cattle, crops and ores.

Denver handled at least 80 percent of the region's wholesale trade. Whatever was purchased in the hinterland most likely passed through Denver, where someone made money off it. Denver also processed or handled a similar percentage of the region's raw materials. The more the hinterlands thrived, the more Denver prospered.

Nor was Denver's power only economic. The *Sunday Denver Post* boasted a greater circulation than all other regional newspapers

Lisa Cook

I was already familiar with the next best thing to my illusory book. Cronon had already written a masterful exposition of the far-ranging impact of an energetic city. In *Nature's Metropolis*, he explains how Chicago, from 1840 to 1893, transformed a vast chunk of North America in order to enrich itself. He shows that a countryside and its dominant city are inextricably tied together.

An overgrazed meadow which pollutes a creek in a remote national forest in Utah is a direct result of the voracious appetite of the beef-packing industry that arose in Chicago after the Civil War.

The packing plants needed ever-increasing quantities of beef on the hoof, thus providing a steady market for cattle. So arose those Western archetypes — ranchers and cowboys driving livestock, along with barbed-wire, windmills, and the physical and cultural transformation of the High Plains. The beef-packing plants also doomed the headstrong bison and fractious Indians of the short-grass prairie; they were exterminated to make room for docile Herefords and mortgaged homesteaders.

Chicago's elevators and flour mills needed grain, which was hauled to the city on Chicago-based railroads, which advertised throughout Europe for farmers and settled those immigrants on 160-acre farms carved out of the tall-grass prairies.

Chicago also looked north, to the woods of Michigan and Wisconsin. Those woods were allocated to Chicago sawmills, where Sears, Roebuck & Co. could fabricate complete house kits, to be shipped on Chicago railroads to settlers who read Chicago newspapers for the latest in merchandise and markets.

Its role as a rail hub made Chicago the ideal center for distribution and wholesaling, and with ample fast rail delivery, its newspapers and magazines could reach farther and faster than any other city's. Commercial domination and media mastery bring financial clout, and thousands of rural banks relied on big Chicago banks for loan participation and clearing-house services. No substantive enterprise could get capital unless Chicago approved.

with and following Chicago. Thanks to the Chicago model, Denver grew from a few shacks along Cherry Creek into the region's leading city from 1860 to 1880 despite spirited competition from Cheyenne, Pueblo and Colorado City.

Led by a political and financial clique with strong Chicago ties, Denver became a railroad hub, a wholesaling and distribution depot for regional imports and exports, and a processing and manufacturing center with smelters, flour mills, breweries, foundries and factories.

From 1880 to 1960, Denver was the "command-and-control center" for 300,000 square miles of Rocky Mountain Empire — all of Colorado and Wyoming, Kansas and Nebraska west of the 100th meridian, the eastern tier of Utah, and the northern part of New Mexico — a tenth of the area of the lower 48 states.

A small group of 17th Street bankers and brokers controlled public borrowing and commercial credit throughout this domain.

Denver capitalists found regional sources of raw materials, laid railroads to transport those resources, exerted political pull to build irrigation systems and import cheap labor while suppressing unions, and raised the money for smelters, mills

combined. Newspapers don't tell people what to think, but they do tell people what to think about, and Denver was thereby able to set the regional agenda.

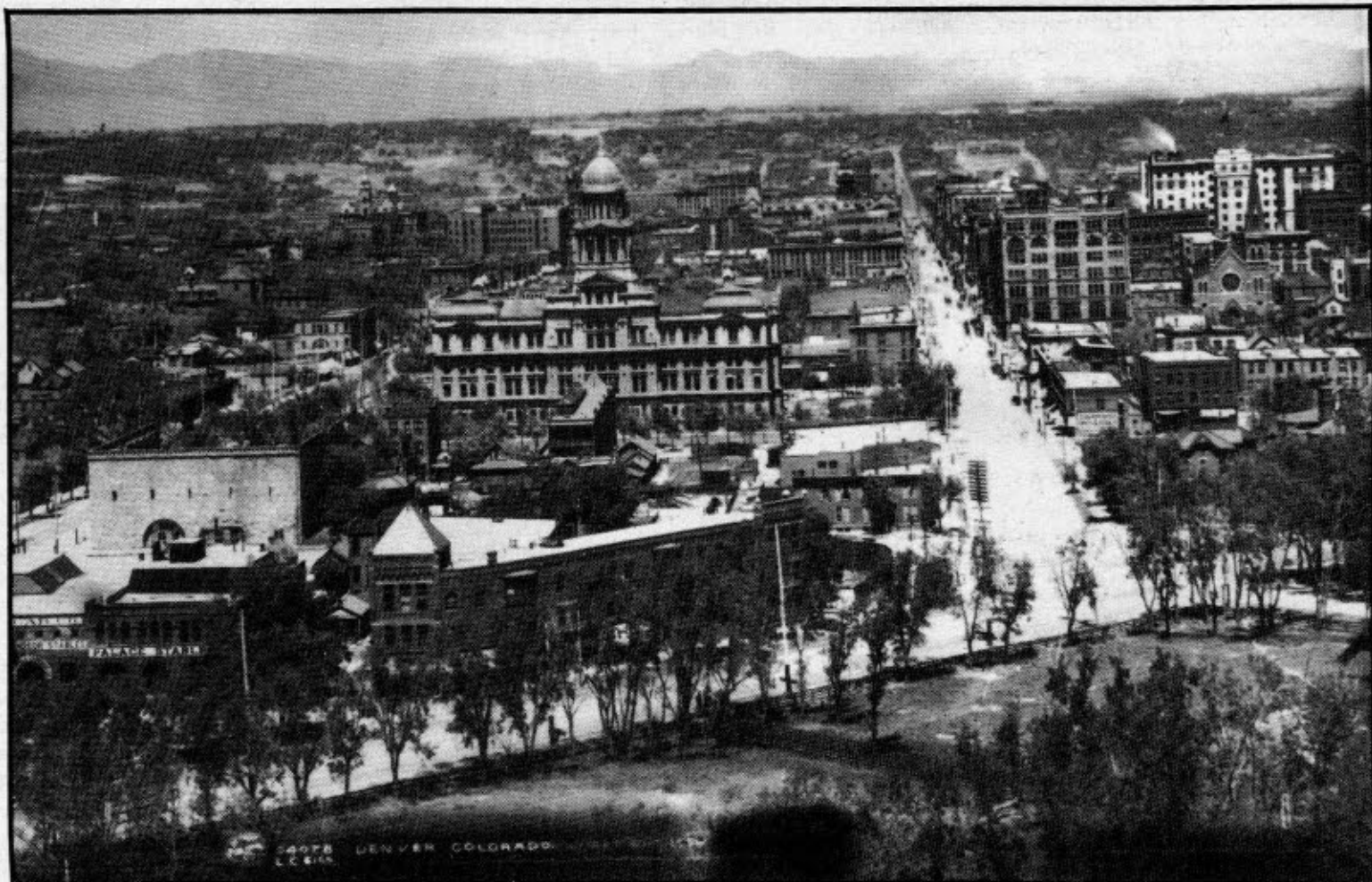
The Rocky Mountain Empire was an integrated unit; what was good for the region was good for Denver.

It was thus in Denver's interest to promote economic activity through its hinterland, and Denver pursued its self-interest, taking profits from one area and investing them to develop other portions of the hinterland.

Charles Boettcher's conversion of Leadville silver into Great Western Sugar and Ideal Cement was only one example. David Moffat could use his mining wealth from Creede and his First National Bank of Denver to build a railroad west from Denver into an untapped portion of the hinterland — Middle Park, Steamboat Springs and Craig, with plans for Utah and beyond. Verner Z. Reed put Cripple Creek gold into the Salt Creek oil field near Casper, Wyo.

Contrast that to more recent tycoons: Marvin Davis and Phil Anschutz taking their billions to the West Coast, where Bill Walters and Ken

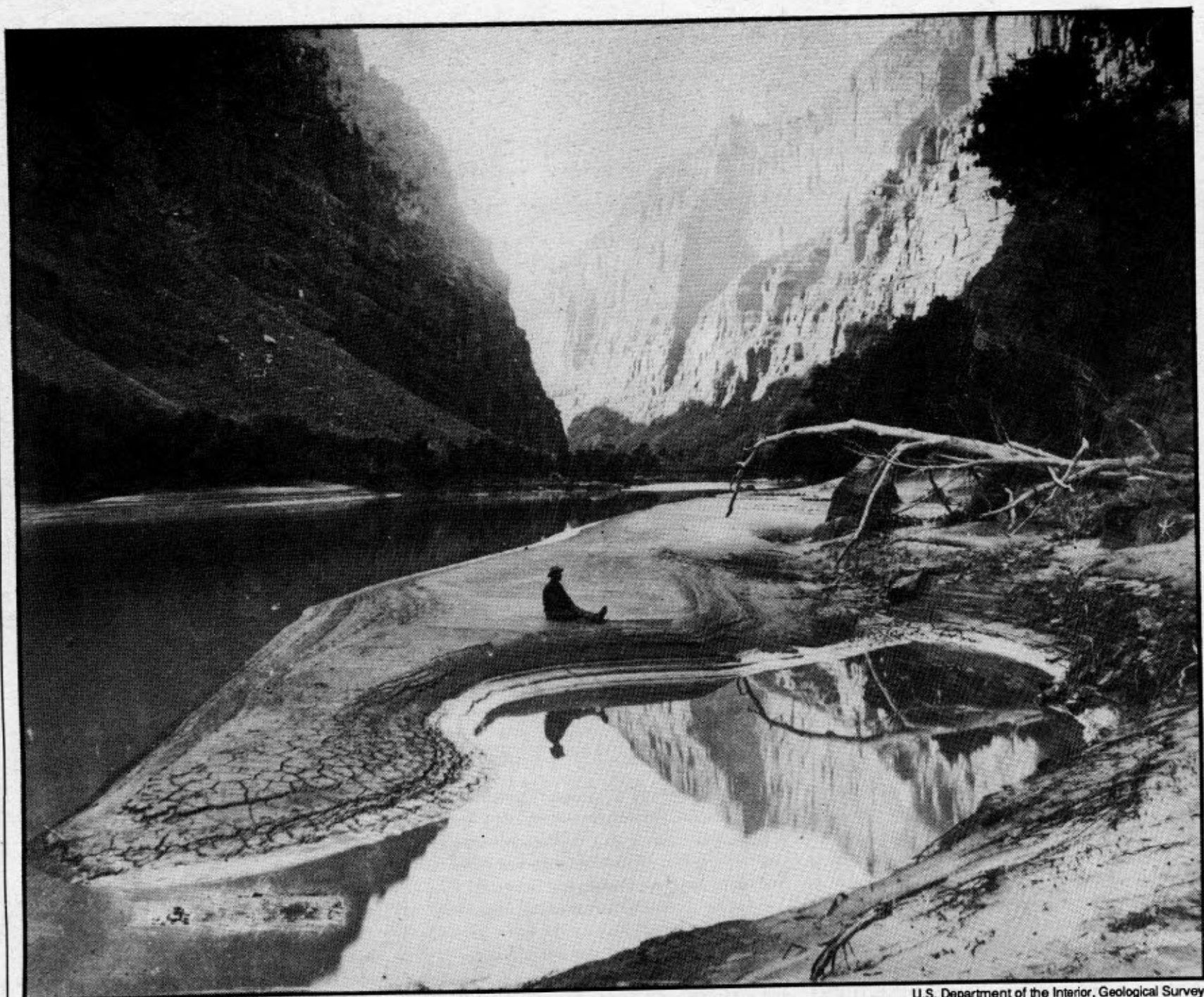
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Colorado Historical Society

Denver grew up cooperating

Denver in the 1890s



U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey

The Green River in Moffat County circa 1871

Now that Denver has abdicated ...

continued from previous page

Good fled when the Silverado Savings and Loan collapsed.

There was once a Denver whose financiers stayed interested in the hinterland, a Denver that built markets for the produce of the hinterland.

That's hardly the case now, according to Phil Burgess, director of the Center for the New West. His Denver-based think tank had just finished a thorough study of the economy of Brush, a small town in farming country about 90 miles northeast of Denver.

According to Burgess, less than 15 percent of Brush's "exports" now go to Denver.

"What they have to sell, they sell all over the world," he said. "Fifty years ago, at least 75 percent of Brush's exports — wheat, corn, sugar, cattle and the like — would go to Denver. They still buy a lot from Denver, because that's where the wholesalers are, but even that is changing. You get these chains like Wal-Mart,

which have their own regional distribution networks that aren't based in Denver."

Go 90 miles west of Denver, and you're in ski country. Does Denver provide a significant market for the recreation experiences that its montane hinterland sells?

No. According to Colorado Ski Country USA, the entire metropolitan area accounts for only 10 percent of the annual dollar volume at Colorado ski resorts. A dry November or bad publicity causes more monetary loss than if the 3 million people between Fort Collins and Fort

Carson vanished tomorrow morning.

Cities are more than markets, and I talked about that with Dick Lamm, who served as Colorado's governor from 1975 to 1987. After some verbal sparring (Lamm has been in politics long enough to insist on rephrasing most questions), he said, "What you're really asking is whether Denver provides any services to the region that you can't get somewhere else in the region."

His answer is no, with one ironic exception — "high-level medical care. That's the only thing Denver really offers that you can't find elsewhere."

Lamm then grumbled about how Denver has lost control. None of its major banks is locally owned, and the same holds for eight of its 10 largest employers, for its newspapers, and its major TV and radio outlets. "The people who make the decisions aren't in Denver any more," Lamm said. "That's a major change from the turn of the century."

But was Denver ever truly in charge of its destiny?

An economic geographer would find only one real distinction for Denver: Its trade area covers a vast territory, thanks to low population density. Otherwise, Denver differs little from other regional cities like Atlanta, Seattle, Boston and Minneapolis.

The real players are what I'll call "megacities," and American history offers three: New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

They're our three largest cities, but they have more than size in common.

Each superseded one or more regional rivals. New York beat out Boston and Philadelphia; Chicago surpassed St. Louis; Los Angeles overwhelmed San Francisco.

Each enhanced its natural advantages to make itself into a transportation center and prototype: New York built the Erie Canal; Chicago was the nation's rail hub and built the Illinois-Michigan

Canal; Los Angeles invented the freeway after it fabricated a harbor from San Pedro Bay.

And each now dominates or once dominated a medium of mass communication and culture. New York has book publishing and theater; Chicago defined the modern metropolitan newspaper; Los Angeles produces movies, recorded music and most television.

Each also has a *Weltanschauung*, a way of perceiving the world, a culture if you will, which the megacity promotes through its hinterland.

In the "hierarchy of places" that geographers use, regional cities like Denver fall right under megacities like Chicago.

The historical evidence is overwhelming that Denver, like Omaha and Kansas City, began as an outpost of Chicago and organized its hinterland along the Chicago principle of "put the land to work."

Now, however, the old Chicago connection has vanished from the Mountain West, to be replaced by a California link. I didn't even need to go outdoors to see that.

The evidence sat in my home, which has some old big-ticket items: a wood-burning range in the kitchen, made by the Universal Stove Works of Chicago; an upright grand in the parlor, from the Werner Piano Company of Chicago.

Nearby is the newer expensive stuff: computers and software from California, along with VCRs, CD players, tuners, speakers, microwave ovens and a host of other electronic toys made in Asia, but funneled through California.

That's only a start on the evidence that California, especially Los Angeles, is in the process of capturing this hinterland:

- Most milk on the shelves in Los Angeles comes from Idaho. Thanks to environmental restrictions and high land prices, the California dairy industry has moved from the Fresno area to the Snake River Valley.

- For generations, railroad industry pundits assumed that the Denver & Rio Grande Western would eventually join a Chicago-based carrier,

That's only a start on the evidence that California, especially Los Angeles, is in the process of capturing this hinterland.

probably the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. But when merger came in 1992, the D&RGW joined the Southern Pacific, the California "Octopus."

- Those who made considerable money in the Mountain West used to go east in search of new challenges. But the latest crop of billionaires — Marvin Davis and Philip Anschutz — go to the West Coast.

- In its formative days as a cultural center after World War II, Aspen was a product of Chicago (Walter Paepcke), especially the University of Chicago (Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler). Now Aspen is tied to Hollywood. The same holds for Santa Fe — once a place where Chicago shopped for art, and now a place for California to strut its stuff.

- Those who read a variety of newspapers say that the most comprehensive coverage of the Mountain West is not in the *Chicago Tribune*, nor *The Denver Post*, but the *Los Angeles Times*. Newspapers give people information for making decisions; this means that the people who make the decisions about this region live in Los Angeles.

- The archetype of Chicago's commercial network was "America's wish book," the Sears catalog that made almost everything available to the rural West. The freeway-ramp shopping mall is the avatar of the L.A. style of retailing. On Jan. 25, 1993, Sears said it would abandon catalogs and confine its stores to malls.

- The Colorado, the great river of the Mountain West, is managed so that the demands of Southern California, especially Los Angeles, come first. California, whose watersheds contribute not a drop to the river, draws at least 4.4 million acre-feet annually (about a third of the average flow) from the Colorado River.

- California imports electricity, too, thus providing a market for power from plants built and proposed around the Mountain West. In 1987, California consumed 190.3 billion kwh, but generated only 130.3. In 1988, consumption was 200.6 and generation only 126. The trend is clear — California consumes more and generates less for itself every year. California's strict air-quality regulations, energetic environmental activists, and affluent, well-connected "not in my back yard" protesters mean that the new power comes from coal-fired plants in the Four Corners region and Nevada — facilities that can't legally be placed in California. Although Southern California Edison, which supplies 11 million people, is currently stressing efficiency rather than added generation, further demands will most likely be met from plants in the new L.A. hinterland, which now extends as far eastward as Colorado.

- Los Angeles imports milk, electricity and water from the Mountain West, and it exports trash and dirty air. The new city dump is 600 miles from town. In late 1992, daily unit trains began hauling household refuse from Los Angeles to a state-of-the-art landfill near East Carbon, Utah. And the Grand Canyon is smogged in partly by air from Los Angeles.

- The twin ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, busiest in the nation, handle the bulk of America's growing trade with the Pacific Rim. In 1900, Europe accounted for 44 percent of American trade and Asia only 10 percent; in 1988, Europe had only 25 percent and Asia had grown to 39 percent. European goods arrived in the Mountain West via New York, the Erie Canal, Great Lakes and Chicago-based railroads; Asian goods arrive through Los Angeles. A growth in Pacific Rim trade means growth in Los Angeles influence at the expense of Chicago influence.

- Wheat from the plains of eastern Colorado once went east to Chicago markets. However, Cargill (an agricultural multinational) had two flour mills in Los Angeles that were always short of wheat. So Cargill bought the nine largest elevators in eastern Colorado and turned that region into the literal breadbasket of Los Angeles.

But as the Bible says, we do not live by bread alone. Megacities have cultures.

Chicago was "hog butcher to the world." Los Angeles is the home of Hollywood and Disneyland, which market images and contrived thrills. Recreation is no longer a diversion, but a profit center, and an economy can be built around selling recreational experiences. The L.A. culture comes with a West Coast attitude toward nature that might be unfairly summarized as "groove on the scenery."

Thus many current conflicts in the Mountain West result from collisions between two antagonistic cultures.

The Midwest says "don't let valuable sawtimber go to waste," and the West Coast counters with "protect the spotted owl."

Midwest says Montana should send Ron Marlenee to Congress; West Coast says Pat Williams. Midwest says water must be stored and diverted and put to beneficial use — industry or agriculture; West Coast says rivers should run free so you can raft down them.

Midwest says to get an honest job bucking hay or chasing cows or mucking rocks. West Coast says it's just fine to entertain the tourists — it is, after all, the home of Disneyland, the archetype of sanitized thrills, where you can experience Frontierland and Adventureland and even good old Main Street, USA.

Midwest says stick with trustworthy George Bush, the way that the solid folks of Kansas and Nebraska do. West Coast says take a fling at change with Bill Clinton — the first Democrat in 28 years to win in the Mountain West. It was also the first time since 1948 that Colorado and Montana voted differently from Wyoming, Nebraska and Kansas.

The changes are evident as the Mountain West moves away from an industrial resource and extraction economy and toward a new world where we sell not resources or crops, but "quality recreational experiences."

Those represent two profoundly different ways of regarding the environment, and so it's little wonder that there are conflicts: Sierra Club vs. People for the West, wilderness designation vs. "wise use," Two Forks Dam vs. I-70 corridor recreation industry, Pat Williams vs. Ron Marlenee in Montana.

The Mountain West, the Denver hinterland whose megacity was once Chicago and whose culture was Midwest, is being captured by Los Angeles and the West Coast culture.

Those of us in the territory may be like the farmers of Gettysburg — we aren't actually fighting the war, but we do happen to occupy the site where opposing forces converge for battle.

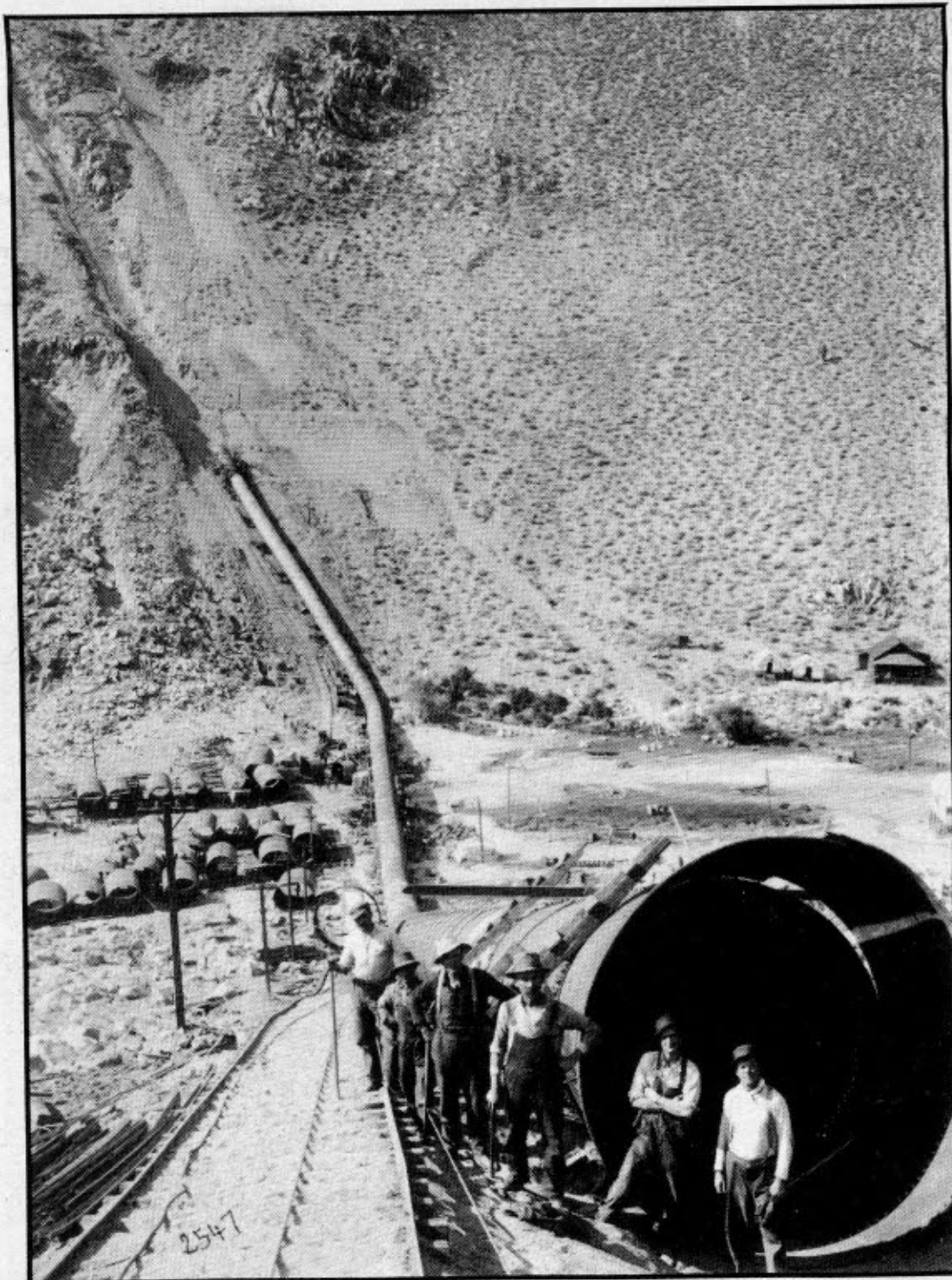
How does Denver fit into this conflict between Los Angeles and Chicago, a conflict you can see on any mountain town's Main Street where there's a crystal shop next to a hardware store?

Denver obviously didn't mesh well with L.A. in 1980, when the *Los Angeles Times* bought *The Denver Post*, ending 88 years of local ownership. *Times* management attempted to turn the *Post* into an upscale newspaper, mirroring a successful strategy in Los Angeles (where the *Times* deliberately reduced its circulation in poor neighborhoods).

The *Times* strategy was to make the *Post's Empire* into a slick city magazine rather than a folksy regional magazine; local features would emphasize the lifestyles of the rich and famous, rather than the problems of the down and out.

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Chicago was "hog butcher to the world." L.A. says "groove on scenery."



Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Construction of the Owens Tunnel in California to bring water from east of the Sierras to Los Angeles

Now that Denver has abdicated ...

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They almost put the *Post* out of business with this strategy. West Coast culture obviously didn't mesh with Denver, and the *L.A. Times* soon sold the *Post* because it couldn't figure out how to run the *Post* profitably.

Perhaps it is symbolic that the *Post's* new owners were based in Texas. The 1970s and early 1980s were the years of the energy boom, when money and people flowed between Texas and Denver much as money and people flowed between Chicago and Denver a century earlier.

Like Houston, Denver is now a regional headquarters for international resource exploration and extraction companies — petroleum, natural gas, gold, coal — and their itinerant human infrastructure of geologists and engineers.

At first glance, this appears to strengthen Denver's ties to the Mountain West, but that is deceptive. These enterprises put in shafts, not roots, and when the vein or oil field pinches out or prices drop, they vanish. Mining and oil companies can exploit resources, but they do not occupy the land those resources come from.

Perhaps this explains the current dissonance between Denver and its old hinterland.

Newsweek ran a list of movers and shakers in the Mountain West ... but Denver knew them not.

The dissonance is best illustrated by Denver's use of its wealth to grow suburbs rather than to develop its hinterland. The suburbs used water, and that forced Denver since World War II to deconstruct the rural economies and communities it had helped build before World War II.

But most recently, the ongoing capture of the hinterland by Los Angeles has changed the water game. When Denver and its suburbs tried to build Two Forks Dam in the 1980s, the opposition came not only from hay farmers, but from a sophisticated industrial-recreation complex — a California-style industry — that had grown along Interstate 70.

John Vanderhoof, governor of Colorado in



The slogan of the Denver Water Board on a dust-bowl era train in Denver

the mid-1970s and a native of western Colorado, felt compelled to veto an earlier Two Forks proposal in 1974. "It was the only way to stop the Denver Water Board," he said. "They rode high, wide, and handsome, did whatever they pleased. They never consulted anyone else when they took water from the mountains."

But this time around, there was a substantial economic value in allowing water to remain in the mountains. Rather than issue decrees, the water board had to negotiate with a powerful recreation industry. To buy off the official oppo-

sition of tourist-oriented Summit County, the board had to agree to maintain a relatively constant level in Dillon Reservoir so as not to impair its scenic and recreational values. What was essentially an irrigation reservoir, a Chicago operation, had to be operated as an L.A.-style recreational attraction and amenity.

Dan Luecke, the Environmental Defense Fund hydrologist who led the fight against Two Forks, explained that the California power came from "federal legislation and financial support of environmental groups. The statutes that we used in the process — NEPA, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and so on — generally receive more support from members of the California congressional delegation than from the congressmen from the intermountain states ... California 'values' and Californians' support of national organizations like EDF gave the environmental community in Colorado the weapons to fight a project whose defeat may be seen as a benefit to citizens and interests in California."

Further evidence of how Denver has lost touch with its old hinterland came in late 1991. *Newsweek* ran a list of movers and shakers in the Mountain West, people who were making national waves. But Denver knew them not. "Who are these people?" a Denver weekly newspaper asked.

The Denver newspaper didn't know them because Denver is no longer key to what makes the modern Mountain West tick. The city's old hinterlands may not hold much in the way of population, but thanks to their California connections, they beat Denver in the biggest environmental battle of the decade.

The economic interests of Denver and the Mountain West have diverged; Denver is no longer the major market for the produce of the

How a governor tried to tame the boom-bust cycle

Dick Lamm earned his "Gov. Gloom" title during 12 years as governor of Colorado. Those were mostly the boom times from 1975 to 1987.

His gloom came from a fear that if the West did not control its resources it would turn out like Appalachia — a region looted of its wealth by "Mr. Peabody's coal train" and left to poverty, isolation, gutted hillsides and polluted rivers.

Multinational corporations such as Exxon, Amax, Amoco, etc., already controlled the resources, many of them via leases from a federal government that was hellbent for development. That meant only state government could prevent the multinationals from looting the region.

Lamm's strategy was to collect severance taxes in good times in order to invest in the schools, universities, libraries, communication and transportation systems that would serve the region when the boom ended.

The Colorado Legislature, controlled by the other party, preferred to cut taxes and avoid public investment, in the hope of luring more private investment. Lamm could only get enough in severance taxes to cushion the immediate effects of the energy and mineral development.

The jury remains out on whose strategy was better, but it is clear that Colorado and the rest of the region are not simply waiting for a natural resource boom to return. Instead, many places are being driven by demand for *lebensraum*, as urbanites come West to live and play.

Talk of bust and population outflow has shifted to the east of Denver, to the Great Plains. There, as Frank and Deborah Popper of Rutgers University in New Jersey point out, energy development, irrigated agriculture and mining have failed to sustain a stable rural way of life.

— E.Q.

Mountain West, no matter whether that produce is software or skier vacations.

The hinterland from Montana to New Mexico has been, or soon will be, captured by the economy and culture of Los Angeles, and Denver is seldom a big player in the new game.

How will the new game turn out? What are its rules?

Such speculation requires some understanding of the past, especially of the role that cities played in the conquest and settlement of the West by Euro-American civilization.

The traditional view, promulgated by Frederick Jackson Turner and his Frontier disciples, goes like this: A few trappers and traders come first, followed by subsistence farmers. They eventually grow a surplus which can be traded. A settlement sprouts. Some settlements grow into cities.

The historic truth is more nearly the opposite. The city comes first. Without its markets, there is no farming worth mentioning and no trading beyond barter.

Almost a century ago, William Jennings Bryan proclaimed, "The great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms, and grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

In actual fact, if one were to destroy the cities that provide markets, tools, transportation, communication, culture and organization, the hinterlands would suffer.

Inhabited hinterlands need cities, perhaps even more than cities need hinterlands, which are largely creations of their cities.

My town of Salida, Colo., is a good example. It was established in 1880 as a division point on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. Thus Denver financiers funneled capital into this town, which ensured a steady payroll, which brought about stores and churches and schools and the other accouterments of civilization.

One long-time industry was a limestone quarry that supplied the blast furnaces of CF&I in Pueblo — an example of regional organization that also required iron ore from Wyoming and coking coal from Trinidad.

Those enterprises are largely gone. A distant city organized a chunk of hinterland, and then abandoned it — left a region to drift for itself when it had been accustomed to getting its direction from Denver. The same holds for vast chunks of the Mountain West.

But most of these towns haven't died. Cut loose from Chicago-Denver, they turned to Los Angeles and now sell recreation.

So the most probable scenario for the future of the Mountain West is that Denver will continue to decline in relative importance while Los Angeles continues to organize its new province.

The fertile zones will send food westward. This may have some interesting water implications, but won't greatly affect the nature of the hinterland.

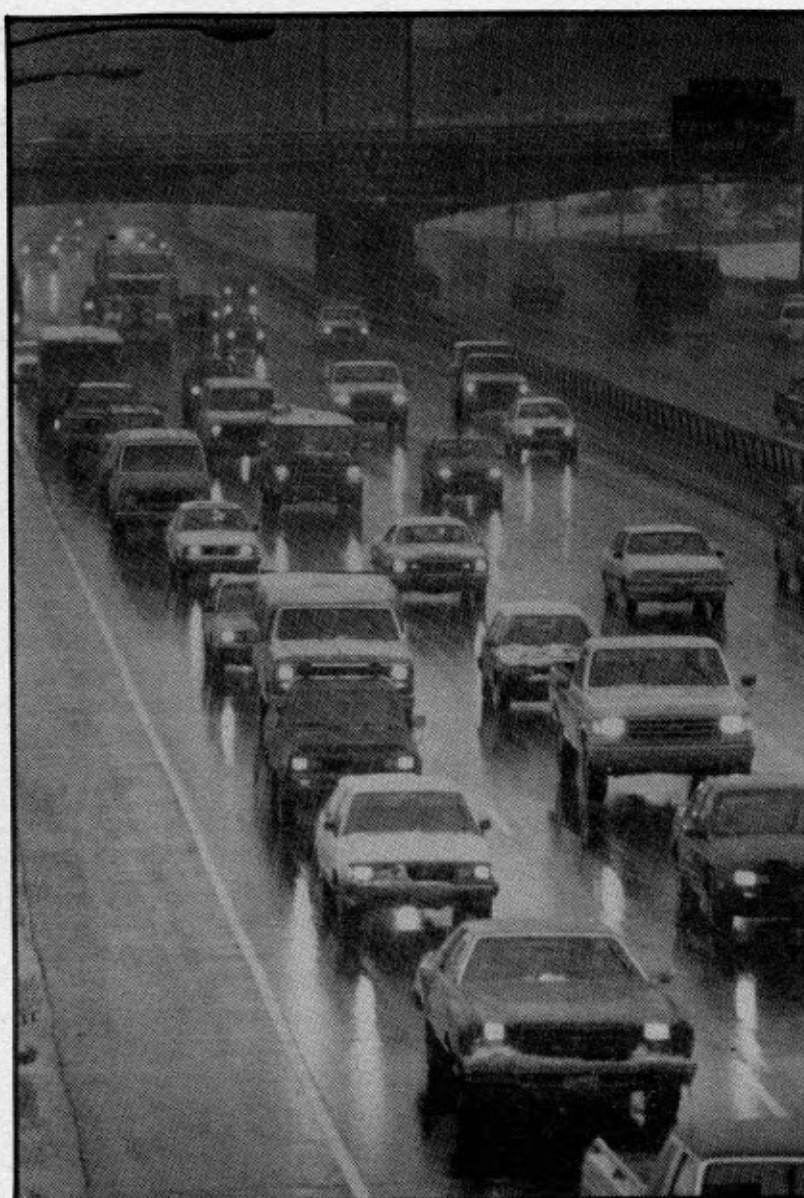
The habitable areas will be increasingly populated by California émigrés — about 20,000 in Colorado alone last year.

Myth has it that migrants want to build a new society. The truth is that they prefer to build replicas of the old country. For confirmation, re-read *The Aeneid*, or note how many small towns in the West resemble towns in Ohio or Illinois.

As the migration continues, we will see more mountain suburbs which lack a traditional urban core — but their residents will still want traditional urban amenities like fire protection and paved streets. We will see more auto traffic, more freeways, more shopping malls, more strip developments and more edge cities — the Vail area is close to that status now.

Most of the Mountain West is neither habitable nor arable, and so it will be organized as an amusement park — Disneyland on a continental scale, with various towns taking on the roles of Frontierland, Adventureland, Fantasyland or Main Street, USA.

Amusement parks offer rides that feel dan-



The Denver Post

Commuters in Denver

gerous but aren't. So we'll have more groomed ski slopes, more rivers whose flow is controlled for exciting float trips, more campgrounds with paved parking and electric outlets, more trout streams preserved for trendy fly-fishermen.

The Mountain West will be scenic but sanitized and will be dominated by what Edward Abbey called "the industrial-recreation complex," just as it was once dominated by a Midwestern complex of mining, logging and agriculture.

Although most of this land is federal, Cali-

formia's immense population and wealth give it substantial control of federal policies. Thus every acre will be managed for a specific purpose, a grand-scale zoning determined by California interests.

Serving as an immense suburb of L.A. is my best guess for the future of the Mountain West. But I've run across other plausible theories.

Dispersed City. Cities are human inventions, devised to suit human needs. They are engines that concentrate and direct talent and capital.

Or so they were in the past, when many enterprises had to sit in a city — that's the only place that offered good transportation connections, timely communications and quick access to specialized services.

Now we're in the age of United Parcel Service and Federal Express, of fax machines and satellite dishes, of instant access to anyone and anything from anywhere.

Economist Paul Hawken calls this a time of "disintermediation" — that is, we are removing the intermediaries, and the city was the great tool of mediation which brought together capital and labor, publishers and writers, lawyers and clients, goods and markets.

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How Midwesterners gobbled up Colorado's banks

Of the three big pioneer banks that dominated regional finance on 17th Street, once known as "the Wall Street of the Rockies," none remains under local ownership.

The First National, home of the Evans dynasty and David Moffat's financial tool for putting Denver on a main rail line, fell the hardest, flirting with failure a decade ago. Now it is owned by First Interstate Bancorp of Los Angeles.

Denver U.S. National became United Bank of Denver about 20 years ago. The chain was recently bought by Norwest Corp., based in Minneapolis.

The Kountze Brothers Bank was founded at almost the same time as Denver; it became Colorado National in 1866. It was the last major independent to be sold; in November, 1992, it and another old-line bank, Central Bank, were acquired by First Bank System, also based in Minneapolis.

Other big players in the Colorado takeovers are Golden West, based in Oakland, Calif.; First Nationwide, based in San Francisco; and Banc One, from Columbus, Ohio.

Altogether, about 62 percent of Colorado deposits are now controlled by giant out-of-state corporations, based either in the Midwest (38 percent) or on the West Coast (24 percent).

Does this recent invasion by Midwestern bank chains negate the theory that the Mountain West is changing from Chicago to Los Angeles?

Not necessarily. Major developments, for example, are not financed by commercial banks. When Ralston-Purina or Twentieth Century Fox buys a ski area, those companies don't borrow from the bank, they float their own paper. Commercial banks supply capital to small businesses, not big ones, so the orientation of commercial banks is irrelevant to major projects.

— E.Q.



Susan Goldstein

The United Bank Building, a downtown landmark, dwarfs an old church

Now that Denver has abdicated ...

continued from previous page

So perhaps we see L.A. at imperial summit. The fact that so many Californians are moving to the Mountain West may mean L.A. is collapsing.

Thus the Mountain West, rather than concentrating its eggs in the Denver basket, might evolve with several smaller but specialized cities. We might get our engineering from Grand Junction and Casper, regional publishing from Santa Fe, environmental consulting from Logan, banking from Minneapolis, our specialized lawyers from Boulder.

Rendezvous Culture. George Sibley, former small-town newspaper publisher and sawmill operator, now head of special programs at Western State College in Gunnison, says we may be returning to a "rendezvous culture."

Among other things, cities are places where people meet to swap stories and cut deals. Long ago, the Utes performed

these chores every fall at a trade fair in Taos. For the same reasons, early trappers and traders gathered at an annual rendezvous whose location varied.

Rather than gather in Denver or some other city year-round, we may be reviving that earlier

tradition. Almost daily, I get announcements of conferences and workshops in spots like Bozeman, Cody and Las Cruces. At these gatherings, people swap stories and cut deals.

These modern-day rendezvous may signify that a post-urban culture is evolving in the Mountain West; the metropolis may no longer be necessary for civilization.

Blade Runner. The woes of Los Angeles are well-known — major urban violence in 1992, a declining tax base with an increased demand for public services, loss of manufacturing jobs, and so forth.

These could be mere stumbling points, or they might indicate the imminent collapse of Los Angeles as a vital city.

Chicago prospered during the first two world wars — wars fought with the food and heavy armaments that its hinterlands produced so abundantly, and then foundered shortly thereafter. L.A. likewise thrived during the Cold War, which was fought with electronics and aerospace technology. And it, too, suffers with the end of wartime spending.

So perhaps we see L.A. at imperial zenith. The fact that so many Californians are moving to the Mountain West may mean L.A. is collapsing rather than colonizing. If that is true, and if cities are still necessary in light of modern technology and commercial habits, then another megacity should begin to take the Mountain West away from L.A.

However, there aren't many contenders. Chicago is still in retreat, Houston can't see past petrochemicals, and New York has plenty of its own problems.

There is also a non-traditional possibility, which is called the "Homeland Commons." I first heard it at the 1991 Headwaters Conference in Gunnison. Roderick Nash presented the West Coast view that microbes and rocks deserve constitutional rights to due process; Michael McCarthy, in the character of a turn-of-the-century rancher, advocated the Chicago approach — resources were there to be used.

But there was another paradigm on the platform. It came from Devon Peña, professor of southwestern studies at Colorado College.

Peña called it the "Homeland Commons." It is more or less the way that the surrounding territory is managed by the traditional Hispanic villages of northern New Mexico or southern Colorado. Irrigable land is cultivated, there's some grazing in the pastures, and they gather firewood and cut a few house logs and fence posts. This is primarily for local needs — they don't export these products.

Homeland Commons didn't mesh well with Chicago when the United States tried to reorganize the Mountain West after the Mexican War; the Yankees wanted specific boundaries so they'd know who owned what. Nor does it mesh well now with L.A., as local Hispanics battle Sierra Club wilderness proposals and restrictions of long-standing grazing patterns.

Homeland Commons is more than a foot-

Denver International Airport: A monument to the S&L scandal

The Mountain West's 19th century entrepreneurs tended to stay here. Some ripped and ran, but most — like Montana's copper kings William A. Clark, Marcus Daly and Frederick Augustus Heinze; mining barons Horace Tabor, Winfield Scott Stratton, Albert Carlton and Spencer Penrose; the big cattle barons Charles Goodnight and Conrad Kohrs; and investors and financiers John Evans and Charles Boettcher — tended to make their homes as well as their fortunes here.

And some of today's entrepreneurs stay put. But many are "now you see them, now you see only their dust."

A decade ago, Denver boasted two certified billionaires: Philip Anschutz and Marvin Davis. Both owed their fortunes to oil.

In the late 1980s, Davis bought into Twentieth Century Fox and moved to Hollywood; Denver had seen its last glitzy Carousel Ball.

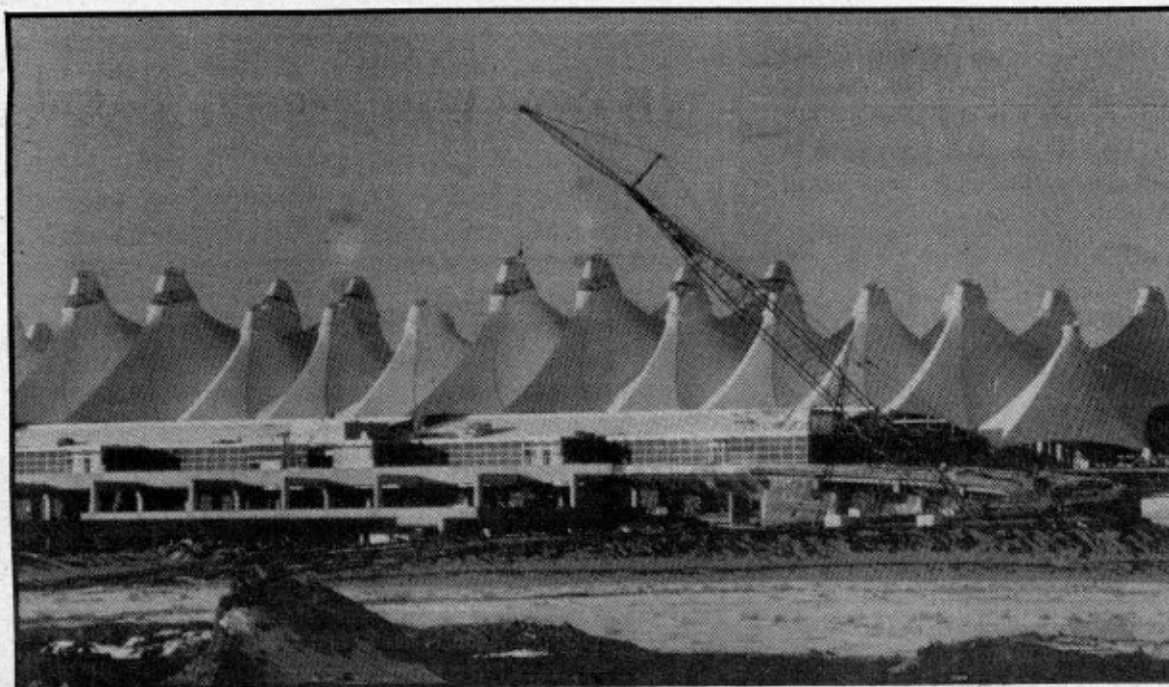
At first, Anschutz stayed local. He bought the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad and then bought the California-based Southern Pacific and began merging the Rio Grande into it. But he now spends most of his time in San Francisco, new headquarters for the line once known as "Rebel of the Rockies."

During the World War II years of local ownership, the Rio Grande worked to develop industries along its lines to generate more traffic. No more. Today, the Rio Grande operates as a "bridge" carrier. It moves other people's freight between Denver and Salt Lake City. It couldn't care less about local business because it sees stops en route as nuisances, not opportunities.

But Davis and Anschutz are pillars of the West in comparison with more modern entrepreneurs.

In 1987, Bill Walters was chairman of the Denver Chamber of Commerce and president of the Cherry Creek Bank. Those are prestigious positions, and how he used them emerged in 1990, when Silverado Savings and Loan director Neil Bush became the poster boy for the savings-and-loan crisis. Putting together the details of those years may take years for federal investigators.

But in essence, Walters built office buildings



The Denver Post

Denver International Airport is scheduled to open in December

and speculated in land with money borrowed on favorable terms from Silverado, where he was a director. In a dozen transactions, he borrowed \$106 million, none of which was ever repaid.

At last report, Walters was in Newport Beach, Calif., enjoying the ocean view from a \$1.9 million house registered in his wife's name.

On the Silverado board with Walters was a trader in equities named Ken Good. Good made and lost a fortune in Dallas real estate before moving to Denver. His name first appeared in local news in 1981, when he made an unsuccessful takeover bid for Tosco, a California company trying to develop oil shale in western Colorado.

Good returned to real estate speculation, aided by his political friendships with Neil Bush. Another friend was Jack Kinstlinger, head of the Colorado Department of Highways, which purchased a tract of Good's land for \$2 million more than it was worth.

Early-day bonanza kings supported gambling halls; they also boasted silver-plated private railroad cars and ermine christening gowns for their children. Good's ostentation came in the form of the largest

house in Colorado, a \$10 million mansion with 15 bathrooms, six kitchens, marble-walled locker rooms and a sensory-deprivation tank. When the bubble burst, Good went to Florida, where he launched another venture in land speculation, Gulfstream Land and Development.

Old-time barons were no goody two-shoes. But they built Great Western Sugar, Ideal Cement and the railroad route west from Denver.

What remains from Good and Walters?

Perhaps the new Denver International Airport. The Silverado crowd speculated heavily in undeveloped land near the new airport — land certain to appreciate substantially — and contributed heavily to Denver Mayor Federico Peña's 1987 re-election campaign after Peña began to support a new airport and an accelerated construction schedule.

The airport was too late to save Silverado's shaky loans. But Peña, unlike Good and Walters, landed on his feet. He is now U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

— E.Q.

note; it is most likely the "indigenous" view of the countryside that doesn't surface in the L.A.-Chicago war.

Read *Crossing the Next Meridian* by Charles Wilkinson, one of the West's leading natural-resource-law authorities. As he discusses artifacts like the doctrine of prior appropriation, the Taylor Grazing Act, Forest Service timber-cut allocations, and the Mining Law of 1872, a theme emerges, remarkably similar to Peña's Homeland Commons paradigm.

To consider only logging, Wilkinson proposes neither Chicago clearcuts nor L.A. amusement-park woodland. He wants to see a small, dispersed logging industry in the West, producing timber mostly for local markets.

Go through back issues of *High Country News* and see some writers reach similar conclusions about grazing on public lands. It won't go away, but can we shape it so we can live with it? they ask. And then the letters pour in from the Chicago side (how dare you interfere with the sacred beef industry?) and the L.A. side (our public lands are for our scenic amusement; how dare you put cows on them? Cattle-free in 93!)

Or the "sense of the community" hereabouts a decade ago when the Army Corps of Engineers held hearings about recreational gold-panning on the Arkansas River. Locals, whether they called themselves environmentalists or anti-environmentalists, were generally opposed to both the Chicago approach (bucket dredges digesting gold from miles of river cobbles) and the L.A. view (all river-related recreation should be a controlled commercial activity).

The consensus was that small-scale panning and dredging were as acceptable as fishing or rafting — don't tear up the river bed or banks, don't spill mercury, try not to bother other river users, and have a good time.

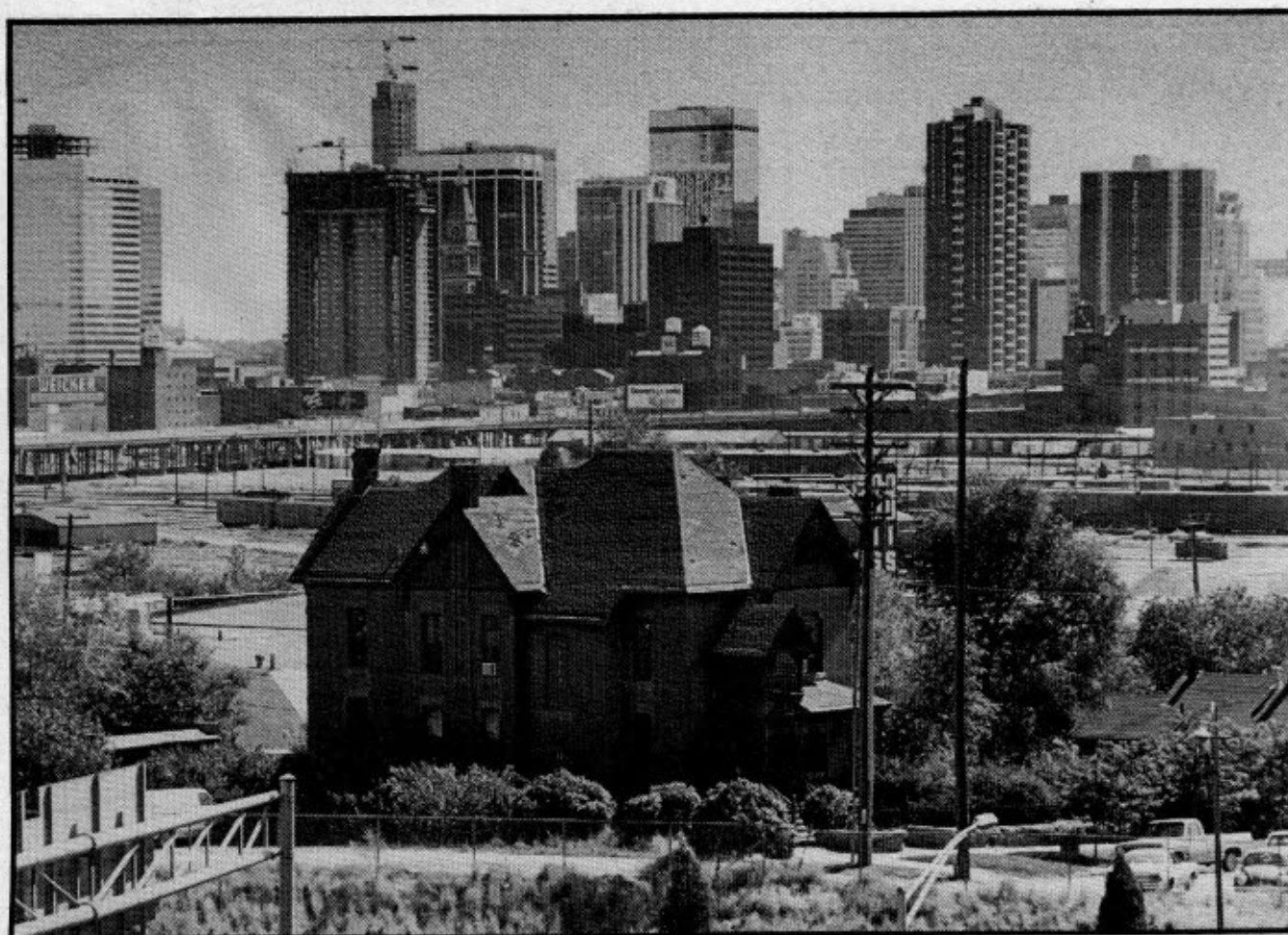
But a middle road — whether on grazing or river use or whatever — is difficult to follow in the modern Mountain West. We've got the Chicago-L.A. war over control of the territory, and it polarizes every issue. (Remember the farmers at Gettysburg.) You're either one of them tree-hugger environmentalists who'd like to lock up the West for an elitist playground, or else a shill for some earth-raping component of the global industrial complex.

Many of us would like another option, but we're not allowed that option because of the bipolar way the public discussions are framed.

Or at least how they are framed right now. And that, I think, is Denver's opportunity. If cities are still important, it is here that Denver could make itself necessary again.

Denver still dominates the mass media of its hinterland; we generally read Denver papers and watch Denver TV. The community of interest remains, at least in that respect.

Denver could develop a local culture and thereby promote a better world-view toward the rural West — not the Chicago Clearcut Strip-mine nor the L.A. Amusement Park Preserve,



Larry Laszlo

The old and the new in downtown Denver

but more along the lines of Devon Peña's Homeland Commons, or Charles Wilkinson's proposals for reforming natural resource laws.

Then Denver could be necessary. But as things are going, it's becoming just another isolated, isolationist Front Range city.

L.A. takes the old hinterland, but L.A. is not a monolithic force. Hollywood owns Aspen, but Orange County has a beachhead at Colorado Springs — witness the bitter conflict over Amendment Two. Basically, that fight is between two factions of Southern California who are using Colorado as a battlefield.

More awful conflicts between L.A. factions,

as well as between Chicago and L.A. world-views, are inevitable unless the Mountain West can find a city or some other center to refine and promote its culture.

If Denver doesn't want to meet this challenge, if Denver believes it is now a world city between Munich and Tokyo, too sophisticated to concern itself with the Bozemans and Chamas of this world, we can only hope that Santa Fe will return to its roots and take the job. ■

Ed Quillen is a free-lance writer and *Denver Post* columnist. His stories were paid for by the High Country News Research Fund.

In case you are not sated, here's a reading list

Although I encountered a wealth of interesting material as I researched, and keep finding more every day, the list of recommended further reading is fairly short.

Foremost is *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* by William Cronon (W.W. Norton, 1991). Although it mentions Denver and its tributary hinterland only in passing, Cronon provides the key to understanding how the traditional Mountain West was a result of Chicago.

The interaction between cities and hinterlands is well explained, though not quantified, in *Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life* by Jane Jacobs (Random House, 1984).

It and *Nature's Metropolis* will show you that, no matter how far out you live, no matter how sequestered your life, no matter how self-sufficient you become — you're still in a city.

For an eminently readable history of metropolitan Denver, get *Denver: Mining Camp to Metropolis* by Steven J. Leonard and Thomas J. Noel (University Press of Colorado, 1990).

To understand just how inappropriate both the Chicago and L.A. approaches to natural-resource development are, read *Crossing the Next Meridian: Land, Water, and the Future of the American West* by Charles F. Wilkinson (Island Press, 1992).

—E.Q.

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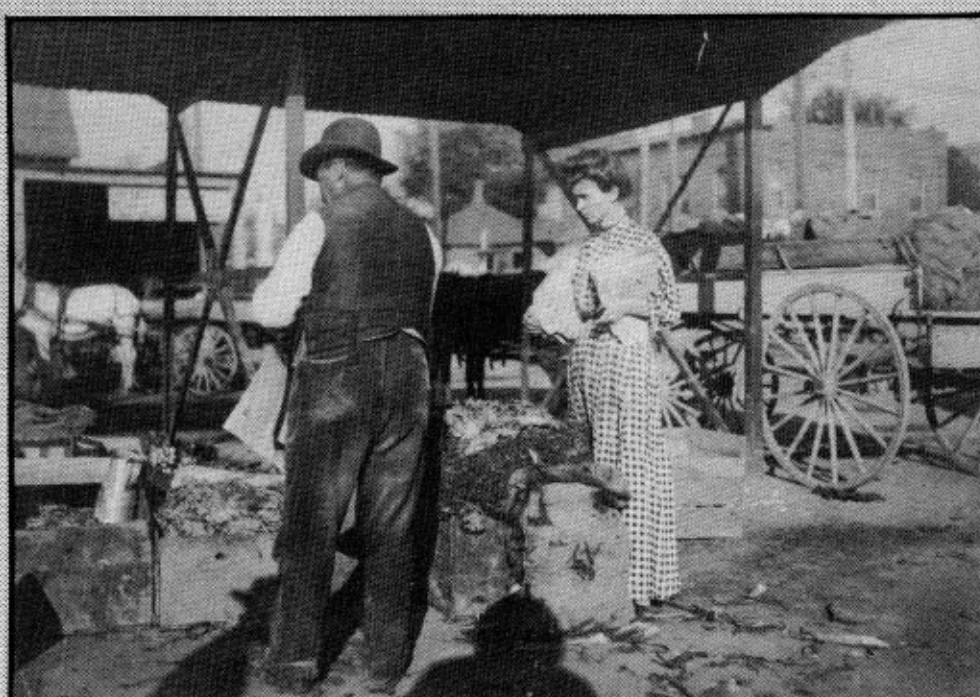
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Vol. 25, No. 9



Colorado Historical Society

A woman shops at the Denver vegetable market in 1892

by Charles F. Wilkinson

This has been a long day, the day I learned that Wally Stegner died. Late at night now, it seems right to put down my thoughts about the only subject that has touched my mind today.

I'll miss Wally so much because, though the words in his 30-odd books will live on, the person will not and, impossible though it may seem, the person eclipsed the books.

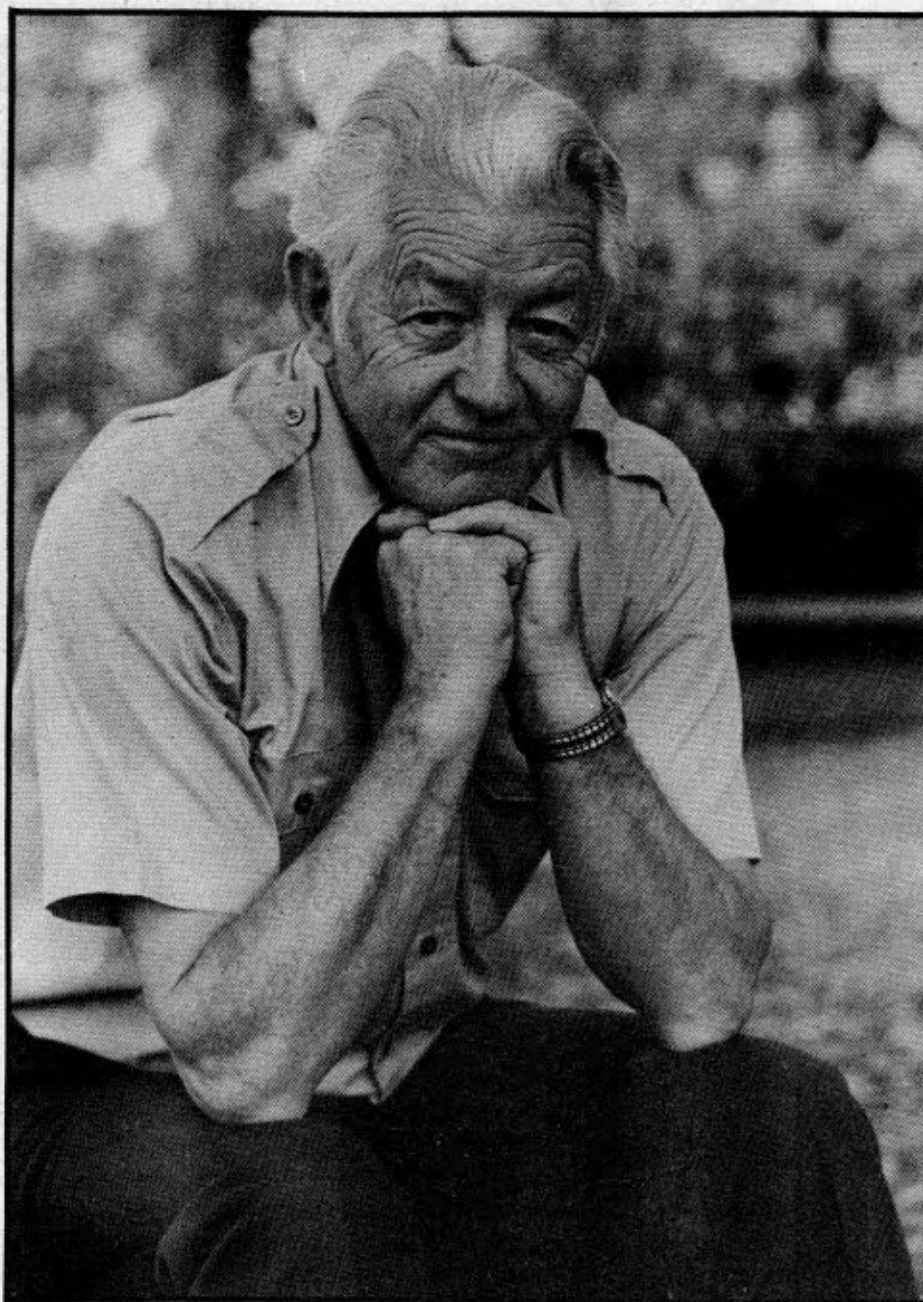
His was a life wonderfully lived. He was brutalized by his father — the physical abuse was terrible by itself and the verbal abuse was worse — yet he transcended that to grow up gentle and caring beyond the saying.

It was always sweet to see Mary and Wally, life-long lovers, together. He and his son Page were bound together by their love of the land. And Wally spread his kindness all around: his hacked-out typewritten letters, done on a creaky machine that must have dated to Gold Rush days, are found in homes all over the West, all over the country. "Thanks for calling," he would say. "You've liberated me from answering these damned fan letters." But he wrote them all, out of kindness, out of humanity. I know. He answered my letter in 1984. I took him up on his invitation to stop by his and Mary's sunny, open home, and my life has ever since been blessed.

During this day it has come to me that the essence of Wally was his civility. He himself was gracious, generous. He was the gentleman of all gentlemen. But Wally was nothing if not tough-minded, and he expected civility of other people and of his country and its governmental apparatus. Our treatment of Indian people angered him so much, I think, because it was so uncivilized.

He was contemptuous of the slashing we have given to the old deep forests in the Northwest because it was beneath the way a civilized society should conduct itself.

Wally, through his writings, was the greatest intellectual influence on the American West during the 20th century, but I want to underscore the person, the standards he



Wallace Stegner

Stanford News Service

A tribute to the man who imagined the West we now seek to build

set, the way he conducted himself, the way he lived a life.

The written words. *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian* wove together the life of John Wesley Powell, the agrarian ideal, the relentless boosterism, and the dictates of the

land and water; it is the greatest book of the West. *Angle of Repose*, a wondrous novel, feminist at its core, maps out a grand panorama of the West and of the lessons of its history. *Big Rock Candy Mountain* is the ache of a boy, battered by his wanderlust, archetypically Western father, redeemed by his mother. *Wolf Willow* tells of returning home, of defining and cherishing roots. *Sounds of Mountain Water*, next to Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, contains our finest collection of conservation essays; among many other things, this thin volume holds Wally's famous "native home of hope" passage and his "Wilderness Letter," at once a full evocation of the reasons for government-protected wilderness and a love letter to wild country.

There is much more, crafted to the nth degree, relentlessly unsentimental, relentlessly moving. With unerring words from that rickety old typewriter, he explained the whole West, the people, the societies, the history, the land, the obstacles, the hope, the spirit, the spirituality. His writing was universal but, like all great writing, grounded in a place and a culture.

His last novel, *Crossing to Safety*. It's at the very end of my shelf. I'm one to save the best for the last. I'll pick it up in about 30 years. How comforting to have it there, waiting.

There is some solace — this is not a rationalization — in knowing that Wally was ready. He was 84 and he hated being, as he saw it, crippled. The bad back. The fake hip. All the aches and pains. The medication. Five years ago he could stride the whole Boulder campus on a bright autumn day for nearly two hours at a young man's pace. No more. The broken ribs and collar bone in the car crash made it much worse. It was in his view, if not in ours, time.

So, thank you, Wally, from all of your sons and daughters, countless in numbers and increasing fast. Thank you always, our gentle, white-maned hero, for telling it straight, sounding the call, living it right. ■

Charles Wilkinson is Moses Lasky Professor of Law at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

In the words of Wallace Stegner ...

"Order is the dream of man. It was the dream of John Wesley Powell more than most, and he never questioned that an order could be discovered, or perhaps to some degree created, by the human mind and scientific method ... The fate of all leaders who go too far ahead, and of all thinkers who think straighter than their contemporaries, was Powell's. Attempting to lead his own time in accordance with the principles of order and science that he believed in, he was almost, though not quite, deserted. But from the river bluffs where we have symbolically planted him, looking over the West that was his province, he can perhaps contemplate the truly vortical, corkscrew path of humanity and with some confidence wait for the future to catch up with him."

Beyond the Hundredth Meridian, 1953

"Aridity, more than anything else, gives the Western landscape its character. It is aridity that gives the air its special dry clarity; aridity that puts brilliance in the light and polishes and enlarges the stars; aridity

that leads the grasses to evolve as bunches rather than turf; aridity that exposes the pigmentation of the raw earth and limits, almost eliminates, the color of chlorophyll; aridity that erodes the earth in cliffs and badlands rather than in softened and vegetated slopes, that has shaped the characteristically swift and mobile animals of the dry grasslands and the characteristically nocturnal life of the deserts."

From the 1972 essay
"Thoughts in a Dry Land"

"Something will have gone out of us as a people if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed; if we permit the last virgin forests to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases; if we drive the few remaining members of the wild species into zoos or to extinction; if we pollute the last clear air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will Americans be free in their own country from the noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human

and automotive waste."

"Wilderness Letter," 1960,
to David E. Pesonen of
University of California's
Wildland Research Center

"For somehow, against probability, some sort of indigenous, recognizable culture has been growing on Western ranches and in Western towns and even in Western cities. It is the product not of the boomers but of the stickers, not of those who pillage and run but of those who settle, and love the life they have made and the place they have made it in ... I believe that eventually, perhaps in a generation or two, they will work out some sort of compromise between what must be done to earn a living and what must be done to restore health to the earth, air and water ..."

Introduction to *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs*, 1992

These excerpts were selected by Tony Davis, a reporter for the *Albuquerque Tribune*.