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**TRACKING DOWN BOULDER, COLORADO'S
RAILROADS**

and

**ROADS OF THE MOUNTAINS AND PLAINS
(Within the Boulder Historic Context Area)**

by Silvia Pettem

Prepared in 1996 for the Boulder Historic Context Project and submitted to the Boulder Planning Department. Copies may be made for research purposes only.

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TRACKING DOWN BOULDER, COLORADO'S RAILROADS

INTRODUCTION

Boulder has been served by at least sixteen railroad and streetcar lines which operated on a maze of tracks throughout the city. As the years went by, some railroad companies ran on the tracks of their predecessors and/or merged with each other. It is impossible, therefore, to neatly divide Boulder's railroad history into the routes of the various companies. To try to sort all of this out, each of the tracks has been color-coded. The railroad companies will be discussed as they relate to the various tracks on which they ran. (See accompanying Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks).

Boulder's railroad companies, in chronological order from 1873 to the present day, were/are as follows:

- Colorado Central (standard gauge)
- Denver & Boulder Valley (standard gauge)
- Golden, Boulder & Caribou (standard gauge)
- Kansas Pacific (standard gauge)
- Union Pacific (standard gauge)
- Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific (narrow gauge)
- Denver, Marshall & Boulder (standard gauge)
- Boulder Horse Rail Road Company (streetcar)
- Union Pacific, Denver & Gulf (standard gauge)
- Colorado & Northwestern (narrow gauge)
- Colorado & Southern (standard gauge)
- Boulder Railway and Utility Company (streetcar)
- Denver, Boulder & Western (narrow gauge)

Eldorado Springs Railway Company (automobiles on railroad track)
Denver & Interurban (standard gauge)
Burlington Northern (standard gauge, still active today)

Still others were in the early building stage, but never materialized. In 1881, grades were constructed for the Denver, Utah & Pacific up South Boulder Canyon; for the Boulder & Middle Park Railroad and Telegraph Company north from Boulder to Left Hand Canyon; and for the Longmont, Middle Park & Pacific, also expected to go up Left Hand Canyon, over the Continental Divide, and on to the Pacific Ocean.

Other didn't even get past the planning stage. In 1878, the Boulder, Central & Utah was incorporated to go to Nederland, then over the Continental Divide to Hot Sulphur Springs.

Then, in 1910, the builder of the Cheyenne Mountain Railway in Colorado Springs proposed a "scenic railway to the top of Flagstaff Mountain." The route would be electrically illuminated with a large search light beaming off the top of the mountain. He estimated that day trips and night excursions would "attract tourists by the thousands."¹ Another tourist route was planned, but never built, along Enchanted Mesa between the bottom of Flagstaff and Eldorado Springs.

Out of necessity, Boulder's first transportation efforts focused on roads, but, at the time, frontier towns knew they needed railroads to grow. In the early 1870s, Boulderites were torn between giving their financial support to the Colorado Central Railroad ("green" track) and the Denver &

¹*Daily Camera*, February 8, 1910.

Boulder Valley ("dark blue" track"). After numerous delays, both eventually reached Boulder in 1873.

Boulder had been settled in 1858 by prospectors who soon found gold in Gold Hill. Some early settlers got discouraged and moved back to Boulder. Others came from the East to supply the miners. Gold mining and agriculture were the area's first industries, but it wasn't long before outcroppings of coal were found in the Marshall area. Coal was in great demand for fuel, particularly for the new and hungry steam-powered trains.

By 1878 there was a need for a short railroad line to connect the Marshall coal fields with the Colorado Central and the Denver & Boulder Valley lines. After the completion of the "red" track from near the "wye"² to Marshall, Boulder was feeling good about its three railroads. An article in the *Boulder News* stated--

"The town is the terminus of the Boulder Valley railroad ("blue track"), which is an extension of the Kansas Pacific railroad. The Colorado Central railroad ("green track") runs through this town, connecting at Cheyenne with the Union Pacific; and, in the other direction, connects this town with the principal mining centers, Central City and Georgetown. There is also a railway ("red track") connecting the town with the Marshall coal mines, six miles south. Other railroads are chartered, one for building a road to the principal mining points of the county, in the mountains. Another to build a line eastward, to form a competing line via the Platte and

²32nd and Pearl Streets where, until 1967, the "green" and "dark blue" tracks intersected. Beginning in 1908, this intersection would be known as "Ara."

Republican rivers. In point of location, the town has every natural advantage for becoming a railroad center."³

In 1881, the Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific built the ("pink") tracks through downtown Boulder in preparation for its line into the mountains. In 1886, the Denver, Marshall & Boulder extended its line ("black" tracks) from Denver through Marshall and the University of Colorado also into downtown Boulder.

These two downtown tracks enabled future trains to make loops through the city, which a succession of railroads continued to do for forty-six years. Yet another track ("light blue") down Pearl Street served the Denver & Interurban for the first half of its eighteen years in Boulder. More tracks were laid in Boulder as its streetcar system ("yellow" tracks) expanded to north and south Boulder.

Boulder's railroad history is more involved than this writer initially realized. "Tracking Down Boulder, Colorado's Railroads" attempts to identify the railroad companies and the routes of the tracks they ran on, in a chronological narrative, from 1873 through the present time. The discussion is limited to the Boulder Historic Context area as defined as Areas I-III in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

Information for each of the color-coded routes includes which railroad company built the route and in what year, where the route went, the dates of use, and related depots. Then the route within the historic context area is given, and any parts of the grade still visible are noted.

Following the above introductory information is a historical narrative on each of the tracks. All aboard for an armchair tour.

³*Boulder News*, September 13, 1878.

"GREEN" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks) --

Built by Colorado Central, 1873.

Between Louisville, 32nd and Pearl, Niwot, and Longmont (originally this route started at Golden, later it started at Denver).

Dates of use, 1873 - present.

Depots -- 32nd and Pearl Streets (demolished ca. 1876)

Route within historic context area -- From Louisville the route extends northwest across Arapahoe Road, past Weisenhorn Lake (now Public Service), and west to 32nd and Pearl Streets. (First called the "wye" for the intersection of its railroad tracks, this location then became known as Boulder Junction. During the 1908-1926 period of the Denver & Interurban, it was known as Ara.) The route then turns northeast and parallels the Diagonal Highway to Niwot and Longmont.

Visible today -- This track is still in use.

The section of track between Louisville, through east Boulder, to Niwot and Longmont ("Green Track") was the first in use in the Boulder area, and is the only one still in use today. The tracks were built by the Colorado Central as part of their Golden, Louisville, east Boulder, and Longmont route, but many other railroad companies have travelled over its rails.

As early as February 9, 1865, the Colorado Territorial Legislature proposed an act to incorporate what was optimistically called the Colorado

Central & Pacific Railroad. Boulder County Commissioners voted in favor of raising \$50,000 to bring the railroad to Boulder.¹

Nothing happened for several years. Then, in 1872, Boulder County residents raised \$200,000 in bonds to enable the Colorado Central to begin construction within Boulder County. Not everyone had faith that the investment was worthwhile, as a race was on between the Colorado Central and another proposed railroad, the Denver & Boulder Valley (see "dark blue" track).² The *Boulder News* later reported, "Repeated disappointments had made our citizens doubtful. One doubted the honest intention of the parties to build the road; another doubted their ability, and all feared lest the powerful influence of Denver interests should overwhelm the efforts of a few who favored the proposed route."³

After months of no activity, horse-drawn dump wagons hauled in fill to construct the railroad grades. By March, 1873, ties were bedded and a "large force" of men were laying the iron rails at a rate of one mile per day.⁴ On April 1, 1873, a reporter noted, "the cars on the C.C. [Colorado Central] railroad rolled around the hill southeast of Valmont in plain sight of Boulder. Tomorrow night they will be at Boulder. Everybody feels good about it."⁵

Ernest Pease, who grew up on a farm near 75th and Arapahoe, remembered the day. He later wrote,

¹*Boulder County Commissioners Journal* #1, pp.212-216.

²Hall, Frank, *History of the State of Colorado in Four Volumes, Vol. II*. Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1889, p. 99.

³*Boulder News*, April 16, 1873.

⁴*Boulder County News*, March 14, 1873.

⁵*Boulder County News*, April 4, 1873.

"One bright morning, as I was at work in the field, I chanced to look to the east, and there coming over the hill, on the prairie where the cattle were accustomed to feed, was a steam engine and cars. They were laying the track just ahead of the train. I shall never forget the feeling of surprise, of astonishment, and of wonder that came over me. Here was the beginning of a new world. The advance of civilization was crowding the pioneer. In due time came the gala day, and we all joined in the first excursion over the new [rail]road. For a long time, the passing of trains back and forth each day was a matter of profound interest."⁶

One day before the railroad's contract expired, the Colorado Central Railroad had been completed. Boulder County officials turned over the first \$100,000 which they had held in trust, and received the same amount in stock. The *Boulder News* continued,

"Boulder County now has a railway. From Longmont to Golden, via Boulder [and Louisville], the iron is laid and the cars are running thereon. For years the enterprising public-spirited men of this county have hoped and labored to secure that which is now accomplished. The history of Boulder County's railroad aspirations would be a history of fierce struggles at the ballot box in which different parts of the County and rival roads were pitted against each other."⁷

The Colorado Central made its first official passenger run on April 22, 1873. Four passenger coaches, one smoking car, and several platform

⁶Pease, Ernest M., *Boyhood of E. M. Pease*. Unpublished manuscript, Carnegie Library, Boulder, 1933, 132-133.

⁷*Boulder News*, April 16, 1873. Subscriptions were also being raised for the D&BV.

cars with seats arrived from Golden.⁸ Colorado Central President Henry M. Teller was on board, as well as Vice-President William A. H. Loveland, dignitaries from Golden and Central City, and members of the press. A Boulder reporter stated,

"At Boulder the train received the accession of a crowd such as no ordinary occasion ever draws. There were men, women, and children -- great and small, sober men of age, and infants in arms; there were the lover with his sweetheart, the groom with his bride, and the big brass band, all bound for a gala day."⁹

This crowd boarded at the east Boulder depot for the ride to Longmont. Many brought their own lunch, but others dined at the St. Vrain Hotel. In Longmont, even more people got on the train bringing the total to over eight hundred. Some of the Boulder people got off in Boulder on the return trip, while others continued on to dinner and dancing in Golden. A special train brought them back to Boulder between 2:00 am and 3:00 am the next morning.¹⁰

Two months later, people in Boulder wondered how they got along without the railroad. One writer editorialized,

"It is astonishing how quick the scream of the locomotive whistle startled into activity and energy towns that for years have been

⁸Hall, Vol. III, p. 300.

Croft, Geo. A., *Croft's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado*. Omaha: The Overland Publishing Company, 1885, p.36.

Vernon, Edward, *American Railroad Manual for the U.S. and the Dominion*. Philadelphia: American Railroad Manual Co., 1873, p. 542. The route connected Golden, Golden Junction, Ralston, Churches ranch, Louisville, Davidson, Lake Side (Weisenhorn), Boulder (wye), Niwot, and Longmont.

Digerness, David S., *The Mineral Belt, Vol. III*. Denver: Sundance, 1982, p. 271. The financial panic of 1873 temporarily stopped further construction of the line beyond Longmont.

⁹*Boulder News*, April 25, 1873.

¹⁰*Boulder News*, April 25, 1873.

resting easily and lazily in their supposed complete grandeur.

Boulder has arisen as from slumber, stopped growing old, and is growing young now. It is now in the full tide of push and enterprise."¹¹

The line connecting Golden, Louisville, Boulder, Niwot, and Longmont is a standard gauge¹² branch of the narrow gauge Colorado Central which went up Clear Creek Canyon from Golden.¹³ Connections were made at Golden for Denver where passengers could board the north and eastbound trains of the Denver Pacific and the Kansas Pacific.¹⁴ The *Boulder News* announced, "Passengers from Boulder can go to Golden, Denver, or Black Hawk and return on the same day."¹⁵ By using Golden as the "hub," Teller and Loveland hoped to promote the commercial and industrial growth of Golden over Denver.¹⁶

In May, 1876, Board members of the Colorado Central elected then Vice President Loveland to become President of the railroad.¹⁷ Teller's men, however, were not ready for him to give up the office. The *Boulder News* called it a "railroad war" when Loveland forced the engineer and conductor off the train and gave the jobs to his friends. Loveland's "large

¹¹*Boulder News*, June 20, 1873.

¹²Standard gauge is 4 feet, 8 1/2 inches between the rails.

¹³Traxler, Ralph Newton, Jr., *Some Phases of the History of the Colorado Central Railroad, 1865-1885*. Unpublished thesis, CU Department of History, 1947. W.A.H. Loveland originally chartered the Colorado Central Railroad as the Colorado & Clear Creek Railroad in 1865. He planned it as a section of the first transcontinental railroad, but that line went through Wyoming instead. Also, *Hall, Vol. II*, p. 98, 422. This narrow gauge Colorado Central reached Black Hawk on December 15, 1872. Another branch arrived at Georgetown in 1877. The Black Hawk line was extended to Central City on May 21, 1878.

¹⁴Vernon, Edward, *American Railroad Manual for the U.S. and the Dominion*. Philadelphia: American Railroad Manual Co, 1873, p.542.

¹⁵*Boulder News*, June 20, 1873.

¹⁶Digerness, David S., *The Mineral Belt, Vol. III*. Denver: Sundance, 1982, p. 269.

¹⁷Digerness, p. 272. Also, *Boulder News*, August 11, 1876.

gang of men" also took possession of all cars, locomotives, and other property at the Golden yards.¹⁸

Meanwhile, Boulder financiers were irate that the Denver & Boulder Valley, Boulder's second railroad which reached Boulder five months later, was taking business away from the Marshall area coal mines. Erie's coal mines, and Weld County to the east, were prospering instead. Loveland promised to help the people of Boulder County by opening up markets in the mountains for coal. The *Boulder News* called him "the plucky, sagacious, steadfast friend of our rights."¹⁹

The Colorado Central, at the time, had problems of its own. The Union Pacific Railroad, which had initially contributed some of its funds and favored a consolidation, sued the Colorado Central and threatened it with foreclosure. On August 12, David H. Moffat, Jr. was appointed the Colorado Central's receiver, but President Loveland refused to give up his line. The last day of the court proceedings, the judge in the case was on the Colorado Central on his way from Denver (via Golden) to Boulder. At Ralston Creek, north of Golden, the train was stopped, and he was kidnapped by twenty-four masked men. For hours the judge was moved around on horseback and in and out of various carriages, then fed dinner and released in Denver in the middle of the night. When he was back in court, he again appointed Moffat as receiver, and Loveland still refused. The "railroad war" finally was resolved out of court.²⁰

¹⁸*Boulder News*, May 26, 1876.

¹⁹*Boulder News*, August 11, 1876.

²⁰Digerness, p. 272-273. In 1877, the line was extended from Longmont to Cheyenne. (*Hall*, Vol. II, p. 422.)

Loveland was re-elected President of the Colorado Central in December, 1877.²¹ Rolling stock included three locomotive engines, two passenger cars, two baggage/mail/express cars, six freight cars, and twelve coal cars.²²

In 1879, financier Jay Gould leased the Colorado Central for the Union Pacific.²³ Then, in 1890, the Colorado Central, operated by the Union Pacific, merged with eleven other railroad companies, including the Denver Marshall & Boulder (see "black" track), to become the Union Pacific Denver & Gulf.²⁴ A new and more direct route between Denver and Louisville replaced the previous one between Golden and Louisville.²⁵ No longer did passengers have to go "up and down and around the hills."²⁶

On December 20, 1898, the Union Pacific Denver & Gulf, along with numerous other predecessors, became the Colorado & Southern.²⁷

In 1908, overhead electric lines were added to the route between Louisville and Boulder to accommodate the Denver & Interurban Railroad, a subsidiary of the Colorado & Southern. The first Denver & Interurban trains ran on June 23, 1908. The "wye,"²⁸ where the Colorado Central had their depot, then became known as "Ara."

²¹*Boulder News*, December 28, 1877.

²²Poor, Henry V., *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1878-1879*. New York: H.V. and H.W. Poor (11th edition), 1879, p. 895.

²³Greiner, Jean M., "The Golden Boulder & Caribou," *Colorado Magazine*, Vol. XLIV/4, Fall 1967, p. 320.

²⁴Digerness, p. 284-285. The Union Pacific Denver & Gulf was a consolidation of 12 railroads including the Colorado Central, Denver Marshall & Boulder (which earlier was the Denver Western & Pacific), and the Greeley Salt Lake & Pacific.

²⁵Digerness, p. 285.

²⁶*Denver Herald*, November 24, 1909.

²⁷Digerness, p. 288.

²⁸The "wye" was the intersection of the green and dark blue tracks at 32nd and Pearl Streets.

Regular passenger and freight trains of the Colorado & Southern and the Denver & Interurban, continued to run on the "green track." On December 21, 1908, both railroads became subsidiaries of the Chicago Burlington & Quincy Railroad.

From 1908 to 1926, the route of the "green track" south of the "wye" (the intersection with the "dark blue track") was used as the Louisville loop of the Denver & Interurban Railroad. (For a further discussion of the Denver & Interurban and downtown depots, see the "light blue" track.)

When the "black" track was abandoned from Marshall thru the University, in 1932, the "green" track between Boulder and Louisville became the only line of the Colorado & Southern between Denver and Billings, Montana. Since the loop through the city was removed, the trains had to back in from the "wye" to the 14th Street depot. (For a further discussion, see "pink" tracks.)

Fewer and fewer people rode on the train due to the increased use of the automobile. However, in 1949, the *Daily Camera* announced that special trains would be added to the daily "Pioneer Zephyr" so as to accommodate the large number of college students leaving Boulder for the Christmas holidays.²⁹

In 1957, passenger trains no longer backed into the city. (See "pink" track.) The Colorado & Southern built Boulder's latest depot north of the "wye" and east of 30th Street between Pearl and Valmont Streets.

Some people watched the end of the steam railroad era with nostalgia. Members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club ran an excursion

²⁹*Daily Camera*, December 8, 1949.

train, in June, 1957, pulled by the last steam engine to go over the route. The special train left Denver (via Boulder) at 8 am for Greeley, and returned to Denver at 5 pm. Several stops were made so passengers could get off and take photos. Those "wishing to operate sound recorders" were allowed to ride in the baggage car.³⁰

The Colorado & Southern, with its name or initials on its railroad cars, continued to run on the "green" track. Then, in 1981, the name of the Colorado & Southern lost its identity in a final merger with the Burlington Northern.³¹ The latest east Boulder depot was in use until 1985 when the building was purchased by Sutherlands Lumber Company and used for storage.

The original tracks between Louisville, the "wye" at 32nd and Pearl Streets, Niwot, and Longmont are still in use today by freight trains of the Burlington Northern. About six trains per day enter the city, but do not operate on a set schedule.³² Boulder residents are most aware of the "green" tracks when they are stopped at the railroad crossings west of 30th Street on Pearl and Valmont Streets.

³⁰*Daily Camera*, June 24, 1957.

³¹Pettem, Silvia, *Boulder, Evolution of a City*. Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1994.

³²*Daily Camera*, July 4, 1992.

"DARK BLUE" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks)

Built by Denver & Boulder Valley Railroad, 1873.

Between Boulder and Brighton.

Dates of use, 1873 - 1967.

Depots -- 23rd Street, north of Pearl.¹ (demolished 1883)

Route within historic context area -- The route from Brighton west to Boulder crossed 75th Street north of Valmont and south of Sawhill Ponds. It then crossed 61st Street and went through the town of Valmont, then ran to the southeast of the intersection of Valmont and 55th, passed north of the current location of Ecocycle, ran along the north side of Old Pearl Street, intersected the "green" track at the "wye," then continued just north of Pearl Street to the depot at 23rd Street.

Visible today -- The tracks currently stop between the town of Valmont and Valmont Drive east of 55th Street. The grade is still visible on parts of its former route between 55th and 47th Streets.

While some people in Boulder were raising money for the Colorado Central Railroad from Golden to Boulder, others promoted the Denver & Boulder Valley Railroad. Territorial Governor John Evans urged the building of the proposed route ("dark blue" track) between Boulder and Brighton, then called Hughes station. There, connections could be made

¹*Samuel Freeze Map of Boulder, 1880-1881.*

with the Denver Pacific Railroad which stopped in Brighton on its route between Denver and Cheyenne.

Governor Evans, who represented the "Denver interests" so feared by promoters of the Colorado Central explained that any other route would meet heavy grades and be more expensive to construct and operate. Evans added that Boulder's businessmen should support the railroad that secures their interest rather than supporting the Colorado Central and William Loveland and Henry Teller's interests in Golden.

Evans told the people of Boulder,

"That parties from Golden City and others interested in diverting the trade of your county to that point are making strenuous efforts to defeat the bonds in your county does not surprise me. From their standpoint they can doubtless see that it would be very bad if your county has a direct outlet by rail that does not come to their city and their railroad. It would bring no grist to their mill."²

Lobbies for both sides spoke wherever they could get an audience. Attorney Granville Berkeley addressed a group of miners at Nederland. He explained that by opening up Boulder County's coal fields and bringing the Denver & Boulder Valley to Boulder, mountain roads surely would be improved. He even predicted that a mountain railroad would be built, and their costs would go down.³ Evans had already predicted that there was little doubt that once the railroad reached Boulder, it would continue to the mountains and probably cross the Continental Divide and continue on to Salt Lake City!⁴

²*Boulder News*, September 7, 1870.

³*Boulder News*, September 7, 1870.

⁴*Boulder News*, September 7, 1870.

Henry Teller then addressed the crowd to push the rival railroad, the proposed Colorado Central. A *Boulder News* reporter stated, "I have seldom seen a plainer or more perfect specimen of selfishness, jealousy, and animosity exhibited by any man." He sarcastically added, "We suggest to our citizens that a purse be raised in order to hire Henry M. Teller to stamp Boulder County and abuse and blackguard her people, and at the same time do all he can for Jefferson County and Golden City at our expense."⁵

The Denver & Boulder Valley railroad, expected to be the first to reach Boulder, was organized on October, 1, 1870.⁶ With the sale of \$300,000 of bonds, work began right away. Governor Evans was one of the trustees. The others were Jerome B. Chaffee, David H. Moffat, Jr., W. S. Cheesman, P. M. Housel, Granville Berkeley, and W. J. Palmer.⁷

Work on the Denver & Boulder Valley began on October 24, 1870. Around this same time, the Boulder Valley Coal Company was organized and the town of Erie laid out. Lots were sold to the miners at low prices and on liberal terms "to encourage permanent settlement and lessen the danger of strikes."⁸ The whole purpose of the railroad was to develop Erie's coal beds, and provide the Denver Pacific with a cheap supply of fuel for its Denver-Cheyenne line.⁹ Marshall's coal fields were being passed by.

⁵*Boulder News*, September 7, 1870.

⁶Poor, Henry V., *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1883-1884*. New York: H.V. and H.W. Poor, 1884, p. 781.

⁷Hall, Frank, *History of the State of Colorado in Four Volumes, Vol. I*. Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1889, pp. 497-498.

⁸Hall, Vol. I, p. 497-498.

⁹Hall, Vol., I, pp. 497-498. Also, Greiner, Jean M., "The Golden Boulder & Caribou," *Colorado Magazine*, XLIV/4, Fall 1967.

On January 24, 1871, the Denver & Boulder Valley's tracks extended from Brighton to Erie, and the railroad looked promising for Boulder. The grade from Erie to Boulder began in March, but not much was done until June, 1872. The Denver & Boulder Valley still was expected to reach Boulder before the Colorado Central from Golden, but there were more delays. The Denver & Boulder Valley finally reached Boulder on September 17, 1873, five months after its rival.¹⁰ A new depot was built just north of Pearl Street between 22nd and 23rd Streets.¹¹

At the time, it took about four hours to go between Denver and Boulder, as the trains were generally mixed trains, a passenger coach being attached to a twenty-car freight train. Passengers had long delays at the Erie depot while coal was loaded and engines switched. It was common for passengers to leave Denver at nine in the morning and get to Boulder by evening.¹²

Rolling stock was furnished by the Union Pacific which leased the line. In 1880, the Denver & Boulder Valley then became the Boulder branch of Union Pacific railroad.

The Denver and Boulder Valley depot was demolished in 1883 when the Greeley Salt Lake & Pacific built their depot on 10th Street. Tracks were extended to connect the section from Pearl and 27th Streets to Water Street, now Canyon Boulevard. All trains then used the downtown depot. (See "pink" tracks.)

¹⁰Poor, Henry V., *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1877-1878*. New York: H.V. and H.W. Poor, 1878, p. 895.

¹¹*Samuel Freeze Map of Boulder, 1880-1881*.

¹²*Denver Herald*, November 24, 1909.

From 1908¹³ to October, 1941, gasoline-powered and later diesel-powered McKeen cars operated on this track. They usually contained only one railroad car, had distinctive round windows, and served the public, particularly travelling salesmen.¹⁴

By 1983, Union Pacific trains no longer ran west of 30th Street. The Foothills Parkway was under construction, and the railroad decided to abandon its line between Folsom Street and the town of Valmont rather than construct a \$1.25 million bridge over the section of track along Old Pearl Street. Railroad crossings on Folsom, 26th, 28th, 30th, 47th, 55th, and Valmont all were removed.¹⁵

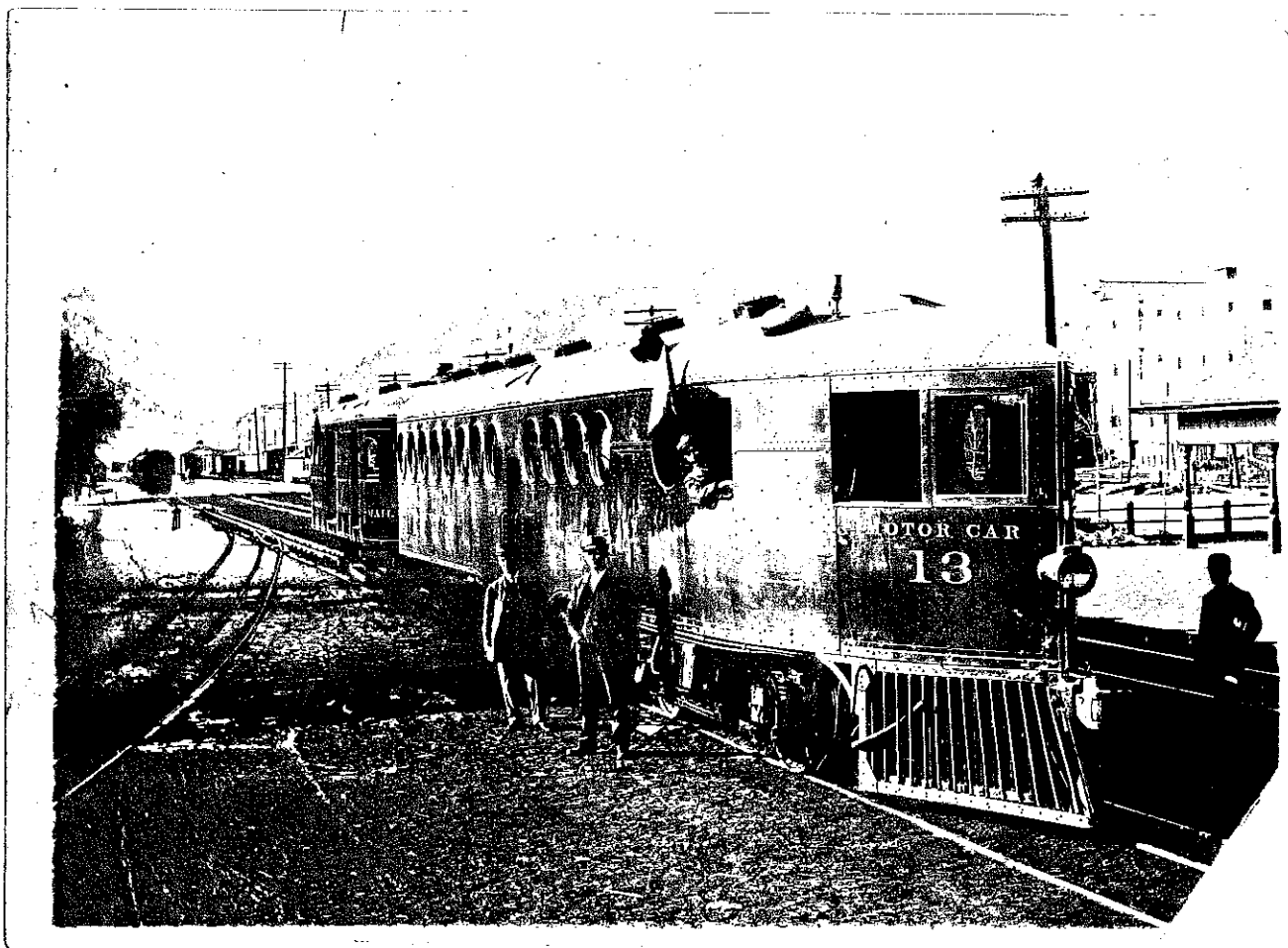
Tracks are currently in place between Brighton and Valmont, but no trains run on them anymore.

¹³*Daily Camera*, January 12, 1909.

¹⁴Telephone interview with Kenton Forrest, February 28, 1996. The cars were named for Mr. McKeen, chief mechanical engineer of the Union Pacific Railroad.

¹⁵*Daily Camera*, August 9, 1983.

McKeen Motor Cars
Between Boulder & Brighton
1909-1941



"RED" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks)

Built by Golden, Boulder & Caribou Railroad, 1877.

Between "old Pearl" Street and the town of Marshall.

Dates of use, 1877-1886.

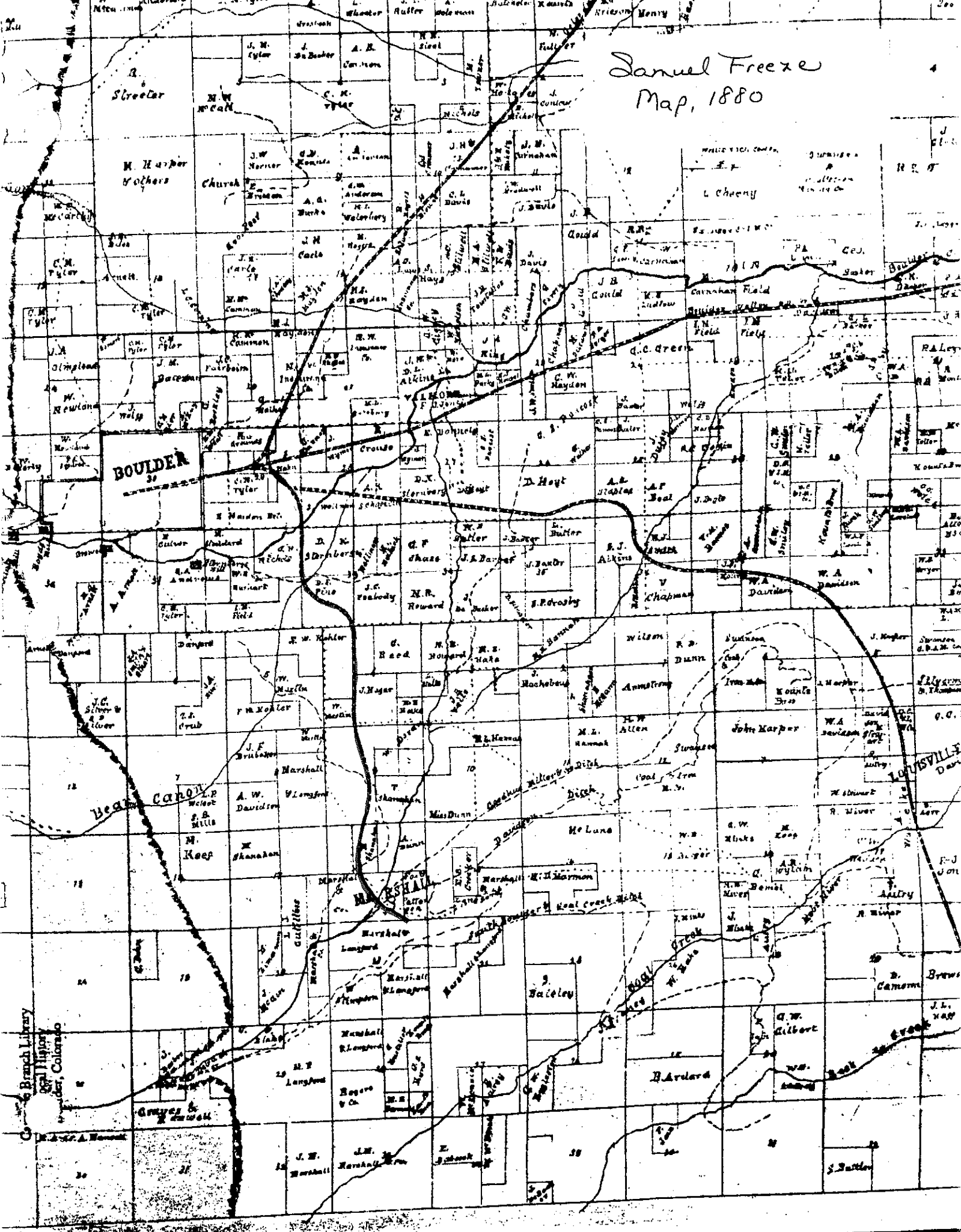
Depots (Of the two,¹ one is presumed to have been at Marshall. The location of the other is unknown.)

Route within historic context area -- From "old Pearl," the route of the Golden, Boulder & Caribou passed east of the Pearl and 47th Street (Foothills Highway) interchange, then headed straight south, crossing Boulder Creek at Arapahoe Road. It then continued south through the University of Colorado Research Park to the Aurora Seven Elementary School. Then it turned to the southeast, went east of the intersection of Baseline Road and Mohawk Drive, then paralleled the west side of the Foothills Highway, and crossed U.S. 36 at the Table Mesa Drive interchange. It then went south through the Flatirons Gravel property, turned slightly west, and paralleled Marshall Road into the town of Marshall.

Visible today - Most of the route of the grade has been obliterated by new development. It is possible that one of the roads in the Flatiron Gravel property could be on the grade, but too much time and change has occurred

¹Poor, Henry V., *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1878-1879*. New York: H.V. and H.W. Poor, 1879.

Samuel Freeze
Map, 1880



BOULDER

BEAR CANYON

LOUISVILLE

Branch Library
Boulder, Colorado

Graves & Dawson

Harvard

Brews

J.L. Vasey

S. Satter

J.L. Vasey

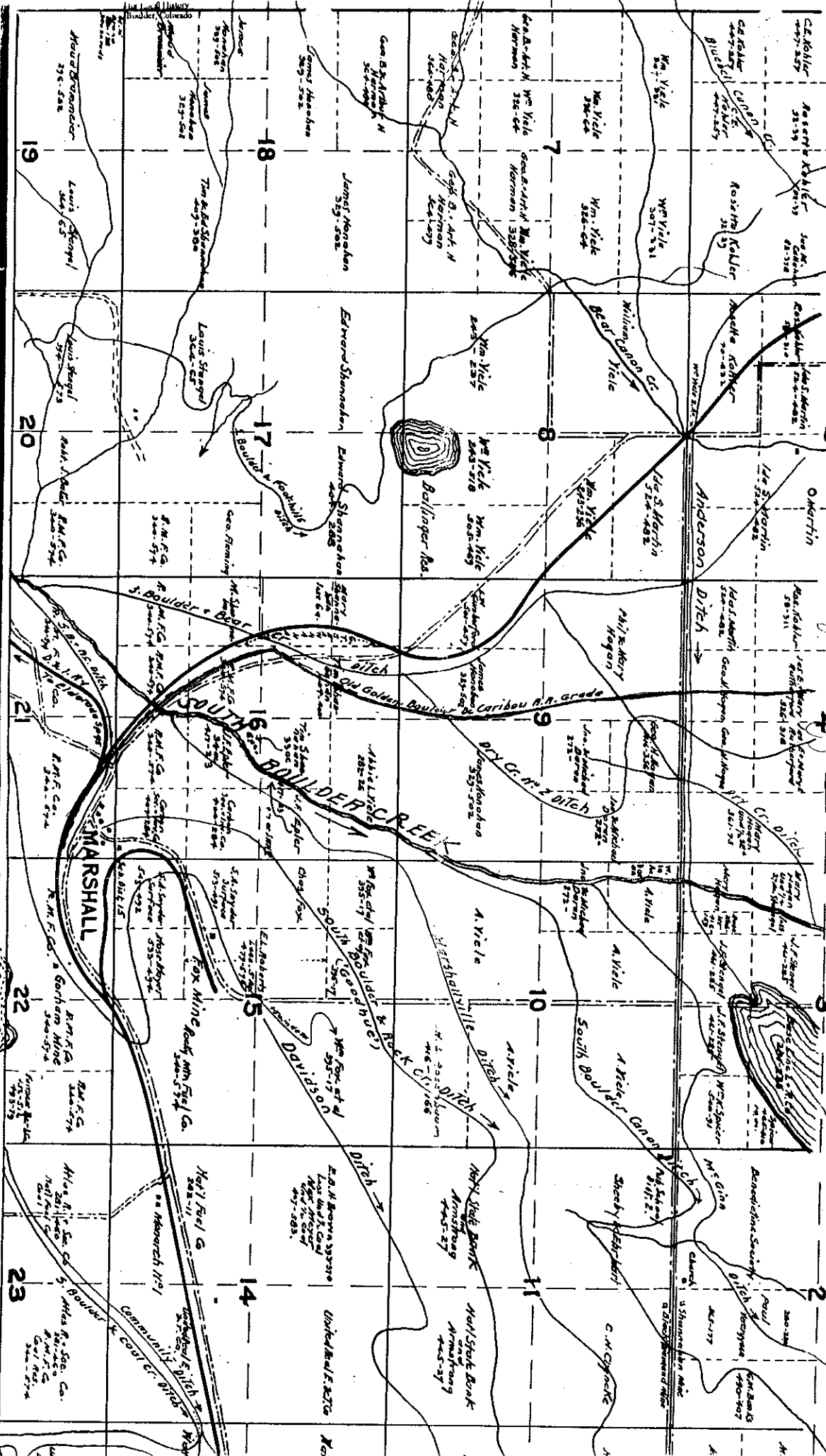
S. Satter

J.L. Vasey

S. Satter

Drum's Map of Boulder Oil Fields, 1927

Oil field of Colorado, U.S.A.



Boulder County
Commissioners
Road Board

ROAD NO. 107 RENUMBERED
DEC. 15, 1953

ROAD NO(S) 107
SEE NOTE

State of Colo.

Golden Boulder
v. Carbon R.R.

NOTE
IN RENUMBERING ALL COUNTY ROADS, THE STATE INSTRUCTION, ROAD NO. 107, COINCIDES WITH NEW ROAD NO(S) 107.
MAP FILED WITH COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER NOVEMBER 25, 1953. ADOPTED FOR USE COMMISSIONERS JOURNAL 28. PAGE 58, DECEMBER 15, 1953.

16

15

14

M. F. Co. & County
Statewide - Denver
Marshall Consolidated Coal Mfg Co.

Marshall Consolidated Coal Mfg Co.

Margaret Palmer

MARSHALL M. I.

Marshall Consolidated Coal Mfg Co.

U.P. R.R.

SUPERIOR
MINE

LANGFORD

10
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21

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T . 1

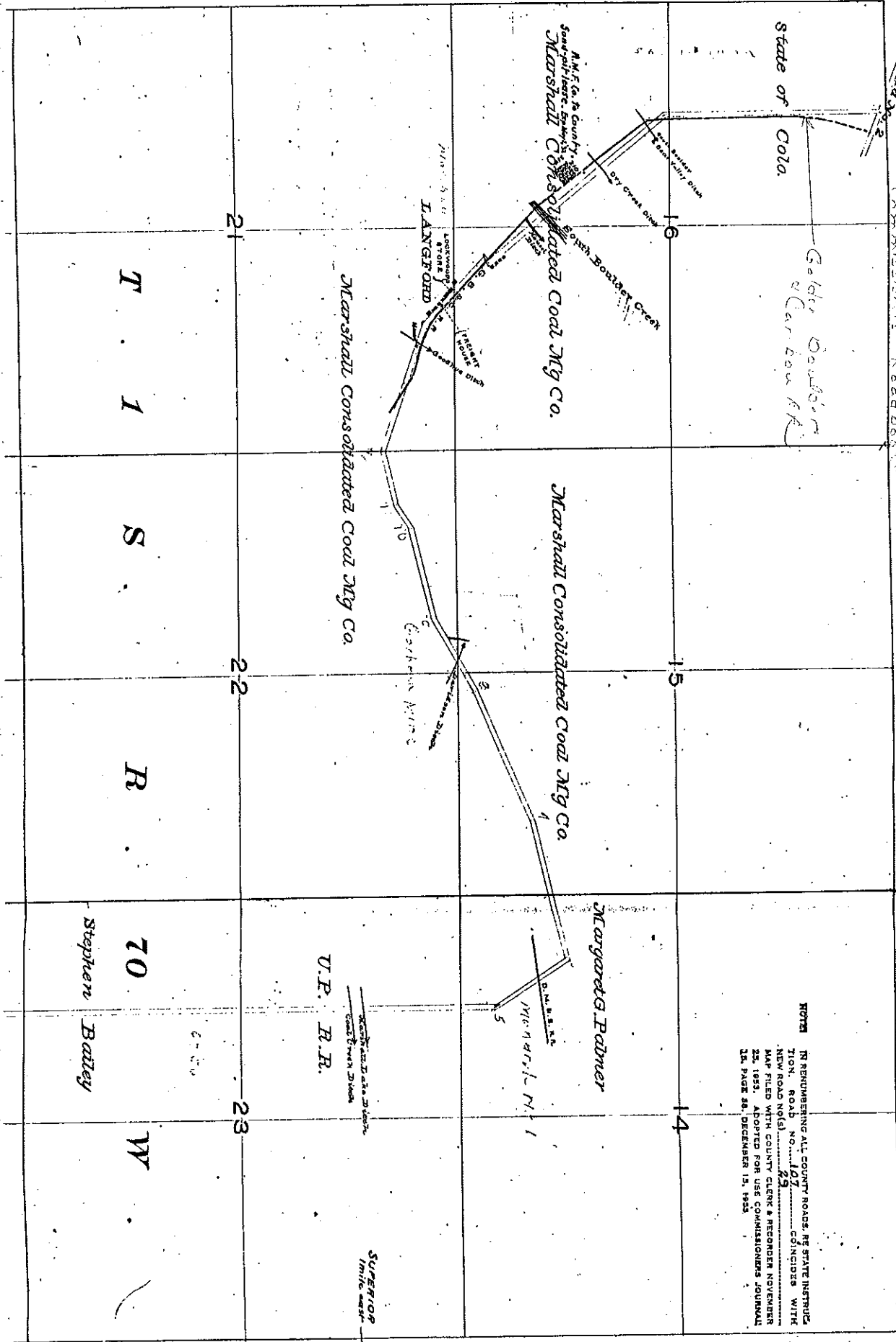
S .

R .

20

W .

Stephens
Balley



to know for sure. In Marshall the grade was between Old Marshall road and the grade of the "Black Track."²

The Golden, Boulder & Caribou never made it to Golden or Caribou, and didn't go to either of the Boulder depots. Instead, it was a feeder line used to transport coal from Marshall to waiting trains of the Colorado Central and the Denver & Boulder Valley which operated, respectively, on the intersecting "green" and "dark blue" tracks.

Boulder area settlers had been gathering outcroppings of coal as early as 1859 when William Kitchens picked up coal off the ground and the area became known as Kitchen Bank.³ In 1864, Joseph M. Marshall, along with A. G. Langford and William and Milo Lee, produced pig iron, fueled with the coal in a rude blast furnace.⁴ As mentioned in the section on early roads, the "Furnace Road," which combined parts of today's Broadway, South Broadway, and Marshall Road, was the second road in Boulder County to receive the identity of a free "county road."

Soon Joseph Marshall realized that it was more profitable to buy up abandoned machinery and recast it rather than to mine the actual iron ore.⁵ Marshall's interests turned to the coal seams waiting to be developed.

As more and more coal was produced, wagon loads of the valuable fuel were pulled by horse teams to the Colorado Central ("green" track) near Louisville. Meanwhile, more coal was discovered near the Boulder-Weld County line. The mining camp of Erie was built directly on the line

²*Drumm's Map of the Boulder Oil Fields, 1927.* (This map is hanging on the wall at Carnegie Library.)

³Greiner, Jean M., "The Golden, Boulder & Caribou," *Colorado Magazine*, Vol. XLIV/4, Fall 1967.

⁴Hall, Vol. I, p. 305.

⁵Sampson, Joanna, "Walking Through History on Marshall Mesa." Boulder County Open Space, 1995, p.7.

of the Denver & Boulder Valley railroad ("dark blue" track). As the Denver-Boulder area became more populated, and coal continued to be in demand, the only way Marshall's mines could become competitive was for a railroad to run directly to the town.⁶

Between November, 1877, and January, 1878, seventy-five men were employed to build the 5.37 mile grade.⁷ The fairly level terrain had eighteen wooden trestle and pile bridges and fifteen timber box culverts. At this time, coal was as important as electricity is today. As a commodity, it was almost as necessary as food. Homes and businesses used coal for heating and cooking, industries used it for power, and the railroads, themselves, devoured quantities just to keep going. Large quantities were needed in Denver.

As soon as the new line was completed, directors and invited dignitaries met on February 18, 1878, at the Boulder Valley Depot at 23rd Street, just north of Pearl. An elegant Pullman coach and commissary car, complete with "Cella, the great restaurateur of Denver," pulled in to to pick up the Boulder guests. The train then travelled to Marshall where, it was reported, even the ladies toured the mines. Then everyone got back on the train and dined in the "best style," before the return trip.⁸

Of equal importance to the future of the Golden Boulder & Caribou was the planning of a narrow gauge into the mountains, hopefully, to its namesake, the silver-mining town of Caribou. Miners needed coal to replace the rapidly-depleting wood supply for their steam-powered equipment, and also needed an inexpensive way to ship out their ores.

⁶Greiner, Jean M., "The Golden, Boulder & Caribou," *Colorado Magazine*, Vol. XLIV/4, Fall 1967, pp. 309-310.

⁷Greiner, p. 315-316. Also, Poor, Henry V.

⁸*Boulder News*, February 22, 1878.

Lawyer Junius Berkeley, a Regent at the newly-opened University of Colorado, was also a Golden, Boulder & Caribou officer, and reported to his colleagues on the mining towns and mills which needed the railroad. Berkeley also recognized the appeal of a tourist train into the mountains.⁹

Berkeley was certain that his mountain route would bring more business to Boulder. There was no time to lose, as the Colorado Central was talking of building an extension from its narrow-gauge terminus at Central City. If the Colorado Central line extended north to Nederland, then the mountain business would go to Gilpin County instead of to Boulder.¹⁰

Plans for the mountain route were ambitious. In 1878, Berkeley, Thomas Moffat¹¹ and three other men chartered a new railroad, the Boulder, Central & Utah, to go to Nederland, then cross over the Divide to Hot Sulphur Springs, and eventually reach Utah Territory.¹² It looked good on paper, but the company's mountain line never materialized. No route even came close to this plan until David Moffat built his line over Rollins Pass in 1904.

The short line to the Marshall coal fields, which was to be a branch of the optimistic Golden, Boulder & Caribou, hauled an average of fifteen to twenty car loads of coal per day.¹³ Loaded to capacity, each trip out of Marshall took twenty minutes. Coal made up ninety-six percent of the line's freight. The *Boulder News* remarked that "things were lively on the little road."¹⁴ A spur extended to the Fox mine near Marshall.

⁹Greiner, p. 315-316.

¹⁰Greiner, p. 317.

¹¹Thomas Moffat was the brother of David Moffat.

¹²Greiner, p. 318.

¹³Greiner, p. 319. Quoted from *Rocky Mountain News*, November 22, 1879.

¹⁴*Boulder News*, January 10, 1879.

In 1880, the Golden, Boulder & Caribou was purchased by the Kansas Pacific. The Kansas Pacific then was consolidated with the Denver Pacific into the Union Pacific, which already controlled the Colorado Central. Thus, the Colorado Central and the Golden Boulder & Caribou became part of the same Union Pacific system.¹⁵

The Golden Boulder & Caribou, operated by the Union Pacific, was a financial success until 1886 when a new railroad, the Denver, Marshall & Boulder, also reached Marshall. Since the new railroad had direct routes into Boulder and Denver, it took all of the business of its predecessor. The Golden Boulder & Caribou had served the area's needs from 1877-1886, and played a significant role in the development of a valuable resource.

Elusive and little-known, the Golden, Boulder & Caribou's only mention in a later history was, "There was for a time a track which went to Marshall from the wye east of town."¹⁶

¹⁵Greiner, p. 320.

¹⁶Denver Herald, November 24, 1909.

"PINK" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks) --

Built by Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific, 1881 - 1883.

Tracks connected the 10th and Water Street (Canyon Boulevard) depot and "dark blue" tracks at 2700 Pearl. Also, narrow gauge (36 inches between rails) line went from the 10th Street depot, to Pennsylvania Gulch (Sunset) in Four Mile Canyon and eventually branched to Ward and Eldora.

Dates of use (mountain railroads), 1883 - 1919.

Dates of use (connecting tracks), 1883 - 1960.

Depots -- 10th and Water Street depot built 1883 by Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific (destroyed in explosion, 1907). 14th and Water Street depot built 1890 by Union Pacific (moved 1973). 12th (Broadway) and Water Street freight depot built 1910 by Colorado & Southern (demolished 1963).

Routes within historic context area --

From 10th Street to the west, the route crossed Boulder Creek at approximately 4th Street, then followed Arapahoe Road to the mouth of Boulder Canyon where it crossed the Creek again. The route then ran along the north side of Boulder Canyon and along today's bicycle path in Boulder Canyon. It then followed today's road in Four Mile Canyon for a short distance before crossing over Four Mile Creek. (Because most of the mountain area is outside the Historic Context boundary, the 1898 extension of the Colorado & Northwestern from Sunset to Ward, and the 1904 extension from Sunset to Eldora will not be discussed in this report.)

There were several spurs to various industries in the downtown area, as well as a spur which ended at a flour mill near Boulder's Red Rocks Park on Canyon Boulevard.

From 10th Street to the east, the route followed Water Street (Canyon) to 22nd Street, then ran northeast to the intersection of Folsom and South Streets, then paralleled the fence between the Horizon West apartment building and the Total gas station on the east side of Folsom. From there it continued on the east of the Breach home (site of Mike's Camera) to cross Pearl Street and intersect with the "dark blue" tracks.

Visible today -- Most obvious is the grade used by the bicycle path in Boulder Canyon. Once the grade crossed Four Mile Canyon, the grade (with houses built upon it) in Four Mile Canyon is recognizable. On the connecting section, nothing remains except the fence behind the Total station (as mentioned above) and a slight jog on the north side of Pearl Street between 26th and 28th Streets.

In 1881, Boulder was gripped with "railroad fever."¹ Connecting tracks were laid from the "dark blue" track to downtown. Hopes were high for railroads to penetrate the mountains. The Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific, which never reached its namesakes, confidently pushed west out of Boulder.

¹Besides the Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific, grades were laid for the Denver, Utah & Pacific, which was planned for South Boulder Canyon; the Boulder & Middle Park Railroad and Telegraph Company intended for Left Hand Canyon and across Buchanan Pass; and the Longmont, Middle Park & Pacific, which hoped to go up Left Hand Canyon, cross the Divide, and reach the Pacific Ocean. The Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific was the only railroad which materialized.

Junius Berkeley, who had mapped out the proposed mountain route for the Golden Boulder & Caribou, became one of the directors of the Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific. The narrow gauge railroad was incorporated on January 17, 1881.²

As the newly-laid tracks reached the mouth of Boulder Canyon, the difficult job of building into the mountains was begun. Two hundred black laborers from Kansas blasted rock, hauled dirt, laid ties, and pounded in the iron rails. All they had to use were hand drills, black powder, and horse and mule-drawn dump wagons. As the grade was made and ties and rails set in, a work train inched upward with carloads of stone for bridge piers. Bridge-building and track laying up Four Mile Canyon continued throughout 1882 and into 1883.

The first passenger train to reach Pennsylvania Gulch (Sunset) and return was in early April, 1883. Shortly afterwards, a 24 by 80-foot frame depot was built at 10th Street and painted a "bloody red."³ A reporter noted, "The sloping platform at the new depot is a regular death trap. It is a splendid place to trip and fall under the wheels of an approaching train." The ladies had their own waiting room, while "the gentlemen's room is all outdoors."⁴

The tracks had three rails so as to accommodate both narrow and standard gauge trains.⁵ The first standard gauge passenger train to use the new downtown depot was on June 30, 1883. On the same day, the railroad offices were moved from the "old" (23rd and Pearl Street) depot to the

²Crossen, Forest, *Switzerland Trail of America*. Boulder: Pruett Press, 1962, p.15.

³*Boulder News and Courier*, April 13, 1883 and May 25, 1883.

⁴*Boulder County Herald*, May 30, 1883.

⁵*Boulder County Herald*, April 4, 1883.

"new" one at 10th Street.⁶ Between 1883 and 1890, all trains, narrow and standard gauge, used this same depot.

In 1890, the Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific was consolidated with the Colorado Central ("green" tracks), the Denver, Marshall & Boulder ("black" Tracks), and nine other railroads into the Union Pacific Denver & Gulf.⁷ At some point, an engine house was built at 6th Street.⁸

Meanwhile, in 1890, the Union Pacific built a stone depot at 14th and Water Streets. The building stones came from the Anderson quarry in Skunk Canyon.⁹ The 10th Street depot had been too small for Boulder's growing population, but was still used by the Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific passengers. On August 6, while the new depot was under construction, a reporter noted, "Yesterday afternoon the passengers for the south-bound train were driven under shelter by the rain, and the air was stifling in the little cubby hole of the old [10th Street] depot."¹⁰

Dedication of the Union Pacific depot was held on September 26, 1890. A band arrived on the train from Denver, led the waiting crowd to the Bowen Hotel¹¹ for a banquet, and returned to the depot for dancing.¹²

On May 30, 1894, in what came to be known as "the hundred-year flood," much of the the track and roadbed of the mountain railroad was washed out. The Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific railroad was abandoned. Then, two eastern capitalists acquired an interest in the Logan group of

⁶*Boulder County Herald*, July 4, 1883.

⁷Digerness, David S., *The Mineral Belt, Vol. III*. Denver: Sundance, 1982, p.284.

⁸*Daily Camera*, July 24, 1919.

⁹*Boulder County Herald*, May 28, 1890.

¹⁰*Boulder County Herald*, August 6, 1890.

¹¹The Bowen Hotel; formerly the American House, and later the O'Connor, then the Miles, then the Gateway, and finally the Monticello Hotel, before being razed in 1955; was located on the southeast corner of 13th and Walnut Streets.

¹²*Boulder County Herald*, October 1, 1890.

mines above Four Mile Canyon. They formed the Colorado & Northwestern Railway and, in 1898, rebuilt the previous narrow gauge line.

In an advertising scheme, one hundred dollars was offered to whomever could come up with the best name for the scenic line. The winner chose "Switzerland Trail of America," which quickly became a hit with the tourists. After a third rail was extended all the way to Denver, people could board the narrow gauge there and ride all the way to Ward or Eldora in the same railroad car.

Despite its service to and from the mining camps, the Colorado & Northwestern Railway went bankrupt in 1904. It was reorganized as the Colorado & Northwestern Railroad Company, but in 1907 the railroad was in receivership until it was sold, in 1909, to the Denver, Boulder & Western.¹³ This railroad company was also enjoyed by tourists and known by its nicknames, "drink beer and wine" and "damn bad and worse."

By 1919, financial troubles again set in, due mostly to the automobiles and trucks which competed with the railroad to transport tourists and freight. Then a July cloudburst damaged the tracks in Boulder and Four Mile Canyons beyond repair.¹⁴ The Denver, Boulder & Western was abandoned. Most of the rails were exported to Japan and the locomotives transferred to other lines.¹⁵

Between 1917 and 1926, electric Denver & Interurban trains, which had followed the "black" tracks and then ran down Pearl Street, were

¹³Ford, L. R., "History of the Famous Boulder County Mountain Railroad," *Daily Camera*, October 25, 1930.

¹⁴*Daily Camera*, July 24, 1919.

¹⁵Ford, L. R., "History of the Famous Boulder County Mountain Railroad," *Daily Camera*, October 25, 1930.

rerouted to the "pink" connecting tracks downtown. (For a further discussion of the Denver & Interurban, see the section on the "light blue" tracks.) Both the Denver & Interurban and the Colorado & Southern railroads used the "loop" route through Boulder consisting of the "black" tracks through the University, the "pink" tracks downtown, a short section of the "dark blue" tracks, and the "green" tracks to Louisville and/or Longmont. McKean Motor Cars used the "pink" and "dark blue" tracks to Brighton. All of their passengers used the 14th Street depot.

After the 1932 abandonment of the "black" tracks through the University, Colorado & Southern trains backed in or out from the "green" track along the "dark blue" and "pink" tracks to the 14th Street Depot in downtown Boulder. (See "black tracks.")

As more and more people travelled by automobile, railroads continued to lose money. Although two Colorado & Southern trains on the main line between Denver to Billings, Montana, continued to back in or out of Boulder on the "pink" tracks before 7am and after 10 pm, the last daytime passenger train left downtown Boulder on February 28, 1951. As was pointed out in a *Daily Camera* article, "Boulder was not left without train service, but was left without practical train service."¹⁶

In 1956, it was evident that all passenger and freight service would leave downtown. The switching yard north of the "pink" tracks between Broadway and 13th Street was sold to the First National Bank as a site for their new building (now Bank One). Colorado & Southern applied to the Public Utilities Commission to abandon its freight depot (on Broadway) and passenger depot (on 14th Street) in order to build a new combination

¹⁶*Daily Camera*, February 28, 1951.

passenger and freight depot between Pearl Street and Valmont Road east of 30th Street.¹⁷ It was in use between 1957 and 1985. (See "green" tracks.)

The last passenger train into downtown Boulder was Colorado & Southern's #29 on December 7, 1957.¹⁸ The next day the trains stopped at the new Boulder depot.¹⁹ The 14th Street Depot was initially retained as a ticket office, bus station, and travel agency. On June 2, 1959, work was begun on the removal of all tracks in the city of Boulder west of Broadway. In 1960, the section from Broadway to 22nd Street, and then northeast to Pearl, was removed as well.²⁰

The freight depot at Broadway was torn down in 1963. In 1967, the last remaining passenger trains, which had stopped at the latest Boulder depot,²¹ were discontinued, although the depot continued to serve freight trains until 1985.

In 1972, the City of Boulder announced its plans to open up the 14th Street intersection to traffic. The eighty-two year old 14th Street depot was slated for demolition.²² In order to save the building, the Boulder Jaycees bought it and, in 1973, moved it to the Pow Wow grounds northwest of the intersection of 30th and Pearl Streets. The building was cut in half and trucked to its new location, not unlike County Commissioner E.B. Hill's 1931 tongue-in-cheek comment about putting the depot on wheels to suit everyone's wishes (see "black" track).

¹⁷*Daily Camera*, February 23, 1956.

¹⁸Letter from E.G. Wesson, Colorado & Southern Vice President to A.A. Paddock, November 27, 1957.

¹⁹*Daily Camera*, July 7, 1960.

²⁰*Daily Camera*, June 8, 1960.

²¹Now owned by Sutherlands Lumber, and near the "wye," which also was called Boulder Junction and Ara.

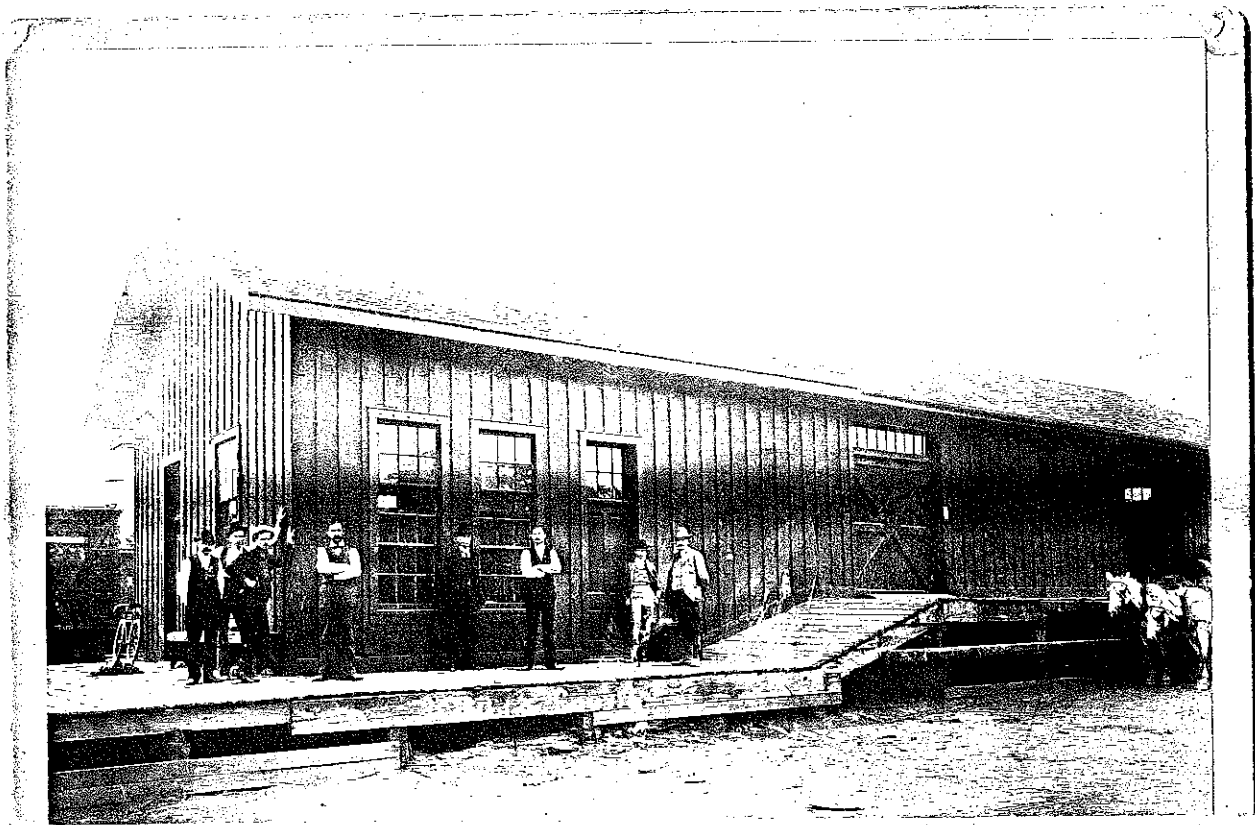
²²*Denver Post*, December 24, 1972.

This stone depot, originally built at 14th Street by the Union Pacific, is now surrounded by the Crossroads Commons Shopping Center. The tracks next to it have been removed. Its historic context has been removed as well.

Depot built in 1883 by Greeley, Salt Lake &
Pacific @ 10th Street

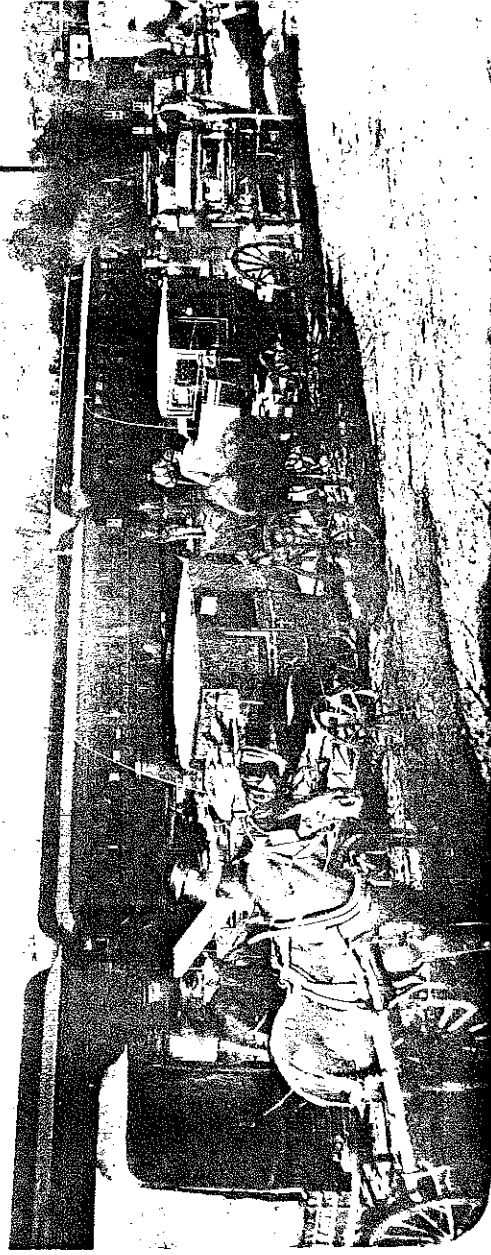


Depot built in 1883 by Greeley, Salt Lake &
Pacific at 10th Street.



June 28, 1899, Boulder freight depot at 10th and
railroad. T. E. Ciller, F. E. Angove, S. M. Majors,
Arren Brown, Ed Hill, William Raiger, G. A. Sherman.

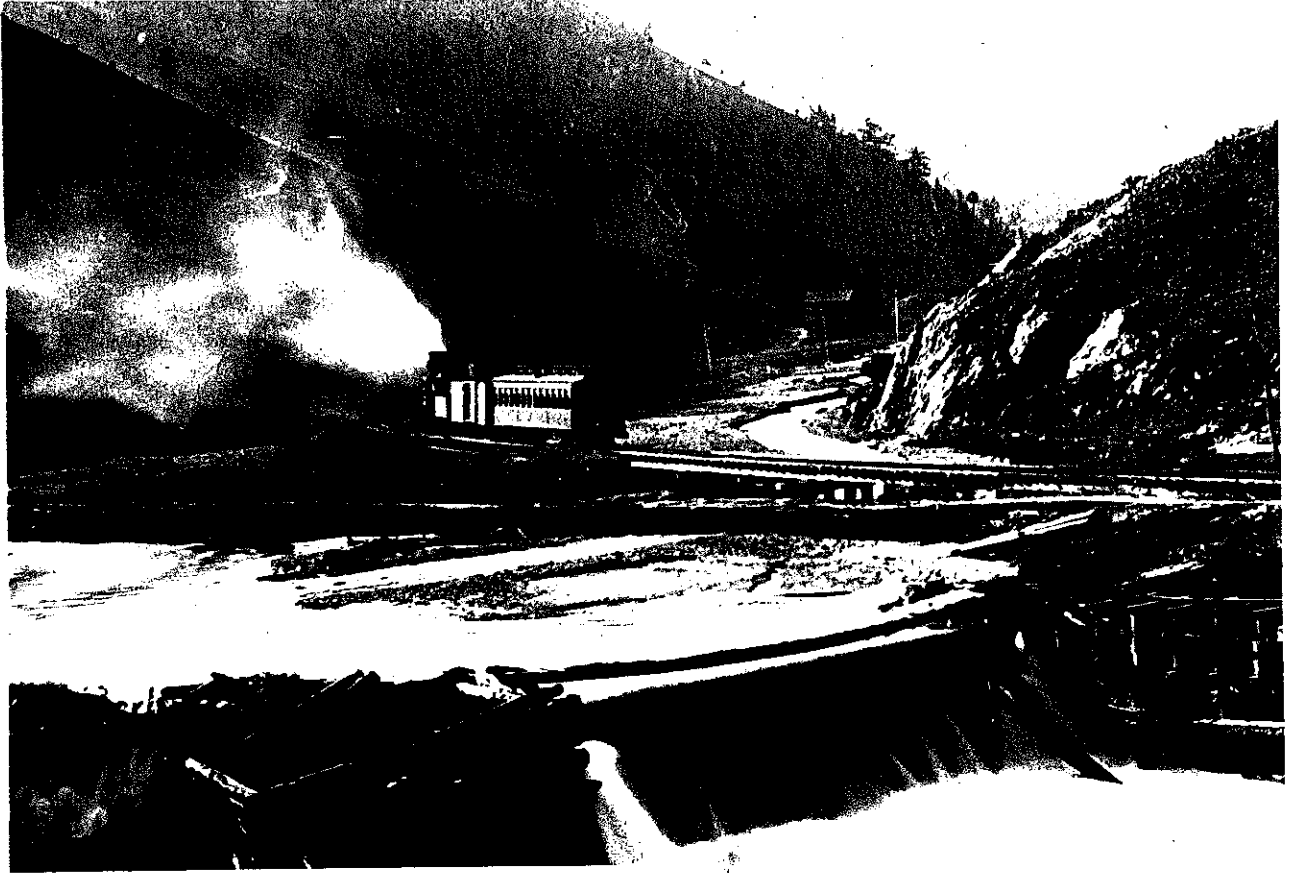
The first regular passenger
train on the Colorado Central
RR, Beckwith's Boulder Valley,
came to the 10th St. Depot,
Boulder, June 30, 1883.
Reported in the Boulder
County HERALD for July 4, 1883



9

Beckwith's
Boulder Valley

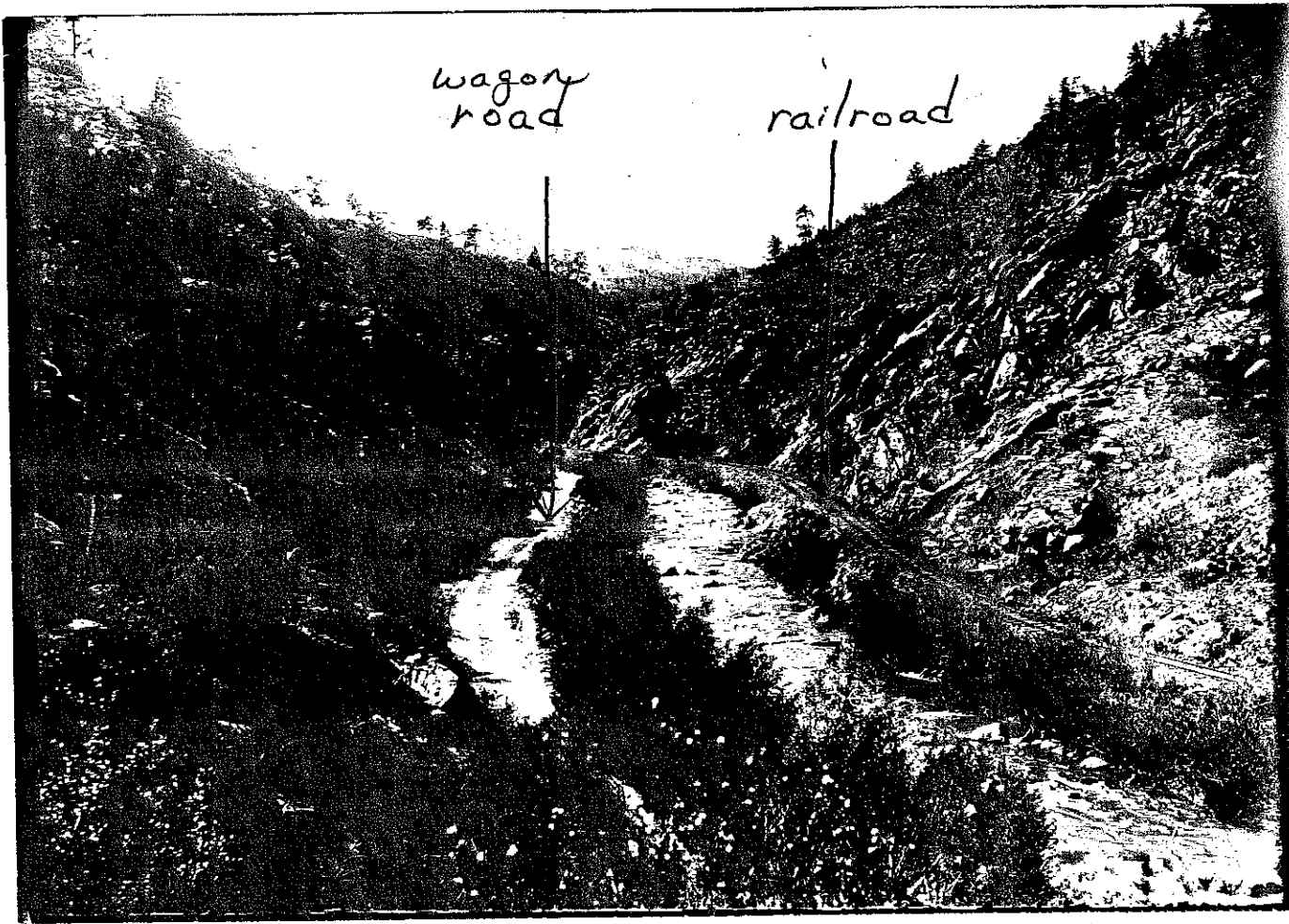
First train into Boulder at depot at 9th and railroad. Date ~~not known~~.

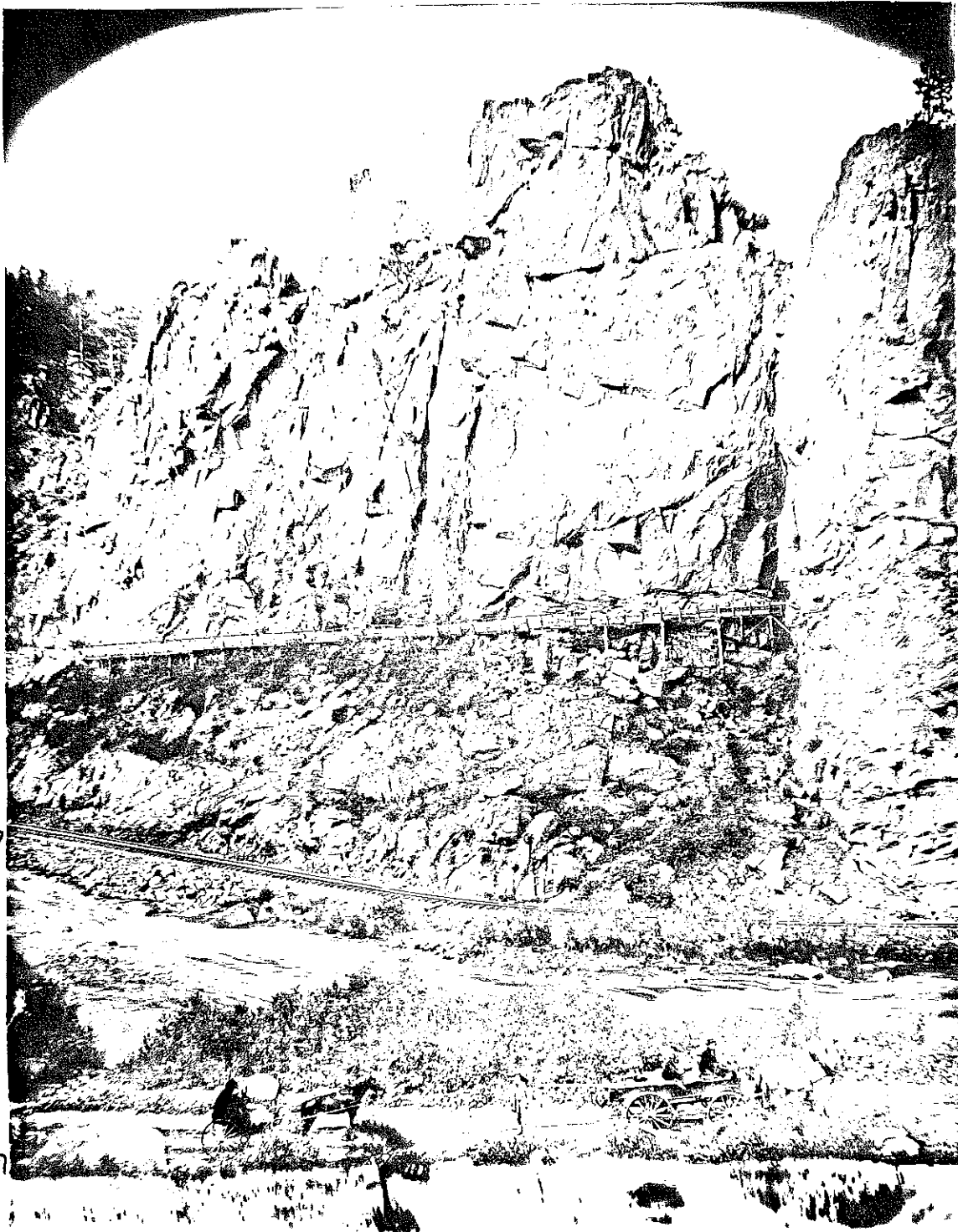


Greeley, Salt Lake & Pacific train
(under UPD & G) turning from Boulder
Canyon into Four Mile Canyon.
ca 1890-1898

Looking west in lower
Boulder Canyon

Carnegie Branch Library
for Local History
Boulder, Colorado





flume
→

rail-
road
→

wagon
road
→

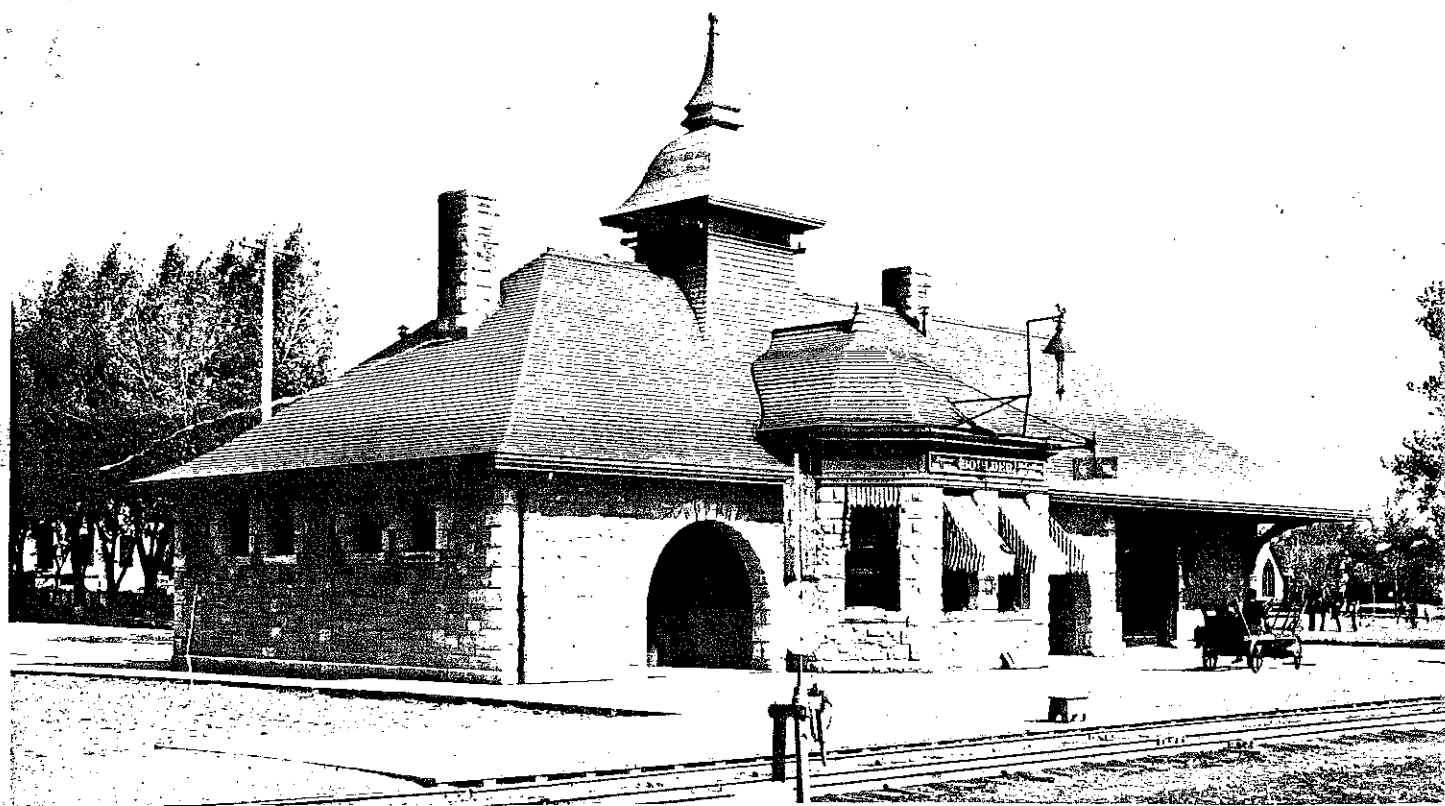
Lower Boulder Canyon

Ca. 1890s

Denver, Boulder & Western
engine house at 5th Street
ca. 1917



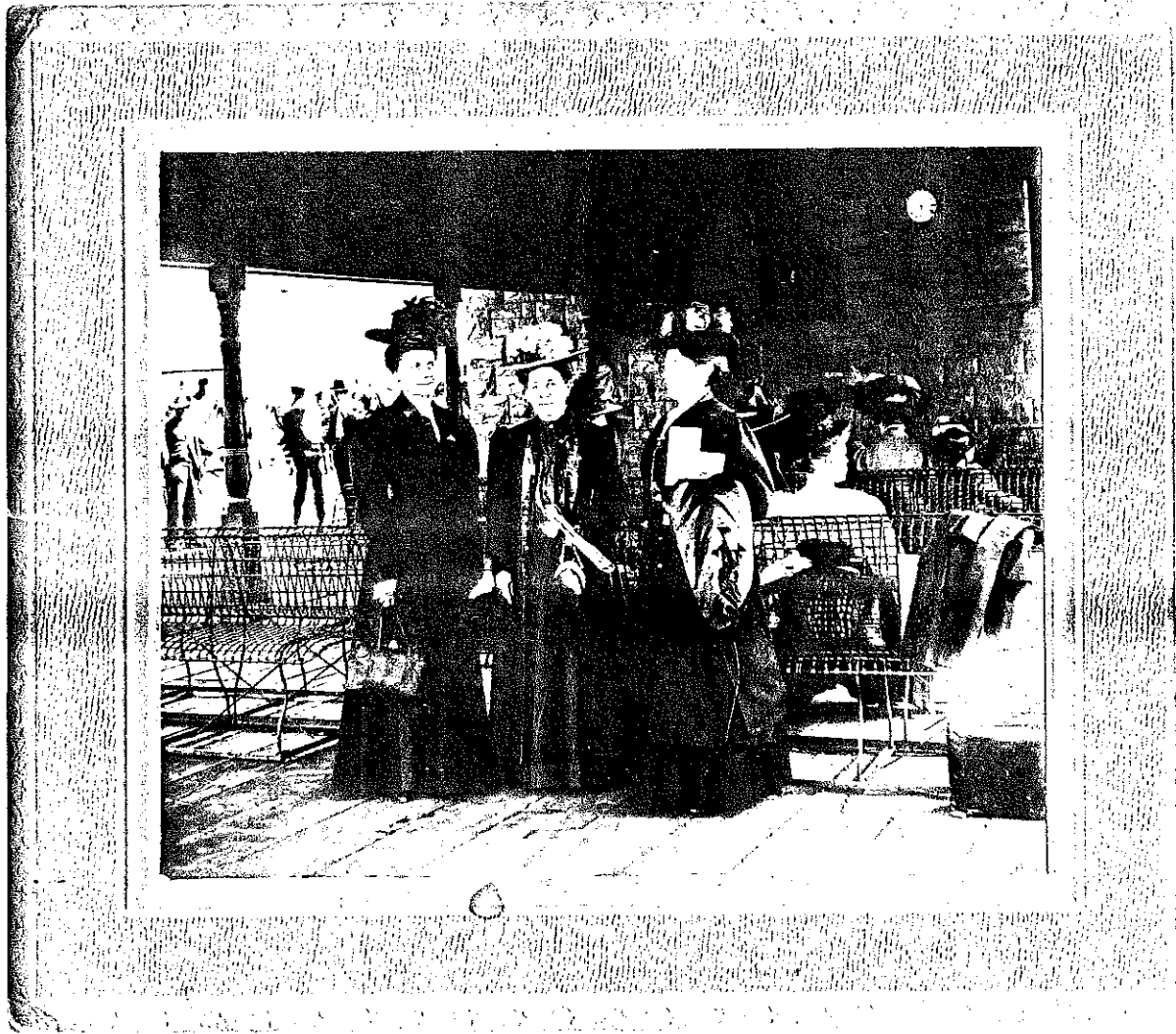
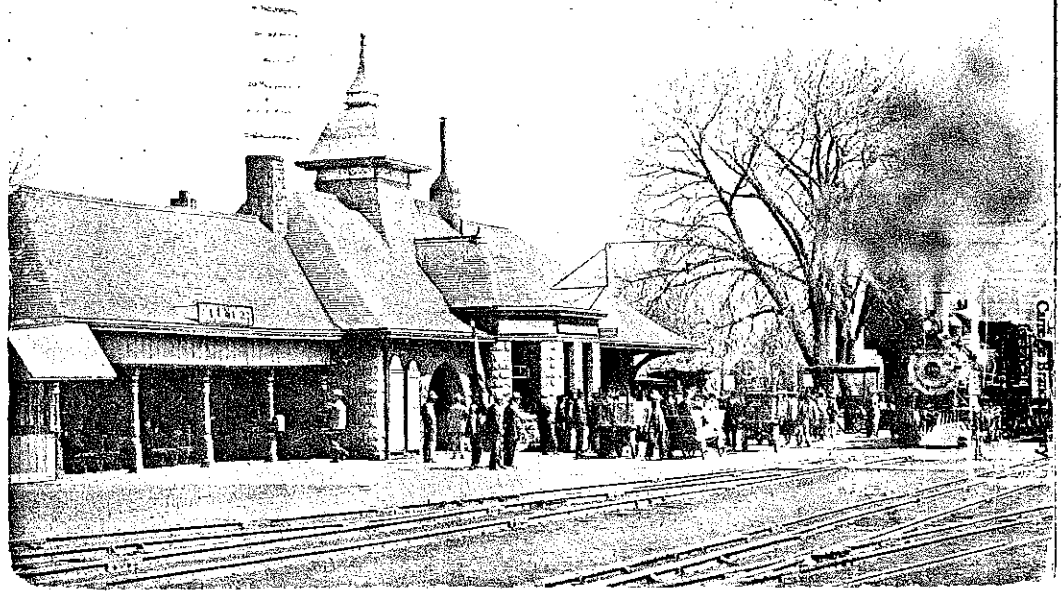
Union Pacific Depot at 14th
Street shortly after it was built
in 1890 (no outdoor waiting room)



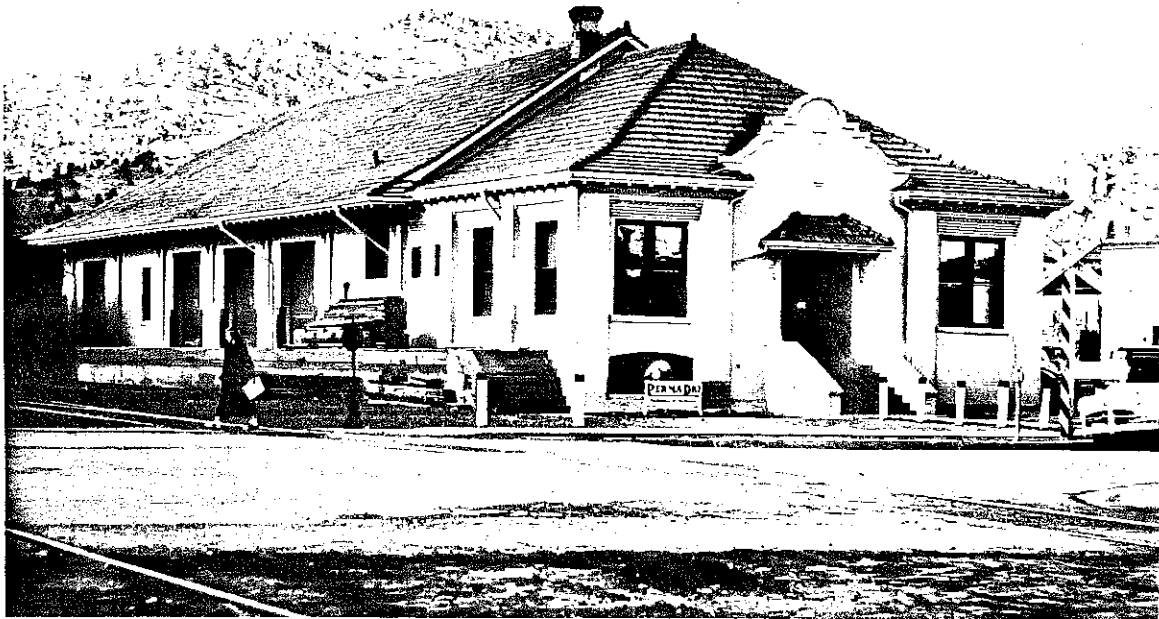
Union Pacific Depot at 14th Street

1453 DEPOT, BOULDER, COLO.

after 1900
edition of
addition of
outdoor
waiting room
→



Depot built in 1910 by Colorado &
Southern (site is NW corner Broadway & Canyon)
photo ca. 1950s.



"BLACK" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks) --

Built (partially) by Denver, Western & Pacific in 1881. The railroad went into receivership in 1882 and was purchased, and track-laying finished, by the Denver, Marshall & Boulder, in 1885.

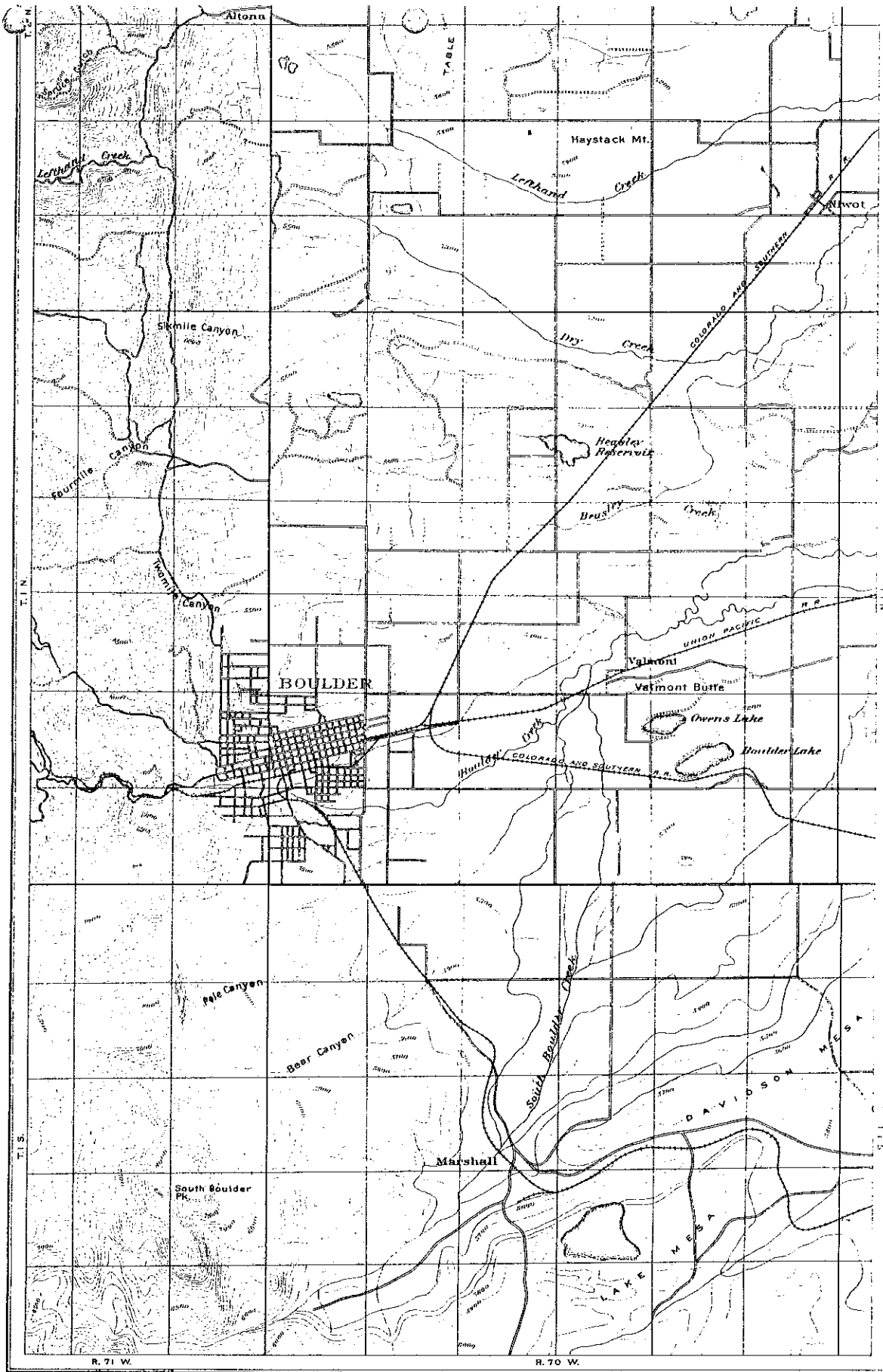
Between Louisville, Superior, Marshall, University, and downtown Boulder.

Dates of use, 1886 - 1932.

Depots -- Used existing 10th Street Depot from 1886-1890, then Union Pacific Depot at 14th (built 1890) and Colorado & Southern Freight Depot at 12th Street (built 1910). There were also small depots at the University, at Broadway and Baseline, Marshall, and other points along the way.

Route within historic context area -- The route went south of and then west of the original town of Superior, then turned west along the approximate route of Marshall Road to town of Marshall. It then followed one lane of today's Foothills Highway (route 93) to its intersection with Marshall Road. There, the route ran to the east of Chambers Drive, then above Tantra Park, and northwest to just east of the intersection of South Broadway and Table Mesa Drive.

From Table Mesa Drive to Baseline, it paralleled South Broadway on the east. The route continued through the University to its depot on the site of the Duane Physics Building. It then passed through the site of Sewall Hall, and crossed the intersection of University and 17th Streets.



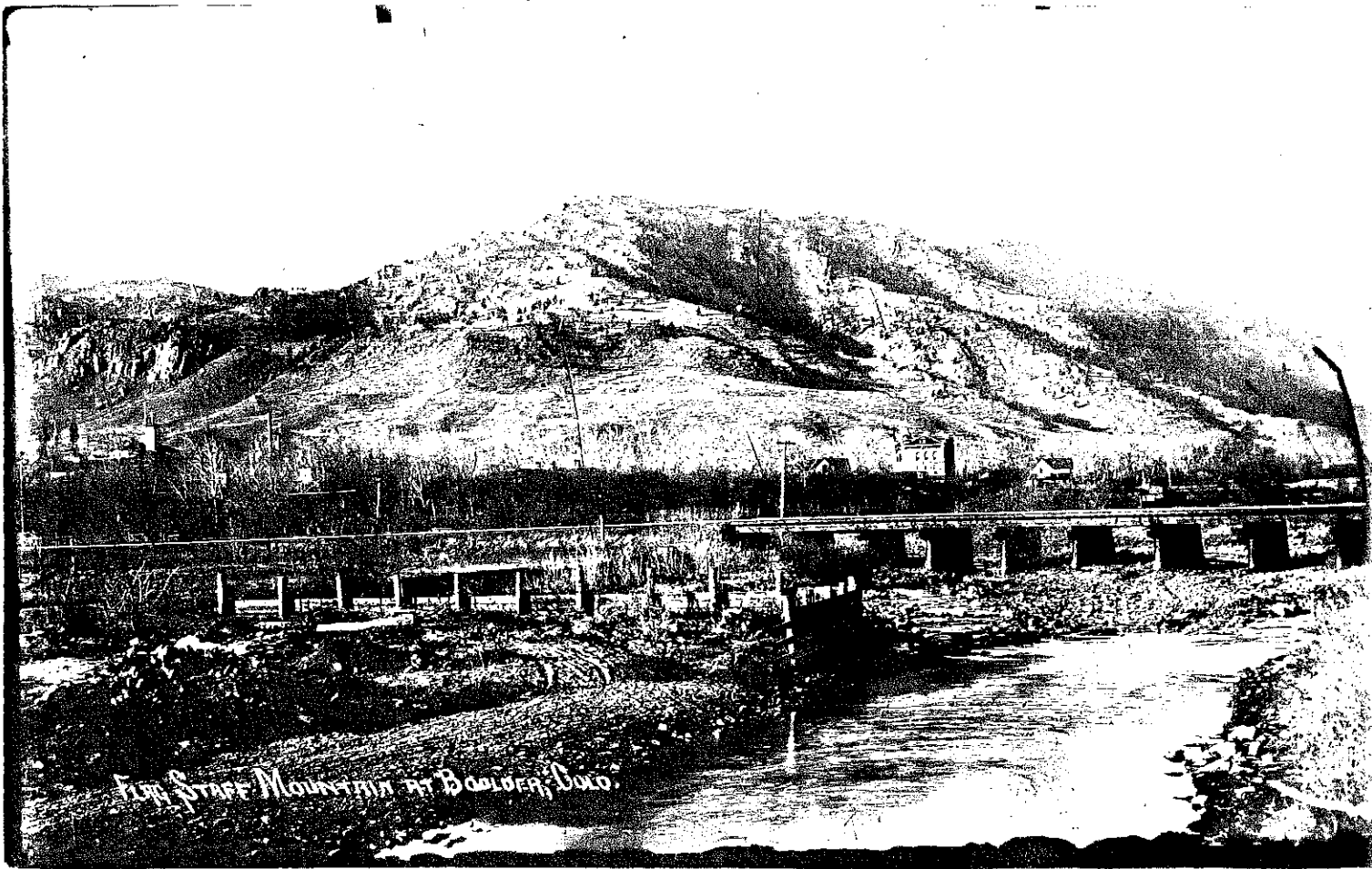
TOPOGRAPHIC MAP OF THE VICINITY OF BOULDER, COLORADO.

Compiled from U.S. Geological Survey Atlas Sheets,
1905 USGS Bulletin #265

Scale 0 1 2 3 4 miles

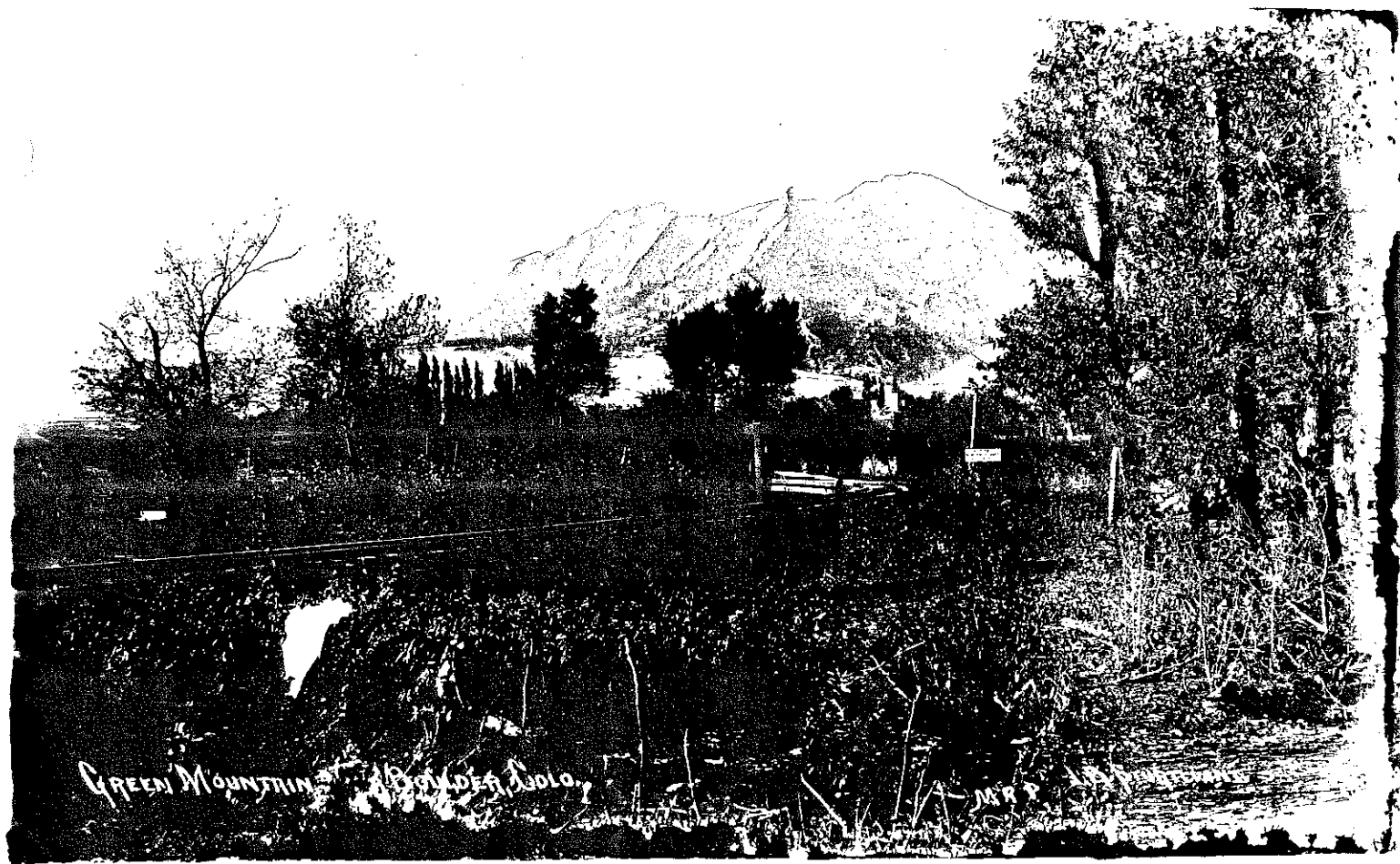
The Golden, Boulder & Caribou tracks between East Boulder & Marshall had already been abandoned in 1905.

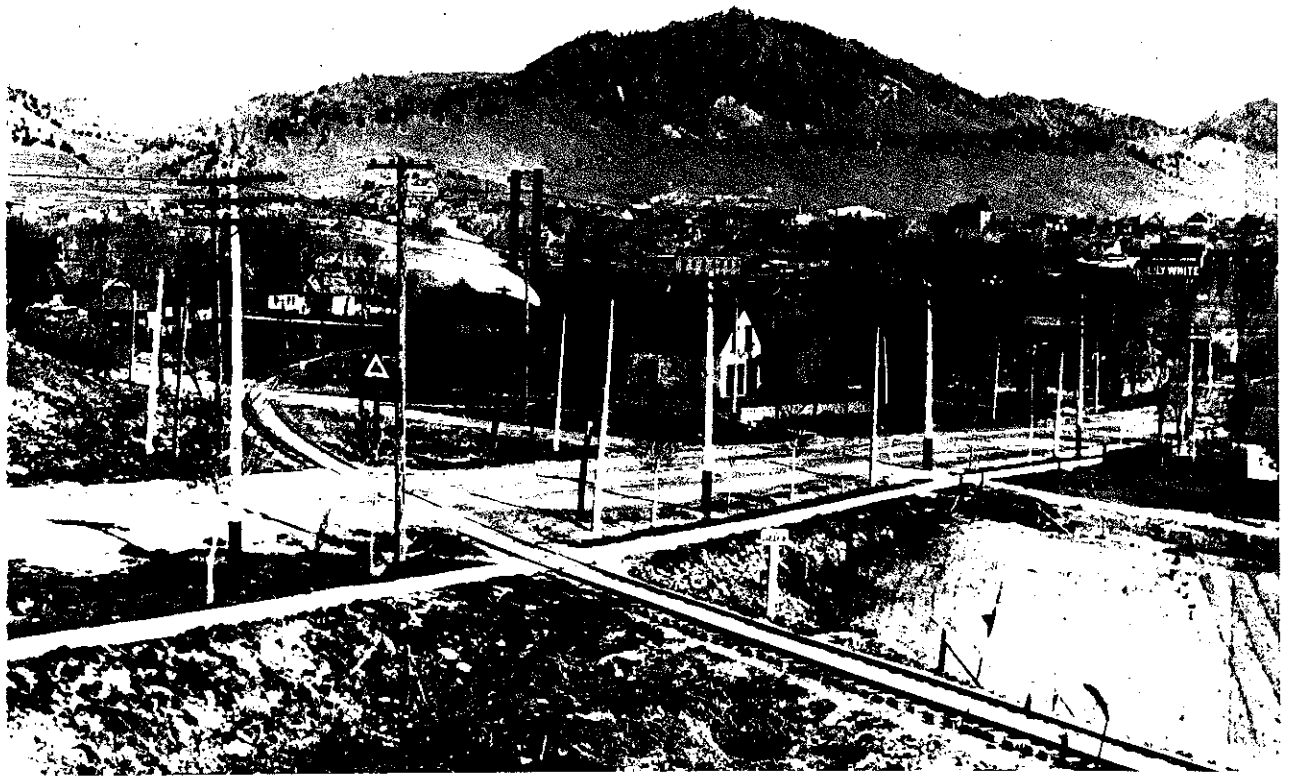
11th Street railroad bridge
looking west (Flagstaff Mt.)



11th Street Mountain at Boulder, Colo.

11th Street railroad bridge
looking southwest (Green Mt.)





Ca.
1913

Railroad tracks crossing Broadway at Marine St.



1996

The route descended into Boulder between Grand View Avenue and the Boulder High School football field, crossed 12th Street (Broadway) at Marine Street, turned north and crossed Boulder Creek at 11th Street, and turned east onto the existing tracks along Water Street (Canyon Boulevard).

Visible today -- In Marshall, the grade is visible south of the Marshall Mesa trailhead. It is also easily recognized east of Chambers Drive and along the bicycle path above Tantra Park. The walking path in Andrews Arboretum, above Boulder High School's football field, was also part of the grade. The pedestrian bridge over Boulder Creek just south of the Municipal Building appears to be on the site of the original railroad bridge.

The grade of the "black" track was begun by the Denver, Western & Pacific in 1881 at the height of Boulder's railroad-building activity. (See "pink" tracks.) By September, the grade was being constructed between the University and downtown. A railroad camp was set up on the approximate location of Boulder High School's football field.¹ At the time, tracks had been laid on the completed grade over half way from Denver.

By October, 1882, however, the Denver, Western & Pacific was "falling into decay and in danger of becoming totally useless."² It then was taken over by the Denver, Marshall & Boulder which continued to build the 26.7-mile route from the Argo Smelter, just north of Denver, to Burns Junction, near Louisville, and on to Superior, Marshall, and downtown

¹*Boulder News and Courier*, September 2, 1881.

²*Boulder News and Courier*, October 13, 1882.

Boulder.³ The new route was a more direct one from Denver than the previous grade of the Colorado Central which came from Golden.

The Denver, Marshall & Boulder railroad soon transported all of Marshall's coal and put the Golden, Boulder & Caribou out of business. (See "red" track).

In 1890, the year that the 14th Street depot was built, the Denver, Marshall & Boulder was one of the twelve railroads which was consolidated into the Union Pacific Denver & Gulf, a line that extended all the way to Fort Worth, Texas.

On December 20, 1898, the Union Pacific Denver & Gulf became the Colorado & Southern.⁴

On June 23, 1908, the first Denver & Interurban, a subsidiary of the Colorado & Southern, ran on this track through Marshall and the University. It was "electrified" so as to accommodate the Denver & Interurban cars which were powered with overhead electric lines. (For a discussion of the Denver & Interurban, see "light blue" tracks.)

After the narrow gauge was abandoned in 1919 (see "pink" tracks), the Colorado & Southern mainline trains between Denver and Billings, Montana; as well as the Denver & Interurban, were the only trains on the "black" track. The trains were convenient for those who chose to ride them, but more and more tourists had taken up "motoring" in their own automobiles. As interest in train travel diminished, some people in Boulder wanted the trains out of the city.

³Poor, Henry V., *Manual of the Railroads of the United States for 1887-1888*. New York: H.V. and H.W. Poor, 1888, p.898.

⁴Digerness, David S., *The Mineral Belt, Vol. III*. Denver: Sundance, 1982, p. 285.

By the early 1930s, the University of Colorado Regents wanted the railroad removed from campus in order to use the land for new buildings. Also, the railroad crossings on Broadway were causing problems due to increased traffic in the city of 12,000 people. The Colorado & Southern, the only line remaining at the time, was losing money and wanted out as well.

Boulder County Commissioners, however, fought hard to keep the "black" track. On April 27, 1931, they petitioned the Interstate Commerce Commission in the matter of Colorado & Southern's application to abandon its line through Marshall to Boulder.

The Commissioners stated that this particular route was needed to keep Boulder one of the educational, recreational, and tourist centers of Colorado. Their specific reasons against abandonment were:

1. Removal of the line through the University would remove the "loop" through Boulder and would require that either the 14th Street depot would have to be moved east of the city, or trains would have to be backed into or out of the city. (The discussion got so complicated that E.B. Hill, Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, proposed that the depot be "placed on a truck and moved around to suit the wishes of people who cannot agree upon the location.")⁵
2. Backing trains into or out of Boulder would involve crossing "twelve or more streets," resulting in "danger to life and property..., unreasonable delay, and unnecessary and unjustifiable inconvenience."
3. A depot east of downtown would deprive Boulder's citizens of the convenience they enjoyed since 1886 when the "black" line first looped

⁵*Daily Camera*, April 30, 1931.

through Boulder. Particularly affected, stated the Commissioners, would be the [3,000] college students, visitors of the Colorado Chautauqua, and patients of the Colorado Sanitarium.

4. Without the main line trains running through downtown, it was feared that Boulder would "suffer great loss of business and revenue, ... become distinctly unpopular as a tourist center, and ruin its opportunities for continued growth." The loop was an asset advertised by the Chamber of Commerce.

5. University students would be deprived of freight and transportation, and Colorado citizens could no longer travel in special trains to the University station to attend CU football games. (In a *Daily Camera* article, County Attorney John R. Wolff stated, "When the University grows and has an enrollment of from 6,000 to 7,000, these same leaders who are now asking the removal of the tracks will be the first to demand rapid, convenient, and reliable transportation.")⁶

6. The town of Superior, whose 500 inhabitants relied on coal mining, would be "wiped out of existence." Marshall also was dependent on the railroad, and a lack of service to Eldorado Springs would result in "great depreciation and destruction of property values."

7. In Boulder, and all along the proposed abandoned line, property values would depreciate and destroy the businesses of the community resulting in a "loss of a very substantial amount of its capital wealth and taxable revenues."⁷

⁶*Daily Camera*, April 30, 1931.

⁷*Petition For Leave to Intervene Before the Interstate Commerce Commission*, The Board of the County Commissioners of the County of Boulder, April 27, 1931.

The Commissioners made a good case against abandonment in their petition, but nowhere did they address the fact that passengers on the Colorado & Southern trains was at an all-time low. Traffic checks in May, 1931, showed some trains with as little as three passengers. An era was ending, but there seemed to be little that anyone could do to stop it. The *Daily Camera* entitled an editorial on the lack of patronage as "Some Very Sad Figures."⁸

The abandonment of the "black" track was granted. Through trains between Denver and Billings, Montana were routed through Louisville. The Colorado & Southern, despite the dangers, agreed to back into or out of Boulder from its new main line ("green") track east of Boulder. The railroad also agreed to make much-needed improvements in the "unsanitary" 14th Street Depot.

In June, 1931, the *Daily Camera* printed an editorial entitled "Boulder Can't Have Both Unless It Makes Concessions." Boulderites, it was stated, "chose the bus and their own automobiles as the means of travel." It was added,

"Every community is entitled to use the means of transportation it prefers. A community which can support every known means of transportation is unquestionably entitled to them all; but a community which can support only one cannot insist upon the retention of two if the patronage accorded the least favored one is not sufficient to enable it to live. A railroad company whose resources have been exhausted due to loss of traffic to other agencies

⁸*Daily Camera*, June 16, 1931.

cannot continue to serve. Operating expenses cannot be paid out of an empty pocket."⁹

The last train ran through the University on April 24, 1932. By June, 1932, all of the "black" track between downtown Boulder and Marshall was removed.¹⁰

The section of the railroad grade from its intersection with Marshall Road to the town of Marshall became the foothills highway (route 93). When it was first proposed, the *Daily Camera* reported, "...the long years of train traffic have packed the right-of-way down until it would be an excellent, solid road base."¹¹

Today, as our need for public transportation has increased, few people even know that this railroad line ever existed.

⁹*Daily Camera*, June 13, 1931.

¹⁰*Daily Camera*, July 7, 1960. The section between Marshall and Superior was removed a few years later.

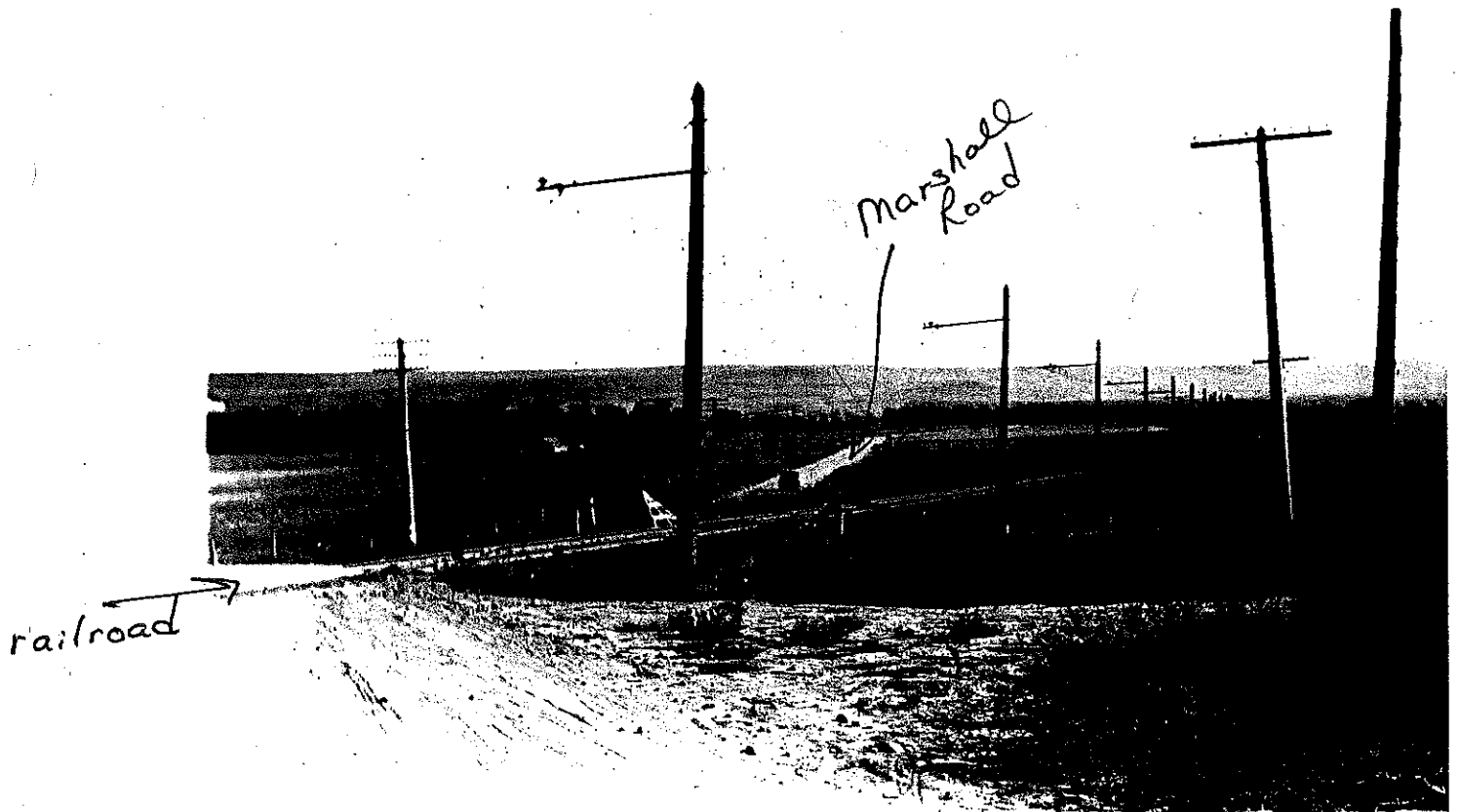
¹¹*Daily Camera*, June 5, 1936. In 1953, after the opening of Rocky Flats, the town of Marsall was bypassed. *Daily Camera*, November 5, 1953.

→
Railroad

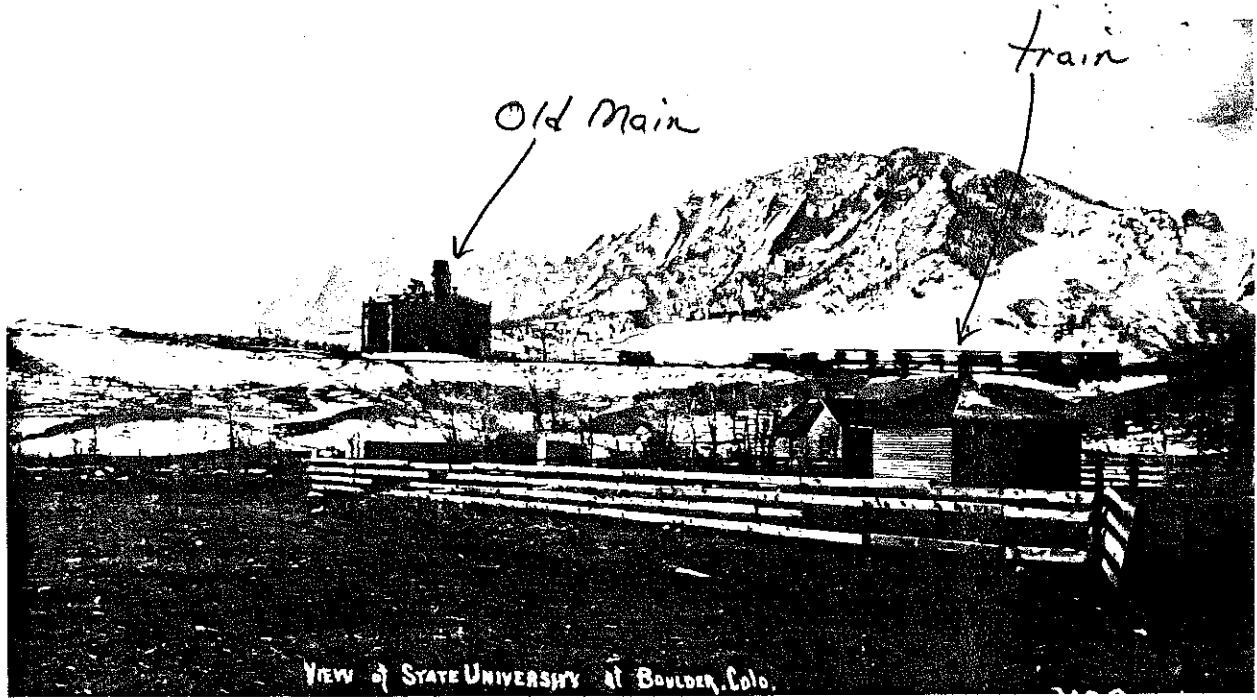


Spur to Fox mine

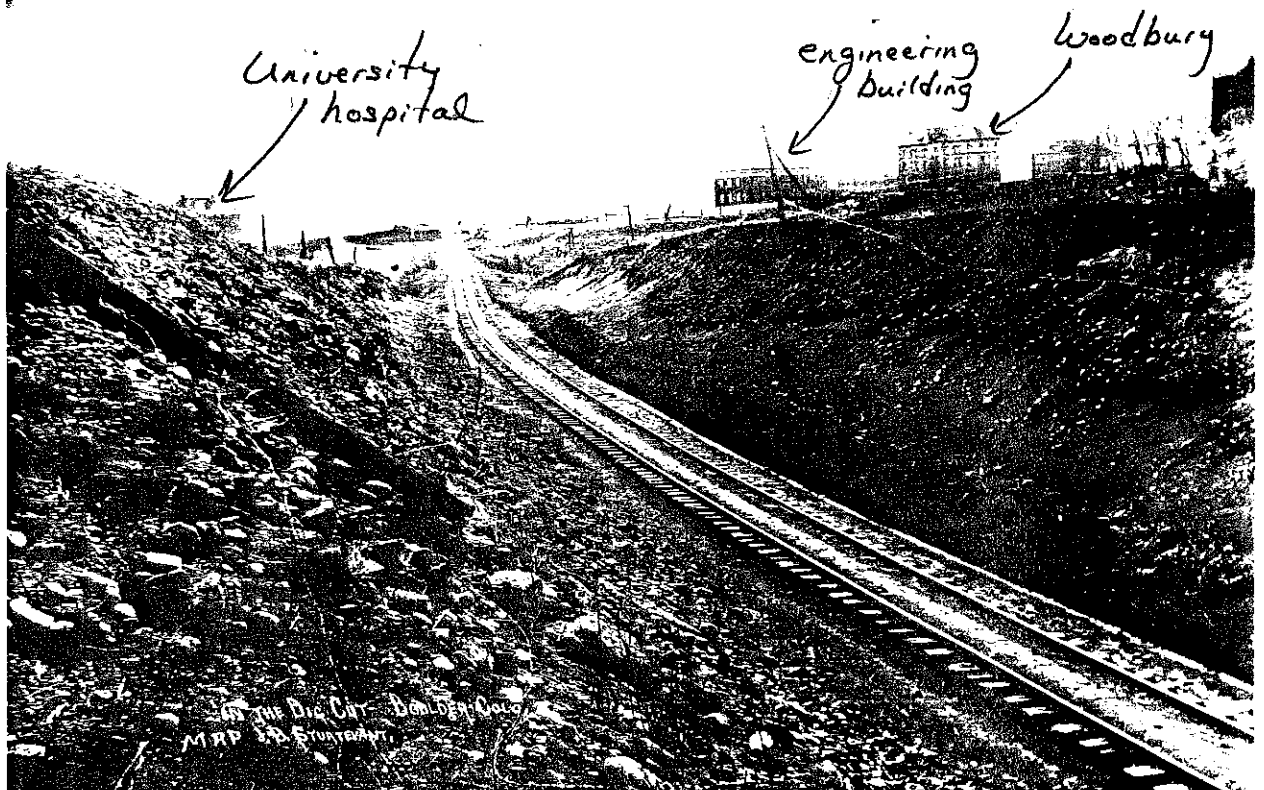
Looking north from Marshall
(for road of Fox mine spur, see
Drumm's Map of the Boulder Oil Fields
in section on "Red" Tracks.)



Shanahan Crossing (south of Boulder)

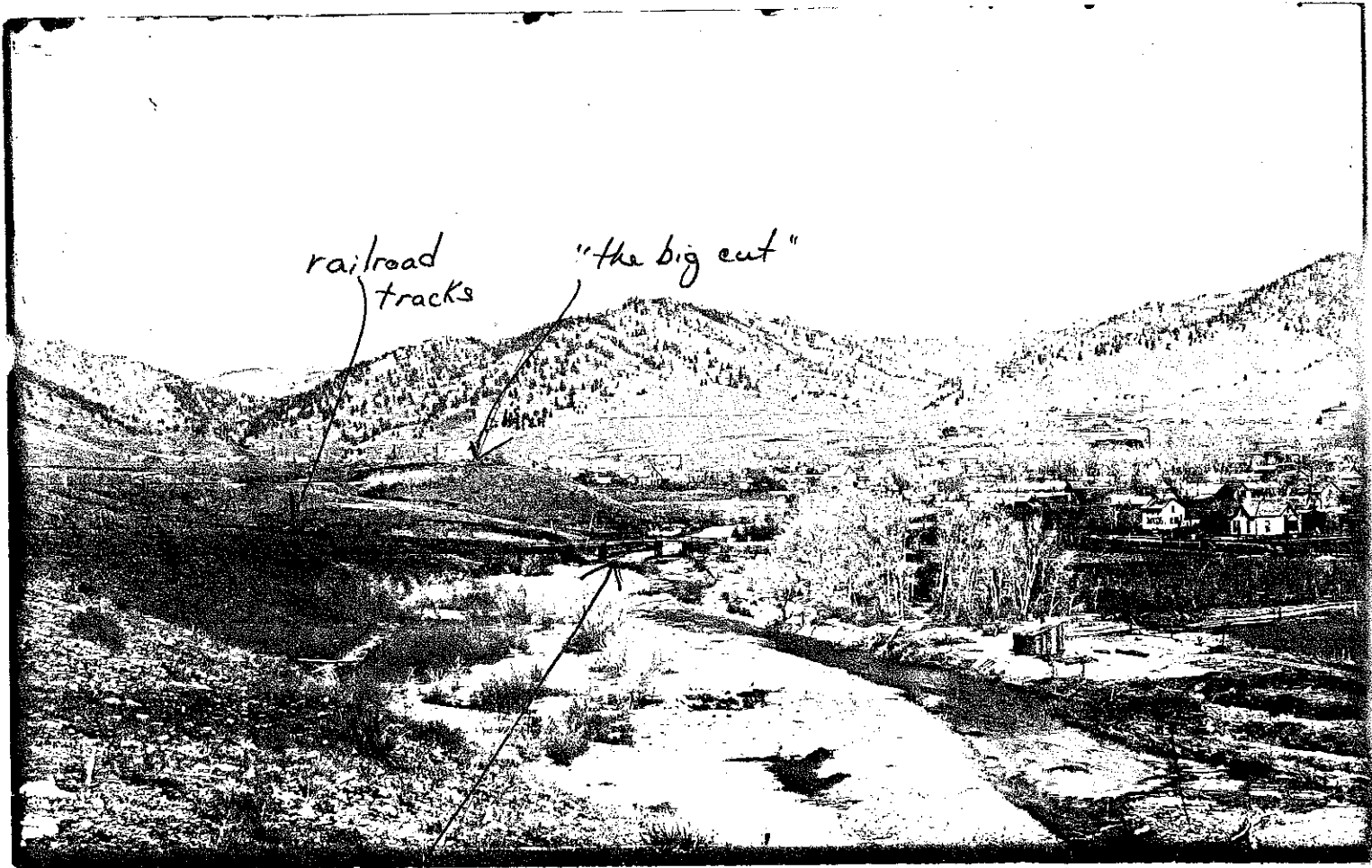


Railroad Thru the University

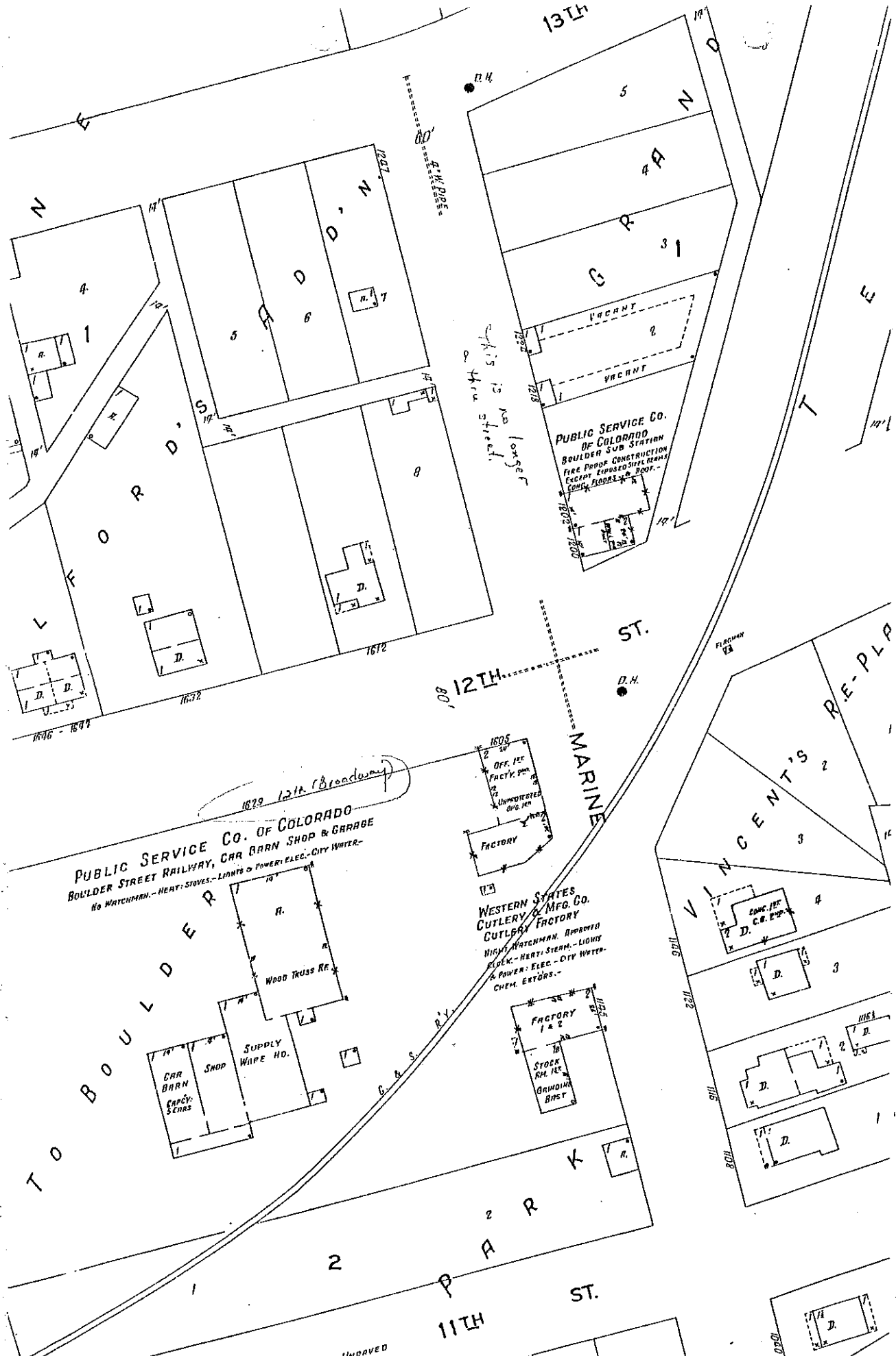


"On the Big Cut"

Boulder looking west
with railroad tracks coming
down from the University.



19th Street bridge



1931 Sanborn Insurance Co. map

"YELLOW" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks) --

Built beginning 1899.

Between Chautauqua Park, Colorado Sanitarium, Newlands Subdivision,
and 23rd and Pine Streets.

Dates of use, 1899 - 1931.

Depots -- none. Power house located at 1629 12th Street (Broadway).¹

Route within historic context area -- The south loop extended from 12th Street (Broadway) and Walnut to Chautauqua Park via Broadway, College Avenue, 9th Street, Baseline, 10th Street, Aurora Avenue, and 14th Street. The north loop went to the Colorado Sanitarium (now Community Hospital's Mapleton Center) and Newlands Subdivision via Broadway, Maxwell, 5th Street, and Evergreen Avenue. Another route left Broadway and went east on Walnut, then north on 14th Street, east on Pearl, north on 18th Street, and east on Pine Street to its terminus at 23rd Street.

Visible today -- The tracks have been removed and/or paved over.

Boulder's first attempt at having a streetcar line was in 1872 when a company was organized to build a horse-drawn streetcar line from the

¹Sanborn Insurance Co. map, 1931. The *Boulder Daily Camera*, April 26, 1899 and *Boulder News*, April 27, 1899 gave its location as the *southwest* corner of 12th (Broadway) and Arapahoe, but the building actually was located in the middle of the block. This is the location of the building on the south side of Alfalfa's Market. (The Alfalfa's building was built by Safeway in 1942.) More research is needed to determine if the existing building on the Public Service site has been remodelled or replaced. The landmarked Public Service substation was a separate building located diagonally across the street on the *east* side of Broadway.

"western limits of the town" to the fairgrounds, then located southeast of Valmont and 28th Streets. This first line, however, didn't materialize.

Neither did a second line, proposed in 1875. It was also to be a horse-drawn line to run from the two year-old Colorado Central depot (see "green" tracks) to the Red Rock flouring mill near the mouth of Boulder Canyon.

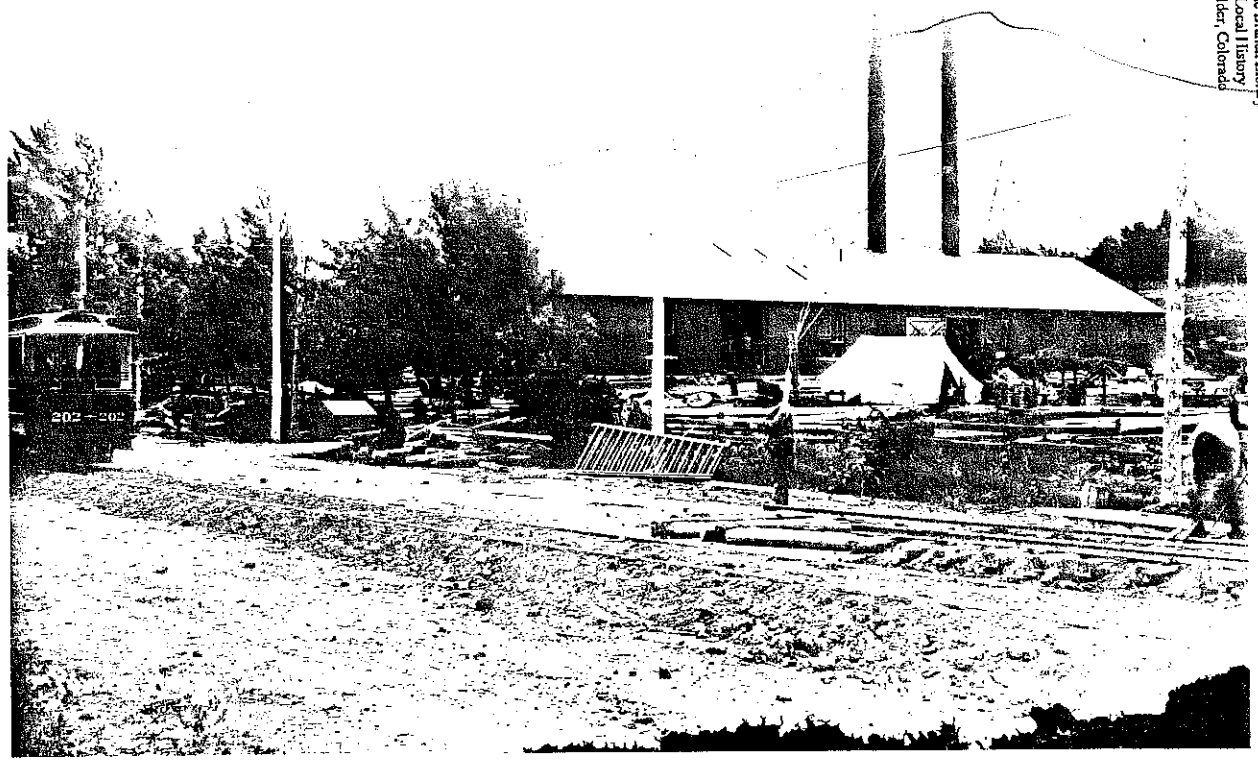
Then, in 1891, the Boulder Railway and Improvement Company was incorporated, but it, too, was doomed from the beginning. Plans were made for the horse-drawn line to follow Pearl Street from 5th to 24th Streets.² The street was plowed and scraped, and tracks were laid, but the promoters failed to pay their contractors.

On September 13, 1891, the first wooden street car was unloaded off a freight train and put into service. There was no way to turn it around, so at the end of the line the horse was unhitched and moved to the other end of the car. Seats accommodated twelve to fifteen people. The fare was a nickel. According to the *Boulder News*, people rode "until the novelty wore off." Less than two months later, Boulder's first streetcar went out of business. The tracks were torn up the following spring. Later, like today's vending carts on the Pearl Street Mall, the streetcar was used for a while as a downtown lunch stand. Restaurant owners were envious and eventually succeeded in having it removed from the city limits under the 1874 law which prohibited wooden structures within downtown Boulder.³

The 1898 opening of Chautauqua Park provided the impetus for the Boulder Railway and Utility Company, an electric street car line. By the

²*Daily Camera*, March 29, 1951. Interview with J.B. Aumick, first horse-drawn streetcar driver.

³*Boulder News*, April 9, 1908.



Street
car →

S-111

Boulder Electric Light
& Power Company 1899
(west side of Broadway
between Arapahoe & Marine Streets)

following spring, promoters were scrambling to beat Chautauqua's July 4, 1899 opening date.

The *Boulder Tribune* stated, "This is good news for Boulder. It assures the permanency of the Chautauqua. It gives University students [the ability] to reside in any portion of the city and still be near the institution."⁴

A coal-fired power house was built on the west side of 12th Street (Broadway) south of Arapahoe. (See footnote #1.) Four engines, four dynamos, and four boilers each had a capacity of 125 horsepower. Car barns were erected and a spur line built from the "pink" tracks to bring in the coal.⁵ Railroad car-loads of rails were unloaded at the University (see "black" tracks) and hauled by horse-drawn wagons to the Chautauqua section of the grade.⁶ Poles were put up along the route for the overhead wires.⁷ As the streetcar line neared completion, the *Daily Camera* stated that "scores of people crowded the streets to watch the work."⁸

The June 24, 1899, *Daily Camera* headline was entitled, "She Starts, She Moves." The three-mile Chautauqua loop of the electric streetcar was complete. A reporter noted,

"To visitors to Boulder and to citizens themselves, the ride is a revelation, particularly in regard to the extent and substantialness of the growth on University hill, in University Place and other additions lying south toward the Chautauqua grounds. The car line circles the addition and will be a means of building up the territory

⁴*Boulder Tribune*, April 29, 1899.

⁵*Boulder County Herald*, May 10, 1899.

⁶*Boulder County Herald*, May 17, 1899.

⁷*Boulder County Herald*, May 31, 1899.

⁸*Daily Camera*, June 23, 1899.

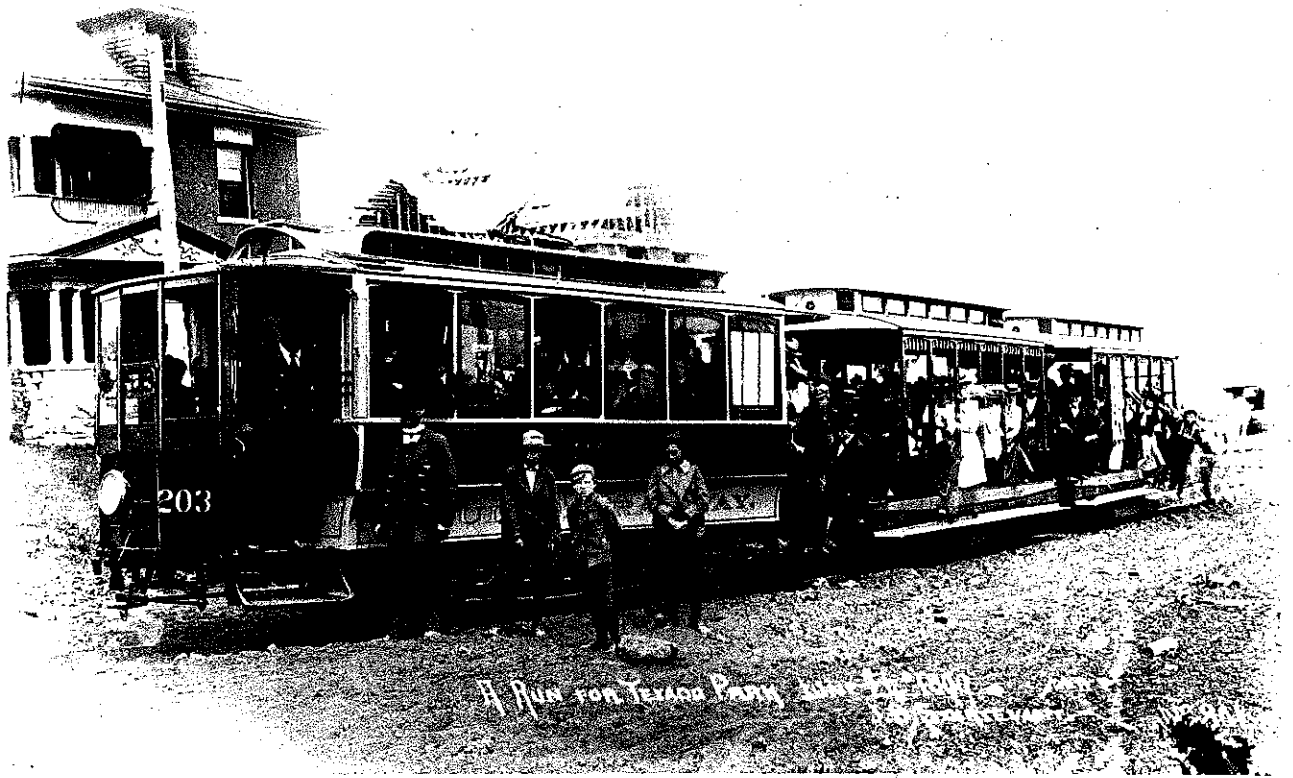
embraced. The plateau has always been a desirable location for residences, but with rapid transit to the town itself its desirability is indefinitely increased. The car line, in fact, will be responsible for a very welcome growth of the city in the residence line.⁹

Next to be built, a few years later, was the line to 23rd and Pine Streets¹⁰ and the north loop to the Colorado Sanitarium. Last to be constructed was the extension north on 5th Street to Evergreen and 12th Street (Broadway). The streetcars became the property of the Public Service Company of Colorado in 1914. By the early 1930s, the novelty had worn off even the most profitable streetcar line. Rail travel became a thing of the past. On June 2, 1931, the electric streetcars were replaced by the city bus line.¹¹

⁹*Daily Camera*, June 24, 1899.

¹⁰The tracks on Pearl Street between 14th and 18th Streets were used by the Denver & Interurban Railroad between 1908 and 1917. (See "Light Blue" tracks.)

¹¹*Daily Camera*, January 23, 1929.



Streetcars to Chautauque
1899

(of B Sturtevant's
photo of streetcar
no. 203 and its
riders when it
stopped at corner
of College & 12th
Street in June 1899
Belser House @ NW
corner of 13th &
College visible in
background)



Street Cars at 12th and Walnut

"LIGHT BLUE" TRACKS

(See Map of Boulder, Colorado, Railroad and Streetcar Tracks) --

Built by Denver & Interurban.

Between 12th Street (Broadway) and Water (Canyon) to Pearl, then along Pearl Street to Boulder Junction, renamed Ara as an acronym for American Railway Association,¹ at 32rd and Pearl Streets.

Dates of use, 1908 - 1917. (From 1917 to 1926, the Denver & Interurban ran on the "pink" tracks and used the 14th Street depot.)

Depots -- West side of First National Bank at 12th Street (Broadway) and Pearl.

Routes within historic context area -- see above.

Visible today -- The tracks on Pearl Street have been removed. Nothing visible remains.

The Denver & Interurban Railroad, a subsidiary of the Colorado & Southern began its electric rail service between Denver and Boulder in 1908. The impressive green train of one to three cars was like a large streetcar. A coal-fired power plant in Lafayette supplied the electricity for the overhead lines.

The Denver & Interurban made sixteen round trips per day between Boulder and Denver. Four of these trains carried mail. Timetables varied from year to year, but generally the trains provided service between 6:20

¹Speas, Sam, and Margaret Coel, *Goin' Railroadin', A Century on the Colorado High Iron*. Boulder: Pruett Publishing, 1985, p. 190.

am and 12:55 am. They travelled fifty miles per hour, cost 50¢ to ride, and were clean and efficient.

In 1907, the developers of Eldorado Springs had built their own Eldorado Springs Railway Company's "train" between Marshall and the growing resort. The railroad cars were actually automobiles that ran on a railroad track. By mid-summer 1908, the Eldorado Springs Railway was bought out by the Denver & Interurban which electrified the line and operated it as a branch of the route through Marshall.²

In April, 1908, six-horse teams plowed up the hard-packed surface of Pearl Street to prepare it for the Denver & Interurban rails.³ The tracks extended along Pearl Street between 12th Street (Broadway) and Ara, the new name for the "wye" where the "dark blue" and "green" tracks intersected at 32rd and Pearl Streets.⁴ On the sections of Pearl and also 12th Street (Broadway) where the Denver & Interurbans and the streetcars both ran, the streetcars shared the heavier rails of the Interurbans.

The first Interurban car arrived in Boulder, via Marshall, on June 23, 1908. Its arrival prompted "all the whistles in town" to be blown and a crowd of a thousand people to greet and inspect the single coach. It was filled with railroad officials, Colorado Governor Buchtel, Denver Mayor Speer, John Wallace (former chief engineer of the Panama Canal), and Boulder dignitaries including Mayor Isaac T. Earl, and *Daily Camera* editor, L. C. Paddock. The train returned to Denver via Louisville.⁵

²Jones, William C. and Noel T. Holley, *The Kite Route, Story of the Denver & Interurban Railroad*. Boulder: Pruett Publishing, 1986, p. 46-47.

³*Daily Camera*, April 4, 1908.

⁴Between 14th and 18th Streets, these tracks doubled for the Boulder Railway and Utility Company (see "Yellow" tracks).

⁵*Boulder News*, June 25, 1908.

As they came and went to Denver, the trains alternated between the "black" track through the University and Marshall and the "green" track through Louisville. Because the route of these lines; which extended from Boulder to Marshall and also from Boulder to Louisville, then met again to continue to Denver; resembled a kite on a string, the line was often called the "Kite Route." Both lines through Louisville and through Marshall added overhead electrical wires. The electric Interurbans and the Colorado & Southern steam trains operated together on the same tracks. However, on the route south of Louisville, between "Denver & Interurban Junction" and Denver, the electrified tracks ran parallel to the existing railroad tracks on the same grade.⁶

The Denver & Interurban's depot was the west side of the First National Bank at 12th (Broadway) and Pearl Streets. The train stopped at any Pearl Street corner where passengers wanted to get on or off.⁷ The \$9,000 coaches, fifty-five and a half feet in length, with lavatories and electric dome lights, were said to be "almost as luxuriant as Pullman passenger cars."⁸

In 1917, the downtown section of Pearl Street was paved, and the Interurban (but not the streetcar) tracks were removed. The Denver & Interurbans were routed onto the "pink" tracks along Water Street and stopped at the 14th Street depot.

Prosperous for the first decade, this seemingly-ideal rapid transit system slowly lost its public appeal with the rise of the automobile. The schedule was cut to 13 round-trips per day in 1920. In an effort to win the

⁶*Interurban*, Special Number Five, October, 1947.

⁷Jones, p. 98.

⁸*Daily Camera*, April 4, 1908.

tourist traffic, scenic one-day trips were coordinated in Boulder with automobile drivers who took the passengers to Nederland, Ward, and Estes Park, with further excursions available by foot and on horseback to the Arapahoe Glacier.

The late author Forest Crossen arrived in Boulder, presumably for the first time, on the Interurban in 1923. He stated in an article, "It was a lovely Sunday morning, and we came up through Marshall and across the University campus. I thought it the most delightful trip I had ever taken."⁹

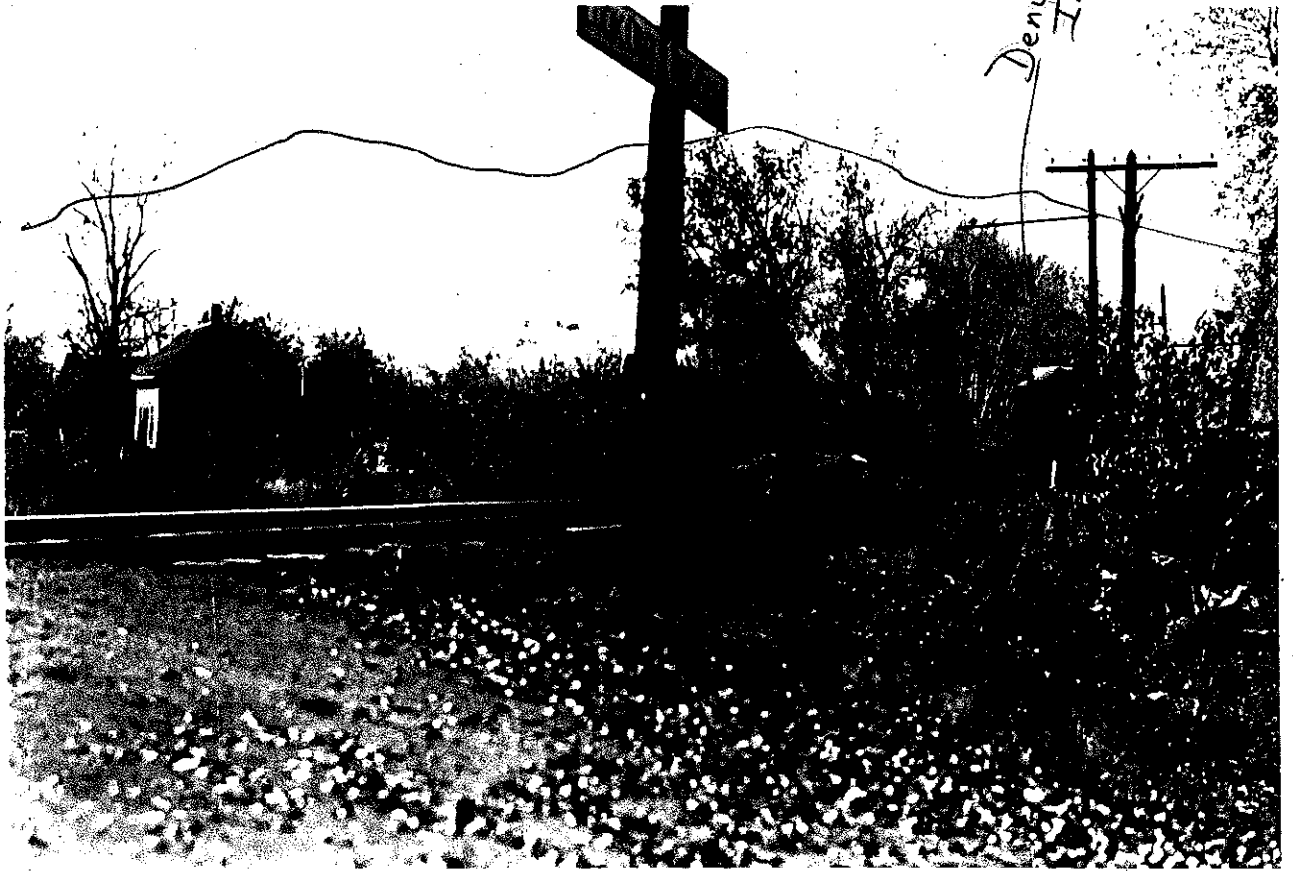
As automobiles, and then inter-city buses became popular, fewer people rode the trains. Buses, it was argued, could provide regular service to any place reached by a road, and one driver could do the work of a motorman, conductor, and brakeman on a train. The Denver & Interurban operated its last run on December 15, 1926.¹⁰ Desperate to stay in business, they started their own bus system instead. For the first two years, the Denver & Interurban Motor Company was owned by the Colorado & Southern Railroad. Eight new buses, each seating thirty, were finished in mahogany and brown leather. The exterior was painted with the University of Colorado's school colors, silver and gold. Eventually, this bus line became the Denver-Boulder Bus Company which was purchased in 1975 by the Regional Transportation District (RTD).¹¹

⁹*Daily Camera*, January 31, 1971.

¹⁰*Boulder News-Herald*, December 15, 1926.

¹¹Jones, p. 148-157.

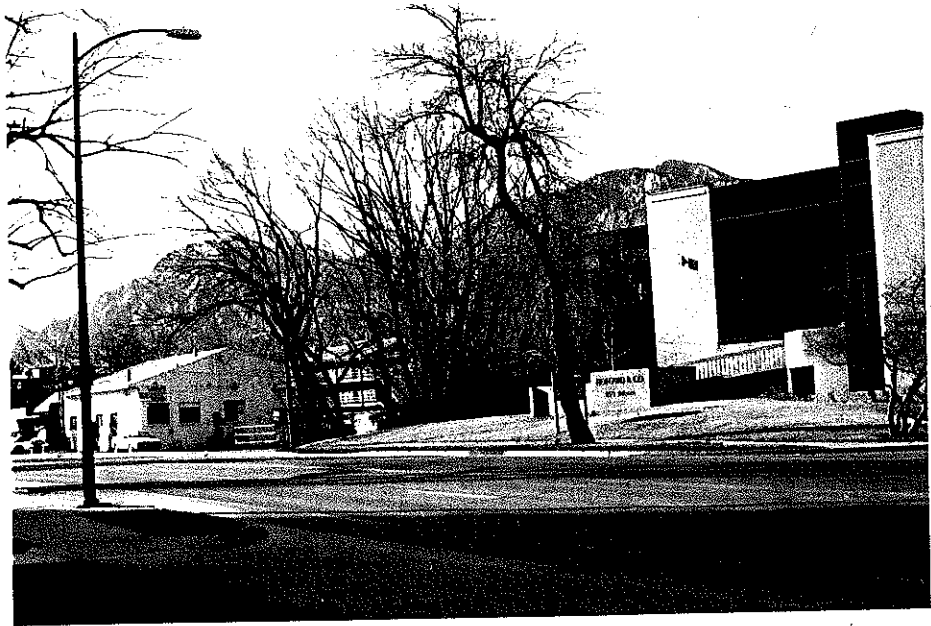
mountains →



Denver &
Interurban

Ca. 1917 - 1926

Looking
Southwest
from Folsom
near South St.
(both photos
same location)



1996

SUMMARY

Identifiable railroad grades --

One has to look very carefully to find properties (in the context area) visible today that relate to Boulder's railroad history. Those still recognizable include:

1. The original track of the Colorado Central ("green" track), which was the first track to reach the area east of Boulder, is the only one in Boulder still in use today. Freight trains of the Burlington Northern currently cross Pearl and Valmont Streets on this same route.
2. The tracks laid by the Denver & Boulder Valley ("dark blue" tracks), and later used by the Union Pacific, currently stop between the town of Valmont and Valmont Drive east of 55th Street. With some imagination, one can reconstruct its former route north of "Old Pearl."
3. With time and access to private property in Marshall, one could probably locate parts of the original grade of the Golden, Boulder & Caribou Railroad. The route also went through the Flatirons Gravel property.
4. The most obvious railroad grade in the Boulder Historic Context area is the grade of the various narrow gauge railroads between the mouth of Boulder Canyon and the turn-off to Four Mile Canyon. Parts of this route are now used as a walking and bicycle path.
5. The grade of the "black" track, first used in 1886 through Marshall and the University into downtown Boulder, is visible in several places -- South of the Marshall Mesa trailhead in Marshall,

east of Chambers Drive and along the bicycle path above Tantra Park, and the path in Andrews Arboretum above Boulder High School's football field. The pedestrian bridge over Boulder Creek just south of the Municipal Building appears to be on the site of the 11th Street railroad bridge.

Other identifiable railroad properties --

Besides the seven depots listed on the accompanying "Map of Boulder, Colorado's Railroad and Streetcar Tracks," there were small stations at various places including the University, Park Avenue (Baseline Road), and in Marshall. Of all of these depots, the only one that remains is the Union Pacific Depot built in 1890 at 14th and Water (Canyon) Streets. In order to save it from demolition, it was moved, in 1973, to the then-existing Pow Wow grounds, now Crossroads Commons Shopping Center. It was landmarked by the City of Boulder in 1979.

Engine Number 30, which once ran on the "Switzerland Trail of America" between 1898 and 1919 has been on display in Boulder's Central Park since 1952. A plaque in front is a "Memorial to Colorado Railroad and Mining Pioneers."

Further research --

This report on Boulder's railroads is far from definitive. A wealth of information in Boulder's early newspapers is available for further research. The citations in the footnotes are a good place to start for more

information, but only a thorough day-by-day reading of the original newspapers will reveal the true history.¹ This has not yet been done.

The writer cannot stress enough the necessity of working from primary source maps and materials. Of the maps that were crucial to the construction of the current "Map of Boulder, Colorado's Railroads and Streetcars" were the following:

Drumm, H., Drumm's Map of City of Boulder, 1926.

Drumm, H., Drumm's Map of the Boulder Oil Fields, 1927.

Fenneman, N.M., Geology of the Boulder District, Colorado, USGS Bulletin #265, 1905.

Freeze, Samuel, Freeze Map 1880-1881.

Hayden, F.V., USGS Topographical Survey of Colorado, 1878.

Hotchkiss, Hotchkiss Historical Railroad Map of Colorado, 1913.

Public Utilities Commission of Colorado, Denver & Interurban maps.

Sanborn Insurance Maps of Boulder, Colorado.

Unfortunately, misinformation has been repeated through secondary sources. For instance, Phyllis Smith, in her 1984 "History of Boulder's Transportation, 1858-1984" incorrectly stated that the Golden, Boulder & Caribou's tracks ran through the University. Then, Lara Juliusson, in her 1992 map series, "Boulder County, Colorado's Major Transportation Routes, Pre 1860 to 1920," erroneously showed the Denver & Interurban on the grade of the Golden, Boulder & Caribou.

¹Most of the various early Boulder newspapers are available in the Archives of Norlin Library at the University of Colorado. Still others can be read at the Colorado Historical Society and/or Denver Public Library. *Daily Camera* newspapers, beginning in 1891, are available on microfilm at the Boulder Public Library.

Need for Interpretive Markers --

Except for an interpretive marker on the bicycle path in Boulder Canyon, there is nothing else in the Boulder Historic Context area which currently marks the historic routes of the city's railroads. Logical locations for other interpretive signs include the Andrews Arboretum and the pedestrian bridge over Boulder Creek by the Municipal Building (see #5 above).

Another area used by the public and appropriate for signage is at the Marshall Mesa trailhead (see #5 above). It would also be appropriate for the proposed Women of the West Museum, if they build on the Flatirons property, to acknowledge the Golden, Boulder & Caribou Railroad (see #3 above).

Boulder's early railroads were essential to the city's growth and development. Now, with pollution and traffic problems, and the inevitability of future public transportation needs, we must know our past in order to plan for the future.

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Boulder News

Boulder News and Courier

Boulder News-Herald

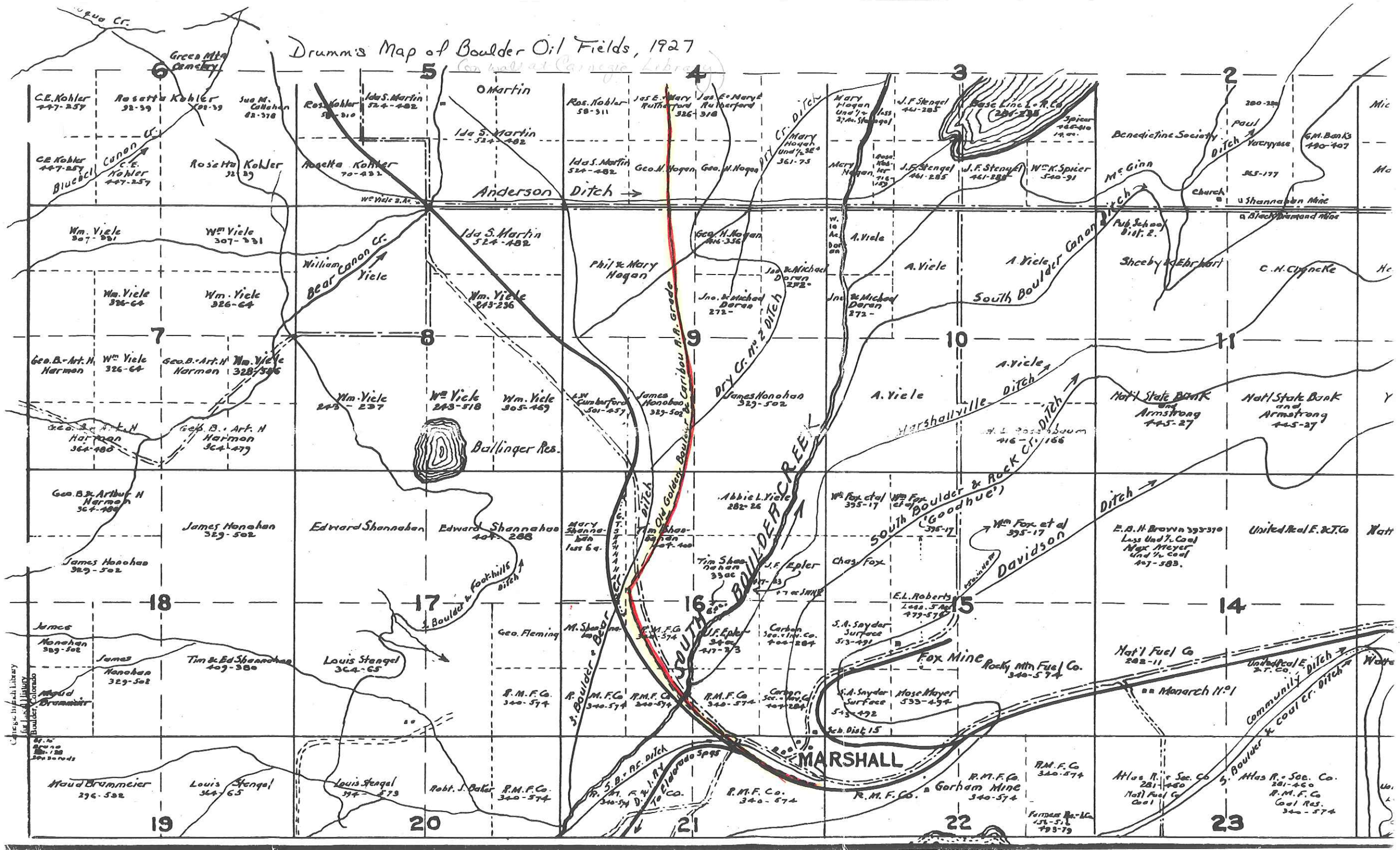
Daily Camera

Denver Herald

Rocky Mountain News

Drumm's Map of Boulder Oil Fields, 1927

Can. Map at Carnegie Library



Carnegie Library
Boulder, Colorado

Mar. 1927
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Houd Drummeier
296-532

Louis Stengel
364-65

Louis Stengel
374-579

Robt. J. Baker
R.M.F. Co.
340-574

R.M.F. Co.
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R.M.F. Co.
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Atlas R. & Sec. Co.
281-460
Nat'l Fuel Co.
Coal

Atlas R. & Sec. Co.
281-460
R.M.F. Co.
Coal Res.
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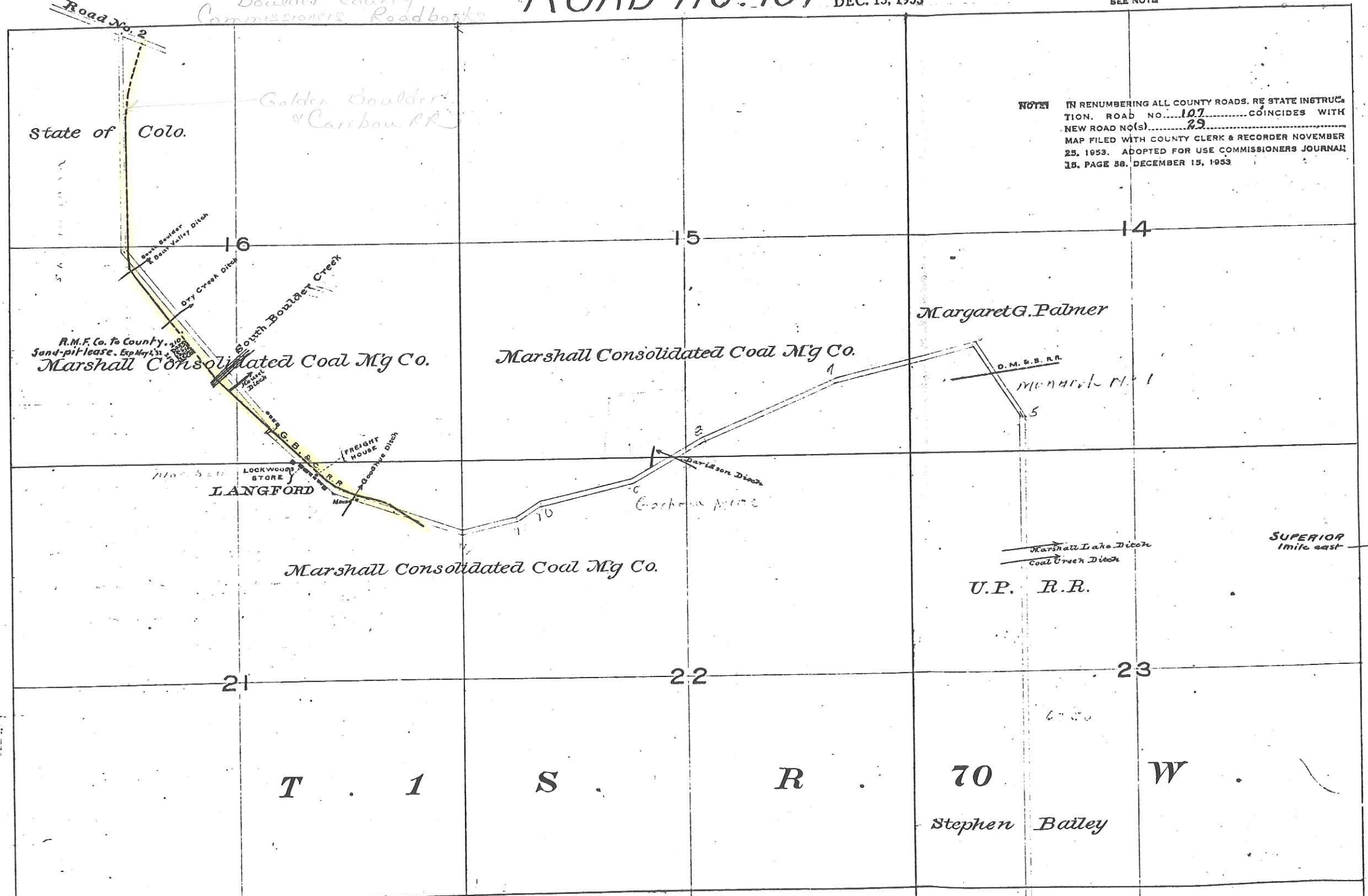
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NOTE: IN RENUMBERING ALL COUNTY ROADS, RE STATE INSTRUCTION, ROAD NO. 107 COINCIDES WITH NEW ROAD NO(S) 29. MAP FILED WITH COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER NOVEMBER 25, 1953. ADOPTED FOR USE COMMISSIONERS JOURNAL 15, PAGE 58, DECEMBER 15, 1953



State of Colo.

Golden Boulder
& Caribou RR

R.M.F. Co. to County
Sand-pit lease, Exp May 31, 1953
Marshall Consolidated Coal Mfg Co.

Marshall Consolidated Coal Mfg Co.

Margaret G. Palmer

D.M.S.B.R.R.

Monarch No. 1

LOCKWOODS STORE
LANGFORD

Marshall Consolidated Coal Mfg Co.

U.P. R.R.

SUPERIOR
1 mile east

T . 1

S

R

70

W

Stephen Bailey



13TH

ST.

MARINE

12TH

ST.

11TH

*This is no longer
a thru street.*

60' 4" W. PIPE

PUBLIC SERVICE CO.
OF COLORADO
BOULDER SUB STATION
BOULDER CONSTRUCTION
FIRE PRNF CONSTRUCTION
EXCEPT EXPOSED STEEL BEAMS
CONCRETE FLOORS & ROOF

WESTERN STATES
MFG. CO.
CUTLERY FACTORY
CUTLERY FACTORY
NIGHT WATCHMAN APPROVED
ELECT. HEAT. STERIL. - LIGHTS
ELECT. HEAT. - CITY WATER
& POWER EXTENS.

PUBLIC SERVICE CO. OF COLORADO
CAR BARN SHOP & GARAGE
BOULDER STREET RAILWAY, CAR BARN SHOP & GARAGE
NIGHT WATCHMAN APPROVED
ELECT. HEAT. STERIL. - LIGHTS
ELECT. HEAT. - CITY WATER
& POWER EXTENS.

1931 Sanborn
Insurance Co. map

UNRAVED

ROADS OF THE MOUNTAINS AND PLAINS

Within the Boulder Historic Context Area, 1859-1996

INTRODUCTION

The settlement of any new community is dependent on its roads. So it was with early Boulder. The first roads on the plains were merely wagon tracks from which the largest rocks had been removed. Travellers themselves often made the improvements in order to be able to continue on their way. The first people to arrive made it easier for others to follow, and encouraged the growth of their new town.

The legendary account of the settlement of Boulder began, in 1858, with a band of gold prospectors who separated from the main group at Fort St. Vrain, a fur-trading post on the Platte River Trail. The small group headed west instead of continuing on to the Denver area. They followed the St. Vrain Creek to its juncture with Boulder Creek,¹ then followed Boulder Creek to the edge of the mountains, and pitched their tents at Red Rocks near the mouth of Boulder Canyon.²

This discussion of roads, from 1858 to the present, will concentrate on the area within the Boulder Historic Context boundaries, as defined as Areas I-III of the City of Boulder's Comprehensive Plan, 1989.

¹Just east of present-day Longmont.

²Bixby, Amos, "History of Boulder County," in *History of Clear Creek and Boulder Valleys, Colorado*. Chicago: O.L. Baskin & Co., 1880, p. 379. Now Settlers Park between Pearl Street and Sunshine Canyon.

INTO THE MOUNTAINS FOR GOLD AND SILVER

Early Toll Roads, Beginning in 1859

Gold Discovered at Gold Hill --

Boulder's first settlers came to find gold. The mountain roads, out of topographical necessity, followed the winding earlier routes of animal and Indian trails. The prospectors walked and/or rode pack animals as they followed one of these trails up Sunshine Canyon. They soon discovered gold in a creek they named Gold Run, at a camp they named Gold Hill, twelve miles west of Boulder. Finding gold was the first step. Next they needed to move in their equipment and supplies. They needed a road.

Boulder to Gold Hill, via Left Hand Canyon --

In Gold Hill and other early mining districts, the first roads were built by the miners themselves who agreed to take time out from prospecting. Gold Hill minutes stated ..."the President shall draw up a subscription that every one is willing to do work on the road to Left Hand..."³

As mining increased, the men were too busy mining to work on their roads. Once a route became established, toll companies, who hoped to make a profit, took over the building, improving, and maintenance of the heaviest travelled roads. Their charters normally ran for twenty-four years, after which the road became free.

³Gold Hill minutes, October 15, 1859, as quoted in Fritz, Percy, *The Mining Districts of Boulder County, Colorado*. Unpublished thesis, University of Colorado, 1933. The road to Left Hand Canyon from Gold Hill was Aikens (Lick Skillet) Gulch.

On December 7, 1859, the Boulder City, Gold Hill, and Left Hand Creek Wagon Road was incorporated. Three hundred shares of capital stock were issued at \$25 per share. The toll road probably followed the route of the miners' earlier road and went up Left Hand Canyon to Aikens (Lick Skillet) Gulch to Gold Hill.⁴

Boulder to Black Hawk, via Gregory Canyon --

The Gold Hill discoveries, however, were soon outshadowed by those made by John H. Gregory at Black Hawk. In 1859, Gregory had managed to haul the first of his machinery up "a sort of road" in what soon became known as Gregory Canyon, between Flagstaff and Green Mountain, then by today's Kossler Reservoir, and across a Ute Indian trail to South Boulder Creek and on to the site of more gold finds at Black Hawk.⁵

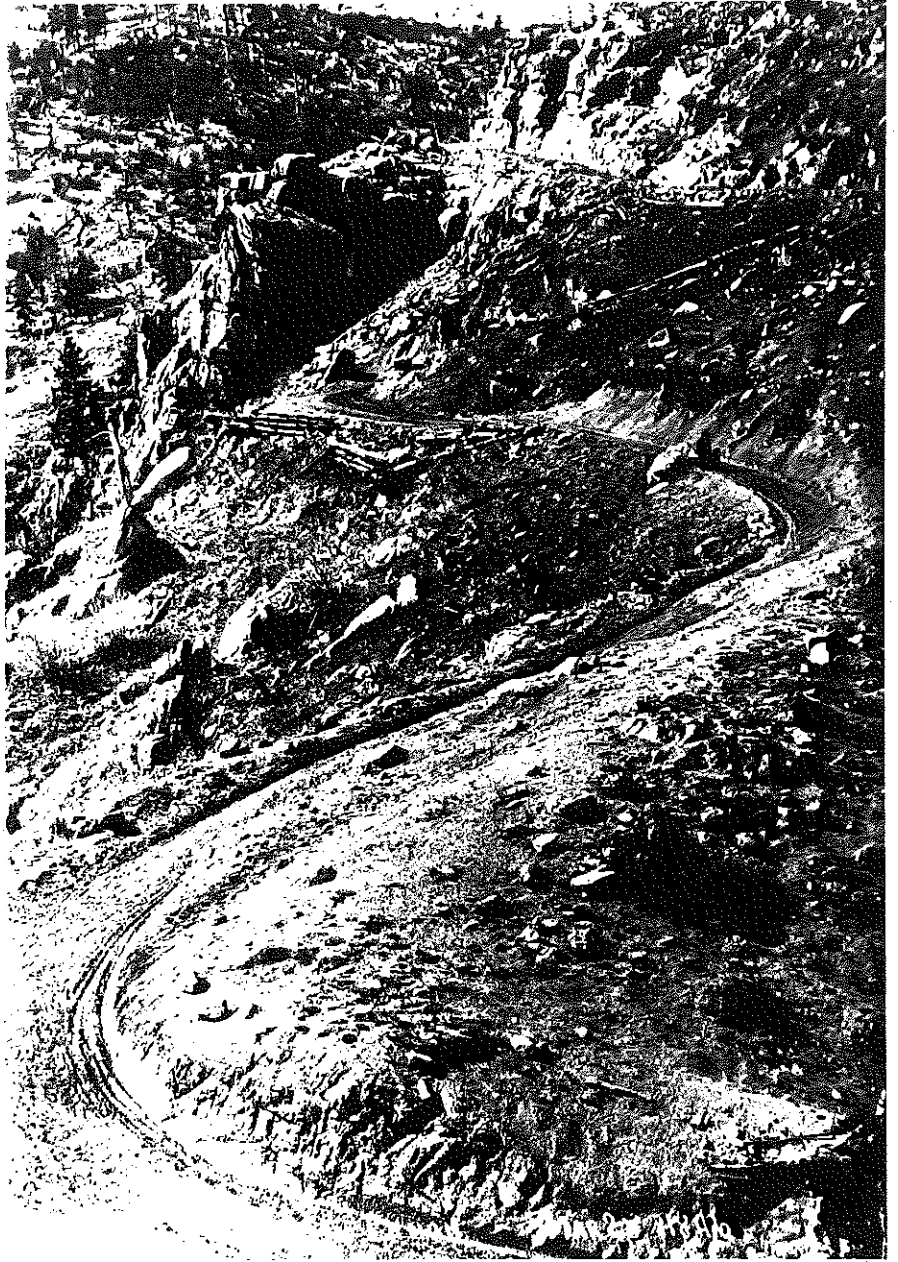
Meanwhile, in the summer of 1859, one hundred men per day were reported to have followed the Platte River Trail to areas of mining activity in what is now Colorado. In order to turn the tide through Boulder, and thus give some profit to the town's early merchants, Henry Clay Norton built a toll bridge across the Platte River near Fort St. Vrain. He also improved the road to Boulder and planned to continue the road John H. Gregory had started up Gregory Canyon. Norton raised funds by subscription, but did not get enough for the road to go into the mountains.⁶

In the 1870s, the Gregory Canyon road was rebuilt by residents of Magnolia as an alternative to the toll road built up Magnolia Hill from

⁴Provisional Laws and Joint Resolutions Passed at the First...General Assembly of Jefferson Territory, 1859, pp. 285-286, as quoted in Fritz.

⁵Parsons, Martin, "Toll Road History of Boulder County," *Daily Camera*, July 31, 1945.

⁶Bixby, p. 392.



"Double S Turns" Gregory
Canyon 1896.

Boulder Canyon. On April 5, 1881, Gregory Canyon was declared by the Boulder County Commissioners to be a free county road. It was in use until the Flagstaff road was built in 1906-1907.⁷

Today one can still drive a short distance up Gregory Canyon from the base of Flagstaff Mountain. The rest is a hiking trail. Since the road was improved several times over the years, it is not known if the current trail exactly follows the original road.

Boulder to "over the range," via Sunshine Canyon --

One of the earliest roads built from Boulder into the mountains was the Gordon and McHenry road of 1861.⁸ In his "History of Boulder County," Amos Bixby called it "another early attempt to make a direct wagon-road connection between Boulder and Black Hawk," but teamster Martin Parsons and author Donald Kemp referred to the Gordon and McHenry road as a "military" road.⁹ Although it was used by miners, it was said to have been built by the U.S. Army in order to be able to respond to Indian uprisings in Middle Park.

⁷*Boulder County Commissioners Journal* 3, p. 519. (April 5, 1881). Gregory Canyon became (old) County Road #217 (*Boulder County Road Book C*, p. 17.)

⁸Bixby, p. 392. Date of 1861 from Parsons' handwritten notes.

⁹The Gordon-McHenry road went up Sunshine Canon, down Ritchie (Poorman) Gulch, on the *east* side of Poorman Hill, to Four Mile Creek to Orodell (now the junction of Four Mile and Boulder Canyons.) It then headed west through what now is the Betasso Preserve, and roughly paralleled the current Sugarloaf Road to the Sugarloaf townsite. Continuing to the southwest, the road went through Gordon Gulch, through Switzerland Park, then along North Boulder Creek, and west through the Tucker (Caribou) ranch where it was abandoned north of the townsite of Caribou. (Kemp, Donald, *Silver, Gold and Black Iron*. Denver: Sage Books, 1960, p. 28. To see this route mapped on a current topographical map, see Weiss, Manuel, *Boulder County Historical Inventory*, 1980, Carnegie Library, Boulder.) It was originally planned to cross Arapahoe Pass into Middle Park, but, by then, easier routes over Berthoud and Rollins Pass had come into use.

By 1874, the route was already called the "Old Gordon-McHenry Road."¹⁰ In 1894, Sugarloaf residents used this route as an outlet to Boulder when they were marooned by a the "hundred-year" flood. In 1915, the route was still traversable by horse-drawn wagons.¹¹

Boulder to Black Hawk, via Bear Canyon --

In addition to local roads built by residents, and the Gordon and McHenry road built by the Army, investor-financed toll roads were necessary to open up routes to the gold mining areas. Several Boulder entrepreneurs formed their own toll road companies. Between 1861 and 1870, seven of the forty-three toll-roads authorized by the Colorado Territorial legislature were in Boulder County.¹²

Bridge-builder Henry C. Norton built a road up Bear Canyon with money furnished mainly by gold mine owner George R. Williamson.¹³ The road, incorporated on November 7, 1861, was the first of several toll roads to be constructed from the present Table Mesa area south of the National Center for Atmospheric Research. The Bear Canyon road intersected the Gregory Canyon road near today's Kossler Reservoir. Norton and Williamson were optimistic about reaching Black Hawk, but a cloud-burst soon washed out the first Bear Canyon road.¹⁴

¹⁰*Boulder County News*, September 18, 1874, p. 2, c. 4, as quoted in Weiss.

¹¹Weiss, Manuel, *Boulder County Historical Inventory*, 1980, Carnegie Library, Boulder.

¹²*Daily Camera*, February 7, 1952.

¹³Williamson owned the Yellow Pine mine and later was President of the Boulder National Bank.

¹⁴Ridgway, Arthur, "The Mission of the Colorado Toll Roads," *Colorado Magazine*, vol. IX #5, September, 1932, p. 165. Also, Bixby, p. 392.

Boulder to Gold Hill, via Left Hand Canyon, again --

The owners of the St. Vrain, Altonia (Altona), Boulder Mines (Gold Hill) & Gregory Wagon Road Company also had high hopes of reaching Black Hawk.¹⁵ This road, which followed the earlier routes up Left Hand Canyon, also was incorporated on November 7, 1861.¹⁶ Either because of a lack of money or because there was enough activity to keep the prospectors occupied at Gold Hill, the road abruptly ended at Gold Hill rather than continuing on to its original destination.¹⁷

Boulder to Black Hawk, via Magnolia --

Despite the Boulder road builders' intentions, the most heavily-travelled route from the plains to Black Hawk and the mines near Central City was the Enterprise Road from Golden thru Golden Gate Canyon.¹⁸ Since Boulder investors wanted to direct the traffic their way, and their own toll roads had not been financially successful, they recognized the importance of connecting with the Enterprise road.¹⁹

This connecting road is what Bixby called "the first successful toll road from Boulder to Black Hawk." The Boulder Valley and Central City Wagon Road Company was incorporated February 8, 1865²⁰ with a capital

¹⁵Bixby, p. 392.

¹⁶Ridgway, Arthur, "The Mission of the Colorado Toll Roads," *Colorado Magazine*, vol. IX #5, September, 1932, p. 165.

¹⁷Finally, in 1873, the Snyder-Corson road was built from Salina up Gold Run and extended westward along the ridge to west of Ward. There it branched, with one branch north to Ward and the other to Nederland. The latter route, completed in 1874, was considered "the best possible route from Black Hawk to Gold Hill." *Boulder County News*, July 3, 1874.

¹⁸Ridgway, p. 164. The Enterprise Road was incorporated on October 3, 1861.

¹⁹Parsons.

²⁰Ridgway, p. 167. Also Bixby, p. 393.

stock of \$50,000. Sawmill partners, James A. Maxwell²¹ and Clinton M. Tyler each subscribed \$10,000. Other prominent Boulderites, including brothers Henry L., Luther C., and Sylvanus Wellman; Charles Dabney; Anthony Arnett, Jonathan A. Tourtellote, Frederick A. Squires, and Daniel Pound also contributed. Construction began in March, 1865.

This well-financed toll road went up the previously impenetrable Boulder Canyon to the foot of Magnolia Hill. It then went up and over Magnolia Hill, where it crossed the road started by John H. Gregory, and then continued across South Boulder Creek, near the mouth of Beaver Creek, joined the Enterprise Road, and continued on to Black Hawk. The toll for a vehicle with one span of horses, mules, or cattle was one dollar. A horse or mule with a rider was 25¢. Travel to funerals was free.²²

Lee and Walter Smith began operating a daily stage line to the town of Magnolia. Their coaches were specially designed for steep mountain roads and were drawn by mules instead of horses.²³

Boulder to Black Hawk, via Left Hand Canyon, again --

In 1866, the Niwot and Black Hawk Wagon Road Company built a road which also went up Left Hand Canyon.²⁴ One branch went north to Ward, but the main route followed California Gulch to Sunnyside, Brown's Ranch (Nederland), Rollinsville, and on to Black Hawk roughly parallel to today's Peak to Peak Highway.²⁵

²¹son of James P. Maxwell.

²²Ridgway, p. 168. Also, *Daily Camera*, January 25, 1976.

²³Gladden, Sanford, *The Early Days of Boulder, Colorado*. Boulder: Sanford Gladden, 1982, p. 402.

²⁴Ridgway, p.168. The road was incorporated on February 6, 1866.

²⁵Kemp, Donald, *Silver, Gold and Black Iron*. Denver: Sage Books, 1960, p. 28.

Boulder to Caribou, via Boulder Canyon and Nederland --

Boulder Canyon, past the Magnolia turn-off, was the last canyon out of Boulder into the mountains to be conquered. In 1869, Wells Fargo and Company came up with the idea of running its stages from Boulder to Black Hawk if a road would be built up Boulder Canyon to Brown's Ranch (Nederland). During the following winter, when the water in Boulder Creek was low, C. M. Tyler, William Pound, and others surveyed the route from the existing road at the bottom of Magnolia Hill to Nederland,²⁶ where the Niwot and Black Hawk road already crossed Boulder Creek. They found that the new route was six miles shorter between Boulder and Black Hawk than the one which went over Magnolia hill.²⁷

By May 20, 1871, the completed Boulder and Caribou Wagon road connected Boulder with what is now Nederland, and continued on to Caribou. While the road was under construction, Caribou conveniently boomed with a major silver discovery. Laborers hurried to get the road done in order to capitalize on the freight traffic that would soon come. A toll gate was located at the mouth of Boulder Canyon. Another at Eagle Rock replaced the station formerly located at the foot of Magnolia hill. The road up Boulder Canyon soon became a financial success as well as a tourist attraction.²⁸

The *Boulder News* stated,

"The road now building up the canon we have feebly described, is the most ambitious piece of work that has ever been, to our knowledge, attempted upon a wagon road in Colorado. The work is

²⁶Besides being called Brownsville, Nederland also was called Middle Boulder in its early days.

²⁷Kemp, pp. 28-29.

²⁸Kemp, p. 29.

stupendous and nothing less. The line necessarily crosses the creek often, how many times we did not count, but guess the number of bridges at 30. These are all substantially built, with a height and water way sufficient to make them permanent....An immense amount of blasting has been necessary to break up the great irregular masses of loose rock, and to cut down the solid points to a grade. In one place a spur of the mountain has been blasted down 20 feet, still leaving the road 15 feet above water."²⁹

Wells Fargo and Company never ran its stages between Boulder and Caribou as promised, but Lee and Walter Smith transferred Wells Fargo express and made tri-weekly trips.³⁰ In 1871, these four-horse Concord coaches charged \$3.50, about the equivalent of a good day's wage.³¹ A branch line ran from Caribou to Black Hawk and Central City.

The sturdy Concord coaches, costing one thousand dollars each, also carried passengers and mail.³² Instead of having shock absorbers, they were suspended on broad leather straps. Author Mark Twain called the Concords "a great swinging and swaying stage of the most sumptuous description -- an imposing cradle on wheels."³³

In Boulder Canyon, stage drivers changed horses and had a meal at the American House, just above the "narrows." Jim Sewell, who drove the Caribou route, later told Forest Crossen in an interview that he left

²⁹*Boulder News*, May 20, 1871.

³⁰Kemp, p. 29. Also, Fritz, Percy, *Mining Districts of Boulder County, Colorado*. Unpublished thesis, University of Colorado, 1933, p. 197, and *Boulder News* August 16, 1878.

³¹Gladden, p. 402, from *Boulder County News*, May 27, 1871.

³²Gladden, p. 402.

³³Noel, Mahoney, and Stevens, *Historical Atlas of Colorado*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993, p. 27. Mark Twain's quote is from *Roughing It*.

Boulder at 7 am with six passengers inside and another on the seat on top with him. The coach would arrive in Caribou around dusk. His passengers were mostly miners going back to work.³⁴

The Boulder Canyon road was narrow and had few turnouts. If two vehicles met where there was no turnout, the lighter of the two had to unhitch its horses and be lifted off the roadway so that the heavier vehicle could pass. Bells fastened on the harnesses alerted the driver of oncoming traffic. At night, a lantern was suspended from the front of the wagon box.³⁵

In 1874, tolls included \$1 for each two-horse wagon, \$1.25 for each four-horse wagon, 75¢ for each one-horse wagon, and 20¢ for a rider on a saddle horse. The section between Boulder and Boulder Falls had been reduced so tourists and others from Boulder could "visit the famous Falls and wonderful scenery of the canyon without feeling that the rates are exorbitant."³⁶

The *Boulder County News*, on August 11, 1876, stated, "The road up the [Boulder] Canon is in excellent condition, and no more pleasurable ride can be had in the state for the same money."³⁷

Conditions had deteriorated by 1878 when freighter Richard Crow angrily wrote to the *Boulder News*. He claimed his tolls averaged over one hundred dollars per month, yet "other travellers have [had] to assist me at

³⁴*Daily Camera*, April 29, 1948.

³⁵Kemp, p. 29. Also, Crossen, Forest, *Switzerland Trail of America*. Boulder: Pruett Publishing, 1962, p. 12.

³⁶*Boulder County News*, July 10, 1874.

³⁷Gladden, p. 402. By 1878, daily stages left livery barns in Boulder for Caribou and Magnolia, as well as to Sunshine, Delphi (Wallstreet), Springdale, Jamestown, and Balarat. (*Boulder News*, August 16, 1878.)

times in making the roads passable, for my teamsters have been compelled to carry axes and shovels to get through."³⁸

While those trying to make a living may have grumbled, author Helen Hunt Jackson, who rode down Boulder Canyon on horseback in 1878, praised its beauty. Of the canyon she wrote,

"Its gray stone walls rise up, fortresslike from the meadow -- the left hand wall bare and gray, the right hand one thick set with fir from the base to the top. It is a picture of vivid contrasts -- the green meadow with ranks upon ranks of yellow and red willow bushes making belts of bright color upon it, [and] between the yellows and reds, gleams of white foam flashing, and beyond the high buttress fronts of the canyon mouth, adorned with evergreens."³⁹

Tolls were discontinued in Boulder Canyon in 1887, nine years after teamster Crow complained, and six years after Magnolia residents had found another way to get home.⁴⁰ The section from the foot of Magnolia Hill to Nederland, however, remained under the ownership of banker Charles G. Buckingham until 1893 when he sold all rights and title to Boulder County.⁴¹

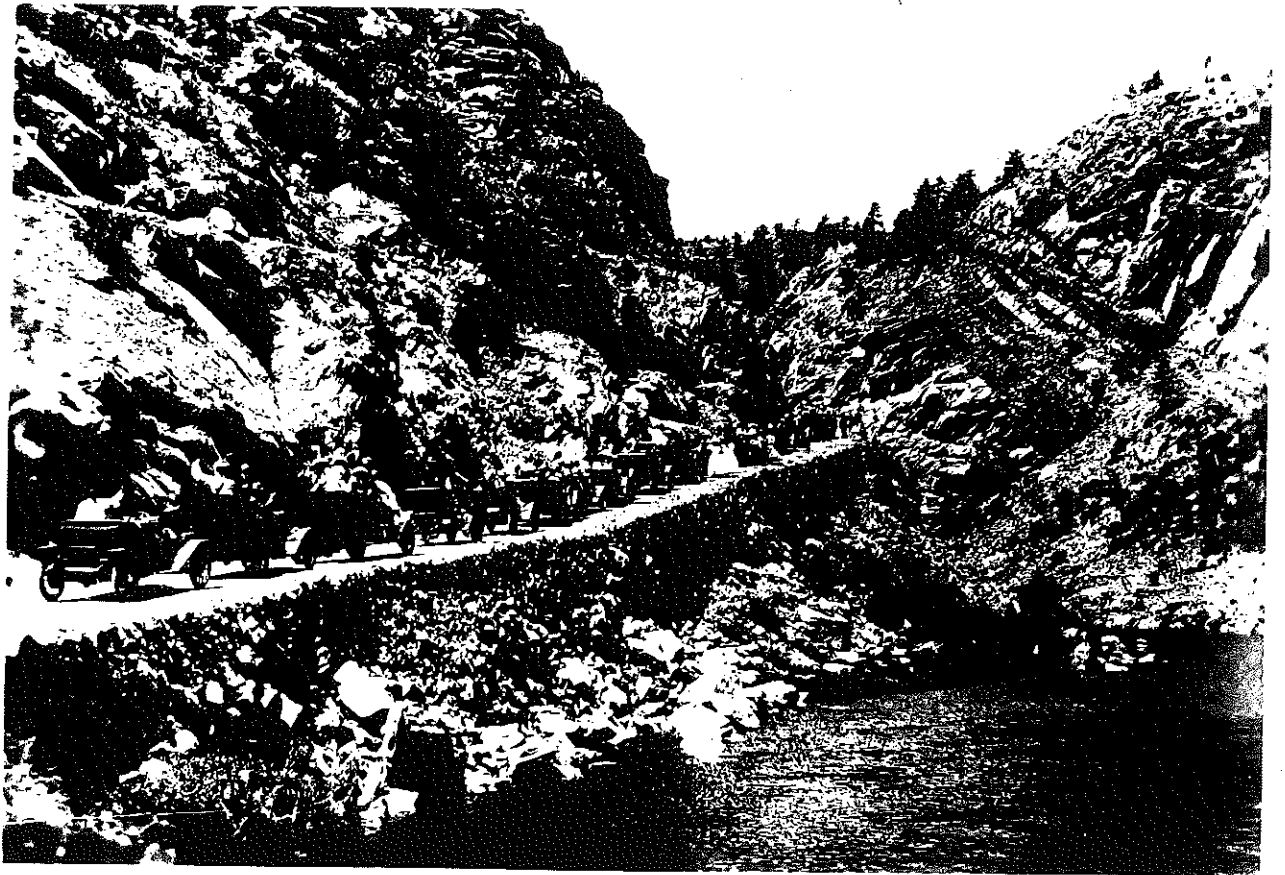
When Mart Parsons came to Boulder in 1897, he drove four-horse stages made by the Studebaker Company. Eldora's gold mining boom had just begun, and there was a lot of traffic in Boulder Canyon. These newer stage coaches had steel springs and hauled nine people inside, and three,

³⁸*Boulder News*, August 30, 1878.

³⁹Jackson, Helen Hunt, *Bits of Travel at Home*, 1878.

⁴⁰*Boulder County Commissioners Journal* 8, p. 36.

⁴¹*Boulder County Commissioners Journal* 6, p.207 (June 6, 1893).



Traffic jam in Boulder Canyon
ca. 1915

including the driver, on top. A storage "boot" in the front held mail and another in the back held trunks and baggage.⁴²

When John W. Valentine rented a team and buggy in 1906 to drive to Nederland to drum up some business for his Boulder hardware store, Boulder Canyon was still a one-track road with turnouts.⁴³

Bear Canyon, Again and Again --

Meanwhile, determined road builders kept trying to establish a road in Bear Canyon, but each one was washed out. G. D. Harmon and Onsville C. Coffin, who had a sawmill at the mouth of Bear Canyon, were the first to rebuild. Then, in 1868, Peter M. Housel and Ed Donnelly, both of Valmont, organized the Bear Canon and Black Hawk Road Company. The last two tries were made by Harmon, Coffin, and a new partner, Eli Metcalf, in 1873, and by the Bear Canon and French Gulch Wagon Road Company, in 1885. Each of the road companies had toll gates at the entrance of the canyon.

In 1907, the road was rebuilt by the Colorado Power Company and used until 1910 for the erection of power lines. It remained passable until 1919 when the same flood that wiped out the narrow gauge railroad also washed out the road. In 1935, the Civilian Conservation Corps worked to make the trail walkable.⁴⁴ The only way to follow Bear Canyon today is on foot.

⁴²*Daily Camera*, February 7, 1955.

⁴³*Daily Camera*, February 22, 1955.

⁴⁴Ament, Pat, and Cleveland McCarty, *High Over Boulder*, 1970. Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., p. 130.

ON THE PLAINS

County Roads and the End of the Stage Coach Era, 1858-1871

When the first settlers arrived, all land south of the 40th parallel, now Baseline Road, was in Kansas Territory, and land to the north was in Nebraska Territory. In the Boulder area, Colorado Territory was formed, in 1861, from parts of both. Boulder County also was created at this time.

As in the early settlement of Gold Hill, the first residents, in both the mountains and the plains, worked on their own local roads. Informal preferences of teamsters decided where streams would be crossed. Neighbors cooperated in grading down steep banks in order to make fording possible.⁴⁵

After Boulder County was organized, any group of citizens who wanted a road presented a petition to the County Commissioners. They, in turn, appointed "viewers" to examine the request. If the viewers' report was favorable, the Commissioners established the route as a free county road. On the plains, roads were straight lines until something interfered. The earliest ones within the historic context area are as follows:⁴⁶

County Road #1 (Pearl Street) had been the first road in Boulder established by the early settlers. As they waited out the winter of 1858-1859, they formed the Boulder City Town Company and built log cabins around the intersection of what is now Pearl and Broadway. A stick was driven into the ground in the middle of the intersection. Pearl Street became a straight route from a sighting across the stick to Valmont Butte.

⁴⁵Large, Dorothy, *Old Burlington, First Town on the St. Vrain, 1860-1871*, 1984. Longmont: St. Vrain Historical Society, p.28.

⁴⁶*Boulder County Commissioners Journal 1*, p.57.

The other downtown streets either ran parallel to or at right angles to Pearl Street.⁴⁷ Valmont was the area's major agricultural center, and Boulder was a supply center for the mining activities in the mountain mining towns. A straight road was the logical way to connect these two earliest communities.

On April 10, 1862, Pearl Street was named County Road #1. The Commissioners stated that it "started at Boulder City and [ran] in a direct course in the direction of the Butte (Valmont)," then along various farmers' boundary lines "on the most practicable route to the east line of the County."⁴⁸

County Road #2, or 12th Street (Broadway), was established the same day. It extended from "Boulder to the Foundry," and was commonly called the "Boulder-Furnace road."⁴⁹ It followed the current route of Broadway and South Broadway to just past Chambers Drive (south of the light at Greenbriar Boulevard) where it then followed what is now called Marshall Road into the town of Marshall. Marshall was the site of the earliest coal discoveries which fueled a blast furnace for the production of pig iron.

This foundry, at Marshall, was described by journalist Bayard Taylor, who visited it in 1866:

"On dropping into a little winding hollow, we soon saw the massive smelting furnace surrounded by clustered cabins. Mr.

⁴⁷*The Saturday Truth*, March 28, 1903, p. 3. In later years, the streets outside of the downtown Pearl Street area were laid out in north-south and east-west directions.

⁴⁸*Boulder County Commissioners Journal 1*, p. 57-58. The rest of the early numbered roads differed from those planned in this entry. In 1902, the section from the Housel and DeBacker mill in Valmont through Canfield to the east county line was vacated (*Journal 8*, p.29.)

⁴⁹*Boulder County Commissioners Road Book B*.

Marshall, the proprietor, received us at the door of his residence, and after dinner, piloted us to the furnace and the mines. There are eleven veins of coal, varying from four to twelve feet in thickness, in the space of a mile; iron ore of a richness of fifty per cent just beyond it, and the best limestone, in almost inexhaustible quantities. Mr. Marshall, however, has only experimented with the native ores sufficiently to establish their value. He finds it more profitable to buy up abandoned machinery at a trifling cost, and recast it. The furnace is not only substantially but handsomely built, and has thus far done a thriving and successful business for its owner."⁵⁰

County Roads #1 (Pearl) and #2 (Broadway) were laid out in the direction which seemed practical at the time -- Boulder to Valmont, and Boulder to Marshall. Outside of the downtown Boulder area, the remaining early roads followed north-south and east-west grid lines.

A petition was circulated in January, 1865 to make the road to the north, from Boulder to Left Hand Canyon, County Road #3. It was located "as near as the base of the mountains as practical," and joined the toll road at Altona, at the mouth of Left Hand Canyon. It appears to be in the same location as North Broadway and the Foothills Highway, but it is not known if this was the same as the the early Left Hand Canyon toll roads.

County Road #4 was part of today's Colorado 287, considered "almost identical"⁵¹ to the "Salt Lake and California [stage] Road."⁵² Previously it was known as the Cherokee Trail.

⁵⁰Taylor, Bayard, *Colorado: A Summer Trip*, originally published in 1867, reprinted, Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1989, p; 157.

⁵¹Large, p. 19.

⁵²*Boulder News*, June 26, 1874.

This stage coach route was declared a public highway on February 5, 1866.⁵³ Although its main route was out of the historic context area, its impact on Boulder makes it too important to leave out of this report.

The stages rushed travellers from Denver to Wyoming and points west. They stopped for meals and/or to change horses at various points including George Church's ranch (south of Broomfield) and John Boone's farm (called Boulder Station⁵⁴) on Boulder Creek. Continuing north, they reached Alonzo Allen's home, and later hotel, in Burlington (on Longmont's Main Street),⁵⁵ and on to Berthoud, Loveland, LaPorte, Virginia Dale, and Laramie.⁵⁶

At Boone's farm there was no bridge across Boulder Creek, so in order to find the best place to ford the creek, stage coaches sometimes detoured to the west to cross on today's 95th Street. During high water, they had to be ferried across at Valmont.⁵⁷ The coaches then travelled on the Gunbarrel road (see County Road #8) to reach their next scheduled stage coach stop at Burlington. There, mail for Boulder was picked up by Edward Viele who rode out from Boulder on horseback.⁵⁸

⁵³*Boulder County Commissioners Journal* 4, p.506.

⁵⁴Jackson, W. Turrentine, *Wells Fargo in Colorado Territory*. Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1982, p. 64 (from *Brown's Gazeteer*, 1869, pp. 26-27.)

⁵⁵Allen, Alonzo H., "Pioneer Life in Old Burlington, Forerunner of Longmont," *Colorado Magazine*, Vol. XIV #4, July 1937, p. 146.

⁵⁶Dyni, Anne, *Pioneer Voices of the Boulder Valley*. Boulder County Parks and Open Space, 1989, p.45-47.

⁵⁷Valmont became a regular stop, in 1867, for the Denver and Boulder County Stage, a feeder line operated twice a week by C. B. Akins between Denver, Valmont, and James Creek [Jamestown]. (*Denver Daily*, March 30, 1867.) The trip, however, was not without its dangers. The April 4, 1868, issue of the *Denver Tribune* stated simply, "The hack from Denver to Boulder was lost during the big storm."

⁵⁸Fetter, Richard, *Frontier Boulder*. Boulder: Johnson Books, 1983, p. 27.

Beginning in 1862, the stages were operated by Ben Holladay as part of his Overland Stage Line. In 1866, the same year that the road was declared a county road, Holladay sold his business to the Wells Fargo and Company which continued to operate it until the line was replaced by railroads.⁵⁹

When the Union Pacific reached Cheyenne from the East in November, 1867, Wells Fargo coordinated its Denver-Cheyenne schedule. Stage coaches that left Denver at 7 am arrived in Cheyenne at 3 am the next morning. Passengers from Denver could get to Chicago in three days. The \$25 fare in 1867 was reduced to \$5 in 1869.⁶⁰

When journalist Taylor travelled on horseback in the Boulder area in 1866, he had left Denver "on the Salt Lake stage road, which runs northward, parallel with the mountains, for near a hundred miles."⁶¹ Others on the road were "large freight trains on their way to Salt Lake," and "many emigrants bound for Montana and Idaho [who] have been obliged to make a detour of two hundred miles, through Denver, in order to get over the swollen Platte [River]."⁶²

The rest of the early county roads were:

County Road #5, the section of Jay Road between 28th and 75th Streets. County Road #6, 75th Street north and south of Niwot. County Road #7 is now Airport Road west of Longmont, and out of the historic context area.

⁵⁹Dyni, *Pioneer Voices of the Boulder Valley*, p.45-47.

⁶⁰Jackson, W. Turrentine, *Wells Fargo in Colorado Territory*. Colorado Historical Society, 1982, p. 44, 64.

⁶¹Taylor, Bayard, *Colorado: A Summer Trip*, originally published in 1867, reprinted, Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1989, p.154.

⁶²Taylor, p. 155.

County Road #8 extended from just north of the town of Valmont to Mineral Road (today's Colorado 52), east of 95th Street, and on to Burlington. Alonzo Allen stated that it was called the "gunbarrel" route "on account of its straightness."⁶³ Today's Gunbarrel Hill was named for this road. When the area was settled by homesteaders, the road, which cut across square and rectangular land parcels, was discontinued.

County Road #9 extended from Peter Housel's flour mill at Valmont east to Louisville. County Road #10 was 63rd Street north of Valmont.

The Commissioners, who later renumbered all of these roads, stated, "All of the above-mentioned roads are to be four rods⁶⁴ wide and to be located with a view to economy, and also so as to damage farms and every other class of property as little as possible, the most fordable crossings of the creeks are to be taken in to consideration."⁶⁵

In 1865, the Boulder County Commissioners required an annual road tax of two dollars per person. A road overseer was appointed for each road district to see that money was collected and the work accomplished.⁶⁶ Those who could work or pay more, did so. In 1880, Amos Bixby, in his *History of Boulder County*, wrote,

"Few, in after years, realize how much of a drain upon the earnings of pioneers is the indispensable expenditure for roads, in a rough, roadless mountain region, where, at first, it was difficult to cut a foot-path or a pack-trail. In this direction, some of the pioneers were liberal and enterprising beyond their means."⁶⁷

⁶³Allen, p. 157.

⁶⁴A rod is 16.5 feet, so 4 rods = 66 feet

⁶⁵*Boulder County Commissioners Journal 1*, p.61.

⁶⁶*Boulder County Commissioners Journal 1*, p. 138 (April 8, 1865).

⁶⁷Bixby, p. 393.

As homesteaders took up their claims, farmers built a grid of straight intersecting county roads which ran along their property boundaries. In 1866, *New York Tribune* correspondent Bayard Taylor visited Belmont (Marshall), then rode on to Valmont. Frustrated by the layout of the roads on the plains he wrote,

"We were full two hours in reaching Valmont, on account of the very independent habits of the Colorado farmers. The second bottoms [defined by Taylor as "rolling table land"] being devoted to grazing purposes, they have found it necessary to fence the outer edge of the farm land; and, in so doing, they cut off the road with the most utter disregard of the public."

"If there are laws in relation to roads, they seem to be a dead letter. That which should be the first business of a territorial government is left to a time when it can only be regulated by a great deal of trouble and expense. Our National Government acts in the most niggardly manner toward its incipient States. There should be at least a million of dollars annually spent in each Territory between Mississippi and the Pacific, on roads and bridges. In spite of the tedious zigzags we were forced to make, the views of the broad, prosperous, and thickly-settled Boulder region, made our ride very enjoyable."⁶⁸

In 1874, the *Longmont Press* wrote an editorial, which was reprinted in the *Boulder County News* on the above subject. The people in Longmont were upset about not having a direct route to Boulder. It was stated,

⁶⁸Taylor, p.158.

"The farmers are not wholly to blame for fencing up the roads and making people zig-zag around two miles, to go a distance of one mile; the most blamable parties are the County Commissioners. They have formed a policy that has not only been detrimental to the advancement of the welfare of the country, but has, by the inordinate stinginess of the County Commissioners in regard to road matters, increased the expense ten times by delaying till the land has become so much more valuable, over which the roads run."

"To illustrate a case in point. A few years ago, a petition was circulated and numerous signed, praying the board of County Commissioners to appoint viewers to lay out a road from this town [Longmont] to Boulder. The viewers were appointed, the road laid out, but some farmer on Left Hand [Creek], whose farm the proposed road crossed, was damaged to a more or less extent, and rather than pay the damages that might accrue to him, the Commissioners revoked the whole thing, and today there is no legally laid out road to Boulder."⁶⁹

The road to Longmont, now known as the Longmont Diagonal, would not become a reality for over eighty more years!

Railroads brought an end to the early road era. Historian Frank Hall reminisced, "None who lived in the period from 1859 to 1870 will forget the gaudily painted and rather imposing Concord coaches, drawn by six splendid horses, guided by the most expert reinsmen in all the land..."⁷⁰

⁶⁹*Boulder County News*, June 26, 1874.

⁷⁰Hall, Frank, *History of the State of Colorado in Four Volumes, Vol. II*. Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., p. 105.

In 1871, a reporter noted that "The Denver and Boulder stage is defunct." Using the term "rapid transit" perhaps for the first time in the Boulder area, he continued,

"Since the increase of service on this route to a daily, Walt Smith meets the mail at [the railroad at] Erie. Thus old institutions are giving way to the rapid progress now apparent all around us. We have enjoyed the old stage line so long that a shade of sadness comes over us as we part with it forever, but console ourselves with the reflection that the age of steam and railroads brings improvements which compensate us amply for the loss. Mr. Smith makes close connections at Erie, so that passengers to and from Denver can rely upon rapid transit. To those who have not seen the iron horse for years we would recommend a pleasant ride to Erie with Walter."⁷¹

⁷¹Gladden, p. 401. From *Boulder County News*, May 20, 1871.

THE AUTOMOBILE ERA

And the Need for Better Roads, 1900-1996

The turn of the twentieth century ushered in a new era of transportation -- automobiles. According to historian Sanford Gladden, the first in Boulder was a ca. 1900 Locomobile owned by Charles B. Culbertson, manager of the Colorado & Northwestern Railroad.⁷² Either this "first" automobile, or another early one was tested in October, 1900, by a drive up the steep road to the town of Magnolia.⁷³ It soon became obvious that automobiles required an improvement in the area's roads.

Paving was on everyone's minds in 1905 when a "Good Roads Convention" was held in Boulder. On exhibit were paving bricks from the Alumina Clay Company's deposits in Bear Canyon. Mayor Lou Johnston favored using the bricks to pave parts of Pearl, 13th, and 14th Streets. Boulder Canyon granite, in a gravel form, was the preferred material for residential streets.⁷⁴

Apparently a majority of property owners did not approve, as no brick laying was ever done. Instead, a steam roller packed Pearl Street with gravel.⁷⁵ On April 4, 1908, six-horse teams were "plowing up the hard surface of Pearl Street" in preparation for the rails of the Denver & Interurban railroad.⁷⁶ By 1911, the Boulder County Commissioners ordered the gravelling of the Marshall Road (South Broadway and

⁷²Gladden, p. 408.

⁷³*Boulder County Herald*, October 2, 1900.

⁷⁴*Daily Camera*, May 17, 1905 and July 26, 1905.

⁷⁵*Daily Camera*, June 16, 1906.

⁷⁶*Daily Camera*, April 4, 1908.

Marshall Road) from Baseline Road. Additional gravelling of County roads was done with horse-drawn dump wagons and convict labor.

Of the convicts, who came from the state penitentiary, Commissioner Clark Gilbert was not enthusiastic. He stated, The convicts "have been fed in Brown Palace style and work about as hard at road building as would the average guest of that hostelry." He also complained that for a gang of thirty men, there were three foremen who "do nothing," and "others who eat but don't shovel dirt."⁷⁷

Another "Good Roads Conference" was held on January 13 and 14, 1911. The general consensus was that better roads would bring in tourists. It was stated,

"Every summer hordes of wealthy people from all parts of the United States would ship their cars to this state to indulge their penchant for motoring, and to enjoy in this way the salubrious climate which now brings to us a less opulent class of visitors...There is little use in kicking about our wealthy class going to Europe each year when they should spend their money at home. When they are ready to take care of them as well, or nearly as well, as they are looked after abroad in these matters of material comfort and convenience of travel, they will come -- and gladly."⁷⁸

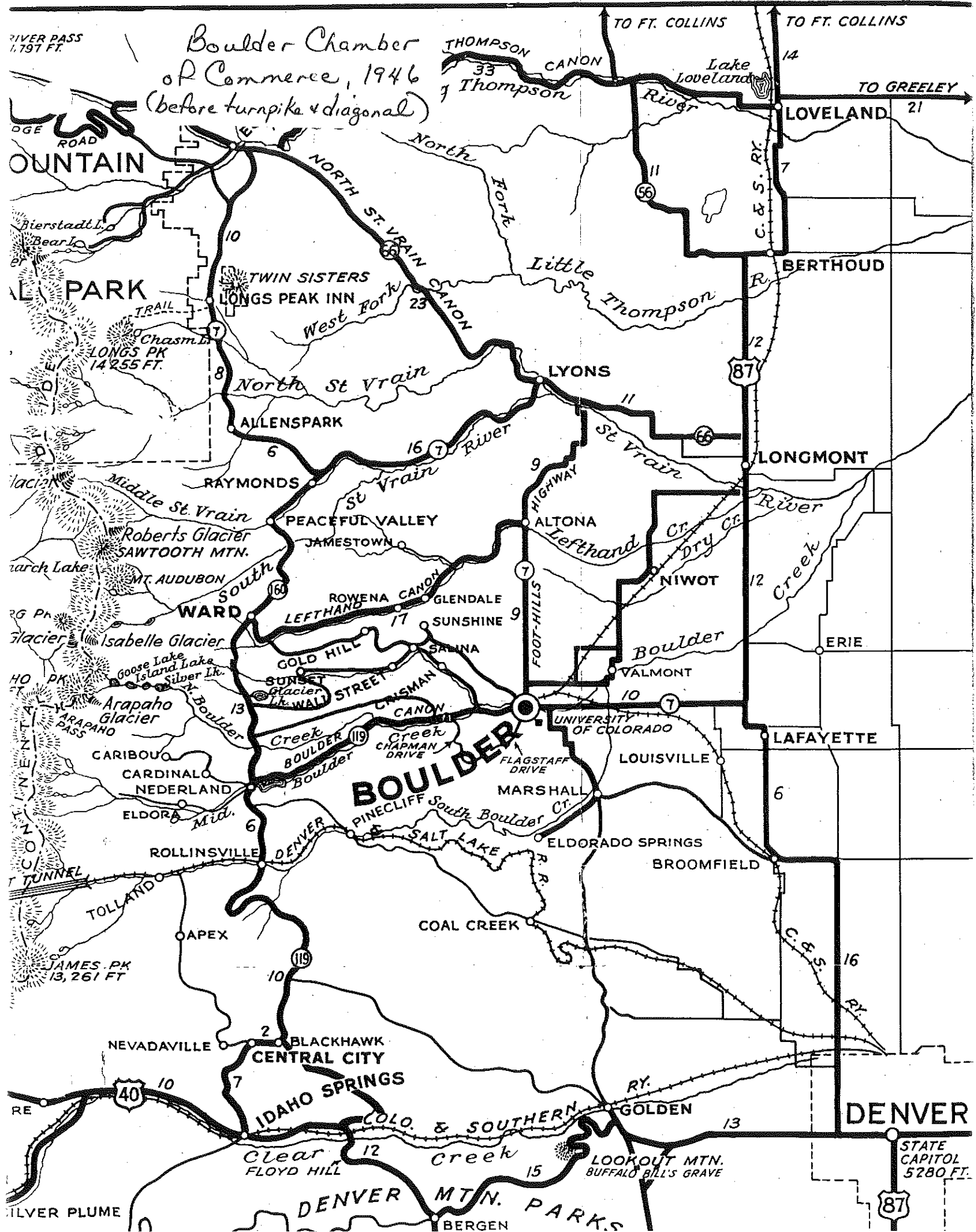
The mood toward convict road builders had improved in 1915. By then they were camped in, and improving the road up, Boulder Canyon. For Thanksgiving that year, the "good people of Boulder City and vicinity" treated the men to games and music and then a mid-day Thanksgiving dinner complete with an after-dinner cigar. In the afternoon they had

⁷⁷*Daily Camera*, April 17, 1911.

⁷⁸*Daily Camera*, January 15, 1911.

ON SHOWING BOULDER'S IDEAL CENTRALZATION LOCATION

Boulder Chamber of Commerce, 1946
(before turnpike & diagonal)



RIVER PASS
11,797 FT.

LONGS PEAK
14,255 FT.

JAMES PK
13,261 FT.

STATE
CAPITOL
5,280 FT.

boxing matches, then more turkey and the trimmings, another cigar, and a "moving picture show."⁷⁹

In 1917, the convicts were still working on the Boulder Canyon road. The Boulder Commercial Association, forerunner of the Boulder Chamber of Commerce, treated the road gang to a noonday dinner in the main dining room of the Hotel Boulderado.⁸⁰

By this time, Hickox and Son started a Stanley Steamer automobile line between Boulder and Eldora. Their busiest years were during the tungsten mining boom of 1915-1917.⁸¹

Speed limits were set for the first time in 1920. Drivers could go 35 mph on "prairie" roads and 20 mph in the mountains. All turns were limited to 18 mph.⁸²

In 1926, Boulder opened the first of its free auto camps at what is now Eben G. Fine park. The *Daily Camera* reported, "It is expected that several thousand motoring tourists will stay one or more nights at the auto camp this summer, and ample accommodations are provided for them to cook, wash, sleep, and enjoy their stay."⁸³

After the railroad tracks through Marshall and the University were removed in 1932, South Broadway was extended to Marshall on the existing railroad grade. (See Railroads, "black" tracks.) The road (Colorado 93) was completed in 1936. In 1954, after the opening of the Rocky Flats Atomic Energy Commission plant, a section of this road was rerouted to bypass the town of Marshall.

⁷⁹*Daily Camera*, November 27, 1915.

⁸⁰Pettem, Silvia, *Legend of a Landmark*. Boulder: Book Lode, 1986, p. 46.

⁸¹*Daily Camera*, January 31, 1971.

⁸²*Daily Camera*, August 10, 1920.

⁸³*Daily Camera*, May 27, 1926.

By 1940, the only paved roads out of Boulder were the Foothills Highway to Lyons and Arapahoe Road east to Colorado 287.⁸⁴ The right angle turns through Lafayette and Broomfield into Denver remained from the early homesteading days. The old stage route was still the main road north from Denver. Drivers turned west on Arapahoe to get to Boulder.

After many years of free county, state, and federal roads, one final toll road was built -- the Denver-Boulder turnpike. The government appropriated land so that the road could go basically in a straight line, just like the earliest roads before the land was homesteaded. Beginning January 19, 1952, tolls of 25¢ were charged at the toll-gate under the Broomfield interchange. The road paid for itself thirteen years ahead of schedule. The last toll was collected on September 14, 1967.⁸⁵

The Colorado Department of Highways submitted plans in 1959 for the Diagonal Highway between Boulder and Longmont. Like the Denver-Boulder turnpike, properties had to be condemned in order to obtain the right of way. One lane of the divided highway was completed in 1965 when the IBM plant first opened. The other lane, which was not begun until 1972, sliced through Niwot's commercial district, destroying a segment of the town.⁸⁶ The Diagonal became a reality nearly a century after county residents requested it!

⁸⁴Noel, Mahoney, and Stevens, *Historical Atlas of Colorado*. Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1994, p. 31.

⁸⁵*Daily Camera*, January 25, 1976.

⁸⁶Dyni, Anne, *Niwot, Colorado, Echoes From a Railroad Town*, 1994. Boulder: Book Lode, p. 45.

SUMMARY

Boulder's early main thoroughfares, Pearl Street between Boulder and Valmont and the Broadway/Marshall Road between Boulder and Marshall were surveyed before the land was fenced into square and rectangular homesteads. The roads were laid out as straight as possible.

The area's latest highways, the Boulder-Denver turnpike (US 36) and the Longmont Diagonal (Colorado 119), also follow straight lines, but only after land was appropriated from the property owners. "The editor of the *Longmont Press* was correct, in 1874, when he stated that the longer the Commissioners wait to acquire the land, the more expensive it will be. Most of the rest of the Boulder area's roads still follow right-angle property boundary lines.

In a 1952 interview, Martin Parsons, the elderly former teamster recounted his poem, "Trails vs. Turnpikes," as follows:

"You boast of your graded highways done in gravel and cement;
Where you can ride in a limousine, with pleasure and content.

But somehow it don't seem natural for an old cowhand, like me,
To sit on a padded cushion, Glassed in, so I cannot see.

I long for a good old cow trail, and a trusty saddle horse,
The hills and plains of a cattle range, where a man is his own road boss.

Out there in God's open spaces you can dream when the sun gets low,
As you ride along you can hum a song just as slow as you want to go.

You've naught to fear as the shadows fall, your cow horse will not
stray.

And you need no glaring headlights to push the dark away.

They say there's a path of glory that leads to a great white throne,
A gleaming, polished highway with angels to bear you home.

But I seem to feel, when I get my pass, for a trip to the judgment seat,
A winding dust blown cattle trail will guide my erring feet."⁸⁷

Within the historic context area, interpretive signs should be located at the base of the hiking trails into Gregory Canyon and Bear Canyon, as well as at the first turn-out in Boulder Canyon.

⁸⁷*Daily Camera*, undated clipping, 1952.

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*This excerpt is from Margaret Long's
"The Smoky Hill Trail," 1953, Kistler Co.*

IV. THE OVERLAND TRAIL THE WESTERN DIVISION IN COLORADO.

U. S. 87 Denver to Fort Collins, and U. S. 287 to Virginia Dale.

AFTER the main line of the Overland Stage Line was changed to include Denver, it ran over the Fort Morgan Cut-off to the crossing of the South Platte in Denver. It then turned back, north, along the west bank of the Platte to Longmont and Loveland. Beyond it passed west of Fort Collins to Laporte on the Cache la Poudre River. The earlier Trail had crossed the South Platte between Latham and Greeley and ascended the Poudre to Laporte.

There were two stage roads between Laporte and Stonewall Stage Stations. The westbound stage ran north from Laporte on the east side of U. S. 287 and descended a steep grade to Stonewall Valley. Going south, the eastbound stage passed west of the highway, between it and the Cache la Poudre River, and came down from the hills to Laporte. These routes avoided the steepest up-grades whether east or westbound, according to the Old Timer's legends.

The Overland stages were pulled by six horses, matched in size and color. The big coaches accommodated twenty-two passengers. There was a deep boot below the driver's feet, which was used for mail bags, express packages and treasure box. At the back of the coach was a four foot platform where trunks were piled and covered with a large leather apron and buckled down with wide straps. One of the seats next the driver was reserved for the guard or messenger. Many long strings of ox-

teams with big freight wagons, and long strings of mule freighters consisting of six to ten mules driven with one long jerk line, went over the stage road. Soldiers traveled over it between Fort Russell, Wyoming, and Denver, and large herds of longhorn cattle from Texas trailed over it to Wyoming and Montana.¹

Alonzo H. Allen describes the route of the Overland Trail.² "In the good old staging days, the main line ran from Atchison, Kansas to Sacramento, California. Our side line came from the northwest, through Little Laramie, Wyoming, Virginia Dale, Colorado, through Laporte, Spring Canyon, Mariano Modena on the Big Thompson,³ crossed the Little Thompson at Dick Bowler's⁴ and the St. Vrain at old Pella,⁵ or on south into Burlington,⁶ then through Valmont to Golden City, and then to Denver. When Boulder Creek, Clear Creek, or South Platte were not too high, coaches traveled by Buford's,⁷ Rock Creek, Rawhide or Churches,⁸ and thence 11 miles into Denver, and pulled up at the old Planter's Hotel at the foot of Fifteenth street." [id.] Sixteenth.

The Allen account in the COLORADO MAGAZINE describes the town of Burlington, across the St. Vrain from Longmont. The first post office was in the Allen cabin, just west of the D. A. R. monument on U. S. 87. The rest of the town, including two general stores, was south of the Allen cabin, all on the west side of the present highway. Burlington was moved across the river in 1870,

¹ Condensed from the account in *The Colorado Magazine*. XIV. 145.

² *Pioneer Life in Old Burlington*. Alonzo H. Allen.

³ Loveland.

⁴ Dick Bower's station was near Berthoud.

⁵ Pella on the St. Vrain, a few miles above Longmont. Now called Hygiene.

⁶ Burlington was across the Big Thompson from Loveland. Longmont. ⁷ Buford's stage station was on Boulder Creek, in the same location as Boone's stage station, described at reading 25.2, page 213. An account of Buford's is given in *The Colorado Magazine*, September, 1946, page 212.

⁸ Church is between Arvada and Broomfield on Colorado Highway 121.

and established on higher ground at Longmont to avoid the floods in the St. Vrain.

Bob Spottswood, who became superintendent of the Overland Stage Company in 1864, contracted with Mrs. Allen to operate a stage house or hotel. This was a board and grout building, erected on the east side of the present highway opposite the Allen cabin. In 1865 a two-story frame addition was built upon the north end of the old house. The office, dining room, living room, and two large double bed rooms were on the ground floor. Upstairs there were four more bedrooms, large enough for two beds each. Sometimes that was not enough and extra guests were accommodated by spreading blankets and buffalo robes on the dining room floor. The guests could not go to bed before the departure of the midnight coaches, and they had to get up before the tables were set for breakfast.

Mr. Allen says: "For regular meals to stage coach passengers mother was paid \$1.50. Maybe that sounds a little steep, but when you consider that flour cost \$25.00 per hundred pound sack, that eggs were \$2.00 a dozen, and butter often \$2.00 a pound, you can see that there was some expense in serving meals. The average meal would consist of a big bowl of good soup as a starter; the main course, served family style, having plenty of meat—usually beef, buffalo, antelope, or deer; vegetables, such as potatoes, squash and beans cooked with plenty of salt pork; light bread; fruit, usually apples dried on strings; home-made pastries; coffee or tea.

"It is probably impossible for the present-day housewife to have much idea of the work required of my mother operating such an establishment without any modern conveniences. At the time she was feeding passengers, drivers, and stock tenders and regular town boarders, she was using pitch pine wood for fuel in a large sheet iron

range; dipping water from barrels that had been hauled from the river on sleds; doing her laundry out of doors, using wooden tubs and washboards; ironing with heavy cast flatirons; with no modern bathrooms, and with all outbuildings quite a distance from the house.''

The main part of Mrs. Allen's Hotel was moved to the southeast corner of Third Avenue and Kimbark street in Longmont and renamed the City Hotel.⁹

The other stage stations on the Overland Trail are described in the following automobile Log.

OVERLAND AND CHEROKEE TRAILS

LOG OF THE OVERLAND MAIL STAGE from Denver to Virginia Dale. This short log of Root and Connelley¹⁰ is given before the automobile Log on the present highways.

- Miles*
- 0.0 Denver.
 - 11.0 Childs (Or Church).
 - 23.0 Boone's. (On Boulder Creek).
 - 41.0 Little Thompson.
 - 49.0 Big Thompson. (Loveland).
 - 63.0 Laporte (On the Cache la Poudre).
 - 75.0 Boner (Near Owl Canyon).
 - 87.0 Cherokee. (On Stonewall Creek).
 - 99.0 Virginia Dale. (On Dale Creek. The last station in Colorado).

AUTOMOBILE LOG. The Overland and Cherokee Trails. Denver to Virginia Dale. U. S. 87 and U. S. 287.

- Miles*
- 0.0 Denver at Larimer and Fourteenth streets. Go west across the Fourteenth Street Viaduct, and northwest on Speer Boulevard to Federal Boulevard. Turn north on Federal or U. S. 87.
 - 3.2 Junction of Federal Boulevard with W. 46th Avenue. Go west on W. 46th or Colorado 72.
 - 6.6 Arvada. Intersection of Colorado Nos. 72 and 121. Go north on No. 121.
 - 6.8 Bridge over Balston Creek:

⁹ *The Colorado Magazine*. XIV. 193. Allen. "Early Days in Longmont."

¹⁰ *The Overland Stage to California*. Root and Connelley. p. 102. The parentheses in the above log of Root and Connelley have been added.

11.6 CHURCH'S STATION or Twelve Mile House.¹ This was a large twenty-room house, on the west side of the highway and the south bank of Dry Creek. The high embankment of the Colorado and Southern Railway runs between the site of the house to the east and the sites of the two barns to the west. The house was burned down a few years ago. Where it stood a bare spot with piles of brick and plaster is still separated from the highway by a row of fine cottonwood trees.

- 12.6 Underpass, Colorado & Southern R.R.
- 13.3 Take the right fork which goes to the overpass.
- 13.5 Overpass, above the Boulder Turnpike.
- 14.6 Broomfield. Turn west on Colorado 121, on the Jefferson-Boulder County Line.
- 14.9 Turn north on Colorado 121. The entrance and exit roads to and from the Boulder Turnpike go west from Colorado 121 in the next quarter of a mile.
- 15.1 Cross the railroad tracks.
- 15.2 Junction of Colorado 121 & U. S. 87. Go north on U. S. 87, which turns from northwest to north at this reading. The Overland Trail ran north with U. S. 87 across Boulder County.
- 17.6 Bridge over Rock Creek.
- 19.4 Bridge over Coal Creek.²
- 21.0 Lafayette. East junction of U. S. 87 and Colorado 7. Turn west on the combined highways, which run on the Base Line or 40th Parallel.
- 21.5 Turn north.
- 22.6 West junction of U. S. 87 and Colorado 7. No. 7 goes west to Boulder. Go north on U. S. 87.
- 25.2 BOONE'S STATION site³ on the east side of the highway and the south side of Boulder Creek. This station site has been located by N. Rothrock of Longmont.
- 25.7 Bridge over Boulder Creek.
- 27.8 Junction of U. S. 87 and Colorado 52. Continue north on U. S. 87.

¹ S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 14, T. 2 S., R. 69 W.

² This stream, named Coal Creek, comes down from the mountains. Another Coal Creek, sometimes called Sand Creek, heads to the southeast near Hilltop. Both are tributary to the South Platte.

³ N. E. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 15, T. 1 N., R. 69 W.

THE SMOKY HILL TRAIL

- 31.8 Bridge over Left Hand Creek.
- 32.0 Site of one of the stores in the vanished town of Burlington on the west side of the highway. It is now occupied by a large red barn.
- 32.2 Road west. Continue north on U. S. 87.
- 32.4 THE ST. VRAIN STAGE STATION site.⁴ Mrs. Allen's Hotel was opposite, on the east side of the highway. A monument on the west side has the following inscription:
1860-1928. The site of the first log cabin in St. Vrain valley lies 200 feet west of the marker. The cabin was built by Alonzo N. Allen and used as a stage station on the Overland Trail. Placed by the Long's Peak Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.
- 32.5 Bridge over St. Vrain Creek.
- 32.8 Cross the tracks of the C. B. & Q. and the C. & S. railroads in Longmont.
- 34.0 North city limits of Longmont.
- 34.7 Junction of U. S. 87 and Colorado 66 to Lyons and Estes Park. Go north on U. S. 87.
- 39.7 Larimer-Boulder county line.
- 40.8 Bridge over the Little Thompson.
- 41.0 LITTLE THOMPSON STAGE STATION⁵ or Dick Bower's Station according to Alonzo H. Allen. The station was a quarter of a mile west of the highway on the north bank of the Little Thompson. Harold Dunning of Loveland obtained the location of this station from an Old Timer, Louis Brandt, also of Loveland.
- 42.7 Junction of U. S. 87 and Colorado 56. Go east on U. S. 87. The Overland Trail continued north and ran west of the highway to Laporte.
- 43.9 Berthoud. Cross the Colorado & Southern railroad tracks.
- 44.0 Cross roads. Turn north on U. S. 87.
- 47.3 Junction of U. S. 87 and Colorado 60. Continue north on U. S. 87.
- 49.8 Bridge over the Big Thompson.

⁴ N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 10, T. 2 N., R. 69 W.
⁵ S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 27, T. 4 S., R. 69 W.

IV. THE OVERLAND TRAIL

- 50.5 Loveland. Intersection of U. S. 87 and Fourth street, the business center of town. Continue north on U. S. 87.
- 51.5 Loveland. Intersection of U. S. 87 and U. S. 34. Go west on U. S. 34.
- 54.3 Leave U. S. 34 and go south through C. & S. Railway Underpass.
- 54.6 FORT NAMAQUA. THE BIG THOMPSON STAGE STATION⁶ was on the west side of the road and the north bank of the Big Thompson. There was a small, square stone fort with loop holes on all sides. The building had a peaked roof which was blown off in a wind storm and replaced by a flat roof. The fort was burned down in the summer of 1936. The original unpainted, wooden barn is standing in the yard near the site of the Fort. It was built by the Wells-Fargo Company.
- 54.7 Bridge over the Big Thompson.
- 54.8 A monument stands on the west side of the road, in front of the Modena cabin. The solid block of granite in which the tablet is placed was brought from Estes Park. The legend reads:
 NAMAQUA. Home, trading post and fort of Mariano Modena, early trapper, scout and pioneer. First settlement in Big Thompson Valley. Station on the Overland stage route to California 1862. Erected by the State Historical Society of Colorado from the Mrs. J. N. Hall Foundation and by the Namaqua Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution. 1931.
- 55.2 End of the road. Turn east.
- 58.5 Intersection of U. S. 87 and Fourth street in Loveland. Same reading as 50.5 above.
- 51.5 Loveland Intersection of U. S. 87 and U. S. 34. Go north on U. S. 87.
- 59.5 Cross roads. Continue north on U. S. 87.
- 60.5 Cross roads at a filling station. Leave U. S. 87 and go west on a section line road.

⁶ N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 16, T. 5 N., R. 69 W.

62.5 **SPRING CANYON STAGE STATION.**⁷ The section line road west ends on the bank of Spring Creek. The station site is in a wheat field at the Trail crossing of the creek, near the mouth of Spring Canyon. It has been located by Clyde H. Brown of Fort Collins who has found an iron bar for locking the stable door and other relics on this station site. Half a mile south of the road intersection at this reading, a road goes west into Spring Canyon and passes Green Gables Filling Station and the site of vanished Stout City.

After the Overland Trail up the Cache la Poudre from Latham to Laporte was abandoned in 1862, the Overland, as described by Root and Connelley, ran north from Denver. Beyond Spring Canyon it passed west of the future site of Fort Collins and crossed the Cache la Poudre at Laporte.

There was a change of route for a short time before the Overland ceased to operate. According to Clyde H. Brown, Namaqua Station, west of Loveland, and Spring Canyon Station, southwest of Fort Collins, were abandoned and the Trail swung eastward. A new station was established on the Washburn Ranch at the trail crossing of the Big Thompson, about three miles below Namaqua.⁸ The Washburn station site is a mile south of Loveland, on the south bank of the river and the east side of U. S. 87 as it approaches the highway bridge. From Washburn the Trail ran northeast to the Second Sherwood Ranch on the south bank of the Cache la Poudre at its junction with Box Elder Creek. Thence it ascended the Poudre, for about five miles, to Fort Collins and crossed the river near the present highway bridge (U. S. 87) on North College Avenue. It then continued up the north bank of the Poudre to Laporte.

After the Cache la Poudre flood of 1864 Camp Collins, the military camp at Laporte was moved to Fort Collins. At that time, tents, clothing, buildings and equipment were carried away and de-

⁷ S. W. ¼ Sec. 28, T. 7 N., R. 69 W.
⁸ S. W. ¼ Sec. 24, T. 5 N., R. 69 W.

stroyed.⁹ The barracks at Fort Collins were on the south side of the Poudre, a few blocks east of College Avenue, according to John McKissick of Fort Lupton. The old grout house at the southwest corner of Linden and Jefferson streets, near the original barracks, is thought to have been the stage stop for passengers and mail. The home station was at Laporte.

60.5 Return to the cross roads at the filling station, and go north on U. S. 87.

62.5 Fort Collins. North city limits. Continue north on U. S. 87 or College Avenue.

63.8 Intersection of College Avenue and Olive street at the Armstrong Hotel. Lincoln Park is two blocks east on Olive street. The Park occupies a city block, bounded on the north by Olive street. The entrance to the Carnegie Library is on the west side of the Park, and the entrance to the Pioneer Museum is on the east side. Continue north.

64.0 Intersection of College and Mountain View Avenues.

64.2 East junction of Colorado 14 with U. S. 87. Cross the railroad tracks just north of this junction.

64.5 Bridge over the Cache la Poudre River.

66.0 Junction of U. S. 87, to Cheyenne, with U. S. 287. Go northwest on U. S. 287.

68.4 Cross roads. The Larsen Ranch is half a mile south, on the west side of the section line road. The house is the original stage station building at Laporte, which Bill Taylor moved to its present position in 1871. It is a large two-story house, painted white. There are two large rooms with a hall between, containing an old fashioned stair case, on the ground floor of the main building. There are several more rooms on the ground floor in the addition of a later date. Go west on U. S. 287.

69.7 LAPORTE. This was a trading post for French trappers as long ago as 1828. Baxter's store is just south of this reading, on the west side of the road leading south to the Laporte bridge over the Poudre.

⁹ *The Colorado Magazine*. X. 47.

The stage station buildings were on the west side of the road between Baxter's store and the river.¹⁰ The station house was moved to the Larsen Ranch, and later the other buildings at Laporte were burned. The memorial tablet was recovered after the fire and is now on exhibition at the Pioneer Museum in Fort Collins. The legend reads:

In 1862 this log house was used as a station house for the OVERLAND STAGE COMPANY.

Erected by the Cache la Poudre Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution. 1916.

73.2 West junction of U. S. 287 and Colorado 14. No. 14 ascends the Cache la Poudre. Go north on U. S. 287, following the east side of the ridge. The Overland Trail ran on the west side of the ridge.

81.0 Owl Canyon. Filling station. C. E. Roberts of Laporte is in charge of this station. He has located the following stations as far as Virginia Dale. Leave U. S. 287 and go east.

81.1 Turn northeast.

84.0 The road turns southeast. There are high, red sandstone cliffs on the north side of the road. This is reported to be an inscription rock on which the emigrants carved names and dates as they passed on their way to California in the 1860's.¹¹

85.5 Roads southeast and south. Turn south on section line road.

87.0 Turn east on a section line road.

87.1 PARK CREEK STATION site¹² on the west bank of Park Creek and the south side of the section line road. A few holes in the ground mark the station site. The stage barn has been moved across the road and is one of the buildings on the Ripples, formerly the Minor Ranch. The barn has been painted and is in good repair. Park Station is called the Pollock Ranch on the Colorado township plat of 1872.

¹⁰ The station site in Laporte is in the S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 29, T. 8 N., R. 69 W.

¹¹ *The Colorado Magazine*, XVII, 72.

¹² N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 16, T. 9 N., R. 69 W.

This is one of the stage stations located by C. E. Roberts of Ingleside and Laporte.

87.3 Bridge over Park Creek.

88.0 Roads east and south. Go south on a section line road.

97.0 Cross roads. Same reading as 68.4 above. U. S. 287 goes west to Laporte and east to Fort Collins.

81.0 Return to the Roberts Filling Station at the mouth of Owl Canyon and go northwest on U. S. 287. The Overland Trail ran close to U. S. 287 from Owl Canyon to Virginia Dale.

81.3 Bridge over Owl Creek.

81.4 Leave U. S. 287 and go south on an unimproved road.

82.4 BONER SPRING STATION.¹³ The original station house is a wooden building which is rapidly falling to pieces. It has been moved from the southeast to the northwest quarter of the section in which it stands.

A grave at the nearby Boner Spring has been marked, L. E. Hale, 1864. It is reported that a little boy is buried here. He ate some ground glass at Laporte, and died as a result by the time the emigrant train had made its slow way to Boner Spring. The Musgrove Corrals, headquarters for horse thieves, were also at Boner Spring. This information about Boner Spring has been given by C. E. Roberts.

81.4 Return to U. S. 287 and go northwest.

84.8 The Forks Hotel. West to Cameron Pass. Continue northwest on U. S. 287.

87.7 Bridge over Stonewall Creek, below its junction with Ten Mile Creek.

90.5 STONEWALL STATION site.¹⁴ Also called Cherokee Station and, sometimes, Ten Mile Station. This stage station site is southeast or below the junction

¹³ The Boner Spring station site is in the S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 13, T. 9 N., R. 70 W.

¹⁴ Near the middle of Sec. 10, T. 10 N., R. 70 W.

of Stonewall and Ten Mile Creeks, at the upper or western end of Stonewall Canyon. The highway, on the west side of the creek, runs over the hill which once sheltered the vanished stage station at its base. Saloons were evidently not countenanced at the stations, but there was one less than a mile up the creek. Steamboat Mesa is a landmark to the north, which can be seen miles away from any direction.

WHEELER SPRING.¹⁵ The westbound stages from Park Station came down the hills on a steep grade to the blacksmith shop at Wheeler Spring en route to Stonewall Station. The junction of the Trails from Boner and Stonewall Stations was about three miles above or northwest of the latter station, near the junction of Stonewall and Ten Mile Creeks. This junction is shown on the Colorado land plats of the late 1860's, and is just east of the present highway.¹⁶

Charles E. Roberts has given the information about Stonewall Station and Wheeler Spring.

95.6 Highway bridge over Six Mile Creek.

98.4 Virginia Dale Post Office, store and filling station.

98.7 Leave U. S. 287 and go north. A monument has been placed at this road junction, on the east side of the highway. The legend reads:

Three-quarters of a mile northwest from this point is the original VIRGINIA DALE, famous stage station on the Overland route to California, 1862-1867. Established by Joseph A. (Jack) Slade and named for his wife, Virginia. Located on Cherokee Trail of 1849. Favorite camp ground for emigrants. Vice President Colfax and party were detained here by Indian raids in 1865. Robert J. Spotswood replaced Slade. Erected by the State Historical Society of Colorado from the Mrs. J. N. Hall Foundation and by the Fort Collins Pioneer Society. 1935.

¹⁵ In the S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 10, T. 10 N., R. 70 W.

¹⁶ The trail junction was in Sec. 5, T. 10 N., R. 70 W., as shown on the Colorado township plat.

99.5 Bridge over Dale Creek.

100.5 VIRGINIA DALE STAGE STATION.¹⁷ The original station house stands on the west side of Dale Creek, at the southern extremity of the Black Hills or Laramie Mountains. A drawing, made by a soldier stationed at Virginia Dale, is on exhibition at the Pioneer Museum in Fort Collins. It shows a group of buildings surrounding three sides of a square, open to the south towards the Trail. The stage barn south of the house, and other buildings forming the east and west sides of the square have disappeared, but the station house still occupies the north side. The following legend has been painted on a board and placed above the front door which faces the inside of the former square.

Virginia Dale, Colorado, alt. 6977 feet.

This building built by the United States Government 1862. The first shingles were freighted from St. Joseph, Mo., at a cost of \$1.50 per pound. Joseph Slade, the notorious outlaw, was a division master of this old stage division, which was located at this place.

The station house is a one-story building, 20 by 60 feet. The square cut log walls are now covered by clapboards, painted white. There are many bullet holes in the logs at the northeastern corner, and the great rock chimney is in the east wall. The walled-in cellar beneath the house was used as a stable for livestock in times of Indian troubles. The well, and the present windmill, are at the southwest corner of the house. The stages entered one end of the barn, changed horses, and drove out of the other end up the slope to the station house, standing on a slight elevation.

According to local legend, there was a stone watch tower on a hill to the east where a sentinel could give warning signals of Indian attacks, or of the approaching stages. Another hill nearby is known as Robber's Roost. A cemetery with three graves is reported to be south of the road, opposite the station house.

¹⁷ N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$, Sec. 33, T. 12 N., R. 71 W.

Virginia Dale was the first division point west of Denver. The stage which left Denver in the morning, stopped for dinner at Boone's station on Boulder Creek, passed through Laporte in the evening, and arrived at Virginia Dale at midnight.¹⁸ It was a stage trip of some eighteen hours with relays of horses. Now it is an automobile trip over oiled highways in two or three hours, depending on the speed limit enforced by the State.

Harold Dunning and Charles E. Roberts have published accounts of Virginia Dale in the local newspapers. The following is based on their stories: Joseph A. Slade or Jack Slade was appointed the first division agent. He erected the house, stables and other buildings. While he was the agent in charge, the mail seldom failed to come through on time. He drank heavily at times, and is said to have made the station a rendezvous for gamblers and bad citizens. For this reason he was dismissed at the end of the first year.

William S. Taylor or Bill Taylor succeeded Slade. Taylor and his wife kept the hotel and Bob Spotswood was the division agent. Taylor, so the story goes, once stood off the Indians with camouflaged cannons made out of stove pipes and wagon wheels. Taylor moved to Laporte in 1866. At some time in his career he was in charge of other Overland Stations, Park Creek in Colorado and Willow Creek over the border in Wyoming. S. E. Leach was Bill Taylor's successor at Virginia Dale.

When the Union Pacific Railroad was completed to Cheyenne in 1867, the Virginia Dale stage station was abandoned. Successive owners have lived there since that time. After the highway was rebuilt in the 1920's and no longer passed by the station, the present owner moved the Virginia Dale Post Office to the new highway. The old station house is in good repair and is sometimes used as a dance hall.

¹⁸ *The Rocky Mountain News* of Nov. 13, 1863.

98.7 Return to U. S. 287 and go northwest.
99.3 Highway bridge over Dale Creek.

103.5 The Colorado-Wyoming line. A monument on the east side of the highway, at the state line, has the following legend:

This stone marks the place where the OVERLAND STAGE LINE on its way to the west, June 1862-1868 crossed the Colorado-Wyoming line. Erected by THE STATE OF WYOMING and chapters of THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. The Cache la Poudre, Fort Collins, Colorado. The Centennial Greeley, Colorado. The Jaques Laramie, Laramie, Wyoming. 1917

The actual Overland Trail crossing of the state line was one mile east of the state line monument, as shown on the Colorado township plat.¹⁹ THE DENVER-CHEYENNE STAGE ROAD

In 1867 the Overland stage between Denver and the east came to an end, but a stage line connected Denver with the railroad at Cheyenne. The new line followed the old one from Denver to Laporte. Beyond to Cheyenne, the stage station sites have been located by Clyde H. Brown, Curator of the Fort Collins Pioneer Museum, and Carl Anderson and Richard S. Baker, also of Fort Collins. Mr. Brown says: "For many years there had been a trail through Larimer County (Colorado) which started at Santa Fe going northward to Fort Laramie." Between Denver and Park Creek, the next station beyond Laporte, the Cheyenne stage road and the Old Cherokee Trail followed the old trail from Santa Fe.

The Denver-Cheyenne stage road can be traced on the Colorado township plats. It ran close to the now abandoned grade of the Denver Pacific Railway or Colorado Central Branch of the Union Pacific. When the railroad entered Denver in 1877 it superseded the stage road. Between Fort Collins and Cheyenne, Highway U. S. 87 runs east of

¹⁹ The Overland Trail crossed the state line nearer Dale Creek and the Old Highway, in Sec. 19, T. 12 N., R. 71 W.

the Colorado & Southern Railway and both the Highway and the Colorado & Southern are east of the old stage road and the abandoned Colorado Central or Denver Pacific.

Between Denver and Laporte, Namaqua Station was on the Cheyenne stage line, as it had been on the Overland line, but the station at Spring Canyon was not used again. By this time Fort Collins was important enough to be included on the way to Laporte. But the only reference to a stage station at Fort Collins is found in the following account of a stage trip by George A. King. Here is the list of stage stations between Laporte and Cheyenne.

PARK CREEK STATION. This was a trail junction. One branch of the old Overland Trail, which came from Laporte, went northwest to Virginia Dale Station in Colorado and on to Wyoming, Utah and California. The other old trail went northeast to Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Between them the later stage line went north (or more accurately N. N. E.) to Cheyenne. The Denver-Cheyenne stage station, used by the Wells Fargo Co., was just south of the earlier Overland stage station on Park Creek.

THE WHITCOMB RANCH, a mile or two west of Bristol on the old Colorado Central R. R., was at the trail crossing of Box Elder Creek, a tributary to the Cache la Poudre. Another Box Elder Creek in Colorado is a tributary to the South Platte.

BURNT RANCH was a swing station. Beyond, the trail passed west of a conspicuous mesa called Round Butte.

JACK SPRING RANCH was at or near Taylor on the old Colorado Central R. R.

SPOTTSWOOD STAGE STATION²⁰ was practically on the Colorado-Wyoming line and Spring station near Taylor was only a short way south of the state line. Both stations were between Spottswood or Spottle-

²⁰ Spottswood, Spottswood or Spottlewood was on the northern boundary line of the Half Section 23, T. 12 N., R. 68 W. In other words on the Wyoming side of the state line, just east of the 105th Meridian which passes through Denver. Nell's maps of Colorado for the 1880's show many of the vanished towns and settlements mentioned in this Log. Among them is the railroad station of Lone Tree, which is not identical with the Lone Tree Stage Station.

wood and Lone Tree Creek. Clyde Brown of Fort Collins says: "It (Spottswood) is not over 150 yards north of the state line in Wyoming. This station was built of rock and was not used merely for a station, but as a fort by the early settlers, as well." Mr. Brown has located the station sites on the stage line between Fort Collins and Cheyenne.

LONE TREE AND HAZARD STAGE STATIONS are in Wyoming and are forgotten in all but the names. They may be two names for the same station, as the distance between Spottswood and Cheyenne is only twelve miles. The Lone Tree stage station evidently took its name from Lone Tree Creek in Wyoming. Lone Tree Stage Station must not be confused with Lone Tree Railroad Station on the old Colorado Central R. R. The railroad station is on Lone Tree Creek on the Colorado side of the state line and east of the Denver-Fort Collins-Cheyenne stage road and stage stations.

A TRIP IN A CONCORD STAGE

George A. King went from Golden to Cheyenne by stage in 1868.²¹ This is the story of his trip. "The first day was spent on the way to Fort Collins, which we reached a little after dark. There we were to have dinner at the stage station near the bank of the Cache la Poudre. After driving all through the night we reached Cheyenne sometime the next day."

But they had an adventurous night on the way to Cheyenne. King relates that just after crossing the Cache la Poudre bridge a front wheel came off. The stage turned on its side and was dragged some distance. No one was badly injured and another stage was sent out from the station on the banks of the Poudre. The passengers, the mail, the bullion carried by Mr. King's father, and three of the four soldiers who were riding on top of the stage as guards against Indians and robbers, arrived in Cheyenne without further mishap. There was some suspicion that

²¹ *The Colorado Magazine*. XIV. 54.

the wheel had been tampered with while the stage was in the corral. But if the accident was inspired by the bullion on board the stage, the robbery did not occur.

Sidney, Nebraska, was then the western terminus of the regular passenger service. After a stage trip of thirty-six hours to Cheyenne, the passengers rode to Sidney in a construction train, and they arrived in Omaha the next day. There were no bridges across the Missouri between Omaha and Council Bluffs in those days. Mr. King's trip was in the winter. The river was frozen, but the ice was too thin to be safe and too heavy for the little ferry boats. So the passengers walked in single file over a line of heavy planks from bank to bank. The bullion arrived safely at the Philadelphia Mint and Mr. King was paid cash for it.

Pioneer Trails are becoming a dream of the past, so much of the story has been forgotten. The trails to Denver, which meant to the gold fields, came from the south up the Arkansas and the Smoky Hill Rivers and from the north up the Platte River.

The emigrants traveled slowly, day after day, in the ox-drawn covered wagons, suffering hardship, privation and often danger. There were no bridges at first, rivers were crossed by ford or by ferry, and too often drownings occurred. Storms disorganized wagon trains and Indians threatened them. The graves beside the trail tell the story. The evening camp fires in the circle of the wagons on the vast prairie brought relaxation from the day's work and offered what little social life there was in the company.

Travel by stage was less slow than by covered wagon but was cramped and uncomfortable at the best. Eventually the stage and the gallant Pony Express were replaced by the "railroad cars" and the telegraph.

Today we travel swiftly over the same country in luxurious Pullmans or motor over fine roads, while air ships soar above us. Let us hope that, in spite of the ease and comfort of travel in this mechanical age, we can still measure up to the hardy pioneer of yesterday.

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