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WILLIAM AUSTIN HAMILTON LOVELAND
Soldier — Scholar — Pioneer — Publisher — Statesman — Founder

Born in May 1826, William Loveland moved with his family from his native Chatham, Massachusetts to Illinois, where he attended McKendree and Shulleff colleges. He enlisted in the War with Mexico, was wounded at the Battle of Chapultepec, and in 1849 joined the gold rush to California. After his marriage in 1854 to Miranda Ann Montgomery, he settled down in Illinois as a merchant, but another gold rush beckoned him to the Pike's Peak region in 1859, and that same year he arrived in Golden, Colorado. There he built the first store, helped incorporate the city, and became its first treasurer.

Loveland's political life included the 1861 chairmanship of a convention to set up provisional Jefferson Territory government, chairmanship of the unsuccessful 1864 Constitutional Convention seeking statehood, and terms as a Jefferson County Commissioner and state legislator. In 1878, he purchased the Rocky Mountain News to further his campaign for governor of Colorado. In 1880, he founded the Leadville Democrat, and was given the "favorite son" nomination for President of the United States by fellow Colorado Democrats.

Loveland's contributions to Jefferson County and Colorado were countless. He built the first wagon road up Clear Creek to the mines. In 1868, he broke ground for the first railroad into Golden (the Colorado Central). In 1891, a second trackage opened to Golden with his Denver, Lakewood and Golden Railroad Line. He gave to the City of Golden the parkland that today is the site of the county courthouse complex, donated land for the first Presbyterian church and for the city's Baptist church, and bought the bell which today stands in front of city hall. Loveland was on the board of trustees of Colorado Seminary (now Denver University) and was a trustee and the acting head of Colorado School of Mines. In 1889-1890, Loveland, his wife, and his partner, Charles C. Welch, platted an area in eastern Jefferson County which they named "Lakewood." The red brick home he built in the 1400 block of Harlan Street still remains. He died in 1894, but the name lasted through the years and was formally adopted by Colorado's fourth largest city after its incorporation. The city of Loveland and Loveland Pass were named for this Jefferson County pioneer.