

**Each time you learn something new you must re-adjust the whole framework of your knowledge**  
Eleanor Roosevelt

Family trees have strong roots.	Volume 33 Issue 3
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## The Tenacity of Our Ancestors!

By Kathie Vlahos

"Tenacity", just the sound of the word is determined and proud. What does this word have to do with our ancestors? Think about the definition of the word and the way it feels and sounds when you pronounce it. The definition of tenacity is: "Persistent determination, the quality of being determined to do or achieve something, firmness of purpose and strength of will". Different words to use in place of tenacity are: "doggedness, perseverance, persistency, pertinacity, tenaciousness, determination and purpose". I like this word!

Now getting back to why it pertains to our ancestors....Our ancestors had a lot of tenacity! They needed it to be able to achieve the things that they did. Each had their own reasons for coming to America, be it because of famine, poverty, religious prosecution, or just to be able to own their own land and to live and work as free people. They at times had to leave loved ones behind and give up all that they were familiar with to come to America, work hard, scrimp, save and make a whole new world for themselves and their families. They were very strong, proud people.

Speaking of tenacity, this leads me to a short story of my husband's great-grandfather, William Henry Johncock and great-grandmother, Charlotte Frances (Meades) Johncock who emigrated from England, into Canada

then to the United States between the years of 1885-1895. These people are a great example of tenacity.

William Henry Johncock (born June 1842 in Chislett, Blean, Kent, England), married Charlotte Frances Meades, (born April 1848 in Marsden, Kent, England,) November 17, 1867 in Maidstone, Kent, England. They had 11 children that we know of. William Henry worked for the railroad in England and for reasons unknown to us decided to immigrate to North America. William and Charlotte were not young people when they decided to make this life changing move, he was about 43 years old and she was around 37 years old. He left for Canada alone in about 1885, Charlotte stayed in England with the 11 children. While in Canada, he was able to find work with the Canadian Railroad. Sometime between 1885 and 1890, he went back to England and arranged for passage for his family to move to Canada, he then went back to Canada alone.

About 1889-1890 Charlotte with 10 of her 11 children, (the oldest being married and living in Scotland) left England and sailed to Canada. Memories of the journey as told by my husband's grandmother, Caroline Meades Johncock, (born 26 September 1882, St. Olave Southwark, London, Surrey, England) who was about 7 or 8 years old at the time,

*Continued on page 6*

# MESA DWELLERS

The Mesa County Genealogical Society, established in 1980, is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization.

## Objectives:

1. To promote an interest in genealogy, to encourage and instruct members in the art and practice of genealogical research.
2. To maintain and elevate genealogical standards, to stress the importance of accuracy in research through careful documentation.
3. To locate, preserve and index public and private genealogical records and make such records available to members and the general public.
4. To assist and support any genealogical library in Colorado, which is open to the public.

Society meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at the Commons of Hilltop Garden Room, located at 625 27 1/2 Road at 7:00 pm. The monthly Sack Lunch meeting is held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Museum conference room of the C. D Smith Building at 5<sup>th</sup> & Ute Streets at 12 noon on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month. A Board of Directors meeting will often follow the Sack Lunch meeting from 1pm - 2pm.

## Society Officers

President	Dennis Jenkins
Vice President	Iris Krogh
Secretary	Donna Jackson
Treasurer	Anita Caldwell

## Board Members

Jan Wilson	<u>3 year Term</u> 2011-2012-2013
Jill Berthod	2012-2013-2014
Karen Grew-Ellison	2013-2014-2015

## Standing Committee Chairpersons

Historian/Archivist	Jan Wilson
Co-Genealogist/Librarian	Kay Oxer
Co-Genealogist/Librarian	Linda Garey
Newsletter Editor	Kathie Vlahos
Assistant Editor	Karen Grew-Ellison
Society Webmaster	Caley Gredig
Parliamentarian	Vacant
Program Director	Dennis Jenkins
Research Director	Bob Cress
Membership/Education/Outreach	Caley Gredig & Jill Berthod

Membership year: March 1 - February 28/29

Annual Dues: \$10 Single - \$12 Family (2 voting family members). Those with unpaid dues after April 30<sup>th</sup> of the membership year will not receive the newsletter.

You can also go to [redacted] to contribute to the newsletter. Contributions are encouraged and appreciated and should be neatly typed or written stories, queries, articles and/or other information applicable to genealogy research. Contribution (deadlines): March issue (Feb 15), June issue (May 15), September issue (August 15), December issue (November 15).

## From the Editor

As Fall approaches and cool weather sets in, my mind starts thinking of genealogy. Now that everything in the garden and yard is starting to wind down, I am starting to become energized and in my mind I have the start of a list of things I would like to do.

One good place to start is familysearch.org, I found they have many helpful teaching courses online for free. I don't know about you, but I can always use a boost to get the learning juices flowing. Ancestry.com is another source that has teaching aids that can be helpful. These are just two of the major contributors to genealogy online, but, there are many more good ones out there that are also helpful to do research with.

One more item that has been on my mind all Spring and Summer is putting into a play an action plan to protect my valuable records. That would include personal, legal, genealogical and irreplaceable photos. With the occurrence of several recent tragedies, floods, tornadoes and now with hurricane season coming up, whatever it may be from man made to nature, it is a good idea to have a plan. Dick Eastman has written an article on just this subject titled "Now is the Time to Protect (and Duplicate) Valuable Records". His website is: <http://blog.eogn.com>. Eastman is just one source, there are many more out there with valuable information.

I hope you all have a wonderful Fall, happy genealogy hunting.

Kathie Vlahos - Editor

Have anything for the newsletter? Please contact Kathie Vlahos or Karen Grew-Ellison or go to: [redacted] to submit via-email directly to the editors.

## September 2013 ~December 2013 ~ Upcoming Programs and Events

6 Sept. 2013	Friday Help Session: 1-3 p.m. at the Palisade Library Branch
12 Sept. 2013	Thursday Evening Meeting 7 p.m. at the Commons: <i>German Ancestral Villages Part I</i> , by Dennis Jenkins
25 Sept. 2013	Wednesday Noon Sack Lunch at the Museum: <i>German Ancestral Villages Part II</i> , by Dennis Jenkins
4 Oct. 2013	Friday Help Session: 1-3 p.m. at a Branch Library
10 Oct. 2013	Thursday Evening Meeting 7 p.m. at the Commons: Topic to be announced later
23 Oct. 2013	Wednesday Noon Sack Lunch at the Museum: Legacy Webinar – <i>Using Church Records to Identify Ancestors</i>
1 Nov. 2013	Friday Help Session: 1-3 p.m. at a Branch Library
14 Nov. 2013	Thursday Evening Meeting: Topic to be announced later
6 Dec. 2013	Friday Help Session: 1-3 p.m. at a Branch Library
12 Dec. 2013	Thursday Noon: Annual Christmas Pot Luck

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### Presidents Message

In August I took a trip from Colorado through Kansas, Missouri and Iowa on my way to my hometown of Staples, Minnesota. I did some research along the way and I thought I would mention how I planned for my research trip both good and bad.

On the following Genealogy.About.com website there is an article about preparing for a genealogy research trip.  
[http://genealogy.about.com/od/research\\_trips/Genealogy\\_Research\\_Trips\\_Vacations.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/research_trips/Genealogy_Research_Trips_Vacations.htm)

It is important to know the regular research hours for a facility as well as their holidays and special closures. You will need to know in what form the records are available, any restrictions including copying and photographing. It is also a good idea to get the directions to drive to the facility and if there are any parking issues.

On my trip, I wanted to visit a second cousin in Topeka, Kansas and a high school classmate in Waverly, Iowa. I have to say that even though I planned the trip well in advance I still failed to be fully prepared.

Since I was going to be in Topeka, I realized that I would also be going through most of Missouri on my way to Louisiana, Missouri and it would be possible to stop in St. Louis, Missouri. I have always wanted to visit the National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records (NPRC-MPR) facility in St. Louis. I am looking for the service and pension records for two servicemen.

I accessed the website at <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/> and found that I needed to make an appointment in advance to allow them adequate time to be able to pull the records for the day I would be there. Unfortunately, after looking for service and pension records of the two service men, they were unable to find the Civil War pension records of my Great Grandmother's brother, since they currently have no finding aids for them. Note that his pension records are in St. Louis because he was still collecting his pension past 1930. They were able to search for my other request, but unable to find his service records for the 1920s. Thus I was not able to make an appointment and would not be able to go to the archive. If I hadn't contacted them, I would have wasted a lot of time going directly to the archives.

I also noticed that I would be driving close to the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Missouri just east of Kansas City. For this I checked online to see a map of their location and the times they would be open on the day I was passing through Kansas City. I was able visit that facility for a couple hours and was impressed with the materials they have. People living near this facility have a great place to work on their family history research.

That same day my plan was to continue on to Louisiana, Missouri to find obituaries for a friend of mine. In doing my preplanning, I emailed the library and newspaper to see if they had the old issues available for research. I found that the newspaper office had issues from about 1985 to present and the library had all the older ones. What I did not do was contact the Pike County Courthouse in Bowling Green, Missouri to check out their resources. However, as I was approaching Bowling Green on the way to Louisiana, It occurred to me that it would be a good idea to stop and see if they could help me with a death date I needed. They directed me to the County Health Department, but as I went back to my car, I noticed the Bowling Green Times newspaper office. I thought they might have copies of their old issues that would have the obituaries I was looking for. As it turned out they did have bound volumes of the past issues and I was able to find the obituary I was looking for in about 15 minutes. Later in Louisiana, I was able to get another slightly different obituary for the same person. While in Louisiana I also got photos of the gravestones in the Catholic cemetery.

The following day my plan was to go to Centerville, Iowa where my aunt grew up to see what information I could find there. I only had a half day there and I wanted to find obituaries of her family members and take photos of the gravestones in their rather large cemetery.

About 5 miles South of Centerville, I was aware of a rural cemetery (Porter Cemetery) I had wanted to visit. Unfortunately, as I was driving near it, I had not printed out a map, but did remember what it looked like on maps.google.com. (Another example of my bad planning) It wasn't easy to find the dead end rutted dirt road that led to the old cemetery without a print out of the Google map. It was a good thing it wasn't wet or raining, or I wouldn't have made it down the road. When I arrived at the cemetery, it was nice to see that someone had recently mowed the grass, but it turns out the headstones were a mess. Many were piled up against trees and the fence surrounding the cemetery. A lot of stones were tipped over and half buried in the ground. I found three stones that I was looking for, but the nicest and best kept stones had the surname Porter. I'm guessing that the Porter family still owns the land and was mowing the grass. Luckily someone has posted 64 of the known burials on findagrave.com. What I failed to do in advance was to copy down the 6 findagrave.com requests for photos. I could have easily taken photos of the stones that were visible.

In Centerville, my plan was to check out the library and newspaper. Wouldn't you know, I didn't plan very well for this visit by checking on the hours of the library in advance, thankfully it turned out OK, and they were open from 10 to 4 that day. I found that the library had a multi-volume index of the local cemeteries. It was well organized, with an index to surnames that gave the pages they were on. When looking at the pages for Oakland Cemetery, it was easy to see that it was organized by the 26 different sections. Names with dates of birth and death were listed by row as they occurred in each section. This made it easy for me to find the stones, since I wrote down a number of the names of those buried on each side of the one I was interested in. I was able to find the gravestones quickly to photograph them.

The first librarian I talked to told me they had microfilm of all the newspapers from the mid 1800's to present. When I was getting ready to use the microfilm reader, which was attached to a computer, a second librarian was helping me and informed me that the local newspaper website had all the newspapers digitized and searchable online. To see these digitized newspapers, go to <http://dailyjowegian.com/> then click on "Search Microfilm" in the lower left column. This was another error in my pre-planning. If I had known about these online newspapers before my trip, I could have done that research from Colorado. You never know what records are available until you check it out.

When I got to the Minnesota Historical Society, I was prepared for the days and hours they are open. Even though I have been there many times in the past, I always check online, since they have changed them often over the years.

I have to say that even though I did a lot of planning for my trip in advance, I failed to do everything that was possible before leaving. Make your next research trip a good one by preparing in advance.

Something that I usually talk about in this column is the need for our members to volunteer to help with society projects. The first one that comes to mind is the involvement of Mesa County Genealogical Society members typing the obituary information into the Mesa County Public Library District obituary file and online database since the 1980s. Currently the library needs more volunteers from our society for this very important ongoing project.

On my trip, I saw quite a few great databases and indexes created by Genealogy and Historical Societies. I think that there are many possible projects we should be considering in the future. We should be updating our online Cemetery Database as well as our Mesa County Marriage index. We should consider working on some new indexes and databases to help those who are researching Mesa County records. One that would be nice to see indexed and transcribed is the local Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) records that are found in the Museum of Western Colorado. A copy is also in the located in the Rashleigh Regional History Room at the Mesa County Public Library thanks to Gary Brewer.

Dennis Jenkins

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## September is Western Heritage Month in Mesa County

"The month of September has been proclaimed as Western Heritage month. The goal is to bring awareness to the unique area and educate the community and younger generations about farming, ranching and agriculture that made the Grand Valley what it is." By Sue Zendeenam, KKCO 11 News, <http://www.nbc11news.com/home/headlines/September-proclaimed-as-Western-Heritage-Month-221246801.html>

As Genealogists, and especially if you have deep roots in the Grand Valley area, this is the perfect time to dig deep into your family history and reach out to your younger family members with the stories of their own ancestors accomplishments in this area. If you are not from this area, it is still a good idea to start including the younger generations with stories of what our ancestors accomplished, it is no small thing.

A good place to start and for some entertaining reading of the Grand Valley area is the stories Historian, Kathy Jordan has written. Her website on Grand Junction History is: <http://www.historic7thstreet.org/remembering/>

Have a great Western Heritage Month!

Kathie Vlahos - Editor

*Continued from page 1*

said that what she remembered was they were in the “stern” of the ship and whenever the seas were rough or windy, all the pots and pans would fly all around.

William and Charlotte spent the next year in Manitoba, Canada, in a tent with their 10 children. We were able to find them in the 1891 Canadian Census, enumerated in June, at Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, Canada. Caroline M. Johncock said while living in Canada, she remembers that when the wind blew, her mother would send all the children out to hold onto the ropes of the tent to keep it down. I think being in a tent for a year on the Canadian plains with 10 children, is a great example of tenacity!

Between the years 1891 - 1895, William was able to get a job with the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad in the United States and moved his family to Nickerson, Kansas. William bought a farm there and that is where the family lived. William Henry Johncock died in Newton, Kansas the 16 May 1899 at the age of 57 years old. He was under a rail car checking on a piece of equipment, the engineer not knowing William was under the car, started the train moving and he was run over. He was buried in the Wildmeade Cemetery, Nickerson, Kansas.



Charlotte Meades Johncock - circa 1900



William Henry Johncock - circa 1885

The family stayed in Nickerson, Kansas for a while, but since the children were older, most of them moved to Chicago, Illinois where there were better opportunities for them to make a living. As their parents had done, they moved on to a better place for themselves.

A story of one family, told in a few short paragraphs, which I am sure barley touch's the hardships, fears, loneliness and sorrows they endured along their journey. Somehow, they were able to overcome these hurdles for a better life because of their tenacity. We should all be proud of the tenacity of our ancestors.

I wonder though, would I have the tenacity now to accomplish what they did then? I can only hope that if I am so lucky, some of those “tenacity” genes of my ancestors have been passed down to me.

*Written by Kathie Vlahos, August 1, 2013*

## Grand Junction and the Rio Grande Railroad

In the history of travel across the United States, railroads have had the most impact. People were able to travel faster and more comfortably than ever before. The railway allowed the interconnection of many counties and towns, thus bringing people closer. New markets opened up and supplies and equipment of all kinds became available and it was possible to transport goods to locations that before only mules, donkeys and men of pure doggedness were able to access. Towns popped up all along the railroad lines and where the trains stopped these towns prospered and grew. The trains helped agriculture and businesses all along the railroad by providing transportation and a new market for the local goods. It also provided many different kinds of jobs on and off the trains for men and women. The railway became the mainstay of American life.

It was no different for Grand Junction, Colorado when the Denver and the Rio Grande Narrow Gauge Railroad decided to choose it for its stop. It is an exciting history of a town that may have had quite a different outcome if it had not been for the railway and what it gave and took from Grand Junction. I have compiled a short timeline below to give one a brief history of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad's history in Grand Junction, Co. If you are interested in a more in-depth story, check out "the History of Railroads in Colorado" in the Beacon, by Sandi Cameron at:

Part I - <http://beaconseniornews.com/news/2013/mar/01/history-railroads-colorado/>

Part II - <http://beaconseniornews.com/news/2013/mar/29/history-railroads-colorado/>

The story is a very well written account of the railroads in Colorado and their impact on the State.

**1869** – The Union and Central Pacific Railroads join their rails at Promontory Summit, Utah Territory, and the entire nation is joined with 1776 miles of track.

**1882** – Denver and Rio Grande (D&RG) Railroad is completed from Salt Lake City into Grand Junction.

**1889** – Grading begins on the Little Bookcliff Railroad by owner Thomas Carpenter. The line ran north of Grand Junction to the Book Cliff mine near the town of Carpenter.

**1890** – A joint venture to build and share track lines between Rio Grande Railroad and Colorado Midland Railroad is completed from Glenwood Springs to Grand Junction.

**1891** – The Little Bookcliff Railroad is completed.

**1905** – Narrow gauge tracks are changed to standard gauge.

**1905** – The Union Depot is built in Grand Junction, shared by D&RG, RGW, and the Midland Railroad.

**1908** - The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad merged with Rio Grande Western Railroad becoming the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad.

**1919** – An 8 stall brick Roundhouse and Turntable were built in Grand Junction.

**1921** - The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad was reorganized as the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad.

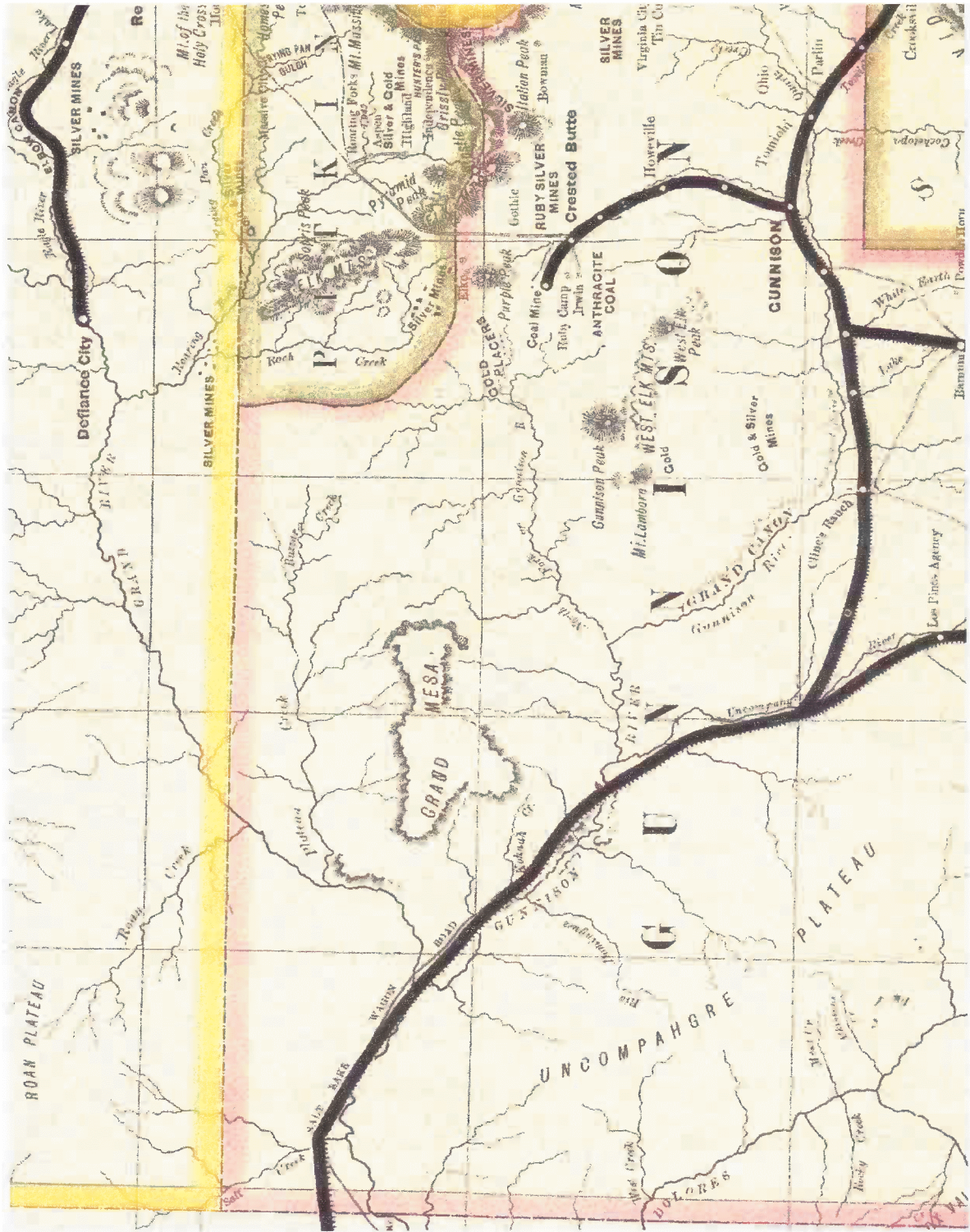
**1953** – The North Fork tracks from Grand Junction ran through Delta to the coal mines of Somerset and Paonia.

**1971** – US Amtrak begins its operations, Amtrak connected 46 States.

*Continued on page 10*

**The maps on pages 8 and 9 are for a comparison to show the changes from the introduction of the railroads in the area in a 5 year span.**

# Map of Denver and Rio Grande Railway System in Western Colorado, 1881



Turn page sideways to view from North to South

Map source: *Library of Congress Railroad Maps, 1828-1900*, <http://www.loc.gov/collection/railroad-maps-1828-to-1900/about-this-collection/>



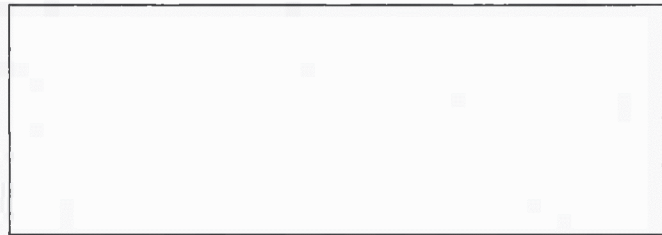
## Map of Denver and Rio Grand Railway System in Western Colorado, 1886



Turn Map sideways to view from North to South

Map source: *Library of Congress Railroad Maps, 1828-1900*, <http://www.loc.gov/collection/railroad-maps-1828-to-1900/about-this-collection/>

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*Continued from page 7*

**1988** – Rio Grande Industries purchased the Southern Pacific Railroad.

**1996** – The Rio Grande and Southern Pacific Railroad is sold to Union Pacific Railroad.

**2008** – The last D&RGW locomotive in full paint was retired in December 2008.

**Sources:**

American History About.com – <http://americanhistory.about.com/od/industrialrev/tp/Effect-Of-Railroads-On-The-United-States.htm>

Rio Grande Junction Railway – <http://www.drgw.net/info/RioGrandeJunction>

Denver & Rio Grande – [http://www.goastdepot.com/rg/mailline/marshall%20route\\_grandjct.htm](http://www.goastdepot.com/rg/mailline/marshall%20route_grandjct.htm)

“The History of Railroads in Colorado” By Sandi Cameron, The Beacon Senior Newspaper, Part I, 1 March 2013,  
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<http://beaconseniornews.com/news/2013/mar/29/history-railroads-colorado/>

“Little Bookcliff Railroad” by Sandy Barney, The Beacon Senior Newspaper, 22 June 2010,  
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