

# Arapaho Placenames in Colorado: Indigenous Mapping, White Remaking

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Indigenous Arapaho placenames for the area around the present Rocky Mountain National Park have been recovered through archival research. Those names reveal a clear pattern of naming on the landscape. Human-use and human-history-oriented names occur especially often in the lowland valleys, while mountain peaks tend to be named with reference to sacred and mythological aspects of Arapaho traditional culture. The Arapaho toponymically occupied the lowlands with their own presence, while leaving the highlands ontologically more distant and "exotic." Ironically, the same pattern of naming occurred when Euro-American conservationists began recording and assigning Arapaho names to the landscape as they struggled to establish Rocky Mountain National Park and draw tourists, with sacred Arapaho names being selected for their exoticism and assigned to mountain locations while virtually all traces of Arapaho use and history in the area were removed in the lowlands and replaced by Euro-American names.

The naming process also reveals interesting struggles between local control of naming and nationwide regulation on the part of the USGS, as well as changing perceptions of the space of Rocky Mountain National Park as a zone of resource extraction, a tourist attraction, an urban wildlands refuge, and a wilderness. The particular Arapaho names chosen (by Whites) for the landscape indirectly reflect all of these tensions.

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The Arapaho are an Algonquian tribe who moved into the Colorado area perhaps three hundred years ago. The 1851 Fort Laramie Treaty assigned the area from the Continental Divide east to Kansas, and from the North Platte River south to the Arkansas, to the Cheyenne and Arapaho. The Arapaho were the primary occupants of the area of Denver and the Colorado Front Range at the time of white settlement, which exploded with the discovery of gold near Denver in 1859. They had numerous contacts with the settlers prior to being forced out of Colorado in 1868 (the Northern Arapaho now reside on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming). Yet prior to 1910, there was not a single indigenous Arapaho placename in use in Colorado, so far as I have been able to discover (I

exclude here two or three names given by White settlers to towns or mountains in honor of friendly Arapaho chiefs). Nor was there a national park. In response, a number of Coloradans connected to the Colorado Mountain Club arranged for a visit by three Northern Arapahos to northern Colorado, to inform the CMC about Arapaho placenames. By 1919, when the official USGS topographic map of the new Rocky Mountain National Park and adjacent area appeared, over two dozen Arapaho names had been proposed for the landscape, either in the original language or in translation, and well over a dozen had already been officially accepted, with several more to follow (USGS 1919).

In this paper, I will examine more closely the particular indigenous Arapaho placenames which were chosen by Whites for "revival," and the process through which this occurred. The names chosen were certainly not random, and the choices reflect the larger patterns of White-Arapaho interaction at the time, as well as the particular political goals of the CMC. In many cases, there were also disagreements between local Coloradans and the USGS; these conflicts reflect interesting differences in the views of the two groups towards Native American names, and also differences in the goals of the two groups. The history of which Arapaho names--and especially which types of names--did or did not end up on the map offers a revealing glimpse into the perception of Native Americans more generally in early twentieth-century Colorado.

I will turn first to the Arapaho names themselves. Were it not for the 1914 visit of the three Arapaho elders to the area arranged by the CMC, essentially no Arapaho names would be preserved for Colorado, as the tribe was forced out of the state by 1868. I have consulted with Arapaho elders of the present, and they remember only a few names for such highly salient places as Denver and Sand Creek (site of the infamous 1864 massacre). Thanks to the 1914 expedition, however, an extraordinarily dense collection of around 120 names is known

for a relatively small region of north-central Colorado (see Benedict 2001:1-3 and Arps and Kingery 1984:2-8 for more on the expedition). Even better, a wax cylinder recording of the 1914 visit was preserved at the Colorado Historical Society ("Arapaho"1914). The original typescript in which Oliver Toll recorded the names and circulated them is also preserved at the CHS (Toll 1914). These names were published in a limited-distribution pamphlet in 1962, using an ad hoc orthography, by the original leader of the expedition, Oliver Toll (Toll 1962). Working with Mr. Alonzo Moss, Sr., a native Arapaho speaker who lives on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming, I have been able to retranscribe, retranslate, and annotate the names.<sup>1</sup>

We initially classified the Arapaho names according to their type, using the terminology proposed by Afable and Beeler (Afable and Beeler 1996). There are many names based on the appearance of the landscape, associations with various plants and animals, and what Afable and Beeler call "fanciful resemblances." Examples include *three mountains*, *lots of willows*, *elk creek*, and *flying bug* respectively. There are also large numbers of names connected to human uses of the land and human resource sites, as well as many names commemorating historical events. Examples of these latter two types are *where we got tepee poles* and *where buffalo were chased up the mountain*. The two surprises of this initial classification process were the discovery of far more than expected "fanciful" descriptions (29 names -- 23%) and far less than expected connections to sacred or mythological events or ideas (3 names -- 2%). Additional apparent fanciful resemblances were mountains called *the lung*, *mountain sheep's heart*, *the white owls*, *the bangs* (of hair), *hair - or mane* (of horse) - *mountains*, *the ant hills*, *bear's ears*, *bear's paws*, *wolf's canine*. I was puzzled by the plethora of such names, which are not otherwise characteristic of Arapaho placenames today.

I stumbled across the answer to this problem while rereading Alfred Kroeber's book on Arapaho decorative arts for a class I was teaching (Kroeber 1983). I noticed that the *ant*

*hills* was a common decorative motif in 19th-century bead- and quill-work and painting. I then discovered that *flying bug* was also a motif which was documented on multiple occasions. Carefully reading through Kroeber's book, it turned out that every single one of the names which we had identified as "fanciful descriptions" (with one exception--*wolf's canine*) occurred as decorative art motifs. Furthermore, the motifs were all important enough to have been documented by Kroeber on multiple material items such as bags, parfleches, and so on. And of course, the motifs were themselves intimately connected to Arapaho mythology and sacred culture. The "Bear's Paws" motif is connected for example to the mythological figure of the "Whirlwind Woman," who was present at the creation of the Earth (see Kroeber 1983:109-10). This discovery at least partially resolved both the problem of too many fanciful descriptions and too few sacred mythological connections (See Cowell and Moss 2004 for a more detailed study of all 120 Arapaho placenames within their cultural context.)

Unfortunately, these connections are not fully "provable." The native speakers with whom I've worked do not recognize the importance of many of these motifs, and the Arapaho visitors of 1914 didn't mention them. In one sense, then, these connections are speculative. But the weight of the evidence seems compelling. Obviously much has changed since the 19th century among the Arapahos, so one would not necessarily expect that detailed mythological knowledge would remain. But in examining Kroeber's work from 1900, many connections come to view. For example, there are only three internal organs documented as decorative motifs--hearts, lungs and stomach/intestines (Kroeber 1983:138-43 lists all the motifs). And there are only three internal organs used among the 120 names--hearts, lungs, and stomach (see Toll 1962:10. He does not however actually list the mountain named for the stomach). And not only does every fanciful name except one match the list of motifs, but no motif which is documented by

Kroeber on more than ten items fails to appear on the list of placenames except stars (which would have been present in the landscape anyway, overhead).

James Kari has discussed the difficulty, even today among fluent speakers, of obtaining such sacred information about placenames (in Athabaskan Alaska in his case) (Kari 1989). Oliver Toll's pamphlet mentions the reticence of the Arapaho, and that observation certainly matches my own experience in this area (Toll 1962:10). Toll was a Denver citizen and Park supporter, but he had had no previous contact with or knowledge of the Arapaho, and only went on the name-collected expedition when several anthropologists declined invitations (Benedict 2001). He later went on to become a prominent lawyer who participated in the Nuremberg Trials, but this was his only ethnographic work in his life. While he should clearly be saluted for his efforts, he was also clearly not the person most likely to succeed in getting at the deeper cultural significance of the Arapaho placenames, or even in asking the proper questions.

Nevertheless, as seen above, we can securely document links between the placenames and sacred and mythological decorative motifs, and we can reasonably presume that these connections are not simply accidents, but rather a form of pervasive evidence for the way in which the early nineteenth-century Arapaho thought about and named their landscape. Once the true character of the fanciful names is appreciated, a second observation becomes apparent: the different types of names tend to be elevationally arranged. Sites named for Arapaho use, presence or history tend to occur more often in the lowlands, and the mythical and sacred-type names tend to be attached to mountains, although this is by no means an absolute rule. Mountains constitute 44% of the named places, but they represent 69% of the fanciful/sacred names. Conversely, lowland sites make up only one third of the named places, but have two thirds of the names connected with human use and historical events. If names related to

fasting and vision quests are considered as part of the sacred rather than human use category, the distribution of names is skewed even more strongly toward sacred highlands and human lowlands. While looking for such patterns in data is always tricky, there are many other components of Arapaho culture which support such a finding. One could argue that elevation on the landscape corresponds to both ontological and temporal features of Arapaho cosmology for example. The Arapaho Creation story begins with the presence of the sacred creators, then follows up with powerful animal helpers, with humans arriving last (see Dorsey and Kroeber 1997:1-6). The Arapaho also speak of a former time when humans had great power, and could communicate directly with the powerful animals and the creator, and a later time when humans are more ontologically removed from these beings. Elevational distance thus correlates with temporal and ontological distance from sacred creation. This resembles Keith Basso's discovery that Apache placenames also catalogue stages of human presence on the land--some names recalling the time of sacred creation, others recalling the animal totems which mediated human adaptation to the world and access to the sacred, and others which make human use and presence explicit, and which thus are understood as originating at a time when humans had fully settled into the land (Basso 1996). The Arapaho words for spatial and temporal distance (*coo'ouúte'* = 'it is high'; *céniixóotéé'* = 'it is far away/it was long ago') are typically used interchangeably in contemporary stories to refer to mountain locations and to concepts of sacredness and extra-human power.

It is thanks to the interested citizens of 1914 that this otherwise irretrievable data on Arapaho naming is available to us, and their efforts constitute an admirable and quite unusual interest in and sympathy towards Native Americans. But the data was not collected simply for disinterested, scholarly reasons. Rather, the collection was intimately connected to the effort to establish Rocky Mountain National Park (see

Buchholtz 1983 for a general history of this effort). Local efforts to establish the park began in the first decade of the twentieth century, spearheaded by the local naturalist Enos Mills, most famously, who also contributed to determining which Arapaho names should be proposed for the area of the Park. A major event in this push was the decision by the USGS to send R.B. Marshall, its chief topographer, to the area in 1912 to survey the proposed park area. That same year, the Colorado Mountain Club had been organized, and one of its main goals was also the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park. Marshall met the president of the club, James Grafton Rogers, and remarked to him that the area looked suitable for a park, but that it would be more appealing to congress with more named sites (Arps and Kingery 1994:1).

The suggestion was of course that "interesting" names would be even more appealing. Rogers (who later went on to become Assistant Secretary of State under Franklin Roosevelt) and the CMC took on the task of providing names, and in 1914 got the governor of Colorado, James Ammons, officially involved. A Colorado Geographic Society was established, and an official state board of names (the Colorado Geographic Board [CGB]) was likewise created, with James Rogers as chair. The governor's letter inviting the public to the first, founding meeting of the CGS, the CGB charter, and the bill in the legislature to support the endeavors, all evoke issues of tourism and "colorfulness" more generally: the CGB "hopes. . .to secure a nomenclature that will be appropriate and that will reflect the romance and adventure of historical and of pioneer days in Colorado." (Rogers Collection, Box 3, "Colorado Geographic Society" file, mss entitled "The Colorado Geographic Board," written by James Rogers, p.2)

the bill: "whereas. . .the State will be rendered more attractive and interesting to the thousands of people who seek rest and recreation within its boundaries every year. . ." (H.B.

471, session of 1914; Rogers Collection, Box 3, "Colorado Geographic Society" file)

the letter: "our state is rich in its scenic effects and experience has shown that appropriate names have always added much to natural attractions." (Public letter from Colorado Gov. Ammons, Oct. 24, 1914. Rogers Collection, Box 3, "Colorado Geographic Society" file)

In such a context, not only Arapaho, but even Euro-American traditional names underwent a programmatic "coloring" as the CGB sought not only to clarify existing names of sites and to come up with new names for nameless places, but also to select the most "attractive" name for a site with multiple possibilities, and even apparently to change existing names to make them more colorful. This occurred for areas both inside and outside the proposed park. Among the names proposed for change or clarification by the CGB were *Middle Buttes*, which became *Cathedral Spires*; *the Castle*, which became *Giant's Castle*; and *Stormy Peak* (not good enough!), which became *Old Windy* ("Colorado Geographic Society" file, Minutes of CGB Meetings, p. 40). Unlike the Arapaho, whose naming practices primarily served to inscribe their own culture onto the landscape, the CGB was clearly interested in using placenames as a way of attracting and "speaking to" outsiders. As such, they were as interested in exotic, non Anglo-American names as in local ones. As Governor Ammons' letter stated, "it is not too late yet to perpetuate many of the old Indian and Spanish names."

In one particularly revealing battle, two names were proposed for a valley east of Rocky Mountain National Park: *Elkanah* (for an early settler) and *Tahosa* (a name apparently of Kiowa origin, with no actual connection to the place in question--see Arps and Kingery 1994: 155-56). *Elkanah* was supported by the local settlers, who were opposed to the park designation, and to Indian names more generally, while *Tahosa* was supported by the Park proponents and the CGB in

Denver. *Tahosa* came out the winner, and the park was designated. The Arapaho names that now exist in Colorado thus must be understood as much in a context of local, White political disputes as in the context of Arapaho culture. In particular, the specific Arapaho names now on the map reflect White interests and conceptions of exoticism in the early twentieth century. Faithfulness to the original meanings—or even actual locations—of the Arapaho names was clearly a secondary issue, as we will see in more detail.

The intimate connection between the naming process and the political goals is perhaps best suggested by the fact that the park was formally established in January 1915, and that James Rogers then resigned as president of the CGB in June of the same year (though he was later persuaded to return to the position in following years) (Minutes 6/10/15). Rogers had a life-long interest in Colorado placenames, and his files at the CGB include many folders of information on the origins of these names, but his official, political commitment to the naming process was much more closely linked to the fate of RMNP, apparently. Once the park had been established, only two or three additional Arapaho names were added to the map of Colorado, and all of these were added to unnamed sites within the Park by park personnel (see Appendix C). In addition, none were actual Arapaho names, but rather names made up by Whites using notes on the Arapaho language. Thus the political fight for the park was clearly the impetus for virtually all Arapaho placenames in Colorado, and they stand as witness to that fight. It should be added that many other names originating from other Native American tribes were also applied to the RMNP area as part of this same political process. In apparently all cases except perhaps a few Ute names, the words were simply chosen from lists of vocabulary or individual chiefs (such as the Kiowa chief *Tahosa*), and applied ad hoc to the landscape, in a way similar to the Arapaho names in appendix C.

For the most part, the specific Arapaho names suggested by the CGB were proposed for otherwise un-named places, using the data gathered in 1914. Oliver Toll's typescript notes on the Arapaho placenames was made available to the CGB, and the board members used it to propose adding names to the landscape. In the minutes of the CGB's meetings, one can follow the fate of the Arapaho names under the pressure of a shift from one culture to another, one language to another, and one purpose (inscribing traditional culture onto the landscape) to another (political promotion): *Where we raced* became *Indian Race Tracks* (Rogers collection, "Colorado Geographic Society" file), *the trap* became *Elk Trap Mountain* (op.cit.) and *the lungs* (Arap. híkono) became *Mt. Haykonon* (op.cit). Even at this stage of the naming process, among the CGB who were largely sympathetic to the Arapaho cause, so to speak, we can notice two transformations. First, histories of (Arapaho) human use tended to become blurred or lost entirely, replaced by names that looked more like "fanciful descriptions" and which lacked temporal specificity: where we (i.e., the Arapaho) *raced* (once, not habitually, according to the Arapaho verb) becoming *Indian Race Tracks*, with neither time nor tribe specified. This was not a matter of mistranslation, moreover, but a conscious decision by James Rogers. In his notes, the translation "race tracks" appears--already a mistranslation, certainly. But he then adds a note to himself: "use Indian Race Tracks" (Rogers Collection, "Colorado Geographic Society" file, Notes on Arapaho placenames). While the change clarifies things in one direction, making it clear at least that "Indians" were involved, it moves the name more toward colorful generality as well, and away from Arapaho historical specificity. Similarly, *the trap* was a game drive area, located in a valley rather than on a mountain, and was used most likely for pronghorn and bison drives. The new proposed name *Elk Trap Mountain* erased the original use and replaced it with one invented by Whites, and also mislocated the name by applying it to a nearby mountain. The end result

is a colorful but vague name which has little connection to actual Arapaho activities. Secondly, the most "fanciful"-appearing Arapaho descriptions (for whites) were seized on preferentially for naming: *Apache Forts, Eagle's Nest, Never Any Summer, Bear Paws*, and so forth. More prosaic names like *lots of willows, thick brush, shell creek, lodge mountain, middle mountain, or three mountains* (all of which occur in the Toll manuscript) were neglected, as were names associated with Arapaho uses of the land, such as *where we got medicine, where we camped*, and so on.

As a result, many of the Arapaho names which might have recalled actual Arapaho occupation of the landscape were neglected--particularly the names associated with lowland sites. And conversely, many of the most "sacred" Arapaho names connected to mountains were appropriated by the CGB to further their efforts at tourism and conservation, without any knowledge of the true meanings connected to those names. Thus whereas the Arapaho had toponymically "appropriated" the lowlands with their presence, and also rendered the highlands distant and sacred, the CGB engaged in a new appropriation: it erased the previous Arapaho lowland presence with its/our own, and metaphorically located the Arapaho themselves in the distant highlands. Yet ironically, this strategy was quite similar to that used by the Arapaho themselves: both groups sought to toponymically "occupy" the lowlands, and make the highlands the place of the "olden days," so to speak. One could also argue that, given the status of more-or-less pristine landscapes and of national parks among much of the American public, the Arapaho names applied to the various mountains connote a kind of "sacral" status assigned to those areas, and that the "exotic" Indian names have even contributed to the evolution of such a status among some of the contemporary public. The mountains have thus become, for a second time, a site linked to the past, the exotic, and the "Other," as they were for the Arapaho as well. This is not to deny the important differences

in naming practice which I have stressed elsewhere in this paper: the Arapaho named the landscape to claim it, and thus implicitly to keep others out. They fought several battles with the Apache and Ute in order to hold on to the area in question. The CGB was more interested in bringing the maximum number of visitors in. But at the same time, they also used naming to "claim" the land of Rocky Mountain National Park itself: the names served to encourage the establishment of an area from which settlers and other non-desirables could be excluded, in order to maintain the area in question for conservationists and largely urban visitors, epitomized by many in the Colorado Mountain Club.

This appropriation also suggests Euro-American attitudes towards wild areas that were specific to the early twentieth century. While the local settlers wanted to stay and use the area themselves, park promoters and the CMC clearly foresaw their own form of occupation and use of the area. Neither group saw the RMNP area as potentially a place which could remain empty and unused. This attitude contrasts strongly with that which developed in the second half of the century, particularly under the impetus of the 1964 Wilderness Act. Inspired by that Act's vision of "untrammelled" landscapes, the US Board on Geographic Names adopted a policy which sought to avoid adding any new names to designated or potential wilderness areas (see Payne 2000:186ff; Julyan 2000; Orth and Payne 1997). The Board's policies state that features should ideally remain nameless in wilderness areas, and that overlays of culture should be avoided (Payne 2000:186). As Robert Julyan notes, names--especially exotic names--draw people, and ultimately cause damage to sensitive areas (2000:220). Ironically, the selling point for preservationists of the current era is often the "blank spots" on the map which are indicative of relative human absence. Thus the presence of the Arapaho names once again points to specific historical moments and specific ideologies of "conservation" characteristic of the early twentieth century.

They also underline the particularities of the National Park System, with its constant tension between public use and enjoyment and preservation for the future. These tensions are relatively less intense around Wilderness areas, and one also finds far fewer Native American names in those areas, though the use of such names for the overall Wilderness areas themselves betrays similar tensions.

For all the similarities however, the recent naming process is clearly connected to the displacement of the Arapaho by Euro-American settlers. Both the local opponents of the park and the conservationists were united as inheritors of that historical process. The CMC secretary, Harriet Vaille, wrote to Alfred Kroeber of the feeling of "especially we Denverites" that "the Arapahos belong peculiarly to us" (Rogers Collection, Box 7, "Kroeber" file, letter of 1/7/15). From a contemporary perspective, the notion of "belonging" seems especially ambiguous. Certainly, both the tribe and their placenames were treated as "possessions" by even the most well-intended of Whites, to be moved around as they pleased. This displacement took on yet another dimension, in that several of the Arapaho names used by the CGB were not actually applied to the original Arapaho sites. The *Bear Paw* was an area near the center of the park, for example, but the name *Bear Paw Mountains* was applied to a group of mountains outside the west boundary of the park. The same fate occurred for other locations as well, including *the head*, which was not only moved but renamed to *chief's head*, and *bald mountain*. Thus in yet another irony, the physical displacement of the Arapaho from the region of the park is echoed in a physical displacement of their names, typically from within to outside of the park proper.

Nevertheless, the CGB did propose a few Arapaho historical and resource names, centered on lowlands, as well as the fanciful ones. Indeed, as the list of proposed names appended to this paper illustrates, the CGB went to some lengths to incorporate relatively unusual (from a Euro-

American perspective) types of Arapaho names. They even went so far as to contact the two Arapaho scholars of the time, Alfred Kroeber and Truman Michelson, both of whom were impressed enough by the group's efforts to respond ("Minutes" p. 32, 36. Rogers Collection, Box 7, "Kroeber" file). But in the final stages of the process, the USGS rejected many names, and on the current map, virtually all the Arapaho names and translations are applied to mountains and passes (12 of the 16 in official use, with two for streams and two for lowland areas). Eight other lowland-location names proposed by the CGB were rejected by the USGS. The USGS essentially rejected all names explicitly recalling Arapaho use of the area. Fourteen of the sixteen current names are either descriptive of the physical landscape itself, or else "fanciful" ones drawn from mythical-sacred sources. Only two records of Arapaho use and presence remain: one of them is in garbled Arapaho, however, and thus meaningless to virtually everyone: *Onahu Creek* comes from the Arapaho *hoonóúhut* meaning 'he warms himself' and recalls a horse which escaped and was found in the location. The other is based on the Arapaho *Seven Utes* which refers to a battle in which the Arapaho were victorious. It has now become *Seven Utes Mountain*, rendering the losers the winners, so to speak, and leaving the Arapaho absent entirely. The final result of the overall naming process offers a very skewed sample of the types of names which were used by the Arapaho, and by Native Americans in general. It also enhances general public perceptions of the Native Americans and of their placenames as especially "colorful" and "poetic," when in fact, large numbers or even the majority of names were quite straightforward and utilitarian, indicating travel corridors, areas of abundant game, location of plant and mineral resources, and so forth. The names that ended up on the map thus participated in the construction of a certain (romantic) vision of Native Americans, to which other Coloradans of the era such as Helen Hunt Jackson, the author of the famous sentimental novel *Ramona*, also contributed.

I have not had the opportunity to investigate whether there are detailed records of USGS' decision-making rationale as part of this naming process. However, it seems clear that the USGS was resistant to names which were not in English, and also to names that were too culturally "specific" or "unique" in relation to Euro-American naming practices. They were also apparently less interested in the local desire for "colorful" names than the CGB was. In fact, the USGS was clearly resistant to local political agendas more generally. James Roger's file on the CGB, as well as the CGB's meeting minutes, contain numerous references to their disputes with the USGS, not just over Arapaho names, but over the USGS efforts to rename *Mt. Massive Gannett Peak* in honor of their recently retired chairman, for example ("CGB" file, Petition to Colorado General Assembly; "Minutes" pages 5a, 6a, 17a; Box 11, "US Geographic Board" file, letter to NGS president Grosvenor from Rogers). The bill introduced in the Colorado State Legislature in 1914 even included a specific "whereas" which raised the issue of federal naming boards "which have not primarily at heart the interests of this State." (HB. 471, 1914). And indeed, in this particular era of its history, the US Board was notably oriented towards not just standardizing but actually regulating local placenames, throughout the nation. This was a policy which led to widespread conflicts around the nation.<sup>2</sup> The same issues of local control also at times threatened the very passage of the bill establishing RMNP, so the naming issue was part of a larger political confrontation.<sup>3</sup> Certainly there were divisions within Colorado over name designations--indeed, these were quite fierce at times, as we have already seen. The Columbus Pioneers Association of Italian-Americans campaigned for *Mt. Columbus*, and others pushed for a *Mt. Christian Endeavor* ("Minutes," 2/2/1915). But if some Arapaho names fell victim to local power struggles, many more clearly fell victim to a power struggle between Colorado and Washington D.C., in which the local desire for colorful names to draw the attention

of tourists conflicted with the USGS' interest in less exotic, more common placenames, or at least their suspicion of overtly political naming decisions which might produce names which did not fit their ideal guidelines. R.B. Marshall, the USGS' chief cartographer, was notably more favorable in this regard, and maintained a close relationship with James Rogers, but even he sided with the USGS in the Gannet/Massive dispute (Rogers collection, Box 7, "R.B. Marshall" file, letter of 2/29/16).

Ironically, at the end of all these (relatively) good intentions, there do in fact remain some names which specifically recall the Arapaho presence in northern Colorado, but none of them are the product of the CGB's activity in connection with Rocky Mountain National Park (see Appendix B). In particular, the town of *Niwot*, Colorado, as well as the names of *Mt. Neva*, *Niwot Ridge*, and *Watanga Mtn, Lake and Creek* all commemorate specific Arapaho individuals known to—and admired by—early settlers of the area. While the names were later made official at the instigation of the CGB, they are the product of local, more-or-less ad hoc naming, of a semi-popular sort, with the support of the local community. None of these names was used by the Arapahos for the places in question. In fact, in yet another irony, no Arapaho placenames recall specific individuals, either in the RMNP area or elsewhere, and the use of individual names for a place essentially betrays the spirit of Arapaho culture, or at least the spirit of Arapaho place-naming practices. It is nevertheless revealing that the most overt and political attempt to place the Arapahos in the landscape ultimately led to as much irony as success, while more haphazard and ad hoc naming processes did in fact result in at least a few names—especially *Niwot*—which the common citizen of northern Colorado recognizes as a memorial to the Arapaho presence.

## Appendix: Arapaho Placenames in Colorado

A. Arapaho-derived Placenames in Colorado Geographic Board to the USGS (names in italics were not adopted by the USGS; \* indicates names applied to a location other than the original one) ("Minutes" for CGB Meeting of Dec. 9, 1914) [See Salzmann 1956 on Arapaho phonology. The // symbol represents a glottal stop, the /x/ corresponds to German 'lach', the /3/ corresponds to English 'th' in 'three,' and the /c/ is always pronounced as English 'ch'. Other sounds roughly correspond to their English equivalents.]

*Apache Fort* (based on *ti'iihiinenii cebtiit* = 'Apaches shooting')

*Apache-Shot-off-Rock* (based on *ti'iihiinen tih'oowoh'oh'oet* = 'Apache when he was shot down')

**Bear Paws Peaks** (from *woxéihtoo* = 'bear paw') \*

**Bennay Mtn** (from *beniix-[ótoyóó]* = 'bald-[mtn]') \*

**Big Meadows** (based on *toonóóxuuté'* = 'meadow') \*

**Chief's Head** (based on *ní3e'ééno* = 'heads') \*

*Deer Creek* (based on *bíh'ihii-koh'ówu'* = 'mule deer-creek')

*Enon kawatay* (from *nenonxóotéi'i* = 'they are located in the north')

**Gianttrack Mtn.** (based on *hinenítee tohnooxéih* = 'man where he made tracks')

**Kawuneeche Valley** (from *koo'óhwuu-niicí'* = 'coyote-river')

*Kokiy* (from *kokíy* = 'gun' [the name of one of the three Arapaho informants, as well as of his father, a famous warrior and hunter])

*Lots-of-Beaver* (based on *hébesii tih'iiwoo3éé3i'* = 'beavers, where they are many') \*

**Lumpy Ridge** (based on *3ee3i'ótoyóó'* = 'lumpy mountain')

**Mt. Enentah** (from *hinenítee* = 'person')

**Mt. Neota** (garbled, from *hóte'* = 'bighorn sheep')

*Nah kay say Hills* (from *nóókhooséi'i* = 'sagebrush')

**Never Summer Mts** (based on *niicíbiicéi'i* = 'it is never summer')

**Nokhu Crag** (from *nohúúx* = 'nest') \*

**Old Man Mtn.** (based on *hinén toh3i'ókut* = 'man where he sits')

**Onahu Creek** (from *hoonóúhut* = 'he warms himself')

**Pine Ridge** (based on *beniis-ótoyóó'* = 'hairy-mountain')

**Plenty Jerked Elk Meat** (based on *hiwoxúúhuu-3ó'ohcoo* = 'elk-pounded meat')

**Seven Utes Mtn.** (based on *nísootoxú3i' wo'tééneihí3i'* = 'seven Utes')

**Takakuan** (from *tóh' okóóxeeni'* = 'where we get tipi poles')

**Tay ay e non** (from *3i' eyóóno'* = 'stone monuments')

**Thunder Pass** (based on *bonoh' óoo-ni3esóó* = 'thunder-pass')

**Tonahutu Creek** (from *toonóóxuuté* = 'meadow') \*

**Tsadenanthal** (from *hísei tihnóó3eet* = 'woman when she was left behind')

**Where Sparrow Hawk's Young Hang** (based on *hééyeisóóno' toh' óú' ou3i' i* = 'young swift hawks where they hang (in the wind)')

B. Euro-American-derived names which refer to Arapaho individuals:

**Hosa, Jefferson County** (from *hóuu-sóó* = 'crow-offspring'; Chief Young Crow)

**Mt. Neva, Indian Peaks Wild.** (Arapaho meaning unknown, perhaps *niibóót* = 'song'; the brother of Chief Left Hand)

**Niwot, Boulder County** (from *nowóó3* = 'left-handed'; Chief Left Hand)

**Niwot Ridge, Indian Peaks Wild.** (same as previous)

**Watanga Mtn., Lake, Creek, Indian Peaks Wild.** (from *wó' teen-koo' óh* = 'black-coyote'; Black Coyote)

C. Euro-American-derived names which use Arapaho words:

**Haynach Lake, RMNP** (from *híii* = 'snow' + *nec* = 'water')

**Lake Haiyaha, RMNP** (from *hóó' óooyóó'* = 'it is rocky')

Mt. Wuh, RMNP (from *wox* = 'bear')

Nisa Mtn., RMNP (from *níisóó* = 'twin')

### Notes

1. The complete list of all the Arapaho placenames, with cultural annotations and analysis, will be published in an article forthcoming in *Anthropological Linguistics*. Other discussions of Arapaho placenames in Colorado occur in Bright 1993 and Arps and Kingery 1994. Both contain several errors with regards to Arapaho transcriptions and translations.

2. This naming process occurred at a time when the US Board on Geographic Names was in a more "regulatory" phase, as compared to other eras when it showed a greater openness to local decisions (such as when it was founded in 1890, and again after roughly 1932) (see Payne 2000 for a fuller discussion of the shifting policies of the Board). From the beginning, however, the Board had policies in favor of "euphony" and against compound words and hyphens in placenames which tended to mitigate against the use of more "exotic" Arapaho names, especially in the original language (Payne 2000:180).

3. R.B. Marshall wrote confidential letters to James Rogers in February and March of 1913 explaining that the Dept. of Interior was refusing to support the Park bill because of concerns about local control included in the authorization language (Rogers Collection, Box 7, "R.B. Marshall" file, letters of 2/28/13 and 3/11/13).

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