

# History of Seven Falls, Springs overlap

BY RICH LADEN  
rich.laden@gazette.com

Seven Falls' natural beauty was recognized long before it became a popular Pikes Peak region tourist attraction.

In December 1872, a year after Gen. William Jackson Palmer founded Colorado Springs, Nathaniel Colby homesteaded 160 acres that included what would become Seven Falls and South Cheyenne Canyon. Nine months later, he sold the land rights to the Colorado Springs Land company for \$1,000.

In 1882, naturalist James Hull — who feared that logging threatened the beauty of Cheyenne Canyon — purchased the land for \$1,300. Hull owned another 160 acres west of Seven Falls and added 80 acres in 1885. With his 400 acres, Hull is credited with recognizing the area as a tourist attraction. He built a road through the canyon and constructed a stairway along the side of the falls for visitors. Ownership passed to Hull's sons.

In 1905, the property — now covering 1,400 acres — was bought by miner and developer C.D. Weimer. It stayed in his family till they sold it to Texas oilman Al Hill in 1946.

Over several decades, Hill and his family expanded Seven Falls into the tourist attraction visitors know today. Among other improvements, they added the Eagle's Nest Observation platform and lights for the canyon and the falls, and, in 1992, an elevator was cut 170 feet into the side of a mountain.

SOURCES: SEVEN FALLS' WEBSITE,  
GAZETTE ARCHIVES, GAZETTE  
RESEARCH, ONLINE ARTICLES