

# Genoa, Colorado Historic Buildings Survey 2008

*Final  
Survey Report*



**Front Range Research Associates, Inc.  
Denver, Colorado**



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Historic Buildings Survey, 2008**

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Survey Report***

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*COVER: Nolan Street (c. early 1910s, view west-northwest) had a mixture of false front commercial buildings as well as the Genoa State Bank (far left) and the Genoa Hotel (right of the bank). SOURCE: Hedlund House Museum, photographic collection, Hugo, Colorado.*

# INTRODUCTION

Genoa, Colorado, is located in Lincoln County, in the heart of Colorado's eastern high plains, some eleven miles north of the county seat at Hugo and one hundred miles southeast of Denver. Lincoln County embraces 2,593 square miles of flat and rolling prairie, interspersed with sand hills and valleys. Genoa's altitude is 5,598 feet. The town's estimated population in 2008 was 180.<sup>1</sup>

During the early nineteenth century, the Cheyenne and Arapaho inhabited the eastern plains, and a succession of explorers, trappers and traders, prospectors, cattlemen, and settlers traveled through the area. The Kansas Pacific Railroad (later the Union Pacific) reached Hugo and Denver in 1870, establishing an eastern rail connection for the state. Significant agricultural settlement in the area began in the 1880s, accelerating with the construction of the Rock Island Railroad in 1888-1889 on an east-west route across the county. In 1889 Lincoln County was created, reflecting an increasing movement of dryland farmers into the area.

Genoa, platted in 1906, became a service and supply center for homesteaders in the surrounding agricultural area and grew at a rapid rate. During the early twentieth century, pioneers built houses, established businesses, erected schools and churches, and created a promising community. Genoa prospered in the period before and

immediately after World War I, when residents erected several buildings in the business district and filled the residential areas with homes. Lincoln County recorded its maximum population of 8,273 in 1920. People living on the eastern plains struggled with difficult economic, agricultural, and climatic conditions in the 1920s and 1930s. New Deal programs during the Great Depression brought some improvements, including the construction of a new school and a water tank.

World War II renewed demand for agricultural production, although labor was in tight supply due to the departure of young men and women for military service and big city jobs supporting the country's war effort. Following the war, people returned to start families and engage in new business ventures and residential development. Like many small towns on the eastern plains, Genoa faced the effects of loss of population and businesses, as well as school consolidation. It is within this historic context that Genoa's architectural heritage developed.

## **Purpose**

This project included a reconnaissance survey of all historic buildings in Genoa to identify the ones with a high priority for intensive survey. The scattered intensive survey included fieldwork, research, and documentation of the historic resources on Colorado Historical Society Architectural Inventory forms (Form 1403) that include architectural descriptions, historical backgrounds, photographs, sketch and location maps, and evaluations of potential

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<sup>1</sup> Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Municipal Population estimates, July 2008.

eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Properties.

### **Project Results**

The survey resulted in the expansion of historical knowledge relating to buildings and structures in Genoa, documentation of the resources' current appearance and previous alterations, evaluation of the significance of the properties, and preparation of a historical background discussing the town's growth and development. Information about forty-three historic properties was recorded in a reconnaissance survey table and an associated memo produced 7 January 2008. A scattered intensive survey produced forty Colorado Historical Society Architectural Inventory forms and a Final Survey Report (this document).

Of the forty properties included in the intensive survey, two individual resources are evaluated as potentially eligible to the National Register (as well as potentially eligible to the State Register) and three are evaluated as potentially eligible to the State Register only.

The information resulting from this survey will assist the Town of Genoa and interested

residents with historic preservation planning. Assessments of eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places and State Register of Historic Properties, as well as the information contained on the reconnaissance survey memorandum, the intensive-level survey forms and in the report, will provide direction for future preservation efforts. The information resulting from this survey will constitute one basis by which properties are nominated for designation and citizens are made aware of the town's architectural and historical heritage.

### **Funding**

This project was paid for in part by a State Historical Fund grant to the University of Colorado Denver (grant number 07-T1-001). The survey was conducted following the guidelines of the Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation publication *Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Manual* (2007). Architectural classifications of buildings are based on the Society's publication *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering* (Second Edition, March 2003 and updates) and the lexicon for architectural styles included in the *Survey Manual*.



## PROJECT AREA

### Survey Area

The Genoa Historic Buildings Survey documented forty properties located within the town's boundaries (See Tables 2 and 3). The survey examined approximately twenty-four acres of urban land and included domestic, commercial, governmental, religious, recreational, and transportation-related resources. Figure 1 shows the location of the town on a USGS base map, while Figure 2 identifies the surveyed resources on a digital aerial photograph of the town showing property locations. The surveyed properties are located in: Section 12, Township 9 South, Range 55 West, 6th Principal Meridian, Lincoln County, Colorado.

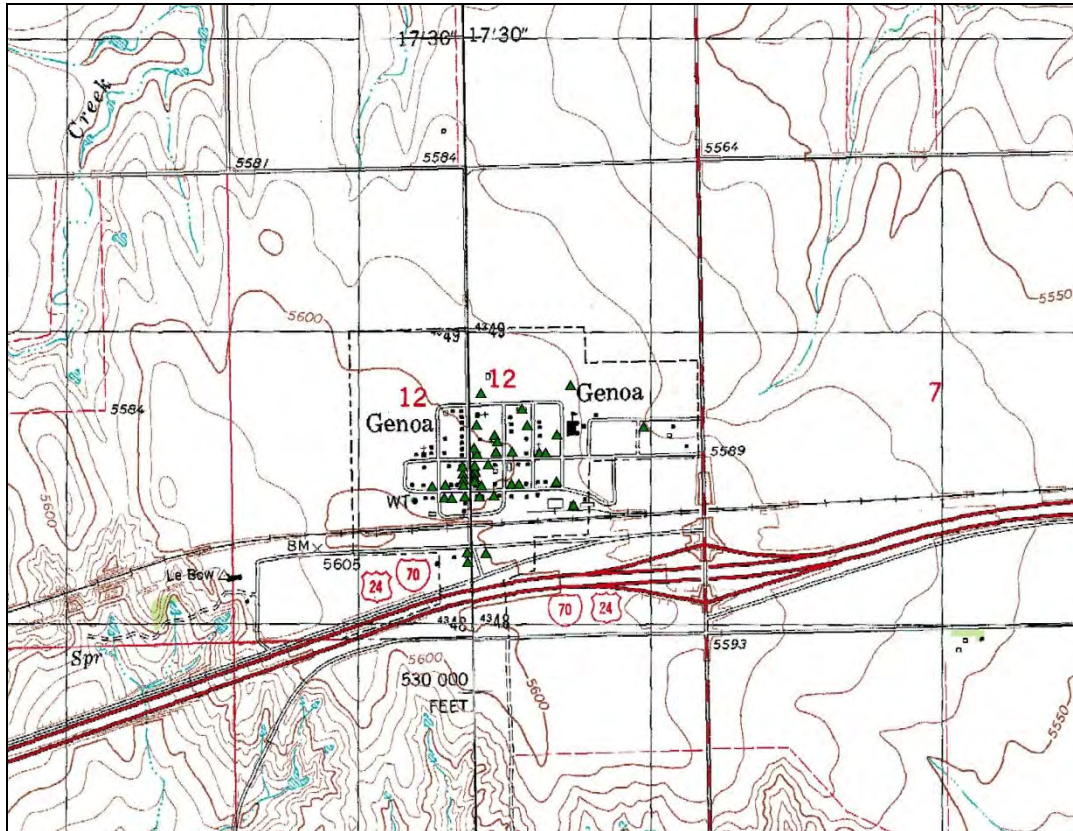
### Physical Setting

The survey area is situated on the plains of eastern Colorado. Genoa is located along Interstate 70, which parallels the original route of the Rock Island Railroad (now the Kyle Railroad), which stimulated settlement of the town and the surrounding region.

The physical layout of the town is a grid, with the railroad tracks extending east-west at the south end. Most of the developed area of Genoa lies to the north of the railroad and Interstate 70. A tall, reinforced

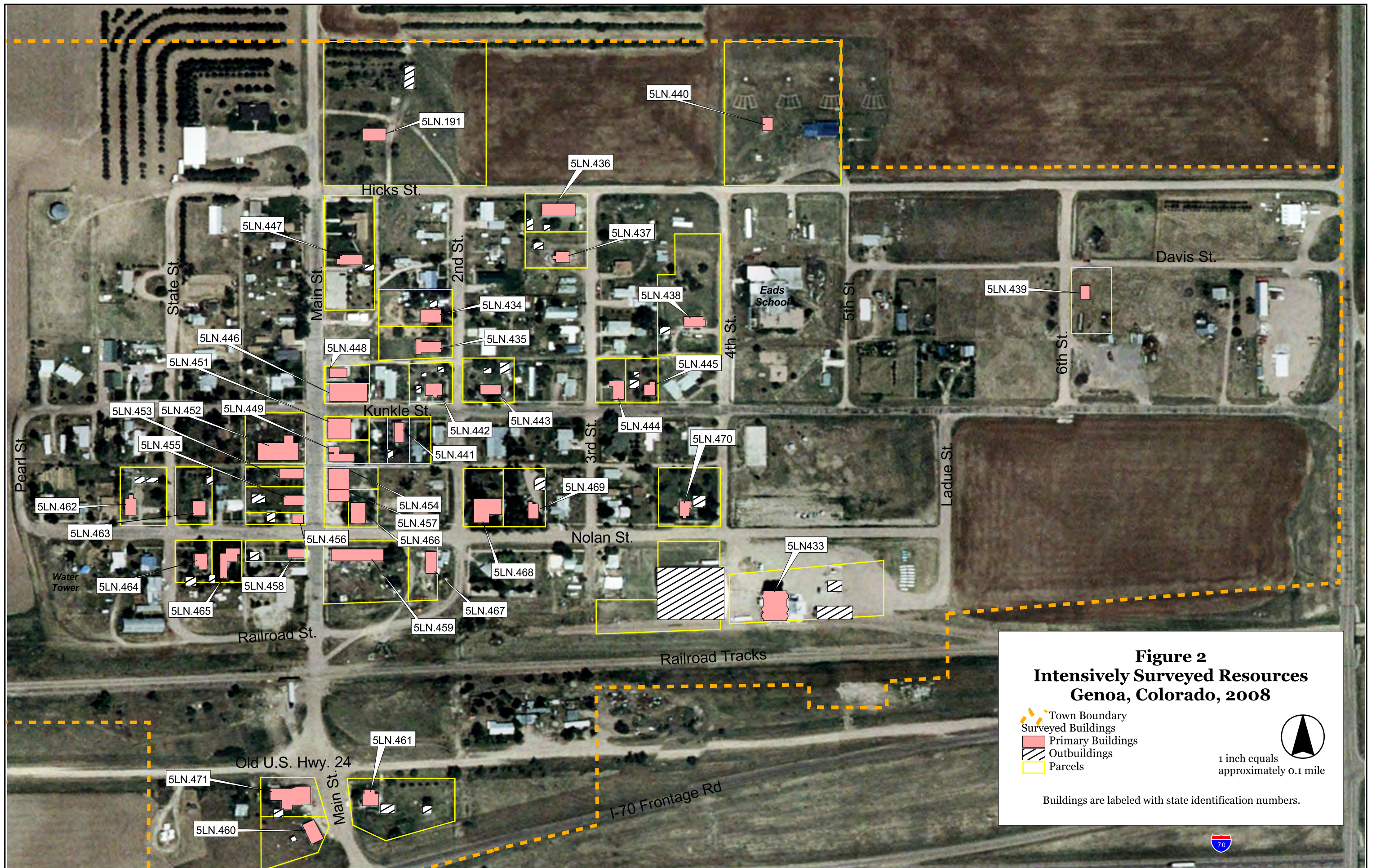
concrete grain elevator facility marks the location of the town from several miles distant as one drives along the interstate. The Genoa Tower, a State Register-listed property, is also a visual landmark west of town.

Blocks within Genoa vary in size and shape, with a range of large rectangular blocks in the northern part of town and smaller, square blocks to the south. Main Street, oriented north-south in the western part of town holds most of the commercial buildings. West of Main Street, north-south streets include State and Pearl streets; east of Main are numbered north-south streets, from 2<sup>nd</sup> Street on the west to 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the east. East-west streets include Hicks on the north, followed by Davis (in the eastern part of town only), Kunkle, and Nolan. A remnant of Old U.S. Highway 24 passes through the southern portion of Genoa between the railroad tracks and Interstate 70. For north-south streets, odd numbers are on the east side and even numbers are on the west side; for east-west streets, odd numbers are on the south side and even numbers are on the north side. Some buildings in town do not have posted numbers.





**Figure 1. Location Map.** Locations of resources included in the selective, intensive survey of Genoa are indicated by triangles. All of the resources are located within the Genoa Town boundary. SOURCE: Base comprised of digital extract of portions of U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle maps: Genoa West, Colo. (1980) and Genoa East, Colo. (1979).





**Figure 2**  
**Intensively Surveyed Resources**  
**Genoa, Colorado, 2008**

-  Town Boundary
-  Surveyed Buildings
-  Primary Buildings
-  Outbuildings
-  Parcels

  
 1 inch equals  
 approximately 0.1 mile

Buildings are labeled with state identification numbers.







# 3

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

### **Objectives and Scope of Work**

The Genoa Historic Building Survey began in late November 2007. The project called for a selective intensive survey of forty properties that were selected after a reconnaissance survey of historic resources in town. The buildings recorded in the intensive survey were described, photographed, researched, mapped, and evaluated, with Colorado Historical Society Architectural Inventory forms produced for each of the documented properties.<sup>2</sup> The project also called for this Final Survey Report explaining the project findings, including evaluations of the surveyed properties, and providing an overview of the history of the town. The report includes a location map outlining the project area and a survey map showing the surveyed properties' locations.

### **Previous Surveys and Listed Resources**

A file search of the Colorado Historical Society's COMPASS database performed in December 2007 showed that only one architectural resource in Genoa had been surveyed previously: 5LN.191, a dwelling at 101 Hicks Street (the northeast corner of Hicks and Main streets). The survey form was produced on an older version of the

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<sup>2</sup> After draft forms were submitted OAHP staff determined that two buildings (305 and 307 Main Street) joined by a rear connector should be recorded on one survey form; thus, 39 final survey forms were submitted.

state form, which required less information than the current ones. Colorado Preservation, Inc. (CPI), as part of its New Deal survey efforts, reportedly surveyed the Genoa School and town water tower in 2008-09, but these resources were not yet included within COMPASS.

No resources within the survey area are currently listed in the National or State Registers. The World's Wonder View Tower (Genoa Tower, 5LN.194), a quarter-mile southwest of town, was listed in the State Register in 1995.

### **Anticipated Results**

Based on the results of the file search, preliminary historical research, and a windshield survey of the area, it was anticipated the resources surveyed would reflect a variety of functions. Important questions about the properties to be surveyed included their dates of construction, building materials used, architectural styles exhibited, association with prominent persons, and original functions. Examination of the ability of the buildings to convey their historic character was an important component of the project. The extent of alterations was also a focus of the study.

### **Kickoff Meeting**

A public meeting held in Genoa in December 2007 introduced local residents to representatives of the University of Colorado Denver (UCD) College of Architecture and Planning, CSU's

Community Technical Assistance Program, and Front Range Research Associates. Kirsten Christensen of UCD and Michael Tupa, DOLA-CSU Extension, and Thomas H. and R. Laurie Simmons of Front Range research Associates, Inc., presented information about the project goals and methodology, answered questions, and received information from citizens.

A key outcome of the meeting was the input received from local residents about the history and locations of buildings that might be candidates for the intensive survey. Locations were identified utilizing an aerial photograph provided by Tom Simmons. Genoa residents also provided information about additional research and interview sources. After the meeting, the historic buildings suggested by residents were compiled into a list for use in the reconnaissance task.

### **Reconnaissance Survey**

Using the information provided by townspeople, in January 2008 the surveyors completed a reconnaissance survey of Genoa by driving through all parts of town and looking at the historic buildings in order to provide a list of possible properties to be included in the intensive survey. The surveyors then presented the Town with a table identifying historic resources representing a variety of building types that also had relatively high degrees of historic physical integrity, and, in some cases, known historical associations.

The table included forty-three suggested historic resources that could be included in the forty-building intensive survey. The table provided a photograph of each building, as well as its address, name, and brief comments. The listed buildings were evaluated as having “higher” or “lower” priority for intensive survey. From this table, the Town selected forty historic properties for the final survey list.

### **Selective-Intensive Survey**

*Fieldwork.* The selective-intensive level field survey was conducted in April 2008. Fieldwork included examination of each building for architectural features and design elements, style, building materials, building condition, plan, setting, and alterations. The location of each resource was verified on a base map. Property owners and other interested persons encountered or identified during the fieldwork were interviewed for information about some historic properties.

*Photography.* Photographs of each primary building and associated outbuildings visible from the public right of way were taken during the intensive survey fieldwork in April 2008. The selected images were printed at 4” X 6”, on Fuji Crystal Archive paper. Negatives were stored in archival storage sheets. Photographs are identified using archival computer labels produced from the project database. The labels indicate Smithsonian identification number, address, photographer, date, roll and frame number, camera direction, and location of negatives. At least one color digital image (JPG) of each primary building also was taken.

The Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation in Denver received one set of original photographic prints and the Town of Genoa retained the other set and the negatives.

*Mapping.* No geographic information system data covering the project area was available from Lincoln County or the town. A 2005 digital aerial ortho-photographic image in MrSID format (UTM NAD83) was acquired of the county, and the footprints of surveyed buildings were digitized on-screen. The centroid of each primary building was used as the UTM coordinate for each surveyed property. Location maps were produced by plotting the centroids over a

digital extract of the USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle maps covering the town: Genoa East, Colo. (1979) and Genoa West, Colo. (1980). Using the building outlines, sketch maps were created from the project GIS showing each resource in the context of its block.

*Historical Research.* Essential information about the resources surveyed was collected during visits to Lincoln County and Denver area libraries and archival repositories. Information was obtained from public agencies and institutions in Genoa and Denver, as well as residents and property owners and other individuals with knowledge of the survey area's history and its historic buildings. General and site-specific research materials about Genoa, including published and unpublished sources, were reviewed for historical background and individual property information.

There is no public library or other public archives in Genoa. Local history books and other publications in the Hugo Public Library were key resources for the project. The library holdings include most of the published histories relating to Lincoln County.

The Hedlund House Museum in Hugo maintains a wealth of county historical information, including historic photographs and documents, reports, and publications. The museum's director, Terry Blevins, guided the surveyors to sources of information about Genoa history, answered questions, and generously shared historical information he has compiled on the area.

The surveyors created books ("Genoa, Do You Know This Building?") with a page for each surveyed building, a photograph, and other identifying information. The books were placed in the Genoa Senior Center and other locations. Local residents wrote down their recollections about the histories of the

buildings included, providing excellent information for the survey forms.

The files of the Lincoln County Assessor in Hugo were examined, including current real estate appraisal cards. Copies of historic Assessor photographs were taken using a digital camera. The County Clerk's Office provided a current plat of Genoa and the dates of additions.

In the Denver area, the files of the Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation provided copies of the previous survey form and the Genoa Tower State Register nomination. Historic newspapers, photographs, and other research materials in the Society's Stephen Hart Library were consulted. The historical materials housed at the Western History and Genealogy Department of the Denver Public Library were utilized, including fire insurance maps, historic photographs, clippings files and brochures, newspaper indexes, and books relating to Lincoln County.

Manuscript U.S. Census returns for 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930 were accessed at Ancestry.com to discover occupations and demographic characteristics of residents and business owners. State business directories, World War I draft registration cards, and other databases were consulted.

Historic Genoa and Hugo newspapers provided information on the history of the town, construction of buildings, biographies of local citizens, obituaries, and business descriptions. Newspaper articles were accessed on the Colorado Historic Newspapers website and at the Stephen Hart Library of the Colorado Historical Society. Terry Blevins' collected newspaper extracts from local newspapers proved very useful.

Construction dates of historic buildings were determined from Lincoln County

Assessor information, historic photographs, newspaper accounts, published books, interviews with owners and other residents, and other written sources, as well as the field survey. Estimated dates of construction (in some cases expressed as a span of years) were produced for some resources.

Some sources of information typically used in intensive survey research were not available for the Lincoln County project. No city or county directory coverage existed; the jurisdiction may have had insufficient population to justify the production of such listings. The town lacked building numbers until the late twentieth century, which made it difficult to match names of businesses and residents with buildings in some cases. No Sanborn fire insurance map coverage was available; a third party fire insurance map compiler provided one year of coverage in the 1960s.

Published histories that include information on Genoa and Lincoln County include: *Tri-County History: A Centennial* by Karlene McKean, Roleta Teal, Betty Jacobs, and Mary E. Owen, edited by Terry W. Blevins (1989); Laura Solze Clagett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado* (1987); and Lincoln County Historical Society, *Lincoln County From the Beginning to 1940* (1979). Several unpublished manuscripts with old-timers' recollections of history of Genoa and its buildings are found in the files of the Hedlund House Museum.

*Preparation and Distribution of Forms and Report.* After completion of the field survey and historical research, Colorado Historical Society Architectural Inventory forms were prepared in an output form acceptable to the Colorado Historical Society and in a database format for analysis and mapping uses. The task required developing a report template that replicated the appearance of the state form produced from a database

structure conforming to other project needs. The system was used for forms completion and printing and analytical sorts, listings, and queries. Sorted extracts from the database were imported into a word processing package for use as survey report tables.

The forms include information on each property's ownership, location, date of construction, building materials, architectural description, style, alterations, associated buildings, historical background, construction history, statement of significance, and sources of information. The Colorado Historical Society assigned a unique Smithsonian identification number for each property. The numbers are included on forms and photographs and were referenced in the report. New identification numbers spanned the range from 5LN.433 through 5LN.449 and 5LN.451 through 5LN.471.

The architectural styles assigned on the forms were based on those in the Colorado Historical Society's booklet, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, and a lexicon of architectural styles included in the Society's *Survey Manual*. Included with each survey form are related photographs, a sketch map showing the building outline of the surveyed resource in the context of the block where it is located, and a location map consisting of an extract of the USGS quadrangle map. Both maps were produced from the GIS.

### **Architectural Styles**

The terms for architectural styles used in this document are derived from the lexicon created by the Colorado Historical Society and found in its publication, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*. Although some buildings within the three towns were found to display features associated with these formal architectural styles, the majority of



resources examined were identified as “No Style.” This category includes buildings of vernacular design found in communities throughout Colorado, as well as buildings that have undergone alterations that make their original style unknown. If a building is a well-preserved example of vernacular architecture, it may still have significance for its design, materials, and craftsmanship as representative of the types of building forms and materials occurring in Genoa. Therefore, a finding of “No Style” should not be interpreted as indicating a lack of importance.

All of these survey products, together with the final report (this document), were submitted to the Town of Genoa and the Colorado Historical Society for review and comment. The Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation transfers the information generated on the inventory forms into its statewide database and houses an original copy of the forms and survey report. PDF versions of the survey forms and survey report and the Access table containing the survey form data also were provided to the Town of Genoa.

### **Public Meetings/Outreach**

As noted above, Tom and Laurie Simmons attended a kickoff meeting with Genoa residents in December 2007. The surveyors also discussed the project with local citizens during fieldwork and research, and interviewed a number of Lincoln County residents to gain historical information. A public meeting was held at the end of the project to present the results and answer questions.

### **Project Schedule**

Due to unforeseen administrative circumstances that caused delays in the start of the project, payment of invoices, and renewal of the contract, the project extended

well beyond the original time schedule planned.

### **Project Participants**

The University of Colorado Denver contracted with Front Range Research Associates, Inc., to complete the historic buildings survey as part of model program to document historic properties in small towns in the state. Kirsten Hill Christensen coordinated the survey project for the University of Colorado. Patricia Vice of Genoa served as the Town’s representative for the survey. Michael Tupa, DOLA-CSU Extension, assisted the project as a liaison to the town.

Front Range Research Associates, Inc., of Denver, Colorado, conducted the historic building survey for the university. R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons of Front Range Research completed research, fieldwork, and consultation regarding eligibility of resources, and prepared the forms, maps, and the final survey report. Tom Simmons took 35mm black and white photographs and color digital images for the project.

Chris Geddes, National and State Register Historian for the Colorado Historical Society (CHS) consulted on evaluations of eligibility to the National and State Registers. Elizabeth Blackwell administered the project for the State Historical Fund. The survey forms and report were reviewed by Mary Therese Anstey, Architectural and Survey Coordinator for the Colorado Historical Society, and Dr. Melanie Schellenbarger, co-director of the Center of Preservation Research at UCD.

### **Acknowledgments**

A number of individuals and organizations contributed to the successful outcome of the project. Patricia Vice publicized the project within Genoa, arranged for public meetings, distributed the book for local residents to

record their recollections, and provided suggestions on sources of information to the surveyors. Other members of the community attended the kickoff meeting and participated in a discussion of which buildings in town were historic and significant. Local residents and former residents also assisted by providing information on an individual basis, many by answering questions in telephone interviews. Genoa natives Bob Andersen and Jim Covington met with the surveyors and provided information on each building included in the intensive survey. The

County Clerk and County Assessor's offices in Hugo provided access to their files, and the Hugo Public Library also shared its resources with the surveyors. Terry Blevins, director of the Hedlund House Museum in Hugo, directed the surveyors to important sources of information and generously shared his knowledge and research materials. The staffs of the Colorado Historical Society Stephen Hart Library and Denver Public Library also facilitated the use of research materials.

To everyone who assisted the project, we offer sincere thanks.

# HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

## Introduction<sup>3</sup>

For the past ten thousand years humans have used the land and been impacted by the ever-changing climate of the Great Plains. In the early 1800s Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples moved into the plains of eastern Colorado. In 1859 the discovery of gold resulted in an influx of people seeking their fortunes in the Pikes Peak region, and large numbers of them traveled along the Smoky Hill Trail route that ran north of present-day Hugo. Stagecoach lines, including the Leavenworth & Pikes Peak Express and the Butterfield Overland Dispatch, traveled across the area during this early period, and cattlemen established large grazing operations on the plains in the 1860s.<sup>4</sup>

Congress created the Colorado Territory in 1861, and the Territorial Legislature divided it into seventeen counties. In 1861

<sup>3</sup> In this historical overview, many of the articles cited in early Lincoln County newspapers were quoted from extracts provided by Terry W. Blevins of the Hedlund House Museum in Hugo.

<sup>4</sup> Lincoln County Historical Society, *Lincoln County: From the Beginning to 1940* (Marceline, Mo.: Walsworth Publishing Co., n.d.), 3; National Park Service, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, "History and Culture" accessed at <http://www.nps.gov> on 11 January 2010; Thomas J. Noel, Paul F. Mahoney, and Richard E. Stevens, *Historical Atlas of Colorado* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 15; J. Donald Hughes, *American Indians in Colorado* (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Co., 1977), 58-61; David Grant Noble, *Ancient Colorado: An Archaeological Perspective* (Denver: Colorado Council of Professional Archaeologists, 2000), 45-47.

the area now encompassing Genoa in northern Lincoln County was part of territorial Douglas County. This area remained in Douglas County until the creation of Elbert County in 1874 from parts of Douglas and Greenwood counties.<sup>5</sup>

Newcomers brought different cultures and attitudes toward the use of land, resulting in ever-increasing tension and conflict with the indigenous inhabitants. The United States military defeated the Indians, removed them from the eastern plains, and left the land open for future development. The Kansas Pacific Railroad, the state's first east-west line to Denver, entered Hugo on 5 July 1870.

## Beginning of the Homestead Era

The homestead era in Lincoln County began in earnest in the 1880s, bringing families from across the country and around the world to pursue dryland farming and livestock raising.<sup>6</sup> As the arable lands in the Dakota Territory, western Kansas, and Nebraska filled with homesteaders, people moved further west into lands in eastern Colorado. Robert G. Dunbar noted in his 1940 study of agriculture on the eastern plains that these

<sup>5</sup> Frederick L. Paxson, "The County Boundaries of Colorado," *University of Colorado Studies* 3(August 1906)4: 197-215.

<sup>6</sup> Dryland farming has been defined as "the farming processes necessary for production of crops without irrigation, in a region of deficient rainfall, usually below twenty inches per annum." Alvin Kezer, quoted in Alvin T. Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado* (Fort Collins: The State Agricultural College, 1926), 245.

newcomers “were for the most part Anglo-Americans and they came from the previous frontiers of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, and Illinois. They were not cattlemen, but farmers. Like their forefathers, they came to acquire land and to plow it.”<sup>7</sup>

Before the building of the railroad across the north part of the county, early settlers came by wagon, on horseback, or even on foot, traveling from the nearest rail connection at Hugo. Moist years in the mid-1880s, as well as the encouraging reports of real estate agents, railroads, and newspapers, encouraged agriculturalists to take up dryland farming. Although a few big cattle companies who controlled much of the plains tried for a time to prevent the homesteaders from successfully claiming land, their days of dominance were ending, and a growing number of newcomers settled in the area and established farms.

### **The Rock Island Railroad Arrives, Bringing Increased Settlement**

The founding of Genoa and intensive development of the surrounding agricultural area were tied to the arrival of the standard gauge Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad (CRI&P), whose subsidiary, the Chicago, Kansas, and Nebraska Railroad (CK&N), built through the area in 1888. The Rock Island organized in 1847 as the Rock Island and La Salle Railroad, with the goal of connecting those two northern Illinois communities. In 1852, the line was renamed the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad to reflect its extension to the state’s largest city. The railroad became the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad in 1866, with a plan to build westward to

connect with the Union Pacific Railroad at Omaha, Nebraska.<sup>8</sup>

By the mid-1880s, the Rock Island established the Chicago, Kansas, and Nebraska Railroad (CK&N) “to construct lines into Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma (Indian Territory). . . . [B]ut the primary goal was actually the center of Colorado.” The Rock Island was interested in tapping the rich mining market of the Centennial State, with particular emphasis on links with the standard gauge Colorado Midland Railway at Colorado Springs. Construction on the westward extension began at Horton, Kansas, in 1886, and the line reached Goodland in July 1888. Continuing westward past present-day Genoa to the vicinity of Limon, the tracks turned southwesterly toward Colorado Springs. Regular passenger service to Colorado Springs began in early November 1888. At the site of present-day Genoa, the railroad installed a siding, with a boxcar serving as a depot, and named it “Creech.” The location apparently was designated to honor John Worth Creech, a Kansas banker and railroad contractor who “constructed several hundred miles of railway in various sections of the United States.”<sup>9</sup>

Many of the farmers arriving by train rented what were known as “emigrant cars,” railroad boxcars filled with all of their possessions, including household furnishings at one end and farming equipment and livestock in the other. The railroad permitted the head of the family to ride in the boxcar, but required other

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<sup>7</sup> Robert G. Dunbar, “Agricultural Adjustments in Eastern Colorado in the Eighteen-Nineties,” *Agricultural History*, 18(January 1944)1:43.

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<sup>8</sup> “The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, Route of the Rockies,” accessed at [www.american-rails.com](http://www.american-rails.com), 15 January 2010.

<sup>9</sup> The CK&N leased its trackage to the Rock Island and in 1891 it was absorbed into the larger company. Michael C. Doty and E.M. “Mel” McFarland, *Rocketing to the Rockies*, Colorado Rail Annual, number 17 (Golden, Colorado: Colorado Railroad Museum, 1987), 11.

family members to buy tickets and travel in the passenger train. When the train reached the site where the newcomers wanted to disembark, the car was pushed off to a side track, where the new arrivals lived for a time until acquiring other quarters.

Lincoln County's landscape is characterized by level prairie, sand hills, and small streams. The Arickaree and Republican rivers flow through the northern portion of the county, and the southern part is crossed by Big Sandy, Rush, and Horse Creeks as they make their way toward the Arkansas River. Altitudes range from about 4,500 feet in the southeast to 5,558 feet at Genoa. Genoa receives annual precipitation averaging sixteen inches, but varying considerably in some years.<sup>10</sup>

Agricultural historian Alvin T. Steinel described the homesteaders who entered this land in the 1880s:

During the early days of settlement it was generally accepted that agriculture without irrigation was not feasible in Colorado, except only along streams where certain crops might yield fair returns in seasons of normal rainfall.... While settlement of the unirrigated plains region was therefore held back as long as the range men were in control, steady inroads were being made on their domain by homesteaders, who were land-hungry and determined to face discouragement and disaster, if need be, to show that a living could be wrested from the soil of the prairies, without the use of water for

irrigation.<sup>11</sup>

As Steinel found, the prospective dry landers "had no guide, no body of literature to fall back on, save the extravagant claims of colonization circulars; no offer of aid from a paternal government." Dunbar agreed, "Unlike their forefathers, these farmers were in a strange country." They had come from areas with twenty or more inches of rain annually to what some saw as "the Great American Desert" because it received much less. "However, because of the persuasive propaganda of the newspapers, railroads, States, and townsite companies, these pioneers were unaware of the aridity of this region in eastern Colorado, which ironically came to be known as the 'rain belt.'" Once they arrived, the homesteaders followed the practices of farming developed further east.<sup>12</sup>

The homesteaders entered the area just as agricultural colleges were being established. Experimental work with dryland farming was unorganized and unpublished, there were no local weather records, and the state provided no information or technical assistance for farmers and ranchers. As Alvin T. Steinel noted in his *History of Agriculture in Colorado*,

Exploitation of the settler was the order of the day, land sharks lied and defrauded the emigrant, unreasoning and imaginative optimists painted the prairie in alluring tints and no one felt responsible for his success, nor cared a whit what happened to him after the emigrant fare was paid and the new comer [sic] was dumped out upon the treeless, waterless land with a "there

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<sup>10</sup> Colorado State Planning Division, Colorado, 1956-58: *Yearbook of the State of Colorado* (Denver: Colorado State Planning Division, 1958), 786; average precipitation accessed at <http://prairiedevelopment.com> on 3 February 2010.

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<sup>11</sup> Alvin T. Steinel, *History of Agriculture in Colorado* (Fort Collins: The State Agricultural College, 1926), 245.

<sup>12</sup> Steinel, *History of Agriculture*, 247; Dunbar, "Agricultural Adjustments," 43.

now, make a home for yourself.”<sup>13</sup>

Homestead houses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries ranged from tents to dugouts, sod or adobe houses, and frame shacks on the claimed land. Local historian Helen Bradshaw observed that “the sod house was a landmark of the homestead era” in Lincoln County. She noted that the lack of trees was not emphasized by land agents encouraging people to move to the area. Some of the early houses are still scattered throughout the county, and remaining examples are becoming increasingly rare and significant.

If the homesteaders prospered, these early buildings were often replaced by larger, usually frame houses featuring milled wood siding and wide, welcoming porches.<sup>14</sup>

### Creation of Lincoln County and Beginnings of Genoa

In 1889 eleven new Colorado counties, including Lincoln, were created. The northern part of Lincoln County (including Genoa) came from part of Elbert County, while the southern part drew land from Bent County. The new county’s name paid tribute to the great Civil War president. Lincoln County embraced an L-shaped area extending seventy-two miles north to south and ranging from about thirty miles wide in the north to about forty-eight miles wide in the south. Hugo, a cattle and railroad town whose post office dates to 1871, became the county seat.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Steinel, *History of Agriculture*, 525.

<sup>14</sup> Helen Bradshaw, “Lincoln County,” in Thomas Chamblin, ed., *Encyclopedia of Colorado* (N.p.: Colorado Historical Association, c. 1961), 242.

<sup>15</sup> Paxson, “The County Boundaries of Colorado,” 197-215; Lincoln County Historical Society, *Lincoln County*, 3; Colorado State Planning Division, *Colorado Year Book, 1962-64* (Denver: Colorado State Planning Division, 1964), 992.

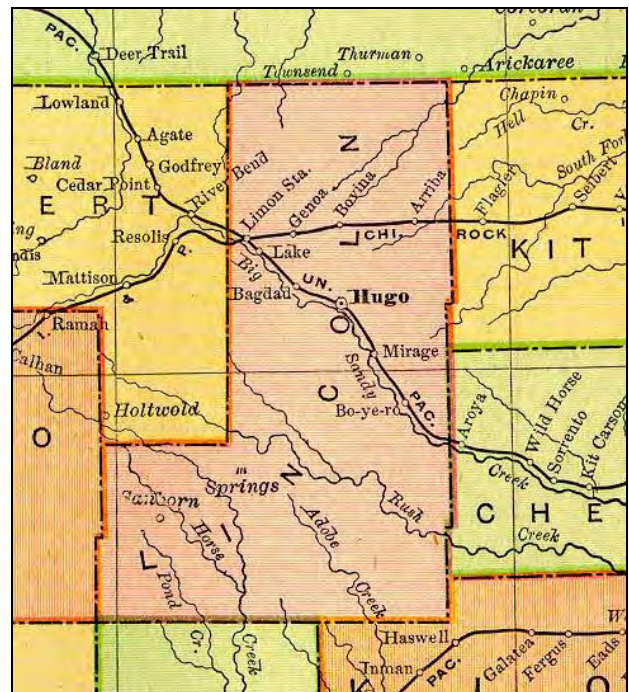


Figure 3. The towns and railroads of Lincoln County are shown with surrounding counties on this 1895 map. SOURCE: Rand McNally, *Railroad Atlas of the United States (1895)*.

Historian LeRoy R. Hafen described the process of creating counties in 1889:

Surrounding the various towns in the dry farming areas of Colorado and constituting the chief excuse for their existence, were the farm houses and plowed acres of the homesteaders. The high plains were being fenced and converted into farms at an amazing rate during the middle eighties. With the large immigration of farmers, the abundance of rainfall, and the coming of new railroads, an optimism developed which carried the legislature with it and resulted in the creation of eight new counties on the eastern plains of the state ....

Hafen further noted that the counties were drawn to distribute the railroad routes, since the new entities depended heavily upon the lines for tax money to pay for

schools and county government.<sup>16</sup>

In 1890 the U.S. Census found 689 people residing in the new county. Among those who arrived in the area in the early 1890s were a large group of people from Russia. Blevins noted these people were probably part of the group of Germans from Russia who came to the country during the decade. The Russians created a small settlement that flourished until drought motivated many to sell their property and move to Texas or other locations.<sup>17</sup>

Genoa's predecessor, Creech, was mentioned in the (Hugo) *Lincoln County Ledger* in December 1892, when the newspaper reported H.A. Roehling (who may have been part of the Russian migration) came to town from Creech to buy lumber to build a residence and school on his claim in that vicinity. Roehling also applied for a post office. When the post office was awarded in 1893, the Post Office Department designated it "Cable," in honor of Ransom R. Cable, the president of the CRI&P from 1883 to 1898. Blevins reported that residents of Cable included Reverend B. Kroeker, who led church services at the school in German; Gerhard Jansen and Arron Esau, who made brooms; and farmer James M. Gruer.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Hafen, *Colorado and Its People*, vol. I, 440.

<sup>17</sup> Genoa School, "History of Genoa," *The Wolf Howls*, 24 November 1939, 3, in the files of Hedlund House Museum, Hugo; U.S. Census, 1900.

<sup>18</sup> *Lincoln County Ledger*, 10 December 1892; Roger Rydberg, Email to Tom Simmons, 1 February 2010; John Worth Creech biography, *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History*, v. 3 (Chicago: Standard Publishing Co., 1912), 432-36; *New York Times*, 13 November 1909; William H. Bauer, James L. Ozment, and John H. Willard, *Colorado Post Offices, 1859-1989* (Golden, Colorado: Colorado Railroad Museum, 1990), 27 and 60; Doty and McFarland, *Rocketing to the Rockies*, 59; Terry W. Blevins, "Genoa, Before 1939," paper presented to the Genoa Lion's Club in Celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup>

The designation of the future Genoa site as "Cable" changed because it was too similar to Cable Junction in El Paso County. In April 1895, with H.A. Roehling as postmaster, the post office was rechristened "Genoa." The origin of the name "Genoa" is in some dispute. Historian Maxine Benson reported that Carrie Echternacht generally has been credited with providing the name "Genoa" for the post office, which she may have selected in honor of towns of the same name in Ohio and Nebraska, where she previously lived. However, Terry Blevins points out that this account may be an error since Roehling was still on the scene. In May 1895 Roehling was placed under arrest and charged with using the post office to defraud the government. He was jailed in Denver, and became a resident of that city, according to the 1900 U.S. Census.<sup>19</sup>

The Karl and Augusta Martin family arrived in Lincoln County during this period. The Martins filed a homestead claim north of Creech, where they moved in January 1893. In that year they built a dugout on a creek bank, living in that dwelling until the completion of their sod house in 1900. The sod house is a rectangular building with a low pitched roof and thick sod walls. The soddy consisted of 6" X 30" blocks cut from the homestead site. The family added a barn, granary, chicken house, and other buildings in succeeding years and expanded their acreage into a viable farm that has supported subsequent generations. The Martin Homestead (5LN.211) is listed in the State Register of

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Anniversary, 14 September 1999, copy provided by Mr. Blevins, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Maxine Benson, *1001 Colorado Place Names* (Lincoln: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 82; Blevins, "Genoa, Before 1939"; (Hugo) *Range Ledger*, 4 June 1903; U.S. Census, 1900.

Historic Properties.<sup>20</sup>

In 1895 historian Frank Hall described Lincoln County as an area where “the possibilities are boundless.” Hall glowingly reported,

The valleys are moist and the whole surface is covered with rich grasses. The soil is a rich loam and is highly productive. . . . The section is a virgin one, with a million acres of available agricultural land. It is the stockman’s paradise, for its range is very extensive, and the wire fence of the farmer is confined solely to a few valleys.

Hall concluded that “no county in the state is better adapted naturally to the pursuit of farming than Lincoln.”<sup>21</sup>

However, the area’s fundamentally arid climate soon revealed itself to settlers during the 1890s. Despite what had seemed a promising beginning, the Genoa area (and the rest of the county) experienced its first weather-related challenges during the decade, resulting in many people leaving the area and the post office closing. As Robert Dunbar described, “The drought of the 90s was severe and prolonged, and eastern Coloradans reacted to it as they were to react in later dry years—by emigration, acceptance of relief, and adjustment.” Many of those who stayed on the plains suffered hardships so severe that residents of Denver and Colorado Springs formed relief committees to assist affected counties. There were good rains in 1892, resulting in renewed optimism, but drought returned in the following years,

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<sup>20</sup> “Martin Homestead,” 57900 County Road 30, Genoa, Colo., Colorado State Register of Historic Properties nomination form, 1 January 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Frank Hall, *History of the State of Colorado*, vol. 4, (Chicago: Blakely Printing Co., 1895), 163 and 203-204.

bringing crop failures and abandonment of homesteads. Dunbar reported that 1894 was one of the driest years ever recorded for the Great Plains.<sup>22</sup>

### **The Platting of Genoa and Rapid Growth in the 1900s**

Lincoln County started the new century with a population of 926 people. Although the period of drought in the 1890s drove many settlers out, longtime residents on the eastern plains observed that in the early 1900s a new wave of population moved into the area and established homesteads. New towns were created to offer services and supplies, and homesteaders did not have to travel as far for what they needed. Many of the families who came at that time invested in and developed businesses, as well as pursuing agricultural interests, and many of their descendants continue to live in the county today.

As the area began to recover from the worst effects of the drought, Genoa was poised for growth. Instrumental in the development of the town were William H. and Carrie Echternacht, who had arrived in Lincoln County from Nebraska in 1893. Blevins found that the couple settled in an area north of Walks Camp before establishing a homestead claim on the future site of Genoa in 1902. When the Genoa post office was reinstated on 31 March 1903, Carrie Echternacht became the postmistress; the area had not had an operating post office for eight years. Mrs. Echternacht continued to serve in that position until 12 October 1914. In 1904, Mr. Echternacht built a combination family residence and hotel (501 Main Street, 5LN.461) south of the railroad tracks where he established the headquarters of a cattle

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<sup>22</sup> *U.S. Census*, 1890 and 1900; Dunbar, “Agricultural Adjustments,” 41, 44, 48.



ranch. On 28 July 1904, the (Hugo) *Range Ledger* reported “W.H. Echternacht was over from Genoa yesterday after lumber. He is building a fine two-story house which he expects to use as a residence and hotel.” Longtime resident Walter Hoffman noted that the house was later acquired by H.C. Holst and moved across the street to the southeast corner of Main Street and old U.S. 24.<sup>23</sup>

Progress continued with the reopening of the Genoa school, which had closed earlier due to loss of population. By 1906 a listing for Genoa appeared in the *State Business Directory*, describing it as a “post office and station on the C.R.I. & P. Ry. in Lincoln County” with a population of twelve. Three members of the Echternacht family were conducting business in the town at that date: Carrie B. Echternacht served as postmaster, Harry Echternacht operated a nursery, and William H. Echternacht was a real estate agent. J.M. Nolan provided competition in the real estate business. The Genoa Telephone Company was managed by Louis Ramsey. Nellie Nordburn taught local children, H.A. Roehling (apparently back from Denver and forgiven for earlier misdeeds) served as justice of the peace, and M.J. Patton was the station agent. In 1906, William Echternacht and John Nolan found the time was right to lay out the Genoa townsite on lands they owned. The first purchasers of lots were members of the Hicks family and Ralph Thompson. George Hicks built a store for general merchandise in Genoa in the summer of 1906.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Roger Rydberg, Email to Tom Simmons, 2 February 2010; Blevins, “Genoa, Before 1939;” Walter Hoffman, untitled manuscript on Genoa’s history, 1952, in the files of Hedlund House Museum.

<sup>24</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1906, 659;



**Figure 4. The Genoa Hotel (1907) at 100 Nolan Street was built by Ralph Thompson. SOURCE: Hedlund House Museum, photographic collection, Hugo, Colorado.**

Genoa grew at an unprecedented rate in 1907. John Jansen built an implement store “packed full of up-to-date machinery” by February 1907. In April, Ralph Thompson of Minnesota started the construction of a two-story hotel (Genoa Hotel, 100 Nolan Street, 5LN.466) described by the *Range Ledger* as “one of the best buildings in town.” By May, a barber shop and a drugstore were present, and July boasted the construction of a grocery and hardware. In the same year, John Nolan started a livery business, R.A. Hein established a blacksmith shop, and Echternacht and Hicks opened a lumber yard. Merchants Charles Brown and C.M. Paull erected a false front building at 310 Main Street (5LN.455) to house their hardware store. In June 1907, Genoa citizens approved the construction of a new school, which opened with thirty-one pupils under the guidance of teacher John C. Unger the following October.<sup>25</sup>

The house at 108 Kunkle Street (5LN.442) was built during this period by one of Genoa’s early builders, John Hansen, and

Blevins, “Genoa, Before 1939,” 4-5; Clipping from *Grand Junction Sentinel*, 1904, in the files of Terry W. Blevins; (*Hugo Range Ledger*, 30 June 1906.

<sup>25</sup> (*Hugo Range Ledger*, 16 February 1907, 13 April 1907, 4 May 1907, 20 July 1907, 17 July 1909; Blevins, “Genoa, Before 1939, 5 and 7.

purchased by one of its early doctors, Dr. Samuel Shaw. The substantial one-and-a-half-story frame house became an early visual landmark. A history of Genoa compiled by the high school class of 1974 indicates that “Dr. Shaw” was one of the homesteaders who came to the area in 1906-1907. According to several accounts by early residents of Genoa, this was the first house built in town (not counting the Echernacht homestead south of the railroad tracks). Builder John Hansen was born in Denmark on 13 August 1881 and began a career there as a carpenter. Hansen moved to the United States in 1903, living in Minnesota before homesteading in Lincoln County fifteen miles north of Genoa in 1906. According to his son Harry, John Hansen “also built many houses in the Genoa community.”<sup>26</sup>

Across the street to the east at 200 Kunkle Street, John G. Jansen built a comparably large house in 1907 (5LN.443). Jansen (1869-1950) was the first farm implement dealer in Genoa, sold milk, promoted land sales, and also had a hardware business. He was born in Brienske, Russia, and settled in the United States with other Russian families near York, Nebraska. In 1892, he moved to a farm 1 ½ miles north of Genoa. In 1895, he married Sarah Toewes (who was also born in Russia, in

1873 and settled in Nebraska with her parents in 1877). Her family moved to the vicinity of Genoa in 1893. The Jansens had five children: George, Sarah, Lena, Mary, and Daisy. Mr. Jansen raised a few cattle, which he branded JLL. He also had some cows and sold dairy products in town. Walter Hoffman recalled that Mr. Jansen operated his business from a building he moved into town and later from the Hanks & Spears building. By 1909, Jansen was also advertising himself as a real estate agent. He had one of the earliest automobiles in Genoa, a vehicle he used to help homesteaders find locations to claim. During the 1900s, he took many trips to Minnesota to bring new settlers to the Genoa area.<sup>27</sup>



**Figure 5.** The house of Dr. Shaw at 108 Kunkle Street is one of the oldest dwellings in Genoa. **SOURCE:** Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

In September 1908, the *Range Ledger's* editor visited Genoa and reported himself

<sup>26</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Rose Henry, Genoa, Telephone Interview by Laurie Simmons, 24 September 2008; Bob Andersen, Interview by Thomas and Laurie Simmons, 30 May 2008; Jim Covington, Interview by Thomas and Laurie Simmons, 30 May 2008; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago* (Genoa, Colo.: Genoa High School, 1974), 6 and 9; Dorothy Stramp, “History of Genoa,” 25 April 1934, in the files of Hedlund House Museum, Hugo, Colorado; Blanch Howe, Genoa Building Notes, c. 1990s, in the files of Hedlund House Museum, Hugo, Colorado; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, Do You Know These Genoa Buildings? 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Covington, Interview; Laura Solze Claggett, comp., *History of Lincoln County, Colorado* (Dallas: Curtis Media Corp, 1987), 4 and 75; Howe, Genoa Building Notes; *Genoa Sentinel*, 19 January 1916, 3 April 1918, 30 April 1919, 31 March 1920, 5 and 19 February 1930; *Range Ledger*, 16 February 1907, 2 January 1909; Dale Cooley & Mary Liz Owen, comp., *Where Wagons Rolled*, vol. 1 (Topeka: Lincoln County Historical Society, 1976), 106; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, Do You Know These Genoa Buildings? 2008.

“greatly surprised to see the substantial improvements there.” In 1904 he had seen one house and railroad section house on the site. During his 1908 visit he observed “three nice general stores, two hardware stores, feed store, implement store, livery barn, good hotel, lumber yard and a number of nice residences. . . .” The editor concluded Genoa was “rapidly becoming one of the more important towns in the county.”<sup>28</sup>

By 1909, Genoa reported a population of one hundred and was described as “a rapidly growing town,” with agriculture as the leading industry. In only three years the number of businesses had increased dramatically. Enterprises included the W.N. Anderson saloon, the Moreheart-Broderick Lumber Company, the Brown & Holmes hardware store, George Clucker’s Genoa House hotel, and W.H. Echternacht’s general mercantile. J.M. Nolan operated the Genoa Livery, Albert Hein had a blacksmith shop, and George Hicks & Son had a general store and a real estate business. T.J. Hicks & Sons operated a hardware store. M.H. Jones also conducted a mercantile business; O.L. Tennis sold flour, feed, and grain; and J.S. Conn was a shoemaker.

The religious needs of the town were served by the Baptist Church, led by Reverend L.W. Ross, and Father Bushnell, who served the Catholic Church. Dr. G.W. Barber treated the sick and L.G. Johnson took care of the town’s legal affairs. Miss Fay Hicks taught music, Miss Lea Hicks was also a teacher, and John Unger was superintendent of schools. The firm of Craig & Kingsley sold real estate, as did A.B. Daywitt, who also dealt in implements. H.S. Crawford was a barber. J.C. Palmer was a painter and Charles F. Soll worked as a carpenter. F.M. Deeds

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<sup>28</sup> (Hugo) *Range Ledger*, 26 September 1908.

provided a dray service. W.R. Miller was listed as agent of the Rock Island and U.S. Express, as well as operating a boarding house. J.A. Jensen served as justice of the peace and Carrie Echternacht was still postmaster. Local men participated in the first fraternal group in town, the Modern Woodmen, founded in 1883 as a fraternal benefit society that provided economic assistance upon the death of a member.<sup>29</sup>

Given the community’s growth spurt, the old boxcar depot of the Rock Island no longer seemed fitting for the town. A petition was filed with the Colorado Railway Commission in June 1909 requesting that the Rock Island upgrade its Genoa facilities. The railroad complied, installing a road crossing and establishing a day agent by October 1909, and erecting a new, permanent depot by 1910.<sup>30</sup>

### **“The Wide-Awake Town of Genoa” in the 1910s**

The 1910 U.S. Census documented a flood of newcomers to Lincoln County, which included 5,917 residents—a six-fold increase from 1900. In 1911 the *Range Ledger* observed “the wide-awake town of Genoa” was becoming one of the most impressive communities in the county. Migration into Lincoln County continued during the 1910s, stimulated by an increase in the amount of land that could be claimed for homesteads, favorable agricultural conditions, and rising demand for food products. In 1910, Genoa reported a population of one hundred, and thirty-three businesses and professionals were listed in the *State Business Directory*. The directory recorded the opening of an

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<sup>29</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1909, 697-698.

<sup>30</sup> Doty and McFarland, *Rocketing to the Rockies*, 59.



**Figure 6.** This panorama photograph (c. 1910, view northeast) illustrates the rapid gains made by Genoa in the early 1900s. SOURCE: Cooley and Owen, *Where the Wagons Rolled*, 4.

important new enterprise, the Genoa State Bank (314 Main Street, 5LN.456), which had incorporated in 1909.<sup>31</sup>

In August 1909, the *Range Ledger* noted the new bank's safe had arrived and was placed in the Jansen real estate office, where the bankers occupied temporary quarters until the completion of their building. In September, the newspaper indicated the bank would open with a capital of \$10,000. In November 1909, the *Range Ledger* reported the building was nearing completion and "will be one of the best buildings for that purpose in this part of the country." Local histories indicate the bank opened in 1910. J.R. Caley organized and managed the bank and served as its cashier, while W.C. Caley acted as president. J.R. Caley had previously been associated with G.W. Klockenteger in a bank at Seibert. His brother, Glenn, assisted in the operation, followed by Donald Hicks and then Miss Rachel Hicks.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> (Hugo) *Range Ledger*, 8 July 1911.

<sup>32</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Cooley and Owen, *Where the Wagons Rolled*, 4; Blevins, "Genoa, Before 1939" and Newspaper Extracts About Genoa; Howe, Genoa Building Notes; Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes; *Range Ledger*, 14 August, 1909, 4 September 1909, 13 November 1909; *U.S. Census*, 1910 and 1920; *Kansas State Census*, 1915; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County; Eastern Colorado Plainsman*, 30 July 1992, 9; Karlene McKean, Roleta Teal, Betty Jacobs, Mary E.

By 1910 the school erected three years earlier was overcrowded, forcing Genoa to build a new three-story building containing classrooms and an auditorium. The new school was utilized until a fire destroyed the interior in 1918. High school students then moved into the earlier building. The following year a large brick building was erected that served local students until new construction during the Great Depression.<sup>33</sup>

By 1911, the presence of the automobile was reflected in Genoa's commercial enterprises. In that year, A.B. Daywitt advertised an auto livery service, joining John Jansen and Alex Kennedy in the ownership of the machines. Activities for men expanded by 1911, when Genoa reported the presence of an Odd Fellows lodge, as well as a pool hall and cigar store established by Roberts & Olson. Women had their own organization, the Royal Neighbors lodge, which was a ladies' auxiliary of the Modern Woodmen. The group organized social events and also offered life insurance. The Catholic church was no longer listed in the 1911 *State Business Directory*.<sup>34</sup>

William M. and Stena M. Hoffman arrived

Owen. *Tri-County History*. Limon, Colo.: The Tri-County Centennial, 1989), 127.

<sup>33</sup> Blevins, "Genoa, Before 1939," 8.

<sup>34</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory, 1911*, 698-99.

in town in 1911 and founded the first newspaper, *The Genoa Times*. The early issues of the paper were printed in Denver. Unfortunately, the small number of potential subscribers in the area resulted in lack of profit for the newspaper and it closed. A year later the arrival of large numbers of homesteaders provided new optimism, and the Hoffmans started the *Genoa Sentinel*, a two-page publication. In January 1914, the Hoffman's paper was printed every Wednesday. In 1914, the Hoffmans decided to try farming and homesteaded in the Flat Top area. They sold the newspaper to E.P. Owen, whose name appeared on the publication by August.



**Figure 7. False front buildings, such as these on the west side of Main Street (400 block), were a common sight during the early settlement period in towns throughout Colorado. SOURCE: Hedlund House Museum, photographic collection, c. 1908, Hugo, Colorado.**

English immigrant E.P. Owen published the paper with the assistance of his family until 1925. He was described as a “prominent and dearly beloved citizen.” The *Genoa Sentinel* indicated, “He was a public spirited man and had a part in supporting every worthy enterprise in town and the community at large.” In addition to producing the newspaper, Owen served as the pastor of the Congregational Church, and he later served as town clerk. A subscription to the weekly newspaper cost \$1 per year in 1917. After selling the

newspaper, Owen became postmaster and built a new post office north of the bank building on Main Street in 1930.<sup>35</sup>

Creamery operations grew in the 1910s. Farmers in the vicinity organized the Genoa Co-operative Creamery in 1911 and built a facility and machinery. In 1912 the *Sentinel* reported some stockholders in the creamery believed the company spent too much on its plant and refused to patronize it. The newspaper also asserted that the “Creamery trusts in Denver, seeing that here was a chance to nip a new competitor, began to raise the price of cream coming from Genoa above its reasonable market value . . . .” However, some people refused to let the association flounder and it continued in operation.

By 1914, Beatrice Creamery Co., with local agent A.V. Peterson, as well as the Genoa Farmers’ Creamery, were advertising in the *Sentinel*. In that year, Harvey Wadsworth became the new operator and cream buyer for the Genoa Creamery. In December 1914, the *Sentinel* announced that the IXL Cream Company of Colorado Springs would open a cream station at the creamery. In 1915, A.V. Peterson was the agent for the Beatrice Creamery in Genoa, and Guy W. Hicks was president of the Genoa Farmers Creamery Company. By 1921, there were four creamery operations listed in the *State Business Directory* for Genoa: Cloverleaf Creamery with Mrs. H. Schoonver as agent, Cole David Creamery Company with W.H. Martin as agent, the IKL Cream Station with E.P. Owen as agent, and Equity Creamery & Mercantile

<sup>35</sup> Blevins, Newspaper Extracts About Genoa and “Genoa, Before 1939;” Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago* (Genoa, Colo.: Genoa High School, 1974), 7 and 9; Walter Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County*, 4; Howe, Genoa Building Notes; *Genoa Sentinel*, 7 January 1914, 19 August 1914, 11 April 1917, 5 November 1919, 19 March and 16 April 1930.



Company with Mrs. W.B. Burrous as agent.<sup>36</sup>

In 1913 G.W. Anderson erected a large two-story building at 306 Main Street (5LN.453) to house a hall and a school. The building was necessary since the existing schoolhouse could not accommodate all of the students in town. After its use for about a year as a school, the building was sold to town founder W.H. Echternacht, who initially utilized it for a hall and pool rooms. In 1914, Echternacht remodeled the hall into a hotel. The *Genoa Sentinel* commented in January 1914: "We understand Genoa is to have another hotel. W.H. Echternacht is remodeling his large pool hall building, north of the State Bank, for a hotel, and his sister who came some time ago from Shelton, Neb., will take the management. There will be a basement dug under the building and a steam plant installed. E. Jensen has the job of remodeling and he started work this morning."

On 8 April 1914, the *Sentinel* reported, "The new Commercial Hotel opened its doors to the public for the first time last Sunday. . . . The furnishing of the hotel is new and strictly up to date in every particular. The parlor is a model of neatness and is supplied with a fine new piano. Hot and cold water are forced into every part of the building by air pressure furnished by a gasoline engine on the outside of the building. The bath room on the second floor is fully equipped and modern in every respect. . . ." In the same month, James T. Welsh announced that

<sup>36</sup> By 1950 no creameries were listed for Genoa in the *State Business Directory*. Lincoln County Assessor records; Andersen, Interview; Covington, Interview; *Genoa Sentinel*, 20 November 1912, 7 January 1914, 23 September 1914, and 16 December 1914; *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1921-1950; Blevins, Newspaper Extracts About Genoa.

"the Pool Hall in the basement of the new Commercial hotel is open for business, and my barber shop is running in connection." In August 1914, the newspaper contained an advertisement for the Commercial Hotel, with Carrie Echternacht serving as proprietor. Rates for the establishment were \$1.00 to \$2.00 per day, with weekly boarding for \$5.25. Sunday dinners cost 35 cents. In November 1914, Mrs. Echternacht quit her position as Genoa postmistress to devote more time to operation of the hotel.<sup>37</sup>



**Figure 8.** The Genoa State Bank, which opened its doors in early 1910, was built of ornamental concrete blocks. SOURCE: Hedlund House Museum, photographic collection, Hugo, Colorado.

Genoa, located on the railroad and surrounded by grain country, was a natural location for grain storage facilities. In 1914, Stimson and Stramp erected the Genoa Elevator, a 10,000-bushel capacity facility that Charles H. Stramp managed for five years. In 1919, Stramp left the partnership and built a second, competing elevator, a 1,600-bushel structure

<sup>37</sup> Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*; William H. Bauer, James L. Ozment, and John H. Willard, *Colorado Post Offices, 1859-1989* (Boulder: Johnson Publishing Co., 1990); *Lincoln County Ledger*, 12 July 1895, 4 June 1903; *Genoa Sentinel*, 11 February 1914, 4 November 1914; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago*; Cooley and Owen, *Where Wagons Rolled*, 106; Blevins, Newspaper Extracts About Genoa; *Colorado State Business Directories*, 1906-1950.

constructed by A.F. Roberts of Sabetha, Kansas.

The outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 stimulated an increase in wages and agricultural prices, benefiting Colorado's farmers and stockmen. Unlike many of the newcomers in previous decades, later settlers arrived with the livestock, machinery, supplies, and money to adequately develop their farms and wait for their crops to come in. Established farmers also experienced good conditions with silos filled for the winter, good horses, small cattle herds, hogs and chickens, increased acreages for grain, tractors to plow to greater depths, and profits to spend on improvements. New families swelled the ranks of school pupils and the number of teachers required.



**Figure 9.** The Wadsworth House at 308 Nolan Street was completed about 1914 and featured in a booster publication. SOURCE: *Lincoln County, Colorado: The Homeseeker's and Investor's Paradise* (1915).

In 1915 a booklet touting Lincoln County's attractions appeared: *Lincoln County, Colorado: The Homeseeker's and Investor's Paradise*. The publication reported that Genoa was "a busy little town of some three hundred population and all lines of business are well represented." The area's suitability for farming was noted, as were its large grain shipments. "Some of the finest ranches and farms in the county are

tributary to this city," it continued. A panoramic photograph of Genoa, with a fine view of Main Street and surrounding residential areas was included.<sup>38</sup>

In 1915 Dr. H.M. Cobb and Dr. G.W. Barber provided medical care, and the firm of Cobb and Daniel offered undertaking services and sold furniture and hardware. Automobile services had expanded with the founding of the Genoa Garage by Wadsworth and Hicks. The business sold Ford cars and supplies, offered an auto livery service, and performed general repairs. The *Genoa Sentinel* was published every Wednesday evening by E.P. Owen, and the subscription rate now was \$1.50 per year. Owen also still served as the pastor of the Congregational Church. R. Grimes operated a drugstore. Telephone service was provided by operator H.M. Jones. Millie V. Rogers ran a five-ten-fifteen cent store and a bakery. Stramp and Stinson marketed grain and coal. O.L. Tinnes had a mercantile and sold flour and feed.<sup>39</sup>

In 1916 the Stockraising Homestead Act increased the allowable size of claims of the public domain to 640 acres, inducing more people to come to the area. Genoa benefited from its location on U.S. 24, designated the "Ocean to Ocean" transcontinental highway. Many older residents of the eastern plains reported the years before World War I as the most prosperous they experienced.

On 6 April 1917 America entered the war, an action that resulted in general draft registration for men living in the county. Colorado sent approximately 43,000 men to service in World War I. As historian Leroy Hafen wrote, "The Colorado soldiers,

<sup>38</sup> *Lincoln County, Colorado: The Homeseeker's and Investor's Paradise* (N.p.: 1915; reprinted in 1995) in the files of the Hugo Public Library.

<sup>39</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1915, 634.

excellent types of American manhood, radiated the vigorous atmosphere of their home state; they embodied the spirit of the old West, its hardihood, and its courage.” The state also contributed to the war effort by increasing vital agricultural production; conserving products needed by the troops, including the proclamation of “wheatless” and “meatless” days; substituting food; promoting canning and drying of fruits and vegetables; and encouraging the planting of gardens. Residents bought War Savings Stamps, contributed to welfare organizations, and joined the Red Cross to produce clothes and hospital items needed for soldiers.<sup>40</sup>

World War I ended with the signing of the Armistice on 11 November 1918, an occasion of great joy and optimism. The nation faced the responsibilities of conversion from a wartime to a peacetime economy, including providing jobs for returning veterans. To provide more lots for the construction of houses in Genoa, the Milo H. Jones Addition was platted. It consisted of twenty lots and two new streets: State and Pearl. Bursting with optimism for the future, the *Sentinel* noted, “Genoa should be a mighty busy little burg this fall.”<sup>41</sup>

### **Genoa’s Business District Continues to Grow in the 1920s**

Reflecting its growth during the prosperous decade of the 1910s, Lincoln County boasted a population of 8,273 in 1920. As historian Stephen Leonard observed in his book about Depression-era Colorado, “Good times eluded much of Colorado in the 1920s as the prosperity sparked by World War I gave way to postwar recession and stagnation.” Economic well-being

resulting from increased demand during the war quickly dissipated for many farmers. Many planted huge crops in 1920, but prices fell, forcing them to sell at prices lower than their expenses. This resulted in heavy losses, and some were driven out of business. Genoa, in its role as a service and supply center, appears to have been somewhat buffered from the economic decline of the 1920s, perhaps also due to its position on the transcontinental highway. A number of important business buildings were erected during the 1920s, and the town formally incorporated in 1925.<sup>42</sup>



**Figure 10.** Hanks and Spears erected this brick building at 401 Main Street in 1922 to house their mercantile business. SOURCE: *Lincoln County: The Beginning to 1940* (1979), 59.

Between 1920 and 1930, the number of farms in the county declined from 1,385 to 1,232. Most of the county’s farmland (68 percent) was used for grazing, with the 1930 assessed valuation of range cattle in the county totaling \$846,085. Harvested cropland accounted for 22 percent of agricultural acreage. In 1930, the top field crop by value was corn, followed by dry beans and hay. The county ranked fourth in the state in the production of dry beans. All of the production was undertaken without irrigation. Weather Bureau records in 1931 reported the county averaged 14.3 inches of precipitation annually over the

<sup>40</sup> Dunbar, “Agricultural Adjustments,” 52; Hafen, *Colorado and Its People*, vol. 1, 540-542.

<sup>41</sup> *Genoa Sentinel*, 9 April 1919 and 18 June 1919.

<sup>42</sup> Stephen J. Leonard, *Trials and Triumphs: A Colorado Portrait of the Great Depression* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1993), 7.



**Table 1**  
**Population Trends by Census Year**  
**Lincoln County and the Town of Genoa**

Year	Lincoln County			Genoa		
	Pop.	Change		Pop.	Change	
		Abs.	Pct.		Abs.	Pct.
1890	689	689	--	--	--	--
1900	926	237	34.4	--	--	--
1910	5,917	4,991	539.0	--	--	--
1920	8,273	2,356	39.8	--	--	--
1930	7,850	-423	-5.1	218	--	--
1940	5,882	1,968	-25.1	214	-4	-1.8
1950	5,909	27	0.5	257	43	20.1
1960	5,310	-599	-10.1	185	-72	-28.0
1970	4,836	-474	-8.9	161	-24	-13.0
1980	4,663	-173	-3.6	165	4	2.5
1990	4,523	-140	-3.0	167	2	1.2
2000	6,087	1,564	34.6	211	44	26.3

SOURCE: U.S. Census, Census of Population, 1890-2000. The Census began tabulating population for Genoa after it incorporated as a town in 1925.

preceding ten years.<sup>43</sup>

The 1920 *State Business Directory* indicated Genoa's population was 150. The facilities of the Rock Island Railroad in Genoa in 1920 included two siding tracks and a spur track, as well as the depot, a section house, a coal house, a stock pen, and a mail crane. Thirty-three businesses and professionals were listed in the directory, including M.W. True's Highway Garage and Electric Light Plant, which provided "general auto, tractor, and machine repairs, auto supplies, accessories, storage, blacksmithing, wagon work, and welding." H.J. Wadsworth sold cars. Three creameries still were in business. The Genoa Elevator, operated by Charles H. Stramp, advertised wholesale and retail grain, flour, feed, livestock, and coal. His business competitor was the Stinson Grain

Company, managed by H.C. Holst. Mrs. Bertha Manzer was proprietor of the Genoa Hotel, offering "clean, comfortable" rooms and advertising: "Our meals are the best." Carrie B. Echternacht continued to operate the Commercial Hotel.<sup>44</sup>

In 1920, John Basinger, Charles T. Spears, W.E. Manzer, and Large & Bruch all had general merchandise stores. H.T. Carter's combined barber shop and billiards parlor was operating. John W. Forlow's hardware store was conducting business, and E.P. Owen still published the *Sentinel*. W.C. Caley headed the Genoa State Bank. Hardman Lumber Company provided building supplies. J.G. Jansen sold agricultural implements, as did F.A. Worley.

<sup>43</sup> Tolbert R. Ingram, comp. and ed., *Year Book of the State of Colorado*, 1931 (Denver: State Board of immigration, 1931).

<sup>44</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory, 1920*, 550-551; Doty and McFarland, *Rocketing to the Rockies*, 107.

Several people acted as real estate agents. Mrs. Zoa R. Spears served as postmistress.<sup>45</sup>

New businesses continued to appear and established firms changed hands. In 1921, forty-two business and professional listings appeared in the *State Business Directory*. Railroad and express agent D.M. Doolan opened the short-lived Doolan Theatre, apparently screening motion pictures. Mrs. Len Peterson became proprietor of the Genoa Hotel, and H.A. Johnson became president of the Genoa State Bank. Frank Herold began operating the barber shop and billiard parlor. Noah W. Hunt was listed as a wholesale and retail grain and coal distributor. Hicks & Harrison offered auto supplies. E.P. Owen represented the IXL cream station. Harvey Mann, who owned the Modern Hotel, also opened a drugstore. W.H. Martin opened a general store, and Denver Miller operated a feed barn. J.C. Ready opened a restaurant and George Sprecher was proprietor of a feed barn. Real estate agent remained a popular occupation.<sup>46</sup>

In November 1919, the *Genoa Sentinel* reported Dr. Walter Charles Keller of Athol, Kansas, “after looking the situation over,” would open a practice in Genoa. Keller, a graduate of Kansas City University, had practiced medicine there for six years, spending more than two years in army medical service. The newspaper indicated he would occupy part of McClellan Carter’s house until he could find a vacant building. Mrs. Grace Keller was described as having “four year’s experience in hospital nursing.”

In December, the *Sentinel* noted Dr. Keller had established an office in the basement of the Commercial Hotel. About 1920, the doctor erected a building at 93 Nolan Street (5LN.465) to house his office and hospital

facility, according to Dorothy Stramp and other local residents. Dr. Keller, who was described as having “a large practice as a physician and surgeon,” owned and operated his practice in this building until his death in 1932. Dr. J.O. Clanin took over operation of the hospital after Dr. Keller.<sup>47</sup>

In 1922, Charles Tallmadge Spears and his father-in-law, Cassius Hanks erected a new building at 401 Main Street (5LN.459) to house their mercantile business. Charles Spears, who was born on 26 September 1890 in Georgia, came to Colorado, settling first in Arriba. The newspaper noted that Zoa R. Hanks Spears, who was born about 1893, came from Marshall, Minnesota, to Arriba about 1913 in search of better health. Her condition improved, and she took out a homestead claim in Washington County. A homestead patent was issued to Zoa R. Hanks for 320 acres in 1916. In the same year, Charles and Zoa Spears, now married, moved to Genoa. In July 1917, Mr. Spears began working as a clerk in the Milo Jones store and was described as “a master of his business, a good citizen and a friendly neighbor.” In 1917, the *Genoa Sentinel* and the *Arriba Record* reported the Milo H. Jones & Co. store had been sold to the Genoa Mercantile Co. owned by Mr. and Mrs. Charles T. Spears. The *Sentinel* concluded, “...we believe they [Mr. and Mrs. Spears] are exceptionally well-fitted to take their place in the business life of the little town of Genoa.” In 1918, Zoa Spears was

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<sup>45</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory, 1920*, 550-551.

<sup>46</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory, 1921*, 564.

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<sup>47</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Andersen, Interview; Covington, Interview; Howe, Genoa Building Notes; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago*; U.S. Census, 1920 and 1930; *Genoa Sentinel*, 26 November 1919, 3 December 1919, 16 April 1930; Stramp, “History of Genoa”; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado*; Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes.

appointed postmistress of Genoa, and the post office was moved to the Spears store.

In November 1922, the *Eastern Colorado Leader* noted, "The Genoa Mercantile new building will soon be ready for use." Longtime resident Walter Hoffman recalled Hanks and Spears had "a flourishing mercantile business for many years." The building included an elevator, with a wide central staircase also leading to the basement storage area. Mrs. Spears' parents, Cassius and Elizabeth Hanks, and her sister, Margaret, had moved to Genoa in 1917. The mercantile was a family business, and the Spears family lived adjacent to the Hanks family on Main Street.<sup>48</sup>



**Figure 11. Pharmacist Noah W. and Tamason E. Hunt constructed this brick and clay tile block building in 1926. It housed their drugstore and other businesses and had a hall on the second story for dances. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1987.**

A healthy variety of commercial enterprises continued to operate in Genoa. In 1923 there were thirty-three business and professional listings in the *State Business*

<sup>48</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes; *Genoa Sentinel*, 7 November 1917, 10 April 1918; *Arriba Record*, 9 November 1917; *U.S. Census*, 1920 and 1930; World War I Draft Registration Card for Charles Tallmadge Spears; Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office, Homestead Record for Zoa Hanks; Blevins, Newspaper Extracts About Genoa; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado*; *Colorado State Business Directories*, 1920-1950.

*Directory*, including the new firms of C.H. Barber offering grains, seeds, and coal; C.O. Berridge's auto sales and electric light plant; L.E. Blackburn's billiard parlor and soft drinks; and the W.R. and E.E. Davis grocery. In other changes, G.F. Dorsch sold general merchandise and I.P. Garner was proprietor of both the Farmer's Hotel and the Modern Hotel. E.T. Clinkenbeard served as manager of the Genoa Oil Supply Company and Clint Hicks managed the Midland Filling Station. William F. Martin headed the Genoa State Bank.<sup>49</sup>

Noah W. and Tamason E. Hunt operated a business in Genoa for several years before they built a new two-story building to house their drugstore and other enterprises at 301 Main Street (5LN.451) in 1926. On 27 August 1926, the *Lincoln County Democrat* described the "beautiful building ... just completed in the town to the north, built of tile and brick. It is a two-story structure. Besides his drug store on the first floor the other side of the building has a pool hall and barber shop. The druggist [Hunt] has equipped his pharmacy with new equipment, including a new fountain....The new building is 50 X 60 feet." Local resident Blanche Howe recalled that the drugstore included a soda and ice cream fountain where "school kids like to spend their time." In 1930, the *Genoa Sentinel* noted, "Hunt's soda fountain will quench your thirst." The Hunts built a large hall in the upstairs where they could host dances in order to help pay for the building. Known as "Hunt's Hall," the venue attracted excellent bands during the 1920s and 1930s, according to local residents. Living quarters upstairs were also included, and some sources indicate the upstairs also was used as a skating rink at one time.

Tama White Hunt was born in Iowa in 1900. Her family homesteaded three miles

<sup>49</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1923, 576.

southwest of Bovina beginning in 1906. The Whites lived in a sod house that was still standing in 1976. She worked at the First National Bank of Hugo for five years and married pharmacist Noah Hunt in 1923; the couple had no children. The 1930 U.S. Census listed the Hunts, who valued their home (most likely this building) at \$12,500. Noah Hunt was born in 1895 in Pleasant Hill, Missouri. His father was a miller in a flour mill and his mother was a nurse. The 1920 U.S. Census indicated Hunt was living with his parents and working as the manager of a grain elevator. He had served in the army during World War I after receiving training at Fort Riley, Kansas. The 1921 *Colorado State Business Directory* for Genoa contained a large display ad for “Noah W. Hunt, Wholesale and Retail Grain, Coal.” The Hunts later moved to Yucaipa, California. Noah W. Hunt died in San Bernadino in 1980.<sup>50</sup>

The Hoffman family again acquired the *Genoa Sentinel*, as well as the *Arriba Record*, in 1925. In 1927 the Hoffmans built a new newspaper office in the 100 block of Kunkle (5LN.441) and installed a linotype and other new machinery for publishing. The family lived in the back of the building. William M. Hoffman was born in Iowa in 1873; his parents were from Germany. Stena M. Diggerness Hoffman, born about 1882 in Iowa, was the child of Norwegian

<sup>50</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Andersen Interview; Covington Interview; Cooley and Owen, *Where Wagons Rolled*, 109; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago*, 10; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*; Howe, *Genoa Building Notes*; Stramp, “History of Genoa”; *Lincoln County Democrat*, 27 August 1926; *Genoa Sentinel*, 19 February 1930; *U.S. Census*, 1910, 1920 and 1930; *Kansas State Census*, 1885; World War I Draft Registration Card; California Death Index, 1940-1997; *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1921, 1930; Blevins, *Newspaper Extracts About Genoa*.

parents. In 1930, one son was living with the Hoffmans: Walter M., age 23, was born in 1906 in Iowa, attended East High in Denver, and worked as an electrician, doing much of the original electrical wiring in Genoa. W.M. Hoffman valued this building at \$5,000 in 1930. In 1933, Walter M. Hoffman, who married Zelma Carter of Genoa, began publishing the *Arriba Record*. In March 1939, the Hoffmans sold both papers to P.E. Holmes. The town lost its local newspaper when Holmes transferred ownership of the *Genoa Sentinel* to the *Eastern Colorado Leader* in Limon. In 1939, the printing equipment was sold to E.C. Gehr, a newspaper publisher in Dickinson, Texas. The printing plant was loaded on a railroad car to be moved, and Terry Blevins reports it was practically demolished in transit.<sup>51</sup>



**Figure 12.** The World’s Wonder View Tower drew passing tourists with its collections of curiosities and the view from its observation deck. SOURCE: Hedlund House Museum, photographic collection, Hugo, Colorado.

In 1926, C.W. Gregory erected the World’s Wonder View Tower a quarter-mile

<sup>51</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Andersen, Interview; Covington, Interview; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*; Blevins, *Newspaper Extracts About Genoa and “Genoa, Before 1939”*; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago*, 7 and 9; Hoffman, *Genoa Building Notes*; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado*, 4; Howe, *Genoa Building Notes*; *Genoa Sentinel*, 19 March and 16 April 1930, 20 July 1932, 1; *U.S. Census*, 1930.

southwest of Genoa along U.S. 24. According to Ripley's Believe It or Not, views of six states were afforded from the observation deck of the six-story tower which was promoted as the highest point between New York and Denver. Like many roadside attractions of the period, the tower complex, which included a gift shop, café, snake pit, Western paintings and curiosities, a gas station, and lodging, was planned to attract tourists and other travelers.<sup>52</sup>

The influence of the automobile on 1920s Genoa found expression in the construction of several service stations and garages. A service station (built in 1922, no longer standing) and garage (315 Main Street, 5LN.457) were part of the Genoa Oil Company Skelley Service Station established in September 1925 by Clarence and William Rowley. Harvey Wadsworth built another garage in 1920 after purchasing, from W.W. Haynes, the corner lot across from W.E. Davis' land office. The *Genoa Sentinel* reported Wadsworth was "planning to put up a fine garage building worthy of the fine business he has done in the past and is preparing to do in the permanent future." Wadsworth became one of the first automobile dealers in Genoa about 1914 as part of the firm of Wadsworth & Hicks, agents for Ford cars. The partners established the Genoa Garage, which Wadsworth later operated alone. According to local residents, Wadsworth's 1920 building (200 block Main Street, 5LN.446) was known locally as the "Ford Garage." The 1921 *State Business Directory* listing for Wadsworth's garage indicated he was an authorized Ford agent who provided "accessories, supplies, repairs, livery." After the town's small electrical plant was

<sup>52</sup> David Carvey, World's Wonder View Tower, 5LN194, Colorado State Register of Historic Properties nomination, 12 September 1995 (listed December 1995).

destroyed in 1927, a portion of this garage was used as a makeshift electrical plant. According to newspaperman Walter Hoffman, Commonwealth Utilities installed a generator and a Fordson tractor in this building and produced power for Genoa. The next year, a high tension line was constructed from Limon to supply power to Genoa, and use of the generating plant in the garage discontinued.<sup>53</sup>



**Figure 13.** Genoa boasted several gasoline stations during its heyday, including this one at the northeast corner of Main and Nolan streets. In the background is the south wall of 315 Main Street. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

The South Side Service at 500 Old U.S. Highway 24 (5LN.471) was built in 1922. A photograph in the Hedlund House Museum photographic collection shows the building, which included a café, nearing completion. From the late 1930s through the mid-1950s, the building (the original east part) housed a gas station operated by Ray C. Eberhart. In 1926 "Jay Jackson erected a large garage at 304 Main Street (5LN.452). The building was constructed of ornamental concrete blocks. Local residents reported that the

<sup>53</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?; Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes; Cooley and Owen, *Where Wagons Rolled*, 104; Howe, Genoa Building Notes; *Genoa Sentinel*, 19 August 1914, 2 August 1916, 28 February 1917, and 24 March 1920; *U.S. Census*, 1920; *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1921, 1923.

concrete blocks were made in the Hanks and Spears building (401 Main Street). Later, the facility was known as the Berridge Garage and then as the Genoa Machine Shop. Paul Edward “Ed” Berridge (1912-1971) initially worked in the garage and subsequently owned it. According to local residents, Berridge worked here for forty-five years, performing vehicle repair, machining, welding, and blacksmith work.<sup>54</sup>

The Genoa State Bank at 314 Main Street (5LN.456) experienced problems throughout the last half of the decade, foreshadowing the Great Depression. The bank reorganized in 1925, with John N. Steichen as president. Steichen immigrated to America from Luxembourg in 1884 and settled in Oberlin, Kansas. The 1910 U.S. Census found him living in Oberlin with his wife, Margaret M., and daughter, Laura N. Steichen, who married Genoa elevator operator Charles Stramp. Biographical information provided by a member of the Stramp family mentions that J.N. Steichen had banking interests in Kansas. Bowing to economic difficulties during the 1920s and the following decade, in February 1931 the Genoa State Bank went into voluntary liquidation. In September 1931, it merged with the First National Bank of Limon, which dated to 1919. A receiver was named for that institution in September 1931.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Genoa Café, historic photograph, 1922, Hedlund House Museum, Hugo, Colorado; Genoa High School, *The Wolf Howls*, 24 November 1939, 4; Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?; *Lincoln County Eastern Colorado Plainsman*, 18 June 1987, 3 (Ray C. Eberhart obituary); Stramp, "History of Genoa"; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago*, 8; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado*, 133; *Colorado State Business Directories, 1920-1950*.

<sup>55</sup> Cooley and Owen, *Where the Wagons Rolled*, 4; Blevins, "Genoa, Before 1939" and Newspaper Extracts About Genoa; Howe, Genoa Building

## **The Great Depression and New Deal Construction in the 1930s**

In the aftermath of the stock market crash in October 1929 pessimism pervaded the American economy as the worst depression in the history of Colorado and the nation occurred. Historian LeRoy Hafen summarized, "Prices dropped sharply, factories curtailed production, business houses failed, new construction work came to a standstill, foreign trade fell off, many banks closed their doors, wages were cut, and workers lost their jobs. Unemployment became general and widespread." Many factors are believed to have contributed to an unbalanced economy, including the overexpansion of credit, agriculture, and industry. The prices of agricultural commodities fell precipitously from 1929 to 1932, including a drop in the bushel-price of corn from 81 to 28 cents and wheat from 96 to 37 cents. Livestock values showed similar declines, and farm wages were reduced by half.<sup>56</sup>

From 1931 to 1950 rainfall was below average. During the so-called "Dirty Thirties" Lincoln County experienced "dust bowl" conditions as severe drought and enormous dust storms swept the eastern plains. Several years of the decade saw local annual precipitation below 10 inches, with 1934 and 1937 recording extreme lows in moisture.<sup>57</sup>

In 1930 the U.S. Census first provided a population total for Genoa, which recorded 218 inhabitants. The county's population of 7,850 reflected a loss of 423 persons. In

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Notes; Hoffman, Genoa Building Notes; *U.S. Census, 1910 and 1920; Kansas State Census, 1915; Claggett, History of Lincoln County, Colorado; Eastern Colorado Plainsman*, 30 July 1992, 9; McKean, et al, *Tri-County History*, 127.

<sup>56</sup> Hafen, *Colorado and Its People*, vol. 1, 549-550.

<sup>57</sup> Ingram, *Year Book of the State of Colorado, 1930*; Hafen, *Colorado and Its People*, vol. 1, 564.

February the *Sentinel* urged shoppers to patronize Genoa's businesses for their Saturday specials, describing the new meat market, Vaughn Schoonover's new pool hall, the garages and service stations, the barber shops with both tubs and showers, and Hunt's soda fountain. A new Genoa Oil Station of "Spanish design" and with modern restrooms for men and women was built by O.H. Self and other local workers for W.L. and Clarence Rowley and K.S. Gurwell. At the same time a new Conoco Service Station was built at the north end of Main for Stanley Douglass.<sup>58</sup>



**Figure 14.** In 1930, E.P. Owen constructed this building to house the Post Office between the bank (left, at 314 Main) and 310 Main (right). SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

Forty-five businesses and professions were listed in the State Business Directory. Newer businesses included the trucking firms of Guy Black and William B. Burros, J.E. Cannon's auto service station, and the garages of Henry J. Gehrke and J.G. Jackson. Several members of building trades were living in Genoa, including carpenters Astor Anderson, Herman J. Gerdes, A.V. Peterson, and Owen Self. Bert Robinson provided painting services, Henry Peterson was a plasterer, and L.O. Jahnke offered brick masonry. Commonwealth Utility Company, an electric light provider, was represented by

<sup>58</sup> *Genoa Sentinel*, 19 February 1930 and 16 April 1930

Noah Hunt, who also had a drugstore. William M. and Water Hoffman were editors and publishers of the *Genoa Sentinel*, and the former newspaper publisher, E.P. Owen, was postmaster. Longtime businesses still operated, including the Clover Leaf cream station, the First National Bank headed by Charles H. Stramp, Forlow's hardware, and a number of others. The Evangelical Church, with Reverend C.D. Nash serving as pastor, was the only church listed. Dr. W.C. Keller was the only physician in town.<sup>59</sup>

Following the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president in 1932, a series of federal programs designed to provide relief and bolster employment came to Lincoln County. New Deal legislation included the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), designed to increase farm income, conserve the soil, and protect the interests of farmers and consumers through crop adjustment, marketing agreements, parity payments, and surplus removal. After the AAA was found unconstitutional, the government turned to soil conservation to aid farmers. The Soil Conservation Service encouraged good land use through practices such as conservation measures and purchase and development of submarginal land. A new Agricultural Adjustment Act in 1938 provided for soil conservation, benefit payments, and crop limitation in an effort to raise farmers' incomes.<sup>60</sup>

Another New Deal entity, the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, purchased, processed, and distributed agricultural products to reduce surpluses and raised prices while helping those in need. The Rural Electrification Administration financed construction of electrical systems in rural areas, mainly

<sup>59</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1930, 616.

<sup>60</sup> *Colorado Year Book*, 1939-1940, 332-333.



through repayable loans to cooperative organizations. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided jobs and vocational training for unemployed young men in conservation projects and development of natural resources. The Public Works Administration (PWA) encouraged and assisted with construction of public buildings, including facilities such as schools, college facilities, waterworks, and hospitals. The Works Progress Administration provided employment for persons who needed relief, funding projects initiated by local public bodies who contributed a portion of the cost.<sup>61</sup> With WPA financing, the state completed such projects as the construction of highways and bridges; sewing of clothes; preparation of school lunches; addition of artworks to public buildings; and erection of schools, libraries, auditoriums, gymnasiums, hospitals, fair ground facilities, swimming pools, and other needed buildings. The National Youth Administration, established within the WPA in 1935, helped high school and college students stay in school by employing them in a variety of jobs. The Resettlement Administration provided grants for subsistence and purchased marginal and submarginal lands from farmers, moving them to more productive sites.<sup>62</sup>

### *New Deal Architecture in Genoa*

By the late 1930s Genoa's school, which included four classrooms, an office, and an auditorium, was considered cramped and in poor condition. High school seniors sometimes traveled to Limon and Hugo to finish their coursework. The school did not

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<sup>61</sup> In 1939 this became the Works Projects Administration.

<sup>62</sup> Hafen, *Colorado and Its People*, vol. 1, 557; *Colorado Year Book, 1939-1940*, 338, 340 and 364-365.

have a gymnasium, making it difficult to maintain an athletic program. Local citizens believed the construction of a new school would draw additional students from surrounding areas, increasing the existing enrollment of ninety children. In January 1938 Genoa School District No. 13 sent a proposal to the WPA for a grade school and high school building with a combined auditorium-gymnasium. The District proposed to erect a ten-classroom school with a frame of reinforced concrete, adobe fill, and a veneer of concrete. Adobe also was used for a WPA auditorium at Hugo and a school at Stratton. The WPA approved the project for construction of a school costing \$57,937 in March 1938 and work on the building began in May. WPA District Engineer L.E. Heggenberger designed the building.

In March of the following year, plans for the building were altered to include six classrooms, a library, an office, two shower and locker rooms, and a boiler room. The auditorium-gymnasium was built five feet below grade and incorporated concrete bleachers into its walls. Construction of the building employed thirty workers in the summer of 1939. Work continued into December 1949, including construction of cabinets from scrap materials. The school was finished on 28 February 1941.<sup>63</sup>

### **World War II and Postwar Development**

The 1940 county population of 5,882 reflected a large decline of 1,968 residents during the previous decade. As America prepared to enter World War II, the country encouraged farmers to produce all the food possible and Colorado farmers "responded to the war-born cry for food

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<sup>63</sup> *Arriba Record*, 11 March 1938; "Genoa School," Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Architectural Inventory Form, 29 June 2007.



and more food with the greatest production in the state's history," despite shortages of labor and machinery. New people came to the area looking for land to put into production. As in World War I, young men and women went off to serve their country, some never to return. The State Director of Selective Service reported one of every eight male residents of Colorado served during 1941-46. Of the state's men and women who served in the war, about 2,700 gave their lives in the cause.<sup>64</sup>

In 1940 the U.S. Census reported Genoa's population as 214, reflecting an essentially stable population. More than thirty businesses and professionals were listed in town, including a service station operated by Leland L. Austin, Edward Berridge's machine shop, W.C. Nottingham's Genoa Oil Company, the Genoa Transportation Company, Clarence Tangemen's trucking business, and the Continental Oil Company, whose agent was R.C. Eberhart. Mrs. Harriett Black operated a grocery store, as did F.G. Hobbs. The Equity Cream Station managed by Mary Clark competed with D.J. Flook's creamery. Foster Lumber Company provided building materials and supplies. Ruth Gunderson operated a beauty parlor and A.O. Miley was a barber. The Carl Johnsons had a variety store, and Lena Martin cooked in her restaurant. I.P. Garner sold coal, as well as operating the Modern Hotel; the Genoa Hotel was not listed. No doctor was listed in Genoa, but Noah Hunt's drugstore was still operating. R.J. Ramsey sold beer and had a billiard parlor. H.C. Holst still managed the Stinson Grain Company. Frank Uher, Jr., had a store selling clothing

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<sup>64</sup> Colorado State Planning Commission, *Year Book of the State of Colorado, 1945-1947* (Denver: State Planning Commission, 1947), 176-77; Colonel Whiteley, State Director of Selective Service, quoted in Hafen, *Colorado and Its People*, vol. 1, 589 and 590.

and furniture. A notable organization was the Tower Home Improvement Association, managed by C.W. Gregory.<sup>65</sup>

In 1941 Genoa officials included Mayor William M. Hoffman, Clerk and Treasurer R.P. Nuss, Marshal L.R. Howe, and Councilmen L.E. Greve, S.L. Shaw, W.I. Peck, Ted Schabacker, and Clarence Tangeman. Mary Burrous served as postmistress. Joe Larson was a justice of the peace, and Owen H. Self served as constable. Felix P. Serafini presided over the town's school system.<sup>66</sup>



**Figure 15.** Completed in 1942, this building remains the home of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

The war years seemed a good time to ensure the spiritual needs of local residents were being met. During 1928-1938, members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints met in the Genoa High School. Owen Self encouraged the congregation to begin planning for a building of their own. After the school was torn down, members' homes were used until the congregation began construction of a new building in 1940. The site of the new church had previously held a house, and the group met in the remaining basement. Since most construction materials were needed in the war effort, an old coal (or corral) shed acquired from the

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<sup>65</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1941, 670.

<sup>66</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1941, 670.

lumber yard at Arriba for \$100 was used for the frame of the building, which later received a coat of stucco. The church books recorded the official designation of the building as “Branch No. 336, Southeast Colorado District.” Members of the church and the community donated all of the labor to construct the building (300 Kunkle, 5LN.444), which was completed in 1942.<sup>67</sup>

The World’s Wonder View Tower operated twenty-four hours a day during the war under owner Bill Stone. According to the State Register nomination for the property, “the tower served as a major bus stop between Denver and Kansas City and dozens of employees were kept busy serving the bus loads of soldiers who were en route from coast to coast.” The Rock Island Railroad also saw increased traffic during the war, carrying troops and supplies to Fort Carson and Peterson Army Air Corps Base in Colorado Springs. After the war, veterans returned from service, started families, and sought to return to the normal patterns of life on the eastern plains. Construction slowly resumed, and a few families built new homes, including the house at 200 Nolan Street (5LN.468) built by Everett and Edythe Ewing in 1946.<sup>68</sup>

Families also wanted to provide their children with religious training, and in 1948

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<sup>67</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Cooley and Owen, *Where Wagons Rolled*, 117; Genoa High School Class of 1974, *It Happened Long Ago*, 19; Claggett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado*, 21-22; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*

<sup>68</sup> David Carvey, *World’s Wonder View Tower*, 5LN194, Colorado State Register of Historic Properties nomination, 12 September 1995 (listed December 1995); Doty and McFarland, *Rocketing to the Rockies*, 22; Lincoln County Assessor records; Howe, *Genoa Building Notes*; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*

a new Trinity Lutheran Church was built at 214 2<sup>nd</sup> Street (5LN.448). The origins of the Trinity Lutheran Church lay with the Karl Martin, Sr., family who moved to a property five miles north of Genoa in 1893. The Martin’s two-room dugout, as well as their later sod house, was the scene of Lutheran church services for the surrounding farm families. In 1894, Pastor H. Schmidt of Akron came to serve their spiritual needs, baptizing and preaching to local residents for five years. Services were held in schools and in Genoa Community church, too. On 7 June 1925, church members formally organized with nine members and bought lots in Genoa, although a church was not erected immediately. The name Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession was chosen.



Figure 16. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church was completed in 1948. SOURCE: Hedlund House Museum, photographic collection, Hugo, Colorado.

In 1929, the Ramsey School was used for the services, followed by the Genoa Community church and the high school auditorium. In January 1932, the local Norwegian Lutherans invited the Trinity Lutherans to worship in their basement church. The Trinity Lutherans did not meet in their own church until 1936, when the congregation obtained the former O.L. Tinnes property (212 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 5LN.434) from John Farlow. The members remodeled the building and dedicated it on 7 June 1936.

Two rooms in the south part of the building were used for religious services, while the other part functioned as the parsonage.

After World War II, congregation members decided to erect a new church. Construction by church members began in 1946 and extended until 1948. Rev. Harve Wangering served as pastor while the church was being built. Rev. Theodore Schabacker, first resident pastor of the church, delivered the dedication sermon, and Dr. E.J. Friedrich, president of the Colorado District of the Lutherans, provided congratulations. Continuing to function as a religious building sixty years later, the building serves the Church of the Lutheran Hour today.<sup>69</sup>

Following a national trend, the postwar era saw a continuing drop in the number of Lincoln County farms and an increase in the average size of farms. The total value of farm products rose from just under \$2 million in 1940, to \$3.96 million in 1945, and \$5.1 million by 1955. Livestock raising accounted for about 73 percent of the value of total agricultural products during the period. By 1955, the county possessed 656 farms and crop raising focused on wheat and other small grains, dry beans, corn, potatoes, sorghums, and hay. In the early 1960s the *Colorado Year Book* observed that the county "consists almost entirely of grazing and dry farming land." Cattle raising continued as the most important agricultural enterprise in Lincoln County in the early 1960s. Cattle and calves on the local range grew in numbers from 61,910 in 1961 to 75,600 in 1963, with a value of \$9.7 million in the latter year. During the same period, by contrast, crop raising in the county suffered through a severe drought

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<sup>69</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Andersen, Interview; Covington, Interview; Cooley and Owen, *Where Wagons Rolled*, 117; Blevins, "Genoa, Before 1939"; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*

that saw the value of crops fall from \$5.5 million in 1961 to \$1.9 million two years later. Wheat was the chief crop.<sup>70</sup>

By 1950 the population of Lincoln County had risen slightly to 5,909. Genoa's residents totaled 257, an increase of 43 over 1940. In the late 1940s and early 1950s additional land was broken for grain production. Forty-one businesses and professionals were listed in the 1950 *State Business Directory*. Three grocery stores (run by Carlson, Flook, and Hicks) provided local residents with food shopping choices. Alice Einterson also provided food at her Cottage Café, as did the Yuma-Tah Lunch Room of A.L. Statton, operated in conjunction with his Yuma-Tah Hotel. There was also a café in the Genoa Tower, operated by William E. Stone & Son. The Johnson Equipment Company offered a variety of merchandise. The Davis Hunt Grain Company and the Genoa Grain Company supported farmers' production efforts.

Foster Lumber Company still supplied materials for construction in 1950. The Genoa Arickaree Telephone Company facilitated communication. Paul Ziemer managed the Genoa Drug Company. Ed Berridge continued his Genoa Machine Shop, and Walt Nottingham operated the Genoa Oil Company. The Eberhart Service Station, the South Side Service Station owned by Harry Hansen, and Uher Motor Sales all conducted business. A.O. Miley still cut Genoa's hair. G.M. Holsberry operated Genoa Electric and Appliance, and Glen A. Ludwig was proprietor of Genoa Coal Yard. Everett Westfall sold agricultural implements.

American Legion Post No. 31 served

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<sup>70</sup> Colorado State Planning Division, *Colorado Year Book, 1945-47*, 214, 218; 1956-58, 786; 1962-1964 (Denver: Colorado State Planning Division, c. 1963), 992.

veterans in 1950. Churches included the Evangelical United Brethren with Rev. D.C. Paulson, the Trinity Lutheran Church with Rev. Bernard W. Johnson, and the Reorganized Branch of the Latter Day Saints, led by Owen H. Self. Lyle E. Clepfil presided over the schools. Mathew Johnson served as town marshal. R.P. Nuss was town clerk and also managed the lumber yard. Town councilmen included O.C. Allen, C.H. Stramp, L.R. Hour, Harry Hansen, E.A. Schoonover, and G.C. Potts.<sup>71</sup>

Beginning in 1953 rainfall was scarce and farmers were “hard hit.” In response to the new drought, programs were established to provide emergency feed for livestock and control blowing soil. After dust storms returned to the plains, people referred to the era as the “Sifty Fifties.” Moisture finally increased toward the end of the decade.

In 1954, one of Genoa’s most important and enduring businesses became a part of the community. Snell Grain (420 Nolan Street, 5LN.433) constructed a complex consisting of a central concrete grain elevator, a large horizontal flat storage building to the west, a warehouse/cleaning shed to the east, an office to the northeast, and scales. Chalmers and Borton of Hutchinson, Kansas, designed and built the 254,000-bushel concrete elevator. The firm built grain elevators throughout the Great Plains from at least the 1930s through the 1950s, including structures in Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, and at least thirty in western Oklahoma. Chalmers and Borton has been described as one of the “leading contractors of concrete country elevators.”<sup>72</sup>

The Genoa facility lay north of the former

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<sup>71</sup> *Colorado State Business Directory*, 1950.

<sup>72</sup> George O. Carney, National Register of Historic Places, Farmers Co-op Elevator, Hennessey, Oklahoma, listed 3 September 2000.

Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific Railroad tracks; a siding provided access to the elevator. The complex expanded in 1961, when the large “flat storage” building to the west was completed with a capacity of 500,000 bushels. A 1962 advertisement for Snell Grain reported that it traced its origins to 1902, noting that “we were here then, we will be here tomorrow.” In 1962, the firm was a buyer and seller “of all grains,” had locations in Arriba and Hugo, as well as Genoa, and offered bonded storage, custom rolling, pelleting, and mineral manufacturing. J.W. Borders served as the president of the company and H.C. Harrison as its vice president. Snell Grain operated the elevator from 1954 to 1990. Between 1990 and 2004 ADM (Archer Daniels Midland)/Collingwood owned the facility. In April 2004, Dorman Brothers purchased the grain complex.<sup>73</sup>

In 1959 county schools were reorganized into five first-class school districts (including Genoa) in a move that eliminated one-room schools. Main Street gained a new post office (217 Main Street, 5LN.448) in 1961. Don Amberger constructed the building of concrete block and green Roman brick in a streamlined modern design. The town’s recreational life was enhanced in the 1960s after members of the Genoa Gun Club erected, with used material and donated labor, a clubhouse in the 400 block of Hicks Street

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<sup>73</sup> Lincoln County Assessor records; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*; Cooley and Owen, *Where the Wagons Rolled*, 104; George O. Carney, National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, Grain Storage and Processing Facilities in Western Oklahoma, listed 18 March 2000; *Genoa Sentinel*, 19 August 1914 and 18 June 1919; Lisa Mahar-Kipling, *Grain Elevators* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1993); Frank Gohlke, *Measure of Emptiness* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

(5LN.440). The building featured an usual new design known as the A-Frame, which had a distinctive gabled roof with eaves that extended to the ground. The club joined the members of the American Legion to erect the Legion's post next door in 1974. A trap shooting area for the club is located near the building, which is used for related storage.<sup>74</sup>

By the 1970s the Rock Island Railroad had fallen upon hard economic times. While the line connected a number of major Midwestern cities, it did so with routes that were more circuitous than its competitors. While the company recovered from two earlier bankruptcies in the twentieth century, in 1914 and 1933, a bankruptcy filing in 1975 and a strike by its clerks in 1979 resulted in the liquidation of the company in 1980. The final CRI&P runs over the line occurred in March 1980. In February 1982, the Kyle Railroad initiated freight rail service between eastern Colorado and western Kansas, including this section of Lincoln County.<sup>75</sup>

Genoa experienced challenges in the later part of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first, as its school

closed after consolidation with Hugo and its last business shut its doors. Today, the Wonder View Tower attracts fewer tourists, although a growing stream of cars passes along Interstate 70 heading toward Denver or Kansas. The grain elevator continues to be a landmark and an economic mainstay for the community. Local residents still appreciate the small town lifestyle and are willing to weather the changes. As Lincoln County historian Terry Blevins noted, “. . . the roots of Genoa have gone deep in this dry country. Descendants of many of the original homesteaders still subsist on this land, and the croplands can keep their family's families as well.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Terry W. Blevins, ed., “Lincoln County History,” accessed at [www.lincolncountyco.us](http://www.lincolncountyco.us) on 2 January 2008; Genoa Residents and Front Range Research Associates, *Do You Know These Genoa Buildings?*; Lincoln County Assessor Records; Andersen, Interview; Covington, Interview; Sam Covington, Jr., “American Legion Summit Post 31,” in Claggett, *History of Lincoln County, Colorado*, 27-28; Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, 2nd ed., (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 2003), 66-67.

<sup>75</sup> “The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad, Route of the Rockies,” accessed at [www.american-rails.com](http://www.american-rails.com), 15 January 2010; Doty and McFarland, *Rocketing to the Rockies*, 25; Kyle Railroad (KYLE), [www.railamerica.com](http://www.railamerica.com), accessed 27 January 2010; Kyle Railroad KYLE #377 [www.uprr.com](http://www.uprr.com), accessed 27 January 2010.

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<sup>76</sup> Blevins, “Genoa, Before 1939,” 10.

## Evolution of a False Front Building 310 Main Street, Genoa, Colorado



c. 1908. The Brown and Paul Hardware building (second from right) is shown in its original location on the west side of the 400 block of Main Street.



1970. At some point, the building was moved to its current location at 310 Main Street. The façade appears intact; it appears to be used as a dwelling.



Unknown (between 1970 and 1988). The north storefront window has been replaced but the false front is still present.



1988. The false front is now gone.



2008. The house appears to be about the same as it did in 1988.

This building, erected in about 1907, started its life as a false front commercial building. At an unknown date it was moved a block north. Later, it was converted to a residence, one of its storefront windows was replaced, and it lost its false front.



# 5

## RESULTS

The Genoa Survey of Historic Buildings Survey documented forty resources in the town. Table 2 presents a summary of eligibility assessments for all resources included in the intensive survey in street address order, while Table 3 displays the results in state identification number order.

The surveyors consulted with Chris Geddes, National and State Register Historian with the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, concerning National and State Register eligibility in December 2009, and she concurred with the evaluations presented in the tables.

### **Individually Eligible Resources**

Two individual resources examined in the survey were evaluated as potentially eligible to the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register of Historic Properties: Hunt Building/Hunt's Hall, 301 Main Street, 5LN.451, and Snell Grain/Collingwood Grain, 420 Nolan Street, 5LN433 (See photographs on page 48). Three additional resources were assessed as potentially eligible to the State Register of Historic Properties only: *Genoa Sentinel* Newspaper Office, 100 block Kunkle Street (south side), 5LN.441; Joseph Larson House, 302 Kunkle Street, 5LN.445; and Genoa House/Genoa Hotel, 100 Nolan Street, 5LN.466. Genoa does not have a register for local historic landmarks.

### **Construction Dates**

Buildings included in the survey ranged in dates from the 1900s through the 1960s. The largest number of resources represented 1920s construction, with

twelve examples. The second largest group was built in the 1910s, which had nine examples. The 1900s had five examples and the 1940s comprised six examples among the surveyed buildings. Remaining groups of buildings included three from the 1930s, two from the 1950s, and two from the 1960s.

### **Original Functions**

The surveyed buildings reflected a wide variety of original functions. The largest categories included domestic, with sixteen examples, and commercial, with fourteen examples. The domestic category included one building erected as a hotel. The commercial category included businesses whose original functions were grocery, insurance office, newspaper office, general store, bank, garages and service stations, specialty store, and hardware store. There were two buildings whose original functions related to agriculture, including a grain elevator and a Quonset hut, as well as the northern portion of 5LN.450 which was a creamery. Three buildings were religious in nature, including two churches and a parsonage. Two buildings had social functions. One example of a government building (post office) and one building associated with health care (a hospital) were surveyed.

### **Materials**

Several varieties of wall materials were represented by buildings in the survey. Fourteen of the buildings displayed stucco walls, comprising the largest group. There were eight examples of buildings with

**Table 2**

**EVALUATION OF RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY  
FOR NATIONAL OR STATE REGISTER DESIGNATION  
SORTED BY STREET ADDRESS**

ADDRESS	STATE ID NUM.	HISTORIC NAME	NATIONAL		STATE	
			Status	Crit.	Status	Crit.
212 2nd Street	5LN.434	O.L. Tinnes House/Trinity Lutheran Church and Parsonage (c. 1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
214 2nd Street	5LN.435	Trinity Lutheran Church (1948)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 block 3rd Street (southwest corner 3rd St. and Hicks St.)	5LN.436	DaVatz Quonset (1949)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
204 3rd Street	5LN.437	Ralph Seaberg House (1934)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
204 4th Street	5LN.438	Self House (1927)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 block 6th Street (southeast corner 6th and Davis)	5LN.439	Berry House (1900s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
101 Hicks Street (northeast corner Main and Hicks)	5LN.191	Black/Martin House (1930s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
400 block Hicks Street (north side)	5LN.440	Genoa Gun Club (1960s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
100 block Kunkle Street (south side)	5LN.441	Genoa Sentinel Newspaper Office (1927)	Not eligible	--	Eligible	A, C
108 Kunkle Street	5LN.442	Dr. Shaw/Larsen House (1907)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 Kunkle Street	5LN.443	Jansen/Covington House (1906-07)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
300 Kunkle Street	5LN.444	Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (1942)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
302 Kunkle Street	5LN.445	Joseph Larson House (1920s)	Not eligible	--	Eligible	C
207 Main Street	5LN.447	Evangelical Church Parsonage/Methodist Church Parsonage (1927)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
217 Main Street	5LN.448	Genoa U.S. Post Office (1961)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 block Main Street (northeast corner Main and Kunkle)	5LN.446	Genoa Garage, Genoa School District Bus Garage (1920)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--



ADDRESS	STATE ID NUM.	HISTORIC NAME	NATIONAL		STATE	
			Status	Crit.	Status	Crit.
301 Main Street	5LN.451	Hunt Building/Hunt's Hall (1926)	Eligible	A, C	Eligible	A, C
304 Main Street	5LN.452	Jackson Garage, Berridge Garage, Genoa Machine Shop, Link Repair Shop (1926)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
305 and 307 Main Street	5LN.449	305-Creamery (1910s-1920s) and 307-Dorsch/Black/Flook/Carlson Grocery (1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
306 Main Street	5LN.453	Anderson Hall, Commercial Hotel (1913)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
309-13 Main Street	5LN.454	Elmer Larsen Insurance (1918)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
310 Main Street	5LN.455	Brown and Paull Hardware (1907)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
314 Main Street	5LN.456	Genoa State Bank (1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
315 Main Street	5LN.457	Genoa Oil Company/Case Equipment Dealership, Larsen Tires (1920s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
400 Main Street	5LN.458	Post Office, Twin City Machinery, Martin House (1909)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
401 Main Street	5LN.459	Hanks & Spears Building (1922)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
500 block Main Street (west side)	5LN.460	South Side Service (1956)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
501 Main Street	5LN.461	Echternacht/Holst/Hansen House (1904)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
86 Nolan Street	5LN.462	Andersen House (1923)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
90 Nolan Street	5LN.463	Steichen House (1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
91 Nolan Street	5LN.464	Eberhart/Flook/Westfall House (1937)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
93 Nolan Street	5LN.465	Dr. Keller Hospital/Dr. Clanin Hospital (1920)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
100 Nolan Street	5LN.466	Genoa House/Genoa Hotel (1907)	Not eligible	--	Eligible	A, C
100 block Nolan Street (south side, west of 109)	5LN.467	Lundien's Auto Repair (1947)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 Nolan Street	5LN.468	Ewing House (1946)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
204 Nolan Street	5LN.469	Shultz House (1918)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--

ADDRESS	STATE ID NUM.	HISTORIC NAME	NATIONAL		STATE	
			Status	Crit.	Status	Crit.
308 Nolan Street	5LN.470	Wadsworth/Flook House (1914)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
420 Nolan Street	5LN.433	Snell Grain, Collingwood Grain (1954)	Eligible	A, C	Eligible	A, C
500 Old U.S. Highway 24	5LN.471	South Side Service/Genoa Café/ Red and Annie Café (1922)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--

NOTE: Letters in Criteria columns indicate the applicable National or State Register criteria.

**Table 3**  
**EVALUATION OF RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY**  
**FOR NATIONAL OR STATE REGISTER DESIGNATION**  
**SORTED BY STATE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER**

ADDRESS	STATE ID NUM.	HISTORIC NAME	NATIONAL		STATE	
			Status	Crit.	Status	Crit.
101 Hicks Street (northeast corner Main and Hicks)	5LN.191	Black/Martin House (1930s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
420 Nolan Street	5LN.433	Snell Grain, Collingwood Grain (1954)	Eligible	A, C	Eligible	A, C
212 2nd Street	5LN.434	O.L. Tinnes House/Trinity Lutheran Church and Parsonage (c. 1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
214 2nd Street	5LN.435	Trinity Lutheran Church (1948)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 block 3rd Street (southwest corner 3rd St. and Hicks St.)	5LN.436	DaVatz Quonset (1949)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
204 3rd Street	5LN.437	Ralph Seaberg House (1934)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
204 4th Street	5LN.438	Self House (1927)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 block 6th Street (southeast corner 6th and Davis)	5LN.439	Berry House (1900s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
400 block Hicks Street (north side)	5LN.440	Genoa Gun Club (1960s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
100 block Kunkle Street (south side)	5LN.441	Genoa Sentinel Newspaper Office (1927)	Not eligible	--	Eligible	A, C
108 Kunkle Street	5LN.442	Dr. Shaw/Larsen House (1907)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 Kunkle Street	5LN.443	Jansen/Covington House (1906-07)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
300 Kunkle Street	5LN.444	Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (1942)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
302 Kunkle Street	5LN.445	Joseph Larson House (1920s)	Not eligible	--	Eligible	C
200 block Main Street (northeast corner Main and Kunkle)	5LN.446	Genoa Garage, Genoa School District Bus Garage (1920)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
207 Main Street	5LN.447	Evangelical Church Parsonage/Methodist Church Parsonage (1927)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--

ADDRESS	STATE ID NUM.	HISTORIC NAME	NATIONAL		STATE	
			Status	Crit.	Status	Crit.
217 Main Street	5LN.448	Genoa U.S. Post Office (1961)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
305 and 307 Main Street	5LN.449	305-Creamery (1910s-1920s) and 307-Dorsch/Black/Flook/Carlson Grocery (1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
301 Main Street	5LN.451	Hunt Building/Hunt's Hall (1926)	Eligible	A, C	Eligible	A, C
304 Main Street	5LN.452	Jackson Garage, Berridge Garage, Genoa Machine Shop, Link Repair Shop (1926)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
306 Main Street	5LN.453	Anderson Hall, Commercial Hotel (1913)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
309-13 Main Street	5LN.454	Elmer Larsen Insurance (1918)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
310 Main Street	5LN.455	Brown and Paull Hardware (1907)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
314 Main Street	5LN.456	Genoa State Bank (1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
315 Main Street	5LN.457	Genoa Oil Company/Case Equipment Dealership, Larsen Tires (1920s)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
400 Main Street	5LN.458	Post Office, Twin City Machinery, Martin House (1909)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
401 Main Street	5LN.459	Hanks & Spears Building (1922)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
500 block Main Street (west side)	5LN.460	South Side Service (1956)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
501 Main Street	5LN.461	Echternacht/Holst/Hansen House (1904)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
86 Nolan Street	5LN.462	Andersen House (1923)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
90 Nolan Street	5LN.463	Steichen House (1910)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
91 Nolan Street	5LN.464	Eberhart/Flook/Westfall House (1937)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
93 Nolan Street	5LN.465	Dr. Keller Hospital/Dr. Clanin Hospital (1920)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
100 Nolan Street	5LN.466	Genoa House/Genoa Hotel (1907)	Not eligible	--	Eligible	A, C
100 block Nolan Street (south side, west of 109)	5LN.467	Lundien's Auto Repair (1947)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
200 Nolan Street	5LN.468	Ewing House (1946)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--

ADDRESS	STATE ID NUM.	HISTORIC NAME	NATIONAL		STATE	
			Status	Crit.	Status	Crit.
204 Nolan Street	5LN.469	Shultz House (1918)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
308 Nolan Street	5LN.470	Wadsworth/Flook House (1914)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--
500 Old U.S. Highway 24	5LN.471	South Side Service/Genoa Café/ Red and Annie Café (1922)	Not eligible	--	Not eligible	--

NOTE: Letters in Criteria columns indicate the applicable National or State Register criteria.

## Potentially Eligible to the National and State Registers



420 Nolan Street, 5LN.433, Snell Grain,  
Collingwood Grain (1954)



301 Main Street, 5LN.451, Hunt Building/Hunt's  
Hall (1926)

## Potentially Eligible to the State Register Only



100 block Kunkle Street (south side), 5LN.441,  
Genoa Sentinel Newspaper Office (1927)



302 Kunkle Street, 5LN.445, Joseph Larson  
House (1920s)



100 Nolan Street, 5LN.466, Genoa House/Genoa  
Hotel (1907)

wood siding, including shingles and weather-board siding. Five buildings, all commercial in function, were constructed of brick. Three buildings had metal siding, and three had replacement siding of undetermined material. Two buildings, a bank and a garage, were built of ornamental concrete block. Two buildings were clad with asbestos siding and two with asphalt siding.

### **Historic Architectural Styles, Forms, and Types**

Buildings documented during the survey displayed a variety of architectural styles and building forms and types. Eight houses represented the Bungalow form, with some incorporating Craftsman style details. Two buildings, both used during earlier years as hotels, represented the Foursquare type. Other surveyed houses reflected Classic Cottage and Minimal Traditional design.

Four commercial buildings represented Early Twentieth Century Commercial type, one building reflected a False Front Commercial design, and one commercial building included Mission style elements. One building reflected the Oblong Box Gas Station type, and one agricultural storage building was of Quonset hut design.

One social/recreational building reflected the A-Frame design more commonly found in mountain towns of the state in the twentieth century. One church represented Modern influences, as did a post office built in 1961. Seventeen buildings did not reflect a particular style due to the vernacular nature of their construction or alterations to their historic design.

The following discussion of architectural styles and building forms and types uses the terminology developed by the Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (see *A Guide to*

*Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition and updates). Some buildings surveyed originally reflected an architectural style but later were modified so that style is no longer apparent. Only the buildings considered good examples of a style or type are mentioned as examples below.

### Domestic Architecture

#### Foursquare

One of the most popular influences in domestic architecture during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the Foursquare form, which reflected the movement away from elaborate exterior ornamentation of the Late Victorian period to more restrained designs. The form worked well for large families and situations where several people lived together, such as small hotels and boarding houses.



**Figure 17. The Commercial Hotel (1913) employed the Foursquare form. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.**

The defining feature of the Foursquare was its boxy shape and simple square plan. Other typical features of the Foursquare are a two-story height, a hipped roof with overhanging eaves providing expansive living space, restrained ornamentation, one or more dormers, and a wide one-story front porch with columns or piers. The form could be individualized in a variety of

ways, such as utilizing different wall cladding, altering the porch design, and varying window treatments by including decorative glass and bay windows.<sup>77</sup>

Examples of Foursquare buildings in Genoa are:

- Anderson Hall/Commercial Hotel, 306 Main Street, 5LN.453
- Genoa Hotel, 100 Nolan Street, 5LN.466

### Classic Cottage

The Classic Cottage is often referred to as a one- or one-and-a-half-story version of the Foursquare and was popular from about 1910 to 1930. The form is characterized by a boxy shape, hipped roof with front dormer, and porch with classical details such as column supports and moldings.<sup>78</sup>

An example of a Classic Cottage style house in Genoa is:

- Steichen House, 90 Nolan Street, 5LN.463.

### Bungalow

The Bungalow, widely popular during the early twentieth century, was influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, and such houses often incorporate Craftsman style details. The influential Arts and Crafts movement was popularized by persons such as Gustav Stickley and Elbert Hubbard. Tenets of the movement

included a preference for restrained design, the use of natural materials, incorporation of comfort and utility, and employment of forms suited to functions.



Figure 18. This Bungalow at 207 Main Street served as a church parsonage. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

Common characteristics of Bungalows are a height of one- to one-and-a-half stories; wide porches with tapered or battered supports and solid balustrades; use of a variety of building materials; and gabled roofs with overhanging eaves, false beams, triangular knee braces, and exposed rafter tails. The design was very versatile and could be adapted to brick, clapboard, shingle, stone, or concrete block. From the beginning of the twentieth century through the 1920s, Bungalows were a favorite form of American house.

Examples of Bungalow houses in Genoa are:

- Joseph Larson House, 302 Kunkle Street, 5LN.455
- Evangelical Church Parsonage, 207 Main Street, 5LN.477
- Shultz House, 204 Nolan Street, 5LN.469
- Eberhart/Flook/Westfall House, 91 Nolan Street, 5LN.464
- Andersen House, 86 Nolan Street, 5LN.462

<sup>77</sup> Paul Duchscherer and Linda Svendsen, *Beyond the Bungalow: Grand Homes in the Arts & Crafts Tradition* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, Publisher: 2005), 20; Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, *A Guide to Colorado's Historic Architecture and Engineering*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Denver: State Historical Society of Colorado, 2003), 60-61; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 328.

<sup>78</sup> Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, *A Guide*, 62-63.



- Ralph Seaberg House, 204 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, 5LN437
- Self House, 204 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 5LN.438

### Minimal Traditional

These houses first became popular in the late 1930s and were widely constructed after World War II. In essence, the buildings reflect traditional domestic styles stripped of decorative details. Common elements of these houses include: a boxy appearance, few decorative details, a rectangular plan, a simple roof, and a central main entrance with flanking windows. Asbestos shingles and aluminum siding were common, as were concrete foundations.<sup>79</sup>



Figure 19. The Ewing House (1946) employed Minimal Traditional design. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

An example of a Minimal Traditional style house in Genoa is:

- Ewing House, 200 Nolan Street, 5LN.468

### Commercial Architecture

#### False Front Commercial

Early photographs of Genoa show Main Street with several buildings designed with false fronts. One of the most notable was

the Hicks Building. This type of commercial building was erected in large numbers during California's gold rush and appeared throughout frontier Colorado as soon as milled lumber became available. In most cases, they represented an early construction type on the plains and were replaced by more substantial buildings as funds and materials became available. False front buildings are becoming increasingly scarce in Colorado.

Such buildings are generally a simple rectangular form with a front gabled roof faced with a wood façade extending beyond the peak of the gable. For buildings larger than one story, a window on the gable face spread light and ventilation to the upper story. The tall false front provided a small building with the appearance of being larger, as well as affording a sizable space for the company's name. More elaborate examples featured decorative cornices or pediments. As Eric Stoehr observed, false front buildings "gave a citified, more eastern look to a new frontier town."<sup>80</sup> In some communities, false front construction continued to be built for several decades.

At least two existing buildings in town (310 Main Street and 400 Main Street) lost their false fronts. An example of an intact False Front Commercial building (now joined to the building to the north) in Genoa is:

- Creamery and Dorsch/Black/ Carlson Grocery, 305 and 307 Main Street, 5LN.449

#### Early Twentieth Century Commercial

As the business district in Genoa developed, buildings of brick and ornamental concrete block were erected to reflect the stability, prosperity, and

<sup>79</sup> Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, *A Guide*, "Minimal Traditional," update; McAlester and McAlester, *A Field Guide*, 478-479.

<sup>80</sup> C. Eric Stoehr, *Bonanza Victorian: Architecture and Society in Colorado Mining Towns* (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 61.

progress of the community. These materials also had the advantage of being more fireproof than the frame construction of the nineteenth century. Some buildings also included stone trim and metal or decorative brick cornices. Large display windows, continuous transom bands, wood doors with large rectangular lights and transom, decorative brickwork, parapets, and corbelled cornices were typical of the construction.<sup>81</sup>



**Figure 20.** The *Genoa Sentinel* newspaper office (1927) is an example the Early Twentieth Century Commercial style in Genoa. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

Examples of Early Twentieth Century Commercial buildings in Genoa are:

- Hunt Building/Hunt's Hall, 301 Main Street, 5LN.451
- Elmer Larsen Insurance, 309-13 Main Street, 5LN.454
- *Genoa Sentinel* Newspaper Office, 100 block Kunkle Street, 5LN.441
- Hanks & Spears Building, 401 Main Street, 5LN459

### Modern Movements

After World War II, the influence of postwar modern design on commercial buildings was prevalent throughout Colorado. On the eastern plains, some

new public buildings, such as schools and courthouses, were architect-designed and represented the variety of modern expression, such as the International style. Many small towns felt the impact of the movement on Main Street in new stores, homes, and churches that displayed some modern elements in their streamline appearance, lack of ornament, asymmetrical composition, and use of new materials.

Examples of modern influence in Genoa are:

- Genoa U.S. Post Office, 217 Main Street, 5LN.448
- Trinity Lutheran Church, 214 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, 5LN.435



**Figure 21.** The 1961 Genoa U.S. Post Office reflects Modern influences. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1970.

### Auto-Related Architecture

The popularity of automobiles surged in the era before World War I, and a number of businesses sprang up to serve local drivers and those traveling from longer distances. During the early twentieth century, many auto-related businesses were designed with elements echoing popular architectural styles of their day. As time passed, gas station architecture evolved to encompass the development of new construction materials, the impact of modern design, and building types created

<sup>81</sup> Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, *A Guide*, 74-75.

specifically for gas stations.



**Figure 22.** An example of the Oblong Box Gas Station form is located near the south end of Main Street. SOURCE: Field photograph, Thomas H. Simmons, January 2008.

Examples of Auto-Related architecture in Genoa are:

- South Side Service, 500 block Main Street, 5LN.460 (Oblong Box Gas Station)
- Genoa Oil Co./Case Equipment Dealership/ Larsen Tires, 315 Main Street, 5LN.457 (Mission style elements)

### Agricultural Architecture

Quonset huts were prefabricated metal

buildings developed on the eve of World War II for military purposes and later manufactured for civilian use. A number of these buildings exist on the eastern plains today and are used for agricultural purposes. Some secondary associated with surveyed resources in Genoa also were utilized for agricultural purposes.

An example of a Quonset hut in Genoa is:

- DaVatz Quonset, 200 block 3rd Street, 5LN.436



**Figure 23.** The DaVatz Quonset is an example of the pointed arch variety. SOURCE: Lincoln County Assessor, old appraisal card photograph, 1987.



**Figure 24.** The brick and hollow clay block Hunt Building at 301 Main Street is Genoa's only two-story commercial building. SOURCE: Thomas H. Simmons, fieldwork photograph, April 2008.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. National and State Register Properties and Creation of Local Register of Landmarks

The survey identified two properties potentially eligible to the National Register and State Register and three properties potentially eligible to the State Register only. If the owners of the buildings are willing, the properties should be nominated for listing in these registers. Such designation places no restrictions on what owners may do with their properties and will increase public awareness of the importance of preservation of Genoa's historic buildings and structures. Listing also may qualify properties for federal and state tax credits and, in some cases, State Historical Fund grants to assist with stabilization and restoration.

Genoa should consider establishing a local register of landmarks to designate important historic buildings. Such a listing would increase public interest in maintaining and preserving historic buildings and in learning more about the history of the town's buildings. Guidance on establishing a local register can be obtained from the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation of the Colorado Historical Society.

### 2. Publications and Walking Tours

Photographs and historical information contained on the survey forms from this project could be utilized to produce walking tour brochures of interest to local residents and visitors. Information from the survey could also be made available from a link on the town's website.

### 3. Educational Activities

The Town of Genoa should continue to support educational activities and programs providing historical and preservation-related information to local residents. Owners of buildings included in the survey should receive a copy of the form related to their property. An informational panel placed on Main Street could provide information about the town's history for visitors.

### 4. Collection of Historical Materials

As Genoa Mayor Patricia Vice observed, much of the historical information relating to Genoa is privately held by local citizens. It is important this information be copied whenever possible and placed in a public repository so future generations will have access to it. An archival space could be created locally to house such materials, or copies of these documents could be donated to the library or museum in Hugo. Oral histories of longtime residents should be conducted to ensure that their recollections are preserved. Official records of the Town and institutions such as local churches also should be preserved in a secure location for future generations.

### 5. Stabilization of Historic Buildings

Several historic buildings in Genoa, including some of the most significant, are currently vacant. Some are deteriorating due to lack of maintenance and others are not secured and have experienced vandalism. To prevent further deterioration and destruction, an inventory of the conditions of Genoa's historic buildings should be undertaken and the

Town should work with property owners to stabilize and secure their buildings. The Colorado Historical Society's Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation should be consulted for advice about the best means of accomplishing this task.

## **7. Retention of Survey Products**

Copies of the products resulting from this survey should be placed in publicly accessible locations and archival repositories such as the Genoa Town Hall, the Hedlund House Museum, and the Hugo Public Library.

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