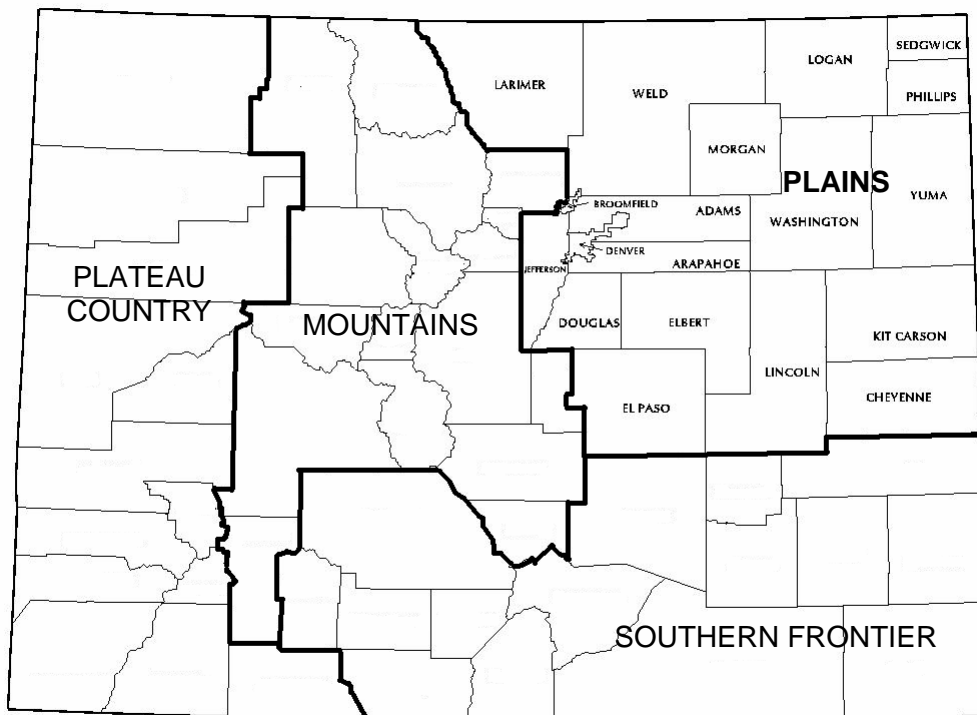


# COLORADO PLAINS HISTORIC CONTEXT



**OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY  
AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**COLORADO  
PLAINS  
HISTORIC CONTEXT**

**STEVEN F. MEHLS**

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This is a facsimile edition of the original 1984 publication. Text and graphics are those of the original edition.

## PREFACE

The Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, is proud to present this set of historic contexts for the State of Colorado. The set includes regional historic contexts and also topical contexts which summarize and evaluate the history of the state from the earliest historic events up through World War II.

The four regional historic contexts include the Plains, the Mountains, the Southern Frontier in southeast Colorado, and the Plateau Country along the western edge of the state. For each of these regions, themes are based on socio-economic units of development in the region. These are presented in rough chronological order, but they are not strictly chronological units. They reflect the historic themes of development in each region and the historic properties associated with them.

Four "topical" contexts were developed: Engineering, Urbanization and Planning, Historical Archaeology and Architecture. The Engineering context is oriented toward a history of engineering technology. This context is organized by topics including Water Resources, Power Resources, Transportation, Industry, Mining, Communications, and Waste Disposal. Within each topic are themes for the various specific resources types. For example, the themes within Power Resources include Petroleum and Shale Oil, Natural Gas, Uranium, Electric Power and Coal.

The Urbanization and Planning context was developed to focus attention on the significance of town planning, layout and transportation modes, the latter including the Stage/Wagon Era, Rail Era and Auto Era. The themes within this context address town form or town function and selected aspects of towns during the transportation eras. Additional themes are presented for the three major urban centers in the state including the Central Business Districts, Residential Development, and Rail/Industrial/Warehousing Districts during the transportation eras.

For all of the historic contexts, the presentation of data for each theme begins with a narrative of the history and description of the theme. A chronology, description of the location of historic properties, and a list of cultural resource types are presented. Then the quality and quantity of existing data about the theme are evaluated. This includes an assessment of the historical documentation, number and location of sites, data gaps, future needs and important resources. Research questions and a guide to evaluation standards for physical condition are presented. References and a map are included for each theme.

The Historical Archaeology context is based on ten temporal units identified as socio-politically significant periods spanning the history of the state. For each unit the quality and quantity of past historical archaeology work is presented and research recommendations and identification and dating problems are considered. In addition, the context presents a research framework for future historical archaeology work in the state.

The architectural context for the project is presented as "A Guide to Colorado Architecture." The guide standardizes the terminology used for architecture styles in Colorado and presents pictures and descriptions of these styles.

The overall purpose of these reports is to provide a framework to identify and record the historical resources in the state and to provide research direction to analyze the significance and preservation of these resources. The contexts can provide guidance for state and federally mandated cultural resource management, as well as direction for pure research. We anticipate that the recording and evaluation of historic sites will benefit by using the combined contexts.

The reports were produced by the Colorado Historical Society with the assistance of a grant from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education. The development of these reports is a direct outcome of the RP-3 (Resource Protection Planning Process) effort led by Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Archaeologist Judith Halasi who provided research, coordination and editing for the project.

The editorial content of this publication was supported by a grant-in-aid through the funding provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, which is administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. The content and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior nor does mention of trade names or referenced publications constitute endorsement or recommendation by the Department of the Interior.

We hope that these volumes will stimulate an awareness of and appreciation for the historical resources of Colorado.



Barbara Sudler  
President  
State Historic Preservation Officer

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## PLAINS

### 1. SPANISH EXPLORATIONS AND FRENCH INTRUSIONS: 1541-1819

#### NARRATIVE

European interest in the plains of Colorado can be traced back to the 1530s and 1540s when reports of the seven cities of gold prompted Francisco Vasquez de Coronado to launch his ill-fated attempt at finding Cibola. His party's wanderings on the Great Plains, while never reaching the study area, were the basis of Spanish claims to all the Colorado plains. After Coronado's return to Mexico, Spanish interest in their northern lands lay dormant for over a century.

The 1650s and 1660s saw Spanish explorers reach the South Platte River, which they named the Rio de Chato, River of the Flat Bed. Problems with New Mexican Indians stopped Spanish exploitation of the new discoveries until the early 1700s, when Juan de Ulibarri traveled to Colorado's plains. By then reports filtered back to New Mexico of French traders being on the Plains in violation of Spain's claims to the region. France felt she had a right to the area because of La Salle's 1681 claim to the Mississippi River and all lands drained by it. To warn the French traders, Spanish authorities sent Antonio de Valverde and a military detachment to patrol the Arkansas River in 1719. As a follow-up, Pedro de Villasur left Santa Fe, New Mexico in 1719 under orders to patrol the South Platte. The group reached the junction of the North and South Platte Rivers in 1720. There a group of Pawnees, long-time trading partners of the French, ambushed Villasur and killed most of the detachment.

The Spanish setback on the Platte led French traders to become more bold about their activities on the high plains. In 1739 Pierre and Paul Mallet led an expedition from the Platte River across Nebraska, then into Colorado along the South Platte, and thence south to the Arkansas, following that waterway back to the Mississippi Valley. News of their trading successes caused other Frenchmen to follow their path. The resulting commerce in guns and other European goods continued until 1763. A treaty signed that year to end the Seven Years War forced France to give Spain all French claims west of the Mississippi River.

Spain had a free hand on the Colorado plains for 60 years after the peace was signed. Despite or perhaps because of the removal of French presence on the Colorado plains, Spanish explorers and traders seldom made trips to the region. In 1766 Ulibarri hoped to visit the South Platte, but only reached the Arkansas River. In 1793 Pedro Vial explored the Smokey Hill River and from then until 1819 Spanish military activity increased in the area. As late as 1817 Spain's army was patrolling the future site of Denver. Much of the increased activity, especially after 1803, came about because of the United States purchase of Louisiana, which gave most of eastern Colorado to the new North American power. Because the boundaries of the sale were inexact, from 1806 to 1819, American and Spanish Authorities laid charges of trespass at one another. In 1819 the Adams-Onis Treaty between the two powers

set the border at the Arkansas River. With the title dispute cleared, American explorers began crossing the Colorado plains in large numbers.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- 1541 - Coronado's search for seven cities of gold.
- 1659 - Spanish explorers reach South Platte River.
- 1682 - France claims Colorado Plains as part of Louisiana.
- 1719 - Valverde expedition to Arkansas River.
- 1719-1720 - Villasur travels across northeastern Colorado's plains along So. Platte.
- 1739-1740 - Mallet Brothers, French traders, cross region trading with Indians.
- 1763 - Peace treaty ends Seven Years War, gives all of Colorado plains to Spain.
- 1766 - Ulibarri travels Arkansas Valley.
- 1793 - Vial explores Smokey Hill River.
- 1803 - Louisiana Purchase gives much of the Colorado Plains to the United States.
- 1805-1819 - Spanish patrols to northern Colorado plains to discourage U.S. explorers.
- 1819 - Adams-Onis Treaty gives U.S. clear title to all plains north of Arkansas River.

#### LOCATION

Presently no cultural resources directly attributed to Spanish and French exploration of the area have been recorded. This is because of the transitory nature of these activities. However, some evidence may someday be found, especially along the Arkansas River, which served as something of an informal boundary for their activities. Any such discoveries should be verifiable due to the large number of readily available maps of these activities.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Battle Site, Campsite, Cache, Trail.

Structures include: Fort, Fortification.

Material includes: Military equipment, lances, guns, helmets, trade goods.

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

The intense professional and popular interest generated by the Spanish and French explorers in the West has led to a vast number of publications about the era. Original records of most official Spanish expeditions have been translated and annotated in English. As well, many books about the settlement of New Mexico and other facets of the Spanish frontier experience such as Bannon's Spanish Borderlands Frontier or Jose de Onis' The Hispanic Contribution to the State of Colorado have been written. Also, many doctoral dissertations and theses have been completed on these same topics. LeRoy Hafen's works on Colorado history and Western exploration should be consulted for information on Spanish and French activities in the region. Also of interest are studies such as Propst's history of the South Platte and Long's history of the Smokey Hill Road. To make full use of these sources and the Spanish archives one should be familiar with Spanish and archaic place names. The best theoretical and general source on the period that helps develop contextual evaluations is William H. Goetzmann's Exploration and Empire; The Explorer and Scientist in the Winning of the West. Goetzmann's work is especially useful in explaining the imperial rivalry between Spain, France, and the United States that was partially played out on the Colorado plains. While the written documentation of plains exploration is extensive, very little on-the-ground evidence remains to mark the passing of these men because of the transitory nature of their activities.

### Number/Condition

The data is insufficient to determine the number and types of resources that once existed or may have existed that are associated with this theme. Resources associated with the Spanish and French exploration such as campsites and trails left no permanent changes on the land. Archaeological evidence, such as campfire rings, often provides little new information because most Europeans adopted Native-American methods of wilderness living, making it nearly impossible to ascertain even which group or race used a given site. Further, Indian trails often were followed by explorers, and since these followed watercourses and other natural travel routes that were adopted by later residents for travel, evidences of earlier use have probably been obliterated.

### Data Gaps

- \* Representative campsite of a Spanish exploration party.
- \* Representative campsite of a French exploration/trade party.
- \* Clearly discernable trail or marker along the path of a known (documented) exploration party.
- \* Representative cache of a trading or exploration party.

## Future Needs

Surveys specifically to find on-the-ground evidence of these early Europeans and Euro-Americans in Colorado's plains should be undertaken at some future date, but should be given low priority due to the extensive documentary evidence available about the era and the low possibility of finding clearly distinguishable sites within the region. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of both the historian and historic archaeologist.

## Important Resources

Because of the lack of known and probable sites, any site is significant. Activities of the explorers and traders stimulated both Spanish and French interest in the West and Colorado. This eventually led to American involvement in the region as well. The explorers, as representatives of their various governments during a period when the region's international ownership was in doubt, played a significant role in this diplomatic struggle. Any site that would substantiate these roles would serve to verify existing documentation and interpretations.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on the Spanish exploration of Colorado?
2. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on French exploration of Colorado?
3. What resources, if any, can substantiate the diplomatic role these early explorers played in European relations?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Battle site: Enough spent material and/or evidence of fortifications (permanent or temporary) and gravesites to verify a battle occurred there and what groups were involved.

Campsite: Any in situ site that shows no or minimal surface disturbance is considered important for research and interpretive purposes.

Cache: Any in situ site that shows no or minimal surface disturbance is considered important for research and interpretive purposes.

Fort, Fortification: Should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to establish dimensions, method, period, and material of construction.

Military Equipment: Metallic parts should be intact.

Trade goods: Metallic parts should be intact and nation of origin/manufacture should be ascertainable.

Trail: Ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.

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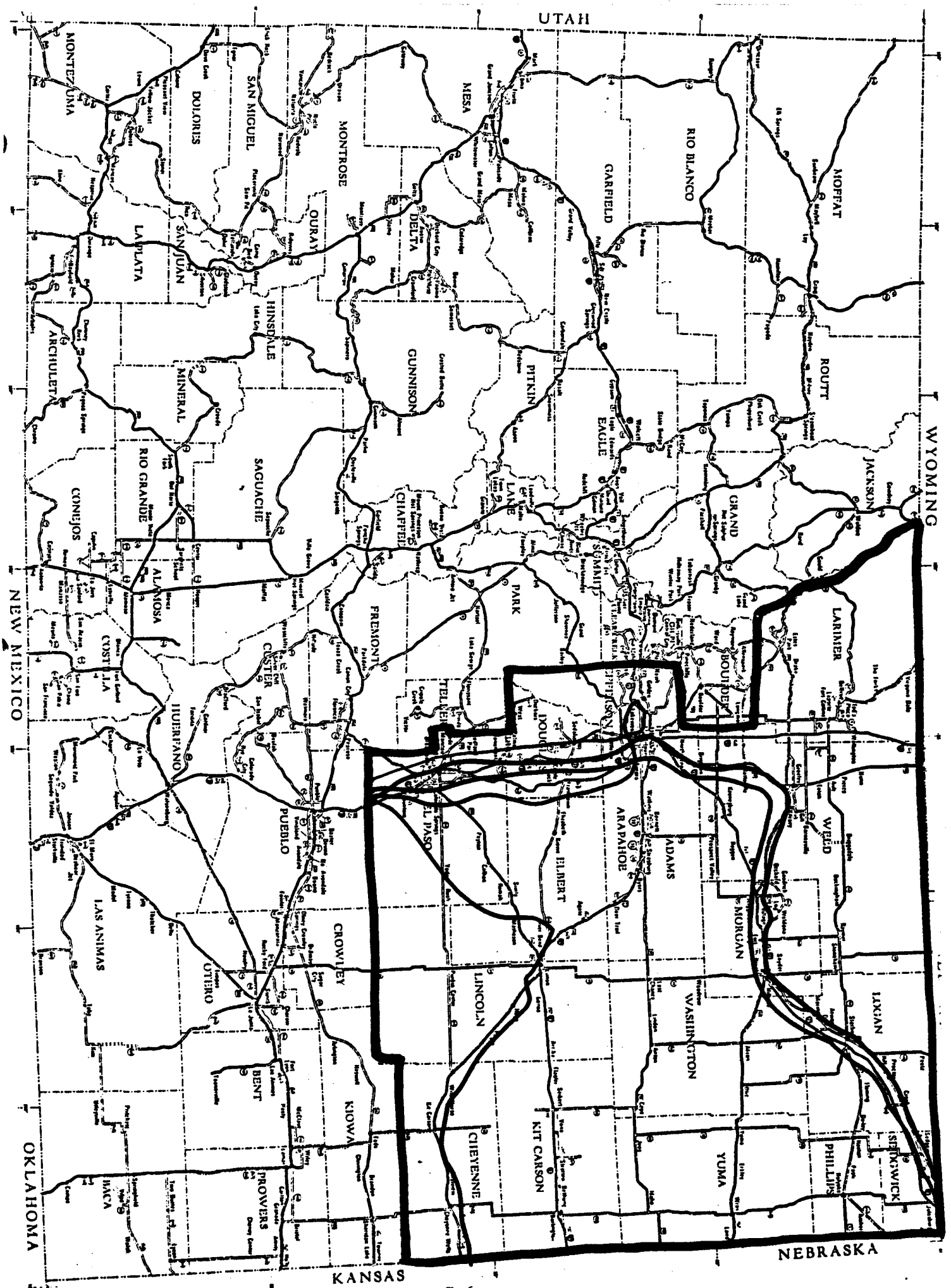
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SPANISH/FRENCH EXPLORATIONS



## PLAINS

### 2. AMERICAN EXPLORERS AND THE ARMY to 1865

#### NARRATIVE

The purchase of Louisiana in 1803 from France led to intense American interest in the West. President Thomas Jefferson authorized many expeditions to the area to catalog what the purchase contained. The first and most famous of these expeditions was the Lewis and Clark effort along the Missouri. The results of their explorations led to further efforts by the U.S. government.

One of the explorations was carried out by Lt. Zebulon Pike. He was charged with exploring the Red and Arkansas Rivers. Pike's group left Fort Belle Fontaine near St. Louis in the summer of 1806 and headed west toward the Arkansas. The party made their way across the Colorado plains to the front range where they discovered "Grand Mountain" which today bears Pike's name. During their trip across the plains, Pawnee Indians warned the Americans about Spanish troops patrolling the area to keep Americans out. Not heeding the warning, Pike searched for the headwaters of the South Platte. When making his way out of the region along the Upper Arkansas River, Pike's party was captured by Spanish troops in the San Luis Valley. After his repatriation Pike labeled the Colorado Plains as desert lands in 1810.

Ten years later, Major Stephen H. Long, U.S. Army, made the next official exploration of Colorado's plains. Originally sent west in 1819 to visit the Yellowstone River, his orders were changed when he reached the Council Bluffs along the Missouri River. The exploration party spent the winter of 1819-20 at Fort Atkinson and on June 6, 1820, they headed west along the Platte. By June 30, they had reached a point on the South Platte where the Rockies became visible. Long proceeded along the river to the front range where they turned south until they came to the base of Pike's Peak. Edwin James, naturalist with the group, became the first person ever recorded to scale the mountain while others made observations and recorded data about the foothills. After James's descent from the peak the party pushed on south to the Arkansas. There, Long divided his group, one subdivision following the Arkansas east while the other went along the Canadian River. Upon return from the Plains both Long and James published accounts of the trip. Each put heavy emphasis on the aridity of the plains, saying the best use would be for pasturage. These findings influence American perceptions of the area well into the 1880s.

From 1820 until the early 1840s, the only government activities on the Colorado plains were Army patrols to control the native Americans. In 1832, Captain Benjamin Bonneville, enroute to Oregon, allowed part of his exploration group to follow the South Platte into northeastern Colorado before rejoining the main body in present day Wyoming. Three years later, in 1815, Colonel Henry Dodge led the First U.S. Dragoons along the path taken by Major Long. While the expedition's purpose was to show the flag and impress the Indians with American power, its most useful result was Dodge's journal. In the book, he wrote his observations of the plains and, influenced by the era's romantic thought, found the arid region to have great majesty and

beauty.

The 1840s saw more Army exploration of the Colorado plains. By then the United States had established the idea of a coast nation and a view of the West as the land of future promise. This was a reflection of the sense of Manifest Destiny Americans felt during the decade, a sense of pre-ordination that the United States should settle all land from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. This spirit led political leaders to authorize creation of a special group within the U.S. Army, the Corps of Topographical Engineers, whose duty it was to explore and map paths for future development in the West.

A popular manifestation of Manifest Destiny was the Oregon Migration of the 1840s. To help ease the emigrant's path, the Army sent John C. Fremont west to find new routes for the settlers. From 1842 to 1844, Fremont made two trips to the West, spending much time on the Colorado plains trying to discover new trails. A cartographer, Charles Preuss, accompanied the expedition. His maps of the explorations added much new and accurate knowledge to that already available about the Colorado plains, especially the South Platte and Arkansas valleys.

The next government expedition to the Colorado plains came in 1845 when Colonel Stephen Watts Kearny and a detachment of U.S. Dragoons patrolled the plains and front range looking for sites to establish military posts. Kearny suggested a series of forts be built along the South Platte and Arkansas, an idea not put into effect for twenty years. However, from 1845 to 1860 the Army did make regular patrols of the plains, usually travelling out of Ft. Laramie, Wyoming or Bent's Fort in Colorado. During the 1850s, in order to facilitate these troop movements and supply shipments from the east, an Army road was laid out along the Smokey Hill and Republican Rivers and then overland to Bent's Fort. Parts of this trail were later used by settlers as parts of the Smokey Hill and Republican River roads.

During the 1840s and 1850s, many private explorers criss-crossed Colorado's plains. Most notable of these was Francis Parkman, Oregon Trail historian, who travelled the South Platte in 1846. He noted the decline of the fur trade and made other observations about the area. The gold rush of 1859 ended pre-settlement exploration and after the Civil War most exploration was for scientific purposes. From Ferdinand V. Hayden and his mapping of the front range as far south as New Mexico, to Yale University paleontologist Othniel C. Marsh's dinosaur fossil searches along the Republican River, the late nineteenth century saw many scientists in the region looking for clues to the earth's past. This continued until 1945 and beyond. Most notable of the twentieth century finds were those at the Lindenmeier Ranch near Fort Collins in 1934 and others in that area. These sites were archaeological in nature and yielded much information about northeastern Colorado's prehistoric human inhabitants.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1806 | - Pike exploration of plains and front range.                |
| 1820 | - Long exploration of So. Platte, front range, and Arkansas. |



- 1832 - Bonneville party visits extreme northern Colorado plains.
- 1835 - Dodge and 1st Dragoons follow Long's path through the area.
- 1842-1844 - Fremont's two trips looking for alternative routes to Oregon.
- 1845 - Kearny trip results in suggestion for military posts.
- 1846 - Francis Parkman travels west.
- 1851-1853 - Army road to Bent's fort well established.
- 1865-1880 - Scientific explorers in the region.
- 1934-1938 - Smithsonian archaeologists excavate Lindenmeier site.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources and natural features associated with this theme can be found throughout the Colorado plains, especially along the major watercourses and front range. However, most of these resources are associated with other themes as well, such as the fur trade forts, visited by explorers, or the travel routes that were later used by emigrants and railroads as transportation corridors. Pike's and Long's Peaks were associated with tourism, recreation, and exploration. Routes taken by the explorers are easily traceable on readily available maps.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Archaeological Excavation, Battle Site, Campsite, Cache, Trail.

Structures include: Fort, Fortification.

Materials include: Military equipment, guns, saddlery.

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

Exploration of the west has stimulated a great quantity of professional and popular studies of the era, many of which contain information about the Colorado plains. These date from about 1810 to the present and cover not only a wide variety of topics but also differ greatly in accuracy and useability. The two best sources are William Goetzmann's Army Exploration in the West and Exploration and Empire; The Explorer and Scientist in the Winning of the West. These are synthetic works that detail not only the explorations but also the political and economic motivations behind exploration. Biographies of every major and some lesser explorers and military officers have also been published. Beyond these are the published journals, diaries, and reports of

the explorers. Pike, Long, Fremont, and others all penned books about their experiences in the Colorado plains region. Further, later writers, such as Donald Jackson and Mary Lee Spence, took these original journals, edited and annotated them and then published their studies. Beyond that, the original journals or reports of military activities were published by the Secretary of War or by the individuals involved. Articles, dissertations, and theses have been completed on various explorers' routes, journeys, and events of the exploration period. Locally available archival material on this era is rather scanty, but many primary manuscripts are available at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

#### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the number of resources that once existed or may have existed associated with this theme. The exception to this is the number, condition, and location of natural features identified by the explorations, such as Long's Peak or the South Platte River, which are all well documented. Other resources associated with the era of American exploration such as campsites and trails left no permanent changes on the land. Archaeological evidence, such as campfire rings, often provides little new information because most Euro-Americans adopted Native American methods of wilderness living, making it nearly impossible to ascertain even which group (race) used a given site. Further, Indian trails often were followed by explorers or the Army and many of these became heavily used routes by later migrants and transportation routes, obliterating evidence of earlier use.

#### Data Gaps

- \* Representative campsite of an exploration party.
- \* Representative battle/skirmish/contact site between explorers/army and the local Native Americans.
- \* Clearly discernable trail or marker along the path of a known (documented) exploration or military party.
- \* Representative cache of an Army or exploration party.

#### Future Needs

Surveys specifically to find on-the-ground evidences of these early Euro-Americans on the Colorado plains should be undertaken at some future date, but should be given low priority due to the extensive documentary evidence available about the era and the low possibility of finding clearly distinguishable sites within the region. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of both the historian and historic archaeologist and any surveyors should be familiar with archaic place names of the region.

#### Important Resources

Because of the lack of known and probable sites, any substantiated site is important. Activities of the explorers and Army, as well as gold discoveries, stimulated interest in and suggested uses for the Colorado plains,

leading to development and statehood. Also, the explorers, as representatives of the American people in a diplomatic struggle over the region's ownership before 1820, played a definite role in international politics. Any site that would substantiate these roles should be considered important.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on the exploration of Colorado?
2. What resources, if any, substantiate the thesis that explorers were programmed by their cultural heritage to locate certain types of things in the wilderness and how were their discoveries or interpretations of them affected by that same background?
3. Can cultural resources lead to re-interpretations of the day-to-day activities of exploring parties, specifically camp life and the "hardships" the explorers faced?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Archaeological Excavation: Standards should be set by archaeologists.

Battle Site: Should have no or minimal surface disturbance, contain spent military hardware, ammunition, and be readily identifiable as to those groups involved.

Campsite, cache: Any in situ site that shows no or minimal surface disturbance is considered important for research and interpretive purposes.

Fort, Fortification: Enough of a structure should be left to understand its function, method, material, and dates of construction or should not have experienced surface disturbance so any archaeological data retains integrity.

Military Equipment: Metallic parts should be intact and enough left to identify function, dates of construction, and use.

Trail: Ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.

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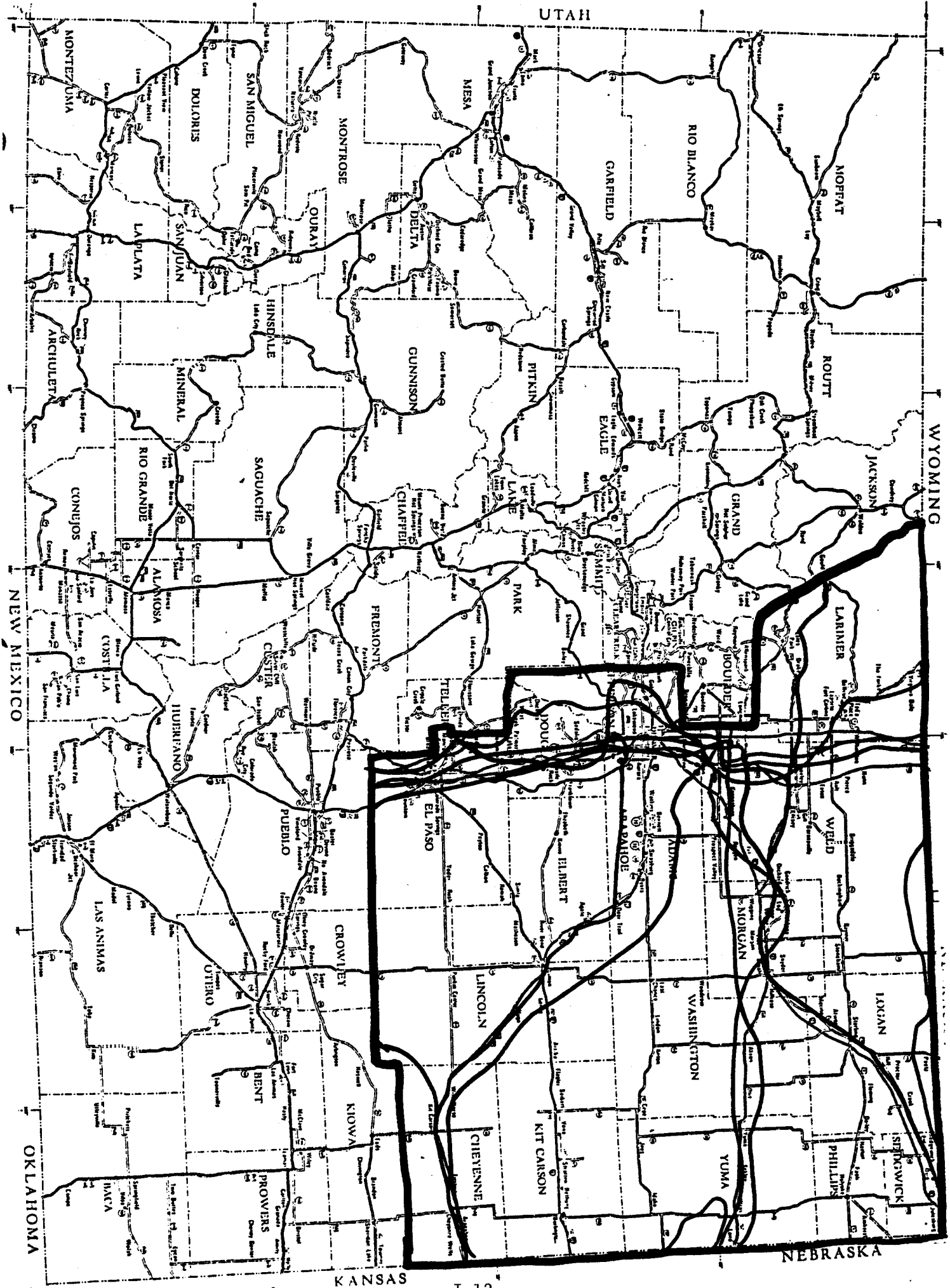
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AMERICAN EXPLORERS AND THE ARMY



## PLAINS

### 3. TRAPPERS AND TRADERS, 1800-1870

#### NARRATIVE

Almost as soon as the United States had title to Louisiana (1803), trappers and traders came into the area in search of beaver and other fur-bearing animals. The first was Baptiste La Lande who travelled the Platte and South Platte into the mountains to trap. The next year James Purcell crossed the plains to get to the headwaters of the South Platte. Both parties were captured and detained by the Spanish Army in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Illegal Spanish military activity trespassing on American soil kept most Americans out of Colorado plains until 1819 and the Adams-Onis Treaty. However, these first parties set a pattern that would remain throughout the fur frontier until the early 1840s. The Colorado high plains and their waterways became popular travel routes for the trappers on the way to and from the Rockies. This caused a large number of posts to be built on the plains and also established routes along waterways that were used later by gold rushers and settlers. These developments were in the future when La Lande and Purcell first entered the region.

In 1820 the situation changed dramatically. During the two years before, some trappers began to work the streams west of the plains and also discovered that buffalo robes and tongues were valuable commodities in the East. During the 1820s, robes and tongues were hunted and traded by Anglos and Indians. Among those who travelled and hunted on Colorado's plains in those years were Andrew Sublette, Ezekeil Williams, Jacob Fowler, Louis Vasquez, Ceran St. Vrain, and James O. Pattie.

Most of the trade goods and fur products travelled overland to and from the Rockies, but in 1836, Vasquez and Sublette felt that a better system could be found by floating flat-bottomed boats loaded with furs down the South Platte. Their attempt resulted in failure, and the idea was abandoned for twenty years.

The distance between supplies and the mountains was solved somewhat when Bent's Fort opened on the Arkansas. While the Bent's economic orientation was toward New Mexico, their post attracted mountain men from all over the plains. The profitability of their operations attracted the attention of others. In 1836 Lancaster Lupton built a stockade on the South Platte and began trading. The next year witnessed the opening of two more forts on the South Platte, Fort Jackson, 1837-1838, six miles downstream from Lupton's operation and Fort St. Vrain also known as Ft. George, 1837-1843, by Ceran St. Vrain, a partner of the Bents. Louis Vasquez also tried his hand at high plains merchandising at Fort Vasquez, a few miles from Fort St. Vrain during the early 1840s. Another trade center outside of Colorado, Fort Laramie, opened during the 1830s. This series of outposts along the front range from Wyoming to the Arkansas made the Colorado plains a very popular wintering spot and exchange location for mountain men.

Operations at the trading posts were much alike for all of them. Guns,

knives, gun powder, shot, tobacco, lead, traps, and liquor were bartered to the trappers and Indians in exchange for their pelts. The Indians found the forts to be full of things their culture did not have, especially alcohol. Also, they were exposed to Anglo diseases such as smallpox for which they had no natural immunity. Traders and fort owners often married or cohabitated with a member of the local tribe to insure a peaceful coexistence and facilitate trade usually while having Anglo families back East as well.

The forts came into existence only a few years before the fur market collapsed. By 1840 European fashions changed, and silk hats replaced those made of beaver pelts. Further accelerating the decline was the depletion of the fur supplies in and around the region. To cut their losses, Ceran St. Vrain tried in 1840 and 1842 to float flat-boats down the South Platte. He hired Baptiste Charbonneau, son of the famous Lewis and Clark guide, Sacajewea, to make the attempts. Neither try got out of Colorado as the boats ran aground on sandbars and could not be refloated. The market collapse and failures to reduce expenses led the South Platte posts to close during the 1840s. Bent's fort stayed open as a way station because of its location on the Santa Fe Trail.

By the late 1840s some retired mountain men began to settle the region in small numbers. Antonie Jarvis built a cabin on the Cache LaPoudre near what became Fort Collins while Elbridge Gerry, new to Colorado in 1840, built a home near the mouth of Crow Creek and the South Platte. Oliver Wiggins opened a supply post for travelers at what became the town of Wiggins. At these points and at the trading posts, some limited farming took place to supply the area's inhabitants. Others did likewise so that by 1850, the plains of Colorado had a very thin line of Euro-American settlement.

After the gold rush and Civil War, the fur business returned to the Colorado high plains when buffalo robes came back into fashion. The buffalo hide trade prospered from 1865 to 1880 at which point the supply of animals was exhausted. By 1870, a group of professional buffalo hunters developed to cash in on the market revival. These hunters were much more well equipped and efficient at killing the hairy creatures than earlier Anglos or Indians had been. Armed with .50 caliber Sharps repeating rifles, a good hunter could keep ten or more skinners busy removing robes. After the robe hunters, others later went on to the plains to pick up the sun-bleached skeletons. The bones were cleaned and pulverized. This product was used by early plains farmers to fertilize their fields. By 1875, bison were becoming hard to find on Colorado's plains, and by 1880, so few were left that robe hunting was no longer profitable. This marked the final closing of the fur trade on Colorado's plains.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1803 | LaLande traps South Platte and is captured by Spanish.       |
| 1804 | James Purcell traps South Platte and is captured by Spanish. |

- 1820 Fur trade to and from Rockies in Colorado grows as Spanish threat removed.
- Plains of Colorado become popular travel route to and from fur trapping areas.
- 1836 First attempt to float flat boats down South Platte.
- 1835-1845 Period of fur forts along front range from Fort Laramie in Wyoming to Bent's Fort on the Arkansas River.
- 1840-1842 Last attempt to float flat bottom fur boats down South Platte.
- 1840-1845 Collapse of fur markets and decline of supply causes closing of forts, except Fort Laramie and Bent's Fort.
- 1865-1880 Buffalo robe trade again prosperous.
- Bison hunting popular on the plains.
- 1880 Buffalo herds exterminated on Colorado plains.

#### LOCATION

Forts and trading posts related to this theme have been recorded along the major water courses of the Colorado plains particularly the Arkansas and South Platte Rivers. Other cultural resources associated with this theme such as camp sites or trails are scarce due to the transitory nature of the fur trade. Those involved did not build permanent structures when traveling or trapping, but rather moved on when locally available supplies of fur were depleted.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Battle Site, Cache, Campsite, Garden Plots, Trail

Structures include: Fort

Materials include: Trade Goods, Trapping Equipment

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

The era of trappers, traders and the mountain men has generated intense popular and professional interest, and this has caused a large number of publications on the period. Studies of the fur trade, from the life of a trapper in the wilderness to economic studies of the business, are readily

available. Because most of the trappers, traders and entrepreneurs visited the Colorado front range, much information is readily available. LeRoy Hafen's eight-volume study of the mountain men is the most inclusive and serves as a good general reference. Beyond that, books such as Weber's Taos Trappers or Lavender's Bent's Fort should be consulted for information. Nearly every major mountain man, such as Jim Bridger or Jedediah Smith, has had at least one if not more biographies written about them. Further, numerous dissertations and theses have been written about the personalities of the fur trade. Because many of the trappers and traders were illiterate, they left little in the way of primary documents. However, Rueben G. Thwaites Far Western Travels, 32 volumes, does contain copies of journals of those who did write about their adventures in the West. Also, the Craggin manuscripts at Colorado College contain first hand accounts about the business, forts and people of the fur trade.

#### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the number, condition and types of resources that once existed or may have existed. The exception to this is the number, condition and location of trading posts (forts), which is well documented. Other resources associated with the era of the fur trade such as campsites and trails left no permanent changes on the land. Archaeological evidence, such as campfire rings, often provides little new information because most Euro-Americans adopted Native American methods of wilderness living making it nearly impossible to ascertain even which group (race) used a given site. Further, many trappers lived with the Indians and used their trails and since many followed watercourses and other natural travel routes that were later adopted by succeeding travelers, traces of earlier use have been obliterated.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Representative campsite of a trapping party.
- \*Representative nonfort trading or interracial contact site.
- \*Representative cache of a trapping party.
- \*Clearly discernable trail or marker along the path of a known (documented) trapping party.

#### Future Needs

Surveys specifically to find on-the-ground evidences of these early Euro-Americans in Colorado should be undertaken at some future date, but should be given low priority due to the extensive documentary evidence available about the era and the low possibility of finding clearly distinguishable sites within the region. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of both the historian and historic archaeologist.

#### Important Resources

Because of the lack of known and probable sites, other than the fur



forts, the sites are significant. Activities of the fur trappers and mountain men stimulated American interest and the popular imagination in the West. This led to American claiming of the region and eventually, with a gold rush, settlement and statehood. Because some of the trappers stayed in Colorado, their presence eased the way of many of the later gold rushers. Sites that substantiate these roles would serve to verify existing documentation and interpretations.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources remain that provide information on the fur trade in Colorado?
2. What resources, if any, remain to document and explain interracial relationships of the period?
3. What resources, if any, substantiate the idea that a picket line of settlement existed on the plains before 1859?
4. Can cultural resources lead to reinterpretations of the business of fur trapping and trading, specifically day-to-day camp life and techniques of trapping, skinning, preparing and storing pelts?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Battle Site: should show minimal surface disturbance and contain spent weapons, possible fortifications and gravesites. Enough material should be extant to identify groups involved.

Cache, Campsite: any in situ site that shows no or minimal surface disturbance is considered important for research and interpretative purposes.

Fort, Fortification: enough of structure should be left to understand its function, method and material of construction and should have had only minimal surface disturbance so any possible archaeological data retains integrity.

Trail: ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.

Trade Goods, Trapping Equipment: metallic parts should be intact and enough material present to identify dates, methods and materials of construction.

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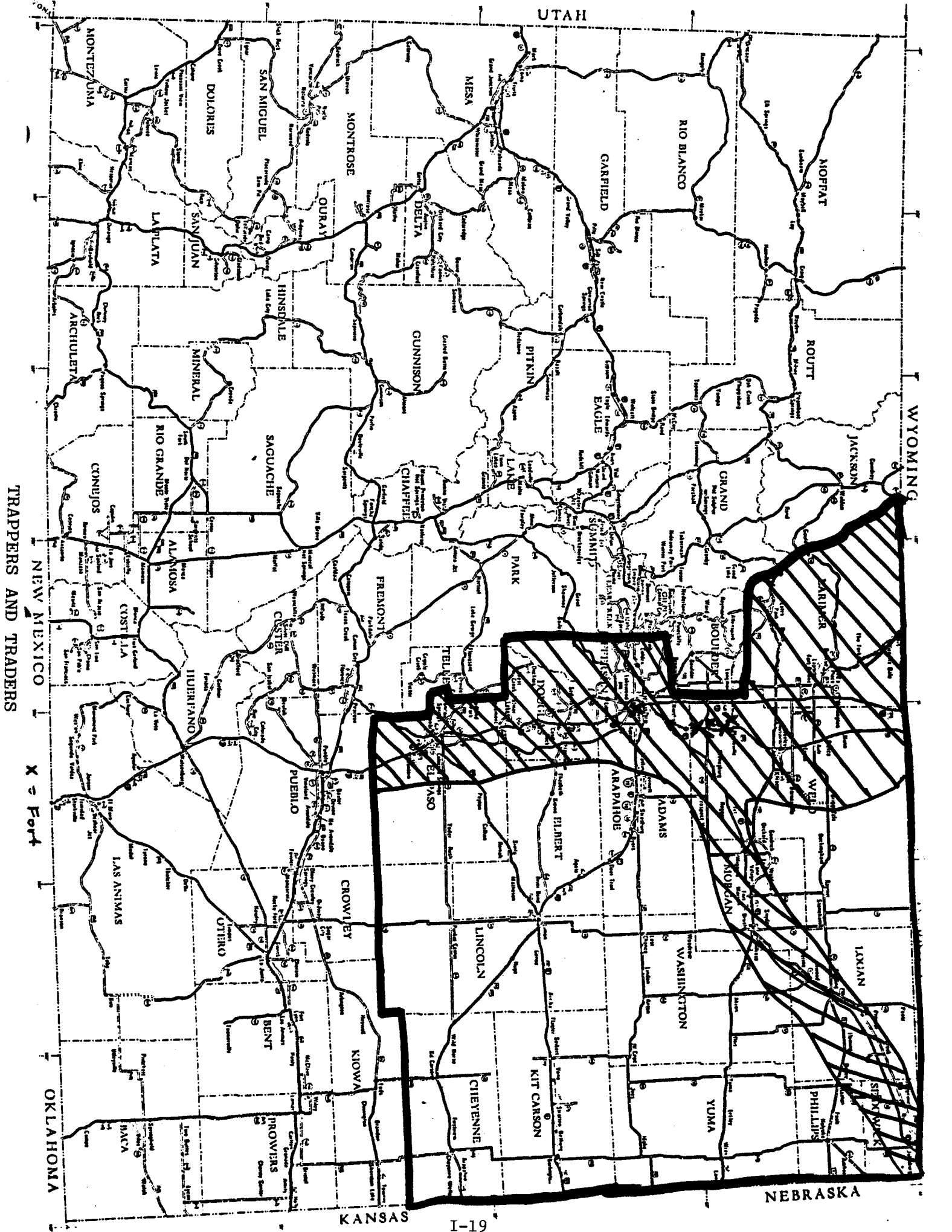
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TRAPPERS AND TRADERS

X = Fort

4. THE GOLD RUSH AND TERRITORIAL PERIOD, 1859-1876NARRATIVE

The discovery and utilization of Colorado's mineral wealth was the single most important factor in the state's early history and that of the plains region. Gold brought thousands of people to the Rockies, many of whom stayed on and peopled the area. Those who stayed but failed at mining were responsible for the development of early ranching and farming on the plains. Their presence led to the spread of a transportation network and in many ways the front range and plains became the cradle of Colorado statehood. All these things came about because the mountains held treasure chests of gold, silver, and other minerals.

The gold of Colorado's Rockies was known before the rush of 1859. As early as 1806 and 1807, trappers reported finding gold in the streams. Little interest was paid to these discoveries. By 1858, the situation had changed. Continued reports of gold along the front range sparked the curiosity of William Green Russell to prospect the area in that year after he had found gold in Colorado during 1850 on his way to California. Russell and his party started their search at the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River. The summer began to slip by without finding any gold so the search spread out until placer deposits were found at Dry Creek. During that summer other parties also reached Cherry Creek. A group from Lawrence, Kansas, arrived and located Montana City near the Dry Creek finds. They soon realized that the gold supply was exhausted and relocated to Cherry Creek where they founded St. Charles. Russell's group also returned to Cherry Creek and set up Auraria on the opposite bank from St. Charles. Hearing news of the gold in the West, William H. Larimer, a professional town promoter, moved to Cherry Creek from Leavenworth, Kansas. Upon arrival, Larimer discovered the best townsites had already been claimed. Not to be defeated, he and his associates bought out the local representatives of St. Charles and renamed the site Denver City in honor of Kansas Territorial Governor James Denver.

While this excitement was going on along Cherry Creek, other prospectors and town promoters were at work at the mouth of Fountain Creek Canyon. They found traces of gold and established Colorado City not only for mining but also as a supply and layover point for the expected influx of travelers that would be sure to come once news of gold spread around the Mideast.

During the winter of 1858-1859, the Mississippi Valley was locked in the depths of financial depression; the Panic of 1857, the news of a gold discovery found an eager audience. Merchants along the Missouri River, farm boys of the area and others all saw in Pike's Peak gold their chance to get rich. By the spring of 1859, as many as 100,000 people were ready to risk travel across the Great Plains for their opportunity at finding the yellow metal. Merchants in towns such as Leavenworth did what they could to encourage this boom psychology by having guidebooks written, often by those who had

never been west of the Missouri River. These volumes were read and reread by those anxious to go to Colorado.

During the spring and summer of 1859, thousands poured west to the Rockies, most to find disappointment and chaos. Some chose to stay, but most joined the "go-backer" movement, a reverse migration. Those people proclaimed Pike's Peak gold to be a hoax and cursed all involved in promoting the rush. The individuals who stayed did so feeling that even if they couldn't find gold, Colorado was a good place for them to make a new life. They sought business opportunities and built an ordered society out of the residue of the 1859 rush.

One of the first problems attacked by the early Coloradans was that of government. When gold was first found in the South Platte's tributaries, the land was part of two jurisdictions; south of the 40th Parallel was Kansas Territory and north of the line was Nebraska Territory. Both governments were headquartered on the far side of the Great Plains, at least two weeks travel from the gold fields. To rectify this problem, in 1859 Coloradans began petitioning Congress for territorial status. They proposed the Territory of Jefferson, and then in a more grandiose scheme declared themselves to be the state of Jefferson. Elections were held, and Robert Steele was chosen as Governor of Jefferson and delegates were sent to Congress. The national lawmakers refused to recognize Jefferson but finally in February, 1861, Congress created Colorado Territory, largely because of the activities of front range boosters and a need for organized government. William Gilpin was made Territorial Governor. Other Territorial officers included treasurer, marshal and judges. A legislature was created for local laws and to help administer the area. Because the nation was plunged into a Civil War only a few weeks after Colorado Territory was created, the officers chosen were picked because they were loyal Unionists and Republicans. During the War, because of the large number of Southerners in the gold fields, Confederate flags appeared more than once. Gilpin pressed the legislature and had strict loyalty oath laws enacted.

Despite these problems of government, the area's residents, especially in Denver, Colorado City, and near Fort Collins, sought to create a permanent settlement at the foot of the mountains. Denver was particularly active in this effort, realizing it had no gold to attract people. Denverites quickly adopted a policy of being the commercial, business and supply center for the mountain mining camps. To do this, the boosters had to encourage farming, trading and other activities on the plains. To a lesser degree this same strategy was attempted at Colorado City. Out of this early period, patterns of the future for Colorado's plains began to emerge, and the area became the cradle of the state.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1806 | James Purcell reports gold in South Platte.  |
| 1850 | Russell finds gold on Ralston Creek.         |
| 1853 | Thomas Fitzpatrick reports gold in the area. |
| 1858 | Russell party finds gold at Dry Creek.       |

- 1858            Lawrence party founds St. Charles.  
                  Russell party founds Auraria.  
                  Larimer founds Denver.  
                  Gold found in Colorado City and the town  
                  of Colorado City is founded.
- 1859            100,000 rush to Pike's Peak gold fields.  
                  State of Jefferson holds election.
- 1861            Congress establishes Colorado Territory.  
                  William Gilpin made first Territorial Governor.
- 1860-1865      Denver and Colorado City develop as trade centers  
                  for mining camps.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme can be found in limited areas along the front range. Sites such as the Robert Steele House-- Golden or the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte, Ralston Creek and Colorado City are well known. However, because of the transitory nature, semi-permanent construction techniques and later development of the region, many of the earliest evidences of the gold rush were obliterated.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Placer Mining Sites, Trails

Structures include: Assay Office, Bank, Corral, Commercial Building, Government Building, Log Cabin, Stable

Districts include: Mining District

Materials include: Wagon/cart

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

Beyond a doubt, the most written on and studied topic of Colorado history at this point in time is the 1859 gold rush and its impacts. Every general history of the state devotes some space to this phenomenon and Athearn, The Coloradans, or Ubbelohde, Benson and Smith, A Colorado History, serve as good starting points for any investigation of the fifty-niners. From there one should start looking for biographical studies of men such as Teller, John Evans or David Moffat as well as reminiscences of early area residents. Also to be consulted are books of early mining and mining

discoveries such as Fell's Ores to Metals, or Goodykootz's studies of mining camps. Nell Propst's Forgotten People serves as a good overview of the impact of the gold rush on areas other than the front range. Political developments and the drive for statehood are covered in detail in D. W. Hansel's "A History of the Colorado Constitution in the Nineteenth Century," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Colorado), Blanche Adams, "Colorado in the Civil War," and Eloie Dyer's, "Statehood Movement in Colorado," two Masters' Theses at the University of Colorado. Primary sources at Norlin Library, the Colorado Historical Society and Denver Public Library contain information pertinent to this theme. Also, the Rocky Mountain News and other early newspapers follow the day-to-day doings on these first Anglo-Coloradans and also give excellent accounts of movements for territorial statehood status. However, they are biased, and these leanings should be taken into account when using the newspapers.

#### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the number of resources that once existed or may have existed that are associated with this theme. There is a great likelihood that a total will never be arrived at because many resources, such as the Russell diggings, have been developed, redeveloped, and paved over by later generations. Also, the psychology of the late nineteenth century West--that anything that was old or "uncivilized" (pioneerish) was bad--led to destruction of many of the resources. However, some such as the Robert Steele House or John Evans House still exist and have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Condition of resources varies from destroyed to preserved.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Representative campsite of a prospecting party.
- \*Representative placer mining site along the front range that dates to the gold rush era.
- \*Representative early commercial and/or residential "tent" structures.
- \*Representative example of early gold exchange facility  
(in situ).

#### Future Needs

Surveys specifically to find on-the-ground evidences of the gold rush in Colorado should be undertaken at some future date, but should be given very low priority due to extensive documentary evidence and massive destruction of sites that has taken place over the past 120 years. The possibility of finding other unrecorded sites is very low because of these problems. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of both the historian and historic archaeologist and would be very costly due to the large amounts of excavation work that would be needed.

## Important Resources

Because of the lack of probable sites that have not been recorded, each site should be considered important. Also, because of the tremendous significance of the Colorado gold rush in state and regional history, each site clearly associated with this theme is important. Further, sites that could explain or substantiate the role of ethnic groups and/or minorities in the gold rush is important.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, remain that can explain the early gold discoveries in Colorado?
2. What resources, if any, remain that can explain the role of minorities and/or women in the Colorado gold rush?
3. What resources remain that can help explain the role of mineral exploitation in the early growth of Colorado?
4. What resources remain that explain or substantiate theories about early government and/or political developments in Colorado.
5. What resources, if any, explain the role of promotion in the development and spread of the Colorado gold rush?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Assay Office, Bank: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to make historic use, dimensions, methods, and materials of construction readily apparent.

Corral: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to make dimensions, method of construction and function readily apparent.

Commercial, Governmental Building: should be in historic use location and have enough physical integrity to make dimensions, functions, and material and method of construction readily apparent.

Log Cabin: should be in situ and have enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, method and dates of construction readily apparent.

Placer Mining Sites: should not have experienced surface disturbance and, if possible, should have historic use tools in situ.

Town/City: see urban context for evaluation standards.

Trail: ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.



Wagon/Cart: should remain operable or at least have enough parts left to make method and motive power for operation readily apparent.

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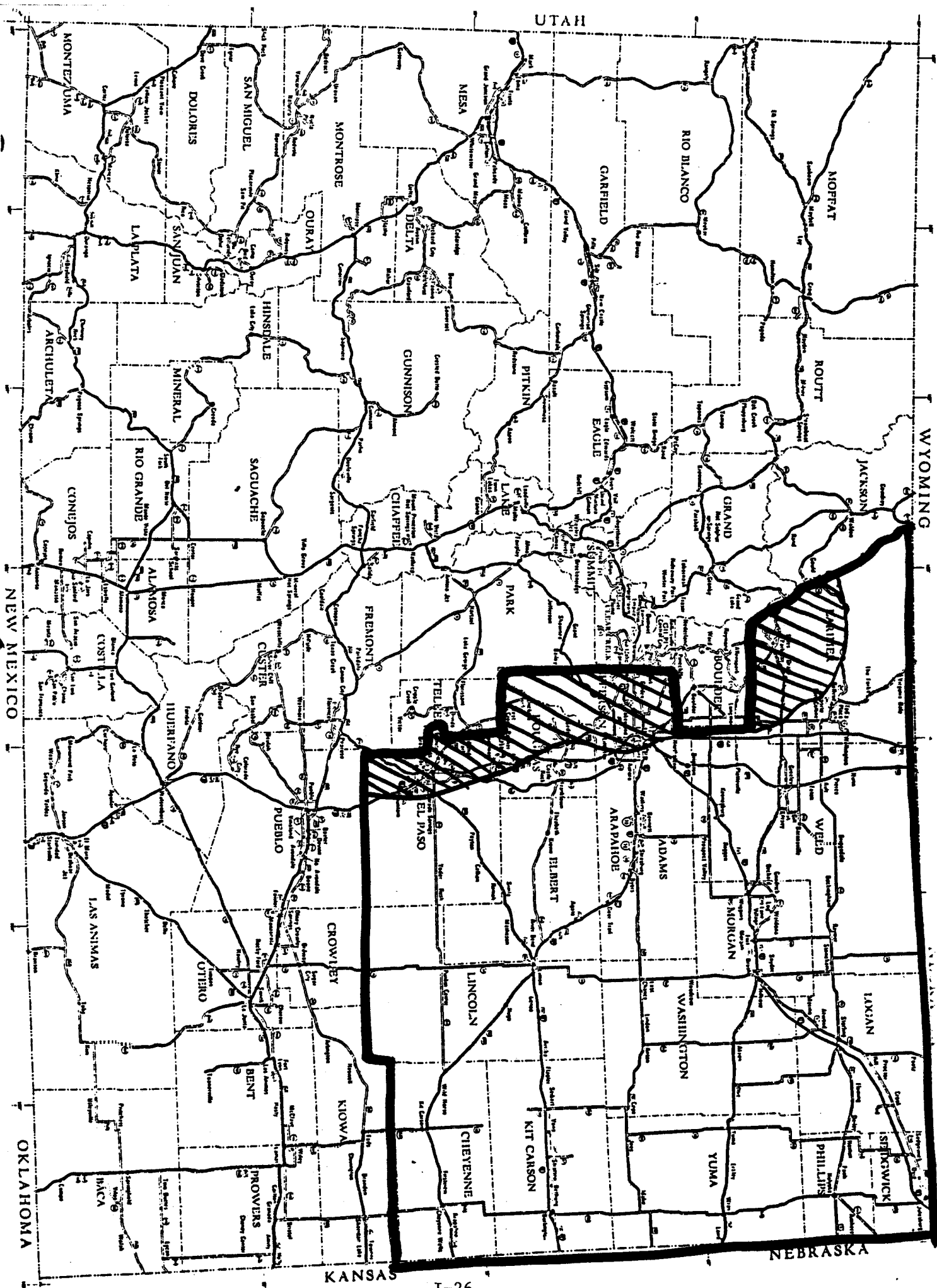
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# THE GOLD RUSH AND AFTER



5. YEARS OF CONFLICT, 1860-1869NARRATIVE

The Indians of Colorado's plains, the Pawnee, Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapahoe, accustomed to Anglo-Americans coming and going through the region since the 1820s, thought little about the influx of anglos in 1859 and 1860. During the fur trade era the region's Amerindians had become dependent on American goods for survival, especially iron products. During the 1850s, government annuities supplied their needs, but by 1859 these giveaways had almost stopped. Many reports from the gold rushers told of Indians begging and starving along the trail. Their needs were not satisfied by the occasional handouts and they soon found it more profitable to attack freight wagons and small parties of travelers. The stock herds kept at stage stations and ranches also enticed Indian raids. These activities continued with varying intensity for the rest of the 1860s.

To try to prevent violence, federal authorities sought to treat with the plains natives in 1861. The Treaty of Fort Wise, which set aside reservations for the Cheyenne and Arapahoe along the Arkansas River, was the product of these negotiations. Four years later, Territorial Governor Alexander C. Hunt held another round of talks with those tribes that resulted in further Indian relinquishments of lands. Many whites felt these two agreements were more than fair to the Indians and could not understand the hostilities that made travel on Colorado's plains risky until 1869.

Anglo-Coloradans, with a heritage of militia service, quickly organized military units for their own defense. By and large, these companies proved ineffective at controlling Indian depredations, and the Civil War made regular army troops scarce. During the summer of 1864, raids became so intense, especially along the South Platte River, that U.S. Army authorities closed the trail and Denverites, cut off from the rest of the nation, felt that Indians would soon be doing a war dance on Wynkoop Street. Governor John Evans sent Major Jacob Downing and the First Colorado Regiment up the South Platte Trail. On May 2, they fought Cheyenne warriors at the Battle of Cedar Creek and returned triumphant to Denver. The apparent smashing defeat Major Downing had dealt the Indians took only a few weeks to be reversed as Cheyenne revenge raids proved. By August, Denverites were at the end of their wits and sent General S. R. Curtis up the South Platte to reopen the trail. He was successful, but Anglo tempers were at the breaking point. Also, during the crisis of August, 1864, after the Hungate murders, the Third Colorado Volunteers, under Colonel John M. Chivington, had been mustered into service for 100 days. Chivington, reflecting general Anglo attitudes, felt the Indians were instruments of Satan to be smitten. Anxious to pay vengeance on the Cheyenne, the 3rd Colorados near the end of their enlistments, left Denver in November 1864 to attack the Indians. On the 28th of the month, cavalry scouts found the Cheyenne Village of Black Kettle's people on Sand Creek near Fort Lyon. During the night the camp was surrounded by Chivington's troopers and at first light they attacked, killing men, women and children.

The plains tribes, momentarily stunned by the Sand Creek setback, soon regrouped and vented their anger on Anglo settlements and outposts on the South Platte Trail from Julesburg to the present site of Greeley. While the Indians were successful in their goal of killing Anglos, they found it impossible to completely close the trail due to the presence of U.S. Army forts built during late 1864 to protect the trail. These were Camp Rankin (later known as Fort Sedgewick), Camp Tyler (later Fort Wardell, and even later Fort Morgan), Camp (later Fort) Collins and Camp Weld near Denver as a supply base. Platte Valley Station near present day Sterling was also converted to temporary military use. These posts were manned by Civil War veterans from both sides. Confederate prisoners of war were offered freedom in exchange for an oath of loyalty to the Union and sent as members of the U.S. Army to new frontier posts. These galvanized Yankees were the basic contingent of Fort Morgan's garrison and saw duty elsewhere on Colorado's plains. The Army's presence helped keep the area calm for two years after the 1865 uprisings were squashed.

In 1868, new violence started on the plains as Cheyenne war leader Roman Nose began raiding western Kansas and eastern Colorado during the spring. This was a result of his dissatisfaction with the Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek (1867) that removed all Cheyenne and Arapaho from Colorado to reservations in Wyoming and Oklahoma. To subdue Roman Nose, the Army sent none less than Colonel George A. Custer, who marched back and forth across Colorado's high plains during the summer without finding any hostile Indians. At the same time, Major George A. Forsyth's Volunteer Scouts were also in the field following Roman Nose's trail. By September, 1868, Forsyth's detachment had tracked the Indians to the Arikaree River in northeastern Colorado. On the 17th of that month, Roman Nose's band ambushed the army unit. The troops sought refuge on an island in the river and dug in for defense. For more than a week the group of 50 Anglos held off over 500 warriors. During the battles, Roman Nose was killed. On the 26th, the 9th U.S. Cavalry, a black unit, rescued Forsyth's command who had left five dead and many wounded. One of the dead was Lt. Frederick Beecher for whom the island and battle were named. A few months later, Custer finally got his battle, the massacre of Black Kettle's people on the Washita River in Oklahoma. This broke Cheyenne power but still a few were unwilling to give up.

During May, 1869, Tall Bull, one of the Cheyenne holdouts, led a group north from the reservation on to the plains of Colorado and Kansas. General Eugene E. Carr and the 5th U.S. Cavalry were sent out to capture the marauding Indians. The Fifth chased the natives throughout the area and on July 11, 1869, caught up with Tall Bull. Approaching the Indian encampment under cover of ravines and a dust storm, the troopers got within a mile of the camp before the charge was sounded, surprise was complete, and by the end of the day the last struggle for Colorado's plains, the Battle of Summit Springs, had ended the last Native American resistance to Anglo settlement.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1851 | Treaty of Fort Laramie creates a dividing line between north and south tribes and gives Colorado plains tribes an Agent. |
|------|--|

- 1861 Treaty of Fort Wise.
- 1864 Indian wars along South Platte Trail begin.  
 U.S. Army builds forts to protect the South Platte Trail.  
 Summer conflicts and Denver cut off from rest of the nation by Indian hostilities.  
 November, Sand Creek Massacre.
- 1865 Indians burn Julesburg, raid trails.  
 Treaty of the Little Arkansas.
- 1866-1867 Indian wars continue, but at lower level of intensity.
- 1867 Army starts to close Army forts.  
 Treaty of Medicine Lodge Creek.
- 1868 Battle of Beecher's Island.  
 Battle of the Washita.
- 1869 Battle of Summit Springs.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources attributed to this theme have been recorded throughout the region. Major resources such as military posts have been located and can be found on many maps. Battle sites and Indian encampments have been identified with varying degrees of certainty. As an example, the Beecher Island battleground has many monuments but, as of this point in time, no one has definitely found all the sites or components of the site of the Battle of Summit Springs. Also, the transitory and mobile nature of horse-mounted warfare makes only a limited number of sites extant.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Battle Sites, Campsites, Cemetery, Rifle Pits.

Structures include: Barracks, Forts, Fortifications, Palisades, Stables, Stockades.

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

Many professional historians and military history buffs have done studies of various phases of Colorado plains Indian warfare. Often these works help

further establish the idea that the region was part of the Wild West. Also, because of the large number of works available, it is relatively easy to trace the historiography and popular views of the Indian. Writers of the late nineteenth century, such as Cyrus Brady (Indian Fights and Fighters) portray the Native Americans as ruthless savages and those heroic soldiers who fought them as being morally right in attempting to "exterminate the vermin." Such attitudes prevailed into the twentieth century, but after World War II, attitudes changed to the point that Dee Brown (Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee) would completely reverse the roles of the two sides. Many other works have been completed including studies of the battles of Sand Creek, Beecher's Island and Summit Springs. Further, diaries and journals of Anglo participants in the battles have either been published or are available at local manuscript depositories, such as G. A. Custer's My Life on the Plains. Official Army reports of the battles and fort activities are available from the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Another good source of impressionistic information about the Indian problem is the Rocky Mountain News. Editor Byers always had an opinion, usually anti-Native, that he shared willingly with his audience. The wealth of information available about Colorado plains Indian warfare makes it easy for the researcher to find data on almost any question.

#### Number/Condition

The number and condition of resources associated with this theme once existed or may have existed should be estimated at well over 1,000. A large number of these resources were destroyed before they could be recorded such as the original Camp Collins which washed away in a flood during the 1860s. Also, because of the nomadic and transitory nature of Plains Indians and Indian warfare, many battles left no permanent changes on the land. However, many sites have been located by using documentary evidence such as battle logs. Also, many military history studies have examined and attempted to recreate or walk through battles and these provide useful information and interpretations of battles and events of Plains warfare.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Representative fort or military encampment associated with the period 1860-1870.
- \*Representative stage station or ranch associated with trail travel and Indian fighting.
- \*Clearly identified (discernable) route of march of an Army scouting party or detachment.
- \*Clearly discernable site of an Indian Pow-Pow or interracial conference.

#### Future Needs

Surveys specifically to find on the ground evidences of the battles and marches of Indian and U. S. Army detachments on the plains should be undertaken at some future date. However, these should be given low priority due

to the extensive documentary evidence available about the era and the low possibility of finding and recording previously unrecorded, clearly distinguishable sites within the region. Such an undertaking would require both military/western historians and historic archaeologists.

### Important Resources

Because of the small number of forts and other associated resources that once existed associated with this theme, each should be considered significant. However, the same does not apply for campsites, skirmish sites, lines of march and the like. Because large numbers of these once existed, great discretion should be applied when dealing with these. Sites that substantiate, refute or interpret present views of Indian warfare and the cruelty it entailed should be considered important as should those that explain the role of settler self-defense in the region. Also, those sites that can help explain or clarify actions during battles should be considered important.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can document or explain the cruelty of Plains Indian warfare?
2. What resources, if any, can explain the role of women or minorities in Plains Indian warfare?
3. What resources, if any, can help document or explain day-to-day army life at forts and on the march?
4. What resources, if any, can document or explain the Indian war making techniques and superstitions?

### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Barracks: should be in original location and retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, method and materials of construction readily apparent.

Battle Sites: should have experienced minimal or no surface disturbance and should present enough spent ammunition and material to make size of engagement and groups involved readily apparent.

Campsites: should be in situ and have experienced minimal or no surface disturbance so archaeological resource integrity is assured.

Cemetery: should be in original location and graves should not have experienced previous disturbance. Graves should be clearly marked in some manner.

Forts, Fortifications: should be in original location and should retain enough physical integrity to make function, methods, materials and dates of construction or modification readily apparent.

Palisades: should be in original location and retain enough physical integrity to clearly indicate function, dimension, material and method of construction.

Rifle Pits: should have experienced no or minimal surface disturbance and function should be readily apparent from observation.

Stables: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to ascertain function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction.

Stockade: see Palisades for standards.

Trail: ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.

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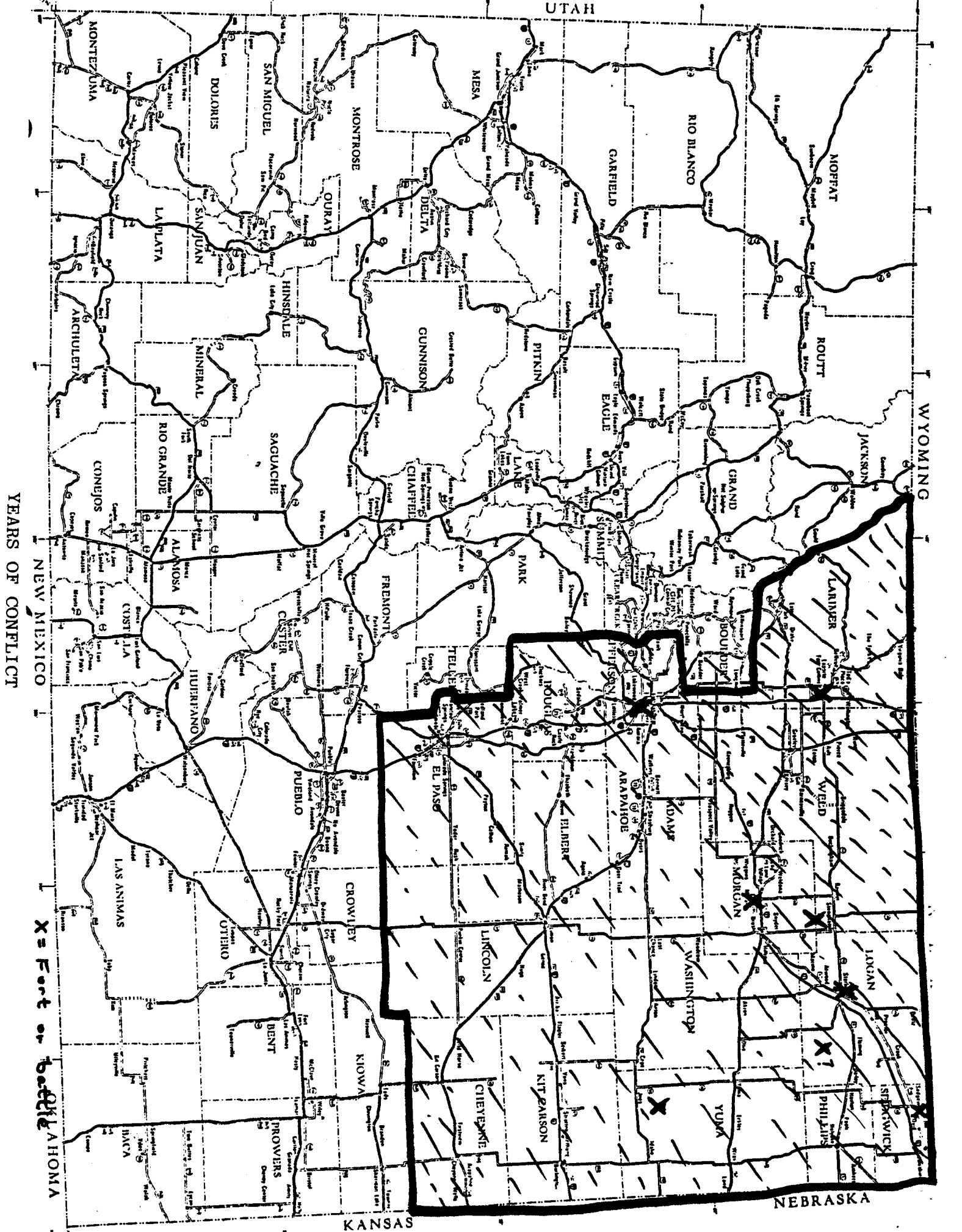
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YEARS OF CONFLICT

X = Fort on Border with ARIZONA

6. TRAILS AND TRANSPORTATION, 1859-1870NARRATIVE

The plains of Colorado offered early natural pathways to and from the mountains, and when Anglo-Americans came to the Rockies they took advantage of these. The first historic uses occurred with the era of fur trapping, and before the rush of 1859, three trails had become well established roads. One route cut off the Overland (Oregon) Trail near Julesburg and followed the South Platte River to the front range (later the South Platte Trail). Another extended along the front range and then to the Arkansas River and Santa Fe Trail (Old Cherokee Trail). The final route, laid out by the U.S. Army, followed the Smokey Hill River to Bent's Fort (Fort Lyon). Once the gold rush of 1859 took place, these roads and others quickly became highways of commerce across the sea of grass.

The most used trail that touched parts of northern Colorado's plains was the Oregon Trail, later renamed the Overland Trail. It crossed into Colorado near Julesburg and ran west for about 16 miles before turning northwest toward Lodgepole Creek in Wyoming. This route was used extensively from the 1840s to 1870s, and by 1859, had become a national highway to American settlements on the Pacific Coast. By continuing southeast along the South Platte from old Julesburg, a traveler could reach the Pike's Peak gold fields. Because of its connections with the Overland Trail and later use as far south as Fort Morgan by Overland stage companies, the South Platte Trail became the most used pathway to the Central Rockies until the late 1860s. The stage road from Fort Morgan ran west to near present-day Greeley and then northwest to Fort Collins and through Virginia Dale before rejoining the main Overland Trail in Wyoming. The stage companies using the trail were Russell, Majors, and Waddell, Holladay's Overland Stage and Wells, Fargo & Company.

The second most popular trail on the Colorado Plains during the 1860s was the Old Cherokee Trail. It was a branch of the Santa Fe Trail that left roadway east of Bent's Fort and headed west-northwest to the front range and then north to Cherry Creek. It was used earlier by fur traders and "Cherokees" enroute to California gold fields and in 1859-1860 by many Southerners during the gold rush. Eventually the corridor north and south along the front range became one of the most popular travel routes in the region during the late nineteenth century.

The Smokey Hill Road was another pathway used by many during the 1860s. It followed the Army's road west from Leavenworth, Kansas, to the present-day Cheyenne Wells. From there, travelers followed the Smokey Hill River northwest and finally crossed into Denver. Between present-day Limon and Denver, three different routes of the trail were used to shorten the trip and find usable water. These variants were known as the north, middle and south branches.

A fourth trail to Denver used during the early 1860s was the Republican

River Road following that stream into the plains of Colorado and then west to connect with the South Platte Trail. It was laid out by Russell, Majors and Waddell to use for stage service. This route was the least used and first abandoned of the early roads to Colorado.

Travel on all these trails had dangers that were readily accepted but often underestimated by the travelers. This was best typified by the gold rushers of 1859. Despite the readily available information about plains travel, many chose to ignore that advice. Supplies that experienced hands considered necessary for survival were left behind. All types of animal and people powered vehicles were used, wagons, buggies, handcarts, wheelbarrows, to cross the plains. The most foolhardy tried the crossing without benefit of a guide or waiting to form a wagon train. Once on the trail they soon discovered how ill-prepared they were to deal with basic travel problems. Fuel, food and water for stock and humans were items that nature did not supply on the plains in great quantities. Substitutes for fuel wood were found in the form of buffalo chips that, when dried, would be burned. Water on the arid plains was another problem for trail travelers. The streams, supplied by spring snowmelts, often dried up by late summer and a party had to go for days without the precious liquid. At places where rivers, natural wells and springs offered a constant water supply, enterprising people and/or stage companies built ranches and supply stations to cater to the overland travelers. In some cases, small communities developed at these sites, such as at Cheyenne Wells. Food supplies, the final critical factor in a successful trip, were harder to come by than fuel or water. As the number of people and livestock on a trail increased, especially during the gold rush, the available game and forage were depleted quickly. As a result, hunters and animals ranged further and further from the trails searching for food. At some points, this resulted in a trail being as much as twelve or fourteen miles wide. Even this did not always secure food. The travel diaries of many Fifty-Niners include tales of cannibalism or discoveries of bodies of people who starved to death. The Smokey Hill Road was nicknamed the "Starvation Trail" as the food supply problem became severe. Indian raids added another element of danger to travel on Colorado's plains.

Another difficulty these early travelers faced was the harsh climate of Colorado's plains. Leaving too early or late in the summer travel season often resulted in people perishing in blizzards. Midsummer meant endless days of hot sun and temperatures well over 100° F. Thunderstorms, hail, tornadoes and flash floods took their toll of human life as well. Heavy rain could wreck a wagon and its contents while turning the trail, if well worn, into a quagmire that could trap a team for hours or days. Riverbeds often hid pockets of quicksand that could engulf a person, animal or vehicle. By the late 1860s, as the Union Pacific and Kansas Pacific railroads inched their way toward the Rockies, trail trips became shorter and shorter with travelers going as far west as possible by train and then taking up the trails. By 1868, the South Platte Trail was all but abandoned as the Union Pacific reached Cheyenne, Wyoming, and wagon travelers re-oriented themselves into a north-south direction to take advantage of the railroad. This not only marked the end of heavy trail use on the Colorado plains, but further reinforced the idea of a front range travel corridor. In 1870, two railroads reached Denver ending the era of overland trail travel.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1820-1850 Trappers and traders use area rivers and valleys as travel routes that begins pattern for future.
- Santa Fe Trail sees annual use as highway to southwest.
- 1840s Oregon migration, trail cross through northern Colorado plains.
- 1850s Army use of trails and road building.
- 1859-1860 Mining rush leads to heavy use of trails on Colorado plains, goal is to get to Denver.
- First stage and wagon freight service opened to Denver.
- 1864; 1865 Indian raids close major trails to Denver.
- 1867 Union Pacific reaches Wyoming; trains cause wagon roads to get decreased business; trail from Cheyenne to Denver becomes popular.
- 1870 Denver connected to outside world by two railroads; overland trail era closes.

## LOCATION

Cultural resources related to this theme have been recorded only in limited numbers and scattered locations. This is because of the transitory nature of these activities. In a few areas such as old Cheyenne Wells, evidences of the trail travel era can be found such as caves used for shelter by travelers. However, many of the structures such as stage stations or ranches were either demolished or, if built of sod or adobe, did not survive due to weather. Also, the nature of trail travel and its demands for food and forage discouraged heavy traffic along many parts of the trail. Maps and descriptions of the trails are readily available.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Battle Site, Campsite, Springs, Trail, Wells/  
Waterhole

Structures include: Relay Station, Roadhouse, Stage Station,  
Stable, Way Station

Materials include: Harness and Saddlery Equipment, Stage Coach,  
Wagon, Cart

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

The trails and methods of transportation have been extensively studied, but much of this is dated. Recent scholarship on this topic has been rather limited, possibly because many of the earlier works were compendiums of every bit of information available about the trails. Three of the standard works are Jay Monaghan's The Overland Trail, Margaret Long's The Smokey Hill Trail, and Carla Neuhaus' "Transportation to Colorado, 1858-1869," a Master's Thesis at the University of Colorado. Also very helpful is Nell Propsts' Forgotten People, A History of the South Platte Trail. Beyond these are the general studies of Colorado history, such as Robert Athearn's The Coloradans, or on western transport such as Walker's The Wagonmasters, or Oscar Winther's Transportation Frontier. Many articles about trail travel and journals of people involved have been published or made readily available through microfilms. Further, guidebooks to the gold fields and the like are also available in microfilm, many of which are presently held by the University of Colorado's Norlin Library. Early Denver newspapers are valuable sources because they reported arrivals on the trails as well as any peculiar events during individual trips. Further, limited amounts of manuscript material are available at the Norlin Library in the Denver Public Library and the Colorado Historical Society. Further information can be gleaned from reports from the National Park Service on the Overland Trail and the Smokey Hill Road.

### Number/Condition

The present data base is insufficient to accurately determine the number, condition and types of resources associated with this theme that exist or one may have existed. While the routes of the major trails have been traced from documentary evidence, many of the associated resources have deteriorated to the point of nonexistence. Also, because trail activity, by its nature, was transitory and many times the routes were many miles wide and resources may have been scattered over a large area.

### Data Gaps

- \*Representative campsite of a traveling party along the established trails.
- \*Representative stage station/ranch along each major trail.
- \*Representative facilities of major companies that conducted stage or freight wagon operations.

### Future Needs

Surveys along the major trails should be conducted to identify any resources that might still exist. Such an effort should be given low priority because of the low possibility of finding significant resources and because of the extensive documentary evidence readily available on this theme. Any attempts to conduct these surveys should be made using comparative and aerial photography and the special skills of an historian

and historic archaeologist.

### Important Resources

Because of the large number of resources associated with this theme that have been or may be recorded in the future, not all can be considered important. Those that substantiate the role of transportation in the development of Colorado's early industries are important, as are those that became cores of later cities and towns. Sites that would substantiate or clarify the hardships and methods of travel on the plains would be important. The significance of the Colorado gold rush and overland travel to the Pacific Coast are beyond doubt, and resources associated with this part of the theme share in this importance.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on the methods of travel over the plains?
2. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on the hardships of plains travel?
3. What resources, if any, remain to demonstrate the problems native Americans caused to plains travelers?
4. What resources, if any, remain to clarify or modify the role of women or minorities in Colorado plains travel?
5. What resources, if any, remain to help demographic studies of plains travel?
6. What resources, if any, remain to clarify present interpretations of day-to-day life on plains trails?

### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Battle Site: should not have experienced extensive surface disturbance and enough material, such as spent ammunition, present to clearly identify the groups involved. May or may not include gravesites.

Campsite: any in situ site that shows no or minimal surface disturbance is considered important for research and interpretative purposes.

Cart: should have enough parts intact to make mode of operation, power and dimensions readily apparent.

Relay Station: should be in original location and have enough structures and materials left at the site to make function, method and materials of construction and dimensions readily apparent.

Roadhouse: same standards as Relay Station apply.

Springs: should have enough built remains to indicate historic use.

Stage Station: same standards as Relay Station apply.

Stables: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to make function, method and material of construction and dimensions readily apparent.

Trails: ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.

Way Station: same standards as Relay Station apply.

Wells/Waterholes: same standards as Springs apply.

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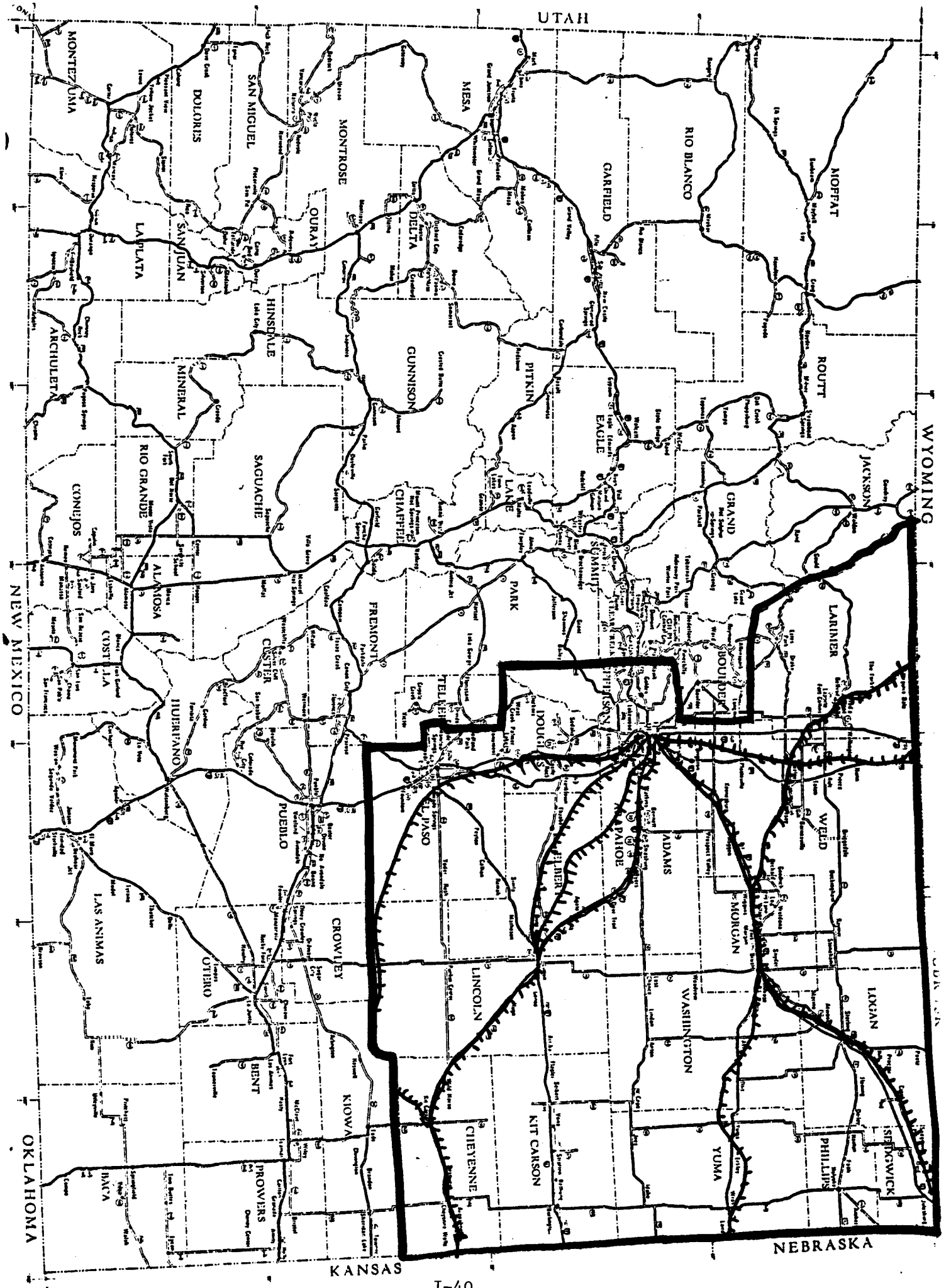
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In addition, consult the card catalog and Winther's Bibliography for additional sources.

TRAILS & TRANSPORTATION, 1859-1870





7. DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE RAIL NETWORK  
1865-1895

NARRATIVE

Colorado and the state's plains entered the railroad age together in 1867 when the Union Pacific mainline entered the area near Old Julesburg. While this began to alter transportation patterns and caused abandonment of the South Platte Trail, it did little to placate residents of towns such as Denver, who felt they should have their own railroad. As early as 1862, citizens of that town called for a rail line to be built to the community and beyond to Salt Lake City. These local booster efforts continued on throughout the late nineteenth century, but Denver and the region were always dependent on outside entrepreneurs to finance and construct their major railroads.

By 1869 and the finishing of Union Pacific, two other companies were making efforts to cross the region and connect Denver with the rest of the nation. These were the Kansas Pacific, building west from Kansas City, and the Denver Pacific, attempting to bridge the 100 miles between the Queen City and the Union Pacific transcontinental at Cheyenne. By the end of July, 1870, both projects were complete and the region started to grow rapidly. This was furthered as the Denver and Rio Grande Railway built south from Denver toward Colorado Springs and Pueblo, and the Colorado Central slowly moved up Clear Creek Canyon toward Georgetown and Silver Plume. A few years later, the Denver, South Park and Pacific, Denver and Boulder Valley and other companies were working on their own lines.

The Panic of 1873 slowed this rapid expansion during the mid years of that decade. However, by the end of the 1870s, not only were the nation's older companies expanding, but also others were moving toward the Rockies. Two of these, the Burlington and Missouri River, part of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy and the Rock Island Line (Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific), reached the front range by the early 1880s as the Union Pacific, by then owner of the Kansas Pacific, Denver Pacific and Colorado Central, built a new cut-off along the South Platte from Julesburg to LaSalle. Governor John Evans was building a line, the Denver and New Orleans, south along the front range to Pueblo and on toward Texas. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe entered into an agreement to serve Denver and then built its own line to the Colorado capitol.

These companies continued to grow throughout the 1880s, building branchlines and the like, but the rapid expansion and over expansion led to heavy debts. During 1893, as the nation slipped into a depression, the Colorado railroads found themselves unable to meet mortgage payments. One by one they went into receivership and by the end of the nineteenth century almost all of them had been reorganized or consolidated. Except for a few route adjustments and the building of interurbans around Denver and its suburbs, very little new rail construction was undertaken after the depression of the 1890s. During the period from 1900 to 1945, railroads continued to be important to the businesses, farms and commerce of the

plains, but as highways were built and auto ownership increased, the role of rail transport declined and their share of the area's traffic shrank. Despite this shift, the railroads had played a significant role in the economic and social development of Colorado's plains before 1945.

The availability of rail transportation during the late nineteenth century was seen as the key to economic growth by people of the era. If a town was on a rail line, its future was assured and to be left off meant nearly certain doom. This was true for Colorado plains communities. To further this, the Union Pacific, Burlington, Rock Island and Denver and Rio Grande were active in town promoting and land sales. Many got federal land grants to help finance construction and others had agents buy or claim land. These plots were then turned over to subsidiary land companies. Those operations publicized the area, telling of the vast lands available, the richness of these tracts and did what they could to promote Colorado's plains. They also offered credit for farmers to buy land, package fares and aid in getting farms started. Many of these same devices were used to promote towns along the lines. Most of these were platted by the land departments and located wherever the company felt it needed water, fuel, junction or section facilities. The towns, often named for investors or officers of the company involved such as Flagler, were usually ten to fifteen miles apart depending upon the topography and availability of water. The farm and town promotional efforts of the plains railroads did much to settle the region during the late nineteenth century.

The impacts that the early railroads had on regional growth, both population and economic, were extensive. The first decade of rail service to the region (1870-1880) has been labeled as the boom decade, as indeed it was. Population nearly trebled, dozens of new towns were founded, Denver began to develop into the commercial center of the Rocky Mountain West, and statehood was achieved. Beyond these dramatic changes, the presence of railroads made eastern Colorado part of national markets. No longer could farmers depend on exchanges to set prices that reflected local supply since railroads controlled many of the grain elevators and the growers were forced to accept whatever price they set. Yet ranchers could more easily send the stock to major markets such as Chicago. Also, the benefits and inventions of contemporary society were quickly disseminated. Railroads catered to tourists and helped stimulate growth of a vacation industry in the region. All these elements combined during the late nineteenth century to change the plains from wilderness to a settled area within a period of twenty years. For the Colorado plains, civilization indeed did ride west on the steamcars.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- 1862, 1864 Pacific Railroad Act passed establishing land grant system for many western rail lines.
- 1866-1869 Construction of first transcontinental, Union Pacific, which crossed extreme northeastern corner of Colorado.
- 1870 Denver Pacific and Kansas Pacific Railroads reach Denver.

- 1870-1873 Rapid expansion of the region's rail system, especially along the front range.
- 1870s Boom decade for the region.
- 1873 Panic of 1873 slows rail construction.
- 1876-1883 Renewed rail construction and new trunk lines reach Denver and front range.
- 1893 Panic of 1893 led to depression and reorganization for the region's railroads by 1900.
- 1900-1920 Interurban era.
- Railroads experience traffic boom with World War I traffic.
- Most of the region's railroads under federal control (United States Railroad Administration) during World War I.
- 1920-1945 Railroads continue to be important but lose significant share of passenger and freight markets to motor vehicles.
- 1940-1945 World War II traffic boom.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme have been and are likely to be recorded in scattered locations throughout the plains study area. Most of the trunk railroads followed traditional (wagon) paths and the major watercourses such as the Smokey Hill, Big Sandy and South Platte Rivers. Branchlines, spurs and cut-offs often were built in as nearly a straight line as possible, following topography to avoid heavy grades or bridges whenever possible. The final factor railbuilders often considered was to locate their lines through areas that showed potential for traffic or to connect existing towns. Resource types associated with terminals and service facilities are usually located within towns of the plains.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Structures include: Ash Pits, Bridges, Car Shops, Coal Chute, Culverts, Depot, Engine House, Freight House, Interlocking Towers/Plants, Loading Docks, Oil Fueling Facilities, Railroad Bed/Track, Section House, Siding/Side Track, Signals/Signal Tower, Switches and Switch Lamps, Tunnel, Water Tower/Standpipe

Districts include: Railroad Yards

Materials include: Locomotives (Diesel, Electric, Steam), Railroad Cars

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

Railroads and their development in and out of Colorado are second only to mining in the amount of historical writing done on them. Nearly every facet of rail history is covered from the story of day labor during construction to the titanic struggles of Harriman, Gould and others to control the northeastern Colorado/Denver markets. Every major company and most minor ones, have had studies done such as Athearn's Rebel of the Rockies (D&RCW) or Overton's Burlington Route. The machinations of capitalists are followed by Grodinsky's Transcontinental Railroad Strategy. The best single source of information is Edgar Reigel, The Story of Western Railroads. Another useful reference is Tivis Wilkins' Colorado Railroads, a chronological summary of rail building and abandonment. Beyond the published books are numerous theses and dissertations about railroads, builders, railroad impacts and the like. Articles in scholarly and popular journals also are abundant and often provide hard to find information. Newspapers of the region offer easy paths for researchers to follow when looking for information about the need for railroads, unfair rates, catastrophes and the like. Manuscript and photograph collections at Denver Public Library, Colorado College, the University of Colorado, the Colorado Historical Society, the Nebraska Historical Society and the Union Pacific Headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, both have immense value to researchers of rail history and lore. The staff, especially Robert Richardson of the Colorado Railroad Museum (Golden), is another untapped source of information about the state's railroads. Also useful in this study of this theme are the Works Progress Administration town files that specify the connections between the urbanized areas and rail companies.

### Data Gaps

- \*Representative terminal and service facilities for steam locomotives.
- \*Complete inventories of remains along abandoned railroads of the region.
- \*Representative studies of "standard" architecture for rail structures.

### Future Needs

At some future date a comprehensive survey of existing and abandoned railroads of the region should be undertaken to ascertain the quantity, type and condition of pre-1945 railroad facilities left in the study area. However, this should be given low priority because of the vast quantities of historic documentation available on the state's rail history. Any survey should utilize the special skills of the historian and historic archaeologist.

### Important Resources

Because of the large number of resources associated with this theme

and the relative importance of railroads to the region's development, the number of important resources that substantiate this role is very large. However, since many are deteriorated, only the ones in good condition or of undisputable significance, such as for associations with important railroads, should be given special consideration. Also, those sites that are representative of outstanding or unique engineering features that represent Colorado's leadership role in rail design evolution should be considered important.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, remain that provide information about the role of railroads in the socioeconomic development of Colorado's plains?
2. What resources, if any, remain that provide information about engineering and technological developments on Colorado plains railroads?
3. What resources, if any, remain to clarify the relationship of railroads and the development of a regional transportation network?
4. What resources, if any, remain to clarify the role of entrepreneurial talent and competition in the growth and operation of Colorado railroads?
5. What resources, if any, remain to clarify or verify the role of ethnic groups, minorities and women in the building and operation of plains railroads?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Ash Pits: should not be fully reclaimed and be associated with other extant sites/resources such as rail yards.

Car Shops: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to make function and dimensions readily apparent.

Coal Chute: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to make function and method of operation readily apparent.

Depot: same evaluation standards as Car Shops.

Engine House: same evaluation standards as Car Shops.

Freight House: same evaluation standards as Car Shops.

Interlocking Tower: same evaluation standards as Coal Chute.

Loading Docks: same evaluation standards as Car Shops.

Locomotives: should be operable or have enough of the original mechanical parts and running gear intact to make method of operation readily apparent.

Oil Fueling Facilities: same evaluation standards as Coal Chute.

Railroad Bed: should have enough physical integrity left to make historic function, dimensions and use readily apparent.

Railroad Cars: same evaluation standards as Locomotives.

Section House: same evaluation standards as Car Shops.

Siding: same evaluation standards as Railroad Bed.

Signals: same evaluation standards as Coal Chute.

Switches: same evaluation standards as Railroad Bed.

Tunnel: should have enough physical integrity to make dimensions and method of construction readily apparent.

Water Tower: same evaluation standards as Coal Chute.

Yards: same evaluation standards as railroad beds.

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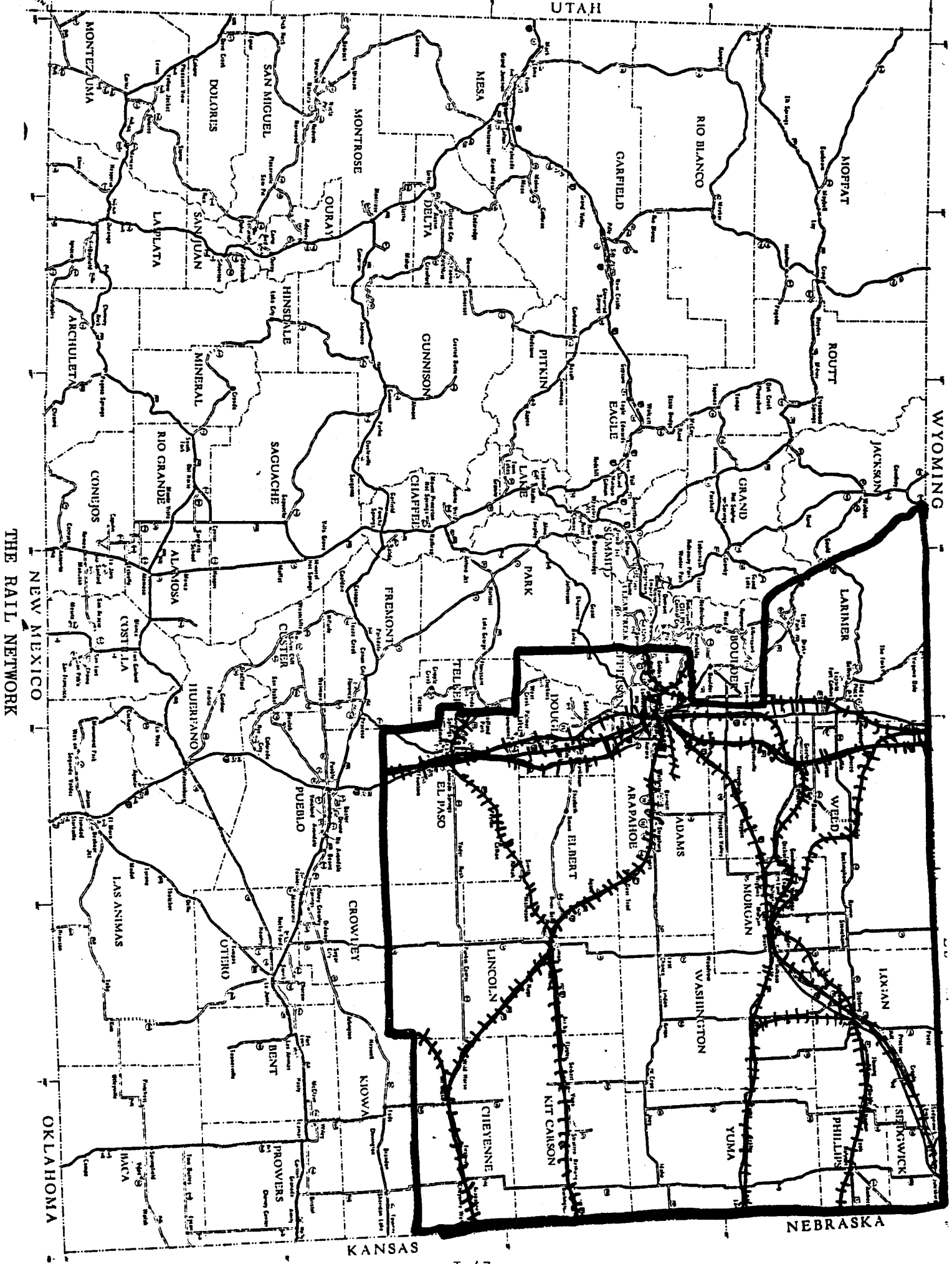
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THE RAIL NETWORK

8. THE URBAN FRONTIER, 1860-1900NARRATIVE

City promoters and builders, such as William Larimer or Nathan Meeker, arrived in Colorado with the first 1858 prospectors, often as members of a mining group. From then until the twentieth century, town speculation and boosting became a profession practiced by many on the Colorado plains. Individuals and companies, railroads and others all platted cities. These centers of civilization, while all proclaiming themselves to be the "Athens of the West," "Gateway to the Rockies," or whatever, prospered to varying degrees. Some failed totally, others grew slowly and still others matured into cities. Whatever their success rate the towns of Colorado's plains did a great deal to help pioneer the region and almost any time settlers arrived in a given locale there was a town founded to meet the commercial and entertainment needs. Colorado's eastern plains were indeed an urban frontier.

The seeds of that frontier took root in 1858 when Denver, Auraria and other towns were founded. The competition between town companies started at that same time and this set another pattern, urban rivalry, that continued throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The contending towns, such as Denver and Auraria, each tried to attract settlers and businesses. In the case of those two towns, because of a lack of stable population and fears of losing residents to other communities, the two united in 1860 under the name Denver. The rivalries often involved pursuit of state, territorial or county facilities and with such plums available, often there were no limits on what one community might do to or about its competition. Accusations and countercharges flew, night raids to steal county records and thereby capture the county seat, and much mudslinging all took place as towns tried to outdistance their competition. Especially helpful in such campaigns were frontier newspaper editors. Not only were they businessmen but also spokesmen for their communities using editorials to encourage promotional efforts, attract new businesses or citizens and criticize neighboring towns. One thing that these scribes often pointed out was the lack of law and order either at home or elsewhere.

Frontier lawlessness was one of the biggest problems the early town-builders faced, especially in the earliest years of settlement. To cure the problem, vigilante committees were often formed. These groups, usually made up of a town's leaders, did away with many of the usual legal trappings and simply took the guilty party out and either banished them or hanged them. The vigilante period disappeared as effective government took over, although some towns never experienced such lawless days. Even after the establishment of law enforcement services, some towns, such as Greeley, experienced times when tempers overruled civil authority and accused killers were taken by mobs and lynched. Such outbreaks of violence were rationalized by the local populations as the drive to be civilized which spurred the local citizenry on.



While population of a town constantly changed, goals were set and accomplished to varying degrees. After a town government was firmly established, other service and social facilities were undertaken such as starting schools, erecting public buildings and cleaning up of vice. These were points of civic pride and helped towns have an air of permanence that was much desired. To further this spirit, some of the larger Colorado plains communities supported colleges and universities. Denver, with Denver University and later Regis, Colorado Women's College, and Loretto Heights college led the field. The University of Colorado was established in Boulder. Colorado Springs boosters encouraged and helped fund Colorado College while Fort Collins and Greeley eagerly sought the State Agricultural College (later CSU). Greeley lost out but eventually became the home of Colorado Normal School, later Colorado State Teachers College (UNC). In addition to support of higher education, local boosters funded opera houses, libraries and other cultural facilities to give an air of civilization to their communities.

While these basic goals to establish permanence and respectability were constant from town to town, the location of the towns were influenced by a number of factors including economics and access to transportation facilities. Some towns along the foothills corridor such as Denver started as mining camps, but as the minerals were exhausted, became supply and business centers. Some even developed commercial hinterlands on the plains and in the mountains if transportation was available. Travel systems spawned their own towns. Natural springs, river crossings and other things that made roadhouses profitable in a certain location also formed cores for cities to grow around, such as at Old Julesburg. Later, railroads also influenced the development of towns through the location of junctions (Limon), shops and terminals (Sterling), or even waterstops. Rail companies including the Union Pacific, Burlington Route, Rock Island, Santa Fe and others promoted towns along their lines on land grants they received from the federal government (Pacific Railroad Act 1862, 1864). The existence of army posts caused the development of towns such as Fort Collins and Fort Morgan because the troops not only offered protection but also a ready market for many goods and services. Ranching influenced the founding of towns near ranch headquarters such as at Iliff and Karval or along cattle trails such as at Bovine or Trail City. In farming areas towns grew at centers for trade and grain shipments along the railroad such as at Watkins or Strasburg.

In nearly all these towns, settlers tried to recreate what they had left behind in the Midwest or East. Schools, churches, hotels, barrooms, and other things all appeared in the communities, many built as replicas of what they left behind, probably to ease the psychological shock of relocation. The phenomena of the rapid establishment of towns on Colorado's plains, no matter why they were settled or how large, caused the pioneering and civilization of the region much more rapidly than would have otherwise happened because it attracted more settlers and gave a sense of stability.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1858            First towns founded.

- 1860s            Towns founded along major trails and at forts.
- 1870-1885       Towns founded along railroads.
- Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins grow rapidly.
- Cattle and agricultural towns develop.
- 1890s            Dry years and Panic of 1893 causes some small plains towns to be abandoned.
- 1900-1920       Final efforts at founding and promoting new towns as a result of dryland farming (see Dryland Farming theme).

### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme are scattered throughout the plains region. Size and complexity vary from abandoned townsites and individual buildings to currently in use towns, commercial districts and buildings. The only discernable pattern to the location of these resources is along present and historic transportation routes. Towns not on roads, railroads or highways were randomly located by their founders as speculative ventures without any particular rationale.

### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Park

Structures include: Bank, Barroom, Bordello, Church, Commercial Building, Dwelling (single or multiple family), Fraternal Halls, Gambling Hall, Government Buildings (State, County, City), Grain Elevator, Hotel, Railroad Depot, School, Theatre/Opera House

Districts include: Residential, Commercial, University/College.

### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

#### Historical Documentation

The history of cities and towns on the Colorado plains has been studied by numerous writers over the years. Of course, Denver, as the state capital and commercial center, has been the most extensively examined, but other communities have also fallen under the historian's watchful eye. The urban studies also include general views such as Duane Smith's Rocky Mountain Mining Camps, or Schaeffer's Ghost Towns of the Colorado Plains. For studies of Denver, the most reliable, but highly interpretative, is Lyle Dorsett's The Queen City. More detailed, but covering a shorter time period, is Jerome Smiley's History of Denver. Of interest, but limited use, is General Larimer's reminiscences of the founding of Denver. Because Denver has been carefully examined, books, articles or theses are available on almost every part of the Queen City's history from banking to railroad building. Fort Collins and Colorado Springs, while not as thoroughly examined as Denver, have been the subjects of many books such as Marshall Sprague's Newport in the

Rockies (Colorado Springs) or Guy Peterson's Fort Collins: The Past, The Town. Many reminiscences are available either through manuscript collections or in magazines such as The Trail. The archives of the Colorado Historical Society and its extensive newspaper collection, the Western History Department of Denver Public Library, Norlin Library at the University of Colorado and the Colorado College Library are all useful for studies of this theme. City, county and municipal records which are readily available should be consulted for work on subdivisions, political activity and other things. Local newspapers, as spokesmen of their communities, offer good accounts, although slanted, of their locales.

Over one hundred surveys have been conducted in the counties herein referred to as the Colorado Plains. Most of these have been conducted in the towns and cities of the region. These focus on various things such as mainstreets, neighborhoods and the like. Also, many have been undertaken for federal urban renewal projects in the cities. Another useful source of survey type information is the Works Progress Administration town files completed during the 1930s. The other surveys date from the mid-1960s to the present.

#### Number/Condition

While the present data base and surveys are not complete enough to ascertain the exact number of resources associated with this theme that exist or once may have existed, a reasonable estimate would be in the thousands. The number left associated with early urbanization has been drastically reduced in the period since World War II as many of the region's towns entered a redevelopment phase. Further, vandals, souvenir hunters and weather have degraded the resources once available. Many resources have been preserved or restored such as Ninth Street in Denver.

#### Data Gaps

\*Accurately recorded locations of all towns and cities that once existed in the region.

#### Future Needs

The Main Street survey program and other inventories of cities and towns in the region are necessary to identify what resources remain from this era. Also, a survey to locate the sites of all ghost towns in the region should be undertaken. To accomplish these tasks, the special skills of the historian and aerial photo interpreter are necessary because many of the ghost towns have been plowed under or returned to range lands and could best be found by aerial photography.

#### Important Resources

Because of the large number of sites associated with this theme that still exist only the most representative examples should be considered important except to serve for locational and spatial distribution studies. Communities that substantiate the roles of railroads, agriculture (farming and ranching), mining, and other economic activities in the spread of the

urban frontier on the Colorado plains are important. Also important are those towns that represent various types of city plans or fabrics that developed on the plains and explain the role of the town promoter. Those that could further present explanations of the urban frontier and town building in the region are also important as informational resources.

Because resources with this theme are probably closely associated with the National Register criteria of local significance, town or county preservation constituencies should be consulted in assessing the significance of sites. However, after further surveys, especially to determine location and/or remains of all towns that ever existed in the study area, are conducted, a sufficient region-wide sample size should be determined by the Colorado Preservation Office.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on the spatial distribution of towns on the plains?
2. What resources, if any, remain that provide information on the relationships between economic activities and town growth on the plains?
3. What resources, if any, remain to explain to the investigator the role of town promoters on the Colorado plains?
4. What resources, if any, remain to explain the reasons why some towns prospered and others failed?
5. What resources, if any, remain that explain typical and atypical town planning features?
6. What resources, if any, remain that might present information relative to understanding the day-to-day town life of the era?
7. What resources, if any, explain the spread of public utilities in urban areas of the plains?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Bank: should be in original or historic use location and maintain enough external physical integrity to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Barroom: same standards for evaluation as Bank.

Bordello: same standards for evaluation as Bank.

Church: same standards for evaluation as Bank.

Commercial Building/District: should be in original location, enough

original or historic use structures should remain to convey sense of fabric and purpose of the area.

Government Buildings: same standards for evaluation as Bank.

Grain Elevator: same standards for evaluation as bank.

Park: original boundaries, landscaping and any manmade features should be readily apparent.

Railroad Depot: same standards for evaluation as bank and, if possible, still be associated with railroad tracks or roadbed.

Residential Block/District: same standards for evaluation as commercial block.

School: same standards of evaluation as Bank.

Theatre/Opera House: same standards for evaluation as Bank.

University/College: same standards for evaluation as commercial block.

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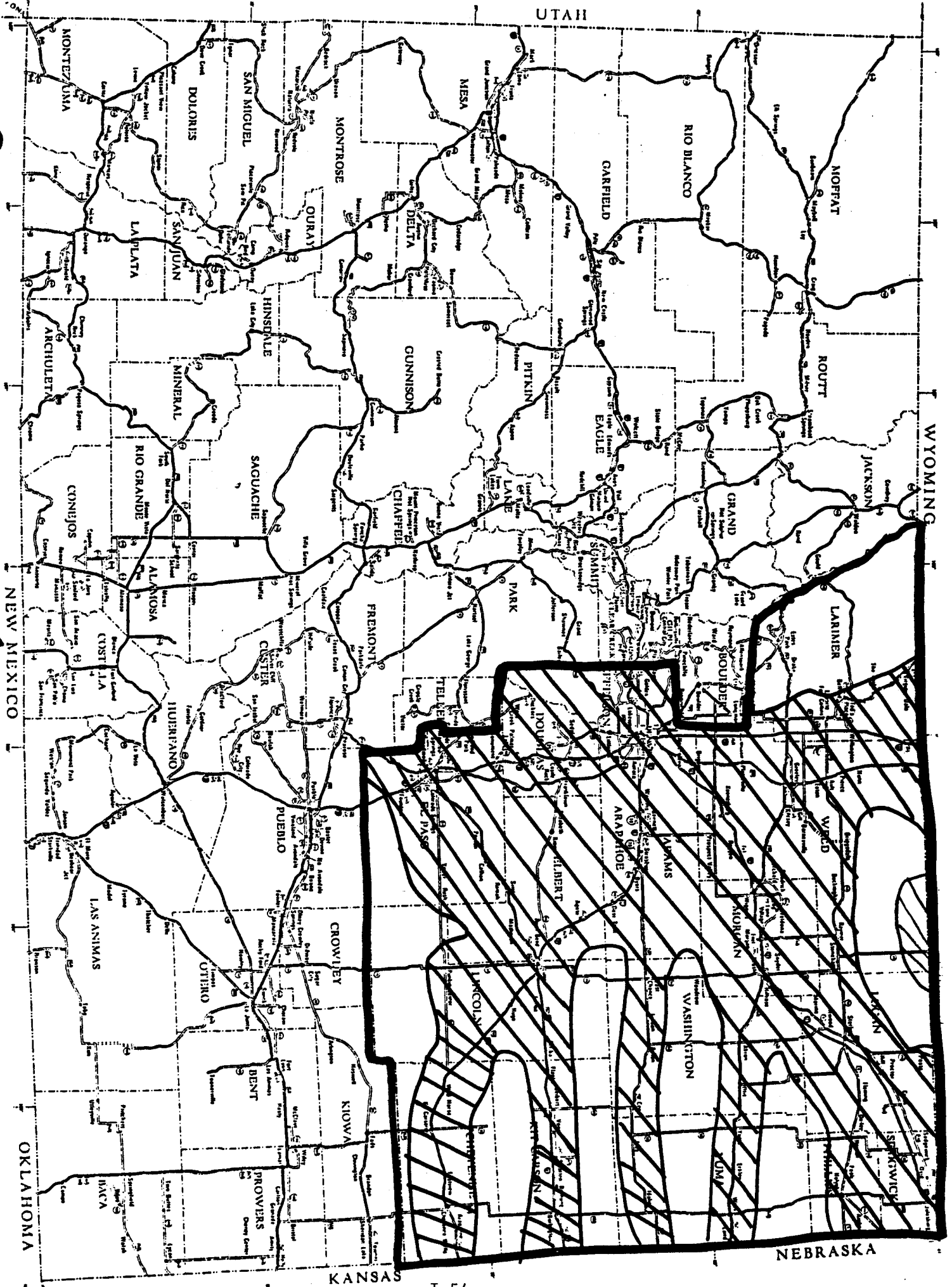
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THE URBAN FRONTIER



9. COLONIES AND TOWNS, 1868-1920NARRATIVE

1870 was a very important year in the development of Colorado's plains agriculture. Indian removal and easier transportation made Colorado's plains more attractive to prospective settlers as did earlier discoveries about the use of irrigation. The last major Indian conflict had been resolved with the crushing defeat of Tall Bull at Summit Springs in 1869. No longer would Native Americans block settlement. That same year saw completion of the Union Pacific across Southern Wyoming to Utah as well as major work on the Denver Pacific and Kansas Pacific, making access to the region much easier. Those new transport routes also advertised the lands along their respective lines.

Many of the post-1870 emigrants to the region came as members of groups. These parties were commonly referred to as colonies or colony towns. Their longevity varied from total failure to success. Although almost all were based on an agrarian economy, each one espoused goals and purposes beyond farming. Some were founded for religious reasons, others as temperance organizations and a number to provide homes for individuals of similar regional or national background. The idea of colony settlements dated to before the Civil War and found new vigor during the era of Reconstruction. The years 1868 and 1869 saw many organizers going about assembling members, securing land in Colorado and preparing for the mass migration. The decade of the seventies witnessed the fruition of these plans, but by 1900, the colonies had all but disappeared in the larger wave of agricultural settlement that had swept across Colorado's plains.

By far the most famous colony in Colorado was the Union Colony of Greeley. During 1869, Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune and Nathan C. Meeker, a heavily moralistic reformer, worked to organize the colony of Colorado, soon renamed the Union Colony. Meeker sought to found and nurture a farmers' Utopia, free from liquor, on Colorado's plains. The constitution gave each member who purchased a share a building lot in town and a farm plot. The document further prohibited the sale or consumption of alcohol within the colony's borders. While work was done to find members, others involved with the project were in Colorado finding a suitable site and arranging to buy land. In May, 1870, the first trainloads of settlers arrived on the Denver Pacific Railroad. This vanguard laid out the town, and farm lands, put in crops and built shelters and irrigation ditches. Over the summer, the number of colonists swelled as more people relocated to Colorado from the East and a few from the midwest. They came to form and fashion their own societal structure on the plains. Nathan Meeker and General Robert A. Cameron were the leaders and managers of the effort after the group had moved west.

The success of Greeley and the Union Colony led others to copy their ways. One was Longmont which was one of the early and most successful

colonies of Colorado, planned in 1870, the Chicago-Colorado or Chicago Colony as it was commonly known followed the example of Greeley's Union Colony, especially limiting the sale of alcohol and keeping communal effort to a minimum. Communal effort primarily included the areas of irrigation, ditch digging, town layout, and land distribution.

Colony fever spread across the United States as the prosperity of Greeley and Longmont were publicized. This also caused other would-be land and colony promoters to look at Colorado's high plains as a region for their projects. People already in Colorado, such as William Byers of the Rocky Mountain News, a representative of National Land Company, did what he could to stimulate interest in plains agriculture and settlement.

Another colony that was founded in the early 1870s was the St. Louis-Western Colony. It was organized in Missouri in 1871 and took up land along the Denver Pacific at Evans, Colorado, south of Greeley. In the first year, 600 people moved to Colorado as part of the St. Louis group. This organization did not outlaw liquor so many thirsty Greeleyites made trips to Evans for refreshment. Despite this, Evans failed to grow as Greeley merchants captured the area's trade.

1871 also witnessed attempted creation of a colony at Platteville. It was backed by a group of people more interested in land speculation than in helping people establish farms. When the settlers arrived on the South Platte River, they found the promoters gone and they were left to fend for themselves. Most of the group were disheartened and left, but a few stayed on and farmed.

Possibly the most flagrant fraud undertaken during the colony craze was Green City, located on the South Platte River north of Fort Lupton. The man behind the scheme was Colonel David S. Green of Tennessee. He had promotional flyers printed showing Green City as a bustling river port with marble edifices, steamboats at wharves, and other things people of the Deep South could associate with. They moved to Colorado to escape the pressures of Reconstruction and the post-war depression, but found Green City to be nonexistent. Instead, they were forced to build farms from the rather desolate plains. Other Southerners settled at Sterling by 1880 in a colony. This colony was shortly dissolved and the settlers established separate farms.

While these colonies spread across much of Colorado's plains during the 1870s, one Coloradan became the expert in planning, founding and early growth of the settlements--General Robert Cameron. Cameron had worked with Meeker at Greeley. He left Greeley in 1872 to found the Agricultural Colony near Fort Collins. Cameron's efforts bore fruit and this colony soon absorbed the Mercer Colony which had been established in the area in 1869 by a group who migrated from Pennsylvania. In 1874, Cameron was hired by William Jackson Palmer to manage and guide the growth of the earlier established Fountain Colony of Colorado Springs. Fountain had not developed the way Palmer had hoped, but Cameron soon put the organization's business affairs in order and the colony grew.



The late nineteenth century saw many colonies planned that failed to prosper and grow. Those that did prosper, such as Greeley, did much to advance settlement and agriculture on Colorado's plains. The colony craze ended by the 1880s, but reappeared around 1900 with projects such as Dearfield, a black colony near present day Riverside Reservoir. By then, however, the region had been settled, towns were well established and many of the earlier reasons to migrate as a colonist, such as group security, were no longer problems.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1868-1869	H. Greeley and N. Meeker Perfect Union Colony plans.  Mercer Colony established.
1870	Union Colony moves to Colorado and establishes Greeley.  Fountain Colony founded at Colorado Springs.  Ryssby settled by Swedish immigrants.
1870s	Colony craze causes many group settlements on Colorado plains.
1870-1871	Chicago-Colorado (Longmont) Colony organized.
1871	St. Louis Western Colony established.  Platteville Colony established.  Green City promotional scheme attempted.
1872	Agricultural Colony at Fort Collins founded.
1890s	Colony craze ends.
1900-1915	Attempts to revive colony idea, but becomes more like informal group settlement.
1920	Dearfield disbanded.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme are generally located along the major watercourses, especially the South Platte, Cache La Poudre and Arkansas Rivers because most colony establishments for farming included the use of irrigation. Some irrigation systems are attributable to colony settlement and should be included with this theme. Further resources dating to the colony period may also be found in towns such as Greeley, Longmont, Colorado Springs and others since towns were founded by the colonies. Evidence of colonies that failed may be harder to find because of the varying land use after the organized attempt at settlement.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Structures include: Bank, Church, Commercial Building, Communal Halls/Buildings, Dwellings, Farmsteads (Farm House, Barn, Outbuildings), Government Buildings, Grain Elevators, Irrigation Systems, Parks, Railroad Depots, Schools, Theatre/Opera House.

Districts include: Commercial, Residential, Farmstead, Irrigation System.

Materials include: Tools and Farm Equipment/Implements.

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

The available information on various colony settlements on the Colorado Plains varies widely in quality and not surprisingly, those colonies that survived have had more written about them than the ones that failed. Athearn's The Coloradans, Ubbelohde, Benson and Smith's A Colorado History, and Willard and Goodykoontz's Experiments in Colorado Colonizations, 1869-1872 offer good synthetic overviews of the colonization movement during the late nineteenth century. Boyd's book on early Greeley and the Union Colony became a standard for others to use as a guide for early historical studies. Boyd, as a supporter of the Union Colony, also offered his explanations why other neighboring colonies failed. Willard's article in The Trail on the St. Louis Western Colony is very useful for research on that effort, while Swanson's Fort Collins Yesterdays and Ellis's The Colorado Springs Story detail the colony roots of those two towns. One source on Longmont is a master's thesis at the University of Colorado by R. A. Puffer. Primary sources associated with this theme are many diaries, journals, and other papers of people involved in the early colony settlements. These are available from Denver Public Library, Norlin Library at the University of Colorado, Libraries at Colorado State University, Colorado College, the University of Northern Colorado, and the Colorado Historical Society. Also, the Historical Society holds extensive interviews, many from the Civil Works Administration, with old timers who had first-hand experience with the founding and growth of colonies in the region. The Civil Works Administration interviews at the Colorado Historical Society contain some information on the founding and colony period for Longmont. Newspapers from the late nineteenth century, while biased, do provide many insights into the operations and problems of the colonies on the Colorado plains. The Works Progress Administration town files assembled during the 1930s contain some useful information.

### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the exact number of resources that existed or once may have existed associated with this theme. However, any estimate would have to be in the thousands if one considered all the buildings, irrigation systems and fields that make up a typical plains colony effort. The types were those usually associated with agriculture and towns of the late nineteenth century. The present condition of resources varies from destroyed to renovated and preserved, such as the Meeker House at

Greeley. Redevelopment and growth of towns on the plains have been the most detrimental forces on cultural resources associated with this theme.

#### Data Gaps

\*Because of the large number of resources associated with this theme that have already been recorded no significant data gaps remain.

\*Representative examples of communal fields.

\*Representative resources for each colony effort in the region.

#### Future Needs

Surveys specifically to find evidences of colony settlement need not be carried out in the future. Rather, surveys for that purpose should be conducted in conjunction with inventories of and for towns within the region because all colonies depended on or founded their own towns and cities. Inventories to identify resources outside of currently existing towns would require the special skills of the historian and the aerial photography interpreter since aerial photography can help cover vast areas in relatively short time periods and reveal features possibly not apparent from the ground.

#### Important Resources

Because of the large number of recorded resources and the overlap of resources between this theme and the urban frontier, agriculture, or irrigation, these sites should be cross-indexed and evaluated for multiple importances. Resources that substantiate or explain why some colonies prospered and others failed should be considered important. Other important resources are ones that document the communal roots of many colonies, as are those that explain the leadership role of certain personalities such as Meeker or Cameron in the early colonies. Because resources associated with this theme are closely associated with the local significance criteria of the National Register, local groups should be consulted.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, help explain why some colonies prospered and others failed?
2. What resources, if any, can document the communal nature of many colony settlements?
3. What resources, if any, can explain differences between or similarities of colony farming and regular farming on the plains?
4. What resources, if any, can explain the leadership roles of certain individuals in the colony movements?

5. What resources, if any, can document and explain the evolution of communal and/or group settlements into private enterprises?
6. What resources, if any, substantiate the role of minorities, ethnic groups, and women in the colonies on the Colorado plains?

Research questions for the urban frontier and early agriculture apply to this theme as well.

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Bank: should be in original location and retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Church: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Commercial Block: should be in original location and enough original or historic use structures should remain to make functions and fabric readily apparent.

Communal Halls/Buildings: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Farmstead: should be in original or historic use location and enough dwellings and associated out-buildings should be present (or, if dismantled, their previous location known) to make function and spatial relationships readily apparent.

Government Buildings: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Grain Elevator: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Irrigation Systems: see engineering context for evaluation standards.

Parks: should retain enough integrity to make boundaries function, landscaping and other man-made features readily apparent.

Railroad Depots: should be associated with railroad or roadbed and meet same standards for evaluation as Bank.

Residential Block: same evaluation standards as Commercial District.

School: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Theatre: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Tools/Implements: should retain enough physical integrity to make materials of construction, method of operation and function readily apparent.

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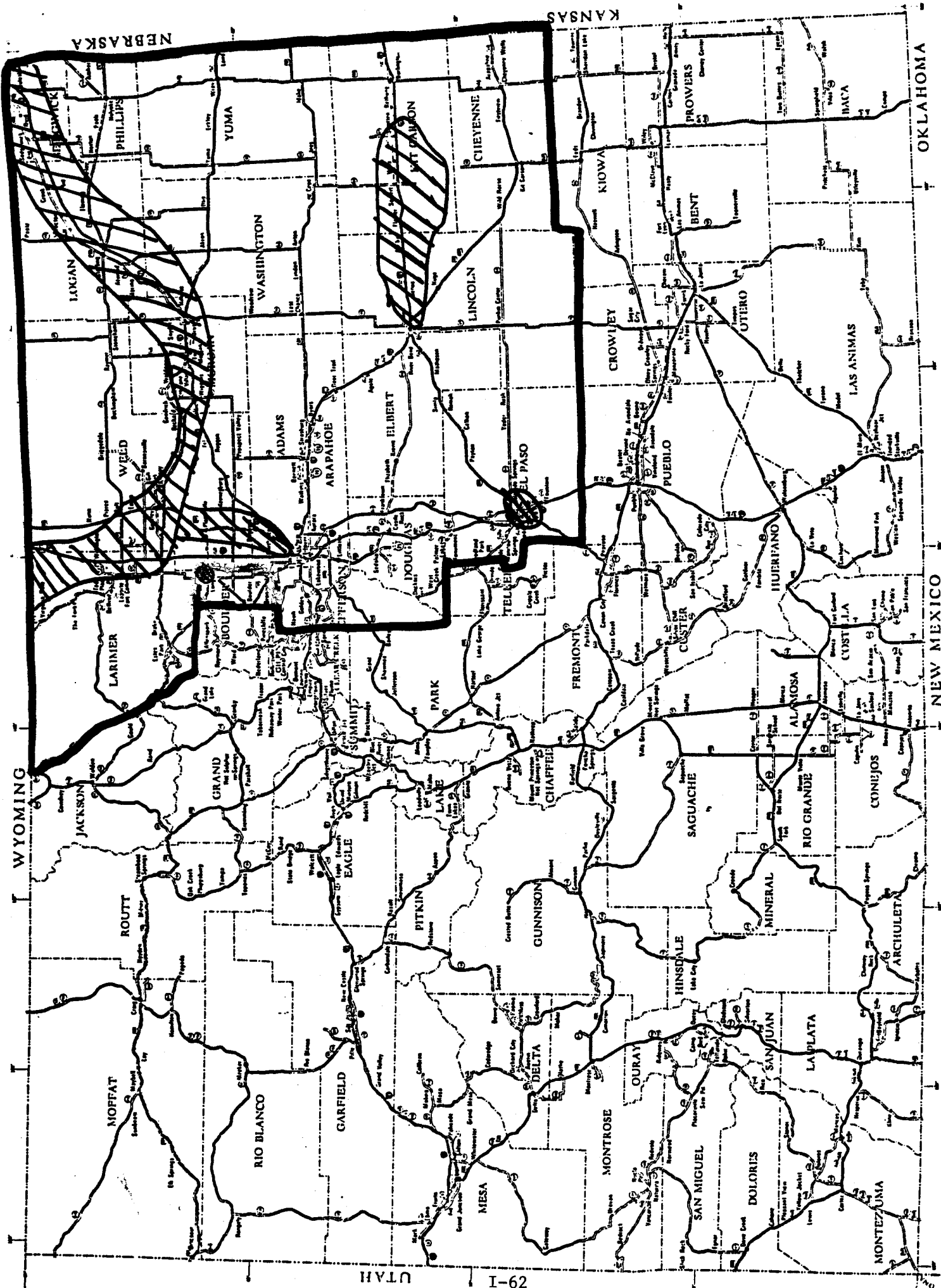
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COLONIES AND TOWNS

10. EARLY HIGH PLAINS IRRIGATION AND FARMING  
TO 1900

NARRATIVE

The earliest farming on Colorado's plains began with subsistence farming at the fur trading posts or early settlement by retired mountain men. This changed in 1859 with the gold rush. Ranches were established along the trails that grew crops to sell to travelers, and some goldseekers took up farming to supply the miners. This shift from subsistence to commercial agriculture and the rapid development of a transportation network meant that most early plains farmers were businessmen, not the typical pattern of frontier agrarians simply trying to feed themselves as had been done in other areas of the Great Plains.

The first introduction of irrigation to the Colorado plains took place at the same time: David Wall planted a vegetable farm near Golden in 1859 and built ditches to his fields to supply water from Clear Creek. Although irrigation had been practiced much earlier in the Spanish settlements in the San Luis Valley, much of this experience was not utilized by Anglos on Colorado's plains. Rather, Wall and others worked to build from their own mistakes. Most of these efforts were relatively small.

The Union Colony at Greeley marked the first attempt to irrigate large tracts of land. By the spring of 1871, the Greeleyites had brought water to 200 acres from the Cache La Poudre and had plans for another 59,800 acres to be irrigated. A major factor in the success of irrigation at Greeley was capital to finance a large irrigation project. The Travelers Insurance Company that aided Greeley became one of the foremost backers of water projects on Colorado's plains. Also, out of the Greeley area came Colorado's doctrine of prior appropriation for water rights. In 1874, a dry year, irrigators at Fort Collins took nearly all the flow of the Cache La Poudre leaving the Union Colony lands dry. Farmers from both towns appeared to be ready to take the fight over the water to violent ends, but an agreement was worked out. The negotiations led to acceptance of a "first-in-time, first-in-right" principle and a system of priorities for use. The ideas were incorporated into Colorado's first constitution and eventually copied by other states in the arid west.

The success of irrigated farming led to settlement along all the major watercourses of Colorado's plains by the end of the nineteenth century. It also led to a realization by farmers and the federal government that water and larger tracts of land were needed for successful farming of the high plains. One way Washington, D.C. authorities sought to deal with the area's problems was through the Timber Culture Act of 1873. The concept that rain could be caused by plowing fields and planting trees, known as pluviculture, or "rain follows the plow," led directly to the Timber Culture Act. This Act supplemented the Homestead Act of 1862 which had not provided for enough land to appropriately encourage plains agriculture. When first written,

the Timber Act would give a person 160 acres of land if 40 acres were planted with trees that were kept alive for ten years. Later it was amended to reduce tree acreage to 10 acres. It was hoped the presence of trees would cause increased rainfall. A wet cycle with above average precipitation during the mid-and late-1880s made it appear as if the law was correct in its scientific basis. A second new land act, the Desert Land Act of 1877, was another Congressional attempt to encourage settlement and irrigation of the arid plains. It allowed claiming up to 640 acres at \$1.25 per acre if irrigation systems were provided within three years of filing.

Neither law worked as intended, but they did do a great deal to popularize Colorado's plains with prospective emigrants. The advertising done by railroad companies, land speculators and the State Board of Immigration helped convince many that the Colorado plains of the 1880s were a cornucopia awaiting development. The 1880s witnessed a massive wave of settlers sweep across the high plains of Colorado. These people heard the advertising and railroad promotion, knew of the liberal federal land laws and followed the call of Colorado. Actually, the arid reaches were settled in pincers fashion with groups moving east from the front range and South Platte Valley and west from Kansas.

Within a few years, much of the land that had been available for claiming or purchase had been taken by farmers. The wet years of the late 1880s encouraged a feeling of prosperity. Rain did seem to be following the plow as thousands of acres of range land were tilled for the first time. By 1889, signs of permanent agricultural settlement were visible throughout the region as the prairies bloomed with buckwheat, corn, alfalfa, wheat and other crops. The cattlemen were unable to oppose this onslaught of sod-busters because the disastrous winters of 1888 and 1887 killed tens of thousands of cows and the resulting decline in beef prices forced many to abandon their livelihood.

The farming boom continued unabated until 1890. That year the spring rains did not come and a dry cycle started. Enough moisture fell to provide food for survival and many thought the worst had passed. But, the next year even less rain came and prices for corn and wheat began to fall. The dry weather caused a panic that led to extreme measures such as hiring rain-makers. The farmers hung on until 1893 when the national economy collapsed. By then many had become desperate and they began abandoning their farms to return to more humid areas of the United States. A mass exodus out of the plains took place leaving behind only those who could not afford to move.

The dry years and financial upheavals of the 1890s also impacted irrigated farming on the Colorado plains. Holders of junior water rights found their ditches empty and fields parched. One attempted solution was the construction of reservoirs. The first, Ferry Lake, owned by Water Supply and Storage Company, was built in 1890. Almost all irrigators were heavily in debt and as crop prices fell they found themselves hard pressed to cover their obligations. Many were forced to sell part of their land to pay these debts. As a result of this situation, the farmers began looking for new cash crops eventually settling on sugar beets after 1900.



## CHRONOLOGY

- 1835-1859 Subsistence farming at fur posts and by individuals.
- 1859 Beginnings of commercial agriculture to supply gold rushers and miners.  
David Wall successfully irrigates land near Golden.
- 1862 Homestead Law passed.
- 1870-1871 Union Colony irrigates 60,000 acres proving viability of large-scale water projects.
- 1873 Timber Culture Act passed.
- 1874 Doctrine of prior appropriation adopted by Greeley and Fort Collins farmers, later becomes model for much of the arid West.
- 1877 Desert Land Act passed.
- 1886-1890 Dryland farming boom.
- 1890-1893 Dry cycle begins that ends boom and leads to abandonment of many farms on plains. Irrigators begin search for new cash crops as a result of falling market prices and large debts.

## LOCATION

Cultural resources attributed to this theme can be found throughout the rural areas of Colorado's plains region. Historic irrigation systems are located along the foothills and major watercourses of the region. Cultural resources of the early dryland farming boom were located in the eastern and central parts of the region, but many may have been demolished during the second dryland boom (1905-1920) and by Great Depression era soil conservation programs.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Timber Claims

Structures include: Farmstead, Grain Elevators, Grange Halls

Districts include: Agricultural Towns, Farmstead (Farm House, Barn, Sheds and Outbuildings), Irrigation Systems

Materials include: Tools and Farm Implements of the late 19th century

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

Great Plains farming and the roots of irrigation and water law in Colorado have spawned many historical studies dating to the 1870s. These vary in quality and completeness as might be expected. Among the best general sources on this topic are Gilbert Fite's The Farmers Frontier, Dick's Sodhouse Frontier and Webb's The Great Plains. Other good sources of more specific information are studies such as Propst's Forgotten People or Conklin's Brief History of Logan County, Colorado. Topics such as land law are covered in Robbins' Our Landed Heritage while the role of railroad companies is typified by Athearn's Union Pacific Country or Overton's Burlington West. Beyond the book length studies, many articles on various topics associated with this theme have been published such as Robert A. Dunbar's "Water Conflicts and Controls in Colorado," Agricultural History, July, 1948. Many theses and dissertations about plains agriculture and irrigation have been completed, too. Manuscript collections and interviews of the Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library, the library of the University of Colorado, and records of Colorado State University as the state's agricultural college, contain much pertinent information that could help researchers on topics such as crop types and technique development. County tax records and land transfer documents would prove very useful for investigating certain things such as ownership or land use. Court records adjudicating water rights are mandatory sources for irrigation use work. Newspapers and chamber of commerce pamphlets help explain promotional and land speculation schemes. Additional useful information about resources associated with this theme is the Works Progress Administration town file.

### Number/Condition

The present data base is insufficiently refined to determine the type, number and condition of resources that once existed or may have existed associated with this theme. However, a reasonable estimate would be 5,000. Many of the resources associated with early dryland farming were destroyed by weather and later settlers after the 1890s dry period. Resources in irrigated areas from the late nineteenth century have survived in greater number than those of the dryland areas. Also, because of the back and forth ranch-farm-ranch land use patterns, many resources have been destroyed over the years. Weather, vandals and purposeful destruction, such as early federal attempts to return Pawnee Grasslands to its native condition, all led to reduction in the number of resources associated with this theme. Present condition varies from destroyed to excellent.

### Data Gaps

- \*Complete and unmodernized representative 1890 dryland farm.
- \*Complete and unmodernized representative 1880 irrigated farm.
- \*Complete and unmodernized 1880 irrigation system.

### Future Needs

Future surveys should be conducted in conjunction with ones for colonies and open range ranching to attempt to identify any and all sites associated with early Colorado plains agricultural activity. Such a survey should be given low priority because of the extensive documentation already available on this theme, but should be scoped to take full advantage of aerial photo reconnaissance techniques. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of the historian and aerial photo interpreter.

### Important Resources

Resources associated with the development of both irrigated and early dryland farming techniques on the Colorado plains are important because many methods and technologies developed there were later adopted or modified by use by people all over the arid West. A good example of this is the doctrine of prior appropriation for water. However, more specifically, important resources should be those first or earliest remaining examples of new methods or technologies for plains farming. Also, resources that explain problems faced but not solved by farmers on the plains are important to help further understanding of post-1900 agricultural developments. The role of women and minorities (or ethnic groups) in the settlement of the region could be substantiated by some important cultural resources. However, because of the large number of resources, careful scrutiny must be used in assessing importance.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, document or clarify the evolution of water law on the Colorado plains?
2. What resources, if any, document or clarify the role of pluviculture on the Colorado plains?
3. What resources, if any, can help explain the rapid spread and contraction of dryland farming during the late 1880s and early 1890s?
4. What resources, if any, can help clarify present understandings of the use of federal land laws by settlers of the region?
5. What resources, if any, can help document and clarify the development of new farming technology and methods on the Colorado plains before 1900?
6. What resources, if any, can help document and clarify the role of women and minorities in the agricultural settlement and/or development of the Colorado plains?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Agricultural Towns: should have enough of the historic use buildings intact to recognize community function, fabric and size.

Farmstead: should be on original or historic use site and enough of the dwellings and outbuildings should remain to readily identify function, spatial relationships, methods and materials of construction.

Grain Elevators: should be in historic use location and have enough physical integrity to readily recognize function, method of operation, dimensions and material and method of construction.

Grange Hall: should be in historic use location and retain enough physical integrity to readily recognize function, dimensions and methods and materials of construction.

Irrigation System: see engineering context for evaluation standards.

Timber Claims: enough of the required timber stand and also fences/property lines should remain for positive identification.

Tools: enough physical integrity should be retained to clearly recognize function and method of operation.

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
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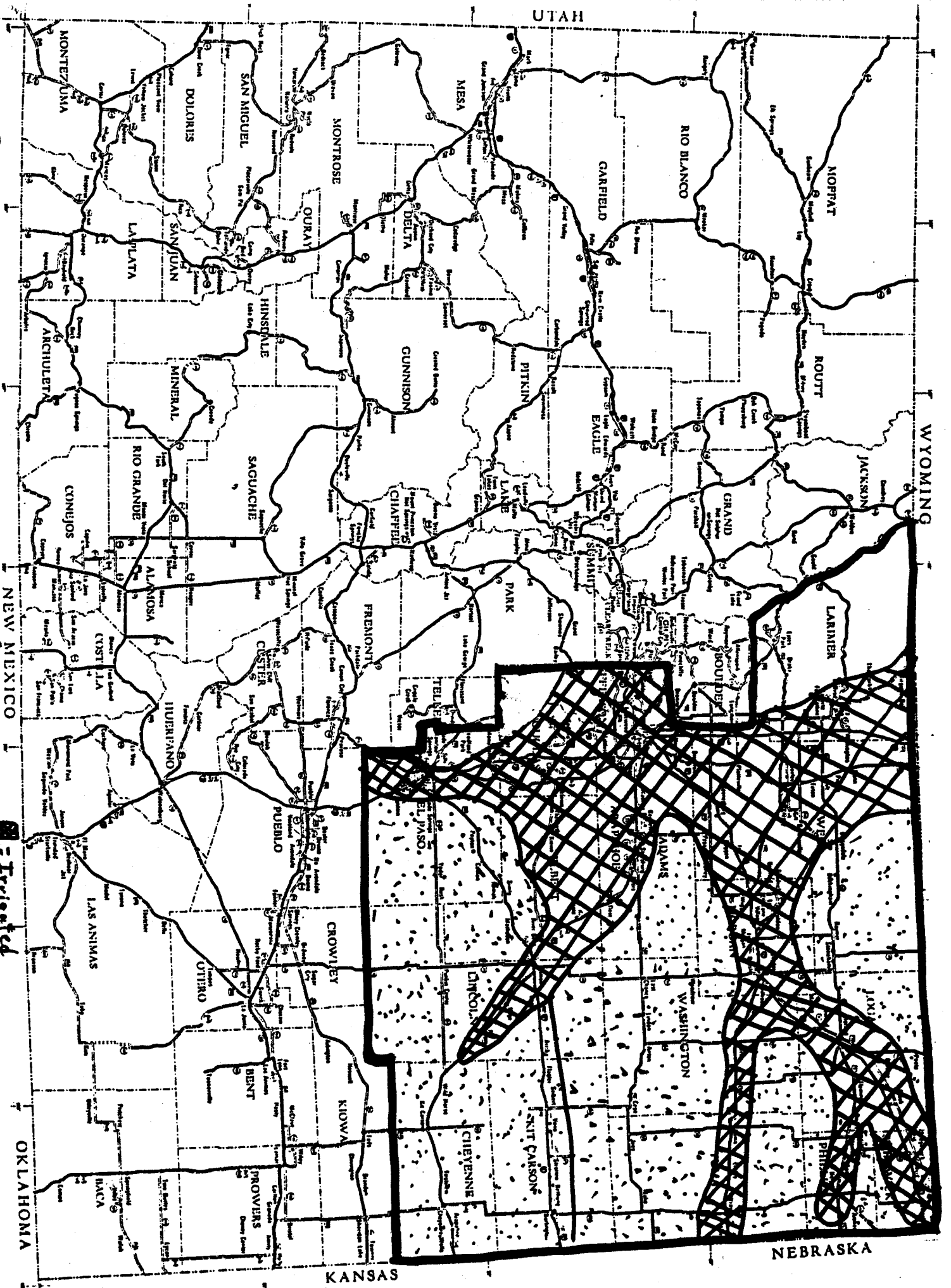
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EARLY PLAINS FARMING

 = Investigated  
 = Dry Land



11. OPEN RANGE DAYS, 1860-1895NARRATIVE

The gold rush of 1859 and the spread of the mining frontier led to the growth and development of an open range ranching industry on Colorado's plains. The cattlemen were further encouraged after the Civil War by the rapid expansion of the beef market and the availability of transportation by 1870 when railroads reached the region in 1870. The final element, abundant supplies of forage, was supplied by the land itself. In 1865, much of Colorado's plains were nothing more than millions of acres of pasture owned by the federal government and open for use. All these factors contributed to the rapid growth and flowering of a range livestock industry during the 1870s. The region's cowboy of the late nineteenth century became America's first unique folk hero, attired in his peculiar garb, living a highly romanticized "free" existence. The cattlemen's frontier on Colorado's high plains had the elements of hardship and adventure typically associated with the "Wild West" that made them the envy of many people from the rest of the country.

John Wesley Iliff became the early leader of an open range cattle industry. He came to Colorado in 1859 and soon found he was not cut out for mining. Instead, he bought a store in Denver and also started running cattle to supply beef to the miners and others. He bought herds from Missouri or Texas, fattened them in Colorado and then butchered the beeves. By 1865, this proved so profitable he gave up all his other businesses. By 1870, his successes earned him the title "Cattle Baron." Three others also earned such labels for their leadership roles: Jared L. Brush, Tilghman P. Hersperger and John Wesley Prowers. Their operations covered thousands of acres and herds ran as high as 50,000 head. Their methods were copied by many others. During the 1880s, the industry changed somewhat in that corporations, such as the Pawnee Land and Cattle Company were formed and single person ownership began to be replaced by company control.

The methods used by the individuals and corporate operations were the same. All depended on the use of unclaimed federal rangelands for cattle grazing. Home ranches were established on waterways or at waterholes, and these sites were owned by the stockmen. They took advantage of all the land laws to obtain ranches, the Pre-emption Act, Homestead Act, Timber Culture Act, and Desert Land Act. With bases of operation under their ownership, the stockmen allowed their herds to roam over the plains at will. Control of water supplies meant control of the range, for without water, the stock perished. Spring and fall roundups were held to count animals, brand calves and sort out those ready for sale. At other times, the cattle were left untended. The attraction of grazing a calf worth \$3 for a few years on free public grass for three or four years and then selling it for \$40 was too much of a temptation for many, and by 1885, the range was overgrazed.

Getting cattle to and from market led to creation of another phenomenon

associated with the West--the Long Drive. The Colorado plains with their level landscape, offered natural routes for the herding of large numbers of cattle and later of sheep. The first cattle trails into the region were the Goodnight-Loving and Dawson trails from the Texas panhandle through New Mexico and into Colorado. At various times the cattle drives would end at Pueblo on the Arkansas or further north, often depending on where buyers for the trail herds could be found. The second route of significance was the Ogallala Trail to Ogallala, Nebraska. It ran north from Texas just west of the Colorado-Kansas state line to Nebraska. Later it was extended as far north as Montana and has been referred to as the National Trail. During the late 1880s, cattlemen's associations around the west requested Congress to formalize the trail and make it a permanent passageway, but the proposal was never accepted in Washington, D.C. Two towns, Bovine and Trail City were established near the Arkansas River along the trail routes to provide places for buyers and sellers to meet as well as provide for the cowboy's supply and recreation needs.

During the 1870s and 1880s, a significant number of sheep were also raised on the Colorado Plains. Most sheep were raised in the foothills, but eventually large numbers were found around towns such as Sterling or Karval. Fort Collins became a center for lamb finishing and trails to that market were developed. Early sheep raising in much of the area duplicated cattle-growing techniques with only minimal supervision of the animals except in the foothills areas and around cattle. Both types of stock often caused problems for farmers by eating or trampling crops and destroying fences. Farmers sometimes added to their meat supply by shooting a stray animal. Such habits led to occasional violence between sod-busters and cowboys. However, the Colorado plains did not experience as many bloody range wars between cattle raisers and sheepmen as other parts of the state and the West did, largely because both sides felt they had adequate rangeland and because many large cattle owners, such as Hersperger, also owned significant numbers of sheep.

The 1880s were a time of change for the plains livestock industry. Consumer tastes changed and demanded beef of higher quality than that produced by longhorns. This led to the introduction of blooded stock such as Herefords. To keep the longhorns away from the other animals, fences were built. The fence building was accelerated in the early 1880s once barbed wire became readily available. Despite these changes, ranchers took little precaution to supply winter feed for the herds. This, combined with overgrazing and severe winters in 1886 and 1887, led to tens of thousands of cattle dying of exposure and starvation. In the winter of 1886-1887, the snows started early and when the cattle began to drift off, the stock piled up along the many fencelines or in ravines and perished. Estimates of the winter kill go as high as 9 out of 10 cattle being dead by the next spring. The following winter was as severe, but losses were fewer because the ranges had not been restocked. At the same time, the cattle market collapsed. By 1890, the heyday of open range ranching had passed on the Colorado plains as feedlots and fenced pastures came into vogue.

## CHRONOLOGY

- 1859-1860 First herds driven to Colorado to feed miners.
- 1862 Homestead Act passed.
- 1865 John W. Iliff takes up ranching full time.
- Civil War ends and use of cattle trails, including Goodnight-Loving Trail begins to increase.
- 1866-1890 Use of Ogallala/National Cattle Trail.
- 1867 Colorado Cattleman's Association formed.
- 1870s Large ranches owned by individuals prosper.
- Sheep raising along foothills enters growth era.
- Trail towns prosper.
- 1873 Timber Culture Act Passed.
- 1877 Desert Land Act Passed.
- 1880s Period of rapid growth in corporate ranching.
- Blooded stock and fencing introduced.
- 1881 First severe winter, but fails to slow the boom.
- 1886-1887 Severe winters and market collapse ends open range ranching era.

## LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this era have been and are likely to be recorded throughout the region, especially in areas east of a line north and south through Greeley, Colorado. Most of these resources will be associated with early cattle raising or trail driving. The foothills regions, especially of Larimer County are likely to yield the highest concentration of sheep raising related cultural resources. Because of the transitory nature of open range ranching and trail driving, as well as later settlement of the region, the number of cultural resources will be limited.

## CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Annual Roundup Sites, Sheep Tending Facilities, Trails

Structures include: Bank, Barroom, Bordello, Corral, Commercial



Building, Fences, Hotel, Line Shack, Railroad Depot, Railroad Shipping Pens, Ranch, Theatre/Opera House, Stockyards

Districts include: Commercial, Residential, Ranch

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

The open range cattle industry of the Great Plains has generated and continues to generate large quantities of literature as well as highly romanticized views of "cowboys and Indians." The Colorado plains have shared in the experiences and studies, and many multi-state studies of the cattle industry contain information applicable to the Silver State. Lewis Atherton's, The Cattle Kings, or Ernest S. Osgood's, The Day of the Cattleman, are good examples of this type of book. More specifically on the study area, Ora Peake's study of the range cattle industry, or Goff and McCaffree's Century in the Saddle offer much information for the Colorado plains. Biographical studies of cattle barons, such as John Wesley Iliff, are on library shelves and should be consulted. Also, theses and dissertations about various aspects such as the economics of the industry have been completed. Beyond a doubt, the most readable and informative volume on cowboy life is Andy Adam's Log of a Cowboy. Articles in scholarly journals such as the Mississippi Valley Historical Review or The Colorado Magazine have much information about this theme. Manuscript collections and interviews at the Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library, Colorado College, and the University of Colorado all have information pertinent to this theme. The western cattle industry collection at the Colorado Historical Society is an invaluable resource for this theme. Local newspapers as well as trade journals from the late nineteenth century can give researchers further insights into the cattle business.

### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the number, type, and condition of sites that existed or once may have existed associated with this theme. Because the industry depended on vast amounts of native rangeland, it purposely discouraged creation of man-made features except at the home ranches. Also, because many of the lands were plowed for farms between 1887 and 1893, some resources failed to survive into the twentieth century. The back and forth range to farming uses of these same lands has continued this degradation up to the present. Efforts by the U.S. Forest Service to return the Pawnee Grasslands to their original state led to the wholesale destruction of resources in that area before preservation laws (1966) were in place. Besides other land uses, the forces most hard on cultural resources have been weather and vandalism.

### Data Gaps

\*Representative roundup camp used by the cattle ranches of the late nineteenth century.

\*Representative sites of technological innovations that impacted the cattle industry.

\*Representative site of a battle between a sheepman and a cattleman.

\*Representative site of a battle between a cattleman and a farmer.

\*Representative range branding site.

\*Representative campsite of a trail/herd.

### Future Needs

In the future, a survey should be undertaken to clearly identify and locate all sites associated with this theme in rural areas of the study area. However, this should be given low priority because of the extensive documentary evidence available about the industry and the low likelihood of cultural resources being found that can clearly be associated with this theme. Such an undertaking should take full advantage of aerial reconnaissance techniques and would need the special skills of both the historian and aerial photo interpreter.

### Important Resources

Because of the role cattle ranching played and boost it gave to the state's economy and development during the late nineteenth century, resources clearly and uniquely associated with this theme should be considered important. Those resources that document or refute current understandings of the range cattle industry, especially day-to-day operations and major recurring events such as round-ups or trail drives should be considered important. Resources that might document or explain the role of women and minorities in the range cattle industry are important, as are those that could further understanding of tensions or cooperation between stockmen and their neighbors.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can document or explain day-to-day ranch life of the late nineteenth century?
2. What resources, if any, can document, verify, or refute present interpretations of the function, methods and sizes of cattle drives?
3. What resources, if any, can document or further present theses about the role of the Cattle Barons in early Colorado and western development?
4. What resources, if any, can document or further present understandings about the role of the cattle industry in early Colorado and western development?

5. What resources, if any, can explain or refute present interpretations of conflicts between cattle barons and their neighbors, farmers, and sheepmen?
6. What resources, if any, can document the rapid and drastic land use shifts on the plains?
7. What resources, if any, can document or refute present interpretations of the demise of the range cattle industry?
8. What resources, if any, can explain the role of minorities and women in the range cattle industry?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Bank: should be in original location and retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Barroom: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Bordello: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Corral: should be in original location and have enough physical integrity to make dimensions, function and material of construction readily apparent.

Commercial District: should be in original location and have enough original or historic use structures remaining to make functions and fabric readily apparent.

Fences: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Hotel: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Line Shack: same evaluation standards as Bank.

Railroad Depot: same evaluation standards as Bank and should be on railroad or roadbed to help make function apparent.

Railroad Shipping Pens: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Ranch: should be in original or historic use location and enough of the dwellings and associated structures (outbuildings) should be present or locatable to make function and spatial relationships readily apparent.

Sheep Tending Facilities: same evaluation standards as ranch.

Stockyards: same evaluation standards as Corrals.

Theatre: same evaluation standards as Bank.

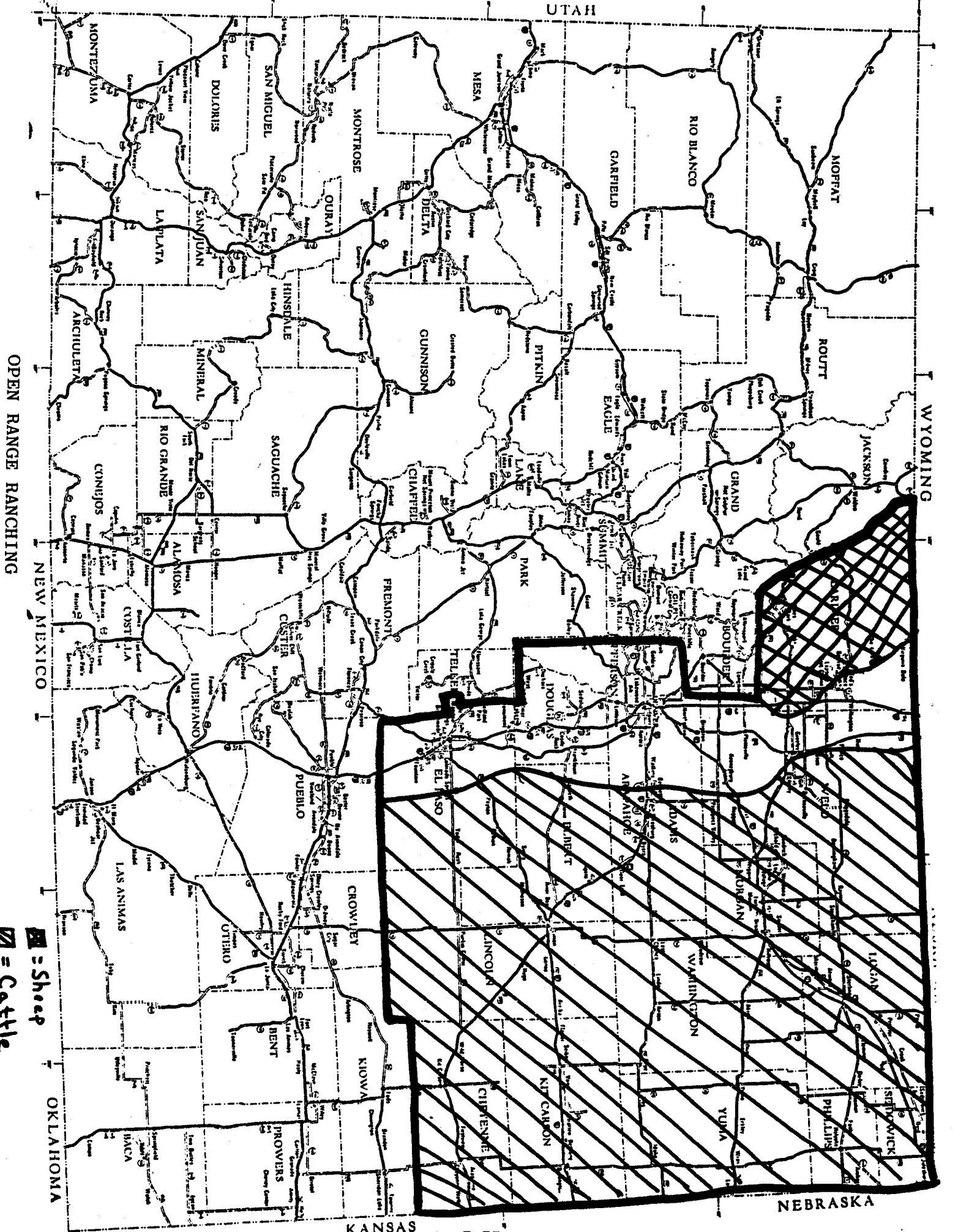
Trails: ability to clearly recognize the trail from physical evidence and from existing historical documentation.

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
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OPEN RANGE RANCHING

 = Cattle  
 = Sheep

12. LUMBERING AND ADAPTATIONS TO THE TREELESS PLAINS  
1860-1900

NARRATIVE

The settlement of Colorado's plains by farmers and cattlemen during the late nineteenth century was dependent not only on a vast area of land open for claiming and people willing to risk pioneer life in the area, but also on the great strides American technology made during the era. Without the industrial revolution and the availability of new products resulting from it, farming on the Colorado plains would not have been as successful.

The aridity of the plains and the lack of timber presented the prospective settler with many problems. Wood had been the basis of life in the humid Midwest providing shelter, fencing and fuel to farmers. On the plains these three basic commodities had to be gotten in a different way. Housing was provided first by construction of a canvas or grass-covered lean-to. As soon as possible after arrival, a sod house was built by cutting large blocks of prairie turf to use as building blocks for a soddy. The roof was usually made of a few poles covered by more sod. Interior walls were covered with sheets of cloth, such as muslin or cheesecloth, and the floor was dirt. While these were a little dusty to live in, they proved to be cool in summer, warm in winter and resistant to fire. Modifications of the basic square house were made by building into a hillside or using stone, if available, for one or more walls. While the soddies were good shelter and often were built quite elaborately, the farmers sought to replace them as soon as possible with wooden frame houses, especially after wood became available by the presence of railroads. After a wooden house was built, the soddy was abandoned or turned into a storage building. By 1900, ownership of a wooden house was a mark of success in many plains agricultural areas.

Fencing was one of the problems most affected by technology during the late nineteenth century. An early adaptation to provide fences in areas without trees, such as in eastern Nebraska, was the planting of hedges (large shrubs, growing 25 feet tall and having 12" diameter trunks). These hedgerows proved usable in some regions, but once settlement reached eastern Colorado, the aridity prevented or stunted the growth of hedges except in irrigated areas. Technology answered the call in 1873 when Joseph F. Glidden invented barbed wire. Soon thereafter, other inventors also went to work, and by the end of the decade many styles of wire were in use. The 1880s witnessed a rapid spread of the use of barbed wire on the Great Plains from Montana and the Dakotas to Texas. At that time, it came into common use by ranchers and farmers on the Colorado flatlands also. Eventually, the use of steel and concrete fence posts even eliminated the need for lumber in that capacity.

The final adaptation to the plains environment was to find a fuel source. Travelers of the 1840s and 1850s discovered that buffalo chips (dried manure) could be used for fuel for cooking and heating. This was well known by

early plains settlers, but the stoves available were designed for wood--the buffalo chips were inefficient in the ranges. Inventors again asserted themselves and designed stoves specifically to burn chips, or hay and grass. The final solution to the fuel problem came after railroads made coal readily available from lignite coal mines in the area, such as Francesville, Erie and elsewhere. Water for domestic use and livestock was obtained from natural springs, man-made wells and, to a limited degree, from windmills.

The one problem plainsmen and inventors could not overcome until the twentieth century was the isolation individual families felt. In colony settlements and near towns this was not a problem, but as farmers and ranchers took up land in more remote areas isolation became acute. Many farmsteads and ranches were so far away from the nearest town that overnight or multiple day trips were required to see other people at the villages. The lack of human contact, starkness, oppressive silence and harsh climate all combined to make life difficult. Many reports are extant of individuals going mad, often killing others or committing suicide in a blind rage. Full knowledge of these problems did not deter thousands from taking up land and trying to make a living in the area.

Lumber or the lack thereof was not a problem for portions of the study region. A sizable timber industry developed during the 1870s in the foothills and mountains, especially in Larimer County. The scarcity of wood and high demand for it made lumbering profitable in many areas along the front range. At one time or another sawmills could be found along the foothills in El Paso, Jefferson and other counties. However, the usable supply of trees was quickly exhausted, and these operations disappeared very quickly. In Larimer County, more usable wood was found and a market for it developed during the late 1860s as railroads, especially the Union Pacific expanded across the plains. Tie cutters moved into the hills and began shipping out boards in 1867 and 1868. One of the leaders of this industry was John Pinagree. During the 1870s, production continued and special techniques were developed. These included damming the Cache La Poudre's tributaries and allowing ponds to form which were filled with logs. During the spring high water periods, the dams were breached and the lumber sent floating downstream to places such as Fort Collins. By the 1880s, much of the easily cut timber was exhausted and the industry began to decline. This decline was hastened during the 1890s and early 1900s with creation of National Forests and severe regulation of tree cutting activities.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1850s	First soddies built.
1865-1895	Lumbering in foothills, especially Larimer County.
1870	Lignite coal mines open
1875-1890	Rapid settlement of plains and thousands of soddies built.
1880s	Rapid growth in the number of barbed wire fences in Colorado, barbed wire invented 1873.

- 1880s-1900      Technological advances in stoves and spread of lignite coal mining provide fuel for plainsmen.
- 1891              Forest reserve law passed leads to creation of National Forests and regulation of lumbering.

### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme were once located through much of the region. Soddies were primarily located east of a line north and south through Greeley, Colorado, and away from waterways that offered cottonwoods for cabin construction. Barbed wire was used throughout the region, but to a lesser extent in the foothills than on the flatlands. In both cases, such fences were most frequently found in rural areas. Lumbering was limited to the foothills and concentrated in Larimer County.

### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Fences (barbed wire), Hedges, Wells (water)

Structures include: Logging Dams, Logging flumes, Sawmills, Sod Structures, Windmills

Districts include: Logging Camps

Materials include: Non-wood Burning Stoves

### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

#### Historical Documentation

The lumbering industry of the Colorado plains was limited to small parts of the region by the natural environment and has had only limited treatment in the historiography of the industry. The best source of information is the United States Forest Service. Their level I cultural resources overview of the front range forests and their forestry records provide the best available data on the lumbering industry. Further, works such as county histories or biographies of forest rangers provide some insights. The adaptations of pioneers to the arid plains environment, regionally more significant, have been covered more thoroughly by historians. The most utilitarian single work is W. P. Webb's The Great Plains which covers topics from Indian fighting technology to the spread of barbed wire. Other specialized studies about adaptations such as sod houses, barbed wire, and windmills are also available. Many accounts of life on the Colorado plains, some slightly fictionalized, have been published that detail the hardships, adaptations and events of the late nineteenth century. The manuscript collections at Colorado College, Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library, and the University of Colorado contain information pertinent to this theme. Also, Civil Works Administration and Works Progress Administration files and interviews are very useful for research on this theme.



### Number/Condition

The number of resources associated with this theme that once existed or may have existed probably numbered in the tens of thousands if one accepts a very broad definition of plains adaptations and lumbering. Nearly every historic resident of the area of present I-25 at one time or another had a sod structure, windmill or barbed wire fence. Also, while lumbering was concentrated in certain areas, nearly every forest tract was used for lumber at one time or another. However, most of these resources did not survive to the present for a variety of reasons. Portable sawmills were moved after tracts were timbered. Sod structures eroded and melted into the ground unless protected, fences were replaced, and often windmills and other machinery were sold or traded in on new equipment. Beyond these agents of deterioration, Americana collectors and others have vandalized many sites.

### Data Gaps

- \*Cumulative records of the number of sod houses and structures that once may have existed in the region.
- \*Representative examples of all different types of barbed wire that were used.
- \*Representative examples of all types of early wind technology.
- \*Representative examples of all types of early plains technology such as hay burning stoves.
- \*Representative logging camp of the 1860-1870s era.

### Future Needs

At some future date surveys should be conducted on the Colorado plains to seek cumulative totals of cultural resources associated with this theme. Such a survey should be conducted in association with one to record farming and ranching cultural resources and should take full advantage of aerial reconnaissance techniques as well as on-the-ground field work. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of the historian, historic archaeologist and aerial photo interpreter.

### Important Resources

While tens of thousands of resources associated with this theme once existed, many have either been destroyed or have degenerated over the years. Therefore, some such as soddies should be given special consideration until a comprehensive survey of the plains can be undertaken. Once such inventories are completed, a better understanding and more clear associations can be developed. Resources that are representative of technological adaptations to the plains should be considered important, as should those that document the presence of an early and active lumber industry in the region. These resources can help document and further explain the evolution of technology

on the plains thereby furthering present historical understanding of the region's history.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can document and explain the applied technology of plains settlement?
2. What resources, if any, can document the leadership role Colorado plainsmen played in developing techniques for living on the arid plains?
3. Can cultural resources lead to reinterpretations of the methods employed on the plains?
4. What resources, if any, remain to document and explain the role of and conduct of the lumbering industry to the region?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Fences: should be in original or historic use location and should retain enough physical integrity to readily identify purpose, methods and materials of construction.

Hedges: should be alive and enough plants extant to show nature and method of operation.

Logging Camps: should retain enough physical integrity to make function readily apparent and should not have experienced surface disturbance.

Logging Dam: same evaluation standards as Fences.

Logging Flumes: same evaluation standards as Fences.

Non-wood Burning Stoves: unless in situ with a dwelling should be evaluated by experts in material culture.

Sawmills: same evaluation standards as logging camp.

Sod Structures: should be in original or historic use location and should retain enough physical integrity to make dimensions, method of construction and function readily apparent.

Windmills: same evaluation standards as Fences.

Wells: same evaluation standards as Fences.

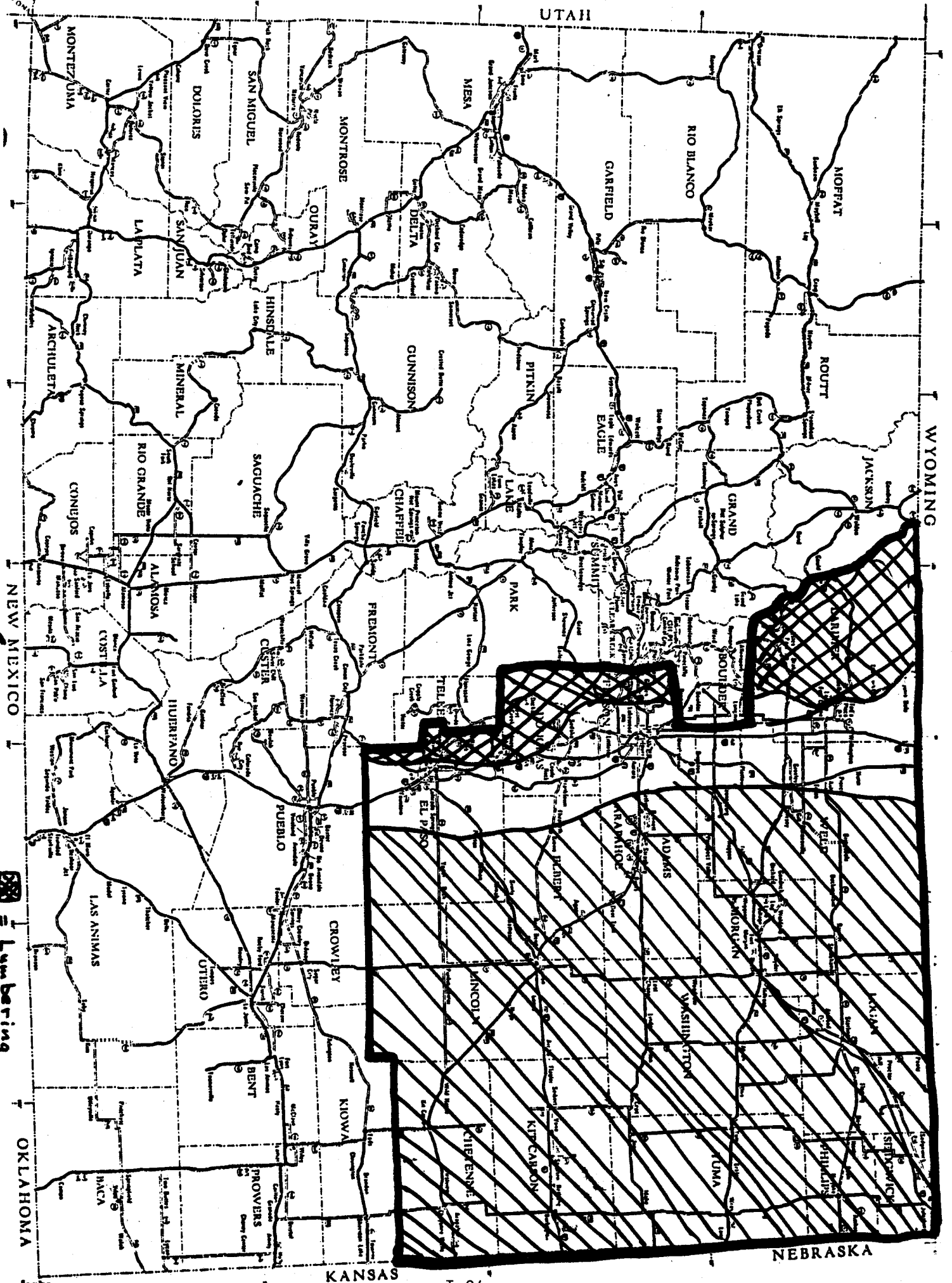
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LUMBERING AND ADAPTATIONS



 = Lumbering  
 = Adaptations (Soldiers)

13. THE REFORM IMPULSE, 1890-1917NARRATIVE

The rapid economic and population growth of Colorado's plains from 1859 to 1890 began to slow down markedly toward the end of the nineteenth century. This end of the boom gave area residents a chance to examine the past and present to lay plans for future development. This introspection led many to see the problems and seek remedies. Political action became the accepted course of action, first through the Populist Party of the 1890s and then the Progressive Movement of 1900 to 1917. These were national movements that sought and found eager supporters in the population of Colorado's plains. The Panic of 1893 and the general depression for many of the region's industries played a large part in both ending the boom and stimulating reevaluation by the citizenry.

The first political manifestations of the unhappiness in the slowed economics came in 1890 and 1892 as residents joined the ranks of the Populist Party. Attacks on bankers and railroads found an eager audience, especially with farmers, who felt those two groups to be not only their worst enemies, but also the root of all their problems. As the dry years and depressed market continued, populism gained strength in the region. Prohibitionists from Weld and Larimer Counties joined as did antimonopolists and free-silverites who advocated the unlimited circulation of silver money. The Populist Party gained enough strength to elect Davis Waite, the Populist candidate, to governor in 1892. He was defeated in his bid for reelection. The Populist' major setback came in 1896 when their candidate, William Jennings Bryan, fell to defeat at the hands of William McKinley, in the presidential election. While few of their goals were accomplished, the Populist interlude did cause much public debate of the social issues and problems of the era. The growing urban middle class of the region, especially in Denver, like other city dwellers across the nation, were particularly interested in reform issues. As reports by muckrakers on transit monopolies, government corruption, white slavery and other things became widely available in popular journals such as McClures or Everybody's Magazine, people in Colorado looked around and found many of the same evils present locally. The Progressives felt mankind was innately good, and if the social, physical and political environments were reformed, the future held nothing but good. This philosophical orientation caused many programs of the era to be aimed at improvement of physical surroundings and uplifting of social consciousness to stimulate a sense of social justice. They sought governmental regulation as a means to codify what they saw as desirable values and rules of civilization.

Progressivism received support from widely diversified interest groups in the Colorado plains region. Early members of the movement were anti-saloon leaguers and soon the voice was being heard in towns throughout the region. In the city of Sterling when Colorado's Reform Party carried the local election city ordinances were passed to close the bars. Success such as that inspired others towns to do likewise. By January 1, 1916, because

of pressure on the state legislature centered from the plains region all of Colorado went dry.

Drinking was but one of the social evils that residents of the area dealt with. Denver and Colorado Springs, because of their large middle classes, became totally emersed in Progressivism by 1900. One of the biggest evils they identified was the monopolies governments gave to public utility companies. Denver especially was in the grip of these forces with the Denver Union Water Company, Denver Gas Company and Denver Tramway. After 1900, concerted efforts to break these monopolies or to buy them for municipal ownership were made. The final transfer of these utilities to city ownership came during and after World War I in most cases. New agencies were created including the Denver Board of Water Commissioners, the municipal electric system at Colorado Springs and other bureaucracies.

Other reforms were aimed at clean up and betterment of the physical environment. These were inspired by a number of things including the City Beautiful Movement that called for intense urban design that had first proved viable at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. One crucial part of the concept was provision for open space. Cities throughout the region began setting aside parks and other areas for enjoyment by the citizenry. This movement is especially evident in Denver: Cherry Creek was landscaped, Civic Center and Civic Center Park were laid out, and Speer Boulevard built.

Progressivism led to improvements in education, especially for adults. In Denver, the Emily Griffith Opportunity School was founded to help people acquire usable skills. Also, Denver's Ben Lindsay became a pioneer in Juvenile Justice. The Denver institution was eventually used as a model for others across the nation. Another manifestation of this in the region was the spread of libraries, especially those funded by the Carnegie Foundation. Such things led to much other activity such as new moves to close down bordellos and gambling halls. The Progressive Movement on Colorado's plains continued until 1917 and after, but much of its energy was lost as the United States became embroiled actively in World War I.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1890 | Populist (People's Party) formed.   |
| 1892 | Davis Waite elected Populist governor of Colorado.  |
| 1893 | Financial Panic of 1893 ends boom for the region.<br><br>Chicago's World's Fair starts City Beautiful Movement.   |
| 1896 | Populists lose national election and party dissolves as potent force.<br><br>The influence of urban reformers in Denver and other cities begins to be felt. |

1896	Local prohibition parties gain strength.
1900-1910	Golden age of progressive reforms throught the region.
1910-1917	Many reforms enacted, libraries built and Progressives accomplish many of their goals.
1916	State prohibition law takes effect.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme have been and are likely to be recorded in most cities and towns of the study area. Populists produced few resources unique to their movement, whereas the Progressives did do much to change the built environment on the Colorado plains with such properties as Denver's Civic Center and the Carnegie libraries that were built in many towns. Also, because of the emphasis on social reform things such as barrooms were closed and the buildings were destroyed or converted for other uses.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Structures include: Civic Centers, Community Centers, Juvenile Courts, Kindergartens, Libraries, Schools (adult education)

Sites include: Boulevards, Parks

Districts include: Civic Centers

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

The Populist and to a lesser extent Progressive eras have received much attention from historians over the years. Especially interesting topics for research have been the personalities involved. Davis Waite, Mayor Speer, Edward Keating, Emily Griffith and many others have had biographies done. As well, many of those involved penned their own interpretations of the events as they perceived them. Because both Populism and Progressivism were national trends, numerous studies have applicable information. Hicks, The Populist Revolt, Nugent's The Tolerant Populists and many other volumes fall into this category. Of most utility locally is Wright's The Politics of Populism; Dissent in Colorado. Progressives have led to even more scholarship than the Populists. Mandatory reading for this period is Hofstadter's The Age of Reform. Others include Mowry's books on Theodore Roosevelt and Link's study of Woodrow Wilson. The general Colorado histories (Ubbelohde, Benson and Smith, A Colorado History and Athearn's The Coloradans) have some information on this period as does Lyle Dorsett's The Queen City. Other local histories are also useful. Newspapers of the era are useful because they took sides on the issues and often carried on public debates on the merits of various reform proposals. Further, manuscript collections and interviews at the Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library

and Norlin Library at the University of Colorado contain information and papers of people involved with the two reform movements and should be consulted for specifics.

### Number/Condition

The exact number and condition of sites associated with this theme can not be ascertained at this time, but a reasonable estimate would put the number under 500. This is because aside from the City Beautiful Movement very few of the reform attempts impacted the built environment. Also, part of the effort to reform the environment called for destruction of resources associated with other themes. Some sites, primarily associated with other themes, are also related to this theme in the sense, as for example, when a community hall was used by a Populist speaker. In other cases there may be changes in the function of certain structures that came about as a result of Populism or Progressivism.

### Data Gaps

- \*Representative meeting halls of populists.
- \*Representative early juvenile detention facilities.
- \*Representative Chautauqua halls (adult education sites).
- \*Representative parks and other beautification projects (outside Denver).

### Future Needs

Presently, surveys such as the Main Street Program should be continued and this theme incorporated into such surveys. Also, the existing surveys should be reexamined to clarify associations of extant resources with this theme. Such work should be done by historians trained and familiar with both documentary resources and field survey techniques.

### Important Resources

Because of the nature of present and future studies in the history profession that lean heavily on the social aspects of the reform movements, cultural resources could play an important documentary role. Resources that explain the need for an urban "clean-up" by 1900, the spread of adult education or the growth of a City Beautiful Movement should be considered important. Also, any resources associated with leaders of the movement should be considered important.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain the need for an urban "clean-up" by 1900?
2. What resources, if any, can explain or document the growth and



local expressions of the City Beautiful Movement?

3. What resources, if any, can document the growth of an adult education movement in the region?
4. What resources, if any, can document or explain the Populist reforms in Colorado?
5. What resources, if any, can document or explain Progressive reforms in Colorado?
6. What resources, if any, can explain or document the role of women in the 1890-1917 reform movements in Colorado's plains?
7. What resources, if any, can explain or document the role and/or impacts of the 1890-1917 reform movements or ethnic or racial minorities in the Colorado plains?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Boulevards: should remain in usable or recognizable condition and retain enough physical integrity to make original construction techniques and materials, functions and any decorative additions readily apparent.

Civic Centers: should remain in original or historic use location and retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Community Centers: same evaluation standards as Civic Centers.

Juvenile Courts: same evaluation standards as Civic Centers.

Kindergartens: same evaluation standards as Civic Center.

Libraries: same evaluation standards as Civic Centers.

Parks: same evaluation standards as Boulevards.

Schools: same evaluation standards as Civic Centers.

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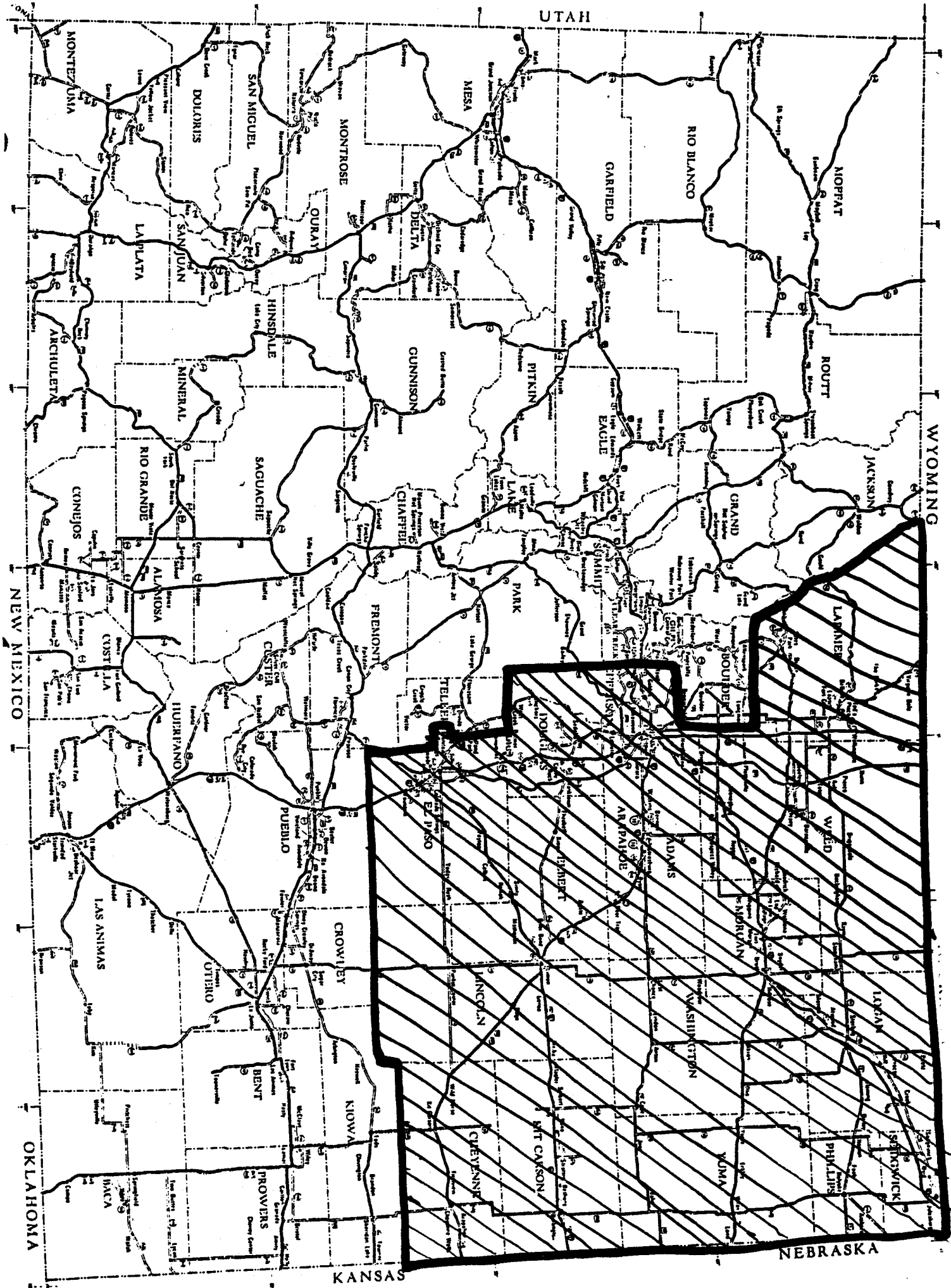
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THE REFORM IMPULSE



14. WELCOMING THE HEALTHSEEKERS AND TOURISTS  
1870-1920NARRATIVE

The plains and foothills of Colorado became a tourist attraction even before the region was heavily settled in 1859. Visitors such as Francis Parkman and William Gilpin visited the area and later wrote of their experiences. During the early 1860s, others such as Horace Greeley and Vice President of the United States Schuyler Colfax toured eastern Colorado. After the first railroads arrived in Denver during 1870, the number of visitors grew quickly. Not only Americans from the Far West, East and Midwest, but also many Europeans came west to behold the majestic plains and gawk in awe at the rugged and spectacular mountains, especially such landmarks as Long's and Pike's Peaks. Early Colorado boosters were quick to realize the fascination the region held and began to promote Colorado vacations. They attempted to tap all visitor markets from those catering to tourists seeking to visit the "Wild West," which was becoming romanticized through popular literature of the late nineteenth century, to those catering to individuals suffering from ill health. For most visitors, the natural environment and scenery were the primary attractions.

The dry climate was advertised as good for vitality and health, especially the "champagne air." People with respiratory problems were especially attracted to the area to seek a cure. Health seekers flocked to the region, especially the areas along the front range. One particular attraction was Manitou Hot Springs, especially after the early 1870s when resort facilities and Colorado Springs began to grow. The springs were originally used by Ute Indians for bathing and cures, and after whites replaced the natives that use continued. The waters were purported to heal maladies from cancer to tuberculosis to venereal disease. The waters were not capable of miraculous cures, but Colorado Springs and its environs did prove to be life giving for thousands. The city developed a reputation as home of the "one-lung" army because many of its citizens suffered from tuberculosis. Hospitals and sanatoriums to house the sick such as Montclair were built in Denver and Colorado Springs and in a few other locations as well.

Colorado Springs, besides being a health resort, also developed in other ways to serve visitors and became a summer home for many from the East and Europe. The town was founded by General William Jackson Palmer. President of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, to be just such a community, where genteel society could develop and flourish. Palmer's associates who joined in the Colorado Springs experiment had ties to England and in its early years the community took on the look and ways of an English country town. This influence was seen in its architecture as well. Because of this phenomenon, the town was referred to by many as "Little London." By the 1880s, some of the "Englishness" had worn off, but the community's genteel support for high culture and the performing arts was active. Many of the more sophisticated traveling shows made Colorado Springs their only stop in the state, and performers readily accepted elsewhere in Colorado were not invited to the "Newport of the Rockies" because they were considered to be lacking talent

or taste. The town fathers furthered this sense of elitism through careful control of building codes and zoning to keep industry out.

In the 1900s, with the advent of automobiles, other towns developed as retreats or summer homes for Denver's elite society, such as Evergreen and Red Feather Lakes.

The rail companies also promoted the growth of tourism. The existence of rail transportation made Colorado's plains and front range easily accessible to people from all parts of the nation. The railroad corporations, independently and in conjunction with local boosters, actively advertised Colorado vacations. Between 1870 and 1920, hundreds of flyers and pamphlets were published and distributed free of charge to prospective vacationers. Tour packages, family rates and fare competition all worked to entice visitors. Some communities, especially Denver, developed a reputation for fine hotels and other accommodations.

The vacation possibilities so widely advertised included the scenery, climate and a chance to see the "Wild West." Most tourists to eastern Colorado felt the visit was not complete without a trip to Pike's Peak. To facilitate their desires, a cog railway was built to carry passengers to the summit. While that mountain held special fascination, the Rockies themselves attracted many visitors, and front range towns became gateways to the mountains for the tourists. Eventually, such thinking led Denver promoters to pressure Congress for creation of the Rocky Mountain National Park. To give visitors a feeling of the "Wild West" dude (visitor) ranches, rodeos and chuck wagon barbeques were developed. Dude ranches in particular became a popular vacation home for visitors who sought to experience the romantic life of a cowboy. Areas such as Red Feather Lakes developed reputations as a place to find the outdoor life.

The tourist industry was well established by 1900. After that date, the major shifts in the industry were to accommodate auto and, later, airplane travelers, making available to them the same attractions that rail visitors had enjoyed.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1840-1860 | Sporadic influxes of visitors to the region.  |
| 1860-1870 | Plains visited by many celebrities such as generals and the vice president.   |
| 1870      | Railroads arrive in Denver and begin promoting tourism.<br><br>First advertisements/reports of health-giving climate in the region. |
| 1872-1875 | Colorado Springs formative years as a town for tourists and genteel society.  |

1870-1920	Era of railroad vacations to Colorado.
1880s	First peak of railroad vacationing.
1900-1915	Second major period of railroad vacationing.
1915	Rocky Mountain National Park founded.
1920	Beginning of auto age tourism.
Post-1945	Boom in auto and airline tourism.

### LOCATION

Cultural resources related to this theme have been recorded throughout the region. Nearly every town had a hotel or motel at one time. Manitou Springs, Colorado Springs and Denver were centers of respiratory sanatoriums, but health camps were found elsewhere also. Dude ranches were scattered throughout the foothills as were vacation cabins and other facilities. Evergreen, Colorado Springs and other foothills areas served as summer homes for the wealthy. Cultural resources have been recorded in all these categories.

### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Picnic Grounds

Structures include: Motor Court, Resort, Hospital Buildings, Grounds, Spa

Districts include: Resort, Sanatorium, Vacation Cabins/Homes, Visitors' Ranches

### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

#### Historical Documentation

Presently there are numerous historic documents available on the theme of tourism and health in the history of Colorado's plains. To date, no comprehensive study has been done, but this undoubtedly will be produced. Rather, one must consult histories of towns, cities and counties in the region. One of the best is Marshall Sprague's Newport in the Rockies that details the history of Colorado Springs. Other tourist cities that have been written about include Estes Park, Red Feather Lakes and Denver. Lyle Dorsett's The Queen City is very useful to understanding the role Denver played in the promotion of tourism. Other studies of railroads and hotels and other facilities also are useful. Of extreme interest are the works of Enos Mills, not only for those interested in Estes Park and Rocky Mountain National Park, but to those seeking an appreciation for the heavy emphasis placed on Colorado's scenery by promoters of the World War I era. Collections of railroad information and promotional pamphlets at the Colorado Historical Society further elaborate on that topic. Other manuscripts and diaries in

the historical society library, Denver Public Library, and Norlin Library at the University of Colorado also contain information and impressions of the region by travelers. Guidebooks for tourists published over the years as well as railway guides offer insights as to the facilities available and attractions over the years.

### Number/Condition

While the data are insufficient to ascertain the exact amount of resources that existed or once may have existed associated with this theme, a reasonable estimate would be over 1,000. Nearly every town at one time or another had a hotel. The more famous resort towns such as Estes Park or Colorado Springs had many tourist/health facilities at one time. Further, many lodges, cabins, trails and parks in the foothills that once existed have been destroyed or rebuilt over the years. These same things have happened to other resources, especially in rural areas that were bypassed by major highways or lost rail service causing the facilities to be abandoned or modified for other uses.

### Data Gaps

- \*Presently, with the level of survey that has been conducted in the more heavily used tourist areas of the region, no significant data gaps exist.
- \*Comprehensive identification of all facilities used for mountain recreation in the region.
- \*Comprehensive association of facilities with various eras of the tourist industry.

### Future Needs

Surveys to identify all tourist-related facilities should be undertaken at some future date, but this work should be done only after the Colorado Preservation Office data base is further refined and present survey forms manipulated and/or completed to avoid duplication of effort. Also, documentary research should be done before fieldwork is undertaken. Such an effort would require the special skills of the historian.

### Important Resources

Because of the large number of resources associated with this theme, only those that represent unique features are associated with important people or areas, such as Rocky Mountain National Park, or are representative of eras or trends, such as railroad hotels or motels, should be considered important. Also, those that serve to document or refute present interpretations should be considered important.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can further explain the evolution of Colorado plains tourism?

2. What resources, if any, can further explain rail-borne tourism in the Colorado plains?
3. What resources, if any, can further explain auto-borne tourism in the Colorado plains?
4. What resources, if any, can help further explanations of Colorado's use as a health-giving location.
5. What resources, if any, can help further document or explain the use of certain areas as weekend summer retreats for the urban upper-class?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Campground: should retain enough physical integrity to clearly distinguish function, borders and any man-made facilities at the site.

Hotel: should be in original or historic use location and should retain enough physical integrity to readily distinguish dimensions, function, methods and materials of construction.

Lodge: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

Motor Hotel: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

Picnic Grounds: same evaluation standards as Campground.

Resort: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

Sanitorium: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

Spa: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

Vacation Cabins: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

Visitors' Ranch: same evaluation standards as Hotel.

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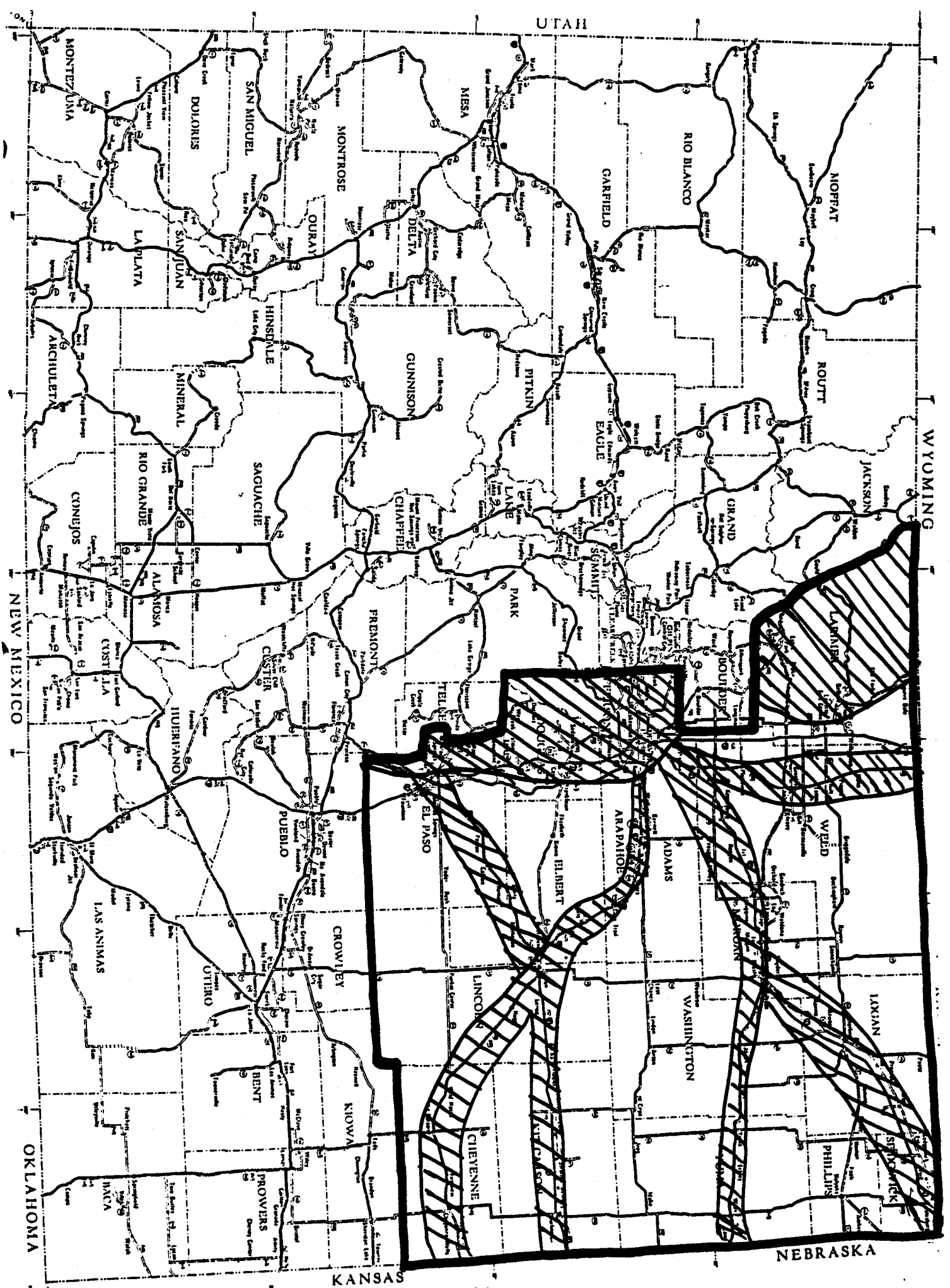
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Also, see local histories and collections of pamphlets such as railroad companies at regional depositories.

EARLY TOURISM





15. POST-1900 AGRICULTURE--SUGAR BEETSNARRATIVE

The first thirty years of the twentieth century were a time of radical change for farmers on the Colorado plains in both the irrigated and dry-lands areas. The most significant modifications to irrigated agriculture came with the rapid growth of the sugar beet industry. The crash of the 1890s had found agrarians along the ditches heavily in debt and unable to meet their obligations. To meet their many needs, the farmers began looking for new crops. After the turn of the century, sugar beets became viable as a cash crop.

While sugar beet growing in the western world dated to the time of Napoleon, it was not until the 1870s that farmers in the South Platte Valley began to experiment with beets. The crop grew well in eastern Colorado's soil and climate if irrigation was used. From 1870 to 1900, the tests continued with help from the state agricultural college at Fort Collins. The crop did not initially attract many farmers, however, because the only markets were out of state. During the 1880s, factories to process beets into sugar began to appear in the West. By 1901, John F. Campion and Charles Boettcher, builders of the state's first beet plant in Grand Junction, turned their attention to the South Platte Valley while others eyed the Arkansas River as a potential area for sugar cultivation. The entire area was alive with talk of the new crop. Within a few years, factories sprang up at towns along the region's two rivers. By 1905, "beet mania" gripped the state's plains. By 1910, approximately 100,000 acres were growing beets for the factories. Great Western, Holly, National and other smaller companies were involved. The system was based on contracts with farmers to set prices and to allow the plants to plan ahead for production needs. New ditches and reservoirs were built to cash in on the bonanza. Great Western went so far as to build its own railroad to collect the crops.

Within a few years of their introduction, the beets had captured everyone's attention and problems began to appear. The most crucial factor was the lack of labor. Beet cultivation was labor intensive and strenuous work. Crouching, stooping, and crawling were all part of the hand labor involved. Americans found this type of work distasteful, underpaid, and degrading, as well as having a labor shortage in the region. To rectify this, the sugar companies sent labor recruiters across the nation and outside the United States looking for people to labor in the beet fields.

One group that found the promises of beet work attractive were the Germans from Russia, also called Volga Germans or German-Russians. These people had begun immigrating from the Russian Steppe farms during the late nineteenth century and settling on the Great Plains. Younger family members who could not afford land in Kansas and new arrivals from Russia were lured by the sugar companies' offers of jobs, land and opportunity. Large numbers moved to Colorado's plains, a region topographically and climatically much

like what they had left in Russia. Many began as contract workers, but hard work and thrift quickly led them to land ownership. Their shared ethnic heritage, language, and sense of community self-help aided them to make economic progress. But keeping their language, habits and building styles lead to occasional charges of clannishness by other Coloradans. Nevertheless, the Volga Germans became well-accepted members of the area's population.

Even with the influx of these new people, the beet growers found themselves short of labor and the recruiters went out again to hunt for workers. Two more ethnic groups responded, Japanese and Japanese-Americans, many from California, and Mexicans. The Japanese relocated to Colorado's plains in family groups, as the German-Russians had. Many saved their earnings and bought farms. Others, unhappy in Colorado, relocated to California after 1910. The Mexican laborers primarily came to the beet fields as single men, either unmarried or leaving the family behind until their savings were sufficient to move the family. Others spent the growing season in Colorado and returned to their homeland to winter. They were the least accepted new people in the region, especially along the South Platte. In some towns, they were forced to live in segregated areas, and in other areas the sugar companies augmented this separation by building housing for the Mexicans away from the Anglo population.

The sugar beet industry prospered and expanded throughout the period 1900 to 1920. World War I demands for sugar helped the Colorado plains industry prosper and farmers expanded their operations. By the end of the war, the state led all others in beet production, and the plains region contributed more than any other area. After the war, the demand for sugar fell off and the growers had to slowly retrench. Throughout the early period and into the 1920s, beet growers and processing plants not only made sugar but also found the beet tops and processed pulp made good cattle feed. This not only provided more income, but also helped stimulate stock feeding as an industry in the region. Sugar beets and their cultivation remained as an important part of the plains agricultural economy until the 1930s when the Great Depression crippled much of the region.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1870      | Experiments with sugar beets started in South Platte Valley.   |
| 1899      | Grand Junction sugar factory opens and starts statewide excitement.  |
| 1900-1910 | Initial boom in sugar beet production and rapid expansion of sugar factories along South Platte and Arkansas River.<br><br>German-Russians hired as workers. |
| 1905-1910 | Large numbers of Japanese brought in as workers.   |

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1905-1910 | Mexican workers recruited for field hands.<br><br>New water projects and lands put into production.<br><br>Beet by-products introduced as cattle feed. |
| 1910-1920 | Beet production continues to rise, especially to meet World War I demands.   |
| 1920-1930 | Production levels off as post-war demand softens.<br><br>Feeding of beet by-products to cattle continues.  |

LOCATION

Cultural resources related to this theme have been and are likely to be recorded along the two major river drainages, South Platte and Arkansas in the region and along the front range from Longmont north to Fort Collins. Rural areas and farms have resources related to this theme as do most larger towns of the river valleys where sugar plants were located. The line of the Great Western Railroad and other companies serving the area have facilities (cultural resources) related to this theme.

CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Structures include: Beet-loading Facilities, Beet Processing Plant Complex, Company Housing, Farm House, Worker Housing, Barn, Outbuildings, Silos, German-Russian Facilities (Barns, Churches, Dwellings (Cottages), Community Halls, Centers), Migrant Housing, Railroads.

Districts include: Beet Processing Plant Complex, Company Housing, Farmstead, Irrigation Systems

Materials include: Early Twentieth Century Farm Implements and Machinery

THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

Historical Documentation

The sugar beet industry and the almost synonymous German-Russians of Colorado's plains have only come into their own with historians during the past ten years. The definitive study of Great Western Sugar Company was completed in 1981 as a doctoral dissertation by William May at the University of Colorado. Other lesser works have been completed, but if but one source is sought, seek out May. Equally interesting but not as detailed is Markoff's dissertation on the National Sugar Company. Holly, American Crystal, and less important companies have been written up too. The German-Russians, an integral part of the industry, have come under the historians watchful eye. Kenneth Rock had led this effort with his statewide study of the ethnic group, and many others have assisted and followed his work. Sidney Heitman assembled a number of these works in Germans From Russian in Colorado. Beyond these

efforts are fictionalized and partially fictionalized accounts of German-Russian life on the Colorado plains. The most useful archives for research on this ethnic group are located at Fort Collins in the German-Russian Study Center. Other materials are housed at the Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library, the Colorado State University Library, Norlin Library at the University of Colorado, and at the State Archives. Sugar beet company papers are located at Norlin Library, Colorado Historical Society, and the Denver Public Library. Promotional literature of the best companies, Chambers of Commerce and other sources are housed at the aforementioned locations also. Newspapers of the region are further sources of information on the topic.

#### Number/Condition

While the present data base is insufficient to ascertain the number of resources that once existed or may have existed a reasonable estimate would put the total above 2,000, aside from fields. Part of the lack of data in this theme comes from the fact that not all areas used for beet growing have adequately been surveyed and, at the same time, some sugar plants are still in operation and have not been included in surveys. The condition of resources associated with this theme varies from intact and operating, to destroyed or badly deteriorated.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Presently many of the urban resources have been recorded.
- \*Cumulative totals of rural resources associated with this theme.
- \*Representative 1910 beet farm.
- \*Cumulative totals of German-Russian associated resources.

#### Future Needs

At some future date, a survey of beet sugar industry resources and to a lesser extent, the German-Russians should be undertaken. However, it would be advisable to delay such inventories, except in crisis situations, until more documentary historic research has been completed on the industry. Any such inventory should utilize the special skills of both the historian (agricultural and cultural) and historic archaeologist.

#### Important Resources

Resources that document the importance of or growth of the beet sugar industry to Colorado between 1900 and 1945 should be considered important, as should those that document or further understanding of the technology of beet sugar processing and growing. Those resources that aid historical understanding of the German-Russians in the twentieth century on the Colorado plains also are important.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can help understanding of the technology of beet sugar processing?
2. What resources, if any, can help understanding of beet growing?
3. What resources, if any, can explain or document the growth and importance of beet sugar cultivation to the Colorado plains in the twentieth century?
4. What resources, if any, can explain or document the role of the German-Russians in the Colorado plains development during the twentieth century?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Beet Loading Facility: should be in original or historic use location (unless portable) and retain enough physical integrity to make function, method of operation, capacity and construction materials readily apparent.

Beet Processing Plant Complex: should retain enough of the original or historic use structures and have enough physical integrity to make method of operations, dimensions, spatial relationships and materials of construction readily apparent.

Farmstead: should have dwellings and enough outbuildings present to ascertain spatial relationships and have enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, materials and methods of construction readily apparent.

German-Russian Facilities: same evaluation standards as Farmstead.

Irrigation Systems: see engineering context report for evaluation standards.

Migrant Housing: same evaluation standards as Farmstead.

Railroads: same evaluation standards as Beet Processing Plant.

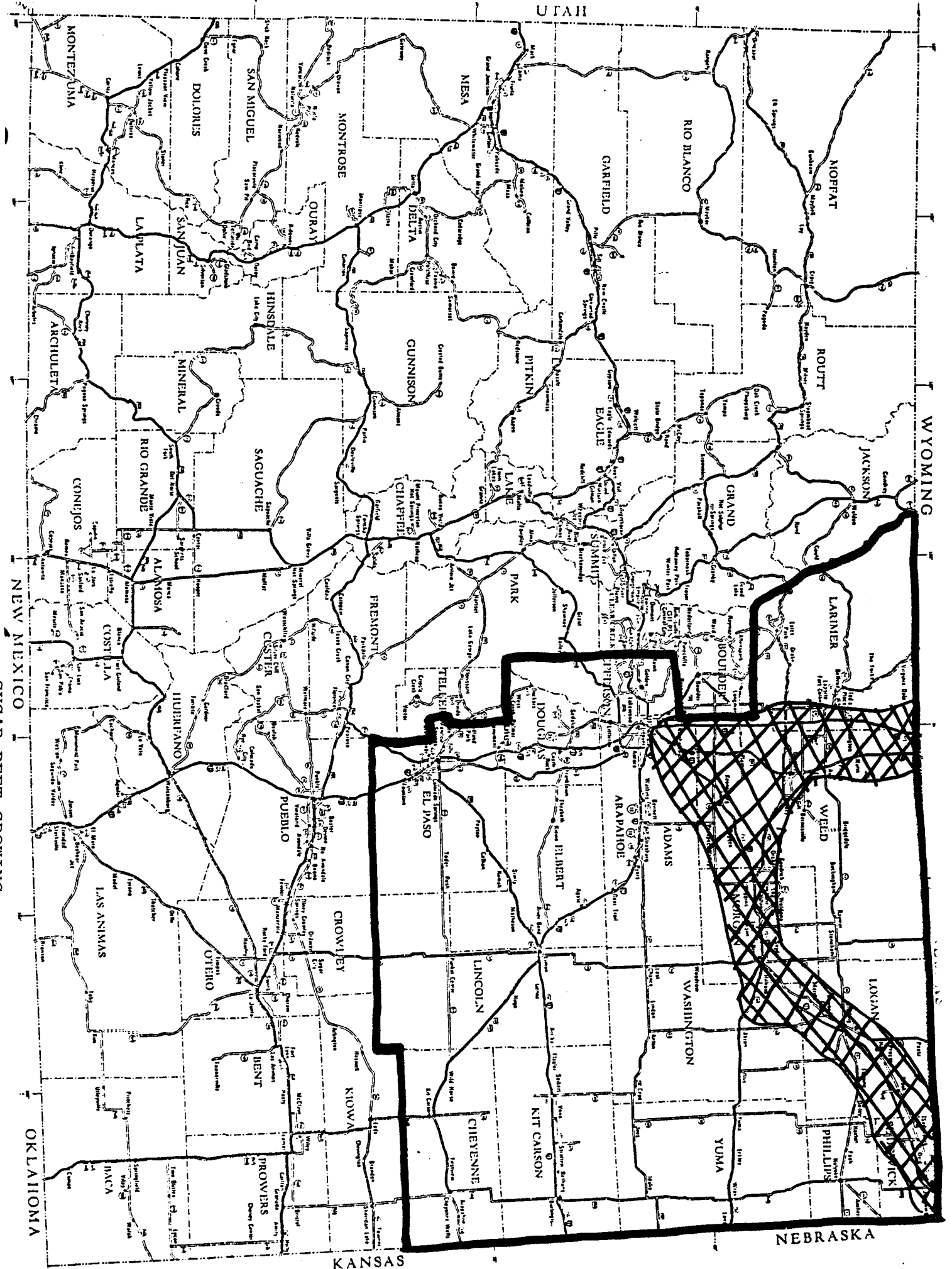
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Also see county and local histories for early farming in specific areas.

SUGAR BEET GROWING



16. POST-1900 AGRICULTURE--DRYLAND FARMINGNARRATIVE

The early years of the twentieth century witnessed a new wave of promotion and interest in farming on the drylands of Colorado's plains. The dry years of the 1890s were quickly put out of mind as promoters, scientists and others worked to conquer the arid lands. Changes in federal land policy, new crops and techniques, as well as rising prices, all encouraged a new group of settlers to try their luck where only ten years earlier failures had occurred.

The state agricultural college and U.S. Department of Agriculture worked together in experiments for new crops and techniques. Cheyenne Wells and Akron as well as other locations were sites of these tests. The results showed that new crops such as certain hybrids of Russian wheat could survive and grow well during dry summers. The wheats, and further south across the Arkansas River, broom corn became the two primary dryland crops during the period from 1905 until the 1930s. The experimental farms also perfected a system of fallow fields and rotation to allow the soil to absorb and accumulate moisture during the off years of crop production. These techniques were workable only if large acreages were controlled by individuals and farmed as a unit. Also, advances in the design of plows and other implements as well as the introduction of gasoline and steam tractors made it possible for one person to till these larger tracts. Windmills were used to raise water for livestock and domestic uses.

The advances in dryland techniques led many to believe that federal land laws had to be changed if farming of that type was to be economically viable. In 1891, the General Revision Act took the Timber Culture and Desert Land Acts off the books, leaving only the Homestead Act. That remaining law provided for claiming of 160 acres, an area far too small to provide a living in the dryland areas if practices such as leaving fields fallow were to be used. From 1900 to 1909, lobbyists from the Great Plains appealed to Congress for changes. In 1909, the Enlarged Homestead Act was passed allowing 320-acre plots to be claimed. Boosters of dry farming felt this did not go far enough, and they continued their campaign in Washington, D.C. In 1912, the Borah Act was passed that eased occupancy requirements, but did not give away larger tracts. Finally, as World War I demands for produce grew Congress passed the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916 allowing an individual to claim up to 640 acres (1 section) in arid regions. These legal changes and the early twentieth century dryland farming boom caused almost all public land in the Colorado plains to pass to private ownership.

The decade 1910-1920 was the period of most rapid growth in dryland farming. Land law changes and wartime high prices made many feel that permanent prosperity had arrived. Promoters had a field day as the glowing statistics accumulated. Private land companies, railroads, and the State Board of Immigration all joined to popularize the ideas of dryland farming. One unique movement of this period was the agricultural colony of Dearfield, not



far from Fort Morgan. The effort was organized by Oliver T. Jackson in 1911 to be a new utopian black community on the plains where members of that race could escape the city evils of Denver. Few Colorado Afro-Americans found the offer inviting, but in Chicago and other eastern cities more enthusiasm was generated. By the close of 1911, sixty families had moved to Dearfield, and from then until the early 1920s the colony flourished. In 1921, over 700 people lived there and all future predictions were for continued prosperity. However, with World War I over and European agriculture recovering, demand slackened and prices began to fall. Many Dearfieldites lost their enthusiasm and drifted away. By the end of the 1930s, the village was just one of many ghost towns on the plains.

The 1910s were a wet period in the region and this, combined with high prices, caused nearly all the drylanders to plow up marginal land and put it into production. To do so, they borrowed heavily for equipment and to buy land. When the war ended, this vastly increased acreage meant that much more was being grown than could be absorbed by the contracting markets. As prices fell, the farmers were forced either to give up their land or continue producing more to meet all their debts. Farmers tried to maintain their businesses throughout the decade but no relief came until 1927 and 1928 when prices began to rise and residents talked of a new prosperity. This soon proved to be only a short respite as the Great Depression began in 1929.

Many of those who had been able to hold on earlier found themselves unable to keep the bill collectors at bay. By 1930, 1931 and 1932, large numbers of farmers were unable to go further and foreclosures or tax sales kept auctioneers busy throughout the dryland areas. Farmers watched as their neighbors were shorn of land, house and possessions. By 1931 and 1932, those who were still in the region began looking for direct action they could take to keep their land. Their patience had worn thin, and it became common at auctions for well-armed neighbors to see to it that a dollar was the highest bid at an auction, that is if the judge, deputy sheriff and auctioneer were not run off at gunpoint. By 1932, Larimer and Sedgwick Counties were becoming notorious for this type of activity. County courthouses were stormed by angry farmers and, yet, no relief for their plight was forthcoming. The situation continued to deteriorate until 1933 when Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal was enacted and began to have effects in the region.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1900-1905 | Early experiments and search for usable crops for dryland farming.<br><br>Promotion of dryland farming starts. |
| 1905-1910 | Boom for dryland farming and promotion active.   |
| 1909      | Enlarged Homestead Act passed.<br><br>Research at Akron and Cheyenne Wells continues.                          |
| 1911      | Dearfield Colony (black) founded.  |

1912	Borah Act passed.
1915-1920	World War I market leads to boom in dryland farming and over-expansion.
1916	Stock Raising Homestead Act passed.
1920-1927	Market collapses and prices fall.
1927-1928	Market rises and talk of new boom coming.
1929-1932	Great Depression leads to many tax sales and farm resistance/violence.

### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme have been and are likely to be recorded in the central and eastern parts of the Colorado plains of Weld, Logan, Sedgwick, Phillips, Morgan, Yuma, Washington, Adams, Arapahoe, Elbert, Lincoln, Kit Carson, Cheyenne and Kiowa Counties. No resources associated with this theme would be found in areas irrigated before 1945, especially along the South Platte and Arkansas Rivers.

### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Roads

Structures include: Farmsteads, Grain Elevators, Railroads, Windmills

Districts include: Agricultural Towns, Farmsteads

### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

#### Historical Documentation

The field of historiography on dryland farming is almost as barren as some of the wheat fields of the early 1930s. To date only a few studies have even been completed, and these are not as detailed or inclusive as would be useful. Alvin Stienel's history of Colorado agriculture is probably the most detailed volume available. Jim Hanson's study of the Soil Conservation Service which is currently underway will undoubtedly shed new light on the dryland farmers. Another useful book is Paul Bonnifield's The Dust Bowl because it explains the popular techniques and tools of the drylanders and how they impacted the environment. For the role of promotion in the spread of dryland farming, a good starting place is Dorsett's Queen City or 1900-1910 issues of The Trail. For changes in federal land policy and federal involvement in the movement, one should consult Roy Robbins Our Landed Heritage and other studies of land policy. Compared to the secondary sources, the vast amount of primary material currently available is staggering. Archives at Colorado State University are of utmost importance because of the

active role that school played in testing and developing dryland crops and techniques. Beyond that, interviews and manuscript collections at the Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library, and the University of Colorado (Norlin Library) have usable information. Publications of the U.S. Department of Agriculture from the early twentieth century not only offer summaries of dryland activity, but also contain "how to" information distributed to farmers at the time. Local newspapers, while being booster literature, also provide some insights into the trials and tribulations of the drylanders. The Works Progress Administration town file, completed during the late 1930s, also provides some useful data for the theme.

#### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the number, type and condition of resources associated with this theme that once existed or may have existed. A reasonable estimate, however, would put the total at over 5,000 if all types are considered. Because these were widely dispersed throughout the region, not all have been adequately recorded. Further, many were destroyed or abandoned either by their owners or by later residents as soon of the marginal lands were taken out of production during the 1930s and returned to rangeland. This was especially true on the Pawnee Grasslands where federal authorities removed resources. All of these forces plus use, vandals, Americana Hunters, weather, and a certain lack of historical interest have served to degrade the resources associated with this theme. There is presently a reasonable possibility that all resources associated with this theme will never be recorded in surveys. The early Preservation Office survey of the state did locate some of the ghost towns and resources associated with this theme.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Cumulative totals of all resources associated with this theme that once existed.
- \*Representative dryland farm of the 1910s era.
- \*Representative pluviculture technology of the early twentieth century.

#### Future Needs

At some future date, cultural resource surveys of the Colorado plains should be undertaken. To be most cost effective, these efforts should be conducted in conjunction with other agricultural history surveys of the study area. The cost of such an effort could be controlled by using aerial photography and, if possible, comparative aerial photography to minimize field time and transportation expenses. Such an undertaking would require the special skills of the historian and someone able to interpret aerial photos.

## Important Resources

The large number of resources associated with this theme that once existed but may not have survived makes many of those extant important. The resources that document the rapid spread of the dryland frontier are important as are those that explain the new technology available to dryland farmers after 1900. Resources that document or explain promotional or colony dryland farms are also of importance to this theme. Further, those that document or explain the conditions such as dust bowls or over-expansion are also important.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain the rapid spread of dryland farming after 1900?
2. What resources, if any, can explain or document the technology available to dryland farmers after 1900?
3. What resources, if any, can explain or document the role of promotion in the spread of dryland farming after 1900?
4. What resources, if any, can explain, document or offer re-interpretations of dryland farming on the plains environment?
5. What resources, if any, can explain or document the role of minorities, ethnic groups or women in the post-1900 dryland farming frontier?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Agricultural Towns: see urban RP3 context for evaluation standards

Farmsteads: the dwellings and outbuildings should retain enough physical integrity to make function, spatial relationships, materials, methods and dates of construction/modification readily apparent. May or may not still be in use.

Grain Elevators: should be in original or historic use location and should retain enough physical integrity to make function, materials of construction and capacity readily apparent. May or may not be in use.

Implements: enough parts should remain to make function, size, capacity and motive power readily apparent.

Railroads: railroad or roadbeds should retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions and appliances readily apparent. See railroads on the plains theme analysis for further information.

Roads: should retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions and any paving materials used readily apparent. May or may not still be in use.

Tractors: same evaluations standards as Implements.

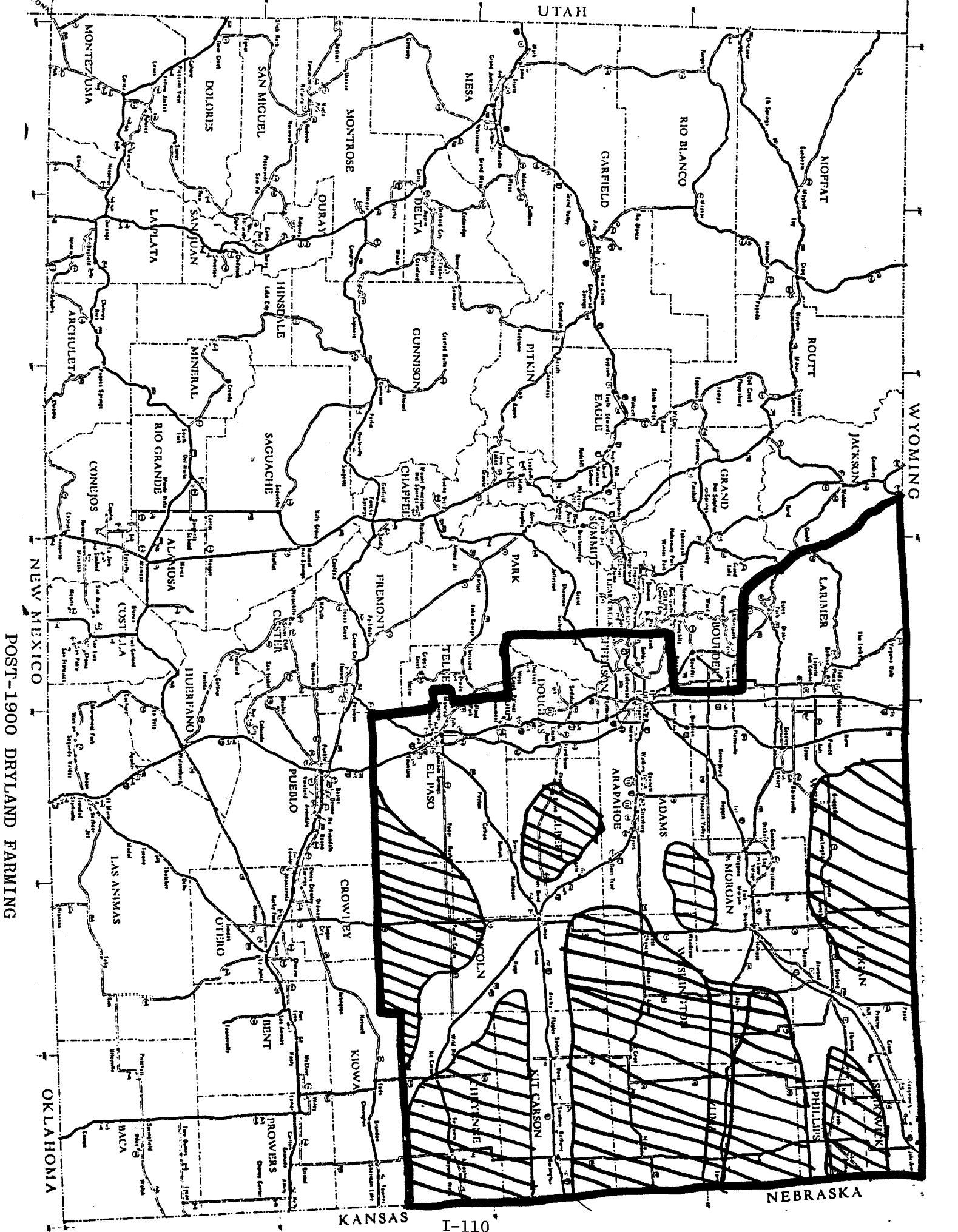
Windmills: same evaluation standards as grain elevators.

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James S. Payne. "The Beginnings of Irrigation in Colorado."  
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Also see county and local histories for early farming in specific areas.



UTAH

WYOMING

NEW MEXICO

POST-1900 DRYLAND FARMING

OKLAHOMA

KANSAS

NEBRASKA

17. RANCHING SINCE 1900NARRATIVE

Ranching during the late nineteenth century was predominated by open range stock growing but by the 1890s this was changing rapidly. The industry was affected by technological modifications including fencing of rangelands, supplying herds with winter feed and further refinement and upgradings of herds. Changes in the climate and the fencing and plowing of rangelands for dryland farming also had a great affect on the ranching industry at this time. Improvements in methods of transportation also had an influence as railroads and later trucks were used almost exclusively to move stock to market. All these changes occurred as ranchers tried to recover from the disasters of the late 1880s.

The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed plains stockmen reorganizing their operations after the Panic of 1893. Cattle prices had begun a resurgence in 1890 but this was reversed quickly as the depression swept the land. The nineties were the last attempts at reviving open range ranching, but by 1900 these efforts were abandoned as new, more dependable techniques were adopted. The first of these was the fencing of pastures, which started earlier. Many had not realized that lands with barriers required that feed be provided for winter and also that the plains grasses needed time to recover after it had been grazed. These requirements led to pasture rotations, a new emphasis on hay, forage and alfalfa growing, and the development of feed lots. Such changes eventually led to specialization in which some cattlemen raised calves and then sold them to others for fattening and finishing for market. By the 1920s and 1930s, both types of stock tending were being practiced on the plains, and the area became a major exporter of unfinished stock to the Midwest. Feedlot operators found their job much easier by 1910 as the beet sugar industry grew. Beet tops and pulp were found to be highly nutritious for cattle and many sugar farmers supplemented their income by stock raising. The general shift toward feeding also led ranchers to grow some crops while buying produce from farmers in the area.

When the range was restocked after the 1880s disasters, stockmen took the opportunity to improve and upgrade livestock. The Longhorn were replaced with many purebreds, such as herefords and angus cattle. Others experimented with cross-breeds in order to develop cattle that were capable of surviving on the plains, but which produced more beef than the longhorns. At the same time, veterinary science was making great strides in livestock health and disease control. Many of the ailments that previously had devastated whole herds were being controlled and eradicated.

One change that made control easier was the end of trail driving. By 1900 all of the Colorado plains were well served by railroads so it was no longer necessary to drive cattle for days, past other herds, to get them to market. By the 1920s, drives of a day or two to railheads were no longer needed. As the rural road system expanded by the 1920s and as developments in internal combustion technology made trucks more dependable, many ranchers

chose this method to take their animals to market.

Sheep raising in the area during this period changed, but less dramatically than the cattle industry. Many cattlemen, finding the market for beef depressed during the 1890s, began tending sheep and their numbers increased throughout the decade. Feeding of sheep became more popular and changes in transportation limited the amount of trailing done with the flocks. Even as cattle prices rose between 1910 and 1920, the number of sheep stayed constant in some parts of the area and increased elsewhere. Both types of stock raising experienced booms during World War I as did other agricultural activities. This strong market caused increases in herd size, but this growth was limited by the animals' natural reproduction rates.

During the 1920s, stock raisers found themselves plagued with many of the same problems that other agrarians faced: falling prices and over supplies of meat. Both sheepmen and cattle growers had borrowed heavily during the previous decade to take advantage of the price boom. As the market declined, more and more cattle were raised to try and meet debt payments. In the twenties, the ranchers also experienced a period of adjustment to the presence of the large number of dryland farms. Each new homestead meant another section of land removed from grazing. This contracting land base meant that not only were ranchers forced to do more and more feeding, but also that areas they previously could use for additional grazing were no longer available. Even as these farm lands were abandoned, it could take as long as ten years for the range to revegetate for grazing. By 1925, many stockmen had made the necessary adjustments and looked to the future as a new, less chaotic period of sustained prosperity.

This situation was altered radically during the first two years of the 1930s. The start of the Great Depression in 1929 caused meat prices to fall quickly. This was furthered when ranchers dumped their animals on the market and the over supply glutted the market. Stock raisers joined their farmer neighbors in protesting and seeking government help for their plight. Only the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency in 1933 presented some hope for the future.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1890-1900	Cattle raisers search for viable alternatives to open range techniques.  Sheep number increase.
1900-1910	Spread of feed lots and other things to care for and fatten cattle, beet pulp used.
1900-1920	Growth of dryland farming leads to decreased rangeland.
1910-1920	Boom time for animal raisers to meet World War I demands, expansion of herds.



- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1920-1925 | Meat prices decline and some herds reduced in size, others maintain or increase to meet debts. |
| 1925-1929 | Slow market increases leads to appearance of new prosperity.                                   |
| 1929-1933 | Drastic collapse leads to many bankruptcies. They protest and call for government aid.         |

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme can be found throughout the region. These are not limited to rural areas because many towns had stockyards and sales facilities. Because of the growth of feedlot operations, many irrigated regions contain resources associated with this theme. Concentrations of cultural resources attributable to this theme are in an area east of a line about 5 to 10 miles east of Interstate 25.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Structures include: Corral, Feedlot/Facilities, Fences, Line Shacks, Railroad Shipping Pens, Ranches, Ranch House, Barn, Bunk House, Outbuildings, Stock Pens, Sheep Tending Facilities, Stock Watering Facilities/Ponds, Stockyards, Truck Loading Facilities, Veterinarian Offices/Hospitals

Districts include: Ranches, Stockyards

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DOCUMENTATION

##### Historical Documentation

The historic community has yet to closely examine the changes that have taken place in Colorado plains ranching during the twentieth century. Possibly this is because many historians, especially of the West, tend to view things after 1900 as not being historical. Also, by 1900, Colorado lost much of its uniqueness and has been included in national studies. Nevertheless, some studies have been and are being done. Ora Peake's volume on the range cattle industry, and the Goff and McCaffree book about the Colorado Cattlegrower's Association are examples. No doubt Jim Hanson's study of the Soil Conservation Service will add further to present understanding of the post-1900 stock raising industry. Very useful, but somewhat dated, is David Henderson's "Beef Cattle Industry in Colorado," a master's thesis at the University of Colorado. Beyond these rather scanty secondary sources, many primary sources are available for use by future researchers. Records of the agriculture college at Colorado State University should prove very useful because of the leadership role that school played in Colorado ranch technology and methodology. Other records at the Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library and University of Colorado also prove useful for research on this topic. The records of the State Department of Agriculture and other state agencies such as branch inspectors as well as publications and reports of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are useful.

In the future, hopefully more information especially secondary sources, will become available.

#### Number/Condition

The data are insufficient to determine the number, type and condition of resources associated with this theme. However, estimates would put the number at over 10,000 including all the range facilities. One reason that a precise number cannot be ascertained is that many of the resources are still in use and others were destroyed or modified after World War II. The other forces that have served to degrade the cultural resources are "Americana Hunters," vandals, scrap dealers and the weather or dereliction. Also, continued use has caused modifications and wear on the resources. A further complication is that much twentieth century stock raising has taken place in conjunction with farming or sugar beet raising and clear thematic associations have not been drawn.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Representative ranch of period 1905-1915.
- \*Representative feedlot from the early twentieth century.
- \*Representative examples of early loading facilities for trucks.
- \*Representative early examples of range vegetation manipulation.
- \*Representative early dual purpose farm/ranch for feeding and breeding of cattle.

#### Future Needs

At some future date, cultural resources surveys should be undertaken to locate and record all extant resources associated with this theme. Such an undertaking should take full advantage of the present data base, such as the tax records and maps, as well as the technology of aerial reconnaissance since many landowners may not permit surveyors onto their ranches. This survey could best be conducted as part of an overall effort to survey twentieth century agriculture resources on the plains. Such undertakings would require the special skills of the historian, historic archaeologist and aerial photo interpreter.

#### Important Resources

Reaching a statement of importance about resources associated with stock raising after 1900 is difficult because many of the resources are still in use and very significant to their owners. However, certain factors should be considered when evaluating the present cultural resource base for this theme. Those resources that contribute to an understanding of the changes ranching experienced, both in technique and technology, should be considered important as should those that document the shift from open range to controlled feeding operations. Also, those resources that document the use

of water in twentieth century stockraising and efforts at soil conservation and early range vegetation manipulation should be considered important.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain twentieth century changes in ranching technology and methodology?
2. What resources, if any, can explain the role of minorities, ethnic groups and/or women in twentieth century ranching?
3. What resources, if any, can explain the evolution of range vegetation manipulation?
4. What resources, if any, can explain the development of feedlots in the region?
5. What resources, if any, can explain the development of dual farm/livestock operations during the twentieth century?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Corral: should be in original or historic use location and enough of structure should retain physical integrity to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Feedlot: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Fences: should retain enough physical integrity to make dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Line Shacks: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Railroad Shipping Pens: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Ranches: enough of the dwellings and outbuildings should remain to make spatial relationships readily apparent and structures should retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Sheep Facilities: same evaluation standards as Corrals.

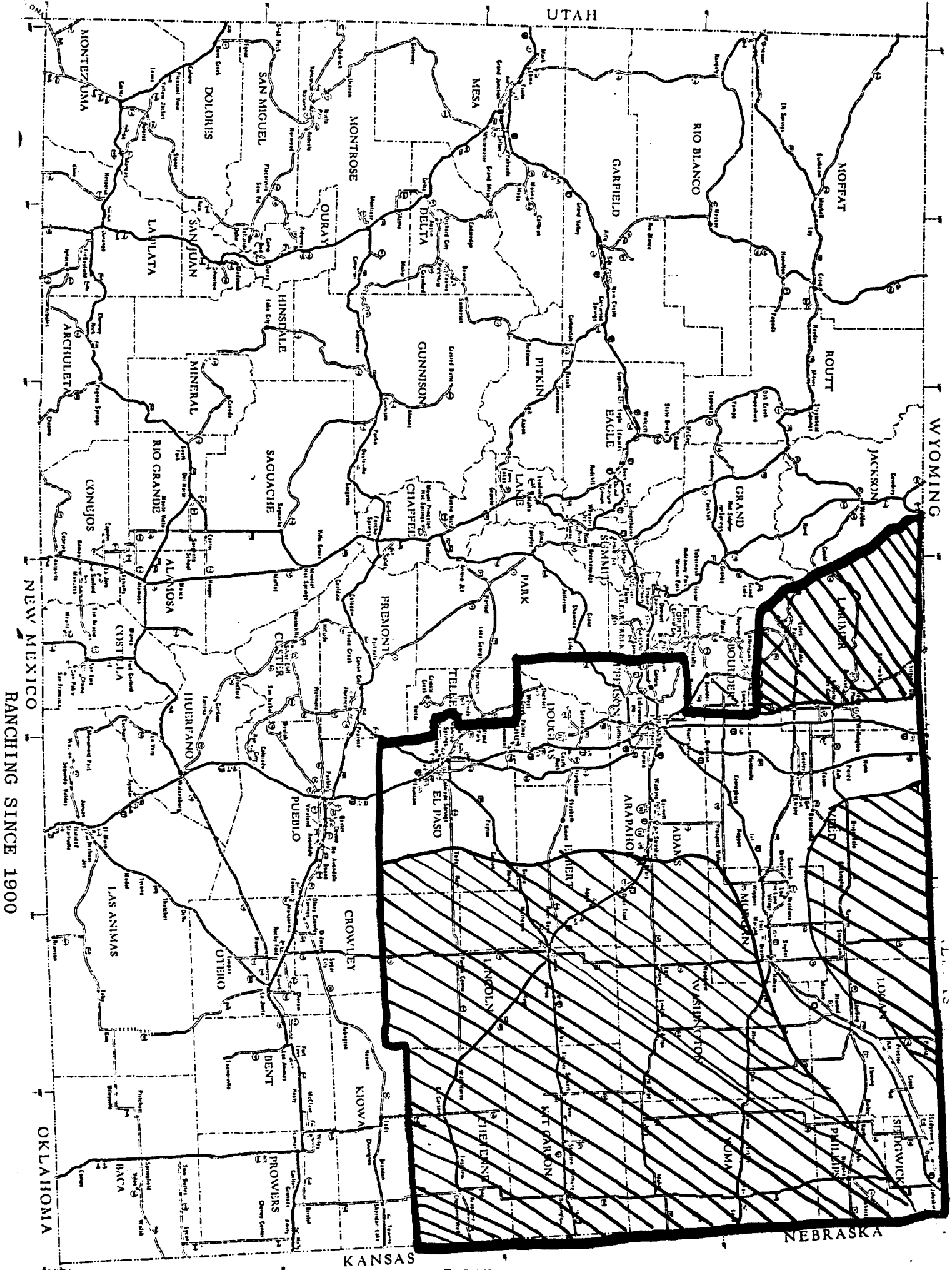
Stock Watering Facilities: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Stockyards: same evaluation standards as Corral.

Truck Facilities: same evaluation standards as Corral.

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- Coff and McCaffree. Century in the Saddle. Denver: Colorado  
Cattlemen's Centennial Commission, 1967.
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Arthur H. Clark Co., 1937.



RANCHING SINCE 1900

18. THE AUTO AGE, 1890-1945NARRATIVE

One of the greatest changes that impacted Colorado's plains after 1900 was the rapid way in which Americans embraced the automobile. The internal combustion engine led not only to the building of new roads and highways, but also led to changes in mining, development of an oil industry, and great social changes rooted in the new mobility. These changes and new industries grew rapidly between 1900 and 1930 and continued well after World War II.

Between 1900 and 1910, as motorcar ownership spread, the plains became caught up in a national fever to build new highways. This actually started in the 1890s when bicyclists lobbied state governments for support of the Good Roads Movement. Once autos appeared in numbers, their owners also joined the effort. City dwellers and boosters, especially in Denver and Colorado Springs, saw the opportunity to increase tourism and quickly pointed this fact out to legislators. Between 1910 and 1920, smaller communities began to see the benefits of new highways and called for further construction.

This same period saw the first federal involvement in road building. One of the earliest efforts, a coast to coast motorway, U.S. Highway 40, crossed the plains and entered Denver. By 1930 many federal roads had been built and numerous plains communities began to realize the benefits. Many of these roads closely paralleled the routes of earlier railroads. Towns along the railroad routes that formerly oriented their commercial activities toward the depot rearranged to serve the auto travelers. This became most obvious as mainstreet strips on the highways appeared as did new businesses such as gasoline stations, auto garages, motor courts, auto sales locations and drive-ins.

The impacts of automobiles on tourism in the region led to vast growth and changes for the industry. Publicity efforts such as the first auto trip to the top of Pike's Peak in 1913 had the desired results and soon many copied the feat and the mountain found a new role in the tourist industry. Denver with its highway connections began advertising itself as the Gateway to the Rockies and built a system of mountain parks, such as Red Rocks, to facilitate camping by auto visitors. Other towns looked for equal attractions and built campgrounds, roadside picnic areas and rest stops for tourists. While the new boom started between 1910 and 1920, it was only after 1920 that the size of the boom was realized. The roaring twenties witnessed annual increases in the volume of tourist trade and spread of facilities for the vacationers.

The advent of automobiles caused shifts in the configuration of cities and towns, increased economic advantage for some towns, and made changes in regional services. The shifts caused by the new mobility, while manifesting themselves before World War II, were greatly accelerated by the conflict.

One change that automobiles brought to the region was the spread of suburbs and subdivisions, especially around Denver. No longer were commuters dependent upon the trolley line to get to and from work and shopping. Factories and businesses could also locate away from the center business district without fear of not having workers as long as a road provided access to their business. Construction of the Denver Ordnance plant in the open countryside of Jefferson County during 1941 is a good example of the spatial dispersal that the auto allowed. Also, the rapid, low cost transportation which cars and motorbuses offered tended to strengthen commercial ties between cities and their hinterlands as well as stimulating development of regional centers for retail businesses. The distance potential customers could travel increased with the speed of transportation provided by the car. Also, where once people had been limited by travel time to shopping in their nearest village, they could not go elsewhere looking for the best selection or prices. Location on the major highways provided an economic advantage. Communities on the major highways often continued to grow while those on secondary roads languished. This same trend toward centralization was also manifested in regional hospitals and education such as C.G. Sargent's drive for consolidated schools. Students were bussed to and from the institutions miles away in the same time it had taken to walk or ride a horse to the nearest rural school.

Two industries nonexistent before the turn of the century became commonly accepted parts of everyday life in the region by the 1930s. These were freight trucking and bus companies. Both were dependent upon the availability of good highways and both competed directly with the area's railroads. By the 1930s, railroads still carried most of the region's human and freight cargoes, but no longer was the dominance of the rail companies unchallenged.

Two other activities that had been limited before the auto age were greatly stimulated by the presence and public acceptance of the motorcar--oil and concrete manufacturing. Cement had been growing in popularity as a building material during the late nineteenth century. Previously, stone had been the most commonly used building material. Most of the stone used in Denver, Greeley, Fort Collins, and elsewhere had been mined from quarries near Stout, Colorado. However, because of its portability, flexibility in use and relatively low cost, cement became the most widely used paving material as the Good Roads Movement spread. Because of this, concrete companies could undersell their stone competition. Also, cement was seen in the popular mind as the modern material, granite the archaic. Desires to be in step with the times led builders to shun stone.

The connection between oil and the auto was much more obvious. By 1900, petroleum was slowly replacing coal as the most used fuel in America. The auto accelerated this trend and encouraged searches for the material on Colorado's plains. The first discoveries were made in Boulder County in 1901 and 1902, and soon further finds were made near Fort Lupton, Hudson, and elsewhere in Larimer, Weld and Adams counties. This area became known as the Wattenburg Field. In 1923, the first successful wells were drilled into the Wellington Dome, further north of the Wattenburg Field. Oil from these areas continued to be produced through 1945. The availability of oil for home heating was the death blow to the area's coal mining as people quickly changed

to oil or to natural gas that was also being found in conjunction with the oil wells. The changes the auto caused on Colorado's plains were many and complex. The ramifications of this new mode of transport were not manifested completely until after World War II.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1890-1900	Bicyclists support Good Roads Movement.
1900-1910	Motorists join Good Roads Movement to lobby state legislature for highways.
1901-1902	First oil boom--Wattenburg Field.
1910-1915	Federal highway program starts and one of the first coast-to-coast roads cross Colorado plains to Denver.
1910	State Highway Commission established.
1913	First auto reaches the top of Pike's Peak.
1915-1920	Boosterism of motor tourists.  Beginnings of special facilities for motorists such as picnic grounds, motor courts.
1916	Federal Highway Act passed.
1920-1930	Peak period of auto tourists until after World War II.  Rapid growth of oil use, decline of coal mining.
1923	Wellington Dome oil field opened.
1930s-1945	Decreased auto travel because of Great Depression and World War II.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources clearly attributable to the early automobile age are randomly located along the federal, state, and county highways of the region, except for the Interstates because these didn't exist prior to 1945. The highway system itself constitutes a resource for this theme. Also, in some areas, especially urbanized ones, buildings either built specifically for or modified for auto use and servicing can be found. Further resources are exemplified by the realignment of some business districts to the highways and the auto-specific buildings integrated into these areas.



## CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Picnic Areas and Roadside Rest Areas.

Structures include: Bus Depots, Cement Factories, Garages, Gasoline/Oil Storage Facilities, Highways, Oil Racks, Oil Wells, Oil Refineries, Motor Hotels, Motor Courts, Service Stations, and Truck Loading Facilities

Districts include: Oil Fields

Materials include: Automobiles, Trucks and other Internal Combustion Vehicles and Tools for their service.

## THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

### Historical Documentation

Two general studies that are useful on this topic are M. Berger's The Devil Wagon in God's Country and W. J. Belasco, Americans on the Road. Otherwise little has been done on the spread of the automobile culture on the Colorado plains. However, some works are in progress that will help explain the phenomenon. Once available, these should greatly increase current historical understanding of the era. The general textbooks, Athearn, The Coloradans and Ubbelohde, Benson and Smith, A Colorado History, offer some insights and interpretations of the auto age in the state. Other sources include LeRoy Hafen's article on the automobile in The Colorado Magazine, 1931, or his multi-volume study, Colorado and Its People. Lyle Dorsett's The Queen City, contains a large amount of interpretative information about motor vehicle impacts on Denver and its thinking. Useful research on the early cement industry is Bean's study of Charles Boettcher. Despite this lack of secondary information, many primary sources are available to aid researchers. The Colorado Historical Society, Denver Public Library, and the University of Colorado's library all contain documents that are helpful. Also, records of county, city and the State Highway Department would prove useful in research on this theme. Further, historic highway maps, guidebooks and travel directories all might help the investigator as would county tax records and local histories and newspapers that often contain information about the first autos, dealerships or highways into an area of the study region. While not extensive, the historiography of the auto in Colorado will no doubt grow in the future.

### Number/Condition

The present data base is insufficiently refined to adequately determine the number, type and condition of the resources associated with this theme that existed or once may have existed. This is due partially to the constant improvement and rebuilding of major highways in the region and the facilities along these roadways. Also, as roads have been rerouted, many of the predecessors were torn up and returned to farmland. Despite these variables, an estimate would put the number at over 10,000. However, aside from some obvious exceptions, such as early gasoline stations, many resources associated with this theme either have not been recorded or not put into the context of the

auto age. The condition differs from destroyed or abandoned to modified for adaptive use to still in use.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Cumulative totals of the automobile associated cultural resources that still exist dating before 1945.
- \*Representative examples of the spatial relationships/arrangements of pre- and post-auto age suburbs.
- \*Representative examples of early national "chain" marketing facilities.
- \*Representative examples of the different impacts of the automobile on business orientations of rural communities on and bypassed by major highways.

#### Future Needs

Surveys to specifically identify cultural resources associated with the auto age need not be undertaken at some future date. Rather, funds would better be spent continuing and expanding the Main Street Program and upgrading or reevaluating the present data base to ascertain associations of cultural resources with the auto age. Such an undertaking would require the skills of an historian familiar with rural history and twentieth century urban/suburban and transportation history.

#### Important Resources

Because of the lack of sophistication in the historical understanding of the impacts of the auto on Colorado plains' residents during the twentieth century, each major resource should be considered possibly important until it is evaluated for its significance in this context. Of definite importance are those resources that document the impacts of motor vehicles on urban and rural lifeways, urban planning, and business orientations or chain operations. Also, those that explain shifts in transportation from rail to auto are important. Resources that can help explain or substantiate the role of the auto in shifting social values are important for this theme, such as changed courting practices.

#### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impact of the auto on social values of Colorado plainsmen?
2. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impacts of national "chain" marketing on Colorado's plains.
3. What resources, if any, can explain or document changed business orientations of the auto age?

4. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impact of the auto on urban and rural lifeways in the region?
5. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impact of the auto on urban spatial relationships and/or urban/suburban planning and growth?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

Cement Factories: should be in historic use location and should retain enough buildings with physical integrity to make spatial relationships, function, materials, and methods of operations and construction clear. May or may not be in use.

Garage: should be in original or historic use location and retain enough physical integrity to make function, dimensions, mode of operation and methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Gasoline Storage Facilities: same evaluation standards as Garages.

Highways: should have enough physical integrity to make function, methods and materials of construction readily apparent.

Oil Racks: same evaluation standards as Garages.

Oil Wells: same evaluation standards as Garages.

Oil Refineries: same evaluation standards as cement factories.

Motor Hotels: same evaluation standards as Garages.

Picnic Areas: should retain enough physical integrity to make function, borders and any man-made features readily apparent.

Service Stations: same evaluations standards as Garages.

Truck Loading Facilities: same evaluation standards as cement factory.

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\_\_\_\_\_. "Pioneer Struggles for a Colorado Road Across the Rockies," The Colorado Magazine 3 (March 1926).

Lyle Dorsett. The Queen City. Boulder: Pruett Press, 1977.\*

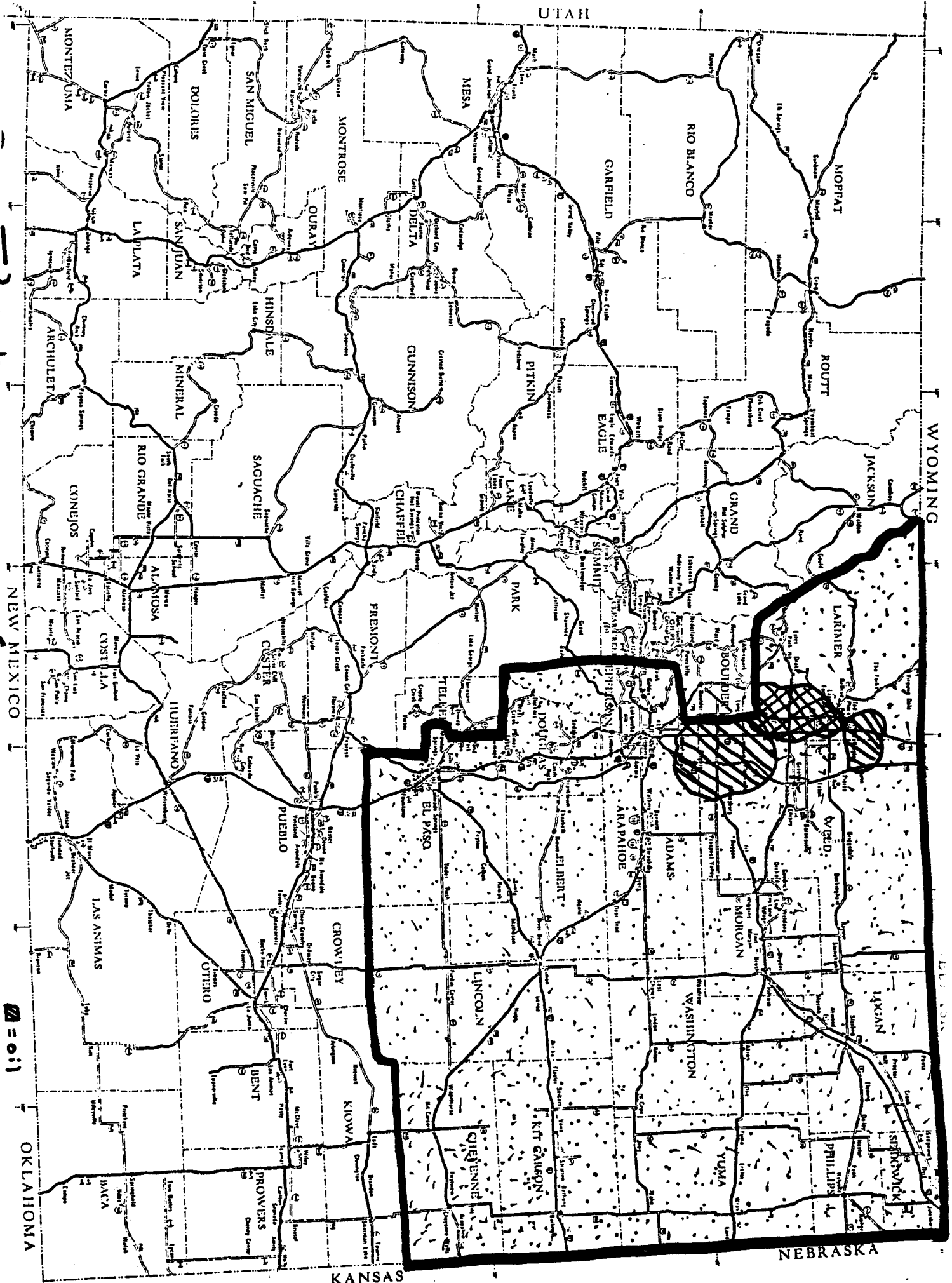
Enos Mills. The Rocky Mountain National Park. Estes Park: n.p., 1932.

In addition, some collections of pamphlets and manuscripts as well as early travel magazines have some useful information.

== roads

THE AUTO AGE

■ = oil  
■ = Stone, Cement



19. THE AIRPLANE AND MASS COMMUNICATION  
1910-1945

NARRATIVE

Very few Colorado plainsmen, when they read about Marconi's wireless telegraph or the Wright Brothers' first flight, probably ever felt that these two inventions would ever have much of an impact on their lives. However, by 1945, nearly every household in the area owned a radio and many had at least seen if not had a ride in an airplane. These two new machines all but eliminated any time gap in travel and communication between the Colorado plains and the rest of the nation.

The first commercial broadcasting tower built in the state went on the air in Colorado Springs in 1919, and soon Denver, Fort Collins, and other towns had their own radio stations. Throughout the 1920s, more and more households bought crystal sets with which they could tune in broadcasts from towns within the region and from outside as well. The same decade also witnessed the growth of national radio networks so that Colorado plainsmen were able to hear live broadcasts from The White House, New York City, and around the nation. Radio sets were given a prominent place in parlors and living rooms throughout the region, and they became a popular form of entertainment and information dissemination.

During the 1930s, rural Coloradans embraced the radio and all its benefits. Radio waves ended the isolation of high plains rural life. As this lonesomeness evaporated, the farmers and ranchers found themselves becoming more and more like their urban brothers. Social values, consumer tastes and buying habits shifted, and the separation of urban and rural lifestyles became less obvious. Later, after World War II, many looked back with nostalgia at the preradio period of plains isolation. The telephone, a device available in places such as Denver by the 1890s, was also quickly adopted by plainsmen as service spread across the region during the early twentieth century.

Many in the region were less ready and willing to accept the other time-smashing invention, the airplane. Yet, by 1930, parts of the area had regular air service. The first commercial flights took place in 1920 as the United States Postal Service inaugurated air mail service. The first routes connected Colorado Springs and Denver with the transcontinental route through Cheyenne, Wyoming. This pattern of service continued until after World War II when there was the widespread use of pressurized aircraft that could safely and comfortably transport people over the mountains.

Before the end of the 1920s, Colorado had its first airline, Colorado Airways, that flew the Pueblo-Colorado Springs-Denver-Cheyenne route for passengers and mail. Many were curious, but very few made use of these pioneer air travel possibilities. Instead, most Colorado plainsmen had their first flights with barnstormers that crossed and recrossed the region putting

on one-man airshows at cities, towns and villages. For a small fee, the pilot would take one passenger on a short flight around the area. Often these flyers used pastures, fields or any other flat surface available for a landing strip. The barnstorming era was over by 1930, and most residents felt the flying fad had passed.

Boosters of major towns in the region, led by Denver, saw the future in air travel. They started campaigns to build airports. Foremost among these people looking to the future was Denver's Mayor Benjamin Stapleton. He felt that the city should invest in a large airport and, if possible, become the center of Rocky Mountain air travel. As mayor, he was in a good position to see his ideas carried out. In 1929, under his administration, the city bought 640 acres that became Denver Municipal Airport. The airport was later expanded and renamed Stapleton International Airport.

During the Great Depression, air travel grew in popularity. In 1937, United Airlines, the first major national air company, chose Denver as one of its first Rocky Mountain stops, although it was on a branch route from Cheyenne until after 1945. Other events during the decade helped to further increase air travel in the region. Federal public works programs helped build and improve airports in towns throughout the region. During World War II, this federal involvement continued with construction of Buckley Naval Air Field and Lowry Air Base in Denver. At the same time, Peterson Field, Colorado Springs' municipal aerodrome, was taken over and improved. La Junta was given facilities to train pilots as were other regional towns. By the end of the war, air travel and the flying machine were well established with Colorado plainsmen.

#### CHRONOLOGY

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|-------|--|
| 1919  | First commercial radio broadcast in the region from Colorado Springs.  |
| 1920  | First commercial flight in area for U. S. Postal Service.  |
| 1920s | Expansion of national radio network.<br><br>Rapid growth of commercial radio broadcasting in the region, many people buy radio sets.<br><br>Barnstorming era of aviation in the region.<br><br>Commercial airlines, Colorado Airways first, grow slowly in the region. |
| 1929  | Stapleton Airport opened, known as Denver Municipal Airport.   |
| 1930s | More radios in use and changes in rural life take place because of the new faster communications.  |

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 1930s     | WPA projects build and improve airports around the region.    |
| 1937      | United Airlines opens service to Denver.                      |
| 1940-1945 | Military airfields in Denver, Colorado Springs and elsewhere. |

### LOCATION

Cultural resources attributable to this theme can be found scattered throughout the region, usually associated with the larger towns and cities. Presently, many of these resources are still in use for their original function. Because of the nature of radio broadcasting, the tower facilities often are located on the highest ground available with a reasonable distance from a city or town while the studios are in the city proper.

### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Structures include: Fueling Facilities, Landing Strips, Taxi Ways, Hangars, Airplane Parking Areas, Terminal Buildings, Tower (Control), Windsock, Broadcasting Studios, Radio Antennas, Radio Towers, Telephone Buildings, Offices, Relay Stations, Transmission Lines

Districts include: Airport

Materials include: Airplanes, Radio Sets, Telephones

### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

#### Historical Documentation

Because of its relative newness and the rather limited areas of commercial use in the plains study area before 1945, the air age has yet to come under intense professional scrutiny by historians. The best sources to date for both air travel and radio are the general histories of the state by Athearn, The Coloradans, Ubbelohde, Benson and Smith, A Colorado History and Hafen's Colorado and Its People. These contain general information about the growth of air service in Colorado. Also, Scamehorn's article on the topic in Ubbelohde's A Colorado Reader provides useful information. Beyond these sources Lyle Dorsett's history of Denver should be consulted for interpretations of the impacts of air travel on that city. Nell Propost's Forgotten People relates events such as barnstormers in the rural areas of the region. The best source of primary material available in the region is at Denver Public Library in a special collection devoted to air travel. Also, the Colorado Historical Society and Norlin Library at the University of Colorado have limited amounts of information for this theme. The airlines and radio stations themselves, especially United and Frontier with long traditions of service to the region, might prove valuable information sources for research on this theme as would copies of airline guides from the period. Beyond that, records of the Federal government and histories of the Army Air Corps should be consulted for data on certain

topics associated with this theme. The final sources, local newspapers, should be consulted for reports of major events, such as barnstorming or air shows. Historic photos are another type of documentation that may be very useful for this theme.

### Number/Condition

The present data are insufficient to determine the number, types and condition of resources associated with this theme that once existed or may have existed. This is due to many factors. Because they are still in use, many of the aerodomes have not or are not considered historic and have not been recorded. Also, many other resources such as Stapleton have been and continue to be modified and rebuilt destroying evidences of earlier aircraft use. Barnstorming and air shows by their nature were transitory and left no permanent changes on the land. Condition varies from destroyed or derelict to still in use on a day-to-day basis.

### Data Gaps

- \*Representative 1920s aerodrome.
- \*Representative site of an early air show.
- \*Representative examples of 1920s era mail and passenger facilities for air travel.
- \*Representative examples of early air traffic control facilities.

### Future Needs

Surveys specifically to locate facilities associated with early air travel and radio use in the Colorado plains should be undertaken at some future date. These efforts should be given low priority due to relatively low possibility of finding sites that have not been extensively modified or expanded over the years. Such a survey should be undertaken by an historian familiar with air travel and field survey techniques.

### Important Resources

Because of the lack of thorough historical understanding about this theme, it is difficult to determine exactly what is important. But each resource should be evaluated in terms of its historic context in relation to the growth of air travel and mass communication in the region. Those resources that are representative of the early air age such as aerodomes and unpaved runways are important as are those that document the growth of air service in the area. Also, those that explain the early uses of aircraft for transport, crop dusting and the like are important. Because the resources have experienced so many modifications over the years, any that are truly representative of the 1920s or 1930s should be given special consideration.



## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain the growth of air service in the region?
2. What resources, if any, can explain the changing patterns and uses of aircraft in the region before 1945?
3. What resources, if any, can document the spread of mass communications via the radio before 1945?
4. What resources, if any, can explain the early passenger uses of aircraft in the region?
5. What resources, if any, can explain the federal government's involvement in the early air age?
6. What resources, if any, can explain the role of barnstormers and air shows in the popularization of aircraft and air travel before 1945?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Airport: should have enough physical integrity of terminal, hangars and other structures to make function, dimensions, methods and materials of construction and spatial relationships readily apparent. Should be able to ascertain if runways were paved or not. May or may not be in use.

Broadcasting Studio: should be in original or historic use location and retain enough internal and external integrity to make function, technology and methods of operation readily apparent.

Radio Antennas: should be in original or historic use location and should retain enough physical integrity to use, function, methods, and materials of construction readily apparent.

Radio Towers: same evaluation standards as radio antennas.

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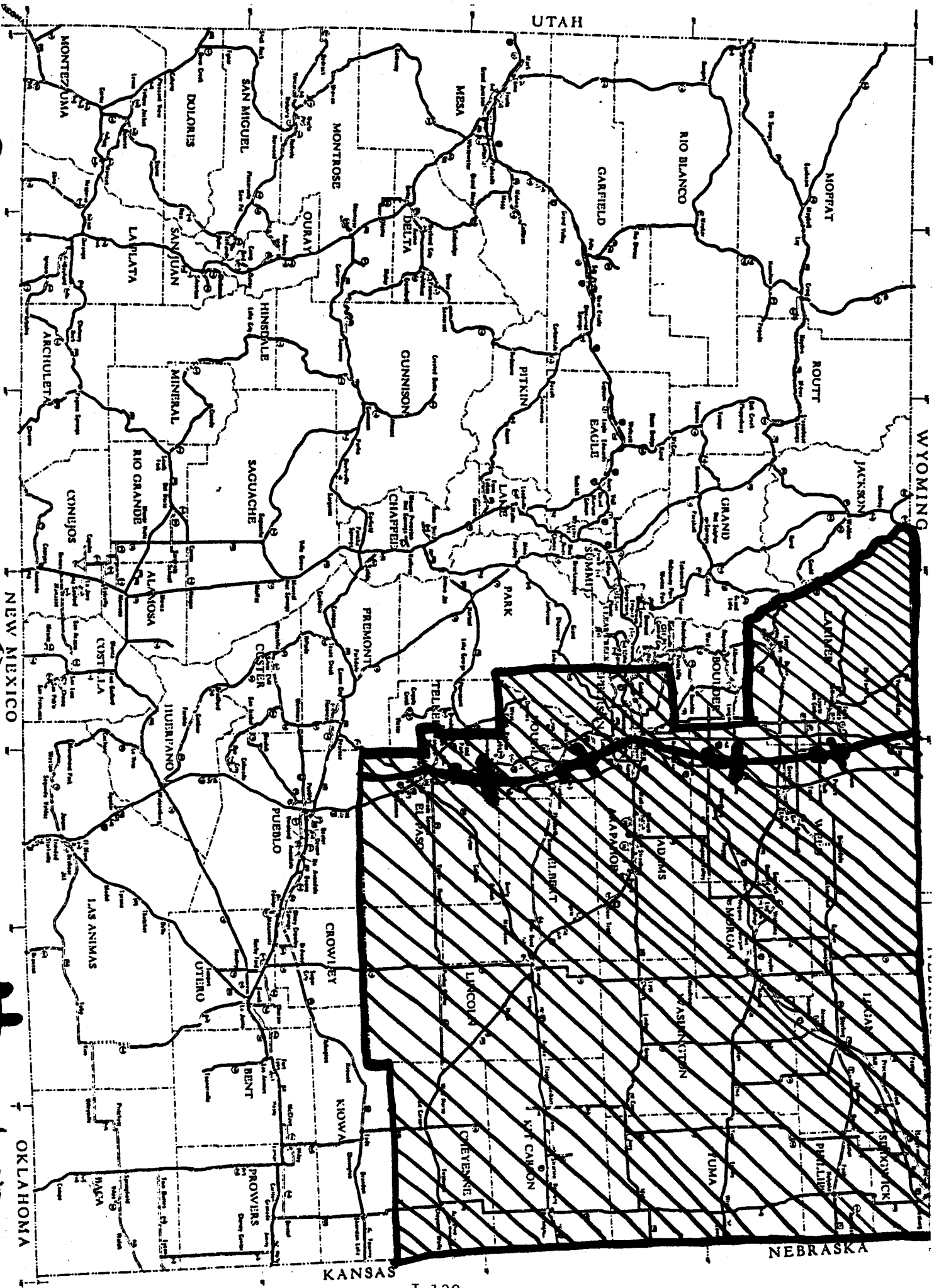
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THE AIRPLANE AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS



= early air route



20. THE GREAT DEPRESSION  
1920-1940

NARRATIVE

Few on the Colorado plains during 1929 realized that when the stock market collapsed in October, the shock waves would reach the area. Some industries such as farming and coal mining had been depressed through most of the twenties. Others such as commerce and tourism had enjoyed the national prosperity of the decade and been part of the "Roaring Twenties." By 1931 and 1932, the entire plains economy had fallen apart and the Great Depression was a reality there as it was in Chicago, New York or elsewhere. No longer was the region separate from the nation in any way, and the people, while talking of individualism, quickly turned to Washington, D.C. for help. In accepting the Federal aid, much of the region lost some of its independence, real and perceived. The area benefitted from the national recovery programs initiated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his New Deal.

When Roosevelt took over as President in 1933, the Colorado plains were suffering from not only economic but also climatic problems. The early 1930s were a period of below average rainfall much as the 1890s had been, and crop failures were commonplace. Combined with this, the constant tillage in many areas by the new heavy machinery had caused the fragile soil to collapse, and the once rich fields became parched masses of blowing dust. In 1932 and 1933 with lack of rains, the hot winds picked up the fine particles and turned them into brown blizzards. The air became so full of dirt that the dust storms paralyzed the area. People, unable to move in cars, trains or airplanes, had little to do but cough and choke as they watched the fine dust sift into their houses around door frames and window sills. The dust storms, known as dusters, became so frequent that weather forecasters began to predict them as they would rain showers or snow. While only the extreme southeastern Colorado plains were actually part of the federally designated Dust Bowl, the entire area suffered. Many farmers and ranchers simply gave up trying and abandoned their land as they watched it blow into Kansas.

In order to bring relief to the depressed agricultural economy, Roosevelt's administration set up numerous programs. The largest was the Agricultural Adjustment Administration that tried to insure minimum incomes for farmers by setting production quotas and paying growers not to plant more than their share. Wheat, corn, cattle, sheep and sugar beets were covered by these ceilings and the income from the AAA made it possible for many to stay on the land. Federal farm mortgage guarantees and other things also helped agrarians keep their farms. After evaluating the situation, federal officials were quick to realize that not all farms should be allowed to stay in production. Marginal lands, especially in Weld County, were bought by the government from the farmers and taken out of production permanently. The Soil Conservation Service, Farm Resettlement Administration and AAA worked together on this program. As a part of this program they found alternative land for the land taken out of production, usually on U.S. Bureau of

Reclamation irrigation projects. The program was completed under the Bankhead-Jones Land Utilization Act of 1937. The repurchase program took marginal farms out of farm production and returned them to rangeland. Some tracts were resold to ranchers, but others became the Pawnee and Commanche National Grasslands. The other New Deal program that was aimed at rural plainsmen was the Rural Electrification Administration that built power systems to farm houses and made all the benefits of the electrical age available to the formerly isolated people.

Business and industry were not forgotten by Franklin Roosevelt. Two major programs that impacted the region were the National Industrial Recovery Act that set up the National Recovery Administration, the Public Works Administration, and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation that made low-interest loans available to businesses for economic expansion or improvements. The Public Works Administration (PWA), replaced later by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and aided by the Civil Works Administration (CWA), all put people to work to help end unemployment and get money in circulation to stimulate the economy. Further, by building and financing public works, these programs allowed many towns and counties to undertake projects they had neither the money nor desire to do on their own. City halls, county court houses, roads, libraries, airports and many other civic undertakings were completed by these various administrations. The WPA projects include the early construction on the Colorado-Big Thompson Reclamation Project and Denver Ordnance Plant, as well as other lesser projects. An additional agency that helped end unemployment through public works was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC work force was made up of teenage boys from around the nation whose work was concentrated on public lands such as National Forests. Although the CCC activity occurred in only limited areas of the plains region, the state headquarters was in the plains region at Fort Logan, near Denver. Other New Deal agencies, primarily for social and administrative programs, were active in the region throughout the period 1933-1941. Even with these massive federal expenditures, the region failed to recover from the Great Depression until the advent of World War II provided employment.

#### CHRONOLOGY

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1920-1933 | Farming, ranching, coal mining generally depressed   |
| 1929      | Stock market crash.  |
| 1930-1932 | Great Depression deepens and Hoover Administration does little to aid the people.<br><br>Dust Bowl begins.   |
| 1933      | Franklin Roosevelt becomes president and initiates recovery programs, especially Agricultural Adjustment Administration, National Recovery Administration and large public works programs. |
| 1934-1937 | Marginal farmlands bought by government to take them out of production, leads to creation of National Grasslands.  |

1937                    Bankhead-Jones Land Utilization Act passed.  
1940-1941              World War II rearmament programs end Great  
                          Depression

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources attributable to this theme can be found throughout the region. To date many have not been recorded because they are not yet 50 years old. Public works projects are easily identifiable because regulations required brass plaques to be put on the structures listing the major construction information and federal agencies involved.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Rangelands, Soil Conservation Projects.

Structures include: Abandoned Farmsteads, Civic Works, Public Works Buildings, Soil Conservation Projects, Reclamation Projects, Rural Electrification Association.

Districts include: Civic Works, National Grasslands, REA Projects.

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

The Great Depression is one of the most studied topics in the historical profession second only to World War II. Of special interest has been the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his New Deal. Two of the most reliable authors on Roosevelt are William Leuchtenburg and Frank Fridel. They have penned numerous works on FDR and the New Deal. Further, nearly every major leader and member of the "brain trust" have been biographified or evaluated. Also, Roosevelt's major programs, such as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, have been examined by historians. The span of historiography on the New Deal grows every year, and the present conservative trend in America is leading to reinterpretations of the Roosevelt leadership. On a local basis, the best source available is James Wickens' University of Denver dissertation, "Colorado in the Great Depression."

Other sources are the Governor Edwin Johnson interviews and manuscripts at the Colorado Historical Society and state archives. Some manuscript collections at the Historical Society, Denver Public Library and Norlin Library in Boulder contain information pertinent to this theme. Also, the government documents section of Norlin Library has thousands of reports, regulations and books put out by various New Deal agencies. The archives of Colorado State University also has information useful for this theme. The New Deal itself generated documentary resources useful for historians such as the Civil Works Administration interviews and the Works Progress Administration files and newspaper indexes. Paul Bonnifield's The Dust Bowl is the most usable and valuable source on that phenomenon and should be consulted if a researcher is interested in dryland farming during the 1930s.

### Number/Condition

The present data base is insufficient to adequately ascertain the number, type and condition of resources associated with this theme that existed or once may have existed. This is due in large part to the fact that no New Deal resources have yet reached fifty years of age and therefore many have not been recorded since they do not meet the age limit for the National Register of Historic Places. The probable number of resources associated with this theme would be over 1,000. The condition varies from destroyed to still in use, either as originally built or with later modifications.

### Data Gaps

- \*Representative examples of all the various types of public works projects undertaken by New Deal agencies.
- \*Representative examples of early attempts at soil conservation.
- \*Representative examples of Civilian Conservation Corps projects in the region.

### Future Needs

At some future date, a survey should be undertaken to identify and record all cultural resources directly associated with the Great Depression and New Deal. Such an undertaking should combine intensive documentary research as well as field work and should be carried out by a team of historians versed in western and twentieth century American history. These surveys, while low priority currently, should be given higher and higher importance in the Colorado Preservation Office planning process as time passes and more of the resources become fifty or more years old.

### Important Resources

Those resources that document the role of federal aid to Colorado during the 1930s should be considered important as should those that offer confirmation or reinterpretations of present historical understanding of the New Deal and Great Depression. Representative public works projects should also be considered important for their associations with this theme. Some, such as the Colorado-Big Thompson Project, are important not only when associated with this theme, but also with other themes and such "cross-referencing" should be done when resources are assigned importance values. Since many of the resources will no doubt have great local significance, this factor should be considered. Those resources that are unique or highly representative are also important.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impacts of the Great Depression on Colorado plainsmen and their lifeways, including minorities and women?

2. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impacts of the New Deal on Colorado plainsmen and their lifeways?
3. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impacts of 1930s public works projects on the Colorado plains built environment?
4. What resources, if any, can explain or document New Deal impacts on Colorado plains agriculture?
5. What resources, if any, can explain or document New Deal impacts on Colorado plains towns and cities?
6. What resources, if any, can explain or document the New Deal impacts on Colorado plains industry?
7. What resources, if any, can explain or document changes in land tenure on the Colorado plains as a result of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl?

#### PHYSICAL CONDITION

Abandoned Farmsteads: enough of the dwelling(s) and outbuildings should remain to show spatial relationships and to make function, method and materials of construction readily apparent. Also, abandonment should be conclusively dated to the 1930s.

Civic Works: should be in original location and retain enough physical integrity to make function, methods and materials of construction readily apparent. Also, should be conclusively dated to the 1930s.

National Grasslands: enough man-made features and/or historic vegetative manipulations should be readily evident to clearly establish man's presence and impacts on the land.

Public Works Building: same evaluation as Civic Works.

Rangelands: same evaluation standards as National Grasslands.

Rural Electrification Projects: see power context report for evaluation standards.

Soil Conservation Projects: same evaluation standards as National Grasslands.

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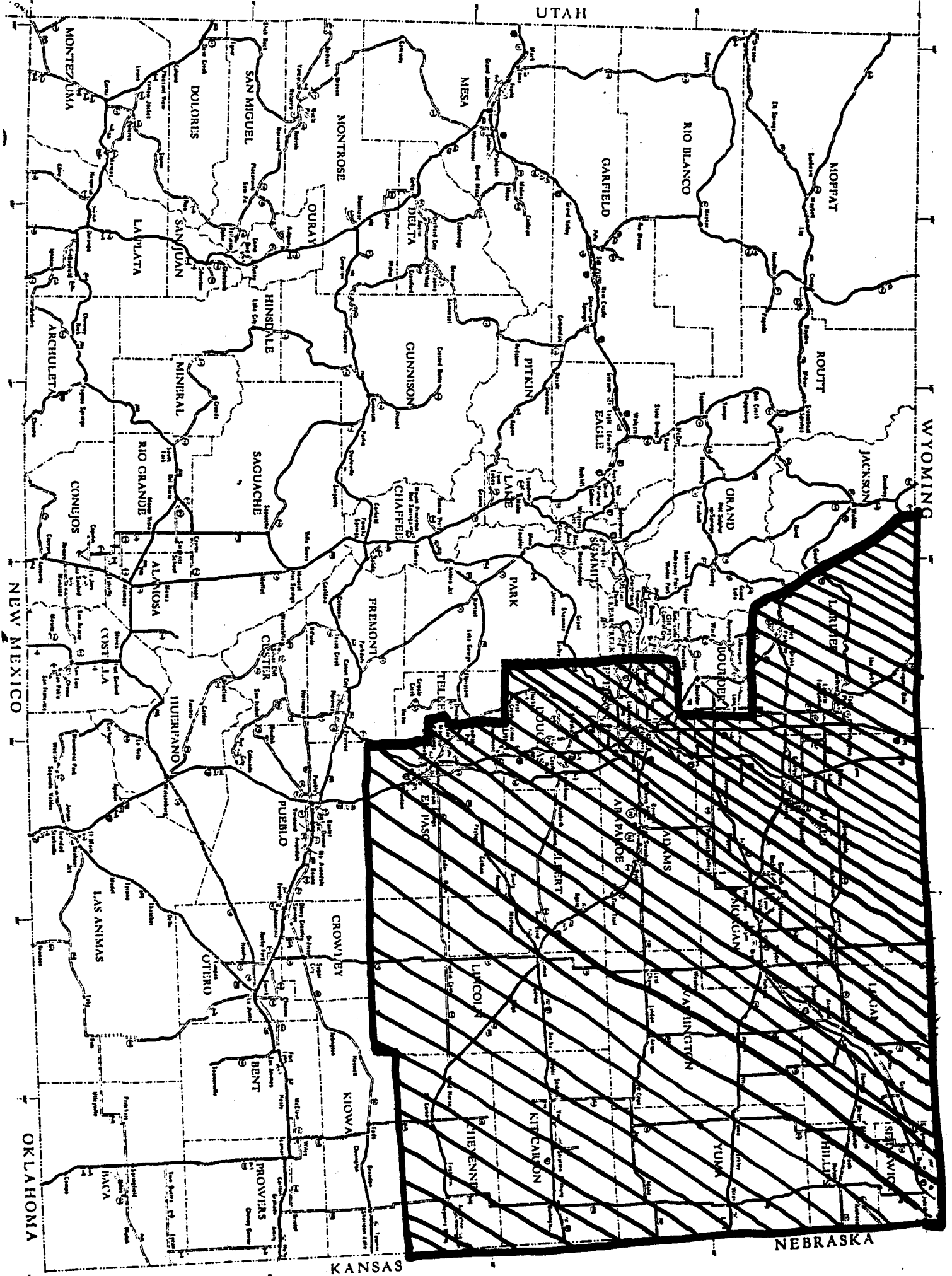
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THE GREAT DEPRESSION



21. THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, 1900-1945NARRATIVE

The increased presence of the federal government in Colorado has been one mark of the twentieth century and a major part of this has been the founding and growth of military facilities and bases. The expansion of army bases was in direct relation to United States participation in wars. By 1900, all of the earlier army forts in Colorado had been long abandoned except for Fort Logan that had remained in continuous use as a military reservation since the 1860s.

The first new facility of the twentieth century was Fitzsimons Army Hospital. Its presence in the region was a direct result of Denver boosters. The army began looking at Colorado as a potential site for the hospital as the United States prepared to actively enter World War I in 1917. Many towns tried to convince the locators to chose their community. Denver bought and made available to the Army a large tract of land on the eastern edge of the metropolitan area for the hospital. This offer convinced the Army and Fitzsimons Army Hospital was built on that tract of land (where it remains to the present) to care for the wounded and lung disorder sufferers from the Great War (World War I).

During the 1920s and 1930s, no new military construction took place within the plains region. By the end of the thirties, as the clouds of war darkened over Europe, the United States government began to prepare for war. As part of this preparation, the War Department began seeking ways to acquire new bases for troop training. Colorado Springs boosters sought the location of a military facility in their town in order to stimulate the economy. The city's promoters invited War Department representatives to visit the area in 1940, and through their hospitality and offers of local assistance in land purchasing and construction, Colorado Springs convinced the Army to build a training camp nearby. In 1941, Camp Carson was under construction. The camp was used not only to train troops for mountain warfare but also served as a hospital camp and prisoner-of-war holding area. Before World War II was over, more than 100,000 troops had undergone basic training at Camp Carson. At the same time, the Army also took over the local airport, Peterson Field, and used it as a base. After the war, these facilities continued in operation.

Denver was the other major beneficiary of the government building programs of World War II. Fitzsimons Hospital was expanded while Lowry Army Air Base and Buckley Naval Air Station and associated bombing ranges were built to train pilots. La Junta and other cities in the region also received new or improved airports as the Colorado plains became a major flight school region.

The other major facilities built for American participation in World War II were the Denver Ordnance Plant and Rocky Mountain Arsenal. In 1940,

Denver promoters made the Army an offer of local assistance if a munitions factory was located near the town. That year, the War Department, working with the Works Progress Administration, built the Denver Ordnance Plant. The factory originally produced .30 and .50 caliber ammunition through contracts with Remington Arms Company. Later in the war, the Henry Kaiser Company used the facility to build artillery shells. The boost to the economy provided by this factory and the military bases not only helped end the Great Depression for much of the plains region, but after 1945, these facilities, either as bases or federal installations, continued to contribute to the local economy.

#### CHRONOLOGY

1917-1919	Fitzsimons Hospital under construction and opened.
1939	World War II breaks out in Europe.
1940-1941	U.S. starts to rearm and prepare for war. Denver Ordnance Plant built. Camp Carson located and construction begins. Area becomes training area for pilots.
1942-1945	Military activity remains at high levels.

#### LOCATION

Cultural resources associated with this theme are not numerous or widely dispersed on the Colorado plains. The Denver metropolitan area has the largest concentration followed by Colorado Springs. Other towns, such as La Junta, also have cultural resources pertinent to this theme.

#### CULTURAL RESOURCE TYPES

Sites include: Bombing Range

Structures include: Air Bases, Administrative Buildings, Barracks, Bombing Range, Chapels, Fueling Facilities, Hangars, Houses, Hospitals, Landing Strips, Post Exchanges (PX), Taxi Ways, Training Buildings, Towers, Wind Socks, Administrative Buildings (Army Bases), POW Camps, Training Grounds, Warehouses, Munitions Factories

Districts include: Air Bases, Army Bases

#### THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF EXISTING DATA

##### Historical Documentation

Another facet of plains history that has not generated as much historical scrutiny as it might have is the presence and sometimes almost dependence

of certain parts of the study area on the military. This close relationship began early in the twentieth century but has yet to generate much scholarship. The best general sources are Athearn, The Coloradans, and Ubbelohde, Benson and Smith, A Colorado History. Also, histories of Denver and Colorado Springs contain information about the local boosters and their efforts to entice Uncle Sam. The best account of the Denver Ordnance Plant is found in Mehls' Masters Thesis on the Denver Federal Archives (University of Colorado). Beyond these secondary sources that deal with the plains region specifically, the researcher is faced with the task of wading through dozens of volumes of U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force histories or consulting other government documents. The Army has published one convenient volume, Fort Carson: A Tradition of Victory and other studies, such as one on Lowry, may some day be forthcoming. Two other sources should be considered: the Public Information or Affairs Offices of the individual bases and the Denver and Colorado Springs newspapers. The local scribes always tried to boost and give optimistic pictures of their towns and followed closely the construction and opening/operation of the facilities.

#### Number/Condition

While the exact number of resources that existed or once may have existed associated with this theme may never be accurately ascertained, the number, location, function, and condition of the major facilities is readily documentable. Some of the bases and installations remain active today in military service, while others have closed or their function has changed. The condition of resources associated with this theme is generally better than those of almost any other theme in the study area.

#### Data Gaps

- \*Representative training grounds for infantry of the 1940s.
- \*Representative Army medical facilities of the World War I era.
- \*Representative training grounds for airmen of the 1940s.
- \*Representative barracks and other facilities (unaltered) from the 1940s.

#### Future Needs

At some future date, cultural resource inventories should be conducted to ascertain the number, condition and types of cultural resources associated with post-1900 military activity on the Colorado plains. These surveys should be conducted, and probably will have to be conducted, with close cooperation between the United States Armed Forces and the Colorado Preservation Office because most of the historic bases are still owned and operated by branches of the armed forces today. These surveys should inventory not only present but past (non-extant) resources.

## Important Resources

Because of the large role the military establishment played during the 1940s for the economic recovery of the Colorado plains from the Great Depression, many of the resources associated with this theme have an intrinsic importance. Further, those that can document changes in military methods, tactics, weapons or strategies should be considered important from a military history standpoint. Those resources that document day-to-day military life or attempts of the Army to care for its members should also be considered important. Also, if certain resources could serve to document or reinterpret present theses and conceptions about the military establishment from 1900 to 1945, they should be considered important.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What resources, if any, can explain or document the role of local boosters in attracting military bases to the Colorado plains?
2. What resources, if any, can explain or document the impact of a military presence on the Colorado plains, 1940-1945?
3. What resources, if any, can explain or document changes in military training methods after 1940?
4. What resources, if any, can explain or document changes in military tactics after 1940?
5. What resources, if any, can explain or document changes in military weaponry after 1940?
6. Can cultural resources lead to a reinterpretation of present or past views of the military's role in American society?

## PHYSICAL CONDITION

Air Base/Administrative Building: should be in original location and should retain enough physical integrity to make dimensions, functions, methods and materials of construction readily apparent. May or may not be in use.

Air Base Barracks: same evaluation standards as Administrative Building.

Air Base/Fuel Facilities: should be in original location and retain enough 1940-era material and machinery to make function, technology of operation and construction methods readily apparent.

Air Base/Hangar: same evaluation standards as Administrative Building.

Air Base/Landing Strips: should retain enough physical integrity

to make dimensions, function and methods or materials of construction readily apparent. May or may not be paved. May or may not still be in use.

Air Base/Taxiway: same evaluation standards as Landing Strip.

Air Base/Training Buildings: same evaluation standards as Administrative Building.

Air Base/Tower: same evaluation standards as Administrative Building.

Air Base/Wind Socks: should be in original or historic use location and retain enough physical integrity (except cloth) to make function, dimensions and methods or materials of construction readily apparent.

Army Base/Administrative Building: same evaluation standards as Air Base/Administrative Building.

Army Base/Barracks: same evaluation standards as Air Base/Administrative Building.

Army Base/Training Buildings: same evaluation standards as Air Base/Administrative Building.

Army Base/Training Grounds: should retain enough physical integrity to make function, purpose, method of operation and any man-made features readily apparent.

Army Hospital: same evaluation standards as Air Base/Administrative Building.

Munitions Factory: same evaluation standards as Air Base/Administrative Building.

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MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT SINCE 1900

