WORST, BEST PERFORMANCES

Colorado-Based Companies Ran Stock Gamut in 1974

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Common stocks of Colorado-based companies listed on the New York and American Stock Exchanges in 1974 ran nearly the full scale from best to worst in a generally disastrous stock market year.

Great Western United, in fact, was the nation's biggest gainer in the year, closing Dec. 31 at 24 1/2 for a net gain of 20 3/8 for the year, up 52 2/5 per cent, as sugar prices soared to unprecedented highs. GWU's principal holding is Great Western Sugar Co., the largest sugar-beet producer in the nation.

Another Colorado sugar producer, Holly Sugar Co., Colorado Springs, scored an impressive gain of 110 per cent during the year, closing the year at 26 1/2 after adding 13 3/4 to its price during 1974. Both GWU and Holly are listed on the NYSE.

On the other side of the coin, First of Denver Mortgage Investors, a real estate investment trust, turned in one of the worst performances in the nation last year, closing at 2 3/4 for a loss of 15 1/2 during the year, or down 89 1/4 per cent. (In the first full week of the new year it moved back some of the loss.)

Real estate investment trusts as a group (there are about 70) were the year's poorest performers, showing a decline of 89.6 per cent.

Other Denver-based big losers on the American Stock Exchange last year were Denver-based Tipton Industries, manufacturer of truck bodies, which closed the year at 17 3/4 for an 11 1/2 per cent loss in the year, down 89.6 per cent; Outdoor Sports, which closed at 25 1/4, down 3 1/4, or 65 per cent, for the year, and First S&L Shares, a savings and loan holding company, which closed at 6 3/2, a loss of 4% and 11 1/2 per cent during the year.

Stanley Aviation, Denver manufacturer of aircraft and components, was the only one of nine Colorado companies listed on the Amex to show a gain for the year. Moving in a narrow range, Stanley Aviation gained 1 1/2 during the year to close at 5 3/4, up 43.8 per cent.

Other Losers Listed

Other Colorado losers during 1974 on the Amex included Cablecom-General Inc., a major cable television firm and subsidiary of General Tire and Rubber Co., which closed the year at 1 1/4, down 1/2, or 14.3 per cent; Consolidated Oil and Gas, off 1/2 for the year to 6 1/4, down 7.1 per cent, and Frontier Airlines, down 3/8 to end the year at 3 5/8, off 9.4 per cent.

Golden Cycle, Colorado Springs mining, land development and trucking firm, was a highly volatile stock during the year, rising and falling with other gold prices and stocks with expectation of development of some old gold mining properties.

Golden Cycle ended the year at 16 1/4, a loss of 3 1/4, or only .8 per cent, for the year, but during the year the stock ranged from a low of 6 1/4 to a high of 34 1/2 in fairly heavy trading.

Among Colorado corporations listed on the NYSE, most were swept lower along with the stock market trend for the year. A trend-bucking exception was John-Manville, a diversified manufacturer of construction materials, which closed 1974 at 19 1/4, a gain of 3 points, or 18.2 per cent, over the year.

Big Board losers included Ideal Basic Industries, closing at 11 1/2, down 6%, or 35.6 per cent for the year; Mountain Bell, down 5%, or 2 25 per cent, to close at 16 1/4 for the year; Public Service Co. of Colorado, off 4%, or 27.6 per cent, for a year's close of 124 1/2, and Rio Grande Industries, which closed at 8, down 5%, for a 41.3 per cent decline.

New York-based Crane Co., now the parent firm of CF&I Steel Corp., Pueblo, showed a fine gain of 15 1/4 points during the year to close at 30 1/8, up 98.4 per cent, partially on strong earnings by CF&I. The Pueblo firm recently reported earnings of $22.6 million for the first nine months of 1974. Full year earnings in 1973 were $5.6 million.

Pipeline Firm Dips

Coastal States Gas of Houston, now the parent firm of Colorado Interstate Corp., Colorado Springs-based gas pipeline and distribution firm, declined 3% to close at 5 1/4 at year end, down 38.2 per cent.

Missing from the Amex list are three previously listed Colorado firms. Midwestern Financial, Denver-based financial services firm, was sold during the year to Security Pacific Corp. of California, and Geriatrics, Inc., Greeley-based operator of health care centers in several states, was sold to ARA Services, Philadelphia.

Woodmoor Corp., Colorado land development firm, was delisted and now is undergoing reorganization in bankruptcy court.

Petco-Lewis, Denver oil firm, had its shares listed on the Amex for the first time last year, going on the board March 29.

American Crystal Sugar Co., formerly based in Denver and for many years listed on the NYSE, now is a grower-owned cooperative with headquarters in Moorehead, Minn.