



# **Reclaiming the Centennial State's Centennial Song: The Facts About "Where the Columbines Grow"**

By Robert G. Natelson

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## Executive Summary

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The year 2015 is the centennial of the Colorado General Assembly’s designation of *Where the Columbines Grow* as the first state song. (The original sheet music appears at the end of this Issue Paper.) Despite the legislature’s direction that the song be played and sung “on all appropriate occasions,” it has been neglected and even maligned.

This Issue Paper tells the story of this unique and misunderstood state anthem. Part I is the Introduction. Part II outlines the extraordinary life of its author, A.J. Fynn, a

polymath and leading Colorado citizen. Part III examines the music and the lyrics, both of which are far richer and more subtle than those of most state anthems. In fact, much of the criticism seems to be based on a failure to understand the lyrics. Part IV concludes that the criticism and neglect of *Columbines* has been undeserved, that the song is worthy of a revival, and that units of Colorado state government should comply with the legislative mandate that the song be played and sung “on all appropriate occasions.”

## I. Introduction

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The year 2015 is the centennial of the adoption of *Where the Columbines Grow* as the first Colorado state song. Today *Columbines* is little known and less sung. This is in striking contrast to practice in some states. In Montana, for example, where I lived for 24 years before returning to Colorado, civic and political events often opened with the state song—if not sung by performers, then by everyone together.

Fashionable modern attitudes toward *Columbines*, as is so often true of fashionable modern attitudes, have been sour.<sup>2</sup> In 2007 the song was forced to make room for John Denver’s *Rocky Mountain High*, to which the state legislature granted equal status.

Yet *Columbines*’ adoption in 1915 was the result of an overwhelming legislative vote,<sup>3</sup>

and was an occasion for celebration and acclaim.<sup>4</sup> The Pueblo *Chieftain* (to cite only one example) wrote that “Every loyal Coloradoan should learn and sing [this] beautiful poem.”<sup>5</sup> When, in the face of efforts to decertify *Columbines*, lawmakers have listened to it anew, each time they have delivered thumping majorities to retain it.<sup>6</sup>

This Issue Paper concludes that *Columbines*’ supporters have it right, and the critics are wrong. The song is worthy of revival and, as the law requires, should be “used on all

appropriate occasions.”<sup>7</sup> While no one can claim that the tune is great music or that the lyrics are Shakespearean poetry, compared to other state anthems *Columbines* is of very high quality: Its lyrics are deep in a manner not apparent on superficial reading and its music is unexpectedly sophisticated and haunting. Moreover, its author was a Coloradan of whom our state can be proud. Before analyzing the composition, let us examine the composer.

## II. About A.J. Fynn

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### A. Fynn’s Biography

“He was the kindest man [we] ever worked for.”  
—assessment of Fynn by teachers at Denver’s Gilpin School<sup>8</sup>

Both the music and the words to *Columbines* were crafted by Dr. Arthur John Fynn. (That’s “Fynn,” not “Flynn.”) A few years after the teachers at Gilpin School offered their assessment, historian Silas Conrad Kimm, who, like Fynn, was an alumnus of Fairfield Seminary in New York, wrote of Fynn that he had been

a small boy, born in a back woods town, poor in soil and lacking in culture, with no academic schools, no daily papers, no good roads and no contact with the outside world [who] force[d] himself upward from a common farmer chore boy to a place of

state-wide service and literary distinction in a great university . . .<sup>9</sup>

Dr. Kimm might have added to this Horatio Alger-style summary that Fynn was a person of extraordinary versatility.

Fynn was born into a farm family in Salisbury, Herkimer County, New York, probably on November 21, 1857.<sup>10</sup> His father was an Irish immigrant; his mother hailed from Connecticut. His father died of epilepsy during military service when “Art” was about five.

Art was one of four children. To support the

family his widowed mother hired him out as a farm laborer. He successively worked on about seventeen farms at a going rate of approximately five dollars a month. He also learned the cheese maker's trade.<sup>11</sup>

Art Fynn somehow managed to collect enough money to pay for a good education. After elementary school, he worked his way through Herkimer County's Fairfield Seminary.<sup>12</sup> Nowadays we would call Fairfield Seminary a high school because it served boys of that age, but it was much more academic than most modern high schools. It billed itself as a "classical academy." This meant that, like most of the better schools of the time, it focused on the Latin language and on the Greek and Roman classics. This training stood Fynn in good stead, for in later years he taught Latin and employed classical learning to enrich his lectures and writings.<sup>13</sup> In Fynn's class of six boys, all become professionals: three lawyers and three educators.<sup>14</sup> Fairfield no longer exists, but an offshoot survives as Hobart College.<sup>15</sup>

Fynn did not graduate until 1878, when he was 20 years old. This probably was for want of funds rather than lack of diligence. The scrap book he compiled around that time reveals a young man determined to obtain a fine education.<sup>16</sup> Its pages are filled with newspaper clippings containing philosophical essays, news items, history, speeches, poems, and other indicia of scholarship.

After graduation, Fynn taught school in Herkimer County—at Fairfield for a year and in Salisbury for three. Then, still unmarried, he enrolled at Tufts College (now Tufts University) in Medford, Massachusetts. He played college football and earned his B.A. (1884) and M.A. (1887) in education.<sup>17</sup> He took advantage of Tufts' location in the

Boston area to begin what eventually became a large autograph collection. While in college he acquired signatures from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, and Oliver Wendell Holmes.<sup>18</sup>

I have not been able to learn how Fynn spent his time for the two years after receiving his master's degree, but in 1889 he landed a job as assistant principal<sup>19</sup> at the high school in Central City, Colorado. In Central City, he taught ancient and modern history, English literature, Latin, German, and oratory. Earnest Morris, one of his Central City students, later recorded that, "There was hardly a poetic gem that he could not recite from memory and explain in a masterful manner."<sup>20</sup>

Fynn was filled with a restless energy and curiosity that drew him into activities far beyond his job responsibilities. For example, in Central City he offered free public lectures on literary and historical subjects.<sup>21</sup>

In 1891 the Alamosa school board selected him over 25 other applicants as school principal.<sup>22</sup> After Fynn helped found a separate high school, he assumed the title "superintendent."<sup>23</sup> In Alamosa, he continued to lecture publicly, offering a presentation on Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.<sup>24</sup> He also delivered a paper to the State Teachers Association convention on how educators could use biography to inculcate character:

The paper of A.J. Tynn [sic] of Alamosa was the first paper of to-day's session and was of great interest. It was on "Biography As a Factor in Education." Mr. Tynn declared there was nothing more interesting and absorbing than a study of life. . . . "We are all, perhaps, unconsciously, worshippers of heroes. Books depicting hairbreadth escapes are

always full of interest for children. Emerson says: "There is no history only biography." Mr. Fynn said that if we are to have statesmen, children must read of statesmen.<sup>25</sup>

While in Alamosa, he began to spend summers traveling to Indian archeological sites. On one of these trips, an 1896 journey to Pueblo ruins in the Four Corners area, he had the experience that may have inspired the future state song.<sup>26</sup>

Although he held neither a Ph.D. nor a university position, perhaps because of his erudition by 1895 people were referring to him as "Professor Fynn."<sup>27</sup> In 1898, he decided to cure the lack of a Ph.D. by enrolling in the graduate program of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Colorado, focusing on pedagogy.<sup>28</sup> His brother, Hiram Addison Fynn, was already on the CU faculty as a dentistry professor.<sup>29</sup> However, the dental college was in Denver, and Arthur attended classes in Boulder.<sup>30</sup> He also taught there as an "assistant in pedagogy."<sup>31</sup>

Fynn earned his Ph.D. only a year after matriculating.<sup>32</sup> By that time, CU had spun off its dental department into a freestanding Colorado College of Dental Surgery, with Hiram as president.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps Hiram's location induced Arthur to accept a job in Denver.

Arthur's new position was as temporary principal of the Twenty-Fourth Street School. The appointment proved controversial. He was derided as an "outsider" taking a position that rightfully should have gone to the assistant principal. However, the superintendent successfully quelled the discontent by pointing out that the assistant

principal was a woman and the school was a large one where "there were frequent cases of corporal punishment."<sup>34</sup> The superintendent was convinced, therefore, that the principal should be a man. Apparently no one thought to argue that if the assistant principal took the top job, she could hire the muscle necessary to inflict corporal punishment.

This job was followed by three similar positions in Denver public schools.<sup>35</sup> It was after leaving his appointment at Gilpin School that some of the teachers spoke of him as "the kindest man [we] ever worked for."<sup>36</sup>

In Denver, as in Central City and Alamosa, Fynn pursued numerous outside activities. For 23 years he served as a part-time instructor for the University of Denver—what we now call an "adjunct professor." In one DU year book he was listed as "Professor of English in the Summer School" and "Professor of Ethnology and Archaeology in the Extension College."<sup>37</sup>

In addition, Fynn lectured in less formal settings on an array of topics: "Samuel Johnson and His Times,"<sup>38</sup> "Ancient Religions," "The inconsistencies and the vagaries of the Pilgrim and Puritan" . . . and many others. In 1914 DU awarded him an honorary doctorate of letters (Litt.D.).

Fynn served several organizations as an officer or director. Among them were the Colorado Historical and Natural History Society,<sup>39</sup> the Denver Philosophical Society,<sup>40</sup> and the Denver Teachers Club. He was a Knights Templar Mason, a life member of the Archeological Institute of America,<sup>41</sup> a religious Universalist, and a Republican. Besides amassing autographs, he collected Indian relics and antiques.<sup>42</sup>

Fynn's special passions were archeology and ethnology, especially pertaining to the American Indian. He made the 1896 trip to Pueblo archeological sites by horse-drawn cart. In later years he toured the West by bicycle and automobile, visiting more archeological sites and mapping Indian battlefields.

He also spent six weeks in Mexico for archeological purposes.<sup>43</sup> In 1907 he was part of a six-man team of researchers and Harvard graduate students who explored the newly-created Mesa Verde National Park. The press credited them with discovering a 40-room, six-story cliff dwelling there,<sup>44</sup> but another source claimed the complex had been discovered more than two decades earlier.<sup>45</sup>

Most of Fynn's published writings focused on archeology, ethnology, and history. His first book, apparently based on his Ph.D. thesis, was *The American Indian as a Product of Environment*.<sup>46</sup> Issued in 1907 by Little, Brown and Company (one of the nation's top publishers), it examined primarily the Pueblo Indians. In 1923 Richard G. Badger, another Boston publisher, released Fynn's second book, *North America in Days of Discovery*.<sup>47</sup> This

volume was seen as good enough to merit an introduction from the president of Cornell University. Beginning in 1923 Fynn contributed frequently to *The Colorado Magazine*, the publication of the state's historical society.<sup>48</sup> He penned a lengthy chapter on Colorado's Indians for a 1927 multi-volume history of the state.<sup>49</sup>

Fynn finally married on August 25, 1902, at age 44.<sup>50</sup> The wedding was held in New York City, and his bride was Mary McDonald, also a schoolteacher and native New Yorker. The marriage lasted until her death in 1922. On August 8, 1924 Fynn re-married. Rose Curry had been born in Oklahoma in 1883<sup>51</sup> and was working as a teacher at Denver's East High School. Like Fynn, she was a fellow trustee of the Philosophical Society.<sup>52</sup> She later served as president.<sup>53</sup>

Contemporaneous photographs show Fynn looking old and his wife young.<sup>54</sup> Their life together was to last only eight years, for that was all the time Fynn had left. He suffered seriously from an intestinal hemorrhage in 1926,<sup>55</sup> retired in 1928, and died of heart failure on December 30, 1930.<sup>56</sup> Rose survived him by more than three decades.<sup>57</sup>

## B. Fynn as a Poet and Songwriter

Arthur Fynn loved poetry. His scrap books are filled with poems culled from newspapers, circulars, and other sources. He wrote his own verse from the time he was a young man, samples of which sprinkle his scrap books. Most of this verse was serious, but there is a humorous specimen ("Poem by A.J. Fynn") recited at a Salisbury school reunion in 1889 and another funny composition ("Those Old Ragged Schoolbooks of Mine") written near

the end of his life.<sup>58</sup> In "The Spirit of the West" he celebrated the ambition that makes humans thrive:

Rejoicing in great deeds achieved  
But finding tasks undone—  
It is that onward, upward call  
That speeds from shore to shore,  
Nor halts until the best is reached  
Or man shall be no more.

Some of his poetry was published posthumously. In 1973, for example, the *Colorado Prospector* printed his playful tribute to Estes Park, portions of which mirror wording in *Where the Columbines Grow*.<sup>59</sup> Naturally, Fynn enlisted his poetic experience in penning lyrics for his music.

Fynn had studied music even before he wrote poetry: As a boy he played the violin for parties and country dances. In his mature years he published three songs: *The Mohawk* (1908), *Where the Columbines Grow* (1911), and *Brother Jonathan Leaves Home* (1917). In 1963, his widow recalled, “He was always writing music, but only those three songs were published.”<sup>60</sup> In several respects, these compositions are similar in structure: Each is set in the key of F-major, and each consists of three stanzas or verses (Fynn used the latter term)<sup>61</sup> with the same melody. Each verse is followed by the same chorus.

Fynn seems, on occasion, to have missed New York State.<sup>62</sup> He regularly read the Herkimer County newspapers<sup>63</sup> and served as an officer of the New York Society of Colorado,<sup>64</sup> a group of Empire State expatriates. He dedicated *The Mohawk* to that society.

*The Mohawk* is a paean to the New York river of that name, which flowed near Fynn’s boyhood home. The song is set in 4/4 time and its tune is trite. However, it resembles the *Columbines* insofar as it is a tribute to nature, and its lyrics aid interpretation of his later, far more polished and creative, work.

*Brother Jonathan Leaves Home* (1917) is a World War I march set in 6/8 time.<sup>65</sup> Its theme is how “the soldiers of the nation” are gathering from all corners of America to “vindicate the

sacred rights of man.” Other than its key and its three-verse-and-chorus structure, it has very little in common with *Mohawk* or *Columbines*.

Frank C. Spencer<sup>66</sup> wrote in 1950 that *Columbines* originated on the 1896 wagon trip from Alamosa to Indian archeological sites near the Four Corners. According to Dr. Spencer:

We were all day reaching the summit of the pass, a broad grassy meadow surrounded by a dense evergreen forest, known as Schinzel Flat [in Rio Grande County], since two brothers of that name had been killed by a snowslide there.

It was near the setting of the sun when the meadow was flooded by a mellowed light. From our camp the whole area seemed covered by a carpet of brilliant-hue columbines, gentians, hare bells and blue bells, with the columbines above and outvying the rest. It was a scene of entrancing beauty. We stood for a long time entranced by the rare beauty of the view. It seemed to flash upon all of us that a song should be written in praise of this beautiful and stately flower. But who would write it? Mr. Fynn named the writer, then an amateur versifier. In turn I nominated him, and before he could object put the matter to a vote. Thus he was chosen, and he promised to think the matter over.<sup>67</sup>

The story may well be true, but we should not assume so. Dr. Spencer did not publish his recollections until two decades after Fynn’s death and more than a half-century after the occasion described. Fynn did not write *Columbines’* lyrics until 1909.<sup>68</sup> He composed



the music even later—on a ship returning from Europe, while suffering a bout of homesickness.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, as explained below, the lyrics do not reflect a southwest Colorado perspective in August, but a Front Range perspective in June or early July.

Fynn was among those who lobbied for *Columbines*' adoption as the state song. Senator Francis Knauss introduced Senate Bill 308 in the 1915 general assembly, and the legislature passed it on May 8. Governor George A.

Carlson signed it the same day. SB 308 contained a single section:

That that certain song entitled "Where the Columbines Grow," the words of which were written by A.J. Fynn and the music of which were composed by A.J. Fynn, be, and the same is hereby adopted as the official state song of Colorado to be used on all appropriate occasions.<sup>70</sup>

### III. About "Where the Columbines Grow"

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#### A. The Music<sup>71</sup>

State songs tend to be playable, singable, and lively. One of the first things you notice about *Columbines* is that it is not as easy to grasp.<sup>72</sup> Nor is it as lively as some other state songs. On the other hand, the assessment by one critic that it is "a languid piece of music,"<sup>73</sup> is certainly unfair. The tempo is "valse moderato," not slow waltz. Nor is it exactly a "waltz." It is simply an air that, like myriads of others, happens to be set in 3/4 time. (The sheet music is attached at the end of this Issue Paper.)

As was true of Fynn's other songs, the published version of *Columbines* contains a common chorus and three verses sung to the same melody. (A fourth verse was added later and is discussed below.) Each verse is best analyzed as composed of four lines, traditionally the most common number in a stanza of poetry, and each line contains approximately eight bars.

The music discloses an unusual amount of sophistication for a lay composer—far more than either of Fynn's other two songs. It also stands out as a relatively interesting piece of music from the period between ragtime and jazz, a period when composition tended to be sterile and predictable.

To be sure, the melody of the chorus is predicable enough, but the melody for the verses is not: Five of its 32 bars contain accidentals (variations from the key signature). To illustrate: The second line of the melody starts like the first, but in its third bar the first note is a B-flat instead of a "C," and the bar develops into a distorted mirror image of its earlier counterpart. In all three verses, the resultant rise always occurs on what one would expect to be an *unaccented* syllable (the "ters" in "waters," "is," and "the").

The harmony contains a substantial number of unusual figures, including one augmented

and three diminished chords in the verse melody and two of each in the chorus—which helps to explain why the song is difficult to sight-read.

In several places Fynn “paints” his lyrics with musical expression. The word “moonlight” is accompanied by a diminished chord. In the third line of each verse the two items contrasted are accompanied by a crescendo and decrescendo, respectively. In the chorus there is a retardando (slowing down) on the word “sings.”

If one were to assign a color to this melody, I think it would be the same shade as that donned by the “purple-robed West.”

## B. Columbine’s Distinctive Lyrics

### 1. The original three verses

The song’s title derives, of course, from the state flower—the blue columbine, *aquilegia caerulea* (or *coerulea* for those who are not classicists). The original lyrics have been castigated for not mentioning the name “Colorado,” but that is only one way in which the lyrics diverge radically from those of the typical state anthem. Specifically:

- As explained below, the lyrics are unusually subtle and intelligent.
- They contain only passing references to human activity. The words instead create a series of sensory impressions and contrasts, mostly visual, but in two cases auditory, and in one case sensual.
- Thus, *Columbines* is far from the “hip-

hip-hooray song” memorably satirized by Lou and Peter Berryman in *Your State’s Name Here*.<sup>74</sup>

Fynn dedicated *Columbines* “to the Colorado pioneers,” of which he considered himself one.<sup>75</sup> The song’s text reflects the standpoint of a narrator (i.e., Fynn himself) who came to Colorado from the Northeast, and now lives in or near the Front Range. The time of year is “midsummer” in its older sense of the June equinox or shortly thereafter. That is the time when the columbine flower is most common on the Front Range. That is the time when snow lingers on the mountain crests, but has mostly disappeared from below the timberline, rendering the forest dark even on moonlit nights.

The song’s place and time perspective will be more obvious after we examine the chorus and the original three verses. The first verse is as follows:

*Where the snowy peaks gleam in the moonlight, above the dark forests of pine,*

*And the wild foaming waters dash onward toward lands where the tropic stars shine;*

*Where the scream of the bold mountain eagle, responds to the notes of the dove*

*Is the purple robed West, the land that is best, the pioneer land that we love.*

Anyone who has spent time in the Rocky Mountains understands why the West is “purple robed.” Fynn likewise identified the West with purple in his panegyric to Estes Park and in his 1920 *Centennial Poem*: “The purple-tinted evergreens/Bedecked the mountainside.”

This stanza is filled with distinct and contrasting images. The introductory line contrasts snowy peaks and dark forests.<sup>76</sup> The second line contrasts white foam and stars with the night's darkness.<sup>77</sup> The third line contrasts (both visually and auditorily) the eagle and dove. The reference to the eagle is accompanied by a crescendo, the dove by a decrescendo. The fourth line resolves the contrasts by labeling what we have just experienced. The word "best" is emphasized with a diminished chord and a fermata (lengthening sign).

The eagle-dove contrast is multi-layered. Those two birds are, of course, traditional symbols of war and peace, a contrast fortified in the second verse. They may also be symbols of East and West, that is, the earlier and later lives of "Colorado pioneers" like Fynn. Certainly there were eagles in the East and doves in Colorado, but eagles were (and are) far more conspicuous in the West, as doves are in the East.

The most important aspect of the eagle-dove contrast is how it reflects oppositions in the columbine flower itself. The blossom features eagle-claw spurs at its base, and Fynn might very well have believed that its scientific name, *aquilegia*, was derived from the Latin word for eagle (*aquila*) —although it may be a form of *aquilex*, water seeker. The outer petals, by comparison, are gentle, and the name *columbine*, derives from the Latin word for "dove-like." This is a flower in which opposites are conjoined: "Where the scream of the bold mountain eagle, responds to the notes of the dove." In this contrast there is also an echo from the Roman poet, Ovid. That reference is explained below.

The colors mentioned in the first verse are white and purple against a dark canvass. The

time of observation is the present. Both facts become significant later.

The chorus adds further sensory impressions:

*'Tis the land where the columbines grow,  
overlooking the plains far below,*

*While the cool summer breeze in the evergreen  
trees softly sings where the columbines grow.*

The chorus thus offers yet another visual contrast (high columbines, low plains), an auditory figure ("softly sings"), and a sensual one ("cool summer breeze"). Anyone who has experienced a Colorado mountain summer will understand why the breeze is cool rather than warm.

The second verse has proved the most controversial:

*The bison is gone from the upland, the deer  
from the canyon has fled.*

*The home of the wolf is deserted, the antelope  
moans for his dead,*

*The war-whoop re-echoes no longer, the  
Indian's only a name,*

*And the nymphs of the grove in their loneliness  
rove, but the columbine blooms just the same.*

(The music crescendos on "war-whoop" and decrescendos on "only a name.")

What a desolate vignette! And it's nonsense, right? There are still plenty of bison in Colorado, and Heaven knows, there are plenty of deer. There are no nymphs in groves, and Indians were very much alive in Fynn's time, as they are today. Or is there something more sinister here than mere nonsense? Is Fynn

telling us that it is acceptable to massacre wildlife and Indians? Is this a call for environmental destruction?

Before we address these questions, observe the continuing use of contrast: *upland vs. canyon . . . war-whoop vs. only a name . . . loneliness vs. blooming*. The second of these is a war-peace antithesis that parallels *precisely* the eagle-dove war-peace antithesis in the comparable line of the first verse. The music to the war phrase is the same in each case, as is the music of the peace phrase.

The questions about this verse are largely resolved by understanding that, while the first verse is set in the present time, the second is set in a likely future in which nature has been denuded. This verse is not a celebration of that prospect. It is a lament.

Consider the nymphs. In Greco-Roman literature nymphs associate happily with (or sometimes hunt) forest wildlife. But if the wildlife is gone, nymphs wander in loneliness. For someone like Fynn, who was classically educated, it is a sad and evocative image.

The reference to nymphs added to the earlier reference to eagles and doves makes me suspect that Fynn was drawing on remembrances of the highly popular Latin poem, the *Metamorphoses*, by Publius Ovidius Naso, whom English speakers call Ovid. It is virtually certain Fynn would have read at least the first book of this poem in the course of his classical studies. In Fynn's day, every educated person knew Ovid.

In Book 1 of the *Metamorphoses*, Apollo, afflicted by amorous passion, pursues the nymph Daphne. She flees from him with great alacrity. He calls to her to stay, averring that he chases her only out of love. She

should not (he says) flee from him as from an enemy, as the lamb flees from the wolf, or the doe from the lion, or as "doves flee, with fluttering feather, from the eagle." (*sic aquilam penna fugiunt trepidante columbae*).<sup>78</sup>

The Indian is in the lyrics because Fynn thought of him as part of the natural order: In his first book, Fynn characterized the pre-Columbian Indian as "truly a child of nature."<sup>79</sup> In his mind, therefore, the wasting of nature would include the passing of the Indian.

In Fynn's world, this was more than a theoretical prospect. Fynn wrote: "[A]s a type of man, [the Indian] is destined to disappear under the irresistible influences of a mightier race. . . The Indian riding on a mowing-machine or selling goods behind a counter is an Indian no longer . . . The Indian will live, but not as an active, vital force."<sup>80</sup> In his second book, he opined that this process was very far advanced.<sup>81</sup> If things did not change, in other words, the Indian would become "only a name."

Fynn was not happy about the prospect. On the contrary, at a time when memories of the Indian wars rendered many whites unsympathetic, Fynn became somewhat of an Indian advocate. When a proposal for a huge Indian pageant in Denver in 1915 turned out to be controversial, Fynn strongly and publicly defended it.<sup>82</sup> In 1920, he suggested that a monument to Native Americans be raised in the Denver Civic Center.<sup>83</sup> Shortly thereafter he began to lecture on "Our Debt and Duty to the American Indian."<sup>84</sup> In 1924 he composed a poetic tribute, "To the American Indian," of whom he wrote, "[N]obler blood has never flowed/Within the veins of man."<sup>85</sup> However, that tribute took the same pessimistic attitude of the Natives'

fate that he had expressed in *Columbines*.

When assessing the lyrics' view of Indians, one must also take account of its theme of contrast. In a world in which "the Indian is only a name," nevertheless "the columbine blooms just the same." The latter is clearly good, so we must presume that for Indians to be "only a name" would be bad.

Is it odd for a state song to include an environmental lament? Perhaps it might seem so elsewhere, but not in Colorado. Here are some lyrics from the state's other official song, John Denver's *Rocky Mountain High*:

*Now his life is full of wonder, but his heart  
still knows some fear,  
of a simple thing he cannot comprehend.  
Why they try to tear the mountains down to  
bring in a couple more,  
more people, more scars upon the land.*

Colorado's state songs are different from those of other states in part because Coloradans are different from people in other states. We not only value the environment, but we adopt state songs that admonish the listener to care for it, even at the risk of seeming dreary.

*Columbines'* third verse runs thus:

*Let the violet brighten the brookside, in  
sunlight of earlier spring,  
  
Let the clover bedeck the green meadow, in  
days when the orioles sing,  
  
Let the goldrenrod herald the autumn, But  
under the midsummer sky,  
  
In its fair Western home, may the columbine  
bloom till our great mountain rivers run dry.*

One's first reaction may be, "Huh? How often do you see wild violets in Colorado? And goldenrod and orioles are far more common in the East than here." However, I soon figured it out because, like Fynn, I grew up in rural New York State, came to Colorado late in early manhood, and remain afflicted with memories of Eastern rustic beauty.

The key to understanding these words is that, while the first verse is cast in the present and the second in the future, the third (like *The Mohawk*) depicts the past. The Colorado pioneers, of whom Fynn counted himself one, had come from the East. They remembered violets, clover, orioles, and goldenrod in their earlier seasons.

Reinforcing the Eastern image is the word "brookside." In the East, a small stream is commonly called a brook. The term "brook" is not unknown in Colorado,<sup>86</sup> but generally Westerners favor the term "creek." The initial part of this verse is a musing memory of nature as the Colorado pioneers experienced it while growing up.

In the middle of the third line, however, Fynn cuts off the musing. A capitalized "But" on a musical crescendo forces us back to the present. It is again midsummer, and the ravines and woods of the Colorado mountains are showy with columbines. They will be there year after year, and they will outlive our memories, outlive any desolate future, and bloom "till our great mountain rivers run dry." This verse completes the temporal cycle: present, to future, to past, and back to present.

This verse also completes the color scheme of the Colorado columbine: To the white and purple referenced in the initial verse, it adds

violet, green, and gold. For although we call it the “blue columbine,” the outer petals are more purple or violet than blue, and the remainder of the flower is gold and white.

## 2. The abortive fourth verse.

Fynn’s song received a substantial amount of criticism for not mentioning the state name. In 1921, Fynn responded by penning a fourth verse. Unlike the first three, the fourth was not written from the standpoint of Colorado’s immigrants. It was written *about* them:

*From the far eastern prairie and lakeland,  
From still farther lands by the sea,*

*Over perilous paths to our mountains, Came  
the pioneers, fearless and free.*

*They came with the bold resolution A  
commonwealth<sup>87</sup> here to create,*

*And the watchword they bore was the name we  
adore, “Colorado,” the columbine state.*

The new lines bear some resemblance to the “they are coming from everywhere” theme of

*Brother Jonathan Leaves Home*. Obviously, however, this material bears little resemblance to the remainder of *Columbine*. It shifts to an entirely new perspective and lacks the imagery and contrast that characterize the earlier verses. It also features the hackneyed verb “adore.” One might accuse Fynn of catering to the ignorance of the great unwashed by offering them a “hip-hip-hooray” patch.

At the outset, my own view was hostile to this addition. Fynn clearly had second thoughts as well. The fourth verse never appeared in the sheet music.<sup>88</sup> I have found only two copies of it in Fynn’s personal materials: an April, 1921 clipping from a publication called *The Trail* and a typewritten version followed by the tentative handwritten attribution, “A J Fink?” (*sic*).<sup>89</sup>

But if you sing the fourth verse a few times, it grows on you. Eventually, you can even sing the phrase “name we adore” without embarrassment. It is the kind of thing, as Oxonians sometimes say, that will appeal to people who like that sort of thing. Some people like their state names to appear in their state songs.

## IV. Conclusion

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*Columbines*’ first public performance after its adoption as the state song was at the annual banquet of the Daughters of Colorado, an organization of women born in the state.<sup>90</sup> As noted earlier, some grumbling followed the adoption, mostly because the lyrics did not mention the state name. In 1917, lawmakers reconsidered *Columbines* against three rivals,

and reaffirmed it by a commanding majority.<sup>91</sup> Dr. Fynn helped the effort by leading schoolchildren into the legislative chamber to sing his anthem before the assembled solons. According to the *Colorado Springs Gazette*, “under the thrall of the childish voices the purely academic objections to the composition disappeared and the hearers were

taken by storm.”<sup>92</sup>

After Fynn’s death, his widow gave the copyright to the Daughters of Colorado,<sup>93</sup> who allowed it to expire in 1939.<sup>94</sup> Efforts launched in 1947, 1960, and 1969 to replace *Columbines* as the state song got nowhere.

That was as it should be, for *Columbines* is uniquely suited to be the state’s official anthem.

First, the melody is beautiful, and its unexpected complexity prevents it from cloying with repetition. The legislators who were “taken by storm” in 1917 were not moved merely because children sang for them. They would have been less enthusiastic, one can be sure, if those children had squeaked out *Jingle Bells*. The performance transported the audience not merely because children were singing, but because of what they sang.

Second, it does not denigrate Indian contributions to admit that, for the most part, Colorado was built by the kind of people, and their progeny, from whose perspective the lyrics flow: adventurous and brave immigrants drawn by the prospect of a better life, and attracted by Colorado’s natural advantages and the openness and freedom Colorado represents. It makes the song more fitting that it was not only *written from* the perspective of one of those people, but that it was written *by* one of them.

Finally, of course, the focus on Colorado’s mountain environment reflects one of its citizens’ deepest values.

Two objections remain: They are (1) the older objection—that the original three verses don’t mention the state’s name, and, (2) a newer

one—that the lyrics in the second verse may be discordant with current sensibilities and realities.

Failure to mention the state’s name hardly seems disqualifying if the song contains lyrics referring to characteristics of the state, which *Columbines* does. Florida’s official song, *Swanee River*, doesn’t mention the state’s name, either. Instead, it refers to a river that runs (mostly) within Florida. In fact, Kansas’ anthem, *Home on the Range* doesn’t mention anything unique to the state at all. There’s more “range” in Wyoming or Montana than in Kansas.

As for the presence of lyrics some find antiquated: It would be silly to change state songs with every shift of political fashion. By that standard, we would have long ago jettisoned the *Star Spangled Banner*, whose third verse refers to “the foul footsteps’ pollution” left by soldiers of the nation that is now our closest ally! For those, however, who want to sing the melodious word “Colorado,” or who cannot understand the lyrics’ symbolism, or who yearn to be politically correct, then there is a solution. It is the same solution we have adopted with our national anthem. We can sing only selected verses on public occasions. In that case, I’d nominate the evocative first and the rousing fourth.

It is time, however, for Coloradans to abide by state law once again: That means we should belt out *Where the Columbines Grow* “on all appropriate occasions.” And with all possible enthusiasm.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Fellow in Constitutional Jurisprudence, The Independence Institute; Professor of Law (ret.), The University of Montana. Biography at <http://constitution.i2i.org/about>.

The author thanks the following for their assistance: Ben and Marya DeGrow and David Kopel at the Independence Institute; Dr. Stanley Jack; Rebecca Natelson Chertudi; and the staff members of the Stephen H. Hart Library (hereinafter abbreviated “SHHL”) and of the Denver Public Library (hereinafter abbreviated DPL).

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Olga Curtis, *Do You Know 'Where the Columbines Grow'?* Denver Post, Aug. 18, 1963, *Empire*, at 20 (characterizing it as a “ditty . . . notable primarily for its purple prose—and the fact that nowhere in it is the word Colorado mentioned.”).

The five principal modern articles on *Columbines* all take a negative or cynical view. Moreover, most contain historical inaccuracies and none contains serious analysis of the words or the music. Although I occasionally cite some of these articles, I have turned to original or contemporaneous sources for all important facts. The five principal modern articles are as follows:

Dana Coffield, *State Song Hit a Sour Note Early*, Denver Post, Mar. 11, 2007

Olga Curtis, *op. cit.*

Ed Quillen, *How About a Real American Anthem?* Denver Post, Jul. 31, 1990

Terry L. Shockey, *The State Song That Forgot to Mention the State*, Colorado Heritage 28 (Sp. 1992) [hereinafter Shockey, *Song*]

Terry L. Shockey, *Where the Columbines Grow*, The Colo. Music Educator, vol. 22, no. 4, at 4 (May, 1975) [hereinafter Shockey, *Columbines*]

<sup>3</sup> Shockey, *Columbines*, at 4, states that the vote was 24-7 in the senate and 46-2 in the house.

<sup>4</sup> *New Song Promises Fame for Colorado* (1915) (unidentified newspaper clipping in DPL Fynn scrap book); *Filled With Spirit Of West Is Song by Prof. A.J. Fynn* (unidentified newspaper, DPL Fynn scrap books).

<sup>5</sup> *Colorado State Song*, Pueblo Chieftain, May 31, 1915, in DPL Fynn scrap books.

<sup>6</sup> See the Conclusion, below.

<sup>7</sup> Colo. Rev. Stat. § 24-80-909.

<sup>8</sup> Brief Histories: Denver Public Schools (undated typewritten collection; pages not consecutively numbered) (available at DPL), 231<sup>st</sup> page.

<sup>9</sup> S.C. Kimm, *Reminiscences of 60 Years Ago*, Utica Daily Press, Feb. 27, 1923, in DPL Fynn scrap books.

<sup>10</sup> Other possible birth years are 1852 and 1859. The year 1852 is stated in composers-classical-music.com, <http://composers-classical-music.com/f/FynnArthurJohn.htm>. It is supported by S.C. Kimm, *Reminiscences of 60 Years Ago*, Utica Daily Press, Feb. 27, 1923, in DPL Fynn scrap books (implying that Fynn was 11 years old in 1863). The date of 1859 is deduced from two obituaries that claimed Fynn was 71 years old when he died. *Arthur J. Fynn, Historian and Educator, Dies*, Denver Post, Dec. 31, 1930, at 4; *Dr. A.J. Fynn, Educator and Historian, Dies*, Rocky Mtn. News, Dec. 31, 1930, at 2.

There are several reasons why 1857 is most probable:

- Other than the two obituaries, both of which appear to have been written hastily (and contain other factual errors), there is no evidence for 1859. This leaves 1852 and 1857 as the more likely candidates.
- As between 1852 and 1857, the known dates of certain life events, such as Fynn’s attendance at Fairfield Seminary, render 1857 the more probable.
- An 1895 photograph of Fynn clearly depicts a man under 40 years old, according to Dr. Stanley Jack of Boulder, Colorado, a physician with experience in cosmetic surgery and aesthetic medicine.
- Fynn’s biography in 4 State Historical and Natural History Society of Colorado, *History of Colorado* 104-05 (James H. Baker, ed. 1927), gives the specific date of November 21, 1857. This is the most credible source from the time because Fynn himself contributed to the *History of Colorado*, and its editor and assistant editor were associates of his. Also, no other source specifically gives the day and month as well as the year. (This



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volume is cited hereinafter as Baker, History).

- 11 S.C. Kimm, *Reminiscences of 60 Years Ago*, Utica Daily Press, Feb. 27, 1923, in DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 12 On Fairfield Seminary (originally called Fairfield Academy), see Fairfield Collection, Syracuse University Libraries, <http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/f/fairfield.htm>.
- 13 For example, in Fynn's *Centennial Poem* he recalls a time when "ancient Troy was young," and one of his lecture topics was "Ancient Religions." Rocky Mtn. News, Nov. 25, 1915, in DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 14 A.J. Fynn, *Last of Class of 1878 of Fairfield Seminary*, Little Falls Evening Times (date unidentified) (reprinting Fynn letter dated Feb. 27, 1929), DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 15 *History of Hobart College, Geneva, New York*, in History of Ontario County, New York (George S. Conover ed., 1893), at <http://history.rays-place.com/ny/geneva-5.htm>.
- 16 SHHL Fynn scrap books. As understood in Fynn's generation, a "scrap book" was a book of clippings, primarily from newspapers. As during the American Founding, newspapers commonly reprinted essays and cultural writings as well as news.
- 17 An 1884 photograph of Fynn's football team, together with a more recent photograph of Fynn, appears with a newspaper article covering his teammate, U.S. Attorney General John Sargent. *Big John Sargent Plows Way Thru 10-Hour Day at Capitol*, Denver Post, Mar. 20, 1925, in DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 18 *Autographs Are Collected By Dr. Arthur J. Fynn*, The Spotlight, May 6, 1925, in DPL Fynn scrap books. It is not recorded whether the Holmes signature was that of the famous father or the more famous son.
- 19 5 Wilbur Fiske Stone, *History of Colorado* 276 (1919) [hereinafter Stone, History] reports the job as "principal," but I have relied on Ernest Morris, who was Fynn's student in Central City. Ernest Morris, *Arthur J. Fynn—Scholar, Ethnologist*, 8 Colo. Mag. 63-67 (1931) (obituary). Moreover, for a young man of Fynn's level of experience, the post of assistant principal seems more likely.
- 20 *Id.* at 64.
- 21 *Id.*
- 22 *The New Principal and Teachers of Our Public Schools Selected*, unidentified Alamosa newspaper in DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 23 He is so identified in Stone, History, at 276, Baker, History, at 104, and other sources.
- 24 Monte Vista J. (untitled, undated item in DLP Fynn scrap books).
- 25 *Closing the Session*, Denver Evening Post, Dec. 31, 1896, at 2. The full text is in the DPL Fynn scrap books. The paper's wording is somewhat different from the reporter's quoted language. This may be the fault of the reporter, but may also be because Fynn had learned the good practice of verbally summarizing, rather than reading, scholarly papers at conferences.
- Fynn's interest in personal character continued throughout his life. See, e.g., A.J. Fynn, *Two Americans*, 1 Colo. Mag. 118 (1924), which compared the lives of Abraham Lincoln and Kit Carson, both born in Kentucky in 1809. At the outset of the article, Fynn nodded to the then-educationally-orthodox line people's lives are shaped mostly by environment (a view reflected in the title of his first book). As the article unfolded, however, it maintained that both Lincoln and Carson were distinguished by features of individual character.
- 26 See below.
- 27 *Professor A.J. Fynn*, Rocky Mtn. Educator, Oct., 1895, in DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 28 University of Colorado Catalogue, 1897-98, at 161 (listing Fynn as a graduate student with a major in pedagogy).
- 29 University of Colorado Catalogue, 1897-98, at 16. Hiram had also graduated from Fairfield Seminary, although two years before Arthur. Fairfield Alumni Directory, Part 2, available at <http://herkimer.nygenweb.net/fairfield/fairalum2.html>.
- 30 University of Colorado Catalogue, 1898-99, at 161-62.
- 31 *Added to the Faculty* (item from unidentified Boulder publication announcing Fynn's CU appointment to teach pedagogy, in DPL Fynn scrap books); University of Colorado Catalogue, 1898-99, at 21 & 48.
- 32 Untitled item in Alamosa newspaper (1899), in DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 33 University of Colorado Catalogue, 1898-99, at 161-62. The spin-off was by court order. The College of Dental Surgery eventually became affiliated with the University of Denver, with Hiram as dean. See, e.g., University of Denver, University Bulletin: Year Book 15 (1918) (listing Hiram Fynn as dean).

Hiram had a long career at the College of Dental Surgery. He died in 1928. Fairfield Alumni Directory, Part

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2, available at <http://herkimer.nygenweb.net/fairfield/fairalum2.html>.

34 *Man of Strength Wanted*, Denver Evening Post, Dec. 23, 1899, at 2.

35 The three were, in chronological order, Longfellow Annex, Gilpin School, and Valverde School. It is clear that Fynn served as Valverde from 1918 to 1928, but the exact dates of his tenure elsewhere are uncertain because of the sources are inconsistent. For example, Brief Histories: Denver Public Schools (undated) (typewritten collection, available at DPL) states on its 361<sup>st</sup> page (the pages are not consecutively numbered) that he was principal of the Twenty-Fourth Street School from 1900 to 1906. Yet other sources say he took the job in 1899. Moreover, the same sheet says he “was transferred to Longfellow School in 1907,” but the 291<sup>st</sup> page claims he was principal of Longfellow from 1908 to 1915. The 227<sup>th</sup> page gives the tenure at Gilpin as 1915-18, which is consistent; but the 331<sup>st</sup> page presents the Gilpin dates as 1914-18. Other sources vary as well.

36 Brief Histories: Denver Public Schools (undated typewritten collection; pages not consecutively numbered) (available at DPL), 231<sup>st</sup> page.

37 University of Denver, University Bulletin: Year Book (1918), at 20. In 1919 he was listed as teaching the following courses either in the first or second semester: Primitive Man, Primitive Arts, Primitive Science, American Aborigines, Primitive Religious, and Primitive Conditions Compared. George Grant MacCurdy, *The Academic Teaching of Anthropology in Connection with Other Departments*, 21 *American Anthropologist* 49, 55 (1919).

38 Johnson was an eighteenth-century English literary figure and lexicographer.

39 University of Colorado, The Alumnus, in the DPL Fynn scrap books. This item also reports that he was the last surviving member of his graduating class at Fairfield Seminary.

40 *Banquet Program*, The Denver Philosophical Society (Mar. 8, 1921), in DPL Fynn scrap books. *See also A.J. Fynn* in Stone, History, at 278 (stating that he was president of the Philosophical Society).

41 *Id.*

42 *Autographs Are Collected By Dr. Arthur J. Fynn*, The Spotlight, May 6, 1925, in DPL Fynn scrap books (reporting collection of over 800 autographs of noted individuals, as well as antiques and Indian relics).

43 *Prominente arqueólogo de paso*, Oaxaca Herald (undated item in DPL Fynn scrap books).

44 *Find Palace of Cliff Dwellers*, N.Y. Tribune, Aug. 18, 1907; *Cliff Men’s Old Palace*, Helena Independent Record, Aug. 24, 1907, at 1, both in DPL Fynn scrap books.

45 *Letter to the Editor, A Correction*, Colo. Spgs. Telegraph, Sept. 9, 1916.

46 Arthur John Fynn, *The American Indian as a Product of Environment: With Special Reference to the Pueblos* (Boston., 1907) [hereinafter Fynn, *American Indian*].

47 A.J. Fynn, *North America In Days of Discovery* (Boston, 1923) [hereinafter Fynn, *Discovery*].

48 *See, e.g., A.J. Fynn, Two Americans*, 1 *Colo. Mag.* 118 (1924).

49 Baker, History.

50 Baker, History, at 105; *Married. Fynn-McDonald*, Alamosa Ind. J. (undated), available in the DPL Fynn scrap books).

51 Olga Curtis, *Do You Know ‘Where the Columbines Grow’?* Denver Post, Aug. 18, 1963, *Empire Magazine*, at 20-21.

52 Baker, History, at 105. *See also Cupid Captures Two of East’s Faculty*, East High Spotlight (undated), in DPL Fynn scrap books); *Denver School Principal Is Wedded to English Instructor* (unidentified newspaper in DPL Fynn scrap book). On her membership in the Philosophical Society, see *Banquet Program*, The Denver Philosophical Society (Mar. 8, 1921), in DPL Fynn scrap books.

53 *Mrs. Rose Curry Fynn to Retire After 25 Years at East High*, Rocky Mtn. News, May 18, 1945, at 5.

54 *Denver School Principal Is Wedded to English Instructor* (unidentified newspaper in DPL Fynn scrap book).

55 *Dr. Fynn’s Condition Much Worse Today* (unidentified newspaper, Apr. 9, 1926), in DPL Fynn scrap books.

56 *Dr. A.J. Fynn Dies of Heart Failure*, East High Spotlight, Jan. 14, 1931. *See also Arthur J. Fynn, Historian and Educator, Dies*, Denver Post, Dec. 31, 1930, at 4; *Dr. A.J. Fynn, Educator and Historian, Dies*, Rocky Mtn. News, Dec. 31, 1930, at 2 (both stating the cause of death, but reporting his age inaccurately).

57 I have not been able to locate an obituary, but she gave an interview to the Denver Post in 1963. *See Olga Curtis, Do You Know ‘Where the Columbines Grow’?* Denver Post, Aug. 18, 1963, *Empire*, at 20-21.

58 The latter was published in the *Colorado School Journal*, Sept., 1929.

59 The Colorado Prospector, Aug. 1, 1973, at 7. The poem is as follows:

Estes Park

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I'd lived on Colorado soil for more than thirty years—  
 In fact, I felt I might be classed among the pioneers  
 I'd traveled over range and plain, from San Juan to the Platte,  
 And on a hundred fishing streams had many a social chat;  
 I'd climbed great peaks, before the dawn, to see the rising sun.  
 And strolled through canons, deep and lone, where wildest rivers run;  
 Yet, after this, a traveler to me made this remark  
 Dear sir, you think you've seen the state, but visit Estes Park,”  
 With some chagrin I answered him (and felt my logic sound)  
 That higher peaks and larger streams in other parts abound  
 And yet a haunted feeling grew of duty left undone,  
 So I resolved to view these scenes I'd somehow seemed to shun  
 Therefore, upon an August day, when auspices [*sic*] were fair.  
 When city streets were furnaces and meadows parched and bare.  
 At early morn, accompanied with songs of meadow-lark.  
 I sought that Rocky mountain realm containing Estes Park  
 Of earth's broad surface, little space this gem of nature claims.  
 But scenic multiformity seems that toward which it aims.  
 For beauty, quaintness, majesty, in myriad shapes appear;  
 Sky-piercing glaciated peaks, with purple canons near.  
 Innumerable years have passed since massive icy chains  
 Drew down their billion tons of rock to form these great morains;  
 So, wild archaic times have left their coeternal mark.  
 And science finds a genial field in stintless Estes Park  
 Strange, cheerless groups of evergreens far up the mountain side.  
 Stand, bleached by ruthless winds that blow across the great divide;  
 Distorted stunted semblances of noble trees below.  
 Half verdureless, like pleading arms, their branches eastward grow;  
 Claim crystal lakes on terraces adorn the distant view.  
 Reflect the matchless sunset sky, with clouds of every hue.  
 And when the moon illuminates those groves, so still and dark.  
 The fairy land of old romance appears in Estes Park  
 In marked seclusion, far away from busy shop and mart.  
 Here nature soothes the tired brain and cheers the aching heart;  
 Here childhood finds a paradise and age forgets his years;  
 E'en timid sheep from timberline here cast aside their fears;  
 The beavers build their homes in peace, the birds in safety sing  
 The cabins on the wooded heights with joyful voices ring;  
 The halcyon broods in the glen where wolves were wont to bark.  
 And Heaven's benedictions fall on peaceful Estes Park.

<sup>60</sup> Olga Curtis, *Do You Know 'Where the Columbines Grow'?* Denver Post, Aug. 18, 1963, *Empire*, at 21.

<sup>61</sup> He identified these units as “verses” in a handwritten copy of the then-popular song, *Wait for the Turn of the Tide*. Hart Library Fynn scrap books.

<sup>62</sup> His scrap books preserve various articles about his home district. A 1898 newspaper article refers to a “Dr. and Mrs. Fynn” vacationing in northern New York state, *Additional Society*, Denver Evening Post, Jul. 9, 1898, at 7, but the article probably refers to his brother Hiram. At the time, A.J. Fynn was still studying for his doctorate.

<sup>63</sup> A.J. Fynn, *Good Words For Dr. Kimm From an Early Companion*, Little Falls Times (date not identified) (reprinting letter of Jan. 27, 1925), in DPL Fynn scrap books.

<sup>64</sup> New York Society letterhead, in DPL Fynn scrap books.

<sup>65</sup> Marches can be written in 6/8 time; John Phillip Sousa's *Washington Post* is an example. However, *Jonathan* is too lilting to be a true march.

- 66 Dr. Spencer was superintendent of schools in Monte Vista at the time, Frank C. Spencer, *The Birth of the Colorado State Song*, 23 Colo. Mag. 61-62 (1950), but later taught at the Adams State Teachers College. A.J. Fynn, *Adams Professor Completes News Story of Colorado*, unidentified book review, in DPL Fynn scrap books. A sub-headline initially Spencer's middle initial as "B.," but the first line of the review corrects it to "C."
- 67 Frank C. Spencer, *The Birth of the Colorado State Song*, 23 Colo. Mag. 61 (1950).
- 68 "Where the Columbines Grow," (unidentified newspaper item, in DPL Fynn scrap books).
- 69 Olga Curtis, *Do You Know 'Where the Columbines Grow'?* Denver Post, Aug. 18, 1963, *Empire*, at 21.
- 70 The measure is codified as Colo. Rev. Stat. § 24-80-909.
- 71 I am indebted to Ben and Marya DeGrow for their assistance in analyzing the music.
- 72 Ed Quillen remarked, "It is difficult to play on the piano . . . (In fairness, I should note that, for me, everything past 'Chopsticks' is difficult to play on the piano.)" Ed Quillen, *Where the Columbines Grow*, Denver Post, Aug. 14, 1990. Ben DeGrow, who is much more competent on the piano, found it relatively difficult to sight-read because of its counterintuitive chordation.
- 73 Shockey, *Song*, at 29.
- 74 The Berryman satire is sung at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EX9p50MIexs>. Illustrative of a "hip-hip-hooray" song is the anthem of Montana:  
Montana, Montana, glory of the West  
of all the states from coast to coast, you're easily the best!  
Montana, Montana, where skies are always blue,  
M-O-N-T-A-N-A, Montana we love you!
- 75 His poem, *Estes Park*, states, "In fact, I felt I might be classed among the pioneers . . ."
- 76 Cf. Fynn's *Centennial Poem* ("The giant peaks stood sentry-like/In hoods of gleaming snow").
- 77 Compare the lines from *The Mohawk*: "the rivers of earth roll on to the sea," and the "Mohawk gleams in the winter moonlight."
- 78 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1:504-506.
- 79 Fynn, *American Indian*, at 234. The same characterization is repeated in Fynn, *Discovery*, at 264.
- 80 Fynn, *American Indian*, at 260-61.
- 81 Fynn, *Discovery*, at 270.
- 82 *Indian Pageant Great Project, Says A.J. Fynn* (unidentified newspaper in DPL Fynn scrap books).
- 83 *Monument Suggested in Memory of Indians*, Rocky Mtn. News, Mar. 17, 1920.
- 84 *Program*, W.J.K. Club, Greeley, Colo., Feb. 2, 1921, in DPL Fynn scrap books. He also may have been an advocate of women's suffrage. See *Rule of Women Has Precedent* (unidentified newspaper item quoting Fynn as reflecting positively on female governance, in DPL Fynn scrap books.).
- 85 A.J. Fynn, *To The American Indian*, Colo. School J., Nov., 1924.
- 86 E.g., Boulder Brook in Rocky Mountain National Park and Beaver Brook, west of Golden.
- 87 Cf. A.J. Fynn, *Creating a Commonwealth*, 1 Colo. Mag., 204 (Jul., 1924).
- 88 Cf. Shockey, *Song*, at 29 ("The new verse . . . never was added to subsequent printings of the sheet music.").
- 89 DPL Fynn scrap book. I suspect that this, like some other items, was inserted in Fynn's scrap book by his widow.
- 90 *New Song of State Given Introduction*, unidentified newspaper, DPL Fynn scrap book.
- 91 *Official State Song Will Retain Standing*, Denver Times, Feb. 22, 1917. Shockey, *Columbines*, at 5, reproduces two tallies, both showing *Columbines* with an overwhelming majority over the combined total for its three rivals. However, he confused sources. The tally he attributes to the *Rocky Mountain News* actually derived from the *Denver Times*, Feb. 22, 1917, and the tally he attributes to the *Denver Post* appears to have originated in the *Colorado Springs Gazette*, Feb. 21, 1921. The *Times* and *Gazette* items are in the DPL Fynn scrap books.
- 92 *Children Swing Votes to Retain State Song*, Colo. Spgs. Gazette, Feb. 21, 1921, in DPL Fynn scrap book.
- 93 Mrs. Rose Curry Fynn *to Retire After 25 Years at East High*, Rocky Mtn. News, May 18, 1945, at 5; *State Song Given To Colorado Daughters*, unidentified newspaper article, in DPL Fynn scrap book.
- 94 Olga Curtis, *Do You Know 'Where the Columbines Grow'?* Denver Post, Aug. 18, 1963, *Empire*, at 21.

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# Where The Columbines Grow

A. J. FYNN

## Valse Moderato

Piano introduction in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The music features a gentle melody in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand, consisting of chords and single notes.

Where the snow - y peaks gleam in the moon - -  
The bi - son is gone from the up - -  
Let the vi - o - let bright - en the brook - -

Piano accompaniment for the first vocal line, continuing the 3/4 time signature and B-flat major key. It provides harmonic support for the vocal melody.

## *Piu Lento*

## *Tempo*

light, A - bove the dark for - ests of pine, \_\_\_\_\_ And the  
land, The deer from the can - yon has fled, \_\_\_\_\_ The  
side, In sun - light of ear - li - er spring, \_\_\_\_\_ Let the

Piano accompaniment for the second vocal line, transitioning from *Piu Lento* to *Tempo*. The tempo change is indicated by a hairpin symbol. The accompaniment continues to support the vocal melody.

*rit.*

wild foam-ing wa - ters dash on - - ward To-ward lands where the  
 home of the wolf is de - sert - - ed, The an - te - lope  
 clo - ver be - deck the green mead - - ow, In days when the

*a tempo*

trop - ic stars shine; ——— Where the scream of the bold moun - tain  
 moans for his dead, ——— The war - whoop re - ech - oes no  
 o - ri - oles sing, ——— Let the gold - en - rod her - ald the

*Piu mosso*

ea - gle ——— Re - sponds to the notes of the dove ——— Is the  
 lon - ger, ——— The In - di - an's on - ly a name, ——— And the  
 au - tumn; ——— But, un - der the mid - sum - mer sky, ——— In its

*Piu lento*

pur - ple robed West, the land that is best, The  
 nymphs of the grove in their lone - li - ness rove, But the  
 fair West - ern home, may the col - um - bine bloom Till our

pi - o - neer land that we love.  
 col - um - bine blooms just the same.  
 great moun - tain riv - ers run dry.

CHORUS *a tempo*

'Tis the land where the col-um-bines grow, — O-ver-looking the plains far be-low, — While the

cool sum-mer breeze in the ev-er-green trees Soft - ly sings where the colum-bines grow. —



SOPRANO

*a tempo* *accel.*

'Tis the land where the columbines grow, — Over looking the plains far below, — While the

ALTO *a tempo*

'Tis the land where the columbines grow, — Over looking the plains far below, — While the

TENOR *a tempo*

'Tis the land where the columbines, columbines grow, Over looking the plains far below, far below, While the

BASS *a tempo*

'Tis the land where the columbines grow, — Over looking the plains far below, — While the

*a tempo*  
*mf*

*rit.*

cool summer breeze in the ev-er-green trees Soft-ly sings where the col-um-bines grow. —

*rit.*

cool summer breeze in the ev-er-green trees Soft-ly sings where the col-um-bines grow. —

*rit.*

cool summer breeze in the ev-er-green trees Soft-ly sings where the col-um-bines grow. —

*rit.*

cool summer breeze in the ev-er-green trees Soft-ly sings where the col-um-bines grow. —

*rit.*