FORT COLLINS AREA
CENTENNIAL COMMISSION, INC.

Presents

A CENTENNIAL PROGRAM

MAY 30, 1964
7:00 P. M.

STUDENT CENTER PLAZA
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO
A CENTENNIAL PROGRAM
Student Center Plaza, May 30, 1964, 7 P. M.
Colorado State University

OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM .......... Francis Scott Key
Audience, Choruses, and Band

CENTENNIAL PRAYER .......... The Reverend A. P. Gaines
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PRELUDE .................. Gregory A. Bueche
Fort Collins Civic Chorus
Colorado State University Chorus
Colorado State University Symphonic Band
(Conducted by the Composer)

As frontiers pushed west and the country grew larger, the daily bread and butter problems which beset the pioneers left little time for artistic ventures. Yet, accounts indicate that there was interest in music by the early settlers. In military camps could be heard the instrumental music of bugles, drums, fifes, and fiddles and also the early hymn tunes of the church.

This composition combines Reveille, Assembly, and To the Colors -- music of the military for bugle and drums -- and hymns of praise to God and Country such as the Doxology and America.

FORT COLLINS EPIC ............ James R. Miller

Narrated by The Reverend Dr. Ray E. Howes
Pastor First United Presbyterian Church, Fort Collins
"Fort Collins Epic" was written by James R. Miller, historian of the Centennial Commission, one-time Fort Collins newspaperman and secretary-emeritus of the State Board of Agriculture, governing board of Colorado State University. Mr. Miller has not only studied the history of this region as preserved in publications of various types and by personal interviews with many pioneers and their descendants, but he has personally observed the passing scene as a resident for the past forty years. His "Epic" expresses in poetic prose his concept of the founding of the city and an appreciation of significant events associated with that historic occasion.

HERITAGE, A CENTENNIAL POEM .... Maude Barker Neff
Music .............. Gregory A. Bueche

The Civic and University Choruses
and the University Symphonic Band
(Conducted by the Composer)

HERITAGE, A CENTENNIAL POEM (Continued)

Everyone knows the story of the Old West and the part the American Indian played in the settlement of it.

The centennial poem begins with an instrumental overture. It is in a style which might in a limited and modified way resemble the music of the native American. The trombones announce the main theme; a theme which provides much of the material on which the composition is based and on which presently the voices make their entrance singing: "These are the very hills, these are the very fields our Fathers gave to us."

May the performance of the work awaken in its listeners a strong feeling of pride, love, and loyalty to residents of our beautiful city and the surrounding area.

A centennial composition was first suggested three years ago at a Rotary luncheon by the late Dr. Robert Hays, former mayor of Fort Collins. Subsequently, the lovely poem was discovered on a visit to the home of Mrs. Gem Barker Jenkins who lives in Sacramento, California. It appeared on the introductory page of the Barker and Lee family history. The work was commissioned on June 15, 1963 by the Honorable Harvey G. Johnson, Mayor of the City of Fort Collins.

The author of the poem, Mrs. Maude Barker Neff, died in Palo Alto, California, in 1945. Mrs. Neff's sister, Mrs. Gem Barker Jenkins, and Mrs. Vinnie Lee Shane of Hayward, California, a cousin of Mrs. Neff, are with us tonight for the performance.

Gregory Bueche, the composer, is a resident of Fort Collins and has been head of Colorado State University's Music Department since 1937.

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Director of the Civic Chorus -
Katharyn Bauder

Directors of the University Chorus -
Edward D. Anderson and Stephen Busch

Director of the University Symphonic Band -
Otto Werner

President of the Area Centennial Commission,
Incorporated - Arthur A. Newton

Vice President of the Area Centennial Com-
mission, Incorporated - James W. Guyer

Vice President in Charge of Memorial Day
Functions - Harold A. Warren
The Family Album
Committees

Mrs. W. E. Morgan . . . . . . . . . . . General Chairman
Mrs. Thomas Bennett . . . . . . . . . . . Commentator
Mr. J. R. Miller . . . . . . . . . . . Historical Adviser
Mrs. J. R. Moore . . . . . . . . . . . Costumes
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Mrs. Elaine Charman . . . . . . . . . . . Tea Table
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Mrs. Roland Muhrer . . . . . . . . . . . Hair Styling
Mrs. Pat Griffin . . . . . . . . . . . Music
Mrs. John Nesbit . . . . . . . . . . . Programs
Mrs. Martha Cooper . . . . . . . . . . . Audience Participation
Mr. David Morris . . . . . . . . . . . Technical Adviser
Mr. Jim Campbell . . . . . . . . . . . Technical Adviser

These Programs are furnished by the
Fort Collins Federal Savings and Loan Association.

The Family Album

I. Lady and Gentleman—1864.
II. Aunty Stone’s Christmas Dance.
III. A Morning Kensington.
IV. The W.C.T.U. Election Parade.
V. Aunty Stone’s Funeral.
VI. The Fire at Chloe Foster’s Place.
VII. A Christmas Eve Church Service.
VIII. An Active Lady’s Pastimes.
IX. The Formal Party for Minnie Anderson, a Denver Socialite.
X. Tedmon’s Bus to Flossie Kimball’s Party.
XI. A Blast from the Past—The Roaring Twenties.
XII. Rebecca Tyler Petty’s Wedding—1884.
The Family Album
A Centennial Program presented by the Fort Collins Area Centennial Commission, Inc.

July 30, 1964 — 3 P.M.
East Ballroom Student Center
Colorado State University
About the author......

James R. Miller, author of "Fort Collins Epic" and historian for the Fort Collins Centennial Commission, is a former Fort Collins newspaperman, who subsequently served as the first experiment station editor at Colorado State University. He also served that institution as secretary of the State Board of Agriculture, governing body of CSU, from 1939 to 1957. In 1958, the institution he had served so long awarded him an honorary Doctor of Literature degree.

Mr. Miller has not only studied the history of the Fort Collins region as preserved in publications of various types and by personal interviews with many pioneers and their descendants, but he has personally observed the passing scene as a resident for the past forty years. His "Epic" expresses in poetic prose his concept of the founding of the city and an appreciation of significant events associated with that historic occasion.

(Prepared originally for "A Centennial Program," Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, May 30, 1964; narrated by Dr. Roy E. Howes; sponsored by the Fort Collins Area Centennial Commission, Inc.)

Illustrations by Shirley R. Parrish

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**Fort Collins Epic**

James R. Miller

Come, let us think of days of long ago, of days a century now gone. Come, think with me of when the West was new, of times when young Americans, with eyes alight and heads held high, swept westward toward a rainbow gleaming in the blue, a rainbow rooted in a pot of gold—and no illusion this!—a pot of riches hidden snug within the fertile soil of Colorado’s fairest site: the valley of the Cache la Poudre.

And through this golden valley flowed a mighty stream, a river mountain-born of mother-snows: creation of a billion rivulets which, coursing ever downward, joined to form the Cache la Poudre, the river of the hidden powder.

The land for ages long had lain, awaiting but the coming of the white man, the paleface with his sorcery, to lead the icy waters of the stream to where the thirsty soil awaited but its touch. This land awaited patiently his coming, unheed ing all alike the strange, wild creatures and the childlike peoples roaming restlessly upon its soil, void of all design but merely to exist.

It was the spring of Eighteen Sixty-four, when deepest snows of many years wrapped the rough outlines of the hills like a concealing, furry coat, and hid the plains and valleys, too. Then came the greatest of chinooks—a warm and gusty wind. Advancing after midnight’s hour from off the Great Divide, it swept in stealth the eastern slopes of Colorado’s Rockies, and across the countryside, replacing winter’s gnawing cold with temperatures of mild degree, and melting snow as though with tongues of flame.

To such a wind, to such a stream, and to a flood they spawned, Fort Collins owes selection of the goodly site whereon it stands. For in its lambent warmth the strong chinook, with magic touch, swept eastward down the frozen slopes, releasing from their ice-bound caves the sleeping waters long congealed. And then, from out each mountainside a billion gurgling streamlets moved, joining their forces in the night, until the myriad torrents gushed their maddened and relentless course, with awesome roar, to join a single, mighty stream, to sweep like fiends released from hell into the channel, granite-lined, and turn their forces to the east, and to the open lands below.

That day had been a fair one in Laporte, and in Camp Collins, at the river’s edge. As evening came, a troop detachment, weary from the trail, rode into camp, its workday done, for to Virginia
Dale it safely had convoyed a creaking stagecoach westward bound. At bugle's call, sweet silence dropped upon the camp; soft darkness wrapped its healing folds secure.

The sounds of night were magnified:

From out the camp of emigrants whose wagon train was bivouacked close by, in comforting awareness of protection by the troops, a sleeping child, weary from long weeks of jolting travel on the trail, cried out in protest from its dreams;

A watchdog, from his refuge safe within the village smithy's yard hurled out a boastful challenge to his skulking cousin, the coyote, who, high atop the bluff across the stream, yelped raucous age-old protest of his fate as hapless fugitive;

A coach-horse, stamping in his stall at the Overland Stage Station, from which next day he and his mates would pull a swaying stage on rocky trails west from Laporte, relaying passengers and mail up the steep grade to Virginia Dale; shrilly he neighed and then in answer heard the whinny of an army horse tethered in grass at river's edge.

As silently the peaceful hours in camp moved by, the Cache la Poudre's anger rose. Stifling within its narrow walls, it pushed in frenzy, seeking space in which to live, to move, to find escape from pressures building from behind which forced it on with crushing weight, until the crest rode mountain-high in foaming rage. And when it reached the canyon's mouth above Laporte, accumulated fury burst and spread destruction over all that lay within its blighting grasp.

Throughout its length, the Cache la Poudre's banks overflowed. From bluff to bluff the water rose, sweeping with cunning stealth upon Camp Collins, slumbering and weak. Aroused from sleep by sentries' calls, the soldiers fled to higher ground, driving their horses to the bluffs, carrying rifles and such clothes and personal possessions as, in haste, they found within their reach. Ordnance and tents, saddles and food, wagons and harness, blankets and camp stoves, mess-hall supplies, letters from home---these and a thousand items more which armies need and troops acquire---went with the flood, engulfed in slime.

And when the daylight came, in makeshift camp on higher ground the soldiers dwelt, while Captain Evans, in command, sent messengers into the West, then waited orders from his chief, from Colonel Collins, at the fort beyond the Plains of Laramie. As days went by, his men carried on their tasks assigned:
To keep unharmed the stages of the Overland;

Protecting covered-wagon trains which crawled their dusty, westward way along the never-ending trail;

Meanwhile, extending comfort and relief to settlers who, by presence there, attested to the faith they held that opportunities untold lay dormant in this virgin land, in readiness for all who came with hopeful hearts and willing hands.

Six weeks had passed when orders came to seek a site whereon to plant a camp, a new one which might well become a lasting symbol of a nation’s might. A young lieutenant--James Hanna was his name--rode downstream with a squad of men and scanned the lands adjacent to the stream. Then, turning back, retraced his route until, by chance, he met Joe Mason, bold pioneer from Canada, who at the age of twenty-four had ended years of wandering and settled on a goodly tract at what is now North Shields Street Road, which he had purchased from a white man’s squaw whose husband had but lately been a victim of the Sioux.

A shrewd, far-seeing man was Joe, who learning of the task assigned the soldiers, in his mind foresaw, located near his ranch, a camp affording market for his hay; increasing, too, the value of his land, and bringing to his lonely life the blessing, much to be desired, of human habitation near. And as he sat erect upon his horse, beside the landmark termed “Big Rock,” at river’s edge, he pointed out a proper site close by his own estate, with high, dry land and drainage good, a widening view of countryside, and flowing river to afford life-giving drink for man and horse.

By Joe’s forensic skill and by his charm, the scouting party was convinced; and when they said goodbye and rode from out the settler’s spell, the course of history had shaped: Lieutenant Hanna had been pledged to recommend Joe Mason’s site. And in the course of days, from out Wyoming’s plains, came Colonel Collins and approved the site on August 20th, 1864. He sent to Washington a request that here officially a post for military use be made. An order then came forth which set aside six thousand acres for a post--an order signed, “A. Lincoln.”

And so, upon the river’s slopes, a camp was destined soon to grow, and then a fort to be, and from the fort a town to spring. And thus Fort Collins was assured a spot upon the western desert’s map.

The fort, short-lived, served well its destiny, and when but three short years had passed, the cavalry with all its gear rode from the valley, never to return, it left behind a name--Fort Collins--a name to grace some day a city. For on the site a settlement, composed of few but hardy souls, clung to the spot in hope and faith that here a town would rise and thrive--such souls as Mason, who by now, with Asaph Allen owned a store; and John R. Brown, who first had been a soldier at Laporte and then remained as blacksmith when the camp was moved; the Harris Strattons, first to marry in the town; and Lewis Stone, whose wife as “Aunty” Stone was widely known in later years; and Henry Peterson, first white civilian on the old campsite, who worked as gunsmith at the fort, remaining here to build a dwelling house and mess hall for the officers who boarded at the table set by “Aunty” Stone.

These were the pioneers--the pioneers of pioneers--with possibly a few whose names are now forever lost. Upon these few the future built, built on a desert spot unpromising and bare. But, by the magic of the times, soon others came, defying storm and plague, and by their work and thrift they learned to wrest their substance from the land. Still others came, and then at last, in Eighteen Seventy-two, the Agricultural Colony was formed to call more settlers from the East.

Then it was the colony decreed the carving of a townsit from a bit of that bleak land so aptly called, in textbooks of the day, the Great American Desert. They knew not then how well they planned. An engineer--his name was Franklin Avery--was hired to plat a town adjacent to the old, and to design, in tribute to the West and all its vaunted spaciousness, two thoroughfares of goodly width, crossing at center of the town, each one a hundred forty feet, with lesser streets to match.

Thus they, with prophets’ instinct rare, but all unknowing what they did, provided traffic avenues for the on-coming motor age, which later only fifty years began to crowd those passage-ways. The town thus planned comprised a site where verdant lawns and shading trees would later stand to make for its inhabitants the pleasant living of today.

And that, my friends, is how Fort Collins came to be--the pleasant city where we dwell, sometimes unthinking of the past and of the folk long gone who left for us this legacy. A hundred years have come and gone, and now a banner waves emblazoned with the motto of today, “Past Achievements Challenge the Future.” With Colorado long a state, our city now a jewel within that State, a forward look is ours. We shall advance, we shall achieve, our fate securely linked to that of our well-favored land--“America, the Beautiful.”