

# Colorado

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## FOREWORD

THE Colorado State Board of Immigration was established by act of the Legislature in 1909 for the purpose of advancing, through legitimate publicity and in other ways, the development of agriculture, mining, manufacturing and other industries in Colorado. Its field has expanded year by year until at the present time it is the recognized authority of the state on all questions within its scope.

The contour, climatic conditions and industries of the state vary widely because of the natural boundaries established by the Rocky mountains, and in order that each district may be treated with reference to conditions peculiar to it because of altitude and climate, the state has been divided into seven districts, each of which includes counties where conditions are approximately uniform. The districts are known as the South Platte Valley, the Great Plains, the Arkansas Valley, the San Luis Valley, the San Juan District, the Western Slope and the Northwest Plateau, each being treated in a separate booklet.

Every effort is made to secure information of an authoritative character and to avoid the optimistic predictions of the enthusiast. It is the purpose of this department to furnish to the prospective citizen of Colorado authentic information concerning conditions in any part of the state. The department has no land to sell, nor does it represent, directly or indirectly, anyone having land to sell.

The department invites correspondence from anyone who is thinking of making Colorado his home. No state in the Union offers better opportunities for those of limited means if they possess energy, industry and intelligence. The truth about Colorado needs no exaggeration.

EDWARD D. FOSTER, *Commissioner of Immigration.*

TOLBERT R. INGRAM, *Deputy and Statistician.*

### STATE BOARD OF IMMIGRATION

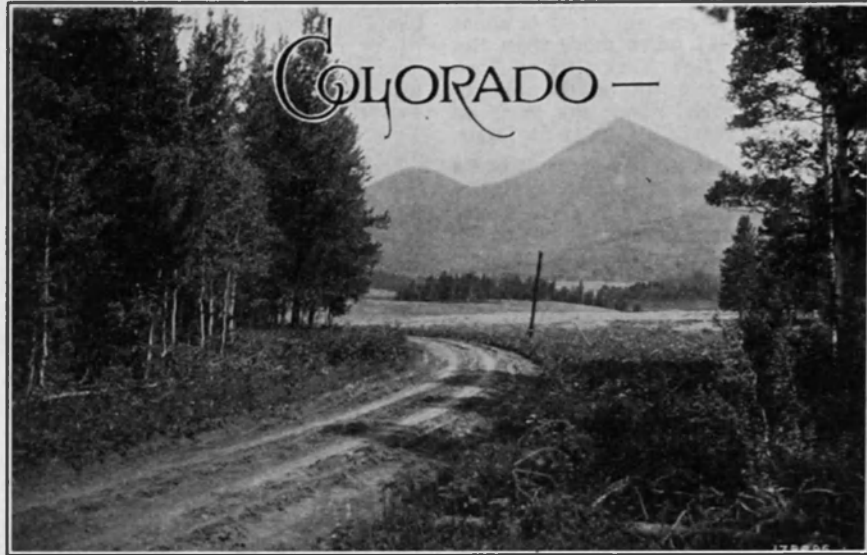
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COLORADO lies almost in the center of that part of the United States west of the Mississippi river basin and in the east-central part of the Rocky Mountain region. The center of the state is approximately 1,500 miles west of the Atlantic seaboard, 800 miles east of the Pacific, 650 miles south of the Canadian border and 475 miles north of the Mexican border, measured by air lines due east and west and north and south. The state is bounded on the west by Utah, on the north by Wyoming and Nebraska, on the east by Kansas and Nebraska, and on the south by New Mexico and a small strip of the Oklahoma panhandle.

The state contains the most elevated portions of the Rocky mountains in the United States, though there are higher altitudes in both California and Washington than are found in Colorado. The United States geological survey assigns to two peaks in Lake county the honor of being the highest points in the state. These are Mount Elbert and Mount Massive, each with an altitude of 14,402 feet.

The highest point in the United States is Mount Whitney, California, 14,501 feet. Colorado has the highest mean altitude of any state, only about one-fourth of its area being below 5,000 feet, while approximately two-thirds of it ranges from 6,000 to 14,000 feet. It has at least 44 peaks that tow-

er 14,000 feet or higher above sea level, and approximately 1,000 having altitudes of more than 10,000 feet. The eastern two-fifths of the state lies in the Great Plains, and is a level or broken prairie, crossed by the valleys of the Arkansas and South Platte rivers and their numerous tributaries, and rising gradually from the state line westward to the foothills of the Rockies. The main range of the Rocky mountains passes north and south through the central part of the state, with numerous secondary ranges and spurs running in all directions, giving Colorado the greatest extent and widest variety of mountain scenery found in any state. The western part lies in the Pacific watershed and contains the largest streams in the state. Its surface is much more broken than that of the eastern part, embracing numerous high mesas and fertile, narrow agricultural valleys, and rising to the rugged and wonderfully picturesque San Juan mountains in the southwest. In outline the state is almost a perfect rectangle, having the most regular form of any state in the Union. It ranks seventh in size, with a land area of 66,341,120 acres or 103,658 square miles. Its water area is 290 square miles, making the total area 103,948 square miles. It is more than twelve times as large as the state of Massachusetts, nearly twice as large as Iowa and about the same

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size as New York, Ohio, Connecticut and New Hampshire combined. Its extreme length east and west is about 387 miles, or 37 miles more than the distance from New York City to Portland, Maine, and its width approximately 276 miles, about the same as the distance from Chicago to St. Louis.

**Natural Divisions**—As a result of its large size and the extreme irregularity of its surface the state is divided into a number of districts that show considerable variation in topography, soil, climatic conditions, industries and products. The most important of these are the following: The non-irrigated prairie section in the eastern part of the state, popularly referred to as "Eastern Colorado;" the South Platte valley, in the north and northeast; the Arkansas valley, extending through the southern part of the eastern half of the state; the San Luis valley, a vast basin, the bed of an ancient lake, lying in the south-central part of the state, almost wholly surrounded by mountain ranges; the San Juan basin, in the southwest; the valleys of the Colorado river and numerous tributary streams in the central-western part; the rugged plateau districts drained by the White and Yampa (Bear) rivers, in the northwest; the mountainous, mineral-bearing districts, extending in a broad, irregular belt across the central part of the state from Wyoming to the New Mexico line; and the mountain park districts, chief of which are North park, in Jackson county; Middle park, in Grand county; and South park in Park county. These last are very similar to the San Luis valley, but all have higher average altitudes and consequently enjoy less intensive agricultural development. In topography and climatic conditions the South Platte and Arkansas valleys are very similar to the non-irrigated sections of eastern Colorado, but by reason of the fact that a large supply of water is available in these valleys for irrigation they enjoy the most extensive agricultural development found in the state and produce a wider range and greater yield of crops than the non-irrigated districts. The San Luis valley has very light rainfall, but an abundant water supply for irrigation is derived from the Rio Grande del Norte and its tributaries. The average altitude is more than 7,500 feet, which limits the range of crops grown, but the fertile soil, abundant water supply and good climate make this valley one of the finest

general farming and stockraising districts in the state. The San Juan basin is a region of from moderate to heavy rainfall, having a considerable area of irrigated land in the river valleys and much good non-irrigated agricultural land on the higher mesas. This is also an excellent stockraising district. The valleys of the Colorado, Gunnison, Uncompahgre and other rivers and smaller streams of the Colorado river basin contain the principal fruit-growing areas of the state, as well as a large amount of the fine general agricultural land. The rainfall in this area is generally inadequate for farming without irrigation, but the water supply is adequate for all land that can be irrigated, and recently farming without irrigation has been undertaken successfully on some of the higher mesa lands, where rainfall is somewhat heavier than in the valleys. The northwest part of the state is less developed than any other district, chiefly because of lack of transportation facilities, but it contains some of the best agricultural and grazing land in Colorado. The mineral area is very extensive, but the principal producing areas are somewhat restricted and are outlined in data published elsewhere in this volume.

**Early History**—That part of Colorado lying east of the Rocky mountains was included in the territory acquired by purchase from France in 1803, usually referred to as the Louisiana purchase. All the southeastern part of the state, lying south of the Arkansas river, and a narrow strip extending north through the mountain district into Wyoming, was claimed by the state of Texas and became a part of the United States when Texas was annexed in 1845. This included a considerable amount of the territory belonging to the Louisiana Purchase, but the controversy regarding the northern boundary of Texas was settled long before Colorado became a state. The western part of what is now Colorado and an additional strip lying west and south of the Rio Grande del Norte was ceded to the United States by Mexico in 1848, following the war with Mexico. The actual settlement of Colorado began with the discovery of gold in the summer of 1858, at which time most of the eastern half of the state was included in Kansas territory under the name of Arapahoe county. The boundaries of the county were very imperfectly defined, and the settlers in the new gold

camps, moreover, objected to being governed by a set of territorial officials 400 miles away. They appealed to the federal government for the organization of a new state or territorial government, and finally, in February, 1861, the territory of Colorado was organized, about a month after statehood had been conferred upon the territory of Kansas. The boundaries of the territory were substantially the same as are those of the state at present. In 1876 Colorado was admitted to the Union as the thirty-eighth state.

**Population**—The population of Colorado has increased steadily and rapidly since its actual settlement began immediately following the discovery of gold in 1858. The following table shows its growth from 1860 to the present time, as compared with the growth for the entire country, all figures being taken from census reports:

Year	Population	Pct. of Increase Over Previous Census	Pct. of Increase For United States
1860.....	34,277	....	....
1870.....	39,864	16.3	22.6
1880.....	194,327	387.5	30.1
1890.....	413,249	112.7	25.5
1900.....	539,700	30.6	20.7
1910.....	799,024	48.0	21.0
1920.....	939,629	17.6	14.9
1925 (est.)..	1,040,442	....	....
1926 (est.)..	1,058,722	....	....
1927 (est.)..	1,074,000	....	....
1928 (est.)..	1,090,000	....	....

During the two decades following 1860 the population was confined largely to the mining districts and to the city of Denver. The cities of Pueblo, Colorado Springs and Trinidad did not make their appearance in the census population statistics until 1880, when the three had a combined population of less than 10,000. During the early 80s the period of agricultural development began and the decade ending with 1890 was in many ways the most important in the history of the state. During that period 24 new counties were organized and scores of new towns were laid out in the agricultural districts. The percentage of increase in population dropped off materially in the succeeding decades, but remained considerably greater than the percentage of increase for the country at large. In 1910 the density of population for the state was 7.7 per square mile, as compared with 30.9 for the United States. Denver county ranked first in this respect, with 3,679, and Dolores

and Jackson counties were tied for last place, with 0.6. The 1920 census showed the density of population for the state to be 9.06 per square mile. Denver still holds first place in this respect, with 4,422.26, and Jackson county ranks last, with 0.81. The rural population in 1910, including all people except those living in incorporated places of 2,500 population or more each, was 394,184, or 49.3 per cent of the total. The rural population as shown by the 1920 census was 486,370, or 51.76 per cent of the total. In 1910 the foreign-born white population was 15.9 per cent of the total, the principal foreign nationalities then being, in the order named, as follows: German, Italian, Russian, Austrian, English, Swedish, Canadian, Irish and Scotch. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 12.4 per cent of the total, the principal foreign nationalities being Russian, Italian, German, Mexican and Swedish.

**Land Classification**—Colorado is the seventh state in the Union in size, with a land area of 66,341,120 acres. It is divided into 63 counties, of which Denver county is the smallest, with an area of 37,120 acres, and Las Animas county the largest, with 3,077,760 acres. The records of the several county assessors showed a total of 36,583,930 acres of patented land on the tax rolls at the beginning of 1929, including railroad rights of way and town and city lots. The records of the federal and state governments at the same time showed a total of 24,083,473 acres of non-patented land, including national forests, homestead areas, national parks and monuments, Indian lands and state land. This leaves 5,673,717 acres of land not definitely classified as to ownership, but none of which is on the tax rolls. Included in this is state land that has been sold but not yet fully paid for and for that reason not yet patented, government land temporarily withdrawn from homestead entry and homestead land that has been filed upon but not yet proved up and for that reason not yet on the tax rolls. In six counties—Clear Creek, Costilla, Gilpin, Hinsdale, Lake and San Juan—the amount of land shown in the various classifications is slightly greater than the area of the counties, as shown by available government surveys. These discrepancies are no doubt due to inaccuracies in surveys, as considerable portions of the mountainous areas of the state have

not yet been accurately surveyed, and each of these counties contains mountainous areas.

Of the area in private ownership in 1928, the tax commission classifies 35,163,103 acres as agricultural land. This is equal to about 53 per cent of the entire land area of the state. The area classified as agricultural land is divided as follows:

	Acres
Fruit land.....	20,515
Irrigated land.....	2,239,622
Natural hay land.....	330,990
Dry farming land.....	11,392,036
Grazing land.....	21,179,940
Total .....	35,163,103

These classifications contain some waste and desert areas of no real value for agricultural purposes. The term "dry farming" applies to tillable land that is non-irrigated. Some of the grazing land eventually will be placed under cultivation. The remaining privately owned area consists mostly of patented mineral land, railroad rights of way and town and city lots.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—Containing, as it does, the most elevated portions of the Rocky mountains, Colorado is quite naturally the source of many of the important streams in the west. The Continental Divide crosses the west-central part of the state, and the streams in the western part flow to the Pacific, while those in the east find their way to the Gulf of Mexico. The streams of the western slope are all tributaries of the Colorado river, from which the state derives its name. The Colorado (Grand) river, the largest stream in the state, has its source in Grand county. The Green river, which was regarded as one of the two streams forming the Colorado when the upper course of the Colorado was called the Grand river, flows through the northwestern corner of Moffat county. The northwestern corner of the state is drained by tributaries of the Green river, chief of which are the Yampa (Bear) and White rivers. The principal tributary of the Colorado river is the Gunnison, which has its source in Gunnison county and enters the Colorado at the city of Grand Junction. The southwestern corner of the state is drained by the San Juan and Dolores rivers, both tributaries of the Colorado. The south-central part of the state, including the San Luis valley, is drained by the Rio Grande del Norte. The southeastern part is drained by the Arkansas river and its tributaries, and the northeastern part

by the South Platte river. The North Platte river has its headwaters in Jackson county and unites with the South Platte in Nebraska to form the Platte river. The Republican river, a tributary of the Kansas, drains a considerable area in the eastern part of the state. These streams have hundreds of small tributaries, most of which have their sources in the mountains where the snowfall is heavy. They furnish the principal water supply for irrigation and for the development of hydro-electric power. Water for domestic purposes is obtained principally from these streams, but in most agricultural sections wells are utilized as a secondary source of domestic water supply. Most of these wells are pumped, but there is a well defined artesian belt in the San Luis valley and artesian water is found in numerous other places. There are more than 8,000 artesian wells in the state, fully two-thirds of which are in the San Luis valley.

**National Forests**—Fifteen national forests located wholly within the state and two lying partially within its boundaries comprise about 20 per cent of the state's area. These forests embrace 13,278,233 acres, mostly in Colorado, and are administered by the department of agriculture of the federal government.

**National Parks and Monuments**—Two national parks and four national monuments are located within the boundaries of Colorado and one national monument on the boundary between Colorado and Utah. Five of these parks and monuments are administered by the national park service of the department of the interior, and two monuments, being within the national forests, are administered by the department of agriculture. Their names, locations and areas are as follows:

Rocky Mountain national park, located in the north middle part of the state, in Larimer, Boulder and Grand counties, and embracing an area of about 378 square miles, or 241,738 acres. Of the total, 9,113 acres is private or state-owned land.

Mesa Verde national park, located in southwestern Colorado in Montezuma county, and embracing about 77 square miles, or 48,966 acres.

Holy Cross national monument, located in Eagle county, and embracing 1,392 acres.

Colorado national monument, located in Mesa county near Grand Junction, and embracing 13,883 acres.

Yucca House national monument, located in the southwestern part of the state in Montezuma county, and embracing 9.6 acres.

Wheeler national monument, located in Mineral county, and embracing 300 acres.

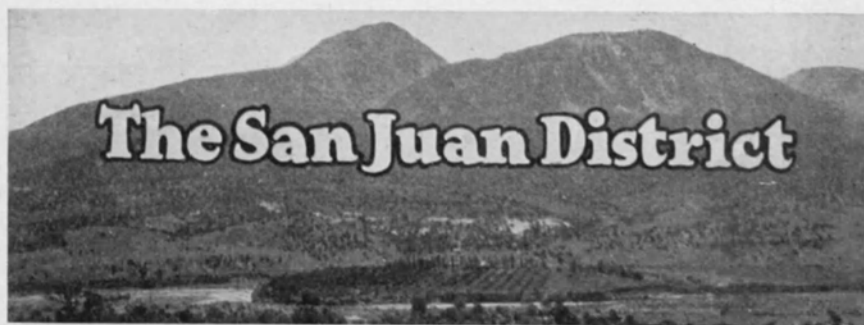
Hovenweep national monument, located on the Colorado-Utah boundary in Montezuma county, and embracing 285.8 acres.

**Climatological Data**—As a result of its great size and the extreme irregularity of its surface, the climate of Colorado is wonderfully varied and cannot be described in detail here. The mean annual temperature for the entire state is 44.3 degrees, but it varies from about 31 degrees in some of the higher mountain districts to 54 degrees in parts of the Arkansas valley. The average annual precipitation for the state is 17.54 inches, but there is also a very wide range here in the different sections of the state. The lowest average precipitation is about 6.5 inches, in the San Luis valley, and the highest about 40 inches in the San Juan mountains. The delightful and wonderful healthful qualities of Colorado's climate are well known throughout the country. Rainfall is comparatively light in all sections of the state and the percentage of sunshine is very high. The range of temperature is wide. The amount of moisture in the air is always low and as a result the unpleasant effects of extremely low or high temperatures are greatly modified. The relative annual humidity ranges from 45 to 60 per cent, being lower than in any other state except

Arizona and Nevada. The high altitude is another important factor in governing climatic conditions in the state. As a result of this high altitude and the correspondingly low atmospheric pressure, impurities in the air are quickly dissipated and the depressing effects common at low altitudes, especially during periods of warm, damp weather, are entirely foreign to this state.

**Railroads, Telegraph and Telephone Facilities**—There are 30 railroad companies represented in Colorado, operating an aggregate of 5,005.22 miles of main line track. Every county in the state has some railroad mileage, though the railroad facilities of some counties, particularly in the northwestern and southwestern parts of the state, are inadequate. The total value of railroad property in the state as returned by the state tax commission for the year 1926 was \$158,898,470.

Ninety-six telephone companies operate in the state, owning an aggregate total of 484,689 miles of telephone line. This is an increase of more than 150,000 miles over the amount reported to the tax commission in 1921. The valuation of all property owned by these companies, as returned by the state tax commission for purposes of taxation in 1927, was \$14,313,420. Most of these companies are small and operate in but one or two counties. The Mountain States Telephone & Telegraph company operates its own lines in all but one county in the state. Baca, and has a total of 471,106 miles of line in Colorado. Four telegraph companies operate a total of 28,306 miles of line in the state.



**T**HE district described in this booklet lies in the southwestern corner of the state and includes the agricultural area popularly known as the San

Juan district. The basin takes its name from the San Juan river, which, with its tributaries, drains the area, while the mining region takes its name



from the San Juan mountains, in which most of the rich metal mines are to be found.

The counties here included are Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, Ouray, San Juan and San Miguel. Their combined areas total 5,392,000 acres, or about 350,000 acres more than the combined areas of the states of Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island. The surface is widely varied, including a small acreage of level and extremely fertile river valley land, considerable mesa land of high productivity, a large area of broken grazing land and some of the most rugged mountainous areas to be found in the United States. The principal river is the San Juan, which rises in the San Juan mountains, near the Continental divide, in Archuleta county, flows into New Mexico and then turns north, flowing across the western end of Montezuma county. The principal tributaries of the San Juan in this district are the Los Pinos, Animas, La Plata and Mancos rivers. The northwestern part of the district is drained by the Dolores and San Miguel rivers, which are, like the San Juan, direct tributaries of the Colorado river. These streams all have their sources in regions of high precipitation and carry from moderate to abundant supplies of water the year round. The mountain areas in this district have the heaviest precipitation of any section of Colorado, so that there is in most parts of the district an abundant supply of water for irrigation and other necessary purposes.

Railroad transportation for the district is supplied by the Denver & Rio

Grande Western, with narrow gauge lines centering at Durango. One of these lines, operating between the district and the south-central part of the state, enters Archuleta county from New Mexico, into which state it makes a dip just east of the Archuleta county line, runs along the southern boundary of the county and turns northwestward towards Durango. At this point it connects with a north and south line running from connections with the broad gauge main line at Grand Junction. This north and south line operates through the eastern part of the district herein described and continues into northern New Mexico. Another line, the Rio Grande Southern, also narrow gauge, branches from Ridgeway, in Ouray county, and runs in a generally southwestern direction to Dolores in Montezuma county, and thence eastward to Durango. The western part of the district has no railroads.

The district is generally served by good state and county highways and national forest roads. These run east and west and north and south and in intermediate directions, and are parts of or connect with the main systems of highways of the state.

Transportation facilities, resources of the counties, opportunities, scenic attractions and other features are discussed in detail in the data relating to the individual counties. Tables in the Colorado Year Book give details as to composition and characteristics of the population of the several counties and the rank of the counties in various lines among the counties of the state.

### GENERAL Description—

Archuleta county is located in the southwestern part of the state, the southern boundary being formed by the state of New Mexico, and the eastern boundary by the main range of the Rocky mountains. It is rectangular in outline, with an extreme length, east and west, of about 60 miles, and an extreme width of 33



miles. Its area is 780,800 acres, or about 100,000 acres greater than the state of Rhode Island. The surface is



mountainous in the north and east and the southwest is broken by numerous narrow valleys, containing a limited amount of arable land. The altitude varies from about 6,000 feet in the extreme southwest, to about 14,000 feet at the summits of some of the peaks on the eastern boundary.

**Early History** — The first known white explorers in the territory now included in Archuleta county, were Spaniards, who came in 1776. The only evidence remaining from their visit is the large number of Spanish names for mountains, rivers, etc., in this territory. When Colorado territory was organized in 1861, what is now Archuleta county was included in Conejos county. Archuleta county was organized in 1885, and was named in honor of J. M. Archuleta, then a prominent citizen of old Conejos county.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, thirty-eighth in area, forty-seventh in population, fifty-third in assessed valuation, fifty-second in bank deposits, fifty-first in agricultural values, fifty-second in dairy cattle values, thirty-eighth in range cattle values, eighteenth in sheep values, forty-seventh in swine values, twenty-third in coal mining, twenty-ninth in manufacturing, thirty-third in railroad mileage, forty-second in highway mileage and fifty-fifth in the number of motor vehicles.

**Topography and Soil**—There is little arable land in the county, except in the southwest, where the San Juan river and several of its tributaries have cut numerous narrow and comparatively level valleys. The soil of these valleys is a deep fertile loam, made up principally from the weathering of rocks in the mountains above. Numerous mountain valleys in the central part of the county produce an abundance of fine natural hay. The northern and eastern parts of the county are extremely rugged and have been but little explored. No detailed soil survey of this territory is available.

**Population**—The population in 1920 was 3,590, compared with 3,302 in 1910, the increase being 8.7 per cent. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 2.3 per cent of the total, compared with 5.2 per cent in 1910. The estimated population in 1925 was 3,752. The principal foreign nationalities are Canadian, Danish and Italian. There are a few Spanish-speaking people in

settlements near the southern boundary, though most of them are native born. The entire population is rural.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—The headwaters of the San Juan river are in the San Juan mountains, in this county and in Mineral county, and numerous tributaries to this stream have their sources in the mountains in the northern part of the county. The rainfall here is extremely heavy and these streams carry an abundance of water the year round. Water for domestic purposes is obtained from the natural springs, and in some sections from wells. Underground water for domestic purposes is found at depths ranging from 10 to 100 feet. Farming under irrigation is carried on to a limited extent in the valleys and there is plenty of water available for all lands suitable for cultivation.

**Industries**—The principal industries are stockraising, farming and lumbering. There has been considerable prospecting for minerals in the county, but no development worthy of note has taken place, partly because of the remoteness of the mineralized district from lines of transportation. There are extensive coal deposits in the western part, which have been but little developed. Lumbering in the past has been the leading industry of the county and is still being followed extensively in the territory along the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad. The value of all farm property on January 1, 1925, as reported by the census bureau, was \$1,992,736. Live-stock on farms included 2,186 horses, 12,501 cattle and 1,291 swine. In 1919, the county had 12 manufacturing establishments, with an output valued at \$367,853.

**Crops**—The principal crops, in the order of their importance and value, are hay, oats, wheat, potatoes, corn and barley. The estimated farm value of all crops in 1928 was \$463,220, of which \$407,590 was in hay, \$19,980 in oats, \$19,650 in wheat, \$3,160 in corn, \$2,440 in barley, \$3,370 in potatoes, \$160 in rye, \$210 in fruits and \$1,750 in miscellaneous crops. There was 22,030 acres, or 2.8 per cent of the total area, under cultivation. Of the cultivated area, 0.9 per cent was in corn, 15.5 per cent in oats, 1.4 per cent in barley, 0.2 per cent in winter wheat, 5.9 per cent in spring wheat, 1.2 per cent in potatoes. The average yields in bushels per acre over a five-year

period were: Winter wheat, irrigated, 30.7 bushels, non-irrigated, 13.9 bushels; spring wheat, irrigated, 27.5 bushels, non-irrigated, 9.8 bushels; corn, irrigated, 28.1 bushels, non-irrigated, 12.1 bushels; barley, irrigated, 33.1 bushels, non-irrigated, 17.7 bushels; potatoes, irrigated, 110.2 bushels, non-irrigated, 44.1 bushels.

**Mineral Resources**—The known minerals are gold, silver, lead, copper, zinc, clay, granite, sandstone and a wide variety of other stones. There has been no mineral development worthy of note.

**Timber**—Excellent pine and spruce timber is to be found in nearly all sections of the county. Cedar and pinon are found in the south and west.

**Land Classification**—In 1928 there was 337,538 acres of land, or 43.2 per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessor listed 10,321 acres as irrigated land, 465 acres as natural hay land, 10,570 as dry farming land, 302,346 as grazing land, 11,403 acres as timber land, 1,583 acres as railroad rights-of-way and 850 acres as town lots. There was 92,343 acres of government land, mostly in small or isolated tracts, or of value principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 17,791 acres of unappropriated state land, which may be purchased upon favorable terms from the state land board. There was 398,361 acres in national forests.

**Transportation**—The Durango branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad, narrow gauge, crosses the extreme southeast corner of the county, runs south into New Mexico and then re-enters the county near the town of Juanita, in the southwestern part. A branch line leaves this road at Pagosa Junction and runs northward to Pagosa Springs, the county seat. The county has 63 miles of railroad.

**Highways**—The county has 510 miles of highways, of which 103 miles are state highways and 407 miles are county roads. Of these, 37 miles are surfaced and 117 miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The principal state highway is the Spanish Trail, which enters the county by way of Wolf Creek pass, over the San Juan mountains, and runs south and west through Pagosa Springs to Durango, where it connects with a road running west into Utah, and another running south into New Mexico, and thence to the Pacific coast. At Pagosa Springs

this same highway connects with the highway over Cumbres pass leading to Antonito and Alamosa. A secondary state highway leads south from Piedra to Arboles. These roads, with a few imperfectly improved county roads and trails, furnish a fairly adequate highway system.

**Educational**—The county is divided into 22 public school districts, in which are located 28 schools, employing 33 teachers. These include one senior high school, two junior high schools, two elementary schools and 23 rural schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 659, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$82.75, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. There are no private schools or colleges in the county.

**Climatological Data**—The rainfall is extremely varied. In the southeast it averages about 14 inches annually but increases rapidly toward the north and east, being about 25 inches along the Continental divide on the eastern boundary. The climate is fairly mild at lower altitudes in the south, but is subject to extremely low temperatures in the high altitudes in the north and east. Snow fall is extremely heavy in the San Juan mountains along the eastern boundary. Normal annual mean temperature at Pagosa Springs is 41.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The average number of days between killing frosts is 91, the last killing frost in the spring usually occurring between June 9 and July 11 and first in the fall between September 1 and September 25.

**Tourist Attractions**—The opening of the Spanish Trail has greatly increased automobile tourist travel to this territory. The road passes through a very picturesque mountain territory and touches Pagosa Springs, which has been an important resort for tourists and health-seekers for a good many years, because of the large mineral springs located there. The water in one of these hot springs is very similar to that of the famous Carlsbad springs. A large area of picturesque mountain territory in the east and in the northwest is almost wholly without highways, and therefore, is inaccessible to visitors. Extensive ruins of villages and settlements of ancient Cliff Dwellers have been discovered in this county and recent excavations and explorations near the Spanish Trail west of Pagosa Springs have uncov-

ered many ruins of interest to tourists. Excellent trout fishing is to be had in all of the mountain streams and considerable game is found in the lower regions of the San Juan mountains.

**Cities and Towns**—Pagosa Springs, the county seat, is the only incorporated town in the county. It is situated at the terminal of a branch line of the Denver & Rio Grande Western from Pagosa Junction, at an elevation of 7,070 feet above sea level, in the center of an excellent stockraising territory, and is an important outfitting point for campers, hunters and fishermen. Its population in 1920 was 1,032, compared with 669 in 1910 and 367 in 1900. Other postoffices in the county are: Arboles, Chromo, Dyke, Pagosa Junction, and Piedra.

**Special Opportunities**—Opportunities are offered here for development along many lines. There is considerable agricultural land not yet under cultivation and range available for pasturing perhaps twice as many head of livestock as are now being fed. The timber resources are perhaps better than those of any other county in the state. Large areas of supposedly mineralized territory in the northern and eastern parts of the county have had but little prospecting and it is not beyond the range of possibility that rich mineral areas may be opened up in this region at some future time.

**Banks**—There is one bank in the county, located at Pagosa Springs.

**Commercial Organizations**—The principal commercial organization is the Archuleta County Boosters club, Pagosa Springs.

#### GENERAL Description—

Dolores county is in the southwestern part of the state, bounded on the south by Montezuma county and on the west by Utah. It is of rectangular outline with an extreme length east and west of 65 miles

and an extreme width of 24 miles. The area is 667,520 acres, or slightly less than the area of the state of Rhode Island. It is broken table land in the west, which rises to the summits of the La Plata and San Miguel mountains on the eastern border. The altitude varies from about 5,900 feet in the extreme southwest, to about 13,000 feet at the summits of some of the peaks on the eastern boundary.

**Early History**—That this territory was visited by Spanish explorers and fortune hunters in the 18th century is proven by traces of ancient mining operations in the vicinity of Rico similar to those known to have been carried on by other Spanish explorers in southwestern Colorado. There is no indication of any important discoveries of gold at that time. A party of trappers employed by the St. Louis



Fur company made a temporary settlement on the Dolores river about 1833. The Baker expedition, which set out from California gulch, in what is now Lake county, in 1860, reached the territory in the spring of 1861. There were numerous other stray prospectors and fur hunters in the territory previous to 1874, but no settlements of importance were made until after the treaty with the Southern Ute Indians in 1873. The Rico mining district was first worked systematically in 1878. The territory now included in Dolores county was first a part of La Plata county. It was organized as a part of Ouray county in 1877 and Dolores county as it now exists was created in 1881.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, forty-second in area, sixty-first in population, sixty-first

in assessed valuation, fifty-sixth in agricultural values, fifty-seventh in dairy cattle values, fifty-second in range cattle values, twenty-ninth in sheep values, fifty-second in swine values, fifth in metal mining, sixteenth in coal mining, sixty-first in manufacturing, fifty-eighth in railroad mileage, fifty-fourth in highway mileage and fifty-ninth in the number of motor vehicles.

**Topography and Soil**—In the western part the surface is a succession of high mesas cut by numerous canons and narrow valleys. Much of the mesa land is suitable for cultivation, but most of the valleys are too narrow for farming. The surface is rugged and broken in the central part and rises rapidly toward the east to the summit of the mountains on the eastern and northeastern boundaries. The soil in the valleys and on the mesas is a sandy loam, very fertile in some districts, but in others, coarse and unsuitable for cultivation. There is no soil survey of this territory available.

**Population**—The population in 1920 was 1,243, compared with 642 in 1910, the increase being 93.6 per cent. This large increase in population was due principally to the settlement of homestead lands in the western part of the county. The estimated population in 1925 was 1,584. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 7.8 per cent of the total, compared with 26 per cent in 1910. This large decrease in foreign-born population is due principally to a decline in mining operations, most of the foreigners being engaged in and about the mines. The principal foreign nationalities are Italian, German and Austrian. The entire population is rural.

**Land Classification**—In 1926 there was 193,716 acres of land, or 29.0 per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessor listed 836 acres as irrigated land, 17,301 acres as dry farming land, 170,757 acres as grazing land, 60 acres as productive and 212 acres as non-productive coal land, 1,644 acres as timber land, 2,326 acres as non-productive mining claims, 430 acres as railroad rights-of-way and 160 acres as town lots. There was 68,839 acres of government land, mostly in small or isolated tracts, or of value principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 9,171 acres of unappropriated state land which may be purchased upon favorable terms

from the state land board. There was 311,075 acres in national forests.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—The Dolores river and its tributaries furnish the principal drainage. The river has its source in the San Miguel mountains in the eastern part of the county, flows south into Montezuma county and turning north again, crosses the west end of Dolores county. A few small tributaries of the San Juan river have their sources in the southwestern corner of the county. There is water available for the irrigation of considerable land, but irrigation development at the present time is very limited. Water for domestic purposes in some sections is obtained from wells at depths ranging from 25 to 125 feet.

**Industries**—Mining is the principal industry. The Rico mining district has been producing steadily for nearly 40 years. In 1927 the county produced \$1,432,554 worth of gold, silver, lead, copper and zinc, and from 1879 to the end of 1927, it produced \$17,528,000 in these metals. There has been some agricultural development in the river valleys and stockraising is carried on rather extensively. The value of all farm property on January 1, 1925, as reported by the census, was \$308,130. Livestock on farms included 746 horses, 2,867 cattle and 455 swine. Lumbering and tie-making have also been important industries at various times in the past. The county produced 8,354 tons of coal in 1928.

**Crops**—The principal crops, in the order of their importance and value, are hay, wheat, corn, dry beans, oats, barley, potatoes and sorghums. The estimated farm value of all crops in 1928 was \$101,650, of which \$29,110 was in hay, \$20,480 in wheat, \$17,200 in corn, \$10,100 in dry beans, \$7,200 in oats, \$4,630 in barley, \$4,050 in potatoes, \$3,100 in sorghums, \$1,620 in rye, \$260 in fruits and \$3,900 in miscellaneous crops. There was 9,800 acres, or 1.4 per cent of the total area, under cultivation. Of the cultivated area, 23.4 per cent was in corn, 10.2 per cent in winter wheat, 18.3 per cent in spring wheat, 14.8 per cent in oats, 6.7 per cent in barley, 3.3 per cent in rye, 4.1 per cent in sorghums, and 3.0 per cent in potatoes. The average yields in bushels per acre over a five-year period were: Winter wheat, irrigated, 14.0 bushels, non-irrigated, 12.6 bushels; spring wheat, non-irrigated, 8.1



ANIMAS  
VALLEY ABOVE  
DURANGO



CUTTING OATS  
FOR  
HAY



CATTLE  
GRAZING ON  
FREE RANGE



WHEAT  
FIELD IN  
SAN JUAN  
BASIN

busbels; corn, non-irrigated, 11.8 bushels; barley, irrigated, 38.0 bushels, non-irrigated, 15.0 bushels; potatoes, non-irrigated, 34.0 bushels.

**Mineral Resources**—The known minerals are alunite, antimony, carnotite, clays, coal, copper, fluor spar, gold, gypsum, lead, silver, zinc, granite and other building stone. Gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc have been mined in large quantities and are still being produced. The Rico district was formerly one of the heaviest silver-producing sections of the state. There are extensive deposits of stone and clay, but they are almost wholly undeveloped because of remoteness from markets.

**Timber**—There is considerable heavy timber in the mountainous districts in the eastern part of the county, principally pine and spruce. Some cedar and pinon are found on the higher lands in the western part.

**Transportation**—The Rio Grande Southern railroad passes through the eastern part of the county. This is a narrow gauge railroad with 18 miles of track in the county.

**Highways**—The county has 281 miles of highways, of which 72 miles are state highways and 209 miles are county roads. Of these, 72 miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The principal state highway is that leading through the eastern part of the county by way of Rico, running north from Cortez to a connection with the Rainbow Route at Montrose. A new state highway has recently been improved from Dolores, in Montezuma county north through Dolores county to Norwood, and another highway between the same points extends through the western part of the county by way of Dove Creek. This county has for a good many years suffered because of lack of highways, but the present program of highway development promises to give it fairly adequate service.

**Educational**—The county is divided into 10 public school districts, in which are located 17 schools, employing 20 teachers. Of these, two are junior high schools, two elementary schools, and 13 rural schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 300, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$76.98, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. There are no private schools or colleges in the county.

**Climatological Data**—The rainfall varies from about 13 inches in the west to about 25 inches in the mountain districts in the eastern part. There is sufficient rainfall for farming without irrigation in most of the dry farming districts, but little progress in this direction has been made. The climate in the western part is mild and equable, while in the eastern part the winters are severe, with extremely heavy snowfall.

**Tourist Attractions**—There is a wealth of picturesque scenery in the eastern part of the county, which is comparatively little known, even to Colorado people, because of lack of transportation facilities. The completion of the state highways previously referred to will greatly increase tourist travel to this section. Good trout fishing is to be had in most of the mountain streams and in a few of the mountain lakes.

**Cities and Towns**—Rico, the county seat and only incorporated town, had a population of 326 in 1920, compared with 368 in 1910 and 811 in 1900. This is one of the most important mining camps in the state. Its altitude is 8,900 feet above sea level. Other post-offices in the county are: Cahone, Dove Creek, Dunton and Northdale.

**Special Opportunities**—Opportunities are offered here for both agricultural and mining development. It has been previously pointed out that there is a large amount of land in the western part of the county, which under favorable conditions might be cultivated successfully, but which has been allowed to lie idle because of remoteness from railroads. While the Rico mining district has been producing extensively for a great many years, there is still a large area of mining territory which has been only imperfectly prospected and which may reveal rich metal deposits. The Rio Grande Southern railroad passes through the extreme eastern part of the county and the agricultural lands in the western part are 50 miles from any railroad. There are deposits of carnotite ore of uncertain richness in the western part of the county which have never been developed because of lack of transportation facilities.

**Banks**—There are no banks in the county, but banking facilities are available at nearby towns in adjoining counties.

## GENERAL Description—

La Plata county is in the southwestern part of the state and includes a considerable portion of the agricultural territory popularly known as the San Juan basin. Its southern boundary is formed by the state of New

Mexico. It has a truncated triangular shape, with an extreme length of about 40 miles, north and south, and an extreme width of 38 miles near the southern end. Its area is 1,184,640 acres, or about 73,000 acres less than that of the state of Delaware. In the south the surface is divided into level tablelands, interspersed with small timbered hills, rising very rapidly into a rugged, mountainous region in the north. The altitude ranges from about 5,900 feet at the southern boundary to more than 14,000 feet at the summits of some of the peaks in the north.

**Early History**—Early Spanish explorers probably followed the course of the San Juan and tributary streams into this territory, but no authentic account of such explorations is available. In 1860 a party of gold hunters, under the leadership of a man named Baker, entered what is now La Plata county. They discovered no gold and made no settlement, hostile Indians and hunger being the influences which forced them to cut their visit short. Another party of prospectors entered this region in 1870 and returned the following year, finding placer and lode gold deposits in the La Plata mountains. A treaty was made with the Indians in 1873 and the following year hundreds of settlers entered the Animas valley and the surrounding mountains. The county was organized in 1874, then comprising a territory nearly four times as large as the present county.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, twenty-third in area, twenty-first in population, twenty-sixth in assessed valuation, eleventh in bank deposits, thirty-third in agricultural values, twenty-third in dairy cattle values, twenty-sixth in range cattle values, sixteenth in sheep values, thirtieth in swine values, nineteenth in metal mining, eleventh in coal mining, fifteenth in manufactur-

## La Plata County



ing, ninth in railroad mileage, thirteenth in highway mileage and twenty-eighth in the number of motor vehicles.

**Topography and Soil**—The surface is extremely irregular. In the south it is crossed by numerous narrow valleys of streams flowing to the San Juan river, most of which contain considerable splendid farming area. Further north, the surface becomes mountainous, with the La Platas on the west and spurs of the San Juans on the north. The soil in the southern part is deep sandy loam, usually, with a wide variety of color and texture, well adapted for the growing of any general crops raised in this altitude, as well as for most tree fruits grown in Colorado. No detailed soil survey is available.

**Population**—The population in 1920 was 11,218, compared with 10,812 in 1910, the increase being 3.8 per cent. Estimated population in 1925 was 11,448. At the beginning of 1920 the foreign-born white population was 9 per cent of the total, compared with 12.8 per cent in 1910. The principal foreign nationalities are Italian, Austrian, German and English. The foreigners are employed principally in the mines and smelters. The population is all classified as rural, except that in the city of Durango, which had a population of 4,116 in 1920.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—This region is drained by the San Juan river, which flows through northern New Mexico. The principal tributaries in La Plata county are the Pine, Animas and La Plata rivers. These streams have their headwaters in the San Juan and La Plata mountains, where the precipitation is very heavy, and carry an abundant supply of water for all irrigable land and for all other necessary purposes. Hydro-electric power is developed on the Animas river above Durango to furnish power





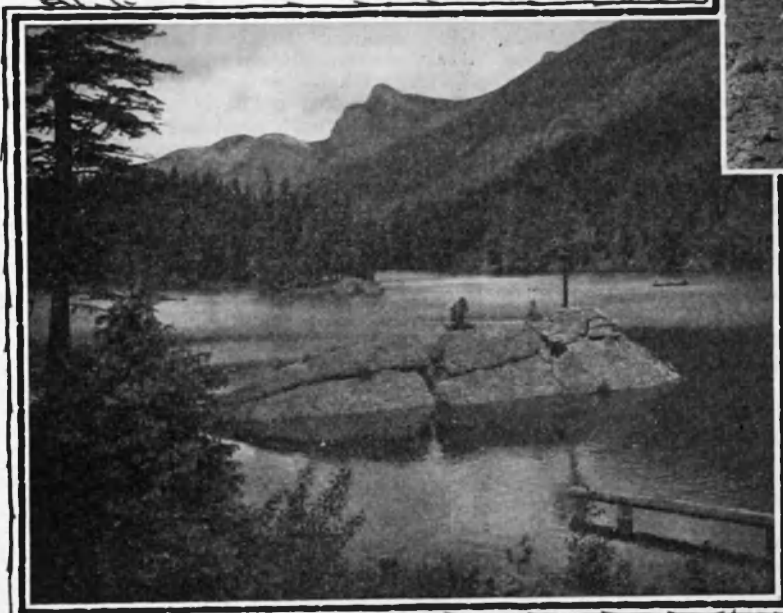
*The Fertile Montezuma Valley*



*Ancient Homes of Cliff Dwellers*



*A San Juan Basin Dairy Herd*



*Born's Lake ~ Archuleta County*



*Irrigating an orchard near Durango*

and light for most of the cities and towns. In the agricultural districts domestic water is obtained from wells where it is not available from other sources. Water is found at depths ranging from 10 to 600 feet.

**Industries**—The principal industries are farming, stockraising, dairying, manufacturing, mining and lumbering. Farming, stockraising and dairying are carried on chiefly in the southern part, though stock is grazed extensively in the forest areas in the northern part during the summer. The value of all farm property on January 1, 1925, as reported by the census, was \$5,514,565. Livestock on farms included 5,427 horses, 24,729 cattle, and 4,979 swine. Metal mining is carried on principally in the La Plata mountains in the northwest. Total output of gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc in 1927 was \$28,156. There are extensive coal deposits in the county, most of which remain undeveloped. Coal is being mined in a number of localities along the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad west of Durango. Output of coal in 1928 was 89,701 tons. A large smelter belonging to the American Smelting & Refining company is located at Durango, handling much of the ore produced in this district and giving employment to a large number of people. Durango is also the principal retail market for this territory and its jobbing business is increasing rapidly. It has a flour mill, an ice plant, a packing plant, a creamery, a brick plant and a planing mill. In 1919 the county had 32 manufacturing establishments with an annual payroll of \$372,747 and output of products valued at \$3,384,123.

**Crops**—The principal crops, in the order of their importance and value, are hay, wheat, oats, corn, barley, potatoes, fruits and dry beans. The estimated farm value of all crops in 1928 was \$1,156,750, of which \$722,860 was in hay, \$216,250 in wheat, \$63,400 in oats, \$50,290 in corn, \$33,560 in barley, \$40,810 in potatoes, \$7,450 in fruits, \$3,520 in dry beans, \$460 in rye and \$18,090 in miscellaneous crops. There was 50,323 acres, or 4.2 per cent of the total area, under cultivation. Of the cultivated area, 5.5 per cent was in corn, 1.4 per cent in winter wheat, 17.8 per cent in spring wheat, 10.3 per cent in oats, 4.2 per cent in barley, and 1.8 per cent in potatoes. The average yields in bushels per acre over a five-year period were: Winter wheat, irri-

gated, 32.6 bushels, non-irrigated, 14.4 bushels; spring wheat, irrigated, 26.7 bushels, non-irrigated, 9.0 bushels; corn, irrigated, 30.4 bushels, non-irrigated, 12.5 bushels; barley, irrigated, 35.6 bushels, non-irrigated, 16.5 bushels; potatoes, irrigated, 121.4 bushels, non-irrigated, 43.9 bushels.

**Mineral Resources**—The principal minerals in this county are bismuth, coal, clay, copper, cinnabar, gold, silver, lead, sand, granite, limestone and a wide variety of other building stone. Gold, silver, copper and lead have been produced in considerable quantities and are still being mined. The coal mines have been only slightly developed, principally to supply local demand, though considerable high-grade coal is shipped out. Clays have been mined near Durango for making brick. Building stone has been quarried to a limited extent, only for local use, and building sand has been developed in the same way.

**Timber**—There is considerable timber in nearly all parts of the county. Pine, and spruce are heavy in the more mountainous parts in the north. Pinon, cedar and pine are found on the higher ground further south.

**Land Classification**—In 1928 there was 443,299 acres of land, or 37.4 per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessor listed 889 acres as fruit land, 53,341 acres as irrigated land, 18,636 acres as dry farming land, 351,040 acres as grazing land, 677 acres as productive and 5,165 acres as non-productive coal land, 4,066 acres as timber land, 4,930 acres as non-productive mining claims, 3,030 acres as railroad rights-of-way and 1,525 acres as town lots. There was 150,067 acres of government land, mostly in small and isolated tracts or valued principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 15,921 acres of unappropriated state land which may be purchased upon favorable terms from the state land board. There was 379,016 acres in national forests.

**Transportation**—A narrow gauge line of the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad system enters the county from the east, coming from Alamosa, and has its terminus at Durango. The Rio Grande Southern, belonging to the same system, runs west from Durango into Montezuma county and north to Ridgway and Montrose. A branch of the Rio Grande Western

runs north from Durango to Silverton and another runs south to Farmington, N. M. Total mileage of railroads is 121.

**Highways**—The county has 1,591 miles of highways, of which 101 miles are state highways and 1,490 miles are county roads. Of these, 137 miles are surfaced, 34 miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The principal state highway is the Spanish Trail, which enters the county from the east and extends to Durango. From here it branches, one road running west to Mancos and Cortez in Montezuma county, and the Mesa Verde national park. Another branch runs south to Farmington and on to southern California by way of the Grand Canon. There are many excellent roads radiating from Durango in all directions. A state highway from Durango to Silverton has recently been completed, so that it is now possible for automobilists to travel from the Spanish Trail at Durango north through Silverton and Ouray to the Rainbow Route at Montrose.

**Educational**—The county is divided into 37 public school districts, in which are located 78 schools, employing 140 teachers. Of these, 14 are senior high schools, one junior high school, 19 elementary schools, and 44 rural schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 2,461, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$108.50, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. The Fort Lewis School of Agriculture, Mechanical and Household Arts, connected with the State Agricultural college, is located at Hesperus. There is a business college at Durango. The government has schools for the Indians in the Consolidated Ute Reservation.

**Climatological Data**—The rainfall in the southern part varies from 14 inches to 16 inches. In the western part it runs as high as 18 inches and in the north it reaches nearly 30 inches. The climate is subject to extremely low temperatures in the north but is equable in the south, especially well adapted to stockraising and general farming. Normal annual mean temperature at Durango is 47 degrees Fahrenheit. The average number of days between killing frosts is 127, the last killing frost in the spring usually occurring between April 28 and June 3, and first in the fall between September 14 and October 16.

**Tourist Attractions**—This is a district of unsurpassed scenic beauty, and the number of visitors has been greatly increased by the opening of the Spanish Trail, which permits automobile travelers to make the trip from the cities in the eastern part of the state to Durango and the Mesa Verde national park. The road from Durango to Silverton has opened a wide range of beautiful mountain scenery, which had been wholly inaccessible to the automobilist. La Plata county is one of the leaders in the construction of good roads. There is excellent trout fishing in many of the mountain streams and exceptionally fine fishing is afforded in some of the mountain lakes. The Ute Indian reservation and school at Ignacio is a point of considerable interest to tourists.

**Cities and Towns**—The county has four incorporated towns. Durango, the county seat, is the principal city and distributing center for the San Juan district. It is an important industrial center and a market of importance. Its estimated population in 1925 was 6,000, compared with 4,686 in 1910. Its altitude is 6,505 feet above sea level. Ignacio, on the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad in the Pine river valley, is an important agricultural town, with a population of 290 in 1920. Animas City has a population of 275, and Bayfield, east of Durango and center of an agricultural district, has a population of 350. Other postoffices in the county are: Allison, Breen, Falfa, Hesperus, Kline, La Boca, Laplata, Oxford, Redmesa, Rockwood, Tacoma and Tiffany.

**Special Opportunities**—Opportunities are offered here both for agricultural development and for prospecting and mining development. The homestead land includes some areas suitable for farming, and a considerable amount of grazing land. Privately owned land may be obtained at prices lower than prevail in most sections of the state. There is an extensive mineralized area within the county, much of which has been inadequately prospected. Extensive coal deposits are found, but development has been slow on account of remoteness from large markets. Cheap power and cheap coal make this area a favorable place for manufacturing development, though it is at present remote from extensive markets. There are immense supplies

of building stone and clays, which must wait for development until the surrounding country is settled, so as to provide a better outlet for the products. Cement rock is abundant, with a good local market. Durango is supplied with natural gas for domestic and industrial purposes from New Mexico.

**Banks**—There are four banks in the county, three at Durango and one at Ignacio. Their combined deposits on December 31, 1928, amounted to \$3,340,127.

**Commercial Organizations**—The principal commercial organization is the Durango Exchange at Durango.

## GENERAL Description—

Montezuma county is in the extreme southwest corner of Colorado, the southern boundary being formed by New Mexico and the western boundary by Utah. It is of an irregular rectangular outline,

with an extreme length, east and west, of about 50 miles, and an extreme width, north and south, of about 38 miles. Its area is 1,312,640 acres, or about twice that of the state of Rhode Island. It is a broken table land in the south and west, rising rather abruptly to the summits of the La Plata mountains in the northeast. The altitude ranges from about 5,600 feet in the southeast to nearly 13,000 feet at the summits of some of the peaks in the northeast.

**Early History**—The first known inhabitants of this area were Cliff Dwellers, so-called because of the peculiar character of their habitations, who at one time lived in large numbers here and in adjoining parts of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. Extensive ruins of their dwellings, temples and even of cities of considerable size, are found in many of the canons in the southern and eastern parts of the county, especially in the vicinity of Mesa Verde national park. The first known white settlers in what is now Montezuma county came in 1873, soon after the treaty of peace had been signed with the Indians of this region. There was much prospecting for gold here, but few important discoveries were made and most of the settlers were farmers, raising excellent crops in the Mancos and Montezuma valleys. The county was organized in



1889, being formed from the western part of La Plata county, and was named for a famous ruler of the Aztecs.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, twentieth in area, thirty-sixth in population, forty-sixth in assessed valuation, twenty-third in bank deposits, thirty-ninth in agricultural values, twenty-second in dairy cattle values, thirty-fifth in range cattle values, tenth in sheep values, thirty-sixth in swine values, seventeenth in coal mining, thirty-eighth in manufacturing, thirty-fifth in railroad mileage, twenty-second in highway mileage and thirty-fifth in the number of motor vehicles.

**Topography and Soil**—In the western part the surface is a high table land, cut by numerous streams, all tributary to the San Juan river. Excellent farming land is to be found in the narrow valleys of these streams, as well as on many of the high mesas lying between them. The soil is a sandy loam, very deep and fertile, with a wide range of color and texture. Further east the country becomes broken and mountainous, suitable only for grazing purposes. The Montezuma national forest extends into the northeastern corner of the county.

**Population**—The population in 1920 was 6,260, compared with 5,029 in 1910, the increase being 24.5 per cent. The

estimated population in 1925 was 6,925. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 3.9 per cent of the total, compared with 5.4 per cent in 1910. The principal foreign nationalities are German, Canadian and English. There is considerable Indian population, the southern part of the county being an Indian reservation. The entire population is rural.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—The southern and western parts of the county are drained by the San Juan river and its tributaries, while the Dolores river rises in the northeastern part and drains that territory. The principal tributaries of the San Juan in this county are the Mancos river, St. Elmo creek and Cross Canon creek. Most of these streams have their sources in a region of high rainfall in the eastern part of the county and carry plenty of water for irrigation purposes. Domestic water is obtained principally from wells, and is found at depths ranging from 25 to 75 feet.

**Industries**—The principal industries are agriculture, stockraising and mining. A large percentage of the land in the eastern part of the county is suitable for cultivation and much of the higher land in the northwest is fine grazing area. The agricultural territory is very imperfectly developed, chiefly because of the lack of transportation facilities. The value of all farm property on January 1, 1925, as reported by the census, was \$3,478,623. Livestock on farms included 3,845 horses, 19,926 cattle and 5,180 swine. In the mountainous section in the northeast, there is considerable mineral, and metal mining is being carried on to a limited extent. There are also extensive coal deposits in the eastern part and some coal is being mined. Coal output in 1928 was 7,399 tons, mostly used locally.

**Crops**—The principal crops, in the order of their importance and value, are hay, wheat, fruits, oats, dry beans, corn, potatoes and barley. The estimated farm value of all crops in 1928 was \$886,650, of which \$502,890 was in hay, \$123,320 in wheat, \$64,020 in fruits, \$45,050 in oats, \$44,050 in dry beans, \$43,480 in corn, \$29,430 in potatoes, \$20,790 in barley, \$2,930 in sorghums, \$1,470 in rye and \$9,220 in miscellaneous crops. There was 43,450 acres, or 3.3 per cent of the total area, under cultivation. Of the cultivated

area 9.1 per cent was in corn, 4.1 per cent in winter wheat, 16 per cent in spring wheat, 10.5 per cent in oats, 3.4 per cent in barley, and 2.3 per cent in potatoes. The average yields in bushels per acre over a five-year period were: Winter wheat, irrigated, 27.3 bushels; non-irrigated, 12.6 bushels; spring wheat, irrigated, 24.7 bushels; non-irrigated, 8.5 bushels; corn, irrigated, 28.6 bushels; non-irrigated, 12.6 bushels; barley, irrigated, 33.7 bushels; non-irrigated, 14.6 bushels; potatoes, irrigated, 109.4 bushels; non-irrigated, 34.4 bushels.

**Mineral Resources**—The known minerals are aikinite, clays, coal, gold, lead, silver, stone and sand. Gold, silver, copper and lead have been produced in considerable quantities and are still being mined. The coal deposits are bituminous and of good quality.

**Timber**—There is considerable timber in the northeastern part and some timber on the higher lands in other parts of the county. Pine and spruce predominate in the northeast, while cedar and pinon are more common in the lower altitudes.

**Land Classification**—In 1928 there was 306,560 acres of land, or 23.3 per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessor listed 812 acres as fruit land, 35,388 acres as irrigated land, 39,638 acres as dry farming land, 227,068 acres as grazing land, 90 acres as productive and 40 acres as non-productive coal land, 576 acres as timber land, 650 acres as non-productive mining claims, 1,568 acres as railroad rights-of-way and 730 acres as town lots. There was 423,880 acres of government land, mostly in small and isolated tracts or valued principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 36,029 acres of unappropriated state land, which may be purchased upon favorable terms from the state land board. There was 224,651 acres in national forests.

**Transportation**—The Rio Grande Southern railroad, a narrow gauge road belonging to the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad system, enters the county east of Mancos, from Durango, runs west to Dolores and north to Ridgway and Montrose. The total mileage in the county is 62.

**Highways**—The county has 1,248 miles of highways, of which 138 miles

are state highways and 1,110 miles are county roads. Of these 50 miles are surfaced and 398 miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The principal state highway is that leading west from Durango through Mancos to Cortez, where one branch turns south through the southern Ute Indian reservation into New Mexico and another northwest through Dolores county into Utah. This road is a continuation of the Spanish Trail. At Dolores a state highway runs northeast to Telluride and another north to Norwood. There are numerous county roads, generally imperfectly improved, but sufficient to take care of the present agricultural development.

**Educational**—The county is divided into 28 public school districts, in which are located 44 schools employing 81 teachers. Of these three are senior high schools, three junior high schools, four elementary schools and 34 rural schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 1,384, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$119.13, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. There are no private schools or colleges in the county.

**Climatological Data**—The rainfall varies from 13 to 17 inches in the agricultural districts in the west and south. In the north it increases rather rapidly, being about 25 inches in the extreme northeast corner. The climate is equable in the agricultural districts, especially favorable for general farming, fruit growing and stock-raising. Normal annual mean temperature at Mancos is 45.8 degrees Fahrenheit. The average number of days between killing frosts is 120, the last killing frost in the spring usually occurring between May 31 and June 7 and first in the fall between September 5 and September 22.

**Tourist Attractions**—The Mesa Verde national park, located in this county, is growing rapidly in importance as a tourist point. Many remarkable ruins of the homes of ancient Cliff Dwellers are found in this region, affording one of the principal tourist attractions. The park was established by executive order in 1906 and embraces an area of a little less than 80 square miles, or about 49,000 acres. It contains the most notable and best pre-

served prehistoric cliff dwellings in the United States, if not in the world. Travel to the park has increased materially in the past few years, and much archaeological work of incalculable value has been done under government supervision. Hovenweep, a national monument of similar historic significance, is located in Montezuma county, partially in Colorado and partially in Utah. There is much fine mountain scenery in the northeast, mostly inaccessible to automobile travel. Fairly good trout fishing is to be found in many of the streams.

**Cities and Towns**—The county has three incorporated towns. Cortez, the county seat, is located near the center of the county, just north of Mesa Verde national park. It is the center of an important agricultural district. Its population in 1920 was 541, compared with 565 in 1910. Its altitude is 6,198 feet above sea level. Mancos, the principal railroad shipping point, is also located near the Mesa Verde national park. Its population in 1920 was 682, compared with 567 in 1910. Dolores, another railroad town further north, had a population of 465 in 1920, compared with 320 in 1910. Other postoffices in the county are: Ackmen, Arriola, Lebanon, McElmo, McPhee, Mesa Verde National Park, Stoner, Towac and Yellow Jacket.

**Special Opportunities**—The principal opportunities offered here are along the line of agricultural development. There is perhaps room for twice as large a rural population as the county now supports, though any extensive development in this direction will probably wait upon better railroad facilities. The large deposits of coal in the county are but little worked, because of remoteness from markets. There is considerable mineral area which offers good opportunities for prospectors.

**Banks**—There are three banks in the county, one each at Cortez, Dolores and Mancos. Their combined deposits on December 31, 1928, amounted to \$1,922,504.

**Commercial Organizations**—The principal commercial organizations are the Montezuma County Chamber of Commerce, Cortez; Commercial club, Dolores; and the Mancos Mesa Verde club, Inc., Mancos.

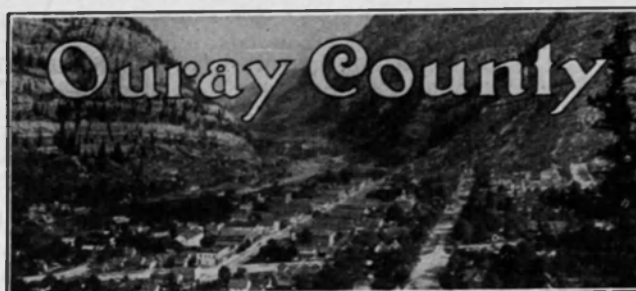


## GENERAL Description—

Ouray county lies in the southwestern part of the state, including a part of the rich mineral belt known as the San Juan district. It is of an irregular triangular outline, with the base toward the north. The extreme length north and south is 33 miles, and the extreme width is about 29 miles. Its area is 332,160 acres, or about one-half that of the state of Rhode Island. The southern part is mountainous and the northern part is level or broken, including a portion of the Uncompahgre valley. The altitude varies from 6,300 feet at the north boundary to over 14,000 feet at the summits of some of the mountains in the southern part.

**Early History**—The territory was included in the tract of land ceded by the Southern Ute Indians to the United States in 1873. It had been but little explored previous to this time, but settlers and prospectors flocked into the entire territory immediately after the treaty was ratified, and rich mineral discoveries were soon made in the district now included in Ouray county. In the summer of 1875, a permanent mining camp grew up in the heart of the mountains near the southern end of Cimarron range. This camp formed the nucleus of the town of Ouray, which was named in honor of a well-known Ute chief, whose services to the whites in this section were very great. Rich discoveries of gold and silver were made in the Mt. Sneffels district in 1875 and two years later the Virginus mine was opened. The county was organized in 1887, at that time extending west to the state line and including the territory now embraced in Dolores and San Miguel counties.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, fifty-eighth in area, fifty-fourth in population, fifty-sixth in assessed valuation, fifty-first in bank deposits, fifty-fourth in agricultural values, fifty-fifth in dairy cattle values, forty-seventh in range cattle values, thirtieth in sheep values, forty-ninth in swine values, thirteenth in metal mining, twenty-fourth in coal mining, forty-ninth in manufacturing, fifty-first in railroad mileage, fifty-second



and in highway mileage and fifty-sixth in the number of motor vehicles.

**Topography and Soil**—The only agricultural area in the county lies in the northern part, principally in the valley of the Uncompahgre river. The soil here is extremely fertile, is under irrigation and yields exceptionally large crops. It is principally a sandy loam or clayey loam soil, similar to that of the lower Uncompahgre valley. A thorough soil survey of the Uncompahgre valley was made by the bureau of soils of the United States department of agriculture in 1910, and published in 1912. This survey applies to a small part of Ouray county. The southern part of the county, from Ridgway to the southern boundary, is extremely rugged and is valuable for its timber and mineral resources and its native grasses.

**Population**—In 1920 the population was 2,620, compared with 3,514 in 1910, the decrease being 25.4 per cent. This decrease has been due chiefly to a falling off in metal mining activity. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 17.2 per cent of the total, compared with 25 per cent in 1910. The principal foreign nationalities are Italian, Swedish and Canadian.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—The Uncompahgre river and its tributaries drain the county and supply water for irrigation and other necessary purposes. These streams have their sources in a region of high rainfall and usually carry an abundant supply of water the year round. Water for domestic purposes in the northern part is provided largely from cisterns and in some cases from springs and wells.

**Industries**—The principal industries are mining, agriculture, stockraising and lumbering. Mining is confined to the mountainous districts in the south, where rich deposits of precious and semi-precious metals have been produced for a great many years. The out-



put of gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc in 1927, was \$107,559 and the total from 1877 to the end of 1927 was \$78,539,546. Agriculture is followed mostly in the upper Uncompahgre valley, and stockmen in this section graze their herds on the fine grazing lands within the national forests. The value of all farm property on January 1, 1925, as reported by the census, was \$1,579,790. Livestock on farms included 1,183 horses, 8,523 cattle, and 795 swine. There are valuable coal deposits in the county but coal has not been mined in recent years. Lumbering has been followed only to supply local needs.

**Crops**—The principal crops, in the order of their importance and value, are hay, wheat, potatoes, oats, barley and rye. The estimated farm value of all crops in 1928 was \$286,530, of which \$210,770 was in hay, \$32,530 in wheat, \$16,040 in potatoes, \$14,200 in oats, \$10,610 in barley, \$160 in rye and \$2,220 in miscellaneous crops. There was 14,245 acres, or 4.2 per cent of the total area, under cultivation. Of the cultivated area, 1.0 per cent was in winter wheat, 11.9 per cent in spring wheat, 7.5 per cent in oats, 5.9 per cent in barley and 3.0 per cent in potatoes. The average yields in bushels per acre over a five-year period were: Winter wheat, irrigated, 32.7 bushels, non-irrigated, 14.9 bushels; spring wheat, irrigated, 29.0 bushels, non-irrigated, 11.6 bushels; corn, irrigated, 27.1 bushels, non-irrigated, 12.0 bushels; barley, irrigated, 39.6 bushels, non-irrigated, 14.0 bushels; potatoes, irrigated, 141.7 bushels, non-irrigated, 39.6 bushels.

**Mineral Resources**—The known minerals are antimony, alunite, bismuth, clays, copper, gold, iron, lead, silver, tungsten, zinc, granite, sandstone and a wide variety of other stones.

**Timber**—There is considerable heavy timber on the mountain slopes within the national forests, principally red and white spruce and yellow pine.

**Land Classification**—In 1928 there was 162,746 acres of land, or 48.9 per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessed or listed 9,824 acres as irrigated land, 2,128 acres as natural hay land, 3,460 acres as dry farming land, 129,405 acres as grazing land, 387 acres as non-productive coal land, 1,360 acres as timber land, 14,212 acres as non-productive mining claims, 1,060 acres as

railroad rights-of-way and 910 acres as town lots. There was 22,360 acres of government land, mostly in small and isolated tracts or valued principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 3,153 acres of unappropriated state land which may be purchased upon favorable terms from the state land board. There was 126,211 acres in national forests.

**Transportation**—A branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad extends south from Montrose to Ouray. At Ridgway it connects with the Rio Grande Southern, which extends south to Durango. The county has a total of 37 miles of railroad.

**Highways**—The county has 316 miles of highways, of which 50 miles are state highways and 266 miles are county roads. Of these, 77 miles are surfaced and 46 miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The principal state highway is that leading south from the Rainbow Route at Montrose, up the Uncompahgre valley by way of Ridgway to Ouray and thence south across the mountains to Silverton. Another state highway follows the course of the Rio Grande Southern railroad west and south to Placerville and Telluride, in San Miguel county. In the northern part of the county there are numerous county roads, adequate in a general way to serve the agricultural territory. In the southern part there are numerous mountain trails, leading principally from Ouray into the various mining districts.

**Educational**—The county is divided into 12 public school districts, in which are located 15 schools, employing 19 teachers. Of these, three are elementary schools, and nine rural schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 293, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$95.29, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. There is a county high school at Ouray giving a full high school course. There are no private schools or colleges in the county.

**Climatological Data**—The rainfall is comparatively heavy in all sections of the county. In the northern part it varies from 15 to 25 inches. In the mountainous districts south from Ridgway, it is above 25 inches, in some cases being as much as 40 inches. The climate in the northern part is mild and favorable for general farming. In the mountainous districts further

south it is more severe, the snowfall of the winter being extremely heavy and the high areas being subject to extremely low temperatures.

**Tourist Attractions**—Ouray has long been noted as one of the popular tourist points in the state. A mineral hot spring located here is famed for its curative properties and has been much visited by health seekers. The mountainous areas about Ouray and further south are exceptionally picturesque. The highway between Ouray and Silverton was one of the first mountain highways constructed in this section of the state and was originally operated as a toll road. It is now a good automobile highway and is traveled annually by thousand of tourists and sight-seers.

**Cities and Towns**—There are two incorporated towns in the county. Ouray, the county seat and principal town, is the terminus of a branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad and the principal supply point for the mining camps farther south. Its population in 1920 was 1,165, compared with 1,644 in 1910. Its altitude is 7,800 feet above sea level. Ridgway, at the

junction of the Rio Grande Western and Rio Grande Southern, is a prosperous agricultural town and shipping point. Its population in 1920 was 400, compared with 376 in 1910. Colona is the only other post office in the county.

**Special Opportunities**—The principal opportunities offered here are in the line of mineral development. There is a vast amount of highly mineralized area in the southern part of the county that has been only partially prospected. The mineral deposits now being worked yield good values at great depths and there is opportunity for profitable investment in the further development of known ore bodies. There is some room for agricultural development in the northern part.

**Banks**—There are two banks in the county, one at Ouray and the other at Ridgway. Their combined deposits on December 31, 1928, amounted to \$467,580.

**Commercial Organizations** — The principal commercial organizations are the Ouray Recreation Association, Ouray; and the Commercial Association, Ridgway.

## GENERAL Description—

San Juan county is in the southwestern part of the state, in the heart of what is known as the San Juan mining district. This mining district takes its name from the San Juan mountains, the principal range in this section of Colorado, while the agricultural district to the south, popularly known as the San Juan basin, takes its name from the San Juan river, which drains southwestern Colorado and northwestern New Mexico. The county is of triangular shape, with an extreme length, north and south, of 30 miles, and an extreme width at the base of the triangle, of 25 miles. Its area is 289,920 acres or a little more than two-fifths that of the state of Rhode Island. There are but four smaller counties in Colorado; these are Denver, Gilpin, Clear Creek



and Lake counties. The surface is extremely rugged, with the exception of a few small mountain valleys. The altitude ranges from about 8,500 feet at the point where the Animas river crosses the southern boundary, to more than 14,000 feet at the summits of some of the peaks in the north.

**Early History**—So far as is known the early Spanish explorers did not penetrate the rugged area now included in the county, though Spanish names have been given to numerous rivers and mountains here. John C.

Fremont's fourth expedition is supposed to have reached a point in this county late in 1848, before the severe winter forced the few remaining members of the party to make a painful journey back over the mountains into the San Luis valley. John Baker's expedition passed through this region in 1860. Prospectors found pay ore here about 1870, but it was not until after this district had been purchased from the Southern Ute Indians in 1873 that settlers began to come in. Mining development was rapid, for this is one of the richest gold and silver-bearing areas in the state. The Durango & Southern railroad, now a part of the Denver & Rio Grande Western system, was completed in 1882 and from that time on an immense store of wealth was poured out from the mines in the narrow canons above Silverton. The county was organized in 1876, being taken from the northern part of La Plata county.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, fifty-eighth in area, fifty-eighth in population, fifty-eighth in assessed valuation, forty-fifth in bank deposits, sixty-second in dairy cattle values, sixty-second in range cattle values, thirty-seventh in sheep values, first in metal mining, fifty-fifth in manufacturing, fifty-sixth in railroad mileage, sixtieth in highway mileage and sixty-first in the number of motor vehicles.

**Surface and Soil**—San Juan county enjoys the distinction of being the only county in Colorado in which there is not a single farm and not an acre of land which may be classed as genuine farming area. It is perhaps the only rural county in the United States in which farming is not carried on, even to a limited extent. The soil in some of the narrow mountain valleys is extremely fertile, being principally alluvial deposits, dark in color and rich in plant foods. These areas are extremely small, however, and the altitude is so high that no crops grow except a few hardy garden vegetables and certain wild grasses. The rock strata here have been wrenched and tilted sharply into unnatural positions by the mighty upheavals which in the ages past disfigured this once comparatively level area. The great irregularity of topography and strata brings to the surface a wide range of geological formations and affords the prospector and miner opportunity to examine practically all the strata that

one would encounter in drilling down nearly four miles from the top of the most recent geological formations to the bottom of the most ancient. Among the principal mountain peaks in the county are Garfield, Hunchback, Sultan, Canby, Kendall, King Solomon and Rio Grande Pyramid, the last named being 13,773 feet high.

**Population**—The population in 1920 was 1,700, compared with 3,063 in 1910, the decrease being 44.5 per cent. This large decrease is due principally to a decrease in metal mining operations. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 31.3 per cent of the total, compared with 43.8 per cent in 1910. This county has the highest percentage of foreign-born population of any county in the state, the foreigners, being employed principally in the metal mining district. The principal foreign nationalities are Italian, Swedish and Austrian.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—The headwaters of the Animas river are in this county, and this, with numerous small tributary streams, furnishes the drainage and water supply. This is a region of high precipitation and little difficulty is experienced in obtaining an abundance of water for all purposes, except occasionally where mines are located on steep slopes far above the streams.

**Industries**—Mining is the principal industry and gives employment directly or indirectly to perhaps 75 per cent of the population. The output of gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc in 1927 was \$3,419,371, and total production from 1875 to the end of 1927 was \$86,226,437. Some stock is pastured in the mountain valleys. There is considerable timber, and lumbering has been followed to a limited extent to supply local needs. Some brick has been made for local use at Silverton.

**Mineral Resources**—The known minerals are antimony, arsenic, bluestone, clay, copper, fluor spar, gold, iron, lead, molybdenum, silver, tungsten, zinc, sand and a wide variety of stone. Gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc have been produced in large quantities and still are being produced. The production of tungsten has begun in the past few years and is increasing steadily.

**Timber**—There is plenty of timber on the mountain slopes and along the streams, principally pine, spruce and

aspen. The government owns 201,412 acres in national forests in the county.

**Land Classification**—In 1928 there was 26,105 acres of land, or nine per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessor listed 200 acres as grazing land, 195 acres as timber land, 24,237 acres as non-productive mining claims, 913 acres as railroad rights-of-way and 560 acres as town lots. There was 54,630 acres of government land, mostly in small and isolated tracts or valued principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 7,422 acres of unappropriated state land which may be purchased upon favorable terms from the state land board. There was 202,707 acres in national forests.

**Transportation** — A narrow gauge branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Western railroad extends from Silverton to Durango. Short lines connecting with this road at Silverton extend into the three principal canons radiating from the town and serve the most important mining districts. The county has 29 miles of railroad.

**Highways**—The county has 137 miles of highways, of which 45 miles are state highways and 92 miles are county roads. Of these, 39 miles are surfaced and five miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The highway from Silverton to Ouray is widely known as one of the most remarkable mountain highways in America, traversing an exceptionally picturesque scenic area. It is connected at Silverton with a road from Durango which makes it possible for automobile travelers to go north from the Spanish Trail at Durango through the picturesque San Juan mountain district to a connection with the Rainbow Route at Montrose, or vice versa. There are numerous mountain trails, used principally for the moving of ores and for carrying supplies to the mines.

**Educational**—The county comprises one public school district, in which are located three schools, employing 12 teachers. Of these, one is a senior high school and two are elementary schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 162, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$218.09, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. There are no private schools or colleges in the county.

**Climatological Data**—The precipita-

tion here is extremely heavy, averaging above 25 inches in all parts of the county. The climate is somewhat severe, the summers being short and pleasant and the winters long, subject to very low temperatures and heavy snowfall. Transportation is well maintained throughout the winter, the district being seldom cut off from communication by rail with the outside territory for more than a few days at a time.

**Cities and Towns**—There are two incorporated towns in the county. Silverton, the county seat and principal city is the supply point for a rich mining district, lying principally to the north. Its population in 1920 was 1,150, compared with 2,153 in 1910. Its elevation above sea level is 9,302 feet. Eureka, 9,800 feet high, has a population of 150. Howardsville is the only other post office in the county.

**Tourist Attractions**—Silverton has long been recognized as one of the beauty-spots of Colorado, and has been visited annually by hundreds of tourists. The town itself, situated in a narrow mountain valley with lofty peaks on all sides, is rivaled in the picturesqueness of its location only by the neighboring towns of Telluride and Ouray. The mountains here afford a wonderfully varied vista of forests, waterfalls, canons and rugged peaks, such as can be found only in the San Juan region. The completion of the Durango-Silverton highway has greatly increased automobile tourist travel and has made accessible to automobile travelers some of the most wonderful mountain scenery on the continent. There are numerous interesting remains of the life of former ages to be found here, both man and beast. Ruined cliff dwellings similar to those of the Montezuma valley are found in the upper Animas canon. Fossil remains of huge animals, principally mammals belonging to a geological period of the remote past when this was a comparatively level country, perhaps near the shore of a great lake, are found in the rocks.

**Special Opportunities**—The only opportunities of importance offered here are along the line of further mining development or of prospecting. There is considerable territory in the county that has never been mined and further prospecting may reveal pay ore in these districts. There is also oppor-

tunity in nearly all the mining camps for the investment of money in the further development of veins already located and partly opened. The immense profits that have been made in mining in this district are the best proofs of the probable returns to be

derived from such investments, when carefully made and safeguarded.

**Banks**—The county has one bank, which is located at Silverton.

**Commercial Organizations**—The only commercial organization is the Commercial club, at Silverton.

## GENERAL Description—

San Miguel county lies in the southwestern part of the state, the western boundary being formed by the state of Utah. It is of rectangular form with regular boundary lines, except in the east and southeast, where mountain ranges form the county division. Its extreme length, east and west, is about 75 miles, and the extreme width is about 25 miles. The area of the county is 824,320 acres, or about 325,000 acres less than the area of the state of Delaware. The altitude varies from about 5,000 feet in the west to nearly 14,000 feet at the summits of some of the peaks on the eastern boundary.

**Early History** — This district, like other sections of southwestern Colorado, was the home of a prehistoric race known as the Cliff Dwellers, and remains of their abodes are to be found in numerous canons in the western part of the county. Early Spanish explorers probably got as far north as San Miguel county, but no authentic records of their wanderings are available. Spanish names are common for mountain ranges and small streams in this as in other sections of southwestern Colorado. The first record of any mining in the county was in 1875, when placering for gold was carried on in a small way on some of the sand banks of the San Miguel river. The county was organized in 1883 from a part of Ouray county.

**Rank**—The county ranks among the 63 counties in the state, thirty-third in area, thirty-ninth in population, forty-eighth in assessed valuation, thirty-sixth in bank deposits, forty-sixth in agricultural values, forty-second in



dairy cattle values, thirty-ninth in range cattle values, fifteenth in sheep values, forty-sixth in swine values, fourth in metal mining, twenty-second in coal mining, forty-first in manufacturing, forty-third in railroad mileage, thirty-eighth in highway mileage and forty-ninth in the number of motor vehicles.

**Topography and Soil**—The surface in the west is a broken plateau or table land, crossed by numerous canons and narrow valleys. It rises gradually to the central part and then abruptly into the mountain ranges which form the southeast and east boundary. The soil of the narrow valleys is principally alluvial and of great fertility. The mesas and plateaus in the western part are of a sandy loam or gravelly soil suitable for cultivation in some sections, but in others are made up of shales and cannot be farmed. There is no soil survey of this area available.

**Population**—The population in 1920 was 5,281, compared with 4,700 in 1910, the increase being 12.4 per cent. Estimated population in 1925 was 5,610. In 1920 the foreign-born white population was 19.9 per cent, compared with 33.6 per cent in 1910. The foreign-born population is employed principally in the metal mines in the Telluride district. The principal foreign nationalities are Italian, Finnish and English.

**Drainage and Water Supply**—The San Miguel river has its source near the San Miguel mountains on the southeastern border and drains the entire eastern part of the county. The Dolores river flows across the western part. These streams furnish a good supply of water the year around. The San Miguel river and its tributaries carry most of the water for the mining operations in the eastern end and an abundant supply for the limited amount of irrigable land in this part of the county. Water for domestic purposes in some sections is obtained from wells, being reached at depths ranging from 25 to 125 feet.

**Industries**—The principal industries are mining, agriculture, stockraising and lumbering. Perhaps 50 per cent of the people in the county depend directly or indirectly upon mining activities for support. In 1927 the mines produced \$2,118,333 in gold, silver, copper, and lead. Between 1875 and the end of 1927, the mines had a total output of \$115,194,302. There is considerable arable land in the western part of the county, but little of it has ever been broken because of remoteness from transportation facilities. Good pasture is found in the national forest areas in the eastern part of the county and stockraising is followed rather extensively, especially along the streams in this section. The value of all farm property on January 1, 1925, as reported by the census, was \$2,434,540. Livestock on farms included 2,404 horses, 15,472 cattle and 1,796 swine.

**Timber**—Heavy pine and spruce timber is found on the mountain slopes, and lumbering and tie-making have been followed rather extensively. There is considerable pinon and cedar timber, especially in the western part.

**Crops**—The principal crops, in the order of their importance and value, are hay, barley, oats, wheat, corn and potatoes. The estimated farm value of all crops in 1928 was \$555,770, of which \$440,180 was in hay, \$46,630 in barley, \$23,600 in oats, \$15,160 in wheat, \$5,710 in corn, \$5,180 in potatoes, \$1,310 in rye, \$780 in sorghums, \$370 in fruits and \$11,340 in miscellaneous crops. There was 28,215 acres, or 3.4 per cent of the total area, under cultivation. Of the cultivated area, 2.1 per cent was in corn, 2.4 per cent in winter wheat, 2.1 per cent in spring wheat, 25.4 per cent in oats, 15.7 per cent in barley, 1.0 per cent in rye and

0.3 per cent in potatoes. The average yields in bushels per acre over a five-year period were: Winter wheat, irrigated, 27.8 bushels, non-irrigated, 15.5 bushels; spring wheat, irrigated, 23.8 bushels, non-irrigated, 9.7 bushels; corn, irrigated, 29.8 bushels, non-irrigated, 14.7 bushels; barley, irrigated, 36.6 bushels, non-irrigated, 17.6 bushels; potatoes, irrigated, 142.0 bushels, non-irrigated, 45.5 bushels.

**Mineral Resources**—The known minerals are antimony, barium, clays, copper, coal, carnotite and other radium ores, fluorspar, gold, iron, lead, platinum, silver, tungsten, zinc, sand and a wide variety of building stone. Gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc have been produced in large quantities for a great many years and are still being produced. Carnotite has been mined to some extent for about 10 years. Some clay has been dug for brick making, and building stone has been quarried to a limited extent for local uses.

**Land Classification**—In 1928 there was 235,743 acres of land, or 28.6 per cent of the total area, in private ownership. Of this the county assessor listed 7,347 acres as irrigated land, 8,113 acres as dry farming land, 207,545 acres as grazing land, 160 acres as non-productive coal land, 547 acres as timber land, 10,598 acres as non-productive mining claims, 1,193 acres as railroad rights-of-way and 240 acres as town lots. There was 250,540 acres of government land, mostly in small and isolated tracts or valued principally for grazing purposes, open to homesteaders, and 19,679 acres of unappropriated state land which may be purchased upon favorable terms from the state land board. There was 172,078 acres in national forests.

**Transportation**—The Rio Grande Southern railroad passes through the extreme eastern end of the county. This is the only railroad, and points on the western border are fully 60 miles from shipping stations. The county has 47 miles of railroad.

**Highways**—The county has 557 miles of highways, of which 143 miles are state highways and 414 miles are county roads. Of these, 15 miles are surfaced and 128 miles are graded, the remainder being unimproved. The principal state highway is that which runs south from Montrose through the eastern part of San Miguel county by way of Placerville and Vance Junction, with a branch to Telluride. At Placer-

ville another state highway runs north and west through Norwood into the Paradox valley in Montrose county and thence into Utah. At Norwood it connects with a state highway running south through Dolores county to Cortez, and another running west and south into Dolores county and thence to Utah. County roads here are generally poorly improved and serve only a small portion of the large territory in the western part of the county.

**Educational**—The county is divided into 15 public school districts, in which are located 27 schools, employing 45 teachers. These include two senior high schools, two elementary schools and 23 rural schools. The average daily attendance in 1928 was 662, and the per capita cost, based on attendance, was \$117.89, which compares with \$134.24 for the state. There are no private schools or colleges in the county.

**Climatological Data**—The rainfall in the western part averages about 14 inches, but increases rapidly toward the east, being about 25 inches in the eastern half of the county. The climate in the western part is mild and pleasant and in the mountain districts in the east the winters are long and severe. The summers are short, but pleasant. The snowfall during the winter is extremely heavy in this part of the county. Normal annual mean temperature at Telluride is 39.3 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Tourist Attractions**—Telluride has long been a popular stopping place for railway tourists visiting western Colorado. It is beautifully located in a narrow mountain valley, surrounded on all sides by high mountain peaks. A lack of well improved automobile

roads has kept this district back in comparison with other sections of western Colorado during the past four or five years, when automobile travel has been increased rapidly. Scenic attractions here are as fine as can be found any place in Colorado. Good trout fishing is to be had in the mountain streams which have no mines or mills along their courses to muddy the waters. Trout lake, in the southeastern part of the county, is a popular fishing resort.

**Cities and Towns**—There are three incorporated towns in the county, Telluride, the county seat and principal town, is in the heart of the most important mining district in the county. Its population in 1920 was 1,618, compared with 1,756 in 1910. Its altitude is 8,500 feet above sea level. Ophir, altitude 9,800 feet, has a population of 35, and Norwood, an inland agricultural town, has a population of 400. Other post offices in the county are: Cedar, Egnar, Gladel, Leonard, Placerville and Vanadium.

**Special Opportunities**—Although metal mining has been carried on in this county for a great many years, there is still mineralized area that has not been well prospected. In the western part of the county there are large carnotite deposits which have had almost no development. The western half of the county has very few inhabitants and offers opportunity for development along varied lines, but such development will perhaps wait upon further transportation facilities.

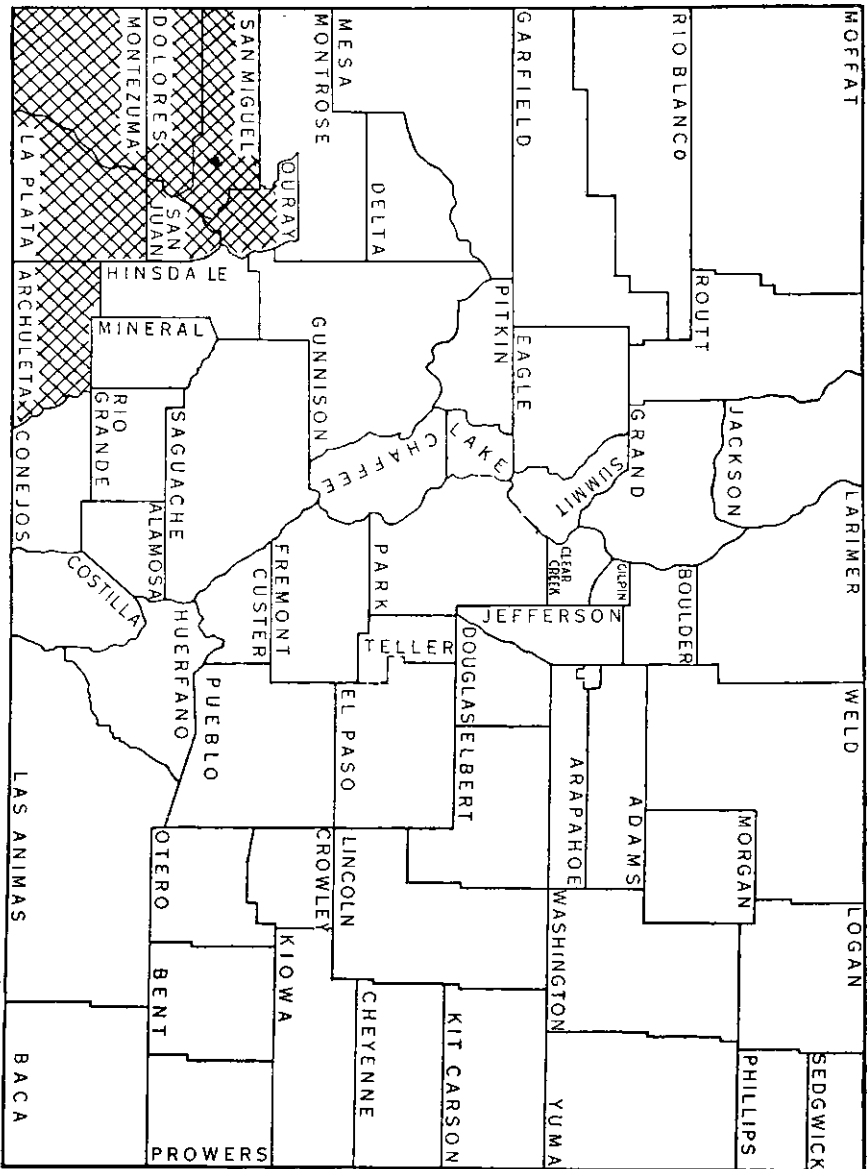
**Banks**—The only bank in the county is at Norwood.

**Commercial Organizations**—The only commercial organization is the Lions club at Telluride.

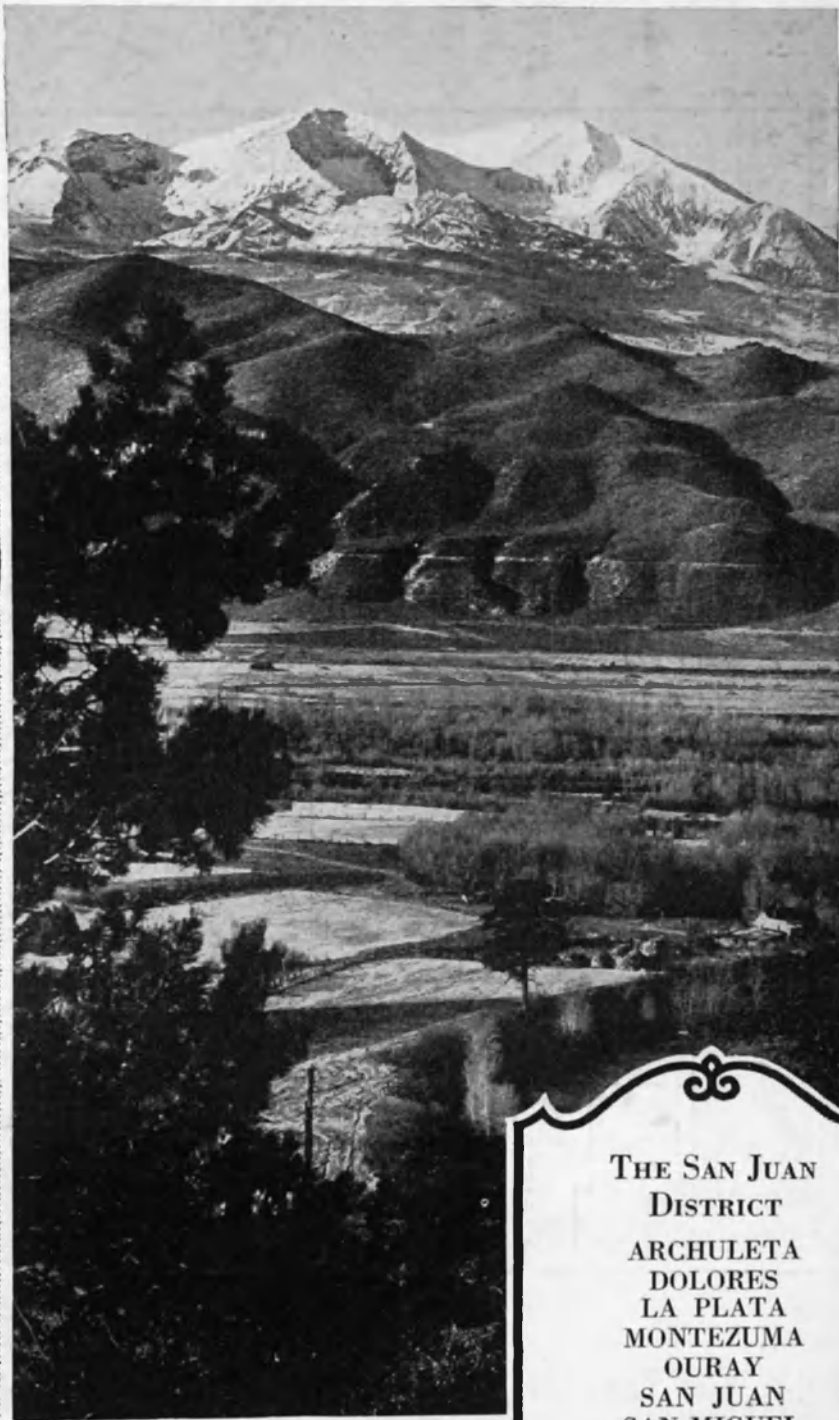
#### MISCELLANEOUS DATA OF SAN JUAN BASIN COUNTIES, ON BASIS OF 1925 CENSUS

	Archuleta	Dolores	La Plata	Montezuma	Ouray	San Juan	San Miguel
Population	3,752	1,584	11,448	6,956	2,620	1,700	5,610
Area, Sq. Mi.	1,220	1,043	1,851	2,051	519	453	1,288
Population per Sq. Mi.	3.08	1.52	3.58	3.39	5.05	3.75	4.36
<b>Per Capita Data</b>							
Assessed Valuation	\$1,224	\$1,040	\$1,335	\$ 907	\$1,534	\$2,125	\$1,200
Taxes Levied	28.87	40.42	41.24	34.68	50.37	54.69	41.95
Bank Deposits	63.93	----	242.27	192.54	152.41	319.35	237.14
<b>Land Area by Percentages</b>							
Patented	43.21	29.02	37.42	23.35	48.99	9.00	28.60
Homestead	11.82	10.31	12.67	32.28	6.73	18.84	30.39
National Forest	51.03	46.61	31.99	17.11	37.99	69.91	20.87
State Land	2.28	1.37	1.34	2.74	0.95	2.56	2.39
Non-Patented	65.12	58.29	46.01	52.13	45.67	91.31	53.65





Map Showing Counties Included in San Juan Basin District



THE SAN JUAN  
DISTRICT  
ARCHULETA  
DOLORES  
LA PLATA  
MONTEZUMA  
OURAY  
SAN JUAN  
SAN MIGUEL