

William W. Anderson
Impact Upon
Denver's Legal and Journalism History

On January 12, 1900 attorney William W. Anderson walked down the 18 steps from his home at 2329 North Eliot Street to catch the trolley to his office in the Cooper Building downtown. Shortly before noon he engaged in a confrontation with the publishers of the *Denver Post* that set off a series of events which tested the very foundation of the judicial system in Denver and made headlines in every Colorado mining camp and news from San Francisco to New York. William Anderson in a brawl with Harry Tammen and Frederick Bonfils over the legal representation of Colorado cannibal Alfred Packer, pulled out his revolver and shot both of them in what was claimed as self-defense. The final turn of this story is that Anderson was acquitted of assault while Harry Tammen and three officers of the court were found guilty of jury tampering as the Colorado Bar Association called for disbarment of Denver District Court Judge Mullins. This saga played out over a period of three years in front page news, public discourse and intense legal wrangling among the best attorneys and judges in the city.

Harry H. Tammen and Frederick G. Bonfils were ruthless in their pursuit of advertising and circulation in the highly competitive newspaper business in Denver. They viciously attacked and spread false rumors of business men who refused to advertise in their newspaper and it was alleged they engaged in blackmail. Sensationalism or yellow journalism was their formula for expanding circulation with no holds barred on exaggeration, fabrication and sordid tales of life and death.

Anderson's first trial ended in April 1901 with a hung jury, then as the second trial began in summer of 1901 rumors began that Bonfils and Tammen had corrupted the Denver court of Judge Mullins by attempting to bribe for conviction William Anderson's jury. Then six jurors filed complaints that officers of the court, the Police Magistrate, the Bailiff and the Fire Warden from North Denver attempted to bribe them with promises of jobs and cash up to \$1,000 and when that failed there were threats of job losses and intimidation saying they would never get another job in Denver.

Upon returning to Denver from a mountain vacation, Judge Mullins insisted on conducting his own investigation of the charges in his court. He then conducted a show trial wherein all, including Harry Tammen were absolved of their guilt by claiming there was no law against attempted bribery in Colorado. This blew the lid off the scandal as the Colorado Bar Association called for Mullins disbarment in his last days in office in September 1901. Newspaper headlines and editorials raged with indignation calling for convictions and the purification of the entire justice system in Denver.

Succeeding Mullins, District Court Judge Johnson called for a Grand Jury investigation and was blocked and delayed along the way by Harry Tammen's lawyers. The Colorado Supreme Court ruled in early November 1901 the Grand Jury could be empaneled. While this was going on, ten days later on November 18, 1901 William W. Anderson was acquitted in his third trial of all charges of assault. After more and lengthy delaying

tactics by Tammen's lawyers, the Grand Jury concluded its investigation in early April 1903 paving the path for a jury trial.

Trials were scheduled to start on Monday April 27, 1903. Then shocking the entire city, on the Saturday before, Harry Tammen, the Bailiff and the Fire Warden all plead guilty to embracery, jury tampering. The Police Magistrate entered a plea of no contest in order to avoid disbarment. The reason they rushed to confessed, the *Denver Times* said was to avoid a jury trial which would cast light on other officials and the *Denver Post* which were engaged in this conspiracy to convict William Anderson.

William W. Anderson continued his law practice and after moving away for several years, returned to purchase the home at 2329 Eliot in 1915 where he passed away in 1930. Alfred Packer was paroled by Governor Thomas in January 1901 and died in Littleton in 1907. Harry Tammen and Frederick Bonfils continued to publish the *Denver Post* and build it into a major voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire, but not without continued controversy. Harry Tammens' beautiful mansion is located at 1061 Humboldt.

William W. Anderson's home at 2329 Eliot was built in 1888 in the original Town of Highlands then known as a safe community above the drunkenness and smoke filled city below. Trolley car 34 ran past the home headed west to Sloans Lake or east to 15th Street. Architecturally the home is described as upper-middle class Queen Anne style and is located high on a hill over-looking Denver. When built in 1888 it was surrounded by open lots not built upon until after the Silver Crash of 1893. The Anderson family came to occupy the home several years prior to 1900 and remained during the trial years, then moved away only to return in 1915 to buy 2329 Eliot where William Anderson died January 19, 1930. Today the home is the last remaining example of this style Queen Anne in the Jefferson Park neighborhood. With its history and architecture it deserves Preservation.

Denver was fortunate in 1900 to have competing newspapers. In particular, without the *Denver Times* this story of jury tampering and revelations of unethical journalism practices by the *Denver Post* would not have been revealed, with the consequence a miscarriage of justice would have occurred.

In today's world the *Denver Times* should be awarded a post-humus Pulitzer Prize for investigative journalism.

Jerry Olson
November 2, 2015

Book Reviews

You must read Laura F. Hindale's book reviews if you hope to keep abreast of the times. They will be found on page 6 of the magazine.

10c a Line

That's the cost of a Small Ad in Sunday's News Times. You pay for the Ad and in return you get—BUSINESS.

DENVER TIMES

VOLUME 33: NO. 68.

DENVER, COLORADO, SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 25, 1903.—20 PAGES.

LAST EDITION—PRICE 5 CENTS.

HARRY H. TAMMEN ET AL. CONFESS THEY ATTEMPTED TO BRIBE THE MEMBERS OF THE ANDERSON JURY

THE FOUR MEN APPEAR BEFORE JUDGE DE FRANCE AND PLEAD GUILTY.

THE COURT IMPOSES LIGHT SENTENCE IN CONSIDERATION OF THE PLEAS.

TO BRIBE THE MEMBERS OF THE ANDERSON JURY

THE SPECIAL PROSECUTORS WHO FORCED THE DEFENDANTS TO PLEAD GUILTY.

BRIBERS PLEAD GUILTY AND ARE SENTENCED

TWO OF THE CONVICTED.



RALPH TALBOT.



ROBERT J. PITKIN



HARRY H. TAMMEN



W. J. THOMAS, Police Magistrate.

Special to The Times. GOLDEN, Colo., April 25. H. H. Tamm, the father of a downy table Denver evening paper, Robert Schrader and Daniel Sadler appeared before Judge De France in the district court this morning and pled guilty to the charge of attempting to bribe the Anderson jury. They were sentenced to serve a day in the county jail and pay fines of \$100 each. Police Magistrate W. J. Thomas of Denver appeared to answer to the same charge and entered a plea of not a contender. It will remove the case against Judge Thomas from the docket, but it can be reinstated by the prosecution at any time. All the remaining charges against the four defendants were dismissed.

By Times Staff Correspondent. Judge De France, who presided at the trial, said that he had no doubt that the defendants were guilty of the crime charged. He said that he had no doubt that the defendants were guilty of the crime charged. He said that he had no doubt that the defendants were guilty of the crime charged.

Tammen, Thomas, Schrader and Sadler remained outside the courtroom for an hour before the session of court began, while their attorneys and the special prosecutors looked on. The defendants were escorted to the courtroom by the police. A few minutes before 10 o'clock Tammen, Schrader, Sadler and Judge Thomas entered the courtroom and took their seats on the bench.

seats behind Attorneys A. B. Seaman, Milton Smith and Thomas Ward. Ralph Talbot and Robert J. Pitkin, the special prosecutors, attorneys who have handled the Anderson case throughout, took their seats on the left. Proceeding at 10 o'clock Judge De France entered the courtroom and took his place upon the bench.

On the opening of court Attorney Smith said that he desired to withdraw the plea of former acquittal, which was dismissed by the court. The next case was awaited with intense excitement. Attorney Ralph Talbot arose and said: "We desire to admit these defendants, Mr. Tammen

and Mr. Schrader, an indictment No. 23, the first count." Attorney Smith waived the formality of reading the indictments. Tammen and Sadler, their faces livid from the strain under which they apparently labored, stepped slowly to the bench, turning toward their Attorney Ralph Talbot and in grave and measured tones said: "We are charged with the offense of bribery. Are you guilty or not guilty?" "I'm a Guilty."

Both men hesitated for a moment. Tammen looked about him furtively, cast his eyes toward the floor, then toward the judge. Judge De France and his suddenly snapped out: "Guilty." He looked like a man who had just cast off a terrible burden and gritted his teeth as if striving for determination to withstand any kind of a sentence the judge might try to put upon him.

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PEERLESS CRUISER COLORADO HAPPILY LAUNCHED

SUN RIDES HIGH AND FREE AND THE FIGHTER DIPS MAJESTICALLY

Special to The Times. PHILADELPHIA, Cramps' Shipyard, April 25. And the mighty ship, the peerless Colorado, while the sun beamed brightly on the water, the great armored cruiser Colorado with a bottle of champagne and as the monster fighting machine rushed majestically into the Delaware to strike the words that gave the ship its honored name.



VESSEL IS ALONE IN ITS CLASS

Receives Distinction Usually Accorded Only to Battleships—Cost Four Millions.

The cruiser Colorado is of a new class of vessels added to the American navy. She is an armored cruiser of the first class, and is the only vessel of her class. She is the only vessel of her class. She is the only vessel of her class.

ASSAY OF COAL SHOWS LARGE GOLD VALUES. SEATTLE, Wash., April 25.—The assay of a sample of coal from the... shows a large amount of gold.

ARE YOU READY? FOR The Big Sunday-News Times TO-MORROW MORNING. Biggest, Brightest, Best of All Western Sunday Papers. PAGES OF SPECIAL DIS-PATCHES. COMPLETE ASSOCIATED PRESS. No Better Newspaper Published in America.

WANAMAKER'S SON GETS HEAVY LIFE INSURANCE. NEW YORK, April 25.—A local life insurance company, through its Philadelphia agents, has just issued to Rodman Wanamaker, son of John Wanamaker, a policy for \$100,000. The premium on the policy will be \$2000 a year. This makes Wanamaker one of the most heavily insured individuals in the world, as he carries policies for \$500,000. His insurance is said to be exceeded only by that of King Edward of England. John Wanamaker, his father, carries policies aggregating \$1,000,000.

THE CRUISER COLORADO. PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL CHILDREN VISITING THE COLORADO. BAR "UNCLE TOM'S CABIN" FROM SCHOOL LIBRARIES. NEW YORK, April 25.—The woes of poor old Uncle Tom and the pitiful death of Little Eva will no longer bring tears to the eyes of the school children of New York if they confine their reading to the class libraries provided by the board of education. The board of superintendents has voted to drop the novel of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe from the catalogue. The general reason given is that the book has served its purpose, and now only tends to revive sectional feeling.

CHRISTENING THE COLORADO.

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ESTD 1872. DENVER, COLORADO, SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 4, 1901.—28 PAGES.

OFFICIALS CHARGED WITH ATTEMPT TO BRIBE THE JURY IN THE ANDERSON CASE

Six of the Jurymen Meet and Will File Information Monday.

Judge Thomas, D. J. Sadlier and Bailiff Schroeder Mentioned by Jurors as Having Attempted to Bribe.

The Times this morning exposed the most infamous attempt at corrupting a jury ever known in this city. The jurymen met at the home of W. W. Anderson, the charged and convicted murderer of Mrs. Adams, and had a conference with the publishers of the Times. Members of the jury were offered \$1,000 to vote for a conviction with intent to murder. The jurymen were offered \$1,000 each in cash and a box of cigars. They were offered the same amount in the form of a check. The jurymen were offered \$1,000 each in cash and a box of cigars. They were offered the same amount in the form of a check.

Two remarkable views of Denver. The first view shows the city from the east, looking down the river valley. The second view shows the city from the west, looking up the mountain slopes. The views are remarkable for the way they show the city's position in the valley and the surrounding mountains.

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