HISTORY COLORADO | WINTER / SPRING 2025

THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

The Wizard in the Mountains

Nikola Tesla's Colorado Springs Experiments

Beanie Baby Boom / The Solid Muldoon / Alien Enemies Act Revisited

You lived through it. It changed the world. See it now.

the 90s

LAST DECADE BEFORE THE FUTURE

ICONIC ARTIFACTS FROM

The '96 Olympics • Berlin Wall • Wayne Gretzky • Snoop Dogg
The Dream Team • Melissa Etheridge • Bill Clinton • Kristi Yamaguchi
John Elway • The Notorious B.I.G. • Backstreet Boys • Tom Hanks
Whoopi Goldberg • South Park • **AND SO MUCH MORE!**

EXHIBITION NOW ON VIEW

Sponsored by: BLUE MOON CBS COLORADO

SCAN ME FOR MUSEUM TICKETS

History Colorado Center

HISTORYCOLORADOCENTER.ORG

A LEGACY OF PRESERVATION

In the midst of the new year's dizzying news, Colorado lost two of the state's history makers and inspirational leaders—Dana Crawford and Daniel L. Ritchie. Dana and Dan, both 93, died in the final week of January. Neither was born in Colorado, but with the zealous fervor of converts, both spent decades of their lives dedicated to shaping a better version of Colorado that will reverberate for many generations to come.

Dana Crawford was the fierce and visionary matriarch of Colorado's historic preservation movement. She mastered how to harness beloved iconic sites and transform them into economically viable opportunities that met community needs. She is well-known for saving Larimer Square and for resurrecting Union Station. As a southern Coloradan, I have deep affection for Dana's work—some of which is still in progress—in Trinidad and Pueblo. One fantastic example was recognized at last year's Stephen H. Hart Awards for Historic Preservation: the East Street School, an adaptive reuse of a vacant school in Trinidad into affordable housing for artists.

Lucky for us that Chancellor Daniel L. Ritchie's incredible life story from North Carolina to Harvard to Hollywood and an avocado ranch in southern California led eventually to Colorado, where he sought the quiet cowboy life on a ranch near Kremmling. Dan was called into a special kind of service on behalf of an insolvent University of Denver, where he catalyzed a renaissance of the respected institution. He also led a transformation at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, as well as a strategic planning effort at History Colorado at a crucial time. His impact on History Colorado is unquantifiable and his pure enthusiasm for our work always lifted my spirits.

Losing both Dana and Dan within a week of each other has given me the opportunity to reflect on the magical qualities they shared. Both had the gift of imagination. They could see beyond the present conditions of a broken building or institution and envision its glorious future. They were undaunted by seemingly inevitable failure of important places and had the heart and audacity to fight for them. And, whether it was through one of Dana's well-placed phone calls or the twinkle in Dan's eye, they got all of us to believe in the possibilities too. Most importantly, they believed in us, in Colorado, and in our potential.

As Dana and Dan join our collective Colorado ancestors, what have they taught us as we meet today's challenges? How can we, here at History Colorado and beyond, defy the inevitable and conjure up the heart and audacity to fight to protect the things that matter, to believe in the possibilities of our Colorado communities, and to envision a glorious future that reverberates through the generations? We can answer these questions together—rooted in our beloved state and fortified by those who came before.

President/CEO & State Historic Preservation Officer

We acknowledge that the land currently known as Colorado has been the traditional homelands of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. We are grateful to work in partnership with the fifty-one sovereign nations who continue to call this land home. Together, we plan exhibits; collect, preserve, and interpret artifacts; do archaeological work; and create educational programs to share the history of Colorado.

THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED SINCE 1923

This publication was supported in part by the Josephine H. Miles Trust.

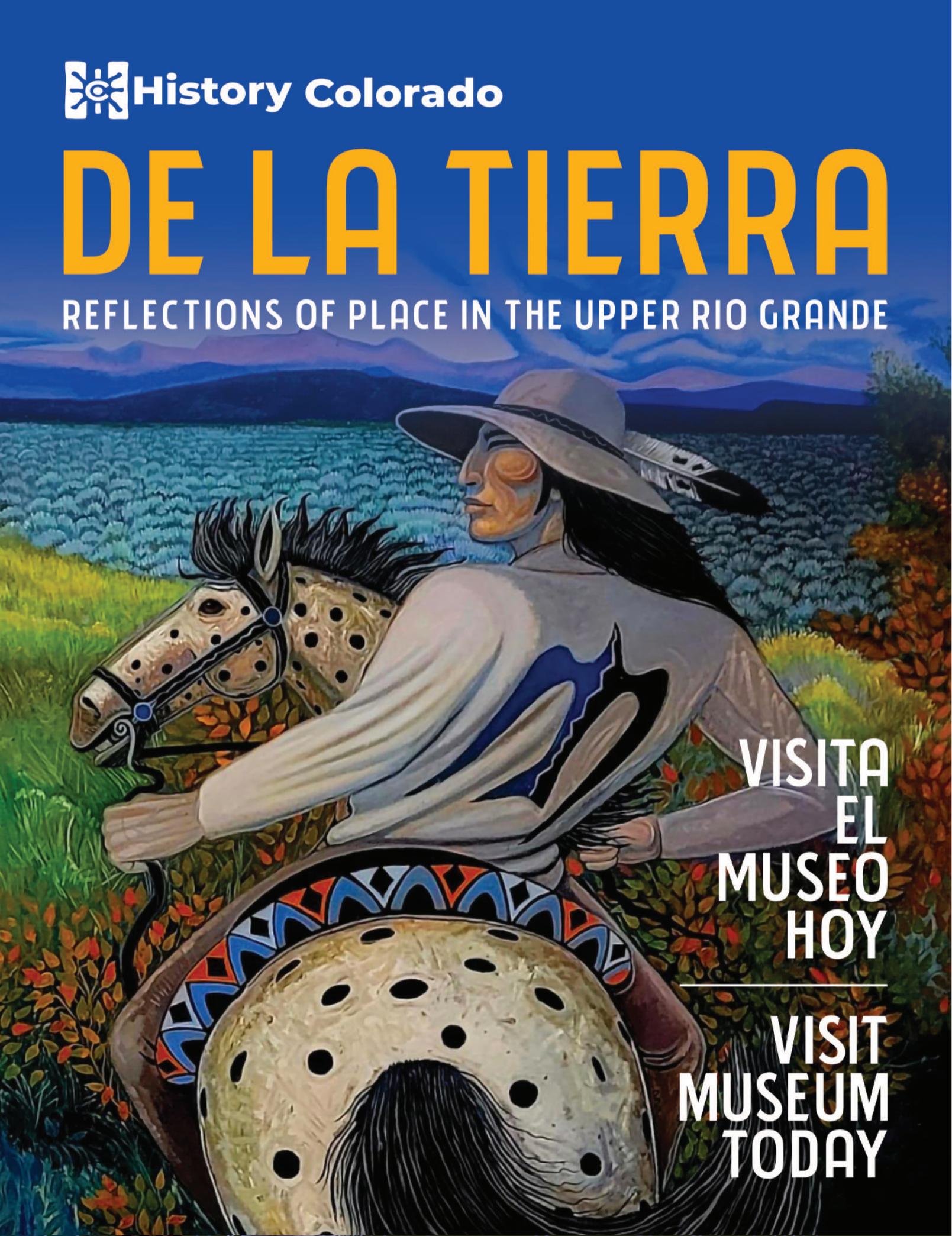
The Colorado Magazine (ISSN 2765-8856) contains articles of broad general and educational interest that link the present to the past, and is distributed quarterly to History Colorado members, to libraries, and to institutions of higher learning. Manuscripts must be documented when submitted, and originals are retained in the Publications office (publications@state.co.us). An Author's Guide is available at HistoryColorado.org. History Colorado disclaims responsibility for statements of fact or of opinion made by contributors.

Postage paid at Denver, Colorado.

History Colorado

DE LA TIERRA

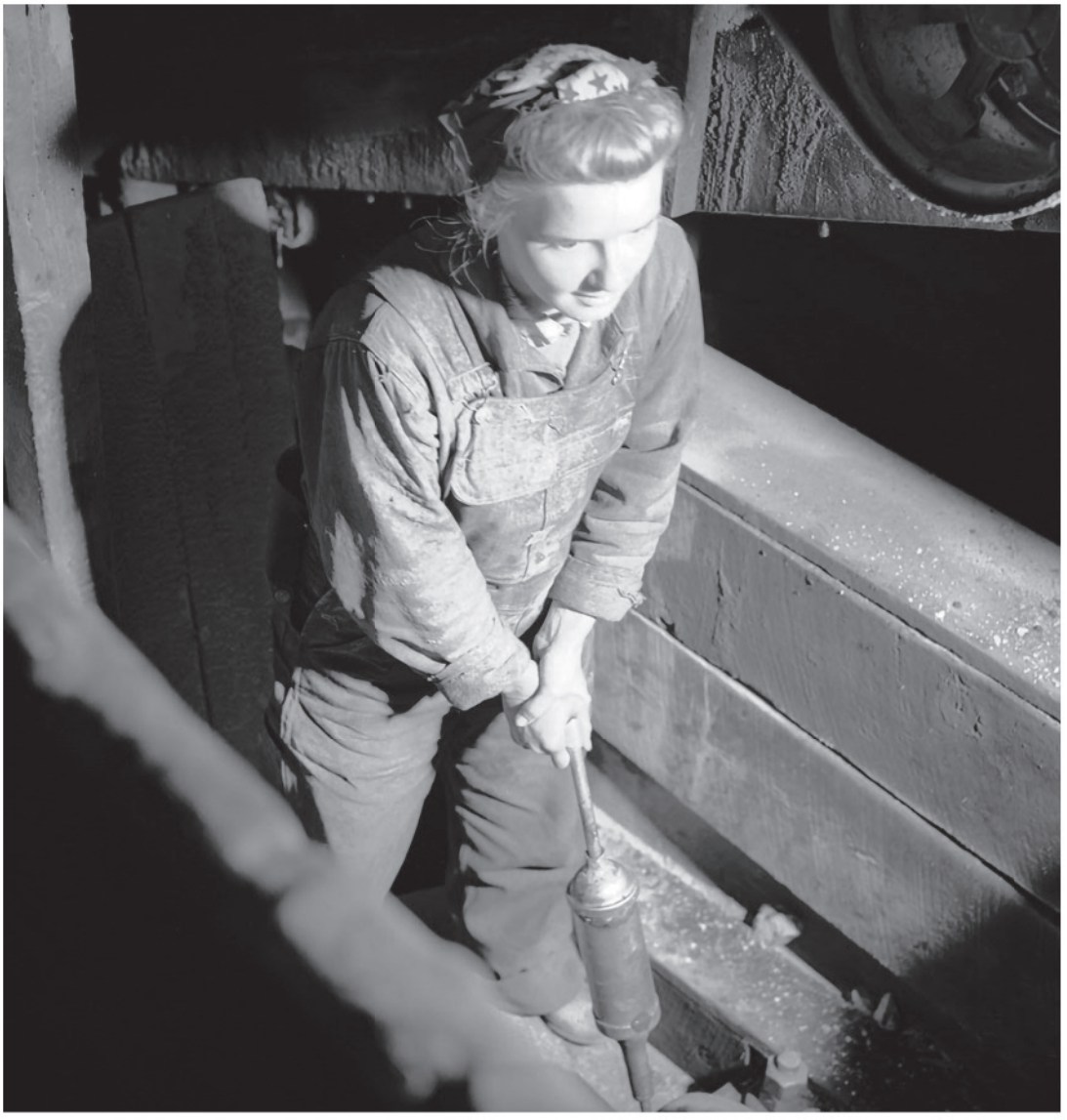
REFLECTIONS OF PLACE IN THE UPPER RIO GRANDE



VISITA EL MUSEO HOY

VISIT MUSEUM TODAY

THE COLORADO MAGAZINE



ABOVE This woman working in the London Mine mill building near Alma in the 1930s wasn't just breaking a taboo. Laws based on notions of female fragility and attracting bad luck to mines kept most women from working underground until the 1970s. History Colorado, 88.442.190

COVER Artwork by Thomas Lusk

THE FORUM

We love hearing from you.

Drop us a line at publications@state.co.us

Real Regional History

Accolades to Ken Feder for debunking the Ogham myth of southeastern Colorado's Crack Cave in the previous issue of *The Colorado Magazine*. Telling is the myth's Celtic fixation, and blatant is the ignoring of Native American cosmology that sustained people who lived in the area for more than 100 centuries. Myths, like false and incomplete narratives, demand rethinking. And across the region people are indeed rethinking their relationship with the land and the past. Today, History Colorado's El Pueblo Museum acknowledges the multi-cultural richness of the region; Bent's Fort National Historic Site recognizes the consequences of commodifying nature; Historic Boggsville celebrates the essential role of Indigenous and Hispanic women; Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site memorializes the state's most egregious mass murder; and Amache National Historic Site forces a serious introspection about racism. Feder's welcomed article continues our rethinking about the region.

– Gerald Morton, via email

Praise for The Weekly Digest

One happy reader wrote in to share their appreciation for our weekly history roundup email back in November!

Oh my goodness, I am on heavenly overload! I don't have time to read anything at length, but you just kept me reading and reading! And adding some of it to my Facebook, and to my own newsletter… both hot topics and historical stuff! Keep up the good work!

– Kathleen Spring, via email

A Personal Connection to the Story

A reader wrote in to share a personal story about her family's connections to Ada Belle Evans.

Thank you so much for the interesting article about Mrs. Ada Belle Evans, Colorado's first Black woman mayor. I shared the article with my mother and it turns out, she was a classmate of Mrs. Evans at Benedict College in Columbia, SC. Since it's a small college, they knew each other. My mother wondered what happened to her and was very excited to find out more about her former classmate.

– Charlease Elzenga, via email

History Colorado Responds: *Thanks for sharing your connection with us! We know that history can sometimes be abstract, but it's good to be reminded from time to time that it connects us to living memories!*

The 90s Exhibit is Rad!

The new History Colorado Center exhibition, The 90s: Last Decade Before the Future *went viral earlier this year, and visitors are raving about it!*

Just visited the 90s exhibit at the History Colorado Center, and it was a nostalgic trip down memory lane! The Nintendo 64 living room setup, complete with beanbag chairs transported me back to epic gaming sessions. The recreated Blockbuster Video store was another highlight, reminding me of Friday night movie marathons. Seeing iconic items like Bill Clinton's saxophone and outfits from artists like Public Enemy added depth to the experience. This exhibit is a must-see for anyone looking to relive the 90s!

– Amir Nahavandi, via Google

Happy Readers Writing In

We've been so happy hearing from all of you enjoying our magazine!

I can't tell you how much I look forward to *The Colorado Magazine*. It's great writing, interesting topics, thanks!

– Bonnie McCune, via email

We feel so lucky to live in a state with such a strong commitment to making sure its citizens have the chance to learn about their own history. *The Colorado Magazine* is such a wonderful perk of membership, and we are grateful each time a new one shows up in the mail.

– Jack and Charlotte Kirkman, via email

History Colorado responds: *We feel lucky to have readers like you! Thank you for supporting our work.*

THE COLORADO MAGAZINE

Sam Bock, Managing Editor
Lori Bailey, Associate Editor
Devin Flores, Assistant Editor

Jori Johnson, Ann Sneesby-Koch, Aaron Marcus; Photo Services

Brooke Cimino, Designer

Steve Grinstead, Editorial Support
Jim England, Editorial Support

Jason L. Hanson, Chief Creative Officer

History Colorado

Subscribe for new Colorado stories delivered weekly at HistoryColorado.org!


History Colorado
COLORADO HERITAGE FOR ALL
Help Us Preserve a More Complete History
Recommend a Place Today
History Colorado is working to add 150 places on the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties that tell the state's diverse stories. Learn more!
h-co.org/heritage-for-all

THE BEANIE BABY BOOM

Beanie Babies captured our hearts and wallets for a brief period in the '90s, playing a pivotal role in the growth of the internet.

BY JEREMY MORTON

We were lucky. On a brisk fall evening back in 1997 my mom and I found out we were the thirty-ninth and fortieth people in line at the Hallmark Shop. We were guaranteed to get the most coveted Beanie Baby to ever exist. You see, only forty Princess Diana bears were set to go on sale the following morning. I could see the dejection in the eyes of the person who showed up shortly after we got in line. They'd have to hunt down some other limited release of the nation's hottest toy. We slept outside the store that night, and with dawn came our chance to buy the purple plushy. We were certain the stuffed bears would make us a ton of money when we sold them on the World Wide Web.

Back then, the internet was a new invention experts told us would open up possibilities we'd never imagined. Other so-called experts were skeptical and unsure what those possibilities actually looked like. There were newspaper articles about how the internet was just a fad that would come and go like disco, and nobody was quite sure. A lot of people were dubious about sending their credit card information into the internet ether, and credit cards themselves weren't the ubiquitous thing they are today. E-commerce was in its infancy. Now we know that certain consumer goods would drive the shift to shopping online, and create the demand that made it worthwhile for people to divulge their much-guarded financial details.

The highly sought-after Princess Diana bear, owned by Kelly Utter-McCloskey, featuring a plastic tag protector to preserve its condition. Photo by Aaron Marcus.

The Beanie Baby craze of the late '90s provided that incentive. You couldn't buy all of them at the store because (in a brilliant marketing move) Beanie Babies were periodically retired to create false scarcity. The only way to find the Beanie you needed to complete your collection was to search for it online, and the best place to do that turned out to be eBay. Launched in 1995, eBay was one of the first major e-commerce platforms, pioneering online peer-to-peer transactions and revolutionizing the way people bought and sold goods online.

Cashing in on the Beanie Boom

Mom was early to the Beanie Baby frenzy, snatching up understuffed animals for $4.99 and then hawking them on eBay for a nice profit. She was so successful that when my teacher asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I told her I wanted to start my own eBay business. She hadn't even heard of eBay, and was skeptical that anyone could make money selling things on the internet. But I saw it with my own eyes. Mom was making bank selling these cuddly critters. At least that's how I perceived it. Seeing her online Beanie profits compelled her to venture into selling other things. Soon she operated her own version of an online thrift store. Just a couple years earlier Mom and I never bought anything online, and almost overnight we were comfortable buying and selling everything on the internet.

Naturally, Mom held on to her favorites—mostly bears. That was one reason getting the Princess Diana bear felt so important. It also brought together two obsessions: the worldwide fascination with Princess Diana following her tragic death, and the feverish Beanie craze.

By the time the Diana bear was released, Beanie Baby mania hit its peak. Thousands of people cashed in on the eBay trend, following a path paved by people like my mom. People were forced onto eBay since it was the only means of improving their Beanie Baby collection. Once there, they grew more and more comfortable paying faceless strangers for things on the internet. Consumers were reassured in part due to the feedback system honed by the most avid eBay entrepreneurs. The company's innovative new system allowed buyers and sellers to rate each other. They could leave a positive, neutral, or negative rating, and had the option to add a short comment. Before anyone ever heard of social proof—the psychological phenomenon where people rely on the actions or opinions of others to determine their own behavior—eBay

users were building trust and credibility by rating each other after each transaction. If a seller mailed someone an allegedly mint-condition Beanie Baby, and it arrived with a creased tag, well, that was unforgivable. That offense warranted a negative review, a review that elaborated that the seller was a liar, a cheat, a seller who couldn't be trusted. It could easily derail an entire e-commerce empire. Your virtual reputation was everything. It didn't matter if you had a Royal Blue Peanut the Elephant—the most valuable Beanie of all—nobody would buy it if your feedback score was too low.

As a perpetually broke preteen, I wanted to get in on what seemed like a money fountain, and the only way for me to do so was to buy and sell using Mom's account since she already had hundreds of positive eBay reviews. I collected football cards and Pogs, so it was easy for me to see the value in this new fad. I followed Mom's lead and started my own Beanie collection.

Glory, the bear given away at the 1998 baseball All-Star Game, alongside its commemorative card. Photo by Aaron Marcus. 2018.117.13

As a Colorado-based Beanie believer, the most impressive to me was Glory. This bear was the giveaway souvenir fans took home from the 1998 Major League Baseball All Star Game at Coors Field in Denver. The bear combined three of my favorite things: Denver, sports, and collecting things most people thought were worthless. Mom made sure to get a special plexiglass case to protect Glory since it was sure to only appreciate in value. Once the bear was safely tucked into its case, Mom gave it a prime spot in the china cabinet, which slowly transformed from a display of our finest knickknacks to a shrine for her expanding Beanie Baby collection. Even though she still sold plenty, she became increasingly attached to certain ones, sometimes choosing sentiment over sales.

That's the thing about collectibles, they're inherently irrational. They don't have objective value. We give them their worth, and sometimes we suddenly change our minds. Beanies were

Kelly Utter-McCloskey, mother of the author, proudly displays part of her Beanie Baby collection. Photo by Aaron Marcus.

easy to collect. Their whimsical nature resonated with both kids and adults, offering an emotional connection that transcended age. Each Beanie Baby had a name, a unique personality, and a poem, appealing to the human desire to rescue something soft and lovable. In a society that was continuously embracing "gotta-have-it" toys like Tickle Me Elmo and Furby, it makes sense that Beanie Babies became such a phenomenon. These toys tapped into the overwhelming power of marketing, from high-energy TV commercials to viral word-of-mouth, fueled by playground chatter. Mass media amplified the frenzy, while early e-commerce platforms and chatrooms introduced a new way to hunt for the hottest items, making the act of collecting part of the thrill.

Each Beanie Baby had a name, a unique personality, and a poem, appealing to the human desire to rescue something soft and lovable.

Beanie Bandits

The frenzy only intensified as the '90s went on. Children were injured in stores as consumers stampeded toward new releases. Divorced couples ruthlessly negotiated for their most prized animal assets. An underground economy emerged for the understuffed toys. Criminals targeted everything from car dashboards to toy distributors' vans. A burglar dubbed the "Beanie Baby bandit" swiped 200 plushies in a single heist. Scammers worked overtime. People forged checks to pay for rare first-generation toys like Honks the goose. Counterfeiters flooded the market with knockoff creatures sporting wonky snouts and dull eyes. One woman in Florida used fake auctions to fund home renovations instead of delivering Chilly the polar bear.

Meanwhile, groups of strangers banded together in online forums to avoid being duped. Experts in Beanieology taught people how to identify originals as opposed to fakes and re-releases. Apparently it had something to do with the type of plastic pellet it was filled with or its type of tag—I'm not sure, I never mastered that aspect. Had they known, the people filling the online forums would've insisted I wasn't dedicated enough, that I'd never be able to compete in the intense online marketplace with such a blasé attitude. Sooner or later, if I didn't pay closer attention, I was going to get swindled in this cutthroat world driven by understuffed animals like Humphrey the camel, Patti the platypus, and a tie-dyed bear named Peace.

The Beanie Collapse of 1999

As a growing adolescent, with what I'm pretty sure was undiagnosed ADHD, I became laser-focused on getting all the best Beanies, only to suddenly lose interest and abruptly shift my attention to exotic pets. In 1999, I resolved to create a terrarium where as many reptiles and amphibians as possible could peacefully coexist. The only way to raise the money for such an endeavor was to sell my collection. So, one day I sat on a corner near Belleview and Federal, and held up a poster board to passing drivers that read "Beanie Babies For Sale." Dozens of cars nearly got in accidents as they whipped u-turns in order to get to my pop-up shop on a grassy Littleton hill. There was no time for them to legally drive to my blanket-based Beanie store. What if I had the most sought after, discontinued Beanie Babies? I made about $150 that day, a testament to the Beanie mania that gripped Denver as much as it did the nation. As soon as I could, I got a ride to the closest PetSmart and bought everything I needed to start my terrarium.

It turned out I bailed on my Beanies at just the right time. Later that year, the market abruptly collapsed. If only I had the same foresight with my Pog collection. Those stuffed animals I sold just months earlier—the ones people nearly wrecked their cars to get—were suddenly worthless. Just like the gold-hunters flocking to the Rockies in the late 1800s hoping to strike it rich, some Beanie collectors cashed in big, while others were left holding the bag when the frenzy fizzled. It was a small-scale replay of the booms and busts that have shaped Colorado's history. The silver crash of 1893, the oil shale bust of 1982, the Beanie Baby collapse of 1999—these moments share a common thread in Colorado history.

So, those Princess Diana bears never did make us as rich as we'd hoped. I eventually traded mine for a Terrell Davis football card. Mom still has her bear, and hopes that the Beanie Baby market will return. She even bought plastic tag protectors to keep the most valuable plushies in mint condition. Her collection lives somewhere in the basement awaiting the return of the Beanie Baby to its rightful place atop the e-commerce foodchain. Maybe the market will return one day. Probably not. But she hung on long enough for her Diana bear to make it into an exhibition at the History Colorado Center.

▲ Jeremy Morton recreates his blanket-based Beanie store on the same corner twenty-five years later. Photo by Kelly Utter-McCloskey.

◄ Kelly Utter-McCloskey next to her Princess Diana bear in History Colorado's exhibition *The 90s: Last Decade Before the Future*. Photo by Aaron Marcus.

A Candle in the Wind

It's easy to look back and trivialize Beanie Babies, even to mock the people who built an entire economy around buying and selling those beanbag animals. But it's no exaggeration to say that Beanie Babies normalized the online marketplace for thousands of people. The Beanie boom accelerated the growth of the internet and made thousands of people comfortable with e-commerce—Mom and me included. I'm sure shopping on the internet would've become popular even if the Ty corporation hadn't captured our hearts and wallets, but the fact is they did. As a result, the history of online shopping will forever be inextricably linked to the rapid rise and abrupt fall of Pinchers the lobster, Waddle the penguin, and Chocolate the moose.

For Mom and me, Beanie Babies came and went like a candle in the wind, but their footsteps will always fall there along Littleton's greenest hill. Their market burned out long before their legend ever will.

Jeremy Morton is an Exhibition Developer and Historian at History Colorado. Jeremy grew up in Denver and graduated from the University of Colorado Denver with a bachelor of arts in history, and a master of arts in curriculum and instruction.

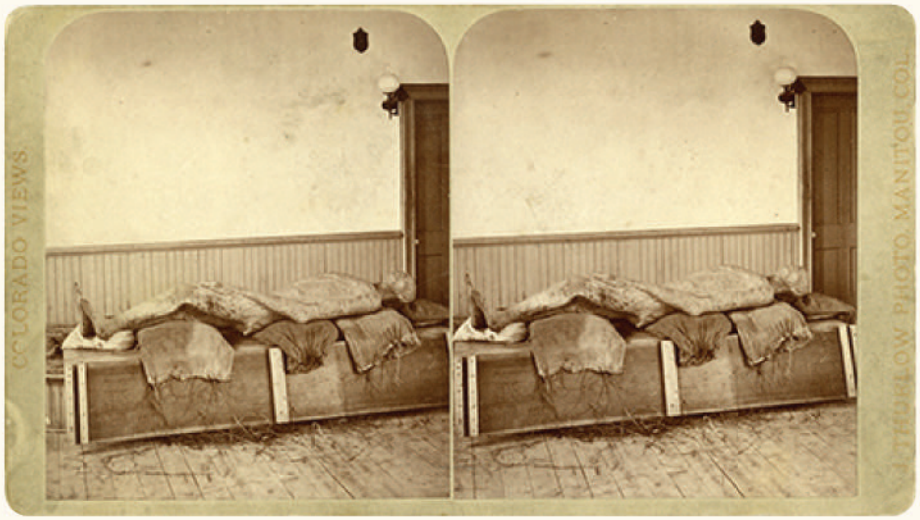
THE FOLLY AND FATE OF THE SOLID MULDOON

Mystery swirled around the discovery of a petrified giant, but was it the find of a lifetime or the greatest fake of its age?

BY ANN SNEESBY-KOCH

William Conant seemingly unearthed a marvel in September 1877. While searching for fossils near Beulah, Colorado, Conant had stopped for lunch when his attention was attracted by curious-looking stones protruding like toes from the ground. As he cleared away the dirt, he exposed what resembled a human foot, thirteen inches long. Further digging uncovered an entire human figure: seven feet and six inches in length, with arms measuring four feet and one inch long, its shoulders two feet in breadth. At the end of the backbone was a tail about two or three inches long. In some of the first coverage of the discovery from September 1877, the *Rocky Mountain News* described the figure as reclining, with "one arm being crossed over his breast, and the other lying along his side with the hand resting on his leg." The remarkable find appeared to be the petrified remains of a man.

Conant arranged help to remove the 600-pound "petrification" to a stable in Pueblo, where according to an account written by Conant in the *Rocky Mountain News* on October 2, 1877, "many hundred visited and examined" the figure. It was moved the next day to a public hall and Conant said "many thousand did see it." Conant telegraphed none other than P.T. Barnum, who was in Denver, about his discovery. After viewing the figure, Barnum offered Conant $20,000 for it.



Stereographic view of the "Solid Muldoon." Image by J. Thurlow. History Colorado, 84.192.727

In a retrospective article about Conant's discovery, the *Colorado Daily Chieftain* of January 1891 quoted Barnum as saying that he was "not sufficiently posted in such matters as to be able to say whether it is a petrifacture or a work of art; looking at it with the eye of a showman, it would be equally valuable to him in either case." Reportedly, Conant refused Barnum's proposition, but offered to sell it to Barnum and retain one-fourth interest in it. Barnum countered with $25,000 if Conant agreed to submit the figure to scientific examination and the result proved "satisfactory" to Barnum.

Conant staunchly maintained the figure was a petrification; however, a well-known painter and sculptor working in Colorado, John Harrison Mills, cast doubts upon Conant's giant in the press. Mills noted in an October 3, 1877, statement in the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News*, that among many anatomical impossibilities, "the brain is small at base, neck small with inadequate support for the head…ears flat to the head and awkwardly modeled…no marks of sternum, floating ribs or pelvic bones, though the subject lies upon his back." Frederick Samuel Dellenbaugh, an explorer, artist, and author, also published his misgivings about what was by then known as "the Solid Muldoon," referring to a popular tune of the day by Edward Harrigan. In a *Rocky Mountain News* article that ran on September 30, 1877, Dellenbaugh said: "I accept the term 'Muldoon' because it is meaningless and is therefore well applied." He denounced the

Muldoon as neither a petrification nor a piece of ancient sculpture; rather "it is plain that the intention of the perpetrators of this fraud was to palm the Muldoon off on the community as a 'petrification' and attempt to make money by causing people to believe that the Muldoon was a verification of the theory of evolution." It seemed too obliging toward Charles Darwin and those interested in finding the "missing" evolutionary link, according to the Chicago *Inter Ocean*, that the figure "carefully drew up his left leg so as to afford a good view of his rudimentary tail." Even the Darwins weighed in on the authenticity of the Muldoon as the "missing link" in a story run in the *Rocky Mountain News* of November 6, 1877. Reacting to a stereoscopic view of the figure taken while it was in Colorado Springs, Francis Darwin spoke for himself and his father by saying, "there seems to be a strong probability that the whole thing is an imposture."

Taking the Show on the Road

Conant arrived in Denver and unpacked his great discovery in a room at the corner of Sixteenth and Lawrence and opened the doors for a public exhibition. "Many hundreds of persons visited and inspected it yesterday… but no one was prepared to give any satisfactory solution to the mystery" of whether it was natural or artificial curiosity, said the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News* of October 3, 1877. Conant traveled east with the Muldoon, going first to Cheyenne and then Omaha and stopping at towns along the Missouri River. In Council Bluffs, Iowa, the Muldoon's arrival was the "means of throwing the scientific portion of that populace into discussion as to the genuineness of the discovery, and where the 'Muldoon' was pronounced a first-class fraud…in language more emphatic than elegant" according to the *Rocky Mountain News*, January 19, 1878. Eventually, Conant and his Muldoon arrived in New York "with the hope of course of lining his pockets with the shekels of the verdant and curious" the *Colorado Daily Chieftain* of January 1, 1891, observed in a retrospective piece. According to the *Chieftain*, the *New York Tribune*—other accounts say the *New York Times*—declared that the Muldoon was not a genuine petrification and went to work to find out the origin of the hoax.

"There seems to be a strong probability that the whole thing is an imposture."

Enter George Hull, a tobacconist and trickster who had perpetrated an earlier hoax: the Cardiff Giant. The Cardiff Giant was one of the nineteenth century's most elaborate frauds. A ten-foot-tall, 3,000 pound "petrified man" was uncovered in October 1869.

"Solid Muldoon" reposed. Image by J. Thurlow. History Colorado, 95.200.138

The Cardiff Giant was in fact designed to imitate the form of Hull and was carved out of gypsum. It was treated with stains and acids to make it look old and weathered. Hull spent nearly $3,000 to fabricate the Giant and transfer it by railroad from Chicago to his distant cousin's farm near Cardiff, New York, where it was buried in a hole. Once "discovered" by workmen digging a well, the Cardiff Giant drew crowds who paid fifty cents each to view the wonder, "and the proprietor of the farm took in more money than if he had discovered a rich vein of gold-bearing quartz," the *Scranton Tribune* reported on June 24, 1899. Some believed that the figure was the petrified remains of an ancient, Biblical race of giants, while others believed it was a statue carved by French Jesuits in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

Some believed that the figure was the petrified remains of an ancient, Biblical race of giants...

Looking back on the phenomenon, the *Detroit Evening Times* of August 31, 1941, reported that everywhere it went, the Giant drew crowds of those who "believed they had gazed upon the hardened remains of the biggest American who had ever lived and those who squawked because they had been swindled by a big but not-too-good example of the stonecutter's art." P.T. Barnum saw the Giant in Syracuse, New York, and reportedly offered to buy it, but his offer was refused. He commissioned a sculptor to create a replica and displayed it in his Manhattan museum which drew more crowds than the original. After bringing in $20,000 from his share of the enterprise, Hull revealed his hoax to the press in December 1869, saying it was his attempt at proving the gullibility of people who would believe the figure to be of an ancient clan of giants.

Media Circus

But Hull wasn't quite finished bamboozling folks. From a little mountain town in northern Pennsylvania, Hull hatched a scheme to create another humbug in the manner of the Cardiff Giant. "Hull had for a long time intended to deceive the public with this pretended petrification," said the *Colorado Daily Chieftain*. A slurry of ground stone, ground bones, clay, plaster, blood, eggs, and other materials was baked for weeks in a kiln to create the stone man. The *Chieftain* continued: Hull used steel needles, fastened in lead, and went "over the entire surface before it was baked, producing the 'goose flesh' appearance which [had] so puzzled scientific men."

Hull applied to P.T. Barnum for financial support once the stone giant was finished. "It was a white elephant on his hands. He had no money to plant it with," reported the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News* on January 30, 1878. The *News* continued that it was "plain that Barnum was both wet nurse and godfather to the Colorado giant and furnished the money and part of the strategy to foist the humbug on what proved to be an incredulous world." In whatever capacity, Barnum provided financial backing and intended to plant the giant in the Rocky Mountains.

The giant was shipped to Colorado Springs and then reshipped to Pueblo. W.A. Conant, allegedly under Barnum's employ, was present for the deposit of the giant at Beulah. Hull, disguised as a farmer named George H. Davis, also arrived in Pueblo where he heard Conant had been "fooling" with the giant and broke off the head and a leg. "However, the giant was skillfully mended and the discovery was made according to the plan" assured the *Weekly Rocky Mountain News*, January 30, 1878. (Conant damaged the giant a second time by trying to pry it out of the surrounding clay with a cedar branch and broke its neck and shoulder.)

That's when Barnum appeared on the scene, in September 1877, with his $20,000 offer, which Conant scornfully refused. Barnum then offered a $10,000 reward to "any man who would prove that the giant was made by chisel." Barnum leaned into the ruse and paid a certain Professor Taylor $100 plus expenses to prove that the giant was a petrified man by boring into the arm of the figure and noting the resulting crystal dust that it would produce. The *Rocky Mountain News* alleged in January 1878 that "Hull obtained the crystal to correspond, and by sleight of hand exchanged it for the dust of the boring implement which was first handed to him by Professor Taylor."

During a tour stopover in Quincy, Illinois, Barnum ordered it brought to New York City, where it was soon revealed as a hoax and the jig was up. The *Colorado Daily Chieftain* said in 1891,

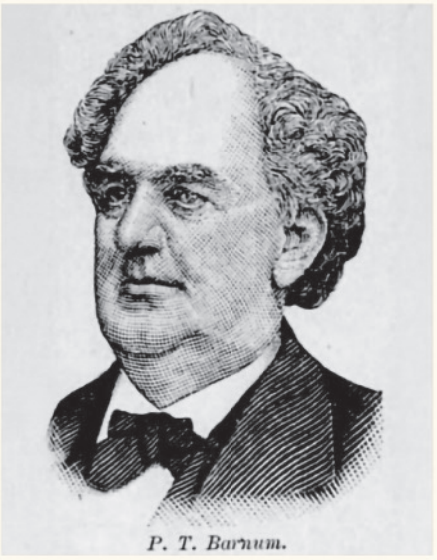
Head and shoulders of the "Solid Muldoon." Image by J. Thurlow. History Colorado, 84.192.728

[T]he reputation of the "Solid Muldoon" waned as rapidly as it grew. What became of the Giant the Chieftain has never been able to learn, but its "discovery" will be recollected by old timers in Pueblo and by many people throughout the United States as one of the greatest fakes of the age.

P.T. Barnum, renowned showman and huckster, went on to co-found the first three-ring circus, Barnum & Bailey's, in 1881. He also lent his name to the Barnum neighborhood in Denver when he purchased 760 acres outside Denver in 1878 and the Barnum subdivision was platted a few years after. The Town of Barnum was incorporated in 1887 and was an independent Colorado town until it became part of the city and county of Denver in 1903. William Conant faded into the background and worked as an agent of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway. George Hull, perpetrator of sensational hoaxes, died impoverished, having lost his "giant" fortunes, and in obscurity, in Binghamton, New York, in 1902 at the age of eighty-one.


The Solid Muldoon.

▲ "Whether I'm a humbug, image or monster grand, or Darwin's link of a pre-historic date." This illustration of the Solid Muldoon and verse appeared in *The Colorado Daily Chieftain* on January 1, 1891. Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection


P. T. Barnum.

▶ The World's Greatest Showman, P.T. Barnum, printed in *The Colorado Daily Chieftain*, January 1, 1891. Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection

Ann Sneesby-Koch is an Archives Collections Specialist in Curatorial Services and Collections Access. She loves old news, the weirder the better.

A HISTORY OF THE ALIEN ENEMIES ACT

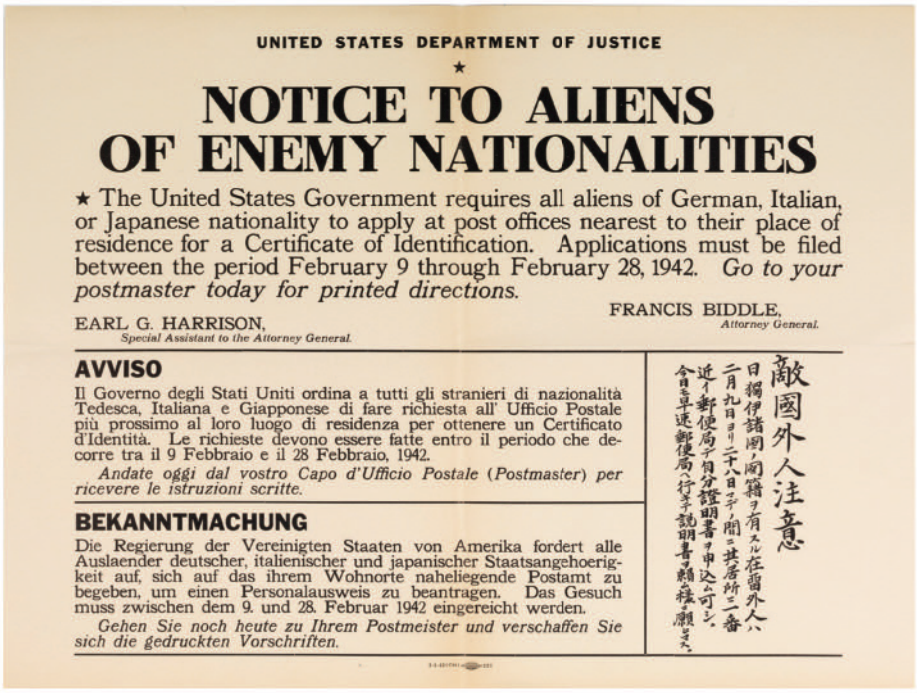
One of America's oldest and most controversial laws is in the spotlight once again

BY WILLIAM WEI

During a campaign rally at the Gaylord Rockies Resort in Aurora in October 2024, against a backdrop that read "End Migrant Crime" and "Deport Illegals Now" accompanied by large photos of men identified as members of a Venezuelan gang, then-presidential candidate Donald Trump spoke broadly of his concerns that the recent surge of immigrants at the southern border was having a detrimental effect on the nation, and specifically of reports that violent gangs of Venezuelan immigrants had taken over apartment buildings in Aurora. Toward the end of his speech, he said, "I'm announcing today that upon taking office, we will have an Operation Aurora at the federal level to expedite the removals of these savage gangs, and I will invoke the Alien Enemies Act of 1798—think of that, 1798, this was put there 1798; that's a long time ago, right?—to target and dismantle every migrant criminal network operating on American soil."

A moment later, decrying the state of the nation as "in tremendous distress" and "a failing country," he expanded on the promise, saying, "We will send elite squads of ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement], Border Patrol, and federal law enforcement officers to hunt down, arrest, and deport every last illegal alien gang member until there is not a single one left in this country." Those in attendance at the rally cheered in support. Aurora City officials pushed back, pointing out that it was categorically wrong to claim, as Trump did in his speech, that their city was "invaded and conquered" by immigrant criminals.

When Donald Trump invoked the Alien Enemies Act as a legal basis for mass deportations, he added a new chapter to the long history of one of the nation's most controversial laws. This essay explores that history by examining the act's origins, its applications across more than two centuries, and the controversies surrounding it.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

★

NOTICE TO ALIENS OF ENEMY NATIONALITIES

★ The United States Government requires all aliens of German, Italian, or Japanese nationality to apply at post offices nearest to their place of residence for a Certificate of Identification. Applications must be filed between the period February 9 through February 28, 1942. *Go to your postmaster today for printed directions.*

EARL G. HARRISON,
Special Assistant to the Attorney General.

FRANCIS BIDDLE,
Attorney General.

AVVISO

Il Governo degli Stati Uniti ordina a tutti gli stranieri di nazionalità Tedesca, Italiana e Giapponese di fare richiesta all' Ufficio Postale più prossimo al loro luogo di residenza per ottenere un Certificato d'Identità. Le richieste devono essere fatte entro il periodo che decorre tra il 9 Febbraio e il 28 Febbraio, 1942.

Andate oggi dal vostro Capo d'Ufficio Postale (Postmaster) per ricevere le istruzioni scritte.

BEKANNTMACHUNG

Die Regierung der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika fordert alle Auslaender deutscher, italienischer und japanischer Staatsangehoerigkeit auf, sich auf das ihrem Wohnorte naheliegende Postamt zu begeben, um einen Personalausweis zu beantragen. Das Gesuch muss zwischen dem 9. und 28. Februar 1942 eingereicht werden.

Gehen Sie noch heute zu Ihrem Postmeister und verschaffen Sie sich die gedruckten Vorschriften.

敵國外人注意

"Notice to Aliens of Enemy Nationalities," a poster published in World War II by the Department of Justice to inform residents of German, Japanese, and Italian descent that they were required to register with the post office. U.S. National Archives, HD1-104273899

Editor's Note: *In November 2024, Ryan Warner of Colorado Public Radio's* Colorado Matters *program interviewed Dr. Wei about the Alien Enemies Act. This essay expands on that interview with additional historical context, historian's perspective, and clarifications of those earlier remarks about the ways that act could be used to legitimize the mass deportation of immigrants from the United States to their countries of origin.*

The first thing to note is that the Alien Enemies Act was part of a series of laws known collectively as the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, enacted during a two-year undeclared and limited naval war with our erstwhile ally, France. Since France was at war with Britain (in the so-called French Revolutionary Wars), the French took umbrage at America's apparent partisanship toward their enemy and began seizing American merchant vessels. As if the ruination of American commerce was not enough, French officials requested an enormous bribe (the infamous XYZ Affair) before they would negotiate the restoration of amicable American-French relations. Americans raised a hue and cry over France's actions and started seizing armed French vessels in retaliation.

This sign was posted during the First World War to forbid Germans and Southern Europeans from entering certain parts of a post office. National Museum of American History, NMAH-AC0433-0006371

Taking advantage of the quasi-war with France, the US Congress enacted the four Alien and Sedition Laws: the Naturalization Act, the Alien Act, the Alien Enemies Act, and the Sedition Act. Historians today have generally viewed these laws as unjust and, most importantly, unconstitutional. It is also important to note that the acts were largely passed for partisan political purposes rather than reasons of national security, despite national security being the rationale provided at the time and repeatedly thereafter.

It was the Federalist Party, which controlled the federal government in those years, that passed these draconian bills, and President John Adams who signed them into law. Both the party and the president were concerned about espionage and internal subversion by French immigrants—potential "fifth columnists" who might support France against America when war broke out between the two nations. They were also apprehensive about importing radical ideas from France that could adversely affect their fledgling nation. However, the underlying reason for the passage of these laws was to undermine their political opponent: the Democratic-Republican Party led by Thomas Jefferson. In other words, national security became a pretext for political repression.

The underlying reason for the passage of these laws was to undermine their political opponent.

The Naturalization Act and the Alien Act restricted immigrants who were believed to favor Jefferson's Democratic-Republican Party. The former increased the residency requirements for citizenship from five to fourteen years. The latter granted the president unilateral authority to deport "aliens," meaning immigrants considered dangerous to the United States. The Federalists sought to protect themselves against a "horde" of Irish Catholic immigrants arriving in their fledgling country who might vote for their political opponents, as well as potentially dangerous Frenchmen promoting revolution on their shores.

The legislation that provoked the most objection was the Sedition Act, which responded to the rise of the partisan press and rival political parties. Through this law, one of America's most repressive statutes targeting political activity, the Federalists sought to suppress dissenting (i.e., disloyal) opinions against Adams's administration by criminalizing political speech. The law was used to imprison nearly a dozen pro-Jefferson newspaper editors nationwide, and its enforcement violated the First Amendment, one of the most treasured rights granted to Americans in the Bill of Rights. The Naturalization Act was eventually replaced, and these original Alien and Sedition Acts expired.

American historians have long viewed these laws as repugnant, regarding them with contempt and scorn for being products of partisan politics. What has concerned them most is that the laws granted the president excessive arbitrary power, undermining the system of checks and balances that is the hallmark of the US Constitution. It is crucial to note that many Americans also viewed them as repugnant, and these

laws were in some part responsible for John Adams's unsuccessful bid for reelection in 1800. Adams likely regretted signing them into law as, instead of consolidating his power, he lost it. As the historian Gordon S. Wood noted, the Alien and Sedition Acts were a "disastrous mistake" that "thoroughly destroyed the Federalists' historical reputation."

Since war was never officially declared against France, the "Alien Enemies Act" was never enforced. This act allowed for the restraint of enemy aliens only during a declared war and has never been repealed. It received bipartisan support, as it appeared to be a reasonable precaution during a national wartime crisis. Consequently, it has remained in effect to this day, allowing the president to detain, relocate, and deport enemy aliens in times of war. Unenforced at the time, the law established a precedent for the government's imprisonment of noncitizens under the guise of national security. In doing so, lawmakers created a powerful tool that could be misused by governments in the future to jeopardize the liberty and security of all Americans.

"Now for a Round-Up" by W.A. Rogers. This political cartoon was published in the *New York Post* following the passing of the 1901 Sedition Act, an updated revival of the original law that targeted Filipinos, Latin Americans, and union organizers. Library of Congress, LC-DIG-cai-2a14550

Since the eighteenth century, the United States has invoked the Alien Enemies Act during the War of 1812, World War I, and World War II. In all three wars, the law was used to discriminate against people based on their nationality, ethnicity, or race rather than their demonstrated threat to national security. While President James Madison imposed some restrictions on British nationals, who faced suspicion, hostility, and restrictions during the War of 1812, the impact of the Alien Enemies Act was most acute during the two world wars.

The law was used to discriminate against people based on their nationality, ethnicity, or race rather than their demonstrated threat to national security.

President Woodrow Wilson imposed restrictions on male German nationals when the United States entered World War I in 1917. Later, these regulations extended to German Austrians and women of both nationalities. The regulations included prohibitions on entering sensitive areas, mandatory registration with the police or US postmasters, and limits on owning signaling devices, radios, and firearms. German nationals were also subject to surveillance. More than 10,000 were arrested and investigated, with most being paroled.

While the experience was humiliating and often led to adverse consequences such as loss of employment, these people were not indiscriminately rounded up and imprisoned in concentration camps. Unfortunately, that was exactly what happened to Japanese Americans during World War II.


FIRST S. F. JAPANESE PRISONER

START OF ROUNDUP—Ichiro Kataoka, owner of Aki Hotel, 1651 Post Street, leaving his premises in custody of FBI agents and San Francisco plainclothes men yesterday as statewide crackdown on suspected aliens swung into action

San Francisco hotel owner Ichiro Kataoka, pictured here being led away in handcuffs by FBI agents, was one of the first people arrested for being of Japanese ancestry after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. *The San Francisco Examiner*, December 8, 1941

The most egregious application of the Alien Enemies Act occurred when, under the authority of the 1798 law, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Proclamation 2525 on December 7, 1941, granting the government the authority to arrest, control, and remove suspected Japanese immigrants deemed dangerous to the safety of the United States. Many of these individuals were community and religious leaders. The following day, another proclamation targeted suspected German and Italian immigrants. By February 16, 1942, the Department of Justice had initially arrested 2,192 Japanese, 1,393 German, and 264 Italian nationals. More arrests would soon follow.

Tragically, the term *alien enemies* was eventually and tacitly applied to the entire Japanese American community on the West Coast, including the Issei (first-generation immigrants who were ineligible for American citizenship because of earlier exclusionary legislation) and the Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans who held birthright citizenship). On February 19, 1942,

President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which authorized the evacuation and imprisonment of 120,000 individuals of Japanese ancestry—two-thirds of whom were American citizens—in ten concentration camps in some of the most desolate and isolated areas of the country. These Japanese Americans were presumptively suspected of disloyalty to the United States and collectively punished for it. The fact that German Americans and Italian Americans never faced the same fate strongly suggests that Japanese Americans were perceived as enemy aliens primarily because of their race. In other words, racism made Japanese Americans members of an "enemy race."

What exacerbated this tragic chapter of American history was the fact that the government knew the Japanese American community posed no threat. Intelligence from the FBI and the Office of Naval Intelligence confirmed there was minimal risk of any Japanese American "fifth column" engaging in sabotage. A White House investigation (the Munson Report), submitted weeks before the attack on Pearl Harbor, also concluded that Japanese Americans presented no threat to national security. Nevertheless, the government imprisoned them as a political expedient to assuage the fears of Americans who believed the Imperial Japanese Army would invade the United States and would be supported by the Japanese American community.

The government knew the Japanese American community posed no threat.

What did indeed pose a threat to the country was the government's actions against the Japanese American community. The imprisonment of Japanese Americans in concentration camps undermined the security of the United States by diverting essential resources toward building the camps and deploying soldiers to guard them instead of fighting the real enemy overseas. For instance, Amache, the concentration camp in southeastern Colorado, cost four million dollars, even with the help of the inmates in building it. It was a tremendous waste. Furthermore, it supported the enemy's propaganda campaign by portraying Americans as racists, an impression the government's own propaganda and explanations for imprisoning Japanese Americans only served to reinforce.

Today, many historians join Americans broadly in regarding the imprisonment of Japanese Americans in concentration camps as the worst mass violation of the civil liberties of American citizens in our nation's history. The US Congress eventually acknowledged that the incarceration of Japanese and Japanese Americans was driven primarily by "racial prejudice, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership," and President Ronald Reagan formally apologized for the injustice of their internment.

▲ Gail Tamaribuchi and her mother, photographed while interned at Amache. Gail was an infant when her family was relocated from their home in Walnut Grove, California, to the internment camp. History Colorado USE.181.4

◀ New arrivals disembarking from the train onto school buses waiting to take them to Amache. History Colorado Collection. PH.PROP2328

A Chinese immigrant laborer, working on the Union Pacific Railroad c. 1860s. History Colorado PH.PROP.3408

Despite the discriminatory laws which sent thousands of Japanese American families to internment camps, many young Japanese men still served in the U.S. Armed Forces during the Second World War. After the war, some of these veterans—including the infantry color guard photographed here—marched in Washington, D.C., in support of immigration law reform. Photo by Private Ozaki, March 20, 1949. History Colorado 86.296.10134

With President Reagan's formal apology, Americans should have understood the lesson from this tragic violation of civil rights. Even in times of fear and crisis, this history shows us that it is fundamentally wrong and counterproductive to imprison or strip basic rights from individuals labeled as dangerous solely because of their nationality, ethnicity, or race. This situation is particularly unacceptable when these individuals have a history of being stereotyped as inherently threatening, such as Asian immigrants who have been stigmatized as a "Yellow Peril" endangering the nation, or Haitian, African, and Salvadoran immigrants who have more recently been derided as inherently inferior.

The most evident lesson of the history of the Alien Enemies Act is that it is a wartime authority. It applies only during a war declared by the United States against another sovereign nation that has either invaded or threatened to invade the country. It was not invoked when it was originally passed because the conflict with France never boiled over into a formally declared war. When it was used during the War of 1812, World War I, and World War II, those conflicts provided the legal rationale. Political rhetoric claiming that undocumented immigrants represent an invasion or predatory incursion does not justify invoking the Alien Enemies Act. Absent a declared state of war, using the Alien Enemies Act as a pretext to detain and deport immigrants currently living in the United States ignores this history. It bypasses protections for immigrants, including their right to seek asylum. It risks trampling upon fundamental principles, including the commitment to the rule of law, that have held the nation together for nearly 250 years.

Invoking the Alien Enemies Act outside of wartime and in defiance of its history will, as it has in the past, infringe upon the rights of immigrants and harm the soul of the nation. United States history has long demonstrated

the value of protecting innocent individuals from harm and injustice—a principle deeply rooted in its founding documents. The Declaration of Independence asserts that individuals possess inherent rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The US Constitution and its Bill of Rights safeguard various individual freedoms, including freedom of speech, the right to a fair trial, and protections against unreasonable searches and seizures. Americans' commitment to pursuing the ideals expressed in those founding documents in ways that protect people and promote a more equitable society is at the core of our national identity. It is in doing so that we seek to realize the American Dream of a "more perfect union."

Dr. William Wei is a professor of history at the University of Colorado Boulder and Colorado's State Historian. He is the author of many books and publications including *Becoming Colorado: The Centennial State in 100 Objects*, and *Asians in Colorado: A History of Persecution and Perseverance in the Centennial State*.

Three unidentified Japanese American men, sitting on a steam shovel at Amache internment camp. History Colorado 88.312.16

SPEAKING OUT FOR SELF

The Black Struggle to Regain the Right to Vote in Territorial Colorado, 1864–1867

BY WILLIAM M. KING

Shortly after the close of the 1864 session of the Colorado Territorial Legislature in Denver, Barney L. Ford, one of the city's more well-to-do Black residents, learned that on March 11, an amendment to election laws took from him and other men of color the right to vote—something they could have exercised several times already since 1861. For it was in 1861 that, by legislative fiat, he and all other men resident in the territory at the time secured that right.

Three years later, however, skin color as a qualification was not overlooked when the legislature revisited the question: Who should be allowed to vote, and what shall be the criteria governing ingress to the circle of equals?

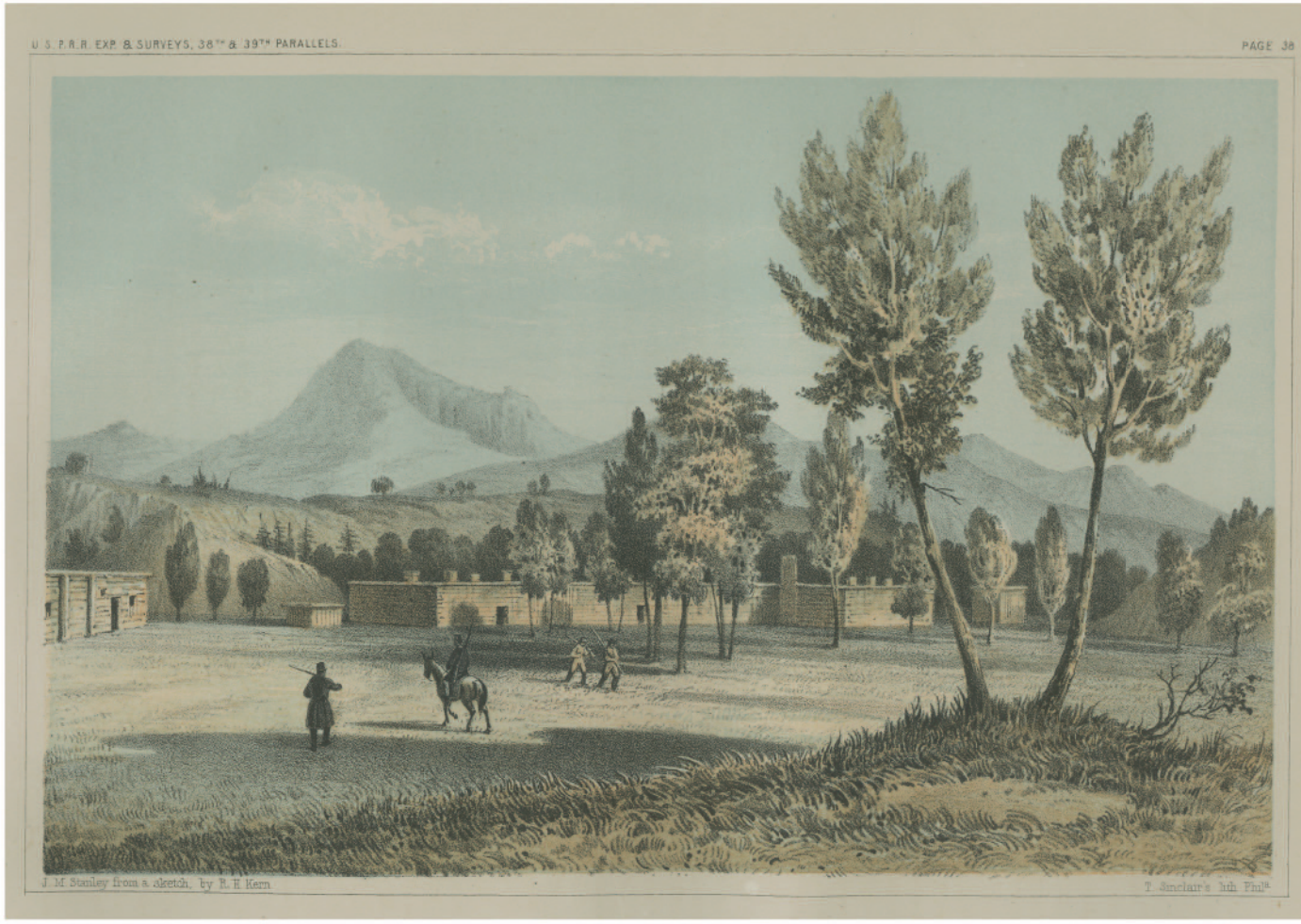
Clearly this shrinking of the public sphere was both a deliberate action and a provocative one, having all manner of import for present and future Black Coloradans. While it is the case that Blacks in Denver embraced both a kind of western rugged individualism and social adaptation to their new habitations, they also grew more inward-looking, implicitly setting a pattern of adjustment for later arrivals. Their political orientation became more conservative, and, in a number of ways, they mimicked the class biases of whites so as not to call unnecessary attention to themselves because of their small numbers—like a Black island in a white sea that, over the years, would take on a growing Hispanic population experiencing its own peculiar oppression.

Photo-illustration of Barney L. Ford, a prominent Black businessman in Colorado's territorial history and early statehood. History Colorado 2022.57.2099

Barney Ford and several of his contemporaries—in particular Edward J. Sanderlin, Henry O. Wagoner, and most especially William J. Hardin—faced several questions given the paucity of the Black population in Denver, the seat of political activity. (According to the 1860 federal census there were twenty-three Black people contrasted with 4,726 whites in the city, while the 1870 federal census enumerated 234 Black residents contrasted with 4,518 whites.) The first question was, did they wish to do anything about this change in their status brought about by the "gerrymandering" of the public sphere, resulting in a reduction of their civil rights? Second, if they were going to seek a remedy, what would it be, and how would they go about it? And third was the issue of consequences—both short and long term—flowing from whatever action they took to reconcile this assault on their personhood intended to contain and constrain their influence in shaping the society of which they believed themselves to be a part.

If they were going to seek a remedy, what would it be, and how would they go about it?

There is little doubt that whatever was done to restore their franchise rights—a symbolic hallmark of American democracy and an altar to their marginalized status in the territory—Black folk were going to have to struggle to retrieve a basic right. The prize: a new, expanded meaning of American citizenship for the post–Civil War United States, a nation in need of new visions of freedom, liberty, equality, and justice. These were, after all, the founding concepts the new nation first propounded at a time when race-based slavery was an everyday fact of life.



Building a National and Local Context

The designation of Black people, first as trade goods and then as chattel property in seventeenth-century America, was made even more concrete as a part of national culture in 1857 when Roger B. Taney, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, delivered his opinion in the matter of *Dred Scott*, saying that Black people

> ...were not intended to be included, under the word "citizens" in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States. On the contrary, they were at that time considered as a subordinate and inferior class of beings, who had been subjugated by the dominant race, and, whether emancipated or not, yet remained subject to their authority, and had no rights or privileges but such as those who held the power and the government might choose to grant them that for more than a century before they had been regarded as beings of an inferior order... so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect.

This was the legally codified racial context into which Colorado was born. Thus, in the summer of 1858 when William Green Russell and a party of Georgians (one of whom may have been James C. Stiles, a Black man) found gold in the Pikes Peak region, a westward migration was spurred the following spring. Thousands sought to get rich quick and return to the States to resume life as they had known it.

Then, less than a year later, on October 16, 1859, John Brown, a fiery, uncompromising abolitionist who loathed the so-called "peculiar institution" of slavery, seized for a brief moment the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. As tensions continued to build within the Union following Abraham Lincoln's election as the sixteenth president of the United States, South Carolina—long a crucible of southern separatism—voted on December 20, 1860, to secede. By February 1, 1861, six other states had followed, with four more to come. And on April 12, with the firing on Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor (less than two months after Colorado had become a territory on February 28), a war began that would bring in its wake unanticipated changes in the American and local social orders, with particular significance for Black people.

1854 lithograph painting of Fort Massachusetts in the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado. When Colorado began pursuing statehood in the 1860s, much of the territory's southern region was only recently annexed from Mexico. Most of the residents were Spanish-speaking and some resented the territorial government of Colorado, or the federal government of the United States. History Colorado 87.122.1

The status and experiences of Black people in Denver during this period are best characterized as representative of that peculiar species, the "Free Negro," who was neither slave nor free, a creature dreamed up through liberal dashes of ignorance and assumption. Their initial count of twenty-three had expanded sufficiently by the middle of the decade for them to be a visible presence in the city; indeed, in 1864 at least two score of their number was described in the *Rocky Mountain News*, one of the city's major daily papers, as they marched off to join the 54th Massachusetts Infantry of the United States Colored Troops.

These were people who had no natural right to access the process by which the preservation, protection, and defense of the privileges and position of the elites ensured the orderly exercise of authority. This had been evident as early as the first attempts to create the State of Jefferson in 1859, whose preliminary draft constitution was authored by William Newton Byers, the publisher of the *Rocky Mountain News* and an ardent supporter of statehood who used the Iowa Constitution of 1857 as a model.

The Quest for a New Stability

On February 28, 1861, President James Buchanan signed the enabling legislation "To provide a temporary government for the Territory of Colorado." In some respects, this quest for a new stability was a continuation of efforts that had begun earlier as it became clear that the miners' courts and people's courts, in their isolation from Kansas, were simply inadequate to the task of dealing with the growing complexity of life in the Pikes Peak region. Without a more reliable source of order, social stability could not be realized. And in the absence of social stability, economic development could not proceed at a pace fast enough for the Progressives whose objective was to create a new society at the far western edge of what they thought of as the "Great American Desert." Realizing this vision would require cooperation and compromise—and perhaps restrictions on who would be deemed suitable for inclusion in the public space.

The first hint at who might be excluded carries over from the Jefferson State and Territorial proposals. If Black

Onlookers gather to watch an acrobat walk a tightrope over Larimer Street in "downtown" Denver in 1861. At the time, the city had a population of fewer than five thousand, and was not yet the official capital. History Colorado 86.70.29

A wagon train on Larimer Street, then "downtown" Denver, in 1862. History Colorado 89.451.274

people were not seen as people, and if their numbers were so small as almost not to matter, then how do you explain the presence of a provision in the initial Provisional Laws of "Jefferson Territory" "that no white person shall be married to any person being a negro or mulatto of one-eighth negro blood"? Was it simply some southerners in the territory between 1858 and 1860 who might have influenced this statement, or was it perhaps a reflection of the character of a society designed by a small special interest group for a larger special interest group? Most assuredly, the number of decision makers would be restricted by the fundamental provision in the purported Territory's "Provisional Constitution" granting the vote to "every white male citizen of the United States, of the age of 21 years," which was reinforced in the Criminal Code, making it a misdemeanor for a person to vote "knowing himself not to be qualified," punishable by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or imprisonment for not more than a year.

The first hint at who might be excluded carries over from the Jefferson State and Territorial proposals.

Contrast this with what we find in the 1861 Organic Act approved by Congress and signed by the president, describing suffrage for the new territory:

> *And be it further enacted*, That every free white male citizen of the United States above the age of twenty-one years, who shall have been a resident of said Territory at the time of the passage of this act, including those recognized as citizens by the treaty with the Republic of Mexico…shall be entitled to vote at the first election, and shall be eligible to any office within the said Territory….

This last sentence is of critical importance, as we will shortly see. The first session of the Colorado Territorial Legislative Assembly approved on November 6, 1861, the following clause expanding the suffrage privilege:

> That every male person of the age of twenty-one years or upwards, belonging to either of the following classes, who shall have resided in the Territory

for three months next preceding any election, and ten days in the township, precinct or ward, in which he offers to vote, shall be deemed a qualified voter at such election....

Contrast this with what took place at the third session of the same body in 1864 when it amended the prior suffrage statute. Section 1 of this new act, approved on March 11, 1864, increased the residency requirement from three months to six months, redefined certain racial categories and requirements, moved election day, and, crucially, set forth a new required loyalty oath for voters.

Notably the clause doing away with the franchise right of Black Coloradans appeared in the middle of a set of actions where it would be less noticeable, begging the question of what these actions meant for the vetting process that Blacks would have to employ in seeking allies in their struggle to retrieve what had been taken from them.

War of Words

With the southern states having withdrawn from Congress, and with the upcoming national elections giving pro-statehood forces in Denver the sense that their time was nigh, Coloradans moved to call a convention in July for the purpose of writing a state constitution they would submit to Congress for approval. A small number of Blacks attended this gathering to press for a remedy to their disfranchisement.

While the national Republican Party wanted additional votes in Congress to continue its program and foster policy creation for the postwar period, statehood hinged on whether there were enough people in the territory to support the costs of state government. Most of the miners and some smaller property holders would oppose it to the last. Unfortunately, the 1864 draft constitution modeled after Iowa's did not address Black suffrage, a fact that would become more crucial in the ensuing years. As some anticipated, this constitution was not ratified by the voters because of the less-than-sanguine financial outlook in the territory and the uncertainty of whether and when the railroad would arrive to more effectively connect Colorado with the states back East.

Blacks would have to vet allies in their struggle to retrieve what had been taken from them.

Not long after, another attempt to secure statehood began, enhanced by an economic upturn early in the new year. At a second constitutional convention in June 1865, the question of Black

suffrage was split off as a separate election proposal in the hopes of advancing the case for statehood.

The fight over disfranchisement is particularly visible in newspapers of the era. Two of the state's early titles, Black Hawk's *Daily Mining Journal* and Central City's *Miners' Register*, took opposite sides on the suffrage question, albeit with a greater focus on the national scene than in the territory itself, but with clear import for Colorado.

The *Register* began the debate on May 3, contending, first, that they did "not believe the negro race, as such, prepared for 'equality of rights under the laws.'" Indeed, this was something they, the publishers, "have never believed." In that "equality would necessarily involve the rights of the elective franchise," they were not yet "ready to concede" that "the masses of the colored population of the south from whose limbs the fetters of slavery have just fallen" were "qualified to exercise [that] right." To make plain their impartiality on the issue, the *Register* stated further that there were also some whites who did not qualify either. What the editors, Collier and Wells, wanted to see before extending the franchise to all comers was that they were sufficiently informed about the issues so that their votes would reflect thought and careful consideration. On May 4, the *Journal* replied with a lengthy article, saying that its editorial staff was not

> …of that party which placed the abolition of negro slavery above the restoration and preservation of the Union. We would have seen it extended over the United States rather than that the country should be finally separated. And holding that opinion, we looked upon the unconditional abolitionists as little better than the secessionists. Of course their motive was nobler, but the effect was the same.

Moreover, they rejoiced with their whole soul that slavery, the cause of the Civil War, was gone, because "its destruction was paramount to the restoration of the Union." And, while the *Register* "would exclude men from voting on account of ignorance and vice," the *Journal* contended that because the

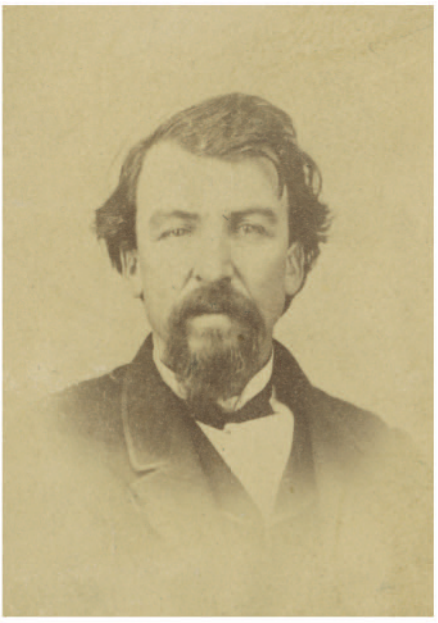
> …negro *fights* and *pays*; it would be less than a man who would not then allow him to vote. You tax him and give him a musket to defend your life and property and then refuse to let him vote! It won't do. It ain't fair; it ain't right; it ought not and will not prevail.

A little later in the same column, the *Journal* makes a most interesting observation. It begins by stating that it favors universal suffrage; that Blacks had voted in all the original states save Georgia. It then asks whether, by continuing to deny suffrage to Black people, democracy is devolving. And, if that is what is happening in Colorado, what does it say about the wannabe state perpetrating the fiction that it is committed to democracy?

The new constitution created that summer was adopted by a vote of 3,025 in favor and 2,870 opposed, on September 5, 1865. The separate proposal for Black suffrage was defeated 4,192 to 476, sustaining the disfranchisement that was unacceptable to the Blacks and making clear that their quest was just beginning.

Most of the affirmative votes cast for suffrage came from Denver and the booming mining town of Central City, where the largest number of Black people lived. A substantial portion of the "no" votes came from the southern part of the territory. Although Congress passed a bill for Colorado's admission as a state, President Andrew Johnson vetoed it, believing Colorado had not met all the conditions of the enabling act of 1864.

The public struggle to regain franchise rights for Black people in Colorado resumed shortly after the veto as a Black man, William J. Hardin, who had achieved some renown as a public speaker, took to the platform to challenge James M. Cavanaugh and congressional candidate John M. Chivington, infamous for his participation in the Sand Creek Massacre of the prior year, both of whom opposed Black suffrage. According to one newspaper account, Hardin, during his remarks that lasted some two hours,



James A. Cavanaugh, delegate to the Colorado Territorial Congress, photographed in the 1860s. History Colorado 91.429.405

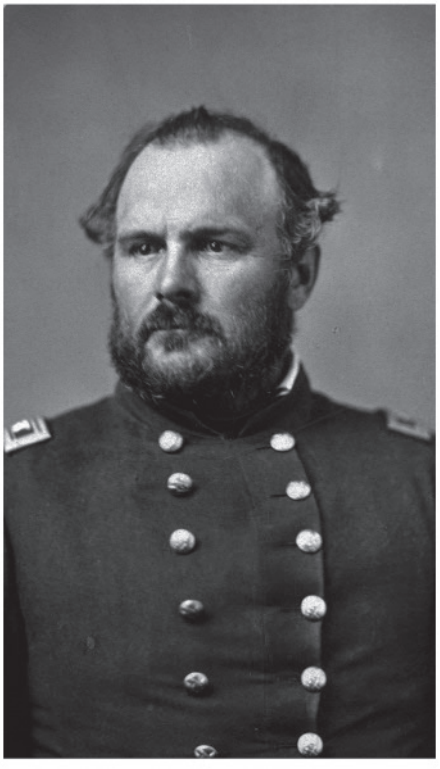


Photo portrait of Colonel John Chivington, notorious commander of the Third Colorado Cavalry at the Sand Creek Massacre. In addition to his military career, he was also very politically active in the new territory. History Colorado 89.451.5534

William Jefferson Hardin was born to a white father and Black mother in 1831 in Kentucky, and spent much of his early life traveling the country before settling in Denver in the 1860s. Before coming to Colorado, he briefly served as an officer in the Union army, but had resigned in protest of recruitment discrimination. After leaving Colorado, he went on to become Wyoming's first Black legislator. Photo from the Wyoming Territorial Legislature, 1882. Courtesy the Wyoming State Archive.

> …held his audience enchained, not so much by his eloquence, (though at times he became truly so,) as by his keen wit, his searching satire, and the true manner in which he applied his facts; the only moments that the utmost silence was not observed were occupied by bursts of applause or uncontrollable laughter.

Once he was seated, a vote was taken on whether Hardin "had not established by his address, at least his own right, even though a man of color, to a vote at the ballot box." Unanimously, the audience agreed that he had. Even Cavanaugh, in remarks that lasted another ten minutes, was moved to change his position and commit himself to impartial suffrage.

Escalating the pressure, Hardin wrote to Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, on December 15, 1865. His intention, he said, was "to call your attention to the political condition of the colored people of Colorado." He followed with a series of examples to make his case:

> In this Territory we have few rights which the white men are bound to respect. We have taxation and no representation; we pay school taxes to educate white children, and at the same time we cannot draw a dollar from the school fund for the education of a colored child or the support of a colored school in the Territory. In the city of Denver two of our wealthiest colored citizens, B.L. [Barney] Ford and E.J. Sanderlin, pay taxes on from $30,000 to $40,000 each; and yet these men had to send their children East to be educated. In the State Constitution, recently framed and adopted by the Union or Republican party, they incorporated the words, "All *White* male citizens," which excludes all her loyal colored citizens from the sacred right of *Equal Suffrage*.

Accordingly, Hardin continued, the colored citizens of the territory had prepared a petition, given to Territorial Governor Alexander Cummings on December 11 for transmission to Congress, a copy of which he included in

his letter. Their intent was to beseech "that Honorable Body not to admit Colorado as a State until she erases from her Constitution the word White."

Greeley replied on the editorial page of the *New York Tribune* on January 15, 1866. He took issue with Hardin's contention that he, Greeley, had urged "the admission of Colorado without exacting Equal Rights for her colored citizens." The exchange illustrates the case Colorado's Black civic leaders were beginning to make for their own enfranchisement, and their frustrations with the constant media struggle.

Pushed to Organize Against Statehood

Alexander Cummings had replaced John Evans (an advocate for statehood) as Colorado's Territorial Governor in 1865. His role in the Black quest for retrieval of franchise rights was limited mainly to speeches to the Territorial Legislature on the incorrectness and immorality of their actions, and transmission of selected documents to Washington.

Born into slavery, Edward J. Sanderlin inherited a portion of his white slaveowner father's estate after a lengthy lawsuit. He utilized this windfall to invest in mines in California and Colorado, opened businesses in Denver, and became one of the wealthiest Black men in the West. From early in his career, he used his wealth and influence to advocate for the right for Black men to vote not only in Colorado, but across the country. *The Sunday Ledger* (Topeka, Kansas), March 16, 1890.

With respect to the first of these duties, Cummings responded to a request he had received from H.O. Wagoner, Albert Arbour, A.C. Clark, William C. Randolph, and William J. Hardin. On behalf of "the colored citizens of the territory," the men wrote,

> many of our people emigrated to this territory with a knowledge of the law of 1861, which gave us the same rights as to other citizens, and that we are now suffering from the unjust law of 1864, which deprives negroes and mulattoes of the right of citizenship; and we are suffering from a further injustice which we have personally called your attention to, in reference to the exclusion of our children from the public schools.

They did this believing Cummings would be sympathetic to their cause because of his service as a commanding officer of colored troops during the recent conflict. He prepared an address, the substance of which recapitulated the events contained in materials submitted by the committee.

Stating that he has "the honor to transmit herewith a petition of a committee of the colored citizens of this territory, on the subject of a law passed by the legislative Assembly during its session of 1864, by which they were deprived of their right to vote," he continues, "It seems incredible, and if it were not for the record, it would be incredible that such a measure could have been adopted at such a time. The colored people, at that moment, were everywhere eagerly pressing forward to the support of the government, and their services were as gladly accepted." He merely wanted the legislature to do what it had been elected to do: make equitable law that will benefit all of the citizens, not just a select few. But they did nothing. He then forwarded to the Secretary of State several documents, including a copy of a petition making the case against statehood for Colorado until it removed the odious clause from its proposed constitution.

The secretary forwarded the documents to President Johnson, who in turn remanded them to Congress on January 12, 1866, believing with Cummings that the election was of questionable legality. Senator Lyman Trumbull of Illinois moved for their submission to the Committee on the Judiciary and was informed by Senator Benjamin F. Wade of Ohio that they had already been submitted to the Committee on Territories.

"Many of our people emigrated to this territory with a knowledge of the law of 1861, which gave us the same rights as to other citizens."

On January 15, in a front-page *Rocky Mountain News* editorial, William Byers published a stinging rebuke to Hardin's petition. He began with the contention "that over two-thirds of the voting population of Colorado [was] loyal to the Union." He added that, for Black Coloradans who should feel indebted to the Union in the aftermath of the Civil War, standing in the way of statehood was "an act of treachery and ingratitude rarely exceeded."

Blacks should, he went on, remember that social change is *evolutionary*, not revolutionary. Black people have seen some improvements over the past few years, and they must be content with "this regular progression, by which they were being advanced in the human scale"; they cannot have everything they want *now*!

Byers wasn't alone in venting his frustrations. Also responding to Hardin's petition, senators-elect for Colorado John Evans and Jerome B. Chaffee, wrote on January 29, 1866,

> …the protest presented to your honorable body against such admission, purporting to be from colored citizens of Colorado, is without signatures, the names being printed thereon. And your memorialists have satisfactory assurances that many of said names were thus used without the knowledge or consent of the parties, and that they have expressed dissatisfaction therewith. And further, that the leading man among them regrets his inconsiderate action, and has since expressed in writing a desire for the admission of the State notwithstanding his protest.

They also wrote that the petition contained misrepresentations, including the assertion "that the framing and adoption of the Constitution were 'accomplished by the utmost recklessness and disregard of law, and in many cases by actual fraud.'"

What neither of these gentlemen seemed to understand was the extent to which the inequity they detail vitiates the claim of procedural equity, no matter what they might contend about the ease of securing suffrage once the territory became a state.

The territory appeared to have experienced "a retrogression in republican principle."

Nothing more was done on the issue of Colorado statehood until March 12, 1866, when Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts attached an amendment to a bill stipulating:

> That this act shall not take effect, except upon the fundamental condition that within the State there shall be no denial of the elective franchise or any other rights on account of color or race, but all persons shall be equal before the law.

The following day, Sumner removed his amendment allowing a vote on the bill. It was rejected 21–14 in part because he read into the record Cummings's message to the Territorial Legislature to buttress his own arguments. However, political realities in the form of increased enmity between the Radical Republicans in Congress and the president resulted in its being brought back because two more votes in the Senate might make a difference.

A crowd in front of the Astor House, a tavern and boarding house in Golden, Colorado, built in 1867. Before 1881, Colorado had no permanent capital, so the territorial legislature (and early state legislature) met in a wide variety of locations for official business, including taverns in Golden. Denver Public Library X-10060

A Black family in their rural cabin, somewhere in Colorado, photographed circa the 1890s. As Colorado's overall population grew during and after the Civil War, so too did the percentage of Black residents. History Colorado 2022.57.253

On April 24, when the debate about Colorado statehood resumed, Sumner observed that the territory appeared to have experienced "a retrogression in republican principle." At the outset of its creation, there was "a recognition of human rights." But then, with the redefinition of who was a qualified voter, in "open and bare-faced [language a] caste was established. A discrimination, odious, offensive and un-Christian was organized in the statutes of the Territory." Even worse, at the time the legislature took this particular action, "the country was still struggling in that terrible war involving the great question of justice to the colored race. At that moment this distant community, already aspiring to be a State in the Union, undertook to put its feet upon the colored race that had began [*sic*] to gather under its jurisdiction." Indeed, they were themselves fighting for the Union. But "when they returned to their homes they found that the franchise that they had already enjoyed was taken from them; that they who had periled life for to save the Republic and to aid it in establishing the rights of all, when they once more found themselves at their own firesides were despoiled of their own."

On the 25th, the bill approving statehood passed in the Senate 19–13, and in the House 81–57. However, Johnson vetoed the bill, giving insufficient population as a reason, without even addressing suffrage. As expected, the *Rocky Mountain News* was less than pleased at the result. It referred to Cummings as a "consummate ass," roundly condemned him as having used his influence injudiciously, and made clear that Colorado would be better off without him and he should not return from the East.

On his return, Cummings continued his unpopular activities, addressing the legislature in December 1866. Reminding them that he had already spoken about "the laws in relation to the colored population," he commended them for taking remedial action to use the tax monies collected from them for the education of Black children in separate schools. However, the suffrage issue must still be fixed since the legislature had done nothing when he asked, and that was to be regretted:

> It is true, slavery is abolished, but if its spirit remains, and a caste is to be retained among us by which a part of the people are to be deprived of their political rights, and of all hope of improvement in their condition, no matter how upright their conduct or meritorious their conduct, or to what degree of intelligence they may attain, it seems to me the war for the suppression of the rebellion will prove to have been only a partial success, and leave us with the root of the evil, ready again at a favorable moment to germinate and produce incalculable mischief.

Accordingly, he called upon the legislature to "do itself credit [by] responding to the public sentiment of the country on the subject [and establish] impartial suffrage, offering it to all classes and colors, on the same conditions."

On January 9, 1867, early in the second session of the 39th Congress, Senator Wade of Ohio introduced House Bill 508 for consideration in the Senate. He indicated that it related to the subject that had been under discussion earlier—namely, "a bill to prevent hereafter any distinction on account of color in any of the Territories belonging to the United States." The Senate, acting as a Committee of the Whole, adjourned before consideration of the bill could be concluded. So, on the following day, the discussion resumed and the following was proposed:

> That from and after the passage of this act there shall be no denial of the elective franchise in any of the Territories of the United States to any citizen thereof on account of race, color, or previous servitude; and all acts or parts of acts, either of Congress or the Legislative Assemblies of said Territories, inconsistent with the provisions of this act, are hereby declared null and void.

A vote was then taken and the bill passed 24–7 with 21 abstentions. After its passage, Wade suggested that it be named "A Bill to Regulate the Elective Franchise in the Territories," and the name was agreed upon. The House approved the bill that same day, and on January 31, 1867, it became law without Johnson's signature.

Rights Restored but Still Under Threat

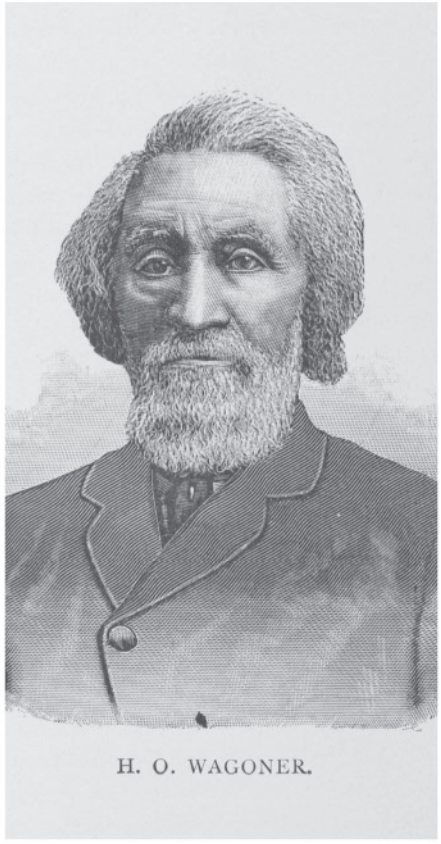
In April 1867, a little more than three years after Black citizens were deprived of the right to vote, Black suffrage was restored in Colorado. In response, the *Rocky Mountain News* wrote:

> A simple act of justice to the colored race of America, so far as the Territories are concerned, has been accomplished, and in all the proud majesty of independent citizenship, the lately reviled and down-trodden negro stands among us to-day.

Black journalist and businessman Henry O. Wagoner, writing to the editor a few days later, made clear that "Colored Men [Were] Awake to their [Changed] Situation." Now that they possessed "the privilege of exercising the elective franchise in [the] Territories," they wanted to insure to the best of their ability that Black voters would "be intelligent ones."

The *News* also reported on February 16, 1867, that Black Coloradans would be holding "a festival in honor of their endowment with the right of suffrage." On Thursday the 21st, William J. Hardin would address the attendees on the subject of "Equal suffrage and the duty of colored voters of Colorado." On the day after the festival, the paper reported that

Irving Williams, an elderly Black resident of Denver, photographed on his porch circa 1900. History Colorado 2022.57.256



H. O. WAGONER.

Henry O. Wagoner was born a free Black resident of Maryland, and from a young age became an ardent abolitionist. He participated in the Underground Railroad in Louisiana, Ohio, and West Virginia, and taught in a school for Black children in Chicago. In 1860, he moved to Denver to join the business prospects of his friend Barney Ford, and continued to be involved in civil rights for the remainder of his life. The New York Public Library, 1169809

> …Mr. Hardin's address last evening attracted a large crowd at Cole's hall. The speaker made an eloquent plea for the colored race, and showed logically that the black man, who assists in the support and defense of the government, should be entrusted with the ballot for its maintenance, and the creation of its laws.

Of particular importance, as subsequent history shows, was the understanding that a future Congress might undo what the 39th Congress had done, especially after the Radical Republicans' losses in the election of 1867. In the last of the Civil War amendments, the Fifteenth, proposed on February 26, 1869, and ratified on March 30, 1870, a portion of the wording noted above—"race, color, or previous servitude"—was incorporated into Section 1 of that amendment as: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Dr. William M. King retired as professor emeritus of Afroamerican Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. A founding member of the National Council for Black Studies, he is the author of *Going to Meet a Man: Denver's Last Legal Public Execution, 27 July 1886.*

THE WIZARD IN THE MOUNTAINS

Nikola Tesla's Mysterious Experiments in Colorado Springs Are Still Raising Questions

BY KENNA HUGHES-CASTLEBERRY

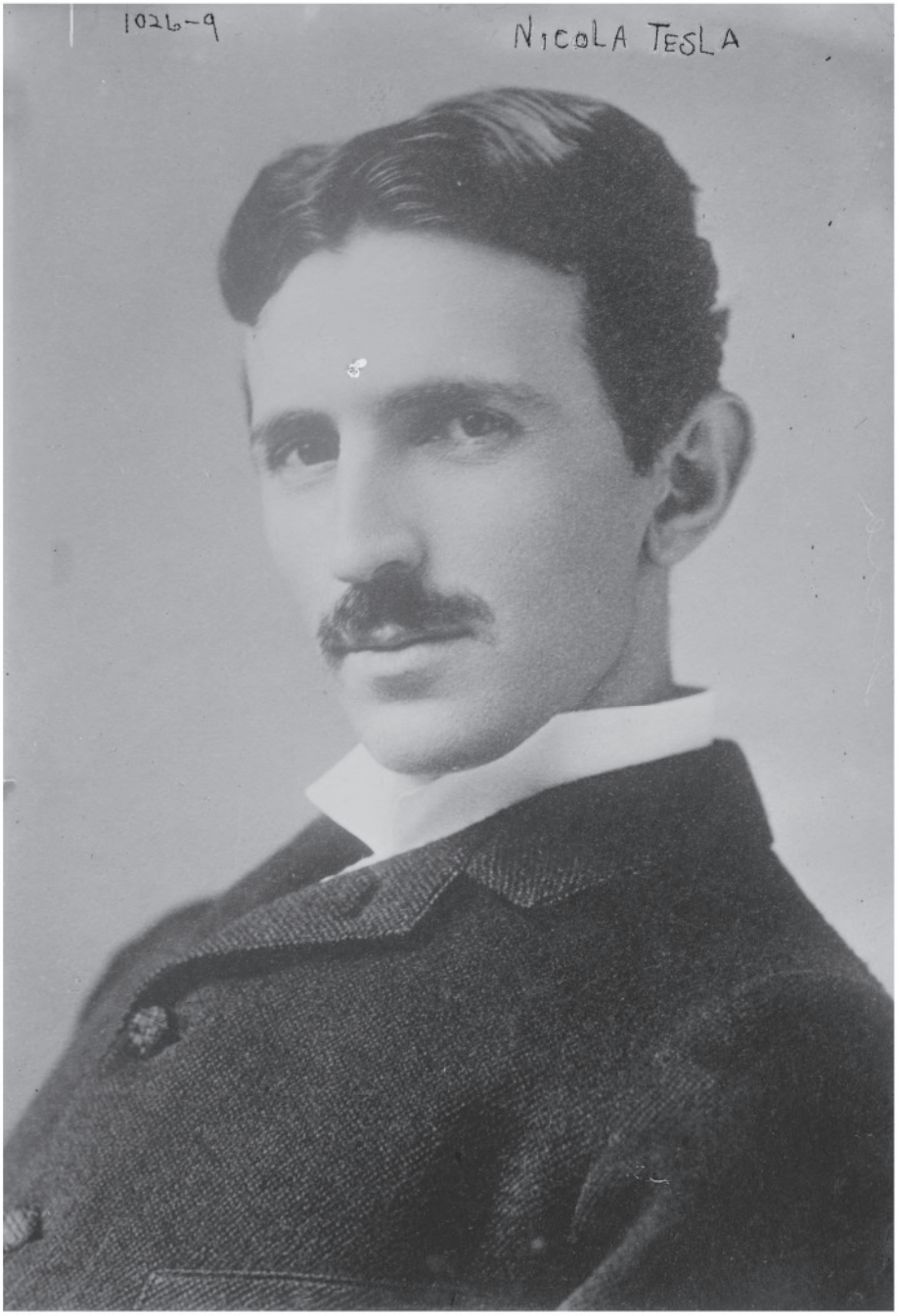


Photo portrait of Nikola Tesla, c. 1890. Library of Congress LC-B2-1026-9

Having grown up in Colorado, and being an avid fan of Nikola Tesla, I was only too thrilled to discover that the famous inventor and physicist had briefly lived in Colorado Springs. Like many people, I became fascinated with the mysteries surrounding Tesla's work, especially from a physics perspective (as I am a physics writer). During my time in graduate school, I had written several articles about Tesla's notes that, at the time, had recently been released by the FBI. My interest in Tesla only grew as I dug through these digital vaults. So, when I found out that he spent time in Colorado Springs, I had to find out why he came, and more importantly, why he left after less than a year.

The famous inventor and physicist had briefly lived in Colorado Springs.

Drive through Colorado Springs today and it's hard to imagine what the town would have been like over 100 years ago. Between the Air Force Academy and the parade of shops and restaurants dotting I-25, it can be hard to appreciate the city's history. Today it's next to impossible to find any evidence of Tesla's visit unless you look really hard. Yet, historians and Tesla scholars alike believe that his visit to Colorado Springs was one of the most productive

and important times in his career, as it helped him come up with some of the fundamental ideas for the wireless transfer of energy. Stories of his barnlike laboratory shooting feet-long sparks into the sky or how he trapped himself under a live Tesla coil remain out of the mainstream narrative of Colorado Springs history, though they explain how the then-rural town dealt with the visit of one of its first celebrities.

Tesla was a Serbian engineer and scientist who was already famous and well-funded by the time he arrived in Colorado. In the 1880s, with George Westinghouse's help, Tesla won the "current wars" against Thomas Edison, wherein the entire city of Buffalo, New York, was lit up using the alternating currents coming from Niagara Falls. He worked on several other experiments, including one that unfortunately burned his laboratory down in 1895.

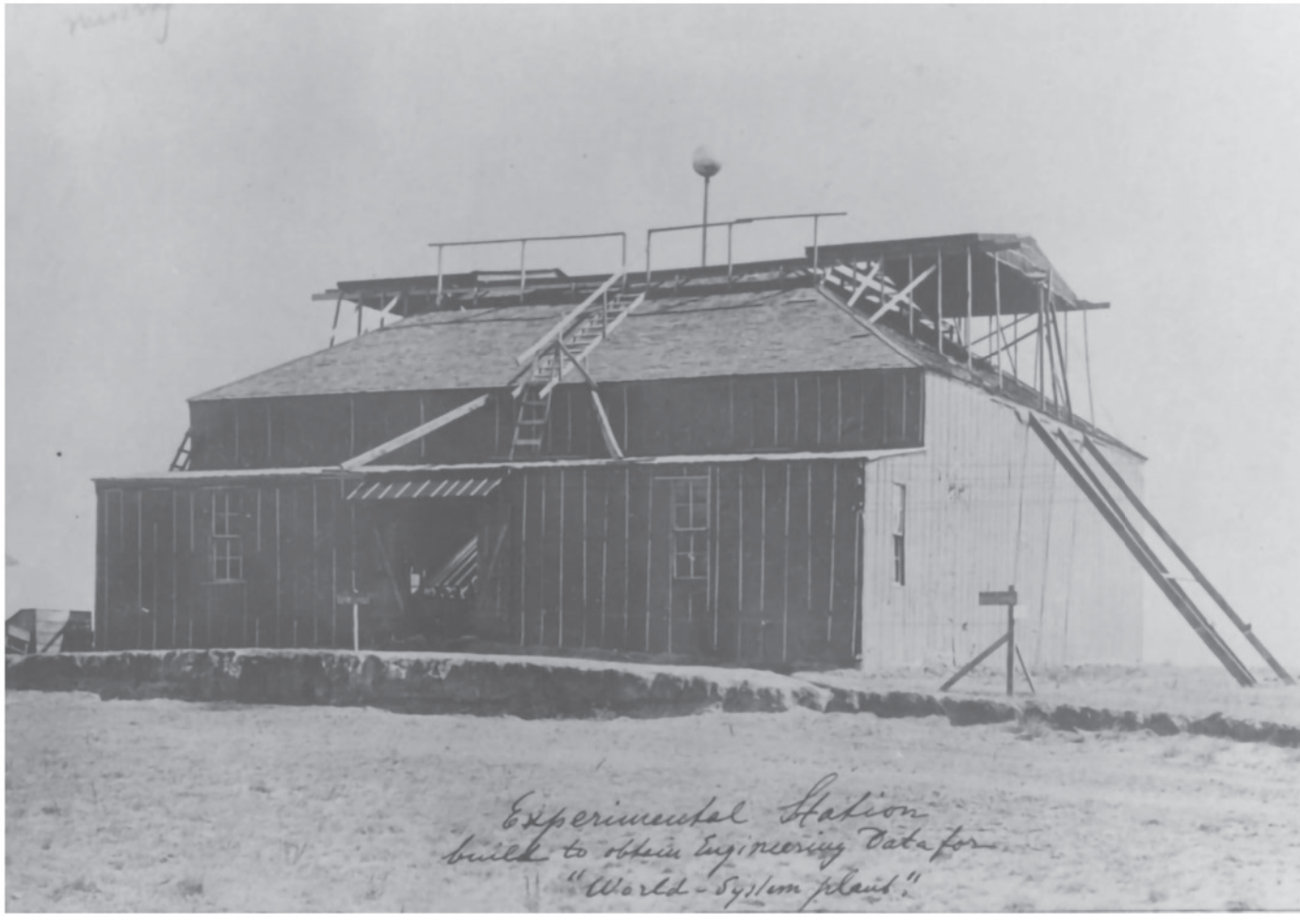
By the time Tesla boarded a train for Colorado, he had given lectures at several Ivy League universities, and colleges in London, securing his reputation as a successful scientist.

Tesla was not deterred, however. By the time Tesla boarded a train for Colorado, he had given lectures at several Ivy League universities, and colleges in London, securing his reputation as a successful scientist.

Heading West

Like much of his research, moving to Colorado Springs in May of 1899 was a calculated risk for Tesla. Through his prior work at the Westinghouse company, Tesla met a lawyer named Leonard Curtis, who had shares in the El Paso Electric Company in Colorado Springs. Curtis knew Tesla was looking for a new laboratory and offered him a discounted property in Colorado Springs and free electricity from the electric company. With fewer safety hazards and more room in Colorado, it was an offer Tesla could not refuse. As he boarded the train for Colorado Springs, he told his laboratory assistants to send his equipment immediately behind him.

He was excited to see whether Colorado's thin air was more conductive for electricity. Tesla planned to place various electrical towers around Colorado



A photograph of Tesla's Colorado Springs laboratory. The opening roof and 142-foot pole can clearly be seen atop the small barn structure. Signposts warning of danger can also be seen near the entrance. National Museum of American History, NMAH-AC0047-0000024

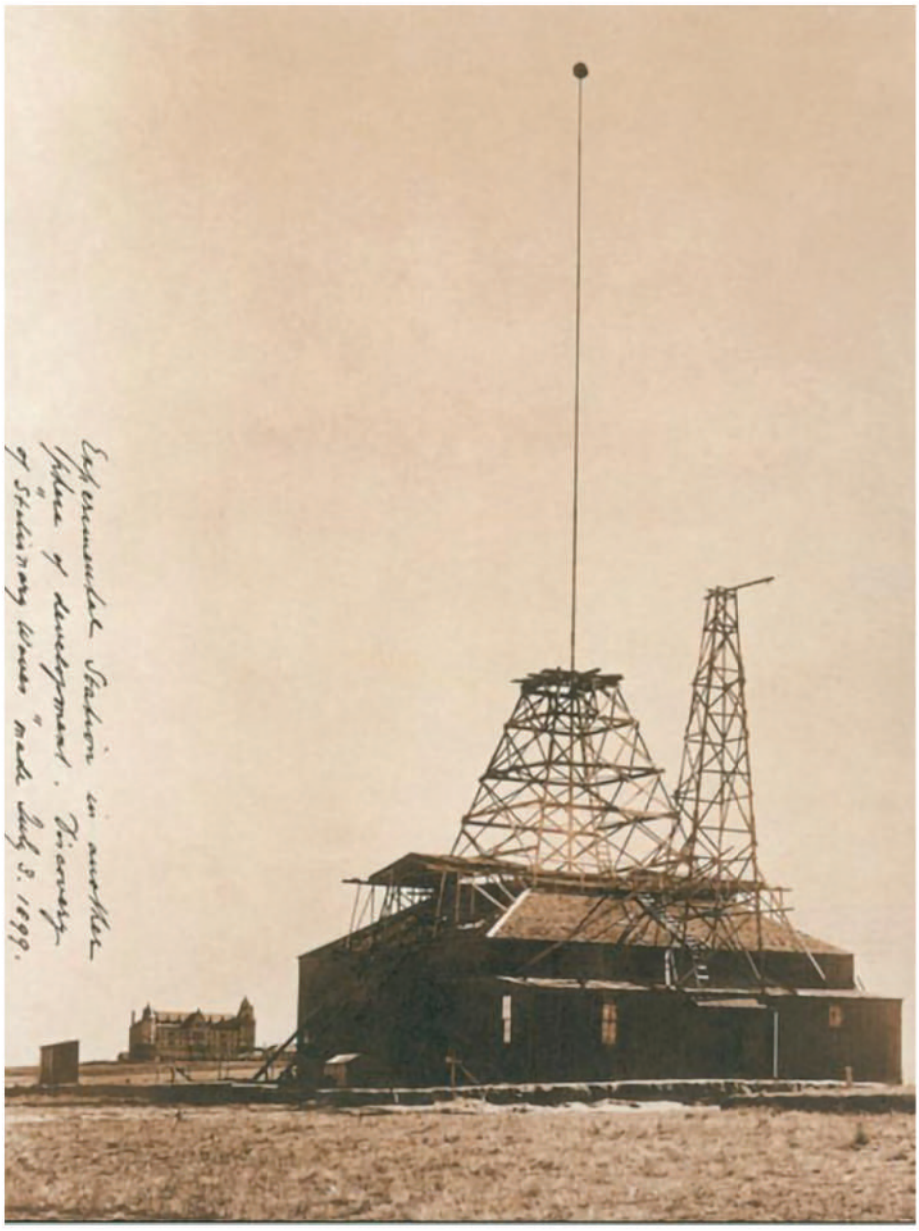
and other mountainous areas in order to transmit energy between them, similar to how satellites work today. Perhaps Tesla thought he would build the first of these electric towers in the Rocky Mountains.

Tesla planned to place various electrical towers around Colorado and other mountainous areas in order to transmit energy between them.

After a short stop in Chicago, Tesla arrived at the then-rural town and was immediately swarmed by local reporters. "When word [broke] out that he [was] coming, there [was] a sensation," explained Leah Witherow, History Curator at the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum. "People [were] interested in what he [was] going to do here, what he [was] like." Flustered, Tesla scurried past the reporters and continued to avoid them throughout his visit.

Colorado Springs' main draws haven't changed much since its founding in 1871. Upper-class families made the trek from the east coast to the Rockies for the mountain views, the fresh dry air, and the invigorating lifestyle. As Leah Witherow, curator for the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, explains, "Colorado Springs advertised itself as America's greatest sanitarium. We lured people here to recuperate from consumption, [which] today we call tuberculosis. It was the leading cause of death in the 19th century."

The Springs' reputation for healthy living attracted people from all over the world, specifically from Europe and England but also the East Coast. Visitors often invested in the local mining businesses, and some quickly struck gold. They then built sprawling mansions



Another photograph of Tesla's Colorado Springs laboratory taken from a different angle. The looming Union Printers Home can be seen in the background. From this angle, different scaffolding and observation platforms stand over the barn. *Scientific American*

around the mountain town using their newly gained wealth. In fact, so many Europeans visited Colorado Springs that the town gained the nickname "Little London." While Tesla's European background undoubtedly helped him blend in with the tourists, his celebrity status made him stick out like a sore thumb.

However hard he tried to hide from the press, Tesla's famous idiosyncrasies became prevalent during the inventor's stay. His room at the luxurious Alta Vista hotel was number 207, a "lucky" number according to Tesla as 2+7=9, a sum divisible by 3. He also ordered eighteen fresh towels to his room daily, which raised a few eyebrows. Tesla's germaphobe tendencies were progressive for his time, as he maintained better health than some of his peers, though he had redder and rawer hands to show for it. Some contemporary experts posit that these were symptoms of autistic behavior, but the hotel overlooked Tesla's quirks in the late nineteenth century because his presence attracted curious locals. "Having someone famous in Colorado Springs [was] a great marketing tool," according to Witherow.

Though the hotel offered many indulgences, from a beautiful brick portico to delicious cuisine, Tesla barely spent time there. This was out of the ordinary for most hotel guests, as the looming castle-like hotel provided a high caliber of warmth and comfort that starkly contrasted with the cold and rugged landscape. But Tesla practically lived in his laboratory.

"It has been said that he initially walk[ed] to his laboratory outside Colorado Springs proper. And people would follow him or show up in his laboratory," added Witherow. "They would want to go inside, but he wasn't interested in entertaining visitors. He barely had the patience for reporters, but he also knew reporters would help to describe his work and spread his name."

He remained a mystery for the duration of his visit, and for the centuries afterwards, individuals like me continue to dig into his fascinating Colorado Springs journey. Tesla and his small team even erected a fence to avoid onlookers and put warning signs alongside it. One sign quoted Dante's *Inferno*: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." But it did little to deter the many curious eyes peeking into the laboratory.

Conducting Electricity Through the Atmosphere

Tesla's "laboratory" looked more like a barn built in the middle of nowhere. A local carpenter named Joseph Dozier constructed the building to accommodate Tesla's strange requests, including a wooden roof that rolled back to prevent the lab from catching fire. Because Tesla was in a hurry to start his research, he rushed Dozier into building the laboratory, the result of which was a rather dilapidated building looking like it might collapse at any moment. In the photos of Tesla's laboratory during the time, the scaffolding around the building remained throughout his entire visit.

In the middle of the structure stood a 142-foot pole with a giant copper ball on the top. In later experiments, this ball would shoot sparks into Colorado's thin atmosphere, giving locals quite the light show. As writer Margaret Cheney described in her book *Tesla: A Man Out of Time*: "It did not take long for the word to spread that the apparatus being built by Mr. Tesla was capable of killing a hundred persons in a single flash of lightning." This was just one of many rumors that would grow from Tesla's visit to Colorado Springs, rumors that I and other scholars have had to untangle to find what Tesla was actually up to.

Tesla had studied and validated his wireless energy transfer hypothesis in New York and hoped to reproduce the process on a bigger scale as he worked to harness Colorado's thin atmosphere to transfer electricity from one apparatus to another.

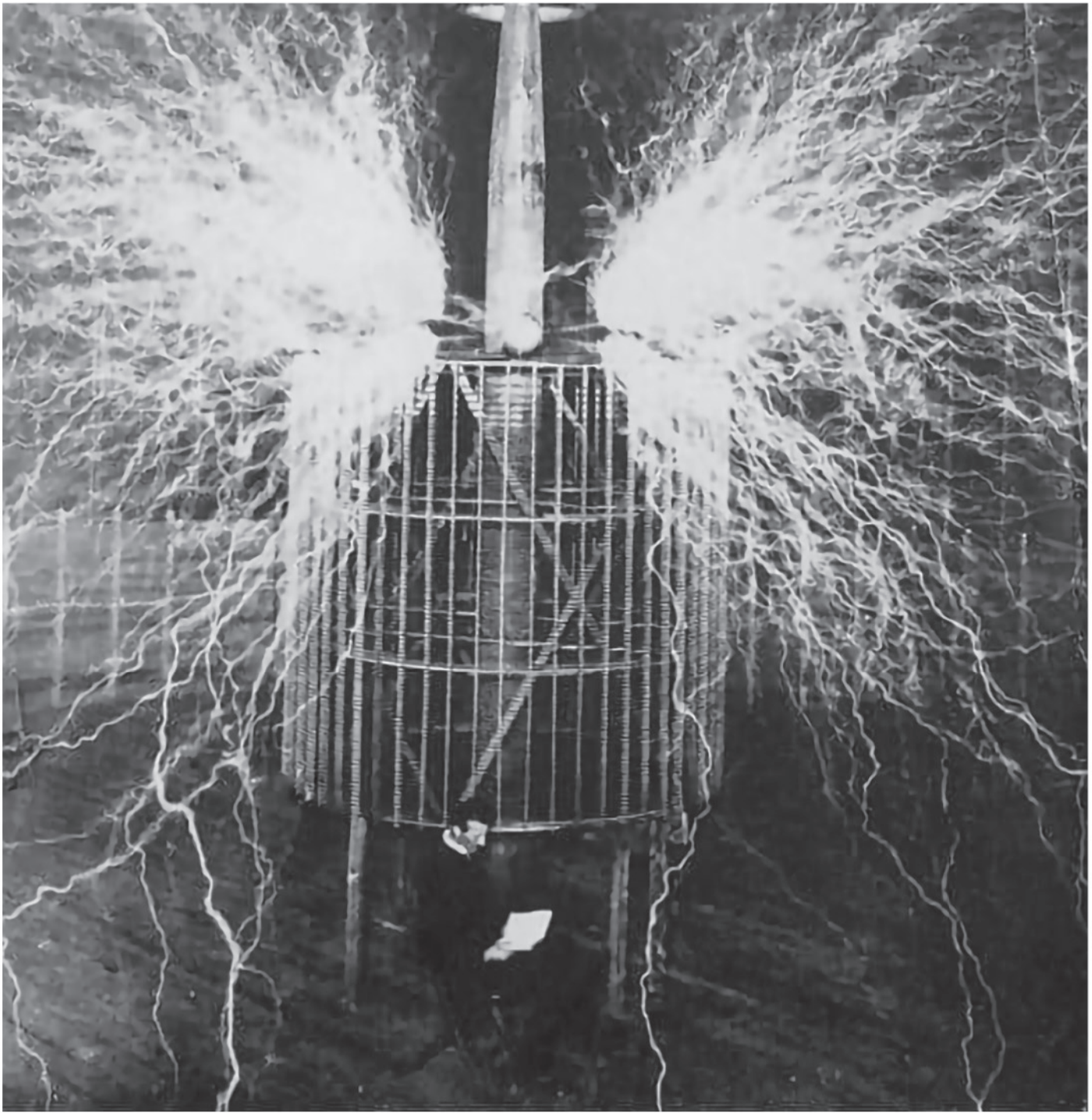
Inside the fifty-by-sixty-foot barn, a goliath Tesla coil measuring fifty-two feet across loomed over the rest of the laboratory and would have made the dilapidated building feel cramped. It was Tesla's biggest coil and proved essential for his many experiments. A Tesla coil works by using a primary and secondary coil, both complete with areas to store electricity (known as capacitors). The two coils can then connect through the air via a "spark gap" or a gap between the two electrodes (or coils) that produces the electricity. Thanks to the spark gap, the two coils and their capacitors create a giant circuit that is connected via this gap in the air. Because electricity is moving through the air, it ionizes air molecules, splitting up nitrogen and oxygen molecules to produce ozone gas. I've smelled the ozone gas when I play with my own small Tesla coil at home. Because ozone is toxic to breathe in, I try to use my own coil as little as possible, but for figures like Tesla who had no idea about ozone's toxicity, he would have no doubt gotten used to its pungent odor.

Tesla had studied and validated his wireless energy transfer hypothesis in New York and hoped to reproduce the process on a bigger scale as he worked to harness Colorado's thin atmosphere to transfer electricity from one apparatus to another. According to W. Bernard Carlson in Tesla: The Inventor of the Electrical Age: "With his larger magnifying transmitter [the Tesla coil] in Colorado, he hoped to generate fifty million volts [of electricity] and produce artificial lightning bolts between fifty and one hundred feet long." These long bolts often threatened to set the barn on fire and did so a couple of times. In one instance, Tesla found himself trapped underneath a live coil. By crawling on his hands and knees, he was able to escape, though he did so in a fit of coughing from the ozone gas produced by the coil. He learned from his previous mistakes and soon took advantage of the mobile roof.

Tesla took immaculate-yet-incomplete notes in a diary during his visit, performing his experiments in the evening when the local power grid was less busy. The darkness made his experiments all the more dramatic as he used his giant Tesla coil, tall pole, and copper ball to send electricity into the atmosphere. "The noises became machine-gun staccato—then roared to artillery intensity," described scholars Inez Hunt and Wanetta W. Draper in their book Lightning in His Hand. "Ghostly sparks danced a macabre routine all over the laboratory. There was the smell of sulfur that might be coming from hell itself."

Tesla was thrilled by how many artificial lightning bolts he could produce and how far they stretched. After monitoring many brief lightning storms during the summer of 1899, he began to understand how lightning moved throughout the dry atmosphere in the mountains. He wrote in his diary: "Colorado is a country famous for its natural displays of electrical force... aided by the dryness and rarefaction of the air, the water evaporates as in a boiler and static electricity is developed in abundance." This electrical transfer from the atmosphere to the ground via lightning would influence how future researchers study wireless energy transfer.

While Tesla remained wary of reporters and onlookers at his laboratory, he did allow one photographer to visit his laboratory. Dickenson V. Alley was a promotional stunt photographer from the East Coast who would take some of the most well-known photos of the inventor. Using a double-exposure trick with his camera, Alley created one-of-



Alley and Tesla took two separate photographs to make this photograph but used the same lens plate to create a double-exposure image. In one image, Tesla sits in front of his large coil, around 52 feet across, the largest one he had built in 1899. In the other image, Tesla fires up the coil and Alley captures the feet-long sparks shooting out of the device. Photo by Dickenson V. Alley. *Century Magazine*

a-kind images of Tesla at work in his laboratory. The first photograph would be of Tesla sitting in his chair, reading a paper. Using the same photographic plate, Alley would take a photo in the exact same location, this time with the Tesla coil active. The final photograph combined the two images to reveal Tesla sitting beside his coil erupting in a lightning shower. Tesla later used this image in his lectures to promote his research and garner funding.

Some of Alley's other images revealed the success of Tesla's experiments. He captured one of Tesla's oscillatorsv, another device wedged into the ground, surrounded by lit incandescent bulbs. From this image, the viewer could deduce that Tesla was conducting electricity through the Earth to light the bulbs. As all the photos were taken during the winter of 1899, Tesla and Alley worked in freezing conditions to catch artificial lightning on camera. Because Tesla injected electricity into the ground, the atmosphere around his laboratory became even more mysterious. Butterflies flitting around the laboratory seemed disoriented, and passers-by often heard sparks crackling between their shoes. This only added to Tesla's bizarre reputation around Colorado Springs. In the end, Alley produced sixty-eight photographs of Tesla's Colorado laboratory, all inspiring curiosity in Tesla fans today.

While Tesla didn't ultimately end up building an electrical station in Colorado Springs to try to wirelessly transfer energy from one part of the world to another (specifically from Pikes Peak to Paris, as he told one reporter), he was the first to realize how impactful wireless energy could be in the future. Instead of having geographical limitations on where to power your electronic devices, using wireless energy transfer allows you to travel anywhere in the world and still have power. Wireless energy could help rural areas and developing countries have a reliable source of energy. In short, Tesla saw not only a new way to power the world, but a way to help better it.

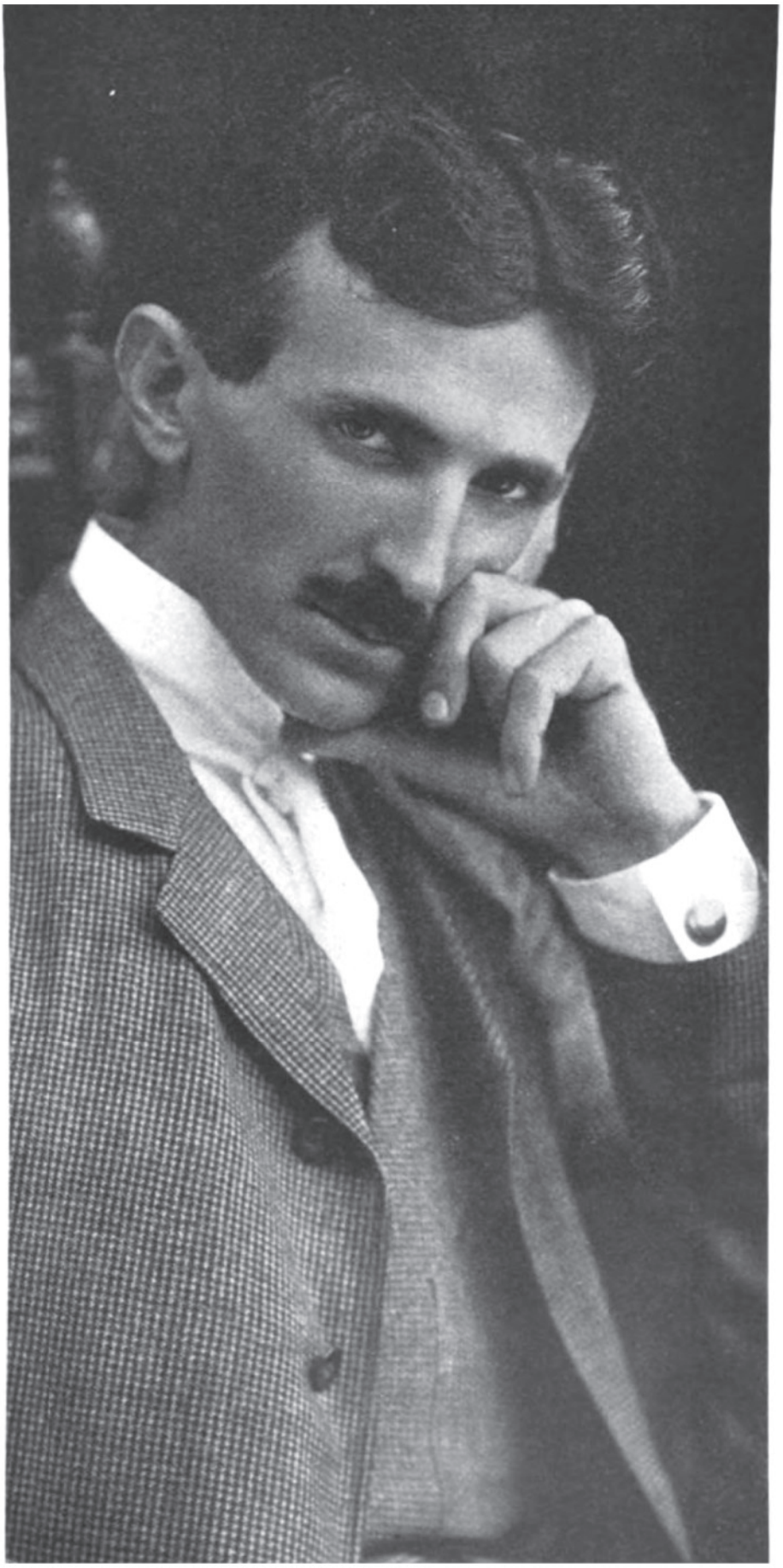
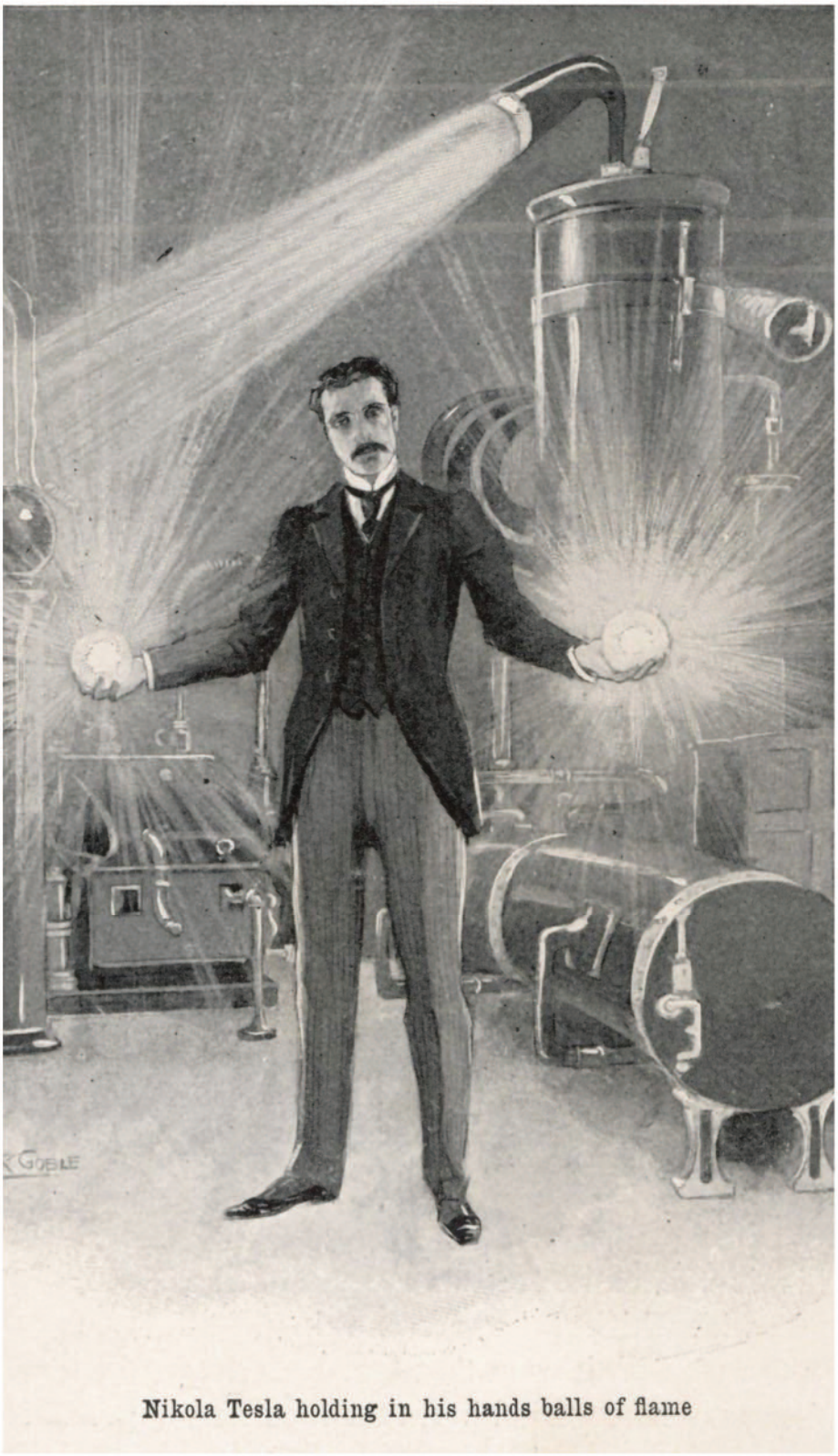


Photo portrait of Nikola Tesla, c. 1904. New York Public Library

Even after he left Colorado, Tesla continued to study this process, hoping to find ways to improve energy transfer and make it more controlled. "Tesla was sort of the engineer's engineer and liked to think way outside the box," stated Greg E. Leyh, a Tesla coil developer. "He stressed the importance of solving problems in an interdisciplinary context and disregarding conventional limits."



"Nikola Tesla holding in his hands balls of flame," illustration by Warwick Goble, 1899. This illustration featured in an article interview of Tesla, which highlighted his work on artificial lighting. *Pearson's Magazine*

Studying Stationary Waves

Perhaps the most well-known experiment Tesla performed in Colorado Springs was his work on stationary waves. Stationary waves oscillate but don't physically move, and Tesla hoped to find these waves inside the Earth's crust and harness them to transfer electric energy from one source to another. He believed the lightning from the mountain storms deposited electricity into the Earth as a standing wave, which he could try to enhance for powering electrical devices.

As Tesla historian and author W. Bernard Carlson explained in Tesla: The Inventor of the Electrical Age, "Because the numerous New York systems—for telegraphy, telephony, lighting, and transportation—produced too much electrical interference, Tesla had not been able to make any reliable measurements of whether the Earth possessed a natural electrical potential or charge." But Colorado Springs was an isolated town and the ideal place for Tesla to detect these waves.

Colorado Springs was an isolated town and the ideal place for Tesla to detect these waves.

To measure the Earth's electrical potential for standing waves, Tesla created a unique apparatus that held iron filings between two electrical terminals within a glass tube. If the apparatus detected an electrical field, the filings would form a line along the terminals. "The earth was…literally alive with vibrations," Tesla noted in his diary, "and soon I was deeply absorbed in the interesting investigation." Using other devices, like his coil, Tesla was able to create his own stationary waves within Earth's crust, showing that the ground itself could indeed conduct electricity.

While more recent research has shown the limitations of electrical conduction within the Earth, Tesla's work showcased the possibility of extremely low frequency (ELF) waves conducted between Earth's surface and the ionosphere, a section of the upper atmosphere.

In his diary, Tesla wrote a prediction about the power of stationary waves, believing they could be used to transmit news reports worldwide. He described: "A cheap and simple device, which might be carried in one's pocket, may then be set up somewhere on sea or land, and it will record the world's news or special messages as may be intended for it." His diary descriptions are eerily similar to the telecommunication signals sent and received by smartphones, computers, and satellites today. "Thus, the entire Earth will be converted into a huge brain, as it were, capable of response in every one of its parts," he added, not knowing the true extent to which humanity's future would bring the potential of these ideas into technology.

Leaving Colorado with More Questions than Answers

Just as suddenly as he arrived, Tesla left Colorado Springs in January 1900. Rumors began circulating that he had caused a power outage in Colorado Springs (which soured his relationship with his lawyer friend Leonard Curtis, who had shares in the local electric company) and he suddenly had to pay for electricity, which he couldn't afford. Others suggest he had better funding options back in New York. Some scholars posit that Tesla was satisfied enough with the experiments in stationary waves that he returned to New York to test them at a different laboratory. Either way, most stories report that, without any explanation, Tesla packed his things and boarded a train for the East Coast, leaving Tesla scholars and fans like myself wondering, "What actually happened?"

Tesla's departure left the townspeople with unresolved questions and expectations. Witherow explained: "He said he would be back, so he hired a caretaker to watch over his laboratory, mainly to keep people out. But he never came back. And after a while, he stopped paying his caretaker. He eventually stopped paying his electricity bills, so the electric company finally began to charge him." The water company sued Tesla in absentia for lack of payment. After several years, "the sheriff's department had an auction on the steps of the courthouse where they auctioned off the property," said Witherow. "The laboratory was dismantled to help pay for his debt, and all of the equipment inside was also sold to pay off his debts."

Some scholars posit that Tesla was satisfied enough with the experiments in stationary waves that he returned to New York to test them.

Due to the auction, it's been challenging for scholars like Witherow to track where Tesla's possessions have ended up. "We do have a small Tesla exhibit, but we don't have any original objects," said Witherow about the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum. She believes any possible reconstruction of Tesla's laboratory in Colorado Springs is unlikely. "We [can't] pinpoint a location exactly [of Tesla's old laboratory] because it is now occupied by private homeowners," she added. "I know over the years that the homeowners have been approached countless times by people who come knocking to see the sight of Tesla's laboratory." A plaque is all that remains to commemorate Tesla's impact on the then-rural town. You can find it in the Knob Hill area of Colorado Springs, if you look hard enough.

Scholars like Witherow believe Tesla's mysterious visit and hasty departure left Colorado Springs locals with a bitter taste in their mouths and a poor impression of the inventor. "He had gone from being an object of curiosity to an object of enmity because people were angry that he didn't live up to his promises [of returning]," she said. However, in the 123 years since his visit, local opinions about Tesla's visit have shifted. "Many people are proud that he conducted some of his experiments here," she added. "So, he's a point of pride. Whereas, you know, 120 years ago, he was a point of contention."

Tesla didn't publish papers or file patents during his visit, two ways he might have helped prove the impact of his research in the mountain town. Because he was an extreme perfectionist, Tesla couldn't bear the idea of publishing his work until it had passed his own rigorous standards. This has left little in the way of physical evidence of his time in the mountains, and due to the gaps in Tesla's own writing, his visit leaves historians and locals alike with more questions than answers. Rumors have made Tesla appear as a larger-than-life character, a wizard of electricity with immense power, making it hard to understand what happened during his time in Colorado Springs. Did Tesla actually cause a town-wide power outage? Was Colorado's thin atmosphere actually helpful for the wireless transfer of energy? These questions, and many others, will permanently haunt Tesla scholars and fans alike when looking at his time in Colorado. From my own research, I believe that Colorado's atmosphere was indeed helpful for Tesla's work, as many accounts seem to indicate. We don't have any similar experiments of Tesla's to compare his results, and the most similar structure, his wireless tower in Wardenclyffe, New York, was never completed since he ran out of funding before it could be tested. Whatever he accomplished here, Tesla's diary shows that he conducted some of his most impactful work in the West.

A Scientific Legacy

Dr. Khurram Khan Afridi, an associate professor at Cornell University, is impressed by Tesla's impact in Colorado Springs regardless of whether or not his experiments ever bore practical results. Before arriving at Cornell, Afridi worked at the University of Colorado Boulder, studying the wireless transfer of energy. "My [wireless charging] work is deeply inspired by Nikola Tesla's work," Afridi stated. "I've been his fan for as long as I can remember."

Today, scientists like Afridi are researching the same wireless energy transfer via magnetic fields that Tesla was working on over a century ago. "Ninety-nine percent of the people and probably ninety-nine percent of the products out there utilize [magnetic fields]," he elaborated.

The main challenge with transferring energy via electric fields (a process known as the capacitance approach) compared to using magnetic fields (known as the induction approach) is due to the space between the sender and the receiver. The longer the distance between the energy's source and its terminal, the smaller the capacitance, or ability to store electric charge. This can make it difficult for researchers developing wireless charging devices for smartphones or electric cars to get a full charge.

Despite the difficulty, Afridi hopes to transfer energy via electric fields similar to Tesla's experiments. "He essentially had a sort of spark gap," Afridi explained. "I don't know precisely what apparatus he was using to produce the high voltage, high-frequency kind of electricity, but he would get the lights turned off, and then he'd put a fluorescent lamp between them, and it would light up without contact and awe the audience. That is the same phenomenon I'm leveraging in my work."

Because electric fields travel in relatively straight lines, Afridi believes that he can lower the cost of the entire system by taking advantage of this process. In his research at CU Boulder and now at Cornell, he has shown initial success in his system by increasing the frequency of the electric fields. "Apart from Tesla being an inspiration in general, for all of his various inventions, and the fact that he was a true nerd… it is also sort of a very close connection in terms of the kinds of demonstrations he was doing."

While at CU Boulder, Afridi felt more connected to Tesla because of his visit to Colorado Springs. "I did feel a closer connection to Tesla," he added. "In fact, it's actually interesting that I've now lived or worked in both the states that Tesla worked in, or at least he's known for: New York and Colorado. When I did move to Colorado, that was one of the things that was in the back of my mind: that I was actually moving to a place where Tesla spent some time." Tesla's visit to Colorado Springs created a paradigm shift in Colorado's history. "Tesla absolutely has become part and parcel of Colorado Springs' story," Witherow explained. "Many famous people have come here over time, but perhaps no one as famous as Nikola Tesla. He contributed so much scientific knowledge to the world, but he also left so many questions because he was truly a mystery. He had fantastical ideas. There are still so many questions surrounding him that, I think, it's a point of pride having come to Colorado Springs. He was born in Europe and did most of his scientific work in New York and New Jersey, so he came to Colorado Springs [specifically] to research…. He's part of our story, even if he was here less than a year."

A plaque is all that remains of Tesla's visit to Colorado Springs. The plaque summarizes the history of Tesla's visit, and highlights his importance to Colorado Springs history. As the plaque was placed where the laboratory once stood, one can see where the landscape has significantly changed due to urban development. Photo by Jeffrey Beall

Kenna Hughes-Castleberry is a freelance science journalist and the Science Communicator at JILA (a world-leading physics research institution set up by NIST and the University of Colorado Boulder). Kenna's work has been featured in various publications, including *Scientific American, Discover Magazine, Ars Technica,* and more.

THE SAND CREEK MASSACRE

THE BETRAYAL THAT CHANGED CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO PEOPLE FOREVER

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

History Colorado

Exhibition On View Now

HistoryColoradoCenter.org

History Colorado Center
1200 N Broadway
Denver CO, 80203

TAG TEAM BACK AGAIN

History Colorado curators Acoma Gaither and Tara Kaufman recently sat down with Cecil "DC" Glenn and Steve Gibson of the iconic hip-hop duo Tag Team, who got their start in Denver and whose single "Whoomp! (There It Is)" went multi-platinum in the '90s.

Q What was your childhood like?

DC: I was born in Chicago, in 1966. Shortly after my brother was born, we moved to Denver. We've always been in the community of Park Hill. I had a great childhood growing up in Denver. [It] consisted of riding our bikes and RTD all over the city. I went to the greatest school on earth, Manual High School, class of '84.

Steve: I was born in Omaha in 1966. My family came to Colorado around 1970, and I grew up at 2700 York Street. It wasn't computers and cell phones back then. We used to go fishing at City Park, we played outside, football, sports. Man, it was just always neighborhood stuff.

Q When did you become interested in music?

DC: My father had a basement full of instruments. He was like, "Y'all boys are gonna learn how to play music." My mother made me go to piano lessons and I just hated it. I've always been music oriented but it really didn't come to head until I went to Manual High School and I sat next to Steve.

Steve: It started when I went to Cole. There was this guy named Dexter. He was the first one that influenced me to do what I do when he asked me to join him on drums for a talent show. He rapped and I was just blown away.

Q How did Tag Team come together?

Steve: There was another member of the band who came in before DC, his name was Otis Preston. We were Tag Team first, and DC was our DJ.

DC: I had moved to California. When I would come home for breaks from college, we would save up our coins and go to the studio called Free Reelin'. It was a couple of blocks after the Capitol, right on Broadway. We would record there. And that was the beginning of Tag Team.

Q What's the story behind "Woomp! (There It Is)"?

Steve: Everybody started saying "Whoomp, there it is" in Magic City [Atlanta]. It was a chant that was going on and DC called me one night and was like, "Hey, man. Let's do a song called 'Whoomp, There It Is.'" And I'm like, "What?" He's like, "Yeah, whoomp, there it is!" I'm like, "How do you spell it?"

DC: I told Steve, we'll never get out of here if we don't do something uptempo. So I went back to the genesis: Planet Rock and Egyptian Love. What we grew up on. I said, "Let's just make it like that and where everybody can enjoy it." That's when we took our first attempt at "Whoomp! (There It Is)." I'll never forget it. We went to the studio, summer '92, and recorded the record, and I put it on the cassette tape. Afterwards, when I came to work, set up, popped the tape in, it was the first thing on my shift. To this day it's the biggest response on any record that I've ever seen. Soon a rep from Columbia Records came and was like, "Give me that. I'm going to New York and I want to let them hear this." In a month and a half, Tag Team was platinum, and the rest is history.

Q DC, can you tell us the story behind your rap name?

DC: When I graduated from high school, I got an opportunity to go to Sac State University. So I get to California and I get to the dorms and automatically befriend a lot of people because I'm probably one of the only Black people around. There was a lot of Black people, but when I first got there, it was like, just me, and they were like, "What's your name?" I was like "Cecil." And they was like, "Where are you from, Cecil?" I'm like, "Denver, Colorado." They're like, "What?" They said, "There's Black people in Denver, Colorado?" I'm like, "Yeah!" So they're like, "We're going to call you DC." And then it just spread, everybody started calling me DC. So my name was just DC, but my DJ name was Sir Mix-A-Lot DC until Sir Mix-A-Lot came out with "Baby Got Back," then I was like, I can't even use that name no more. So, that first summer, I was in the basement with a guy named Roy Lee Davis. We were doing what young people do, you know, having a drink and having

a smoke and philosophizing as you do. And one thing people notice about me is that I always figure things out. And Roy is like, "Man, we're going to call you the Brain Supreme." Like, what? "The Brain Supreme, man. Because you always figure things out. Everything out. You come from a different perspective." Then everybody started calling me that. I've been DC the Brain Supreme ever since.

Q What was the music industry like in the '90s?

DC: Just young, dumb kids partying together. Everybody gave us respect because "Whoomp! (There It Is)" got so big. I remember our first show in California was with Tupac. I remember we was backstage with Kid 'N Play at the American Music Awards and I'm introducing Whitney Houston. On our first tour, we would rock the house because when "Whoomp!" came on, it was over. I remember we did Buffalo, New York, and we were late, so we had to go in the middle of the order and we did "Whoomp! (There It Is)" and everybody else came out of the dressing room because it rocked the arena that loud. Everybody's going "Whoomp, There It Is!" I'm blessed, especially for a kid from Denver, to get to do all these things.

Q What's one of the most memorable moments of your career?

DC: You can just drop us anywhere and everybody knows "Whoomp! (There It Is)" and they'll appreciate it even if it's in the middle of a country show, everybody, they'll start line dancing. I remember I performed at the National Speakers Association 50 Year Ball and they didn't expect it, it was at the end of the ball, and everybody's got on gowns and everybody's tired, and this is just like a thousand people in a room. And I got

DJ Sir Mix-A-Lot DC at Sac State University in 1985, now DC The Brain Supreme, of Tag Team. Courtesy of Tag Team

out there and I've never seen joy like that because everybody had won their awards, everybody got their accolades. It was just a star-studded night and I ended it. And I'll never forget this because Black folks are doing the electric slide, people have the cha cha line, people were doing the line dancing in ball gowns and tuxedos. Every dance you could think of in every genre and every race, everybody was doing it to "Whoomp! (There It Is)." And I'm walking through the crowd and I end up having like a Pied Piper line because I had to go back to the DJ booth, I was going to give it to him and he was going to finish, and I look back and it's just everybody dancing, people with shoes off, women with their heels in the air. And I went back to DJ and he was just tripping too, and he played "Celebration" by Kool & the Gang. And it just capped off the night so well. And just to be able to experience that, right? Just to get that much joy out of people because of me, because of something me and Steve created.

Billboard® HOT 100 SI

FOR WEEK ENDING JULY 17, 1993

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	2 WKS AGO	WKS. ON CHART	TITLE / PRODUCER (SONGWRITER)	ARTIST / LABEL & NUMBER/DISTRIBUTING LABEL
				★ ★ ★ No. 1 ★ ★ ★	
1	1	2	13	WEAK (2 weeks at No. 1) B.A.MORGAN (B.A.MORGAN)	◆ SWV (C) (T) (V) RCA 62521
2	4	7	10	CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE (FROM "SLIVER") UB40 (G.D.WEISS,H.PERETTI,L.CREATORE)	◆ UB40 (C) (V) VIRGIN 12653
3	3	4	8	WHOOMP! (THERE IT IS)▲ TAG TEAM (TAG TEAM)	TAG TEAM (C) (M) (T) (X) LIFE 79001/BELLMARK
4	2	1	12	THAT'S THE WAY LOVE GOES▲ J.JAM,T.LEWIS,J.JACKSON (J.JACKSON,I.HARRIS III,T.LEWIS)	◆ JANET JACKSON (C) (T) (V) (X) VIRGIN 12650
5	5	3	15	KNOCKIN' DA BOOTS▲ B.BURRELL (SHAZAM,DINO,GI,STICK,R.TROUTMAN)	◆ H-TOWN (C) (M) (T) LUKE 161
6	7	5	13	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY ● P.LEONARD (V.MORRISON)	◆ ROD STEWART (C) (D) (V) WARNER BROS. 18511
7	6	6	16	SHOW ME LOVE ● A.GEORGE,F.MCFARLANE (A.GEORGE,F.MCFARLANE)	◆ ROBIN S. (C) (M) (T) (X) BIG BEAT 10118/ATLANTIC
8	9	10	17	I'LL NEVER GET OVER YOU (GETTING OVER ME) G.ROCHE (D.WARREN)	◆ EXPOSE (C) (M) (X) ARISTA 1-2518
9	18	26	6	I'M GONNA BE (500 MILES) P.WINGFIELD (C.REID,C.REID)	◆ THE PROCLAIMERS (C) CHRYSALIS 24846/ERG
				DRE DAY	◆ DR. DRE

Tag Team soaring up the Billboard Hot 100 charts in the summer of 1993. Courtesy of Tag Team

Q When did your families first come to Colorado?

DC: I was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1966, and my brother was born four years after, and one of my father's best friends, who I'm named after, moved to Denver and he was like, "Come on out here, man. We can make this happen." So my father packed us all up and we moved to Denver. We've always been in the community of Park Hill, first lived on Grape Street, and then we lived on Krameria. And I had a great childhood growing up in Denver.

Steve: My family came to Colorado, I think it had to be maybe 1970. I was born in Omaha at Offutt Air Force Base in 1966. My dad was in the Air Force. That's where he and my mom met. When I was four, we came to Denver and dad had a job at 3M. He was a microfilm processor back then, and my mom was a secretary. She worked at an advertising agency, so we lived in an apartment first and then we moved down on York Street. And that's where I grew up, at 2700 York Street.

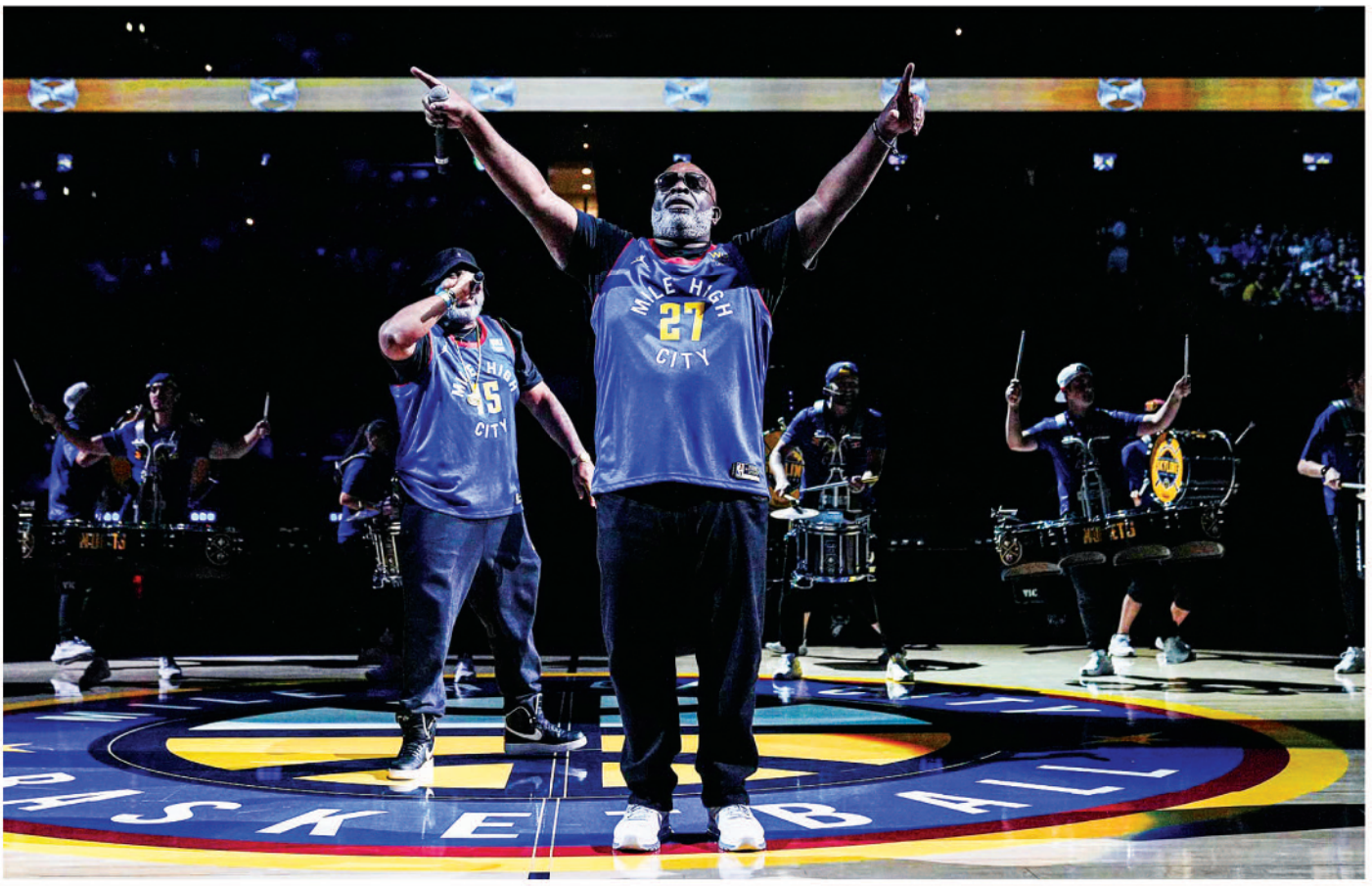
Q What were the hangout spots that you would go to in Denver?

DC: The Pub. The Pub was down in this basement. They had a dance contest where Lisa G would win every week. Then you had Scooters, which was out on Parker Road. We used to play downtown, on the 16th Street Mall, when it was kind of brand new and when they just built it. And then what really helped us, like, we go back so far because every time we would record, we would ride out to Boulder to a lady named Becky Davis. Becky Davis had the only Black radio station. We would drive up there and she would let us play our music on I think, Sunday night. And we saw her, we did a fundraiser for Michael Hancock and she had to come see us. And she was like, "I'm so proud of y'all. Cause y'all never gave up. And y'all made it." So it's just, it's so much history, right?

Q What advice would you give to young artists today?

DC: Everybody's success story is different. Because we're from Denver, Colorado, and we made it and it was hard. It was not easy.

Steve: There's no blueprint. Just always try to do something positive and it'll turn into some positive. You got to just keep moving, and it eventually becomes something that's good for you.



Tag Team delivering an electrifying hometown performance at the Denver Nuggets halftime show. Courtesy of Tag Team

TAG TEAM

Tag Team promotional picture, 1993. Courtesy of Tag Team

History Colorado

History Colorado Center
1200 Broadway
Denver, Colorado 80203

Nonprofit Org
US Postage
PAID
Denver, Colorado
Permit No. 1080