



*The* DENVER WESTERNERS  
**ROUNDUP**

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*Toll family photo*

Roger W. Toll in his forties

**Roger Wolcott Toll  
and Rocky Mountain National Park**

**by Giles Toll, C.M.**

**(presented April 27, 2005)**



## **Our Author**

Giles Toll, a nephew of Roger W. Toll, is a graduate of Williams College, holds an M.D. from Harvard Medical School, and is a retired pathologist who lives in Golden. He has climbed all the Colorado Fourteeners at least twice. His travels out of the country include ascents of Kilimanjaro and Mt. Elbrus, as well as five treks in the Himalayas and Karakoram. He is a member of the Colorado Mountain Club.

He is also the son of Henry W. Toll, Sr., and brother of Henry Toll, Jr., both well known Westerners. He has appreciated being a Corresponding Member for many years.

# Roger Wolcott Toll and Rocky Mountain National Park

by Giles Toll, C.M.  
(presented April 27, 2005)

At the highest spot on Rocky Mountain National Park's Trail Ridge Road drivers who take a break from their cars find a little trail leading to a solitary rock outcrop. Rising from the surrounding tundra at an altitude of 12,310 feet high, it presents on its top a mountain locator identifying the landmarks in a 360-degree panorama of dramatic alpine scenery. On the side of this outcrop, part way up the natural steps leading to its top, is a simple bronze plaque which reads:

"The mountain index placed on this rock is a memorial to Roger Wolcott Toll - Superintendent of Mount Rainier National Park 1919-1921 - of Rocky Mountain National Park 1921-1928 - of Yellowstone National Park 1929-1936 - Mountaineer - Civil Engineer - Naturalist - Whose love of the high country was manifested by making it more accessible to you and your friends"

The site of the memorial is one of the most spectacular in all of Rocky Mountain National Park. It is also one of the most accessible. That it should dwell in such a setting was no accident. For, ever since his youth, reaching the most magnificent spots in the area that would become Rocky Mountain National Park was Toll's passion. And

as the park's superintendent, getting other people there was his mission.

Roger Wolcott Toll was born in Denver in 1883, the second of four sons of Charles Hansen Toll and Katharine Wolcott Toll. This photo (next page) was taken in 1896 and shows the four boys. Roger is second from the left. His mother was Katharine Wolcott, one of five Wolcott siblings who came to Colorado beginning in the 1870's. His parents named his oldest brother after his father, Charles Hansen Toll, but his mother saw to it that her next three sons all had "Wolcott" as a middle name; as first name, she gave them either the first or middle name of her two brothers who were also in Colorado.

Roger Toll's first home was a small corner house surrounded by a white picket fence at 1801 Welton St., where Roger, as well as his older brother were born. The family then moved to a small brick house on the east side of Grant St., the second house south of 18<sup>th</sup> Ave., and about 1892 moved again to the southwest corner of Colfax Ave. and Gaylord St.<sup>1</sup> Roger attended the Denver Public Schools, and graduated from Manual Training High School in 1901. He then enrolled in Denver University for one year.

Katharine Wolcott Toll was remarkable in her ability to travel with her sons while they were growing up, first evidenced by a seven-week trip in



*Toll family photo*

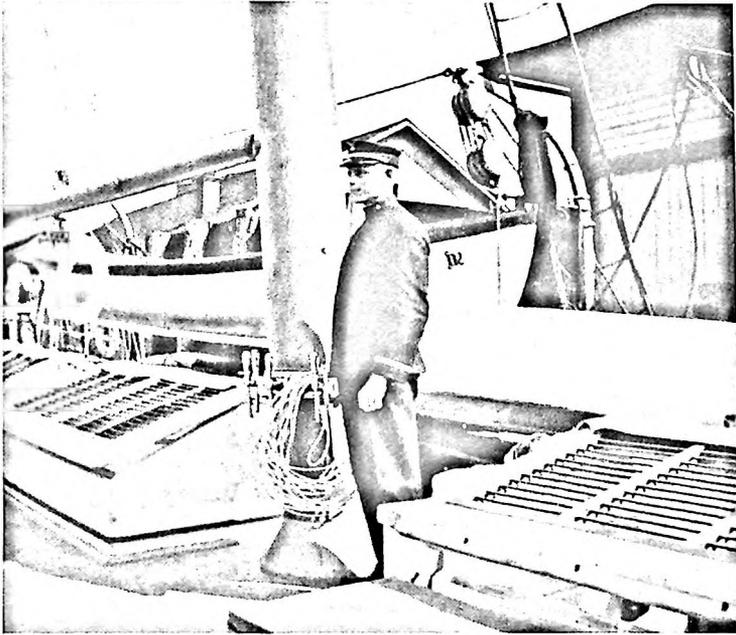
Photo taken in 1896 of Roger and his three brothers in evident chronological order. Charles H. Toll, Jr. ("Carl"), the oldest, is on the far left, then in sequence from left to right are Roger, Henry and Oliver

1884 when she took Roger, age 1, and Carl, age 2, through Ohio, upper New York state, and Connecticut to visit Wolcott and Toll relatives. In 1889 she took her then three sons, including two-year-old Henry, to Maine and Connecticut for the summer, again visiting relatives. In 1897 she took all four sons (now including Oliver who was 6 at the time) to northern Michigan for the summer. In June 1899, she began a one-year trip, again with all four boys, beginning with the summer traveling in Great Britain. They then went to Paris where she enrolled Roger and his brothers in school for the academic year, and had them tutored in French.

They traveled in Switzerland and Germany, and returned to Denver in June, 1900.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout his boyhood, Roger's father, Charles H. Toll was very busy practicing law and thus could never join the family in their trips. His career came to a tragic and premature end in 1901 when he died very suddenly while at work at the age of 51.

Roger finished his year at the University of Denver in 1902 and entered Columbia University. He joined the Engineering Society and was elected vice president of the sophomore class; he also served on the board of the school yearbook, the *Columbian*.



*R.W.T. family photo*

**R.W.T. in uniform on the deck of the U.S.S. MacArthur with the Coast and Geodetic Survey in Cook Inlet, Alaska, 1908**

Fittingly, his quote for his yearbook biography was: "Continued cheerfulness is the true sign of wisdom." Toll earned his B.S. in engineering from Columbia in 1906.<sup>3</sup> He spent a full year after graduation traveling around the world with his brother Carl. On his return, he worked as an engineer for the Massachusetts Department of Health.

By March 1908 Toll had been accepted by the Coast and Geodetic Survey as an aide. He stayed at the Washington office of the Survey only briefly. In a letter to his mother, he described the next development: I telegraphed you this evening that I was to leave tomorrow for Seattle, and

will tell you the rest of the story now. This afternoon I was working, Capt. Gilbert (who has charge of the boats of the Coast Survey fleet) came in and said, "Toll, can you go to Alaska this afternoon?" I thought he was joking and said "No sir, but I can go tomorrow afternoon," and he said, "Well, I'll give you till noon." This assignment is the very one I would choose if I had the pick of the whole lot, as the work is to be quite varied, some on land and some in boats.

The ship, the S.S. MacArthur (named after the father of General Douglas MacArthur), was assigned to survey in the southern half of the Cook

Inlet, sailing out of Seattle and arriving in Alaska in April 1908.

The expedition's headquarters was the town of Seldovia, on the eastern side of the mouth of the Cook Inlet. One of the principal projects was a hydrographic survey of Seldovia Harbor, which required 2800 soundings, in which Roger was involved. Another of Toll's jobs was locating and building triangulation signals at sites along the coast. And he took his turn standing watch on board ship when the *MacArthur* was under way.

For recreation, he was equipped for bottom fishing and trolling for salmon. As for hunting, he recorded: "Over my bunk is the arsenal—Two shot guns and two rifles."<sup>4</sup> His six-month assignment had him back in Denver in early October 1908. On his return, Toll began a position as engineer with the Denver Tramway Company. He held the job for seven years, serving as chief engineer for the last three years' worth.

In April 1912 the Colorado Mountain Club came into being at a meeting organized by James Grafton Rogers (who became dean of the University of Colorado Law School and chairman of the Colorado Historical Society) and Mary Sabin (who taught Latin and mathematics at the old East Denver High School). Among the 24 founding members was Roger Toll, who served on the organization's first board of directors and was an early vice president. This group of mountaineering enthusiasts aimed to provide a safe and informed way for people to enjoy the mountains and participate in the protection of the mountain environment.

In one of its first forest-preservation

moves, the club joined with other groups and individuals working for the designation of Rocky Mountain National Park; the designation came in 1915.<sup>5</sup>

"He was a charter member, one of the 24 organizers, a member of the first board of directors, leader of many trips and active member of the earliest outing committees," club co-founder George C. Barnard and his wife, Emma R. Barnard, later wrote of Roger Toll. "He originated our system of trip reports, and designed the Club's peak register cylinders made of bronze, which proved so satisfactory on all 14,000-ft. peaks."<sup>6</sup> Toll contributed occasional descriptions of mountain ascents to *Trail and Timberline*, the club's periodical.

It was then that Toll began compiling the first of his two books.<sup>7</sup> Published by the National Park Service in 1919 as *Mountaineering in the Rocky Mountain National Park*, Toll's first book is both a precursor to today's hiking guidebooks and a contemplation on the virtues of wilderness exploration. He opens with meditation on climbing:

...In the open, one learns the character of his companions with more rapidity and certainty than in the more conventional life of cities. A friend is defined as one with whom you would like to go camping again. Strong and weak characteristics rapidly develop. Selfishness cannot be hidden. True and lasting friendship is often built up in a short time.

Then follow thirty pages of advice-

much of it just as relevant today as it was then—about equipment, food, weather protection, and the essentials for safe and enjoyable climbs in Colorado's high country.

A table lists the 84 named peaks over 11,000 feet high in what was the Longs Peak quadrangle. (In his own copy, Toll took a pencil to the list as he hiked the peaks, eventually checking off all 46 in Rocky Mountain National Park and 29 others.) At a time when such information was largely word-of-mouth, Toll and 16 fellow Colorado Mountain Club members describe and provide photographs for 34 climbs and three circle trips. Their write-ups are models of route descriptions: For each, a tabular "Log of trip" shows the time landmarks are reached, length of stops, elevation at each landmark, and its distance from the last mentioned place. Toll intersperses careful directions for reaching trailheads and lists nearby lodging establishments.

The extent of Toll's hiking in the Rocky Mountain National Park area is indicated by his personal map of the Rocky Mountain National Park 15-minute quad on which he marked in pencil all the hikes he made.

In his book, Toll reveals the particular appeal Longs Peak had for him, extolling its features more than any other mountain's:

Longs Peak is the king of the Rocky Mountain National Park. It is more than a hundred feet higher than Pikes Peak. Mount Meeker, Mount Lady Washington, and Longs Peak form an encircling ring of granite cliffs that nearly surround Chasm Lake and produce one of the

wildest and most impressive spots in the Colorado Mountains.

In October 1916, when he left the Denver Tramway Company, Toll joined Sweet, Causey, Foster & Co. to sell investment bonds. The United States entered World War I and in November 1917 the Army commissioned Toll as a captain in the Ordnance Department. Senator John F. Shafroth had written one of Toll's letters of recommendation to the Secretary of War. (Toll took advantage of being in Washington to work with the National Park Service in the publication of *Mountaineering*.) Toll worked his way to the rank of major by the war's end.

In his work with the Army, Toll also struck up an acquaintance with Horace Albright, assistant director of the Park Service, whom he had met earlier in Colorado. As Albright later related, "During the war, a very personable young major who was stationed in Washington, Roger Toll, had come around the Interior Department to talk about national parks. He was one of three mountaineering sons of a pioneer Colorado family that had been active in creating Rocky Mountain National Park. I had kept in touch with Toll after he had left the army and moved to Hawaii (Author's note: that this probably should be "was visiting Hawaii for a vacation and to study volcanoes."), so I suggested to Mather that he contact him

while in the Islands as a possible candidate for the superintendent's position at Mount Rainier National Park, which was then vacant. Mather was quite impressed with young Toll, and hired him for the job."<sup>8</sup>

Family versions differ as to whether Mather and Toll met while climbing Mauna Loa or whether Mather, driving along a lightly traveled road, recognized Toll from a previous meeting and stopped to talk with him. At any rate, they found each other and Mather hired Toll for his first position with the National Park Service. Toll served as superintendent at Mount Rainier from 1919 to 1921. During his tenure he made the first ascent of Rainier's challenging Kautz Glacier.

As assistant director of the National Park Service, Horace Albright was a key partner to director Stephen Mather. In 1915 and 1916 Albright was invaluable in getting congressional approval for the creation of the National Park Service. Albright was the one who stayed in Washington while Mather traveled the country, using his charisma and personal wealth to generate public approval for the service. In early 1917 an episode of severe depression incapacitated Mather; it lasted twenty-one months. As the United States got involved in World War I, Albright, as the solo director until Mather's return, was responsible for the resultant funding and personnel shortages. It was during that time, when Albright was single-handedly directing the National Park Service, that Toll visited the Department of Interior and Albright

identified him as a potential superintendent.<sup>9</sup>

In September 1916, 15 months after Rocky Mountain Park was established, "Chief Ranger in Charge" L. Claude Way took over park directorship; his title later became "Superintendent." In experience with the Army that included service in the Spanish American War, Way had reached the rank of captain. He then worked as a forest ranger at the Grand Canyon. As the first superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park, Way got the contentious task of imposing and explaining national park stipulations to the region's residents, garnering the inevitable criticism in the process. In October 1921, during a reassignment to Hawaii National Park as superintendent, Way vacationed in Arizona; he bought a cattle ranch and resigned from the Park Service.<sup>10 11</sup>

Author, naturalist, and mountaineer Roger Toll was Horace Albright's natural choice as Way's replacement. Toll's tour as superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park was to run through early 1929.

"One item of no mean importance was the almost immediate establishment of the friendliest cooperation between the Park Service and other governmental agencies," the Barnards wrote. "A difference of opinion, to him, never meant antagonism. Those who at times opposed his plans frankly state that never was his judgment or action based on self consideration; always he was guided by what he felt was right." They add that, "In all his treatment of individuals he chose the course which was the most considerate and the kindest."<sup>12</sup>

On a similar note, Madeline



*Courtesy Rocky Mountain National Park*

The Boulder Field Shelter Cabin included a stove, table, benches and chairs on the first floor, and two bed spaces on the second floor accessed by a ladder through a trap door. Shown is a Colorado Mountain Club group, and the photo was taken by Roger W. Toll on 31 July 1927.

Framson writes in the *Estes Park Trail*:

The vibrant young Park was beset with problems associated with birth pangs of vitriolic controversies. This physically striking man with steady demeanor, bringing measured plausibility, never shied away from controversy. His character augmented with human understanding, this polished gentleman with dignity and presence was indeed expert in persuasiveness for compromise and change between parties. Armed with intellectual imagination and integrity, this affable diplomat was able to quell friction and unrest and draw people to his point of view.<sup>13</sup>

Toll's arrival as superintendent was

timely. It coincided with the rising popularity of the national parks. Rocky Mountain's established reputation and Toll's administrative talents and enthusiasm for the area converged in seven years of major, progressive changes.<sup>14</sup> All the while, Toll continued writing to publicize the mountains and the park, as this from an article in *Municipal Facts* of 1928:

Look! The grand old peak stands there so majestically. He has watched the sun rise day after day, year after year, for centuries, who will say how many? No wonder he has such a solemn dignity! Follow the slope with your eye, on and on, up and up, to the summit towering several thousand feet above us. The mountain is so great-man is so small. Do you



*Courtesy Rocky Mountain National Park*

suppose we will ever stand up there on the highest point-it seems so inaccessible, remote and so far above us.<sup>15</sup>

In *Mountain Magazine*<sup>16</sup>, as well as in *Estes Park Trail*<sup>17</sup>, Toll published a description of ten days of hiking in Rocky Mountain National Park. The experience, he wrote, is “not for a tenderfoot, but assumes you are a good hiker, have had experience in the mountains...and that you can go through a little hardship, for the sake of the objective that you started for.” Then follow careful, tourist-tempting descriptions of some of the park’s finest hikes and climbs.

As an increasingly mobile public began motoring to the new national park, Toll’s administration undertook construction projects on Longs Peak

The Agnes Vaille Memorial Storm Shelter located beside the Keyhole stands near where Agnes Vaille died on 12 January 1925.

The plaque to her is shown directly below the window, where it is still present. Photo taken on 5 October 1930.

with these early tourists in mind. In August 1925 Toll oversaw the placement of steel cables on the treacherous north face of the peak.<sup>18&19</sup> Both cables were removed in 1973 as required by the Wilderness Preservation Act of 1964.

In 1926 Toll designed the Boulder Field Shelter Cabin, basing the design on facilities he had seen in Europe. This cabin was completed in 1927. As Toll wrote, “The lessee will furnish anything from a cup of coffee to dinner, bed and breakfast.” The masonry cabin provided eating facilities on the first floor and sleep areas on the low-ceilinged second floor. Adjacent to it were a stable and latrine. As the walls were continuously cracking-apparently because of gradual movement in the boulders-the shelter stopped serving as a concession in 1935; the shelter and stable were subsequently removed.<sup>20&21</sup>

A third construction project on Longs Peak, the Agnes Vaille Storm Shelter at the Keyhole, still stands today. Denver Architect Arthur Fisher designed the shelter on the lines of ancient dwellings in Apulia, Italy; it was built in 1926 and 1927.<sup>22</sup>

The tragedy surrounding this structure intimately involved Toll. Agnes Vaille was an experienced mountaineer, a long-time member of

the Colorado Mountain Club, and a respected and beloved member of the Denver community, where she served as Chamber of Commerce secretary. In the fall of 1924, she and a young Swiss guide, Walter Kiener, decided to attempt the east face of Longs. They tried once in October, again in November, and a third time in December. Each attempt was frustrated by bad weather, route-finding difficulties, or equipment problems. Despite pleas from Agnes's family, friends, and fellow club members, she and Kiener made another attempt, reaching the Timberline Cabin the night of January 10, 1925, accompanied by Elinor Eppich Kingry. Kiener and Vaille started for the peak after breakfast the morning of January 11. As they climbed, the weather deteriorated. They finally summated at 4 A.M. on January 12 (the first wintertime summit via that route). They descended the north face. At this point Agnes was exhausted. Toward the bottom of the north face she fell, slid 150 feet, and although apparently not injured, had difficulty walking thereafter. Powerless to go on, she stopped to rest, and Kiener went for help. Kiener and another man were able to return to Agnes in spite of a severe storm, but found her dead. Among the accounts of this event, two are those of James Pickering<sup>23</sup> and Janet Robertson<sup>24</sup>.

Compounding the tragedy, rescuer Herbert Sortland, innkeeper for the Longs Peak Inn, was found dead a short distance from the inn after turning back from the rescue expedition. The controversy remains as to whether it was Vaille or Kiener who pushed the ill-fated decision to try the climb. As park superintendent, Roger Toll oversaw the

rescue operation and was among the 12 men who recovered Agnes's body later in the week. He was a close associate and friend of Vaille's through the Colorado Mountain Club. He was also her first cousin.

An inscription on the plaque at the Vaille Storm Shelter reads: Agnes Wolcott Vaille - This shelter commemorates a Colorado Mountaineer, conquered by winter after scaling the precipice, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1925; and one who lost his life in an effort to save her - Herbert Sortland. (Please see Footnote on page 16.)

It was during his tenure at "Rocky" that Toll compiled his second book, *The Mountain Peaks of Colorado*.<sup>25</sup> This directory of all of the named points of elevation in Colorado - peaks and mountains, ridges and hills - published in 1923 by the Colorado Mountain Club. The booklet is typical of Toll's comprehensive and orderly approach to the task. As Toll writes in his introduction, "The following lists of mountains and peaks in Colorado have been prepared in order to collect in an available form the latest information regarding the elevation of these peaks, their names and location." Again collating previously unavailable details while expanding on them for posterity, Toll determined the number of named peaks and relative order of height. His objective was an "alphabetical list, as complete as possible, for the purpose of determining to what extent the names of the mountains are duplicated, and for use in future naming of mountains."

In the process of compiling the features' names, Toll mused on his findings:

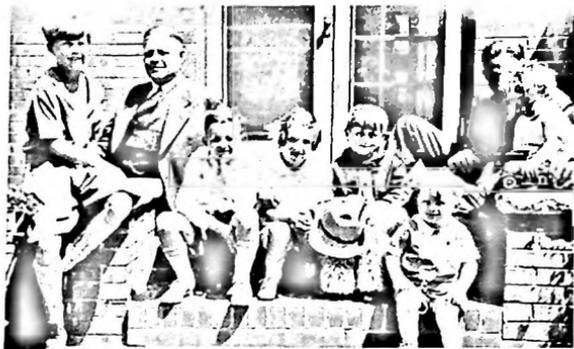
There is an unfortunate amount of duplication in the names of mountains as well as other topographic features. For example, there are 17 Bald Mountains in Colorado, and if we include the Bald Peaks, Baldys, and the like, there are 36 points sharing this designation. Similarly there are 26 mountains named "Red" and 22 named "Sheep," and there is considerable repetition of such names as Black, Blue, Green, Bear, Eagle, Elk, Lookout, Sugarloaf, Table, Twin, and Sawtooth. Where there is so much duplication the name ceases to be a distinctive designation and indicates a regrettable lack of originality.

For years, motorists relied on the Fall River Road to get them across the park. Nearly as old as the park itself, the road linked Estes Park and Grand Lake via a scenic drive over the Continental Divide. Long discussed was the notion of supplementing that increasingly traveled road with a highway over the Continental Divide using the Trail

Ridge route. In his first annual report in 1922 Toll included the project in his budgetary needs.<sup>26</sup> This was at a time when the Park Service was still so limited financially that it was hard to find funds to maintain the roads already in existence. In August 1923 he again included the project in his budgetary estimate for 1925 in a letter to Horace Albright as field assistant to the director.<sup>27</sup> In 1926, he noted that surveying for Trail Ridge Road had begun; it continued in 1927. At the time Toll completed his tour at Rocky Mountain in early 1929, the funding was in place. The construction of Trail Ridge Road began that summer under Superintendent Edmund Rogers.

Toll was persistent and foresighted in making Trail Ridge Road happen. The project demonstrates his belief, along with Albright and Mather, that when appropriate a very limited portion of a national park could be used for a highway to give those visitors who were unable to hike or ride horseback a chance to see some of the incredible beauty of the parks. Trail Ridge Road stands as an example of the early National Park Service leaders' balancing of conservation goals with recreational use.

In early 1929, Horace Albright was called from Yellowstone to take over the directorship of the Park Service from an ailing Stephen Mather. Toll took the superintendent's position in Yellowstone, where he continued until his untimely death in 1936. In his seven years at Yellowstone, Toll showed the administrative talents he had



*Toll family photo*

demonstrated at Rocky Mountain. He also continued his dedication to preservation of the environment.

A family photo taken in 1930 (previous page) shows Toll, Roger's three children, Henry Toll (Roger's brother and the author's father), and Henry's three children at the time.

Toll was an early and articulate spokesman for conservation. The author recalls a family visit to Yellowstone when he was a seven-year-old boy, during which Toll expressed deep concern over visitors' impact on the park. Into a beautiful, deep, blue thermal pool someone had thrown a large wooden beam. The sight elicited a speech from the superintendent about the problems of preserving the treasures of the national parks in the

face of increasing pressure. Another day, at the Obsidian Cliff, he posed the hypothetical scenario of every visitor taking home just one piece of obsidian. With enough time and increasing numbers of visitors, of course, there would eventually be no obsidian cliff for visitors to admire.

As superintendent of Yellowstone, one of Toll's responsibilities was to host visiting dignitaries. In the family archives is a photo (below) of famous and influential western photographer William Henry Jackson, taken on a visit to the park. In the photograph, Jackson and Toll flank one of the 1871 photographs of Jackson's that helped convince Congress to approve Yellowstone as a national park the following year.

Superintendent Toll had a collateral



*Toll family photo*

job during the slow winter season: to take part in the teams evaluating sites proposed for status as national parks or monuments. The arrangement began during his final year at Rocky Mountain in 1928 and continued throughout his tour at Yellowstone. In a letter to the director of the national Park Service on March 11, 1935, Toll wrote: "Attached is a list of existing national parks and monuments on which are checked the 98 areas that I have visited. Familiarity with the existing areas has frequently proven very helpful in determining the comparative value of proposed areas." Toll also listed the many proposed areas to which he had made on-site inspections. In Toll's inimitably thorough and systematic fashion, his report on Big Bend National Park alone takes up 40 pages.<sup>28</sup>

In a letter to the New York *Herald Tribune* written a few days after Toll's death,<sup>29</sup> Horace Albright, who had retired as director of the Park Service two and a half years before, wrote this of Toll's career during his last eight years:

During the winter months Mr. Toll has been assigned to investigations of proposed new parks and monuments. No man in official life has seen more of the remote spots of our country, the strange, the little-known places. The regions difficult of access were all visited by Major Toll, and inspected on foot, on horseback and from the air. He studied the Everglades of Florida. He explored, photographed and described in reports most of the canyons of the Colorado, from the headwaters high in the

Rockies to the California line.

His report on the Big Bend region of Texas was the basis for authorizing the Big Bend National Park. The Barnards, in their "*Trail and Timberline*" profile of Toll, add: "A tireless worker and wizard for detail, he has compiled hundreds of reports of inestimable value ... No other man has the first-hand knowledge of our national scenic resources which was his."<sup>30</sup>

In February 1936, Toll returned to Texas's Big Bend as part of a six-man commission to study possible sites along the Mexican-American border as international parks and wildlife refuges. Toll was en route from Big Bend to the border mountain district of Arizona, near Deming, New Mexico, on February 25, 1936. An oncoming vehicle had a blowout in its left rear tire; it swerved, hitting Toll's car head on.<sup>31</sup> Riding with him was George Wright, director of wildlife research for the Park Service. Toll was killed on impact; George Wright died shortly after in the Deming hospital. Unharmful but witnessing the tragedy were the remaining members of the commission, who were following closely in another car.

Letters of condolence, today in the Toll family's possession, poured in to Toll's widow, Marguerite Cass Toll.

From Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior: "Mr. Toll's excellent official record in the Department of the Interior over a long period of years speaks for itself but more than this his high personal standing among those with whom he was associated was of such quality that his loss will be felt keenly.

It is no exaggeration to say that we will have great difficulty in filling his place because he had carved out for himself through the years a distinctive position by reason of his personal qualities."<sup>32</sup>

From Ray Lyman Wilbur, President of Stanford University and former Secretary of the Interior: "He was one of the most effective men in the whole National Park Service and will be greatly missed. I am sure that you can be somewhat comforted by pride in all that he achieved and by many happy memories. He did so much to please others and yet maintained the high standard of the organization of which he was so proud."<sup>33</sup>

From Peter Norbeck, Senator from South Dakota and a staunch supporter of the National Park Service in Congress: "Mr. Toll was a great man and true friend. His death is a great loss not only to me personally, but also to the Park Service, to which he devoted his life. His work in connection with the Parks was splendid and will live on through the years, and there will be those who will enjoy life a little more because of his efforts."<sup>34</sup>

From James Grafton Rogers, founder of the Colorado Mountain Club and master of Timothy Dwight College, Yale University: "Roger was all that I valued and honored in a man - able, sympathetic, clear-headed, straight forward, industrious - quite outstanding in any group of Americans."<sup>35</sup>

And from Joseph Joffe, acting superintendent of Yellowstone National Park: "Of all my experience I have never had the pleasure of working with a kinder, more thoughtful, and more considerate man than Mr. Toll ... He seldom lost his temper and to me was

the ideal of what a man should be. I know many others feel about him as I do. Mr. Toll should have died without leaving an enemy as I know that in his heart he never at any time meant to harm an individual."<sup>36</sup>

Aubrey L. Haines expressed an added thought that was held by many who knew Toll: "A career ended prematurely by accident is forever haunted by speculation; yet one cannot entirely put aside the feeling that the National Park Service lost a future director in the death of Roger Toll."<sup>37</sup>

Toll left behind other, more tangible legacies. First, he named Mount Columbia in the Sawatch after his alma mater. While climbing Mount Harvard in 1916, he identified a peak to the southeast that his observations suggested was over 14,000 feet in elevation, and separated by a ridge of length and vertical drop that qualified it as its own peak. He suggested the name "Columbia" to fit the theme of the adjacent Collegiate Peaks. The Colorado Mountain Club accepted the name in 1922, and in 1928 the U.S. Geographic Board had adopted "Mount Columbia" as the official name.<sup>38</sup>

The second is Mount Toll in the Indian Peaks Wilderness, a mountain that Toll had climbed in August 1926. Following his death, some of Toll's good friends in the Colorado Mountain Club replaced the name of Paiute Horn with "Mount Toll," the official name as of 1941.<sup>39</sup>

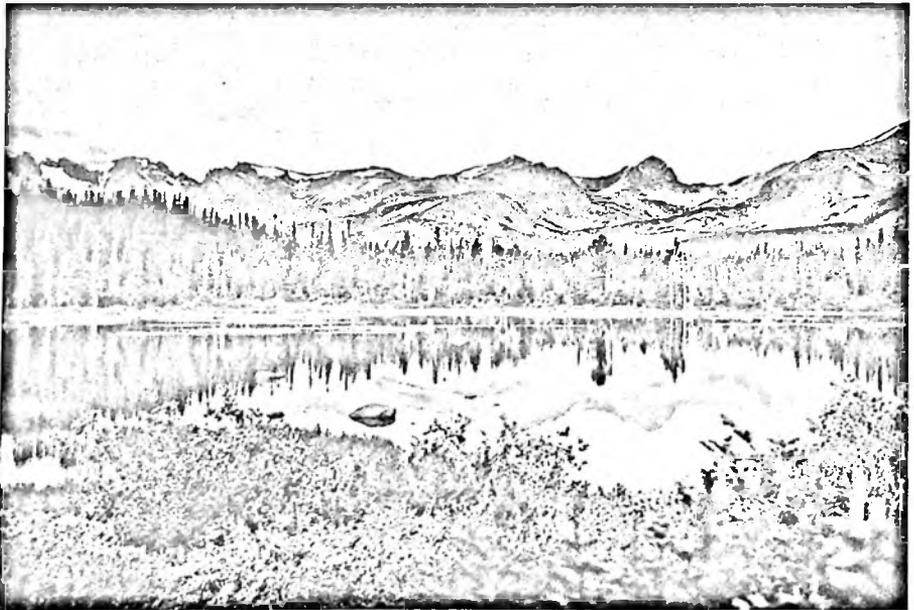
Third is Toll Mountain in Big Bend National Park. As Toll had recommended Big Bend for national park status, and as he was killed having just visited there with the international parks commission, it was appropriate

that this mountain - one of the more conspicuous peaks forming the Chisos Basin - should bear his name.<sup>40</sup>

Less tangible is Roger Toll's most important legacy, which he left in company with Mather, Albright, and other Park Service pioneers. That legacy was the balance of conservation with carefully selected ways for the public to enjoy the precious environment and stunning beauty of the national parks. There seems to be no better example of this balance than Trail Ridge Road - which has given so many thousands of visitors a chance to see the big views and tundra while massive areas of the park remain roadless and remote. How appropriate that the memorial to Toll should be located beside it.

(Footnote referenced on page 11)

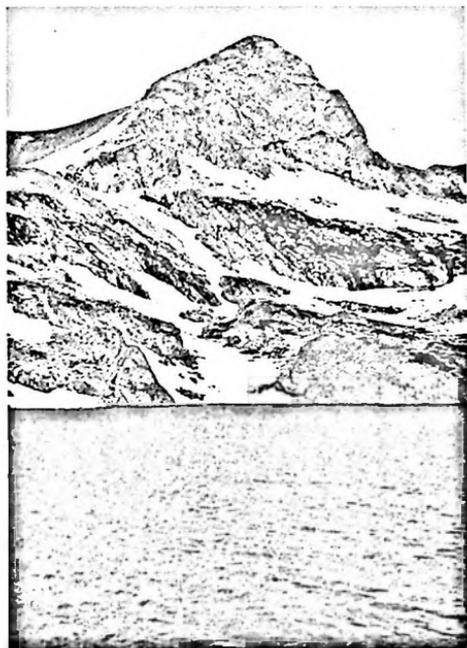
This sad event involved the family of the author as well. His mother, Cyrena Martin Toll, received her education at Smith College. Her assigned roommate at Smith was Agnes, and the two became fast friends. In the summer after their junior year (1911), Vaile invited Cyrena Martin to visit her in Denver. She introduced her to another cousin, Henry W. Toll, whom Cyrena later married.<sup>18</sup>



*Toll family photo*

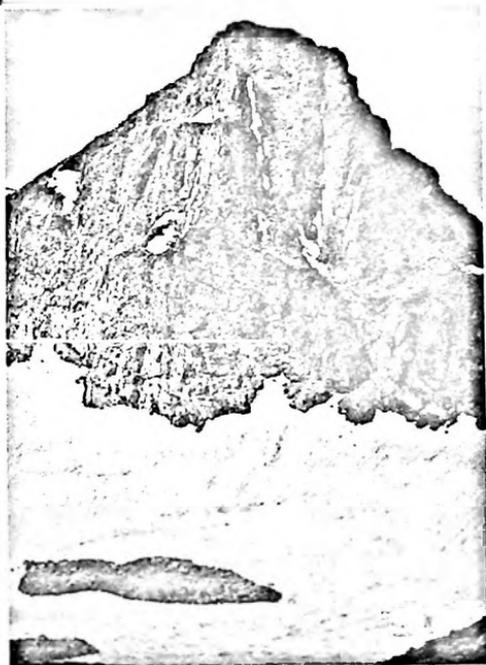
Panorama from Red Rock Lake: Mt. Toll is the pyramidal peak at the near right.

All are photos of Mt. Toll taken by Roger Toll in 1926.



Mount Toll from Blue Lake

*Toll family photos*



North face of Mount Toll

## End Notes

1. "Katharine Ellen Wolcott," Brief biographical sketch, probably by Charles H. Toll, Jr., Family papers of Henry W. Toll
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