CAPITAL OF THE COLORADO PLAINS

By

Andrew Schon

A THESIS

Submitted to
Adams State University
in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of

M.A. in United States History

August 2016

Adams State University
History, Anthropology, Philosophy, Political Science
Signed Title Page
Signifying Completion of Thesis

Capital of the Colorado Plains
(Title)

A thesis prepared by: **Andrew J. Schon**

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree,
Masters of Arts in Humanities: United States History
has been approved and accepted by the following:

/JAD

Dr. Christopher Gilmer
Vice President of Academic Affairs

Richard D. Loosbrock, Ph.D.
Chairperson of the Thesis Committee

Aug 31, 2016
Date

Thesis Committee Members:

Richard Loosbrock, Ph.D.

Edward R. Crowther, Ph.D.

Charles Nicholas Saenz, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

CAPITAL OF THE COLORADO PLAINS

By

Andrew Schon

The guiding questions of this case study are an ambitious attempt to interpret the experience of ordinary people in Morgan County, especially in its major hub, the city of Fort Morgan, from the 1860s to the present; to chronicle the rise of a community found in the relative isolation of northeast Colorado from a military installation to a municipality, and create an understanding of the socio-cultural phenomena that exists today. The central questions addressed are how and why the community of Fort Morgan sometimes responded so differently to apparently similar situations facing most western communities. Capitalizing on Colorado laws surrounding irrigation, industrial diversification, and aided by the railroad and interstate highway, Fort Morgan has continued to be insulated from the boom-and-bust cycles experienced by other frontier towns. When other towns have lost their identity and the very features that once gave them distinction and appeal, Fort Morgan maintains its historic character and quality of life. In a rapidly changing world adaptability personifies Fort Morgan, and one quickly realizes there's something extraordinary about this town.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of Brian Mack and the Fort Morgan Museum. The access to such a wealth of information was invaluable and words cannot express my gratitude for your guidance along the way. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and wisdom.

To my wife Jerica and children Asthen and Brantley. Your patience, love, and support, have been remarkable. You have allowed me to pursue this research and have sacrificed a great deal enabling me to complete such a momentous task. I am eternally blessed to have such a loving wife and beautiful children. Love you all high as the sky!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Located on the South Platte River in northeastern Colorado, the town of Fort Morgan is often described as a small agricultural and manufacturing based community. The town itself lies along I-76, approximately 80 miles northeast of Denver and today offers the casual traveler a convenient resting place on their journey across the Great Plains. The city was named for a briefly active military fort (1864-1868)[1] along the Overland Trail serving to protect settlers and supplies going back and forth from Denver and surrounding mining districts. However, the history of Fort Morgan runs far deeper than its military beginnings. Fort Morgan has a unique story as a town that developed during the great American expansion across the continent.

To the average commuter, northeastern Colorado has very few aesthetically pleasing geographical features. The area starkly contrasts with the typical Colorado travel brochures commonly found at any local convenience store. The Rocky Mountains are several hours drive from the state's welcome sign as one crosses the Nebraska border; and one can hardly tell the difference between one state and the other. The flat plains seem limitless, water is scarce and trees are few and far between. It is likely nineteenth century settlers looked out on the land where the community of Fort Morgan now resides and viewed the South Platte River as a welcome reprieve from the endless miles of nothingness. The area allowed them to water their livestock, find a variety of small game for hunting, and rest their weary legs under the shade of trees alongside the river bank. Many of these early settlers found solace here for a brief time before continuing on their journey further west. Today, many travelers still view Fort Morgan as an appropriate place to pull over their automobiles and refuel before continuing on their journey.

Others stayed and found ways to establish a life on the plains. Having access to water and located along the South Platte River, Fort Morgan became home for resilient personalities. Their story is the subject of this thesis. Building on the work of local historians and the work of scholars like Elliot West, Richard Eutalian, and others, this study reveals that the inhabitants of Fort Morgan have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of frontier life, developing a settlement out of primitive economic and political conditions into the complexity of a civilized town. Similarities can be observed with other frontier towns and the changes that modernized and incorporated the Western United States, but there are essential differences in Fort Morgan's story and its place in the history of the West since 1865.

Transforming the farming frontier of northeastern Colorado, industrial diversification, division of labor, and fostered by the railroad and interstate highway, Fort Morgan evolved and exhibited the coarseness and strength necessary to sustain civilized life. To study this transformation, the people who lived under these conditions, and the political, economic, and social results, is to offer an anchor of identity and explanation to understand the significance of life on the frontier, and the rise of Fort Morgan.

CHAPTER ONE.

Necessitating a Fort

Fort Morgan arose from the vast, grassy seas that make up today's Colorado plains. Before any Anglo interlopers, First Nations Peoples called these lands home. The early history of Fort Morgan is highlighted by its role in the Indian Wars of the West, and the United States' growing power over the Native Americans. Cultural clashes between the indigenous people and the Anglos necessitated a fort following the South Platte River. The favorable location persisted after the natives defeat in the war, permitting the creation of a town. Fort Morgan's identity since then and its sense of place have not faded into historical memory. Fort Morgan's preservation, throughout its history, continually asserts its local importance and offers an understanding of the communities' importance to both the United States and northeast Colorado's local history.

During the 17th century, the Apache Nation dominated the South Platte River area after obtaining horses from the Spaniards. Allied with the Spanish, the Apache expanded across the southern plains and only saw their power decline after the growing presence and attacks of Comanche warriors pushed them out of the South Platte area. Afterward the Comanche took control of the region and other territories in Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas.[1]

Both the Arapaho and the Cheyenne moved to Colorado after their lands were taken from them by the Lakota and Dakota in Minnesota and the Black Hills. By the 19th century, the Cheyenne established themselves in Colorado and were living peacefully alongside the Arapaho. The tribe lived in tepees and routinely packed up and moved to various hunting

grounds in the Platte River valley. Known for their high quality horses, the Cheyenne were said to be the richest in horses of any tribe on the continent.[2]

The 1851 Treaty of Fort Wise provided supplies to various tribes and hoped to convert the Cheyenne and Arapaho into farm-based societies. William Bent, a trader and trusted friend of the Indians, was sent by the U.S. government to disperse subsidies and hopefully convince the Cheyenne to give up their traditional migratory patterns for a more permanent agricultural lifestyle. In 1859 Bent met with a large group of Cheyenne Indians camped near Beaver Creek on the South Platte River near present day Fort Morgan and discussed the possibility of abandoning nomadic life.[3] During this exchange, Bent outlined potential future outcomes for the Indians and addressed the mounting tension and frustration Indians felt toward the white man encroaching upon their lands. William Bent's report with the Cheyenne in 1859 notes:

> *I had a full and satisfactory interview with the Cheyenne and Arapahoe... I submitted to them the wish of the department that they should assume a fixed residence, and occupy themselves in agriculture... Being buffalo Indians, they require dwelling-houses to be constructed for them... They ask for pay for the large district known to contain gold, and which is already occupied by the whites, who have established the country of Arapahoe and many towns. They further ask annuities in the future for such lands as they may cede and relinquish to the government...*
> *The Cheyenne and Arapahoe tribes scrupulously maintain peaceful relations with the whites and with other Indian tribes, notwithstanding the many causes of irritation growing out of the occupation of the gold region, and the emigration to it through their hunting grounds, which are no longer reliable as a certain source of food to them. These causes precipitate the necessity of immediate and sufficient negotiations for the safety of the whites, the emigrant roads, and the Indians. Regulations, strictly enforced, are essential in the granting of licenses to trade with the Indians...*
> *A smothered passion for revenge agitates these Indians, perpetually fomented by the failure of food, the encircling encroachments of the white population, and the exasperating sense of decay and impending extinction with which they are surrounded. To control them, it is essential to have among them the perpetual presence of a controlling military force... The concourse of whites is therefore constantly swelling, and incapable of control or restraint by the*

government. This suggests the policy of promptly rescuing the Indians, and withdrawing them from contact with whites... anticipat (ing) and prevent (ing) difficulties and massacre.[4]

William Bent's message could not have been more accurate concerning the future events that were about to transpire. As Elliot West describes "The people living on the plains understood instantly that the march of the "merry" and "light hearted" Argonauts was part of the shuffling of power and resources that raised up some and devastated others. One groups opportunity was another's disaster; what seemed an emigration to some was to others an invasion."[5]

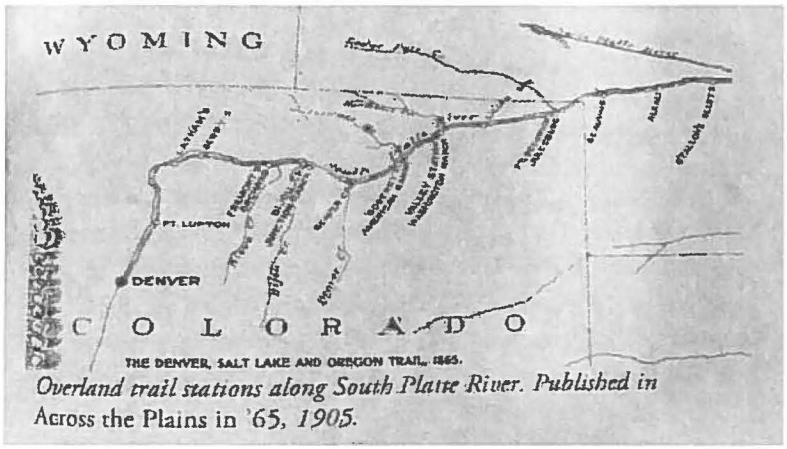
By this time settlements across Colorado started being established and boosters were looking for additional opportunities to promote their communities. "The first thing Americans think of when they emigrate,' Ned Wynkoop decided, 'is to lay out a town site, expecting of course that their own town will someday... become the metropolis of the world."[6] William Byers, founder of the *Rocky Mountain News,* had comparable ambitions while working for both Denver and Auraria. Besides promising "gold," Byers wrote a guidebook with a map following the South Platte River that promoted the "route across the central plains as an avenue of western progress, with Denver and Auraria just off a major continental thoroughfare.[7]

The 1858 discovery of gold at Pikes Peak incited overnight settlements in areas that promised wealth and prosperity. Thousands of settlers with news coming from the West, flocked to the gold fields to seek out their own claims and reap the benefits of what they assumed would be immediate success. The promotion of Colorado was led by newspaper publishers proclaiming the territories wealth and advantages. Editors of Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*, Central City's *Miner's Register*, the *Canon City Times*, the *Colorado Chieftain of*

Pueblo, and the *Colorado Miner of Georgetown* made their respective papers a "mouthpiece and engine of future progress."[8]

On the other hand there were also plenty of doubters and the story of Pike's Peak gold. Critics like the editor of *Chicago Press and Tribune* proclaimed "there is more gold to be dug out of every Illinois farm than the owners will ever produce by quitting the home diggings for those on the headwaters of the Arkansas and Platte."[9] Despite the detractors in a matter of only a few months areas that were once sparsely populated now became mining encampments occupied by hundreds of people. During the "bonanza years" towns like Denver, Leadville, Aspen, Creede, and later Cripple Creek sprung up.

Fort Morgan; was originally part of the Nebraska Territory in 1854 and became part of the newly formed Colorado Territory in 1861.[10] In 1859 the trail became part of the Overland mail route and was later referred to as the Denver Road, Pikes Peak Trail, California Road, and Platte River Trail/Road.[11] Mail to Denver was originally sent along the Republican River, but by May of 1859 operations along the Oregon Trail were consolidated and the route to Denver instead followed the South Platte River.[12] Early Anglo settlement in Colorado typically followed the rivers making the newly designated route the most logical choice.



Overland trail stations along South Platte River. Published in Across the Plains in '65, *1905.*

By 1862, Ben Holladay owned and operated the Overland Stage Line that sent mail coaches from Council Bluffs to Denver along the South Platte, and in 1864, Holladay changed

the route to include a cut-off at the junction that would become known as Fort Morgan.[13] The overland route through Fort Morgan became a cutoff site for gold prospectors and reduced previous travel time by 30 to 40 miles,[14] saving precious miles of travel for gold seekers. Fort Morgan consisted merely of a store, with social life centered on the stations and ranches of the surrounding area.[15] As more ranches sprang up they tended to be located near the stage stations, both for accessibility and for protection in case of trouble.

From 1859 to 1864, the area where Fort Morgan was built witnessed an endless stream of wagons, livestock, and travelers along the trail west. The trail the gold seekers traveled ranged from 80 to 150 feet wide, and thousands of cubic yards of earth were worn out of this roadway, which could plainly be seen miles away 25 years later."[16] Many paused to camp along the banks of the river and found substantial amounts of food and water for their exhausted wagon parties. In 1857, while camping along the Platte expedition organizer John Beck called the area "a fine country to live."[17] Others travelers who took the new cut-off reported the cut-off as being a "full ninety miles long, sandy, minus water, save what is alkalized, and is in fact, a nuisance and a humbug!"[18]

In an effort to relay messages to Denver and conduct business with delivery companies such as Wells Fargo[19] (See Appendix A), a post office and telegraph office were also established in Fort Morgan. However, this was far from an uninhabited land and buffalo still roamed the plains while Native Americans traveled through the same area. If a white man deviated from the trail or overstayed their welcome too long it almost always led to sudden death.

The escalating tension between indigenous people and white interlopers necessitated the construction of new military posts across the Great Plains. Fort McPherson was built in

1863 on the South Platte above the Platte forks, Plum Creek Station was built between Fort McPherson and Kearney, while Fort Sedwick was established in 1864.[20] Guarding the spot where the Denver cutoff left the South Platte road, Fort Morgan was built on an embankment overlooking the South Platte River. Formally known as Camp Tyler and later Camp Wardwell, Fort Morgan did not officially become a permanent fort until July, 1865.[21] (See Appendix B)

Samuel Browne, commander of the Department of Colorado, established Fort Morgan's first camp in 1864. Shortly after, "a detachment of 'galvanized' troops (rebel prisoners discharged from prison under agreement to enlist under Union officers to fight the Indians under Capt. Williams) assumed control and named the camp 'Camp Wardwell.'[22] Later a handful of sod and adobe buildings were constructed making up what could be categorized as a tent city and classified as Fort Morgan.[23] During its occupancy, Fort Morgan was a station for one to six companies of cavalry and infantry.[24] L.H. Corniorth of Denver describes the post as a well-furnished garrison and "surrounded by an earth embankment five feet high, and cannons, two 3-inch rifled Parrott guns as mounted in two elevated rooms at the northeast and southeast corners of the enclosure."[25]

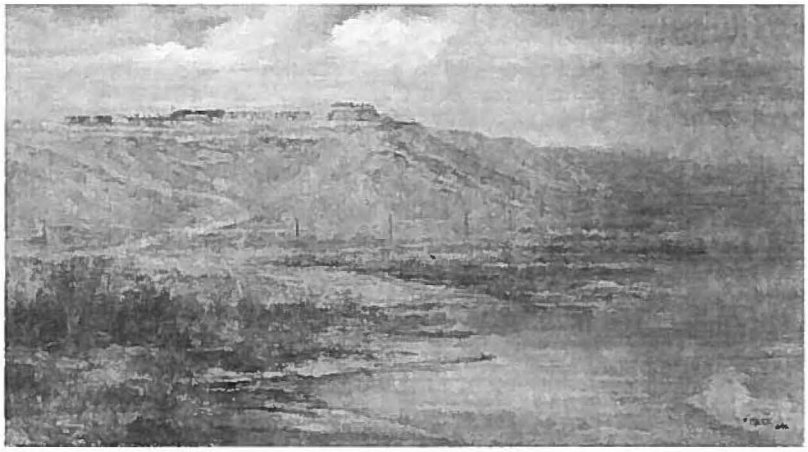


Photo courtesy of Fort Morgan Museum

The life of soldiers at Fort Morgan was one of isolation, and for the most part, social contacts were confined to the post with officers associating with fellow officers and enlisted

men with their own kind. Organized under a rigid structure of time and work garrison duties, life was generally monotonous and living conditions were not comfortable until permanent quarters were completed. During the formative years post commanders even struggled to obtain basic necessities. Fort Morgan's request to Denver's military installation often included food, building supplies, and even additional blankets to ward off the cold nights characteristic of the Great Plains.[26] (See Appendix C)

The daily schedule varied from year to year and season to season, depending in part on the post commandant. Following the prescribed routine, troops at Fort Morgan performed their respective duties. A typical day was organized as follows,[27] (See Appendix D) with orders coming from the top down. Troops had little free time for diversion and entertainment. General maintenance was always necessary and as a frontier fort went, and soldiers kept a watchful eye out for any sudden attack. As the *Rocky Mountain News* noted, "Whatever may be said to the contrary, the war on the Platte is carried on with a vigor that betokens the Indians thoroughly aroused."[28]

The perpetuated frustration and anger the indigenous people felt towards the white intruders led to assaults along the South Platte River that were widely published by the *Rocky Mountain News*. The federal government response was to round up those responsible and punish them, and U.S. military commander were "instructed to do what was absolute and necessary,"[29] when dealing with the Natives.

In 1864, the Cheyenne clashed with white soldiers at Fremont's Orchard, just 15 miles west of Fort Morgan. This event set off a chain reaction, including the fateful events of the Sand

Creek Massacre on November 29, 1864. While a majority of the Cheyenne and Arapaho warriors were away on a buffalo hunt under the pretense of peace, Colonel Chivington along with 675-700 troops and four howitzers descended upon their village just before dawn.[30] While the village slept, Chivington and his men attacked with brutal force. The village was primarily composed of women and children and left defenseless. Leaders like Black Kettle, One Eye, and White Antelope, sought peace as the bullets ripped through the tents of their people, but Chivington's men pressed on and their pleas fell upon deaf ears. Although the accounts of the Sand Creek differed in the aftermath the death count ranged between 60 and 160.[31] Many soldiers had no remorse at killing women and children. This was an age when whites generally didn't think it was a big deal to kill Native Americans.

Not all soldiers wanted to kill though. "Captain Silas Soule, refused to commit his men from Company D to participate in the slaughter. 'I refused to fire and swore that none but a coward would."[32] Soule called it a "massacre of peaceful Indians,"[33]and later blew the whistle reporting the massacre for what it was. Soule testified in court that Chivington and his troops had committed mass murder, but no-one was ever brought to account legally. For his decency, Soule was assassinated in downtown Denver by some of Chivington's men shortly after he testified.

Arguably the darkest event in the Indian Wars, Ari Keiman's *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek,* outlines the unjustifiable violence of Sand Creek and criticizes the United States for holding on to such events as part of its triumphant origins. Commemorative speeches and events over a hundred years later Keiman notes are unable to grasp that the slaughter of over 100 Native Americans should not be part of a heroic national

effort to civilize the West. Commenting on the Colorado Governor's opening ceremony in 2008 that recognized a new memorial site at Sand Creek as a place for healing and for living "in peace without conflict,"[34] Keiman states that speakers even today still "had no idea how painful commemorating Sand Creek has been."[35]

Keiman's analysis of U.S. history suggests that a radical transformation needs to occur integrating past wrongdoings into the landscape of national memory. Keiman notes the "Civil War" is remembered "as a good war, transfiguring a history of violence into one of virtue."[36] The virtuous cause for the Civil War was the abolition of slavery, and westward expansion must be seen in the same violent context as the Civil War, but Keiman contends no honorable justification can be made for the destruction of the Plains Tribes, of which the Sand Creek massacre was one particular cruel episode.[37]

After the massacre at Sand Creek many of the Cheyenne and Arapaho sought revenge and attacked military posts and settlements along the South Platte, and across the Great Plains. The attacks resulted in the death of hundreds of Indians and non-Indians. Government officials tried to apologize for the Sand Creek Massacre, but raids continued to penetrate the outskirts of some Colorado towns. Outraged reports from the *Rocky Mountain News* noted:

> *If the present suicidal policy of the government is carried on, eventually the plains settlers must succumb to the unequal conflict, or unite in bands to carry on the war after the manner of the Indians, which means to kill, burn, destroy Indians villages, innocent papooses and squaws, scalp the warriors and mutilate the dead; in fact follow in the same course as the red men, that their name may be rendered a terror to all Indians. Then, and not till then, may they hope for peace. From conversations with the ranchmen and freighters on the prairie, we are of opinion that the time is not far distant when we may hear of such confederation of whites organized for such purposes. It is a desperate remedy, and yet it seems the only one likely to attest the sanguinary and vindictive savage.*[38]

To avoid further blood-shed, active military posts across the Great Plains remained a necessity to maintain Anglo-American presence within the region. Federal installments like Fort Morgan were vital within the Platte Valley to provide security for overland settlers across northeast Colorado and deter future aggression amongst Indian and non-Indians.

The Fort Moran installment remained active until 1868, when the Union Pacific Railroad began building, and immigration overland subsided substantially. In a public auction on May 6, 1868 building materials, a lot of gunny bags, eight thousand pounds of bacon, and other Quartermaster and Commissary stores were sold.[39] The remaining buildings within the confines of the fort itself were then taken apart and the timber was recycled and used for houses and barns. By 1870 the fort was completely abandoned. Aided by this fortunate location, and unlike other frontier towns that sprang up around the western forts however, the town of Fort Morgan has been able to make the transformation to a municipality long after the military stockade that had offered collective protection for travelers against hostile Indians was deemed necessary.

CHAPTER TWO.

Envisioning and Enlarging Fort Morgan

Located near the ruins of the old military post, the city of Fort Moran was born out of the inspiration and achievement of men who desired accountability only to themselves. For generations, the vast prairie land had been home to only Indians. In recent years the prairie had been crossed countless times by mountain men, trappers, explorers, buffalo hunters, gold prospectors, and finally covered wagons and pioneers. Speculation fueled Colorado's growth in its early years and now the land had become an area for men who wanted property of their own to farm. By 1870 the South Platte Valley was already the location of huge cattle ranches owned by men like J.W. Iliff, (who operated nine cattle camps from Kiowa Creek to Julesburg), Jared L. Brush, (who ran tens of thousands of head ranging throughout Northeastern Colorado), and Bruce Johnson, founder of the 22 Ranch between Merino and Hillrose[1] Boosterism was the key to the future, and the success of town development in the west after the Civil War only came to those with visionary minds. Promotion of one's town was a civic duty felt by the pioneers of western communities, and regional development was the key.

Abner Baker, who lived in the Greeley Colony during its formative years, believed the lay of the land surrounding Fort Morgan held tremendous possibilities for agricultural development. The area held the potential to be a small farming community of well-established schools, churches, and a positive place for the average man to build his home and live in comfort. Baker's dream was to develop irrigation canals to increase the fertility and productiveness of the land. Baker's inspiration for the irrigation of crops, between two major

railroad lines, and amongst massive ranching operation, laid the foundation for the city's future prosperity.

Born August, 1844,in Norwalk, Ohio, to George R. and Hannah A. Baker, Abner had three brothers and two sisters. At a young age he moved with his family to Indiana, and shortly after to Baraboo, Wisconsin, where he received his formal education.[2]

Responding to the call of duty, Baker enlisted in 1861 with the First Wisconsin Cavalry and served throughout the duration of the Civil War. When the conflict came to a close, Baker returned home and found employment as a salesman for a mercantile firm until 1866 when he moved with his sister and brother-in-law to Tennessee to develop a farm. He remained in Tennessee until 1870 and then subsequently joined the Greely Colony becoming one of its original colonists. Before long, Baker became involved with farming and irrigation and started a construction company that built irrigation ditches and completed work for the Union Pacific Railroad.[3]

(Photo courtesy of Fort Morgan Museum)

Baker married Sarah Frances Graham in 1877, and the couple had four children: George Graham, Lois Adelia, Frances Sarah, and Abner Sylvester Jr. After many years of poor health, Sarah would die in Fort Morgan in June, 1895.

While living in Greely, Baker learned a great deal about irrigation and farming. The introduction of ditches would benefit a community for generations to come. The idea of

developing the area of land east of Greely captured Baker's attention. It was impossible to ignore the need for water to raise crops, feed livestock and fill the demand for food created by thousands moving to Denver and the mining camps. Quoting from Mr. Baker's diary, "My impression of the country when I first came to the place were anything but favorable. There is nothing in the dry sterile looking plains to awaken enthusiasm in anyone. However, so far as the lay of the country is concerned nothing could be finer."[4]

During the 1870s many Colorado farmers experimented with river valley farming. The success of irrigation development depended on monopolizing water for private profit. Investors and irrigation districts hoped to convert water into cash by improving nearby land values. The result was boom-and-bust agriculture during the first twenty years of statehood.

In the 1880s English investors operated through the Colorado Mortgage and Investment Company developed lands owned and operated by the Kansas Pacific Railroad."[5] The company built the "fifty-mile-long Larimer and Weld Canal in the Cache la Poudre watershed, the Loveland and Greely Canal out of the Big Thompson, and the Highline Canal, which wandered more than seventy miles from the mouth of the South Platte Canyon to the plains northeast of Denver."[6] Hundreds of other ditches made the South Platte basin a vast network of canals that began expanding farming toward the Fort Morgan area.

After successfully engaging in the construction of several ditches in Weld County and working for the Union Pacific in 1880 and 1881, Baker took a contract to build the Platte and Beaver canal which was projected to cover the eastern portion of the Fort Morgan flat. Out of his profits, Baker proceeded to begin a project of his own by building a canal to cover the central portion of the flat. The project resulted in the Fort Morgan canals. A portion of the

project would develop a town site to be called Fort Morgan and "about 25,000 acres of this virgin territory was to be watered by the Baker canal."[7]

During this time, land was open to settlement under the Homestead, Preemption and Timber Claim acts of the United States government. Additionally, these measures transferred land free of charge to anyone who was willing to occupy and make use of the property. Leading up to the construction of the ditches, the territory had been open range for herds of buffalo and later a favorable destination for range cattle. Mentioned earlier, cattle ranches were conveniently spaced at water holes along the river for thirty miles or more, "making the only places of habitation for human beings in a region some hundred miles east of Greely and about the same north and south of the South Platte."[8] From the irrigated ditches running south from Greely to Denver east to the state line the "entire population of the state was scarcely 1,000."[9]

Now pursuing his dream to establish a new community east of Greely, Baker knew the key to development was his canal providing water from the South Platte and making the area sustainable. Baker realized construction of such a massive endeavor would require substantial financial help and his most prominent supporters included Jared L. Brush, and Clark and L. Ogilvy an associate in irrigation construction work.[10] The upper Platte and Beaver ditches were the two primary projects in 1882 and served the Brush area. In 1883 Baker incorporated the Morgan Irrigation Co. and became the driving force behind the Fort Morgan Canal and provided water for the Fort Morgan flats near the site of the old military post.

By the spring of 1884 the canal was completed and ready to deliver water to the land surrounding the town site of Fort Morgan. The canal was highlighted by a 2,100 foot flume across the Bijou Creek. Baker's principal achievement provided water for more than 20,000

acres above and west of the line of the Platte and Beaver ditches.[11] Baker and his family were the first to file on the open lands located near the ditch he was building and after it successfully delivered water, Baker sold 80-acre water rights for $800. Making farming a prosperous business in the arid region in those early days was difficult at best and to pay for upkeep of the canal and installments on the water rights, many farmers paid Baker in labor. Baker encouraged people to farm and water all of the land possible to cultivate, and contended that the building of a ditch did not necessarily create a priority of right. Baker believed the building must be followed by application of water to the land and an earlier constructed ditch might lose its prior rights by not actually applying the water to beneficial uses. [12] This theory was later affirmed-by the Supreme Court of Colorado and Baker's action in the application of water himself and by associates to the land surrounding Fort Morgan, enabled him to date the priorities for a large amount of water ahead of ditches constructed prior to the time of building the Fort Morgan canal."[13] As one newspaper reporter commented, "Had we not had such rights awarded to us, Fort Morgan might have withered up and blown away in its early inception, and Mr. Baker, above all others is entitled to the praise."[14]

In anticipation of the projected completion of the Fort Morgan Ditch in 1882, ambitious men quickly purchased the land adjacent to this artificial river. Several individuals acquired farms almost immediately and included W.H. Clatworthy, J.H. Farnsworth, Robert M. Glassey, L.W. Kimball, and of course the Baker family consisting of Abner's brothers and sister, father, and father-in-law.[15] These early arrivals were the first to file on the open lands around the ditch and when the Fort Morgan town site was surveyed on May 1, 1884, the active operations in building began. Stakes were driven to mark lots and the tract that was once buffalo grass and

cactus began to take on a distinguishable form resembling the outline of a city. "John Farnsworth was building a hotel, a brickyard was opened by Killebrew & Burk, a livery barn, black smith, and carpenter shops were going up, as well as many other dwellings. Most of the material and money was furnished by Mr. Baker."[16] Fort Morgan was now on the map both literally and figuratively.

With the canal in full operation, the town was becoming a reality. Many hard-working and ambitious families began arriving and as Baker witnessed the success of his hard work he is quoted in the following regarding the new inhabitants to the community:

> *There was no class among us those days; the section hand was as good as the best of us, the ditch worker the equal of any man, the farm hand as good as the best. A fine thing about pioneering! The spirit is one that all men are born equal. It is probably true that only a diversity of interest separates us after all, causing us to grow apart.*[17]

By the late 1880s the irrigation boom had faded and companies discovered that farmers resisted the payment of annual royalties and in other cases settlements were not close enough to support their investment. In addition the 1888 Colorado Supreme Court decided against the English Irrigation Company, determining "That ditch companies were common carriers. They could charge small annual service fees but not royalties on water they did not own."[18] When the Colorado Constitutional Convention of 1875 met the delegates were well aware that impending battles over water were a distinct possibility. The constitution they created laid the foundations for state control by declaring:

> *The right to divert the unappropriated waters of any natural stream to beneficial uses shall never be denied. Priority of appropriation shall give the better right as between those using water for the same purpose... Those using water for domestic purposes shall have preference over those claiming for any other purpose, and those using the water for agricultural*

purpose shall have preference over those using the same for manufacturing purposes.[19]

After the 1888 ruling against the English Irrigation Company many corporate irrigation systems were reorganized and farmers who owned stock in newly formed cooperative companies were granted water rights. Additionally "In 1901 the state reorganized the new situation with a law authorizing landowners to form irrigation districts, purchase and construct irrigation facilities, issue revenue bonds, and levy land taxes for debt service."[20]

Baker also understood that in order to sustain success, he needed to secure a railroad station for his town. A transcontinental route was originally expected to go through Colorado, but a more practical route was found through Wyoming.[21] In the early 1870s the Colorado Central Railroad, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific, surveyed and graded a cutoff route between LaSalle and Julesburg, but construction was delayed until 1880. Construction began in Julesburg and went as far as the Union in Morgan County by the winter of 1880. The line was completed in 1881, when the track reached LaSalle. The first train ran on November 30, 1881.[22]

The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy began construction on a line from McCook, Nebraska to Denver in 1881.[23] Working through its subsidiaries the Burlington & Chicago and Burlington & Missouri, tracks reached the settlements of Brush and Fort Morgan in April of 1882. The line was completed on May 25, and the first train ran on May 29, 1882. [24]

Originally the town site of Fort Morgan was not located on a railroad siding and the closest sidings were Ensign and Deuel, located on the CB&Q, and across the river on the Union Pacific respectively.[25] To convince the CB&Q to build a siding near Fort Morgan, Baker was obliged to deed half of the town lots to the Lincoln Land Co; which was a subsidiary of the railroad company. Under the agreement, the section house called Ensign, was moved down the railroad line and a

small railroad station was relocated down to the new town. The contract also gave the land company the authority to lay out the new town at Baker's direction, and outlined the lots to be sold and make up the formation of the new town.

Denver leaders at this time also negotiated an agreement to build a rail spur north to the Union Pacific. When the agreement fell through in 1867, "former governor John Evans negotiated a deal with the Kansas Pacific, a line building west from Kansas City to Denver. in return the Kansas Pacific received a half interest in the Denver Pacific and a traffic-sharing agreement; Evans received the right to manage the line for five years and the funds to finish it."[26] It wasn't until 1877, that Denver via the Colorado Central connected to the Union Pacific. Railroads promoted the growth of the Front Range and towns sprung up along the lines.

For Fort Morgan, access to railroads immediately made it easier for settlers to come to the region. The once worn wagon wheel paths became streets, and construction of the town accelerated with the arrival of carpenters S.N. Fiske and J.L. Haff. The establishment of Frank Baker's lumberyard and the brick business of Killebrew and Burke transformed the area by the summer of 1884. With a railroad station now in town, it made it easier to bring in supplies and transport locally grown produce, principally cattle, corn, hay, wheat, and oats. A post office was also established and the settlement of Morgan County flourished after the construction of the railroads. In the 1920s, the Burlington constructed a new station, tearing down the 1884 and 1906 stations.[27]

In short, the railroad was critical. There would be no history of Fort Morgan, if Baker had not been able to persuade the railroad to invest in the region. Town promoters and western communities understood that real progress was measured by population, railroads, and

economic activity. Those who failed to entice the iron horse of progress often fell by the wayside, while the subsidiary economic activity the railroad generated for Fort Morgan nurtured the towns' development.

Baker's foresight in the possibilities of achieving success east of Greely was far in advance of his time. He envisioned an agriculturally sustainable community with thousands of thriving local inhabitants, but sadly never fully saw his vision reach its peak. Abner Baker died at St. Luke's hospital in Denver on April 17, 1898 and he is buried at Fort Morgan. Given his ambitious ideas and commitment to laying the foundation of the city, he seldom had time to rest and his poor health caught up to him in his later years. Baker's contributions to the city of Fort Morgan however have had a resounding impact and led to the admirable structural growth of the community today. The fulfillment of his dream has come to fruition and speaks to the character of a man who devoted his life to make it a reality. As L.H. Johnson, Editor of the Fort Morgan Times, wrote "Of Baker; he planned well. It was been one of my life philosophies; the man dies, but the thing remains! He built for the future, planted what others might reap."[28]

Growth of a City

The town grew slowly the first few years and many of the inhabitants found life to be difficult. The concept of irrigated farming was a new phenomenon to immigrants from the East, those used to abundant rains to provide sustenance to their crops. The arid, treeless lots that the town offered were unattractive to many new families. Even with the water resources provided by the Fort Morgan Canal, a number of people still favored the dry land farming that they were accustomed to and settled along other Burlington Railroad towns such Sterling, Akron, or Yuma instead. Besides the pessimistic attitude toward Fort Morgan's viability, Abner Baker the town's founding father had gone bankrupt by the late 1890's and his ditch company was repossessed by insurance companies. Baker, who represented much of what Fort Morgan stood for, epitomized the struggle to build the community and achieve personal wealth and prosperity during those early years in Fort Morgan.

The early settlers, much like Baker, had to scrape to make ends meets and simply survive that difficult time to get the town started. Beginning in 1884 the town could only be described as a tent community, with a few sod and wood houses clustered together. Similar encampments were typical in the early years of Anglo-American settlement in the West before territorial infrastructure was established. A majority of the farmers who had filed for land typically had nothing more than a team of horses and a wagon to begin their farms. The environment could be best defined as exhibiting a ruthless and barren landscape and demanded that anyone trying to make a living exemplify a strong work ethic and resilient attitude toward their current circumstances. Working day after day in the dry summer heat challenged untold numbers of farmers and the brutally cold winters caused many to question

the rough life they had chosen. Those who were unable to cope often found a quick trip out of town while those who stayed maintained an attitude of honorable poverty. Everyone was relatively poor initially, a circumstance that tend to mute class distinctions. Every citizen was treated as an equal amongst their peers but by the end of the century residents had erected a number of permanent houses, "a twenty room hotel built by J.H. Farnsworth, Baker's general store, a carpenter's shop, a candy and notion store and the beginning of a two story frame building of which the second floor would be used as a public hall."[29] Dr. Crawford, the community's first doctor also arrived in Fort Morgan at this time.

The gradual growth of the town continued and in response marked the beginning of a more sophisticated way of life. In an effort to keep the local inhabitants informed about the goings-on around the community, Lyman Baker started the first newspaper. George W. Warner and Lute H. Johnson soon joined forces with Baker and "every week they would fill the paper with the day to day dealings of the settlers while watching the antelope and coyotes chase across the open expanses of the town."[30] Besides writing about the news, the other purpose of the Fort Morgan Times was to shape the moral compass of the town. The founding families of the community were English, Scot, and Scot-Irish Calvinists who shared common religious and cultural traditions and values.[31] The Baker family was quite religious and aware of the evil pitfalls within society that could tempt even the most devote Christian and destroy the family-oriented town that they were trying to establish.

Alcohol was strictly forbidden as part of Abner Baker's contract for land sold in the town and Lyman Baker made it a priority in his editorials to convince the residents to abstain and endure.[32] For individuals migrating from the Union Colony at Greely, a great deal of Fort

Morgan's first town peoples, the temperance rule was nothing out of the ordinary. The Union Colony had rules similar in nature to the ones that the Baker family was attempting to instill amongst their neighbors, but the rules seemed arbitrary and difficult to enforce upon those migrating from somewhere outside of the Union Colony. It was Lyman Baker's firm belief that God, family, and country should be the cornerstone of any man's life and hard work was the key to success and helping the town grow. Alcohol, in his mind, was the worst evil of man and the leading cause for prisons, hospitals, and asylums. Even during times of heartache and struggle, Baker encouraged people to turn away from liquor and advocated that parents teach their children about temperance and abstain from any indulging on their part.

As the population of Fort Morgan grew the townspeople built more permanent residences and set about establishing a community complete with schools, churches, and entertainment venues. The population increase from 1885 to 1900 brought ethnic, social, and economic diversification to the town. However the residents of Fort Morgan were selective on the type of individuals they wanted to permanently settle in their up-and-coming community. "The editors of the Fort Morgan Times made it clear in their editorials that Fort Morgan would welcome only respectable people and not rogues."[33] A life characteristic of a working class community, was promoted and hardworking farmers, mechanics, and businessmen would be the only type of people welcomed. To discourage the unwanted the townspeople even set up a sign on the Burlington Railroad depot stating, "Notice tramps and bums! 6 P.M. is too late for you to be in this town. Hit the road."[34]

Most agricultural communities like Fort Morgan shunned hobos, but come harvest time used them when labor was needed. Still Fort Morgan favored employing transient families and

offered a variety of contracts year round encouraging these families to stay. As the *Fort Morgan Times* proclaimed; "We believe it will be great advantage to the community to have these families here. They desire to remain the year round if they can get work. By having these people here permanently we will not be compelled to depend upon hobos to harvest our grain and dig our potatoes."[35]

In an effort to recruit permanent residents to Fort Morgan Abner Baker set his sights on an even bigger project in 1889: the Bijou Canal. The new canal would run fifty miles and open approximately 45,000 new acres of farm land in the western section of the county.[36] "The original owners of this ten-mile-wide and forty-mile-long strip then divided up their land in the hopes of selling it to individual small farmers."[37] With the completion of the canal, Fort Morgan secured its future success and immediately became the commercial center for Northeastern Colorado and the large agricultural area in which it was located.

Eager to make the Great Plains attractive to additional settlers, boosters and railroads departments dispatched recruiting representatives throughout Nebraska, Kansas, and eastern Colorado. In addition the commissioner of the General Land Office, in his 1868 report, stressed that agricultural settlement leads to climatic enrichment, and urged the planting of tress on the Great Plains as a means of increasing rainfall.[38] The belief that rainfall increased with settlement was also a convenient recruiting device used by the active railroad recruiting agencies. The agents asserted that the land surrounding the tracks had been permanently transformed by the new iron rails and the "friction of metallic surfaces,' sent waves up into the atmosphere as the trains went through."[39]

Samuel Aughey a prominent supporter of the theory, and professor of biology at the University of Nebraska, proclaimed "As civilization extends westward the fall of rain increases from year to year."[40] Aughey went on to elaborate that "the plow was the trigger of change, the cultivated earth serving as a sponge that absorbed the moisture, then released it slowly.[41] The boosters turned the idea into the ingenious slogan the "rain follows the plow," and enthusiastically promoted the theory of increasing rainfall to justify railroad expansion. Reassured by the prospect of abundant rains and adequate farm land, settlers moved west and advanced to the plains of eastern Colorado. The settlers descended in large numbers which lead to the creation of thirteen new counties: Washington, Phillips, Yuma, Sedgwick, Logan, Prowers, Morgan, Otero, Lincoln, Kit Carson, Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Baca.[42] Colorado's natural limitations however forced settlers and farmers on the plains to adjust. The most immediate necessity upon arriving still remained water. Makeshift shelters could be constructed, food could be imported, but acquiring an adequate amount of water was a continuous struggle. Options for obtaining water were very limited, and by 1890 even the volume of flow coming from the South Platte and Arkansas River were significantly reduced by inefficient ditch irrigation and lack of storage facilities. Of course every settler wanted their own independent supply of water, but sinking a successful well to water was only achieved by a lucky few. However, those achieving such a feat as Isaac Messinger noted, "were the richest man in the country,' not in a monetary sense, but because it was a luxury not to have to haul it every day."[43]

The communities that ignored the agricultural limitations of the Great Plains often encountered unfortunate results. Traditional dry-land farming that had been successful in the

east relied on abundant rainfall and the cyclical patterns of drought settlers now encountered brought disaster to many grain farming families. By 1894 the weather was drier than most could remember. "Only ten inches of rain fell at Yuma, eight at Burlington, and seven at Holyoke."[44] Drought forced farmers to abandon the lands they so eagerly acquired just a few short years before. During the 1890s the total population of the thirteen counties dropped significantly, and the Census reports show some areas by as much as forty percent.[45]

Where irrigation did exist as in Morgan County (an increase of 125 percent) there were major gains in population.[46] Fort Morgan added a significant number of people when most of the region skimmed its population and witnessed farmers desert the area. Fort Morgan's investment in irrigation ditches had paid off and with its incorporation in 1887 the community reaped the fruits of its labor. M.E. Lowe was elected the town's first mayor and in 1889 the state legislature formed a new county from the eastern section of Weld County. Fort Morgan was named the county seat. The city was no longer a sister city to Greely but rather its own independent town in a county that placed it at the hub of economic activity.

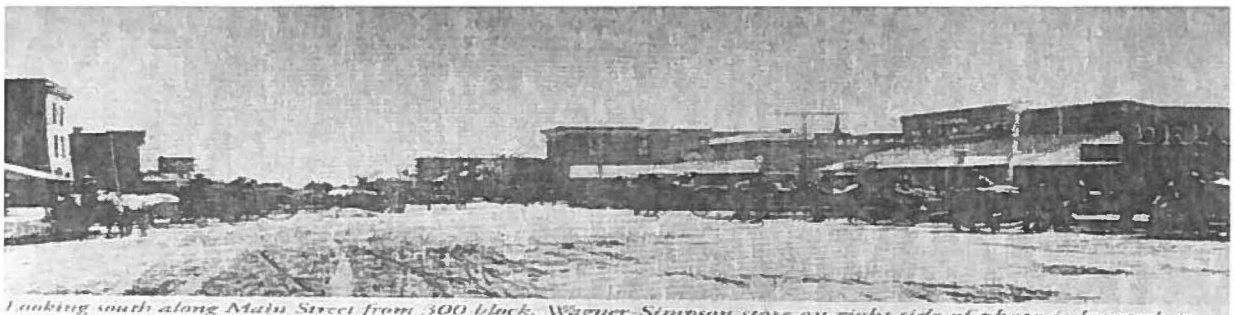
At this time, Morgan County had a population between 1,500 and 2,000 people, with the main industries continuing to be agricultural with the state assessing its value at two million dollars.[47] As the 1900s approached, Fort Morgan had access to two railroads that bisected the county, 175 miles of irrigation canals, and 135,000 acres of irrigable land. [48]The acres that were not irrigated were used for cattle and sheep grazing. Oats, wheat, alfalfa, and corn crops were also investment for farmers of the area and with cheap irrigated farm land being sold for ten to fifteen dollars an acre, the wealth and population of the city continued to grow.[49]

With its increased wealth, the community expanded the amount of construction and built public schools and public halls for its residents. School District 3 was formed, Center School (now Baker Elementary School) was built, and the first high school class graduated in 1885.[50] Citizens were also encouraged to plant trees around their homes for shade in the sweltering summer heat but also to make the city more appealing to prospective settlers. The property owners who planted trees and shrubs on their lots were remitted a percentage of their taxes. Those families who now had a little more financial security added on to their homes or built new brick houses to replace their initial wooden homes. These aesthetically appealing improvements made Fort Morgan an attractive small town on the rise and offered modest living and plenty of opportunities to prosper.

Being a close-knit, conservative, family-oriented community, the citizens of Fort Morgan organized and built a number of churches to accommodate the various religious faiths. The first Presbyterian Church was the first organized church in the city starting in 1886. By 1900, 9 more churches were built.[51]A variety of other denominations held their services in the public halls and Fort Morgan proudly proclaimed its reputation as a religious community devoid of liquor and undesirables.

Growth and increased social stability created a measure for community success. After the hard times of establishing a town, Fort Morgan's citizens began to address how to best use leisure time. Initially, citizens formed fraternal organizations and service clubs. The Masons were the first organization to establish a fraternal society in 1886[52]and other organizations followed suit shortly after. These groups included the Knights of Templar, the Modern Woodman, the Macabees, the Grand Ole Army of the Republic, the Knights of Pythias and

others. Women's organizations were also very popular in Fort Morgan and included a Chautauqua lecture series, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Friday Club, and the Bay View Club that raised money to beautify the cemetery and benefit the library. Along with these independent groups, each church typically had its own separate club for members. A majority of these clubs were active on a weekly basis and contributed to the spirit of celebration and amusement for the local community throughout the year and presented plays, musicals, and dances. Social life in early Fort Morgan also centered on the hotel and J.H. Farnsworth. Once a month and on special occasions, Farnsworth hosted musical entertainment and dances in the evenings at the hotel event center for the enjoyment of all. The social gatherings provided the people of Fort Morgan an opportunity to relieve the monotony of work and everyday life and offered the perfect occasion to meet and converse with other people around the community. Life was difficult for most communities on the western frontier and feelings of isolation and separation were common. Given the variety of options available Fort Morgan residents found a number of ways to amuse themselves, and combat the hardship of life in those early years.



Looking south along Main Street from 300 block. Wagner-Simpson store on right side of photo is located at 309 Main Street. Courtesy of the Fort Morgan Museum.

By the end of the 19th century the real frustration for many Colorado towns centered on the major issues of money, land, and transportation. America's complex economy of the urban-industrial age left some with feelings of alienation and a loss of sociological status. Many farmers, miners, and railroad workers anxiety stemmed from what they considered their exclusion from the "American Dream."

Colorado had been transformed from a frontier outpost to an industrial state by the mining industries; but by 1890 problems were apparent with steady declines in the silver price and "the miners' acknowledgement of the increasing gap between the reality of their lives and the myth of success."[53] Before 1890 few had reasons to question the American Dream; the belief was that success came to those who worked hard and failure was simply the result of an individual's shortcomings and unwillingness to work. Stories of successful men filled the newspaper headlines and early settlers naively believed that there was something for everyone.

However, success was outside the grasp of everyone. For every successful prospector there were hundreds who failed. The remarkable growth of the Colorado mining industry only took place after large mining companies with capital came to the state, the federal government facilitated the passage of mineral land laws, transportation networks were developed, and technological improvement were applied to the industry.[54] Lacking these essential components, prospectors and small operators soon discovered they were unable to compete with the large scale operations and after years of frustration many ultimately went to work as day laborers for mining syndicates.

In addition, despite industrial development in Colorado that lowered the cost of operation mine laborers did not tend to share in the profits. Wages typically changed very little

in the 1880s and many mines tended to drop wages with downward fluctuations in the price of silver but refused to conversely raise wages with increases in the market price.[55] Combined with these low wages, mining camps frequently related stories of accidents and the hazards associated with the job. Colorado also began to see a sharp increase in foreign born miners who quickly overwhelmed the workforce. The result was that bitter old prospectors, American-born miners, and industrial workers of the mines began to have an increased group awareness of their changing profession and the capitalist system that had shattered their dreams of success.

By the 1890s Colorado's mine, mill, and smelter workers began organizing unions and went on strikes calling for better wages and workings conditions. In 1892 the Colorado Bureau of Labor Statistics counted nearly 16,000 union members in 206 organizations.[56] The rapid growth of the unions in the 1880s was a direct result of the workers displeasure with the growing number of large corporations, the growing presence of immigrant workers, and the disappearance of individual prospectors and skilled workers.

For Colorado farmers the gap between reality and myth proved to be just as difficult to accept as it had been for the mine laborers. During the 1870s and 1880s successful farmers had been rewarded for their hard work with grand houses, barns, fields, and healthy livestock. On the other hand overgrazing, poor management, drought, and severe winters could just as easily ruin a farmstead and destroy a man's future. The tough reality was that sometimes farmers simply failed and the prosperity of a farmer was not entirely determined by his industrious nature.

Following the improvement of mining techniques, farming technological improvements like irrigation projects also led to incorporation. The corporate irrigation projects

that were constructed during the 1880s enabled settlers to move out of Colorado's river valleys to the western slope but, "the water companies often sold the rights to more water than they could deliver, causing obvious consternation among local farmers."[57] Nevertheless, by 1889, 59 percent of the farmers in Colorado practiced irrigation and the number of individuals working on farms and ranches increased from 13,539 in 1880 to 36,316 in 1889.[58]

Yet, just a year later the upward growth of Colorado's agriculture was beginning to see several alarming issues. Corn prices had started on a downward trend, there was unhappiness between farmers and grain buyers, friction had taken place between water users and irrigation corporations, and high transportation rates to the market all indicated that Colorado agriculture had overextended itself. In an effort to lobby on their behalf stockmen, irrigators, and plains farmers formed associations and assumed their respective positions on controversial issues.

As Colorado approached the twentieth century many people questioned the institutional and socioeconomic context in which they found themselves. Some argued that the political elites had gained too much power and forgotten those they represented and in the process infringed upon the rights, values, and voices of the people. In an effort to overthrow the small circle of elite' voters began to organize themselves and denounced the current system in which millions toiled to build up the fortunes of the few. Angry farmers and miners were especially critical of capitalism, banks, and railroads, aligning themselves with the labor movement. The complaints became the basis of a new political party in the early 1890s and James Wright's work *The Politics of Populism: Dissent in Colorado* examines the economic,

social, and political factors that the influenced the party along with its impact on twentieth century Colorado politics.

The movement began in 1891 when Colorado's independent workers formed a new political party, calling themselves the People's Party of Colorado.[59] What became known as the Populist Movement focused on the interests of wage laborers and small entrepreneurs throughout small communities, and advocated for a range of economic and political legislation. In Colorado Davis Waite encouraged miners and foreign-born workers to join the party, while James Weaver a presidential candidate in 1891 received 57 percent of the Colorado vote, and voters elected twenty-seven Populists to the state House of Representatives and twelve to the Senate.[60] Republican opponent, Albert W. McIntire, however charged that the Populists had disgraced Colorado in the eyes of the nation, frightened off capital, and fostered a spirit of anarchy.[61]

Despite the initial success of the Populist Party in Colorado the 1893 financial panic put nearly 45,000 Coloradans out of work in many of the mining towns and rural communities across the state. The Populists sustained substantial losses in the state wide elections of 1895 while the Republican Party made substantial gains. Reports indicated that Republicans secured 207 county court appointments while the Populist secured 145 and the Democrats 16.[62] The traditionally conservative *Fort Morgan Times* proclaimed "From these returns it can be discerned that the Republican Party is in ascendancy of Colorado, as well as in the rest of the country. And it is also plainly discernible that the backbone of the Populist Party is broken."[63] In the town of Fort Morgan Republican candidates secured all county officials appointments outside of the County Clerk, County Commissioner, and Coroner.[64] (See Appendix E)

The 1896 national election was a disaster as well for the Populist and instead of running as a third party in the election the party joined the Democrats and supported Williams Jennings Bryan for the presidential appointment. One of the major political battles of the election was over currency. Sectional and class conflict had heightened after the economic depression of 1893 and positions on currency divided citizens over the issue that a sound national economy must be based on the gold standard to ensure the dollar's stability, and promote unrestricted competition in the marketplace. Bryan and proponents to the gold standard believed that the United States did not necessarily need to reserve a specific amount of gold equal to all the paper money in circulation. Bryan instead advocated "free silver" to back the dollar to increase a more flexible money supply and more equitable economy. Bryan also wanted to use silver to back the dollar at a value that would inflate the prices farmers received for their crops, thus easing their burden of debt.[65] Many Colorado residents fully supported the Free Silver Movement and stood behind Bryan platform which fought for the rights and opportunities of labor and still promoted competition.

Bryan's opponent, Republican William McKinley, however mounted a well-funded campaign, easily controlled the industrialized Northeastern states, and persuaded voters that dropping the "gold standard" would lead to inflation and an increase in the price of goods and services. In short, McKinley convinced the country that the Free Silver Movement was a bad idea and subsequently easily won the national election. Although Bryan ultimately lost the election the silver mining interest of Colorado was strong and "the results of the presidential election in Colorado surprised no one. Bryan received over 158,000 votes as compared to 26,279 cast for McKinley."[66]

Bryan had become almost everyone's candidate in Colorado, but as the headquarters of the Republican County Central Committee, many Fort Morgan residents had supported William McKinley for president even during the early stages of the campaign, and sent seven Republican delegates to participate within the Republican party of Colorado convention held in the city of Colorado Springs.[67] In the months leading up to the election local papers also encouraged voters to support McKinley and proclaimed, "McKinley is first of all, strong in his personality and embodies an exceptional degree of fortunate blending qualities conducive of success, and is honorable without comparison."[68] Others were simply not convinced by the Democrats and Populist that Bryan's policies could restore the nation's economic health. Many felt instead that his programs would destroy the economy and result in much lower wages and increased unemployment.

In addition to the Populist defeats at the state and national level, Colorado businessmen worked actively to destroy unionism over the next two decades. James Peabody who won the 1902 Republican gubernatorial nomination, and was elected Governor of Colorado, aggressively dealt with a succession of labor strikes and suppressed other reform tendencies. Miners' unions conducting strikes in gold and silver mines at Colorado City, Cripple Creek, Telluride, and Idaho Springs were only a few communities divided by the disputes. Peabody who ran on a platform of "law and order," answered the petition of local businessmen and whenever necessary called out the National Guard to restore peace and resolve strikes. Many felt Peabody's tactics in the use of the National Guard were heavy-handed, but as Peabody interpreted his duty, his responsibility was "to preserve the commercial and industrial enterprises of Colorado from assault and annihilation."[69]

In the following years Colorado business owners continued to use political influence to neutralize labor organizations and established a framework for labor negotiations that favored corporate leaders. Colorado's unions proved useful in minor disputes but achieved only minimal success in major confrontations. Colorado's business owners had successfully out-organized, and to a large degree suppressed the rallying cries of the state's industrial workers.

By 1912, the Colorado Progressive Party had virtually become non-existent, while the Republican Party gained support and voters nation-wide. Many of the old Progressives were absorbed by the Republican Party, and reform movements shifted towards the problems associated with rapid urban grow. Anti-Populist farmers and businessmen from Fort Morgan had rejected the political theories of the Populist Party from the very beginning contending:

> *The policy of the free trade party is to throw our American market in the open to the competition of the farmers and manufactures of all other nations. The free trade policy is to give our markets to the chain labor countries and to compete with the cheap labor in their similar markets. We should understand clearly that the only party to blame is the populist party of the house and senate. It is not the eastern manufacture who is to blame but the populist.*[70]

While other communities focused on labor relations and urban growth the people of Fort Morgan typically wanted the government to support its agricultural background, promote state funds for the digging of irrigation reservoirs and canals, encourage eastern capitalists to invest in eastern Colorado, and above all else increase the economic prosperity of the growing agricultural community. The Republican political party best supported these ideas and the people of Fort Morgan and Morgan County voted completely Republican in every state and national election from 1884 through 1910.[71]

CHAPTER THREE.

From Beets to Beef: Industrial and Demographic Diversity

Fostering Development & the Great Western Sugar Company

Morgan County continued to grow and saw some of its most significant increases occurring from 1900 to 1910. Much of this growth can be attributed to the construction of additional canals and reservoirs. Farmers were beginning to exhaust the South Platte River on an annual basis by the time the autumn months descended upon the region and the viable solution for Morgan County was to construct a series of reservoirs. Jackson Lake, the most prominent of these reservoirs, was completed in 1905;[1] and it was followed by the construction of the Bijou Reservoir, Empire Lake and Riverside Reservoir. Reprieve for the farmers' crops had now become a reality and the completion of Jackson Lake guaranteed the longevity of the agricultural industries surrounding Fort Morgan. The security provided by the reservoirs also increased the interest from outside agricultural companies to begin investing in the Fort Morgan area. The most significant interest came from the Great Western Sugar Company.

The mining and smelting industries of Colorado had faded by this time and processing agricultural products began taking their places. Boosters since the 1860s explored the agricultural profits of sugar beets and farmers had experimented with the crop in different capacities. Following the 1893 financial panic and the decline of Colorado's silver boom Denver's Charles Boettcher, who had made his fortune in Leadville and multiplied his money by selling hardware, partnered with John Campion, William Bryd Page, J.R. McKinnie and his son Claude, to form the Western Sugar Company.[2] Boettcher realized that in order for Colorado's

farmers to successfully grow beets, they needed to raise capital, build factories, and manufacture the sugar. In an effort to make his business solvent Boettcher traveled to Northern Germany and spent a number of months investigating the beet sugar industry.[3] When he returned to Denver, Boettcher brought with him 1,500,000 pounds of the best German sugar beets to be used as seed in the beet fields of Colorado.[4] Reflecting on his journey Boettcher commented, "The time will come before long when Colorado will raise her own sugar beets, but we cannot do it just yet. They have been at it longer than we have in Germany and we have not been able to get the farming part of the industry down to as fine a point as they have."[5] Encouraged by the potential of growing sugar beets in Colorado, Boettcher went on to say "On the mechanical part of the business we are ahead of them. Our factories are larger and have more modern machinery than theirs and our methods are fully advanced."[6] Conversations with Mesa County promoters persuaded Boettcher and other Denver investors to erect the state's first sugar beet factory in Grand Junction in 1899.[7]

After only modest success on Colorado's western slope the sugar industry shifted to the Colorado plains and factories were built in towns up and down the South Platte and Arkansas Valley. Located 15 miles to the north of Rocky Ford, towns like Sugar City exploded over night, and like a mining boomtown, "in its first year Sugar City housed a mix of 2,000 executives, engineers, construction workers, merchant farmers, and Volga German immigrants."[8] Pursuing similar industrial growth Fort Morgan also considered the viability of processing the agricultural product. As business representatives across the Front Range explored the possibility of obtaining their own sugar factory within their towns the *Fort Morgan Times* proclaimed "Where are we? With the best piece of flat surface on earth to raise beets on, and closer to water than

any of our competitors for a factory, we appear to be still waiting for a report. Perhaps something will develop at the sugar beet mass meeting next Tuesday afternoon at the courthouse."[9]

Colorado's Eastern Plains offer some of the most conducive environments to grow sugar beets. The sugar beet crop thrives upon hot days, cool nights, and dry air. The sandy loam soils that are prevalent in Colorado also provide an ideal seed bed for the crop to grow. Sugar beets can tolerate the arid conditions and flourish much better than corn, making them a more practical crop for the area since drought is often likely. With the addition of irrigation resources from the extensive canal and reservoir system surrounding Fort Morgan, The Western Sugar Company had the foresight to visualize vast fields of sugar beets across the desert-like plains of Morgan County.

In 1901 the Western Sugar Company built a factory in Loveland, Colorado and offered contracts to the local growers of the region. In the subsequent years, factories were built by other interests in Greeley, Longmont, Windsor, Eaton, and Fort Collins.[10] Each new factory quickly became the hub of the agricultural community in which it was constructed. On February 27, 1905 the Great Western Sugar Company was incorporated.[11] The details of the merger reported by the *Longmont Ledge*r are as follows:

> *The Great Western Sugar Company is the owner of numerous sugar factories in the northern district of Colorado, at least it controls the stock of several factories built by Mesars, Morey, and Boettcher of this city. The capitial stock of his company, which was organized in New Jersey several years ago is $20,000,000. The Colorado fee for filing is $30 for the first $50,000 of capitalization and 30 cents a thousand for each $1000 therafter. The object of the filing was to designate C.S. Morey as the company's agent in Colorado, and to name Denver as the place of principal business and location of offices in the state.*[12]

The Fort Morgan Improvement Association was formed in the early 1900s and conducted a campaign to educate farmers on the industry and secure a sugar mill for the area. In 1905 committee members paid a visit to the Great Western Sugar Company in Loveland in an effort to secure the construction of a factory in Fort Morgan.[13] The committee returned with positive news and successfully acquired a pledge from the company to build a factory under the following conditions: "First the improvement association had to meet a commitment of 1,500 acres of beets to be planted in 1905 and processed at the Greely factory. Then with a further guarantee of 3,500 acres in 1906 and 1907 the factory would be constructed."[14]

At first the local farmers were hesitant to convert their acreage for an unfamiliar crop and were not receptive to the contracts offered to them by the Fort Morgan boosters and commerce leaders including George Redfield, S.H. Shields, James Curry, and John Schoepte.[15] As the last day to sign acreage contracts approached, Fort Morgan Mayor J.B. Farnsworth "issued a proclamation to close all local businesses from 2 to 2:30 p.m. while everyone "talked sugar beets."[16] The acreage goals were subsequently secured.

With the contracts secured, the building process began and railroad tracks to the sugar factory site north of Fort Morgan started in the early months of 1906. The easily accessible railroad lines would give Fort Morgan farmers a distinct advantage over competitors when it came to bringing their crops to market, and provided the CB& Q with a reliable way to simulate development along their lines.

The construction of the sugar company office buildings and the factory foundation were overseen by E.J. Nugent, and W.S. Burrows of the Riter-Conley Manufacturing Co. Based in Pittsburgh, Riter-Conley owned the contract for the machinery and construction of the plant

and reported an estimated cost to the Great Western Sugar Company of $1,000,000.[17] From a community perspective the economic impact of growing sugar beets with a factory located in town was exponential. National trends had already shifted away from mining enterprises and been replaced with agricultural industries. As some Colorado communities withered and died in the transformation, Fort Morgan flourished and found sustainability. Irrigated land prices soared from $40 to $250 per acre. The first beet crop brought into the county close to one million dollars and the population grew by at least an additional 2,500 persons that first year.[18] In addition, the beet tops could be used for cattle and sheep feed after harvest and provided a substantial financial byproduct of the industry. The stage was now set for a long term relationship between the Great Western Sugar Company and the Fort Morgan area and all signs pointed to prosperity.

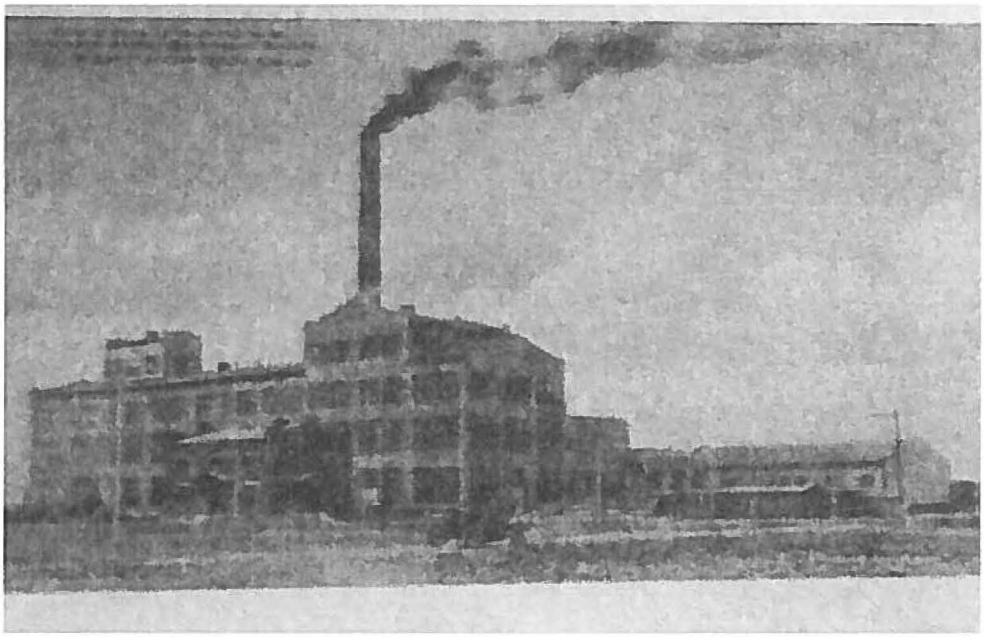
When in 1906 the *Fort Morgan Times* proclaimed the factory officially finished, it was undeniably one of the most anticipated events. The *Times* had played an integral part in bringing the factory to Fort Morgan and upon its completion held no reservations claiming their share of the credit of the achievement. The process from start to finish spanned the better part of three years and on December 27, 1906 the editor issued a story donning the accomplishments of those who supported the measures from the very beginning.[19] Witnessing the sugar beets float down the sluices to the eager workers on the factory floor was cause for celebration and the editor was quick to point out the doubters who had such little faith and stood in the way of progress. Scoffing at the idea of a $100,000 price tag associated with the Jackson Lake project, and the attempt to lure the Great Western Sugar Company into building a factory on site most residents were unable to justify the investment. "Oh, but you ought to

have seen the knockers knock, and heard the calamity howlers howl!"[20] "It was us, The Times proclaimed, in those long and weary years that reminded the people that the era of sugar beets was at hand, and the people of Fort Morgan might reap the benefits of that had always been found in communities with sugar beeteries."[21] Throughout its columns and on the streets, The Times reminded those who had quickly forgotten that they were among the few that had stood for change and were committed to the factory that would assure growth and prosperity. Along with the business owners, the paper had faced staunch criticism for their foresight in those formative years and it was now their time to bask in the glory of the factory's first days. Those once boisterous knockers as the paper referred to them were now "ashamed of themselves and joined the triumphal procession, headed by the Times, and the thing was done."[22] The factories capacity was 600 tons of guaranteed processed beets a day and it was anticipated that over 100 tons could be processed by the time operations were running smoothly.[23] "The first campaign lasted 41 days ending Feb 19, 1907 and nearly 17,000 tons of beets were sliced. In 1907, the campaign was 105 days long with 65,000 tons of beets sliced producing 160,000 bags of sugar, and in 1908, the campaign was 71 days long with 63,000 tons of beets sliced.[24] The Riter-Conely Mfg. Co. was credited with much of this success but special recognition has also been bestowed upon the contractors, growers, factory workers, and citizens of Fort Morgan.

Processing the sugar beets at the factory was the final stage of the operation. Producing the crop itself is a difficult, backbreaking, and labor intensive task. The investment of sugar beets is usually higher than other crops but the reward and financial returns are also greater. Hard work and long days for farmers was necessary, as it was the only way to yield success. The beet itself is resilient to the heat, wind, and cold but is very fragile and susceptible to all

weather elements prior to its emergence from the ground. Many seedlings never grow to maturity and die well before breaking the soil in which they are planted. To combat this dilemma, farmers often planted an abundance of seeds in shallow rows and applied generously to ensure the crop's survival. As the growing season progressed, the seedlings would need to be thinned out or they would perish from a lack of nutrients and proper spacing. Beets typically need to be planted 10 to 12 inches apart for optimum spacing and the most reliable way to accomplish this was to use a hoe and remove away the unwanted seedlings.[25] Weeding was necessary on multiple occasions to produce a clean and hearty crop and there was always a demand for laborers.

The Great Western Sugar Company understood the success of the industry would require a number of workers who had the fortitude to work in the sweltering summer heat and those willing to put in the necessary hours to accomplish the task. Contracts for growing beets were continually met with the objection that the farmer never could obtain the necessary help to care for them. Outside of the growers' families, the factories made it a priority to begin recruiting a work force that could ensure the



crops were harvested in a timely manner. Although shunned by most agricultural and railroad towns any other time of year, hobos during sugar beet harvest were welcomed and communities used them when labor was needed. Later families experienced in the cultivation of beets were recruited and could find steady employment throughout Weld and Morgan County. In 1902, arrangements made by Mr. Hoff, from Lincoln, Neb., organized the relocation of seventy five to one hundred and twenty-five families to Northeastern Colorado.[26] Anyone who desired help could sign contracts at the office of the sugar company, and if one farmer did not have the acreage sufficient to employ an entire family two or more farmers in the same neighborhood could join together to procure the necessary help.

Italian and Volga German families represented some of the largest nationalities recruited to Fort Morgan in the early years. "In 1909, it was estimated that almost 6000 Volga German immigrants came to Colorado to work in the sugar beet fields."[27] Later Japanese and Hispanic immigrants joined the work force throughout Colorado and western Nebraska. Today significant Hispanic populations can still be found in places like Greeley, Scottsbluff and Gering, Nebraska. The demographics of this early labor force have also had a lasting effect on Fort Morgan. Each group settled within the region and attempted to assimilate into the surrounding communities but often kept their own traditions and held tightly to their family's heritage. "The workforce grew further between 1910 and 1920 as beet acreage increased another 70 percent in Weld County and more than doubled in Morgan and Logan Counties."[28]

When it came time to harvest, the beet industry became a family effort. Schools, including Fort Morgan, generally closed during the harvest season so children who were old enough to work could participate and provide much needed manpower. The beets were first

lifted out of the ground by a beet puller and then the tops of the beet were cut off with a knife and piled off to the side, a grueling task indeed. Next, the piles of beets were shoveled by hand into wagons and transported to the mill. Once the harvested beets arrived at the factory, operators and chain-men assisted the operator and truck drivers and the scale personnel weighed the contents of each load and paid each farmer accordingly. The success of each harvest required experienced and hard-working individuals at each level of the operation and it became a community wide effort.

Life on the farm during those early days was without a doubt difficult and tested even the strongest family's strength. Each member of the family was expected to do their part and families in those days were just trying to get ahead. Lesile Bernard of *Fort Morgan Times* interviewed Bill Wunsch a World War II Veteran and longtime resident of Fort Morgan, for the article "Memories of Life on the Farm; Hard Work and Long Days." Wunsch was often interviewed by the *Fort Morgan Times* about farming in Morgan County and his Volga German heritage.

Wunsch spoke about the early days of life on the farm as being *"back-breaking work."*[29] The beets were dug, topped and taken to the factory with only the aid of animals and humans. All farm equipment was horse-drawn "Remember there was no tractor,"[30] he said. Wunsch of Volga German descent went on to say that his family had a terrible language barrier. He remembered his father picked up the language pretty well by interacting with other local residents, but "the children did not have the chance to learn in school, because they were working during the beet harvest and planting season."[31]

Modern conveniences and farm machinery have made life easier, but for generations assimilation for Volga Germans like the Wunschs' was difficult as they continued to retain their native language, and ethnic customs. Established groups in Morgan County often spurned newcomers, but by the 1980s there were few German families that had not married into other ethnic groups.[32]

Getting the beet harvest to the factory for processing posed an additional challenge for both the Sugar Company and the growers. In the early stages of production the farmers hauled their crop directly to the plant themselves. Most of the contracted acreage was located within five miles of the facility. As the acreage was increased, the factory built receiving stations farther away to facilitate the region's expansion. Each grower wanted these stations as close to their farms as possible in order to lower their costs and accelerate the harvest.[33]

Railroads also played an integral role in the transportation phase of production. To increase their own profits the railroad companies sold desirable land near their lines and transported the sugar beets, lime, and other necessary supplies for the beet refining process. Farmers used the convenience of the railroads to not only haul their crops but also took advantage of the grain and livestock produced on their farms. The beneficial relationship between all parties lasted well into the 1970s, at which time large semi-trucks were able to compete and eventually dominate the railroad in freight shipping rates.[34] Today Interstate 76 and Hwy 34 connect Fort Morgan to Metro Denver and the city of Greely, which meets the general commercial needs for a variety of its industries. Rail service provided by Burlington Northern and Union Pacific provides 21 freight trips daily, and the center of the county is within 60 minutes of Denver International Airport. Based on the extensive transportation network

surrounding Fort Morgan and Northeastern Colorado, the region has been able to capitalize on its expanding international presence and is becoming a gateway to major cities.

Other opportunities also emerged for savvy farmers to capitalize on additional income and increase their earning potential. The Great Western Sugar Company offered farmers the opportunity to offset their costs by using their own trucks after harvest to transport the beets that had been piled at the various receiving stations around the area.[35] Trucks ran round the clock regardless of the weather, until the entire harvest was hauled to the factory. The transportation contracts with farmers to re-haul the beets remained in effect until the Great Western Sugar Company filed for bankruptcy in 1985. The company was then purchased by the sugar firm Tate and Lyle and changed its name to the Western Sugar Company, and its first major move was to establish their own trucking division. Farmers lost the revenue from operating their own trucks but the company created employment for load operators and truck drivers. In 2002, more than 1000 sugar beet growers purchased the company, creating the grower owned cooperative.[36]

Beef

Sustainable growth for Fort Morgan continued when the community made the decision to diversify and enter into a new market of industry. The prominence of cattle and ranching operations pre-dates the rise of the town of Fort Morgan. Most travelers saw very little potential in the arid region before the construction of the canals and Abner Baker's vision of a town. During the 19th century, buffalo wandered in great numbers across northeastern Colorado living off the resources that the plains provided. It was only after these magnificent animals were hunted to near extinction that the thought of raising cattle in the region became a possibility. "The potential for raising cattle on the eastern plains was discovered as early as 1859 when weak animals left by prospectors in the winter were found alive and well the next spring."[37] The land surrounding the South Platte exhibited prime grazing lands and it was not long before ranchers began moving their herds into the area.

Most of the herds were left to graze freely on the abundant prairie grasses near the river and each spring the local ranchers would round up their stock, brand their calves, and drive them back to their home ranges and prepare them for sale. The process of rounding up the cattle and separating a herd from that of another man became an ordeal all of its own. The rise of the quintessential cowboy transcended the eastern plains as the hired hands went out on horseback and sometimes spent days sorting through the cattle and driving them back to the home base. Brush, located just ten miles from Fort Morgan became a major shipping point for cattle once the Burlington Railroad was completed and became fully operational in 1882. Other destinations and cattle trails could be found running as far south as Oklahoma and Texas.

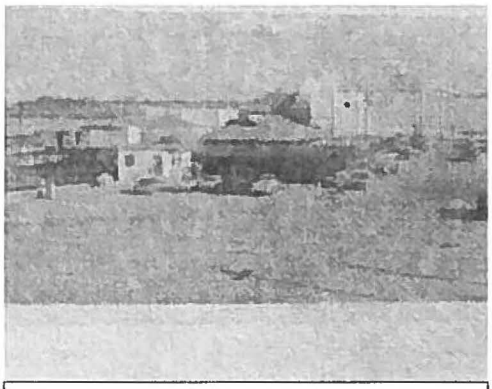
Most of the cattle ranchers at this time did not permanently establish their businesses and homes in northeast Colorado, and instead chose to live in some of the more established cities such as Greely, Denver, or Cheyenne, Wyoming. John Iliff however, was one of the few men who built his cattle empire on the lands just to the north of Fort Morgan. In the early 1860s Iliff began buying up the sick or injured livestock of passing emigrants and used the lush grasslands of the area to cheaply fatten up the cattle before shipping them off to market. As he successful increased his profits Iliff then bought 750 head of cattle from an Oklahoma cattle king by the name of Charles Goodnight. Iliff purchased "6000 more in 1868 and three years later, Goodnight delivered another 25,000-30,000 to Iliff."[38] In a matter of only a few short years, Iliff was considered the cattle king of northern Colorado and ranch houses could be seen all along the South Platte River. His rise to prominence even caught the attention of the *New York Times,* and the paper published a piece entitled "The Cattle King of the West," describing Iliff's cattle empire:

> *Iliff had amassed a huge herd, but he also controlled much of the grazing lands in northeastern Colorado in a triangle from Julesburg to Denver to Cheyenne. But it wasn't just the amount of land or the size of his stock that made him successful, Iliff controlled the land by controlling the water on the range. Iliff purchased only 15,558 acres of land, but he monopolized the water rights along the South Platte. Other ranchers could operate only if he granted them access to streams and ponds. By owning the best of the scarcest, Iliff became the effective proprietor of far, far more. He was also a very good businessman and stock trader. He sold to builders of the Union Pacific, government depots and agents in charge of Indian reservations. His stock also found its way to prime eastern markets, selling for top-dollar.*[39]

Iliff ultimately became ill and died of a gall bladder obstruction in 1878. At the time of his death, he had amassed an empire like nothing ever seen in Colorado. His wife, Elizabeth, continued the business after her husband's death and became one of the wealthiest women in

Colorado and was termed the "Cattle Queen,"[40] before eventually entrusting the families' ranches to the Snyder brothers who owned large ranches themselves near Brush.

With the expansion of the railroad by the late 19th century, the days of cattle drives and cowboys were numbered. The future for the cattle industry was still bright but now smaller operations could also find success herding their cattle to the nearest railroad to be shipped anywhere across the country.



(Sterling Beef: Courtesy of Fort Morgan

The operation and dominance of huge cattle ranches once employed by Iliff and other cattle kings now faced competition from others who could find profitable ways to use the pastureland. As the times changed, so too did Fort Morgan, and in the coming century the community found its own way to commercially capitalize on the cattle market.

As transportation networks continued to increase in the coming decades, transporting to market became less of a burden than in the past. Realizing that shipping cattle elsewhere was a lost opportunity for the community of Fort Morgan, the local residents began contemplating building a beef processing plant of their own. Establishing a plant in Fort Morgan would prove to be crucial in fostering the economic development of the community.

Gene Mapelli of Mapelli Meat Co. Institutional Distributing Inc. in Denver[41] articulates the excitement surrounding the idea of a beef plant in Fort Morgan in a piece produced by the *Times* in 1966 and he wrote the business venture could be sustainable given the established cattle industry in the surrounding area. Mapelli proclaimed at a local Morgan County Cattlemen's Association that "All segments of the cattle industry are going to experience the

greatest years of our lives for steadier growth and more profits."[42] Mapelli went on to state "By 1980 which is only a few short years, the country will increase in population by 55-60 million people, and one dollar out of every four dollars will be spent on meals outside of the house. Beef consumption is getting bigger each year." [43]It was an astute observation on Mapelli's behalf and with the demand for beef on the rise, the optimistic cattle investors set in motion additional ways to increase their profits.

The end result was the formation of Fort Morgan Dressed Beef Inc. which held its open house on April 24, 1966, followed by the first processing of beef on June 10.[44] Fred Hartman became the president of the dressed beef firm and during its initial startup days the firm employed 80 people, bought one million pounds of meat per month, (the equivalent to 13,000 head of high choice) and prime dressed beef per year, 95 percent of which was Colorado beef cattle.[45] One of the greatest attributes that the company offered its consumers was the Colorado sirloin steak created to compete against steaks found in various restaurants across the country advertised as New York or Kansas City steaks. For years, these steaks had been from cattle born, fed, and slaughtered in other states and shipped into the big cities. As the local papers proclaimed "By virtue of the company's creation it will buy enough Colorado beef to process, scientifically age, hand cut, package and sell four million of these Colorado sirloin steaks throughout the United States by the end of 1966."[46]

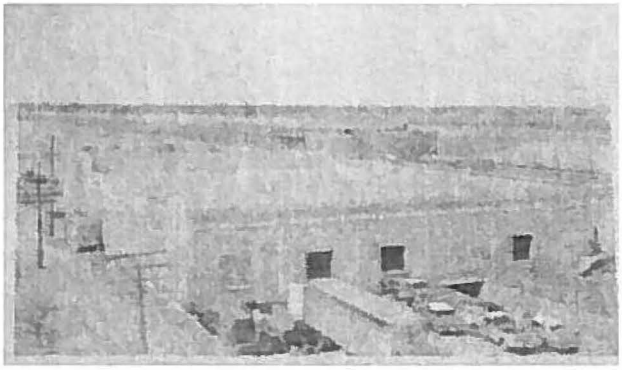
Attracting processing facilities in the Midwestern states had become a popular strategy for rural communities by this time and was seen as a good fit for agriculturally dependent regions such as Fort Morgan. The industry was also seen as an essential provider for low-skilled labor and new immigrants providing employment opportunities for residents in the local

community. As Fort Morgan Dressed Beef Inc. emerged into the beef processing business they made tremendous strides during the first years and gained the interest of bigger outside prospective buyers. By 1968 they had nine potential buyers and on April 30, 1968, were purchased by American Beef Packers of Oakland, Iowa for $450,000 at a public auction.[47] The new owners almost immediately began remodeling the plant and looked to expand its current operational capacity.

By June of 1968 the daily kill rate was up to 225 head of cattle, and by October the installation of larger coolers brought the capacity up to 1,000 a day.[48] The remodeling efforts would cause a temporary shutdown of the facility for the better part of the year but operations resumed in September 1969. By the time the plant was up and running again the facility had almost quadrupled in size and the work force increased to approximately 375 people by 1970.[49] The plant continued to achieve at a high level for the next few years despite a beef price freeze in 1973 and a nationwide truck strike in 1974. By 1975 though, the American Beef financial situation had reached a breaking point. The firm was forced to file for a debt-payment arrangement under Chapter 11 of the Bankruptcy Act Jan 7, 1975 and the local plant was closed in the midst of another expansion project aimed at installing additional coolers.[50] The firm's management personnel was accused of buying cattle with bad checks, despite gaining national recognition and being labeled by Fortune magazine as "The youngest of giants with sales of $147 million in the year ending June 1, 1968."[51]

Later found guilty of fraud charges, American Beef was forced to sell the company on Nov 19, 1975 to a group headed by Tom Cooper and the Morgan, Weld, and Washington county feeders.[52] The selling price of the company at the time was $5 million it opened under new management on Feb 6, 1976.[53] Other changes soon followed and by January 1979, the plant was instructed to break part of the carcass production into portions and package them for shipment at a different facility. Plans for a merger between Morgan Colo. Beef and Sterling Colo. Beef was also announced. A partnership was brokered between the two facilities shortly after and the Fort Morgan facility took over the breaking plant and the Sterling plant controlled the packaging and shipping departments.

The two plants worked alongside one another for the next three years until 1983 when Cal Humphrey of Sterling Colo. Beef, Pepper Packing of Denver and Chilewich of New York City, bought out the Fort Morgan Plant under a firm named Sterling Beef Co.[54] The Fort Morgan plant would remain part of the Sterling Beef operation until the company sold to Excel Corp in 1989, now known as Cargill Meat Solutions.



Since that purchase, Cargill has owned and operated the Fort Morgan facility and currently employs approximately 2,100 people. A number of employees have been with the company since the most recent purchase of the plant back in 1989 and although the name has changed, Cargill's 25 plus year commitment has added benefit to the Fort Morgan and Northeastern Colorado economies. Over the years the plant has invested in its infrastructure by rebuilding the kill floor, building new coolers, and redesigning the hold yards,

among other updates. The beef industry for Fort Morgan has created job opportunities, increased public revenues, and provided stimulus for further development in areas such as retail trade and services. Cargill's commitment to the local area has established a positive long-standing relationship with the local community and ensures the beef industry's future in Fort Morgan remains firmly intact.

Fort Morgan's industrial diversification from beets to beef has promoted the communities' growth and development throughout the twentieth century. Economic diversity has insulted Fort Morgan from the boom-and-bust cycles experienced by other frontier towns. Benefitting from railroad and interstate access have also allowed Fort Morgan to achieve unprecedented prosperity and enabled itself to withstand future economic peaks and valleys.

(Cargill Facility 2016: Fort Morgan Times)

Diversity

With Jackson Lake completed in 1905 and the Great Western Sugar Company's construction of a large factory in 1906, the once sleepy little town was awakening by the early twentieth century. Main Street businesses were beginning to accumulate and during this period, the town developed a city park as well as a water works and electric generation plant. An opera house, court house, sewer system, the City Hall, and the Carnegie Library soon followed.

One of the most significant contributions to Fort Morgan's earliest days was the diversification of immigrants arriving in the community. The cultural diversity that exists to this day demonstrates a unique aspect making Fort Morgan different from other frontier towns. Greater cultural and ethnic backgrounds became evident during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Most of the original inhabitants to Morgan County were of English, Irish, and Scottish decent,[55] and the diversified population gave way to different ideas and lifestyles. The largest groups of immigrants during this period were primarily Germans from Russia. These people immigrated to the United States during the drought and famine in Russia during the 1890's, coming in search of a more prosperous life. These German people moved to Northeastern Colorado primarily to raise sugar beets, while still others moved west after hearing stories of opportunities from relatives who wrote back. Later, Mexican-Americans were brought in to weed crops and a handful of Danes and Scandinavians settled in the areas surrounding Fort Morgan and Brush. After the internment camps during World War II closed several Japanese-Americans also settled in the area and most recently, East African Refugees.

The term "Volga German" is used because these particular groups of people were German in ethnic origin but settled in Russia along the Volga River dating back to 1760.[56] The German-born Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great, allowed thousands of Germans to settle the region and in return these individuals were given cultural autonomy as well as freedom from taxes and military service. Originally the Volga German people then immigrated to the United States and settled near Lincoln, Nebraska. With the construction of the sugar factories in Colorado, special trainloads of Volga German families were brought into Morgan County to work in the beet fields thinning and weeding the beets. "In 1905 the first train arrived with 865 men, women, and children ready to work in the fields."[57] Agents for the Germans promised them peace and prosperity on the Great Plains in communities like Fort Morgan and Brush and "employment in sugar beet fields, dreams of their own farms, and work in Denver and Pueblo drew them to Colorado from Nebraska and other states."[58] Slowly, more and more families opted to stay and settle in Morgan County rather than return to Nebraska and subsequently, convinced their friends and relatives to immigrate as well.

The opening of two sugar beet factories in Brush and Fort Morgan in 1906, created a high demand for hand labor. The work of growing and harvesting sugar beets in the early 20th century required a hardworking and industrious people, for which the Volga German

immigrants were accustomed. In 1909, 79,000 acres of beets were planted in the Fort Morgan and Brush area .[59] Colorado had officially become the leading beet sugar producing state in the country. The immigrants soon found a new home in the local communities and "of the 10,724 beet workers in northern Colorado, 5,870 were Germans from Russia."[60]

Upon signing contracts with the Great Western Sugar Company a majority of Volga German people began working in the fields in April when the beets were planted and they worked through the harvest season typically ending by the middle of November. Thinning the beets to assure a good stand was the first step in the process. After thinning, the workers completed two hoeings to kill any weeds and finally the harvest took place which required pulling the beets out of the soil and removing their leaves. "For all of this labor, a family could earn $1000 to $1500 or $25 per acre, enough to sustain them until the following year."[61] It was backbreaking work but the Volga German people found it satisfactory and remained in the area. When the harvest was completed, many adult males found employment in the factory or working for wealthy townspeople, while the women worked as housekeepers and the children attended school.

A majority of the Volga German who came to Fort Morgan settled in the neighborhoods just south of the Great Western Sugar Factory, between what is today Main Street and West Street. If they lived outside of town they typically settled on farms, living in buildings provided by a farmer.[62] Although they acclimated themselves easily enough to the agricultural work of beet farming, assimilation into the community was another story. Like most new immigrants, "many Americans disapproved of the Germans because of their large families of sometimes eight to ten children, their child labor practices, and their ability to manage money."[63] Local

residents viewed the Germans as an economic threat, inferring that German children were worked too hard from a young age. People complained that this gave the Germans an unfair advantage compared to their American equivalents. Newspaper articles highlighted the struggles of American workers competing with immigrant labor at low wages and how poorly they treated their children, going as far as suggesting "the situation of white slavery has become a problem."[64] Many Germans also could not speak English, making the assimilation process within their local communities extremely difficult. Consequently, German families typically kept to themselves focusing on their work, their church, and socializing among their own kind.[65] Since they also almost exclusively interacted with their own people and remained in their social groupings, they were often victims of prejudice and discrimination. Many of the local townspeople found them standoffish and thus called them "Roosians."[66]

One particular incident in 1906 brought the unstable relationship of these new people to a critical point. A Volga German family was working in a beet field of a farmer outside of town, when the farmer's son accidentally fell into an irrigation ditch and drowned. The mother in the Volga German family attempted to save the child but was unable to do so. The farmer in his grief blamed the mother and her family for not trying hard enough to save his son. The farmer proceeded to the family's home and beat the father with a horse whip, ordered them off the property, and warned them that if they returned he would kill them.[67] The family went into town attempting to secure an arrest warrant for the farmer, but the sheriff refused both the warrant and the request to accompany the family back to the farm to secure their property. It appeared to be an act of discrimination but having no other alternatives, the family returned

without the aid of law enforcement. Once they arrived the farmer, still visibly upset, shot and killed the father of the Volga German family.[68]

The entire incident enraged the Volga German people of the community. The Volga German people insisted the violence could have been avoided if the sheriff had accompanied the family to their home and arrested the farmer when the incident was first brought to his attention. It became the belief that equality in the eyes of the law was not enforced and ultimately led to the tragic events of that day. After the murder, the sheriff eventually arrested the farmer, but the animosity between the immigrants and native settlers of Fort Morgan reached an all-time high. The tensions only increased when the local newspaper printed that a "mob was forming and that they were going to break into the jail."[69] The militia was called in to surround the jail and prevent the hanging of the defendant, but no such mob ever came to fruition. Most of the hostility only existed through conversations and the overreaction on behalf of the townspeople did little to calm the situation. It was not until the "newspaper printed an apology to the Volga German and admitted that they were largely responsible for the situation by passing on unfounded rumor,"[70] that things around town returned to a state of normalcy. The location of the trial was eventually changed and justice was handed down but prejudices on both sides had been established in the minds of many.

As time went on and the community had time to heal and the incident became a distant memory, but the German's continued to face discrimination due to their linguistic, religious, and racial differences. Americans became very xenophobic during the World War I era, especially after the U.S. joined the war effort. There was tremendous suspicion and public condemnation towards people of German backgrounds. Signs went up around town saying

speak American, long-haired Germans were not allowed in some restaurants, and Germans felt they had to participate in a book burning conducted by local officials to demonstrate patriotism.[71] In school German children were segregated from their peers, had separate recesses, and experienced harassment from the other children. At one point, the city of Fort Morgan even passed an ordinance for a period of ten weeks, September-November 1918, forbidding German to be spoken in public.[72] In an effort to avoid trouble many German families changed their names to more Anglic sounding names, but fostering a new atmosphere of cooperation between Germans and earlier residents remained difficult.

Despite the discrimination the Volga German stayed, learned English, continued to send their children to school, and instilled a legacy of pride and accomplishment. Today, German families have married with other ethnic groups, and their descendants have completely assimilated into the cultural identity of American society. Their early presence in the growth of Fort Morgan has proved to be a cornerstone of the community's history and has greatly impacted the cultural richness of the area and the city's identity.

People of Latino origin have immigrated to Colorado and along the South Platte River since Spanish explorers first arrived from Santa Fe. Long before Colorado became a state Mexicans-Americans farmed the land and in the 1870s, a Mexican shepherd "corralled his flock in the ruins of the old fort. Cowboys employed, by early ranchers, were also of Mexican descent."[73] The movement of Mexican families back and forth across the U.S. border has had a long history based on the economic and political conditions existing between the two countries. In the early 20th century a revolution in Mexico, unemployment, and a labor shortages in the

U.S. caused by WWI created a viable opportunity for many Mexican workers to find sustainable jobs in America.

Unlike some of the other workers the Hispanic labor forces were more migratory. They would work in Colorado thinning beets each spring and then head to California to harvest fruits or vegetables.[74] Sarah Deutsch's *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* does a marvelous job exploring Hispanics migration as a way of dealing with the intrusions of Anglo settlers. The development of a regional community was a necessary strategy outlined by Deutch and contends that the frontier was "a zone and a process."[75] Frontier communities like Fort Morgan developed a growing Latino presence as a result of the "changing dynamics of the intercultural frontier." [76]

In the early 1900s, Fort Morgan and the Great Western Sugar Company recruited Mexican families to work in the sugar beet fields. By 1922, the sugar company sold lots and building materials, to their Mexican laborers.[77] "The Mexican Colony" was built on company land and twenty families "of the better class of Mexicans," were to become the nucleus of a permanent community."[78]

When the Great Depression swept across the country in the 1930s, the demand for foreign agricultural workers ceased and thousands of migrant Mexican families were sent back home. WWII opened the borders to the U.S. once again and provided the growers with the resource of cheap contracted Mexican laborers. The Mexican workers were in high demand because they were willing to take lower wages than other ethnic groups because the wages they received were still of a higher salary than many skilled workers in Mexico. These factors lead to the higher employment rates of Mexican laborers, but Mexican workers faced more

than their fair share of injustices, violence, and discrimination at the hands of frustrated American born workers.

From the 1960's to the present, beef processing plants vigorously recruited Mexicans to their facilities. "In 1989, Cargill purchased the beet plant in Fort Morgan and hired workers from Mexico, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Puerto Rico, making Cargill the largest employer of Hispanic workers in Morgan County."[79] The Hispanic culture is still a vibrant factor shaping Fort Morgan and by the 21st century, a number of Hispanic citizens have opened businesses and offer a variety of services throughout the community.

Many of the first Japanese immigrants originally came to Colorado in the late 1880s and 1890s finding employment in the coal mines and working for the railroads. A majority of these individuals settled in Denver and immediately faced hostility, violence, and discrimination being scorned as "yellow peril." With the development of the sugar beet industry in Morgan County, a need for laborers in the field arose and provided an alternative to the jobs in the railroad industry and coal mines.

The animosity towards Japanese Americans also reached rural areas, however some communities on the Great Plains were more accepting than others of the Japanese Americans. Shingo Nakamura's of Sterling, Colorado recounted his personal experience in Bill Hosokawa's *Colorado's Japanese Americans: From 1886 to the Present,* "As the result of the distrust that I sensed, we tried to live unobtrusively. We lived quietly and made sure that we went to church service every Sunday."[80] Nakamura went on to state:

> *Since we had interacted with our neighbors for many years, we began to see each other as people who lived in the same community. Among those people were a goodly number who had Italian and German ancestry. I took*

the attitude that we all worked under the Stars and Stripes, and therefore we were no different from the others nor they from me.[81]

By the late 1920s the Volga German, who had already built a reputation of being excellent beet laborers were demanding higher wages for their services. As a result the Great Western Sugar management searched for alternative sources of labor. The company began hiring predominately male Japanese Americans who were willing to accept lower wages than their Volga German counterparts and proved that they too could handle the strain and responsibilities of beet workers. "According to GWS records, the average Japanese beet worker in Colorado cultivated approximately thirteen acres of beets per season, compared to seven acres by a Volga German worker (Most of the Japanese workers were single men while the Volga German worker included children and women)."[82] The push factor for many Japanese was coming from the land policies in California that made it impossible for Japanese to own land.

Records from the 1920s indicate the largest number of arrivals of Japanese Americans into the county, with census records indicating a total population of 1,419 residents in the area termed "People of Other Races" who were not "White' or "Mexican."[83] With the severe drought, dust bowl, and Depression affecting Morgan County in the 1930s, the statistics significantly dropped during that decade.

After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the U.S. entry into World War II, Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 initiated the relocation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast or the impending imprisonment in concentration camps. "In the face of widespread anti-Japanese sentiment, Colorado's governor, Ralph Carr, stood alone in welcoming them to Colorado. "[84] Evicted from his home in California, Japanese-American

George Kato, relocated to Fort Morgan in 1944 and commented on Ralph Carr's announcement in the following, "As I understand, the late Governor Ralph Carr had made a statement at that time that he felt he shouldn't keep Japanese out of Colorado. I interpret that as more or less that I am welcome."[85]Those who already resided in Morgan County were predominantly farm laborers. A majority of Japanese-American families adapted very well and had positive relationships with their fellow citizens.

The Japanese in Northern Colorado, like most areas of the country during this time, were often labeled as "Japs" years after the war and faced discrimination throughout the duration of WWII. "In later years some of the grandchildren said they dreaded the discussion of Pearl Harbor Day at school, and felt everyone thought because they were Japanese they had something to do with WWII."[86] As the younger generations became more educated they often moved away to places like Denver or other urban centers around the country for better paying jobs and more affluent neighborhoods. The Japanese American population has continued to decline since the 1950s and today only a handful of families remain in Morgan County.

The workforce demand of Fort Morgan in the agricultural sector of the community has been fulfilled by immigrant laborers for years. The majority of laborers in the 20th century were of Latino heritage, but by the mid-2000s, federal policies began to dictate the modern employment practices. Fort Morgan, up to this point, was outside the realm of U.S. refugee resettlement policies but "East Africans had been resettled in the U.S for decades and were about to emerge as an employment authorized alternative to the old system of hiring Latino immigrants."[87] Cargill, which offered the best available employment opportunity, became the most viable option for some East African refugees.

Like those of previous generations, local residents were skeptical of the newly introduced demographic changes and "this new wave of immigration to the area brought new challenges as residents adjusted to unfamiliar cultures and amplified language access issues."[88] Providing one of the most valuable resources to all of the residents of Fort Morgan was the One Morgan County (OMC) organization that focused on immigration integration throughout the county. In its annual report the OMC noted that the refugee population represented the countries of Burundi, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iraq, Morocco, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, and other African nations. The Somali Refugees represented an estimated 90+ % of the local refugee population.[89] Another factor of consideration for the local residents with the arrival of the refugees was the expressed fear of Islam that many of the Somalians practiced. Previous immigrant groups were primarily Christian, and common religious beliefs could be identified and shared with these groups. In the wake of 9/11, "the Somali refugees were met with attitudes towards radical Islam, and were seen as too similar to known enemies of the U.S."[90]

To overcome the distrust and tensions between the local townspeople and the new arrivals, a collective effort to assimilate the refugees was put in place. "Representatives from law enforcement, media, nonprofits, schools and other sectors worked with refugees to overcome the challenges through various programs and relationship-building opportunities."[91] Cargill, one of the biggest supporters, purposefully worked towards bringing together a diverse workforce and a Workplace Education program partnership between the factory and Morgan Community College (MCC) was located onsite.

As the local community slowly embraced the Somali refugees, they began to experience their traditions, food, and culture. "The Somali cuisine and other traditions were catalysts for

Somali entrepreneurs to establish local retail stores offering clothing, home furnishings, food staples, Halal (religiously permissible) meat and other commodities. Stores and gathering areas were created on the 200 block of East Kiowa Avenue and the 400 block of East Railroad Avenue."[92]

The arrival of the East African refugees presented many unresolved questions about the impact on Fort Morgan and it is still an ongoing story with many historical implications. The significance is an undeniable factor when approaching rural immigrant integration, and the value in honoring heritage and diversity. In an era when the U.S. has many questions surrounding immigration and political correctness, Morgan County has stepped to the forefront and demonstrated that cultural diversity can successfully coexist and the evolution of America as a 'melting pot' is ongoing.

CHAPTER FOUR.

Remaking the West:

The Great Depression

In previous economic depressions, farmers were usually safe from the severe effects of a depression because they could at least feed themselves. Unfortunately, during the Great Depression, the Great Plains were hit hard with both a drought and horrendous dust storms, creating what became known as the Dust Bowl. Due to the high level of unemployment, and the impact that the Great Depression had on the economy, this is often seen as a time when government intervention in the economy and society became more prominent or important. The conditions facing Fort Morgan coincided with the national trends for agricultural communities, but Fort Morgan's response differed from other western communities faced with apparently similar circumstances.

The Depression for most of the country began well before the stock market crash of 1929 when farm prices began plummeting. Too many crops were grown worldwide and demand fell sharply the next three years. In Morgan County "A bushel of wheat that sold for $2.94 in 1920 sold for only 30 cents in 1932."[1] Fort Morgan experienced its fair share of suffering and destruction as a result throughout the 1930s. A number of local farms were repossessed and businessmen as well as professionals had to turn to bartering and trading services and goods in order to survive.

Despite the national crisis the stock market crash had caused, local media coverage surrounding Fort Morgan only hinted at the hardships endured by its local residents. Fort Morgan disposition instead was optimistic. Local news highlighted the first showing of a "talkie"

film, and Fort Morgan claimed itself the "Sugar Bowl of America" in a brochure produced and distributed by the Chamber of Commerce. On a national scale, like most cities Fort Morgan focused on air flight events including Charles Lindberg, Germany's Graf Zeppelin, and Frank Hawk's journey from New York to Los Angeles and back in a record time of just over 36 hours.[2]

Other items of note in the local papers during 1929 included Fort Morgan County's first air circus with acrobats and passenger hops. Buck Jones the great Western star, made an appearance during a big four-ring circus at American Legion Park and there were a number of sightings involving illustrious individuals such as Billy Sunday, John Philip Sousa, Babe Ruth, and Al Capone, who were driving through the area during the year.[3] The only mention of banks was the notation that in Florida '23 banks had closed in two weeks.' Local merchants purchased full page ads urging people to pay their bills and 'make your word your bond,' as well as "You'll have no regrets if you pay your debts."[4]

In the midst of overwhelming negative headlines consuming most papers around the country Fort Morgan in large part had turned its attention to the positive events transpiring on both a local and national level. Even the *Denver Post* praised the community spirit surrounding Fort Morgan in the travel section of its paper. The Post referenced the city's ability to stay out of debt while building an electric plant valued at $315,000, a water plant worth $215,000, and a $300,000 high school all in a town of only 5,000 residents; suggesting travelers explore the local area and "run over to Fort Morgan only 79 miles to the northeast."[5] Unfortunately, as 1929 came to a close, Fort Morgan's optimistic approach to the impending Depression came face to face with one of its greatest fears; a beet harvest trapped in the frozen ground.

The weather had grown progressively colder by the first of November, and the county was hit by a foot of snow. Once the initial snow did melt it was far from an ideal situation and the Fort Morgan Times reported "hauling of beets has stopped, fields are a sea of mud..."[6] The weather continued to be uncooperative, dipping well below zero on a number of occasions. Reports stated "on Nov 7, seven inches of snow fell and about 35 percent of the beet crop remained in the ground."[7] The problematic situation facing Fort Morgan only escalated by the end of the month when half of the beet labor force decided to leave as wintry weather conditions continued. Migrant Mexican-American families made up a substantial portion of Fort Morgan's labor force during beet harvest, and by the early 1900's Great Western Sugar agents recruited Mexican families to work in Northeast Colorado.[8] Unable to harvest a sizeable portion of the crop workers decided to search for employment in neighboring agricultural communities or migrate to warmer regions of the country where fruit harvests were still underway.

Additionally the sugar beet factory in Brush experienced a breakdown resulting in a temporary shutdown of the facility. The remaining harvest efforts were severely hampered and although the local school board voted to close the high school for as long as possible to provide more labor, by December 1929 the Brush and Fort Morgan sugar factories were closed. The plants though promised to keep their facilities "warmed up" and ready to resume work on a 24 hours' notice if the circumstances surrounding the remaining fields changed.[9]

By January, the beets were still frozen in the ground. President of Farmers State Bank, J.H. Bloedorn, said "Due to a series of heavy snowstorms beginning on Oct. 28, thirty percent of the sugar beet crop is still frozen in the ground—resulting in an $800,000 loss."[10] By mid-January growers realized their remaining crops would be lost. In the following days, farmers

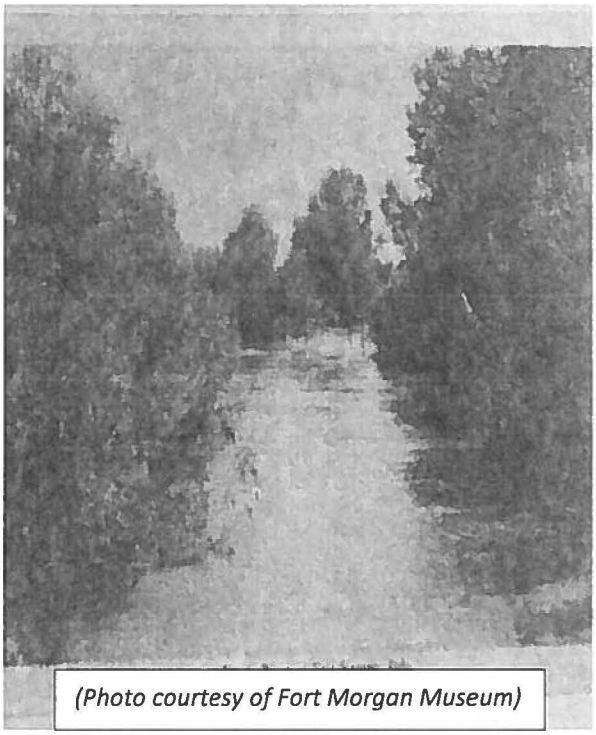
argued with the Sugar Company that they should not have to bear the entire loss. However Sugar company representatives told the growers that "the beets would not be salvageable and delivery to the company must be abandoned."[11] The harvest loss had a substantial effect on the community which had developed a great deal of its infrastructure around the industry. By April of 1930, farmers were once again out planting for the next year. The one positive point of the beet freeze of 1929 was that livestock was permitted to feed on beets still in the fields. Many individuals looked at the situation optimistically and realized other communities had suffered entire crop losses and recovered through a succession of good crops in the following years.

Drought in Morgan County, however, began in 1932, and the biggest difference this time was the loss of drought resistant buffalo grass that worked to hold down the topsoil. "Thousands of acres were eroded as the wind and soil blew across Morgan County, covering roads, fences, and farmsteads."[12] Many farmers were forced to plant and replant their crops multiple times because their crops blew out. Similar situations occurred elsewhere across the country, and were even more extensive in states to the east.

For Fort Morgan the peak of the drought occurred in 1934. Sand storms continued to blow across the plains and with pastures dried up, farmers quickly ran out of feed for their livestock. Morgan County received drought aid from the federal government in 1934, and "During the Depressions, farmers made underwear from gunny sacks, canned their own food and recycled everything. The federal government had to bail out farmers because they could not do it themselves."[13] During these troubling times huge dust clouds suffocated all life, and when storms blotted out the sun, some feared it may be the end of the world.[14] Circumstances such as these were similar for most towns in the Dust Bowl region of the country. Enduring the

Depression for agricultural towns depended on circumstantial factors sometimes out of communities' control.

Tragedy and devastation hit Fort Morgan again in the spring of 1935; in the form of a flood. During a time categorized by extreme drought in eastern Colorado, the South Platte River, on which the local structure and economy was based, rose to unprecedented levels and threatened the livelihood of those who lived and farmed along its banks. The combination of snowmelt from the Rocky Mountains and uncommonly heavy rains resulted in one of Morgan County's most destructive floods. According to Robert and Anna Baer, historians of Morgan County, four lives were lost in the flood of 1935 and water in some areas was reported as high as 10 feet.[15] On May 31, 1935 the water flooded the basement of the Fort Morgan power plant and the entire city lost power and light for over a day and a half.



(Photo courtesy of Fort Morgan Museum)

Homes and buildings were washed away and livestock were drowned and washed downstream by the current only to be recovered days later. More than 50 bridges in total were washed out in the county in the flood of 1935. The entire town of Wiggins was forced to evacuate and flooding occurred as far north as Brush and Hillrose. When recovery efforts were finally implemented, aid from the outside was much needed. The Great Western Sugar Company provided fresh water and supplies and local volunteers did what they could to rebuild damaged homes and farms. In a time where warning

systems were inadequate, the only practical way of informing people of the impending danger was through the use of telephone and word of mouth. The aftermath of the severe flood is still a topic of conversation today when the South Platte begins to rise in the early months of spring and the event has remained a defining piece of history when examining the effects of the Depression era on Morgan County.

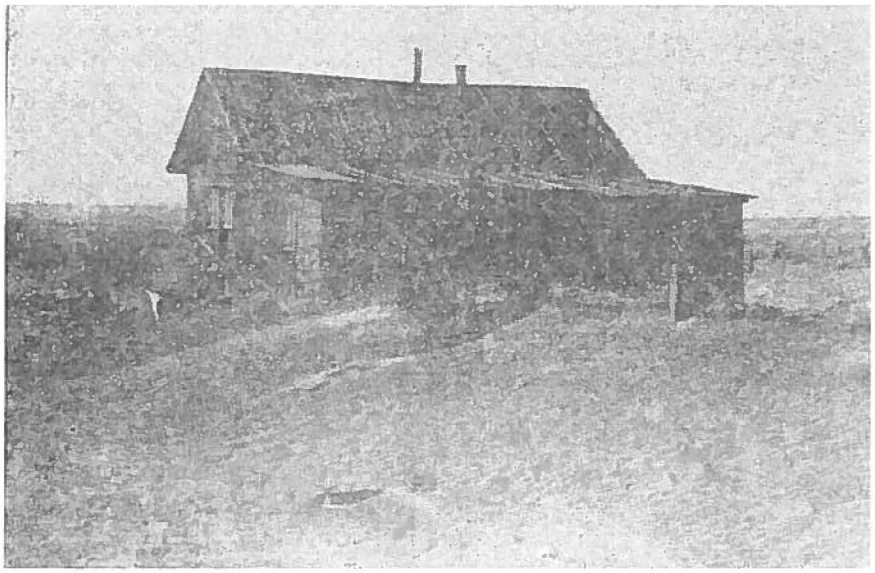
Throughout the 1930s Fort Morgan survived numerous setbacks, both financially as well as natural disasters. While the entire nation suffered from the Great Depression, the eastern plains of Colorado faced additional disasters including drought, dust storms, and a grasshopper plague that hit Fort Morgan in 1938 which resulted in the National Guardsmen distribution of truckloads of poison bran. President Roosevelt initially developed his New Deal programs to alleviate the suffering across the nation but quickly implemented special relief programs for agricultural areas such as Fort Morgan. The most significant government policies initiated were the Soil Conservation Service in Eastern Colorado: 1933-1942, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Public Works Administration (PWA)- Building a framework for Eastern Colorado: 1933-1942, and the Works Progress Administration (WPA)- Work for Everyone: 1935-1942.[16] The expectation of these agencies was to either improve or construct public works and build resources in the eastern plains counties of Colorado. Fort Morgan, among other communities, was the beneficiary of jobs created by the WPA, CCC, and PWA. Locally the fire and police buildings were erected, a county sewing project hired women to sew surplus materials into clothes for the needy, and the county commissioners took advantage of a federal construction grant from the PWA to match county funds toward the construction of a new courthouse to replace a 1907 building.[17] During the lean Depression years the town rallied around the

opportunities provided by FDR's New Deal and sought to restore the collapsed eastern Colorado economy.

The New Deal and other government programs that were implemented throughout the 1930s represented a new relationship between the Federal government and the West. Richard Etulain in his work *Beyond the Missouri: The Story of the American West* said it best stating: "More than any other force, the federal government, through its social and economic programs in the West, helped transform the region from its dependent colony of the East to a new and powerful region."[18] The Depression along with a variety of other economic and social situations had wreaked havoc on the country; and the people living in the West were hit especially hard. The New Deal represented a chance to recover, and provided some independence for those regions that had yet to break free of their bonds instituted by their eastern benefactors.

While the timing an`d severity of economic depression of the 1930's varied across the nation, Fort Morgan and its residents were able to endure the agricultural misfortunes and move out of the Great Depression with help from FDR's New Deal programs. The New Deal provided meaningful work and income for thousands of the nation's unemployed individuals and put countless eastern Coloradans back to work. FDR's relief programs not only provided economic relief but also launched soil conservation programs, major irrigation construction plans, and protected a number of buildings and public works facilities throughout Colorado, including Fort Morgan. The legacy of the New Deal is still hotly debated among economic historians, but its effect on Fort Morgan have had a considerable impact. The relief it provided to the local community still assists the area today and serves as a reminder of the tough times the 1930s invoked on everyone around the country.

While the common conception is that the Great Depression ended with the United States entry of World War II, the town of Fort Morgan united during those harsh years leading up to the conflict. Fort Morgan celebrated its 50th Anniversary, parades were held, and other festivities were organized on an annual basis and there were multiple occasions that were cause for celebration. The community found ways to brighten a desperate time and leaned on one another to survive the decade from 1929-1939. The support residents demonstrated for each other was becoming a common theme. The experiences of the local area coincided with the national trends for agricultural communities, however the local media coverage often focused on the recreational opportunities available and the pleasant way of life for those who chose to live here during the decade of the Great Depression.



This Associated Press picture was printed in the Fort Morgan Times on March 29, 1935. (*Fort Morgan Museum collection / Courtesy photo*

World War II

Events of the late 1930s, leading up led to World War II, were felt across the country and Fort Morgan was not exempt from the impact. As Hitler's army invaded Poland and war broke out, the United States did not initially join the European conflict but the Roosevelt administration moved toward rearmament. News of the arms build-up quickly reached northeastern Colorado and boosters from Colorado Springs to Fort Collins saw new wealth if the Federal government were to build defense facilities in the region. The boosters' efforts were successful in obtaining a Federal presence in the region, and as World War II commenced, the conflict stimulated the area economically. The bolstered economy though came with a hefty price. Approximately 140,000 Colorado men and women were mobilized and served in the armed forces throughout the war. Nearly 1,700 hundred men from Fort Morgan would be called to serve their country and 86 men were killed in the line of duty.[19] The 86 men who lost their lives while in service have been recognized as the Gold Star Boys of Fort Morgan and Corporal James D. Slaton a native of Fort Morgan earned a Congressional Medal of Honor.[20]

Socially and economically World War II enabled Colorado and the West to gain independence from the industrialized Northeast. Gerald Nash in his work *World War II and the West: Reshaping the Economy*, goes as far as stating the West before World War II was America's "Third World."[21] The shift for Colorado from colonial dependent, to economic front-runner was a result of the events that transpired during and after World War II.

At the onset of the war federal expenditures to the West reshaped the economy and allowed for diversification on an unprecedented scale. The range of federal expenditures included: "purchases for business and agriculture; wage and salary payments to civilians as well

as military personnel; investments in new manufacturing facilities; and disbursements for public projects such as dams, roads, and highways."[22] Great Plains communities like Fort Morgan which produced an abundance of agricultural products were the recipient of these benefit payments and capitalized on the abundant resources the state and local area possessed.

The state also witnessed a massive buildup of its military posts and ammunition facilities. The Denver Medical Depot by 1943 employed 20,000 people, Lowry Air Base and Fitzsimons Hospital expanded and trained over 55,000 people annually, and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company increased production by more than 250 percent in five years.[23] Town such as Pueblo and Colorado Springs during this era also drew federal attention and witnessed a dramatic increase in their populations given their access to railroads and extensive transportation networks. A majority of the military posts that were established at this time resided in the eastern part of the state where munitions and supplies could be easily transported across the nation. Although many of the military jobs that were created in Colorado during World War II catered to men, women also played a crucial role. Women across the country began to work in the factories while their husbands were away, and they organized and volunteered for a variety of war time campaigns while still taking care of their responsibilities at home.

During the war a number of POW camps housing German, Italian, and Japanese citizens were also established across the state including Morgan County. Some of the largest facilities were Camp Carson (12,000), Greeley (3000), and Trinidad (3,500).[24] The Japanese were treated with the least amount of dignity and during the war itself, the War Relocation Authority forcibly

removed more than 100,000 Japanese from the West Coast and placed them in the camps, due to the perceived threat to national security that they imposed. [25]The social ramification of these camps established in local communities created tension between the citizens of Colorado and the new inhabitants, but following the war many of the Japanese –Americans decided to stay in Colorado after they were released.

Tracing its military history back to the army fort established during the Indian Wars, Fort Morgan has a prominent past focused on a military presence in the area known as the "Morgan Flats." The first company that was assembled following the closure of the original fort in 1868 was Company "I", First Colorado Infantry of the National Guard, on the 20th day of March, 1886.[26] Records show that a number of companies were mustered into and out of service between 1886 and 1916 but remained Company "I" through World War I, in which they served overseas and were later reorganized in 1921 changing to a machine gun unit and designated Company "M" of the 157th Infantry.[27] Built in 1922, the state armory in Brighton served as the headquarters for Company "M" of the 157th infantry of Colorado National Guard.[28]

The National Guard transferred to Fort Morgan in 1928 and the unit was subsequently changed on February 1, 1929 to a rifle company and designated Company "K."[29] The company leading up to the onset of World War II emphasized rifle marksmanship and developed some of the most decorated rifle shots in the Colorado National Guard.

Shortly before the United States entrance into World War II the 157th Infantry was called to service after a presidential proclamation delivered in September, 1940, ordered them to join the 45th Infantry Division at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.[30] Preparing for action, the troops unloaded their gear and began their first stage of training at Fort Sill and remained there for the next five

months. The Infantry Division then moved to Camp Barkeley, Texas where they participated in some of their most extensive training. The 157th Infantry stayed at Camp Barkeley for over a year, before moving by train to Fort Devens, Massachusetts in April, 1942.[31] From there the men moved to Pin Camp, New York and by January 1943 were stationed at Camp Pickett, Virginia.[32] For the next six months the men would again have their skills and fortitude tested and "during that time, the troops practiced amphibious landings in maneuvers in Maryland and underwent extensive mountain training in western Virginia."[33] On June 3, 1943, the 157th time had come and the Infantry Division sailed from Hampton Roads, Virginia.

Like all local newspapers across the country, the *Fort Morgan Times* devoted the entire front page of the paper to the "War Today" and covered the events of the conflict both domestically and abroad. Keeping subscribers up to date on national issues affecting the nation took precedence over all other activities of note. War propaganda was regularly included (See Appendix F)[34] (See Appendix G), [35] urging local residents to do their part in the war effort, and patriotic editorials donned the headlines. For active duty soldiers from Fort Morgan receiving the local paper reminded them that their service was appreciated by the local community. While at Camp Berkeley, Avery Keller's correspondence letter back to *Fort Morgan Times* stated, "The members of "K" company from Fort Morgan certainly appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity in sending copies of their hometown paper."[36] Keller went on to note that the weather in Texas that time of year was beautiful, and no changes in program or activity had yet been announced.[37]

Those who served and were blessed enough to return to their families, came home with distinct experiences and stories involving their tours overseas. Like any war involving heavy

causalities, most men chose not to divulge the things they saw or were forced to do in order to make it back to their loved ones. Those who did reflect on their experiences often simply counted themselves lucky and fortunate to be alive.

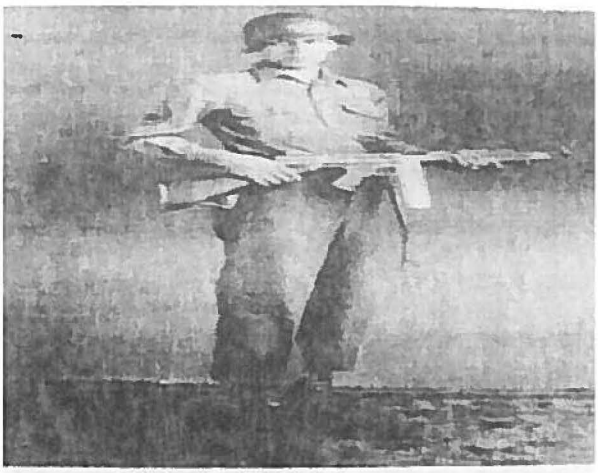
The following from Shirley Gilliland's *World War II and The People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado*, is one man's story of chance and survival.

Miracle Escapes from Death Make S-SGT. Otis M. Chartier Thinks He's "Just Plain Lucky"

Just plain lucky is the way S/SGT. Otis Chartier sums up the story of two miracle escapes from death experienced early in January while he was on combat duty in Germany.

His initiation in combat came on New Year's Eve when his whole company was ambushed by two machine guns.

"We were on an open road in the night," Sgt. Chartier writes his brother, Ray. "My squad was the one in lead, and the first burst got everyone in the squad except me. I hit the ditch that was supposed to be along the road, but there wasn't any. So I just lay there and played dead and prayed, with bullets hitting all around me. In a little while they figured we were all dead, and shot up two flares to make sure. I lay there about an hour until everything was quiet. So I figured I had better start moving or else get captured. I rolled in snow and got my overcoat well covered, and then started crawling. I had to crawl about 150 yards before I hit a ditch. That was when I found the rest of the company had pulled out about an hour before. "I really started moving fast in the ditch. The Jerries heard me and fired a few shots at the sound. I finally hit our guard about a mile down the road. I had just been behind our lines about 15 minutes when Jerries counter-attacked."[38]

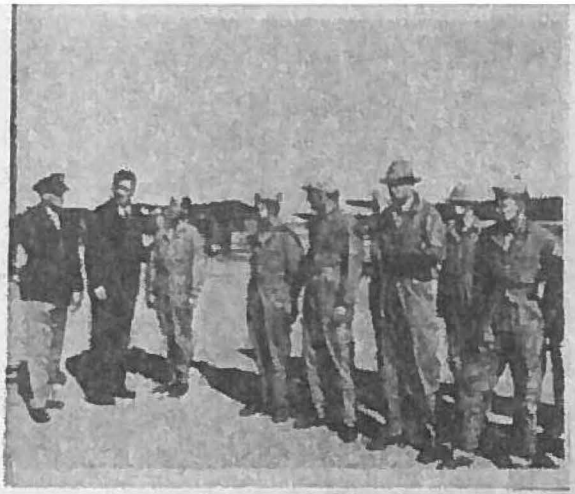


Otis M. Chartier

(Photo courtesy of Fort Morgan Museum

One of the most unique aspects about Fort Morgan's contribution during World War II was the establishment of a Glider Pilot Training facility that served as the host state for some of the earliest aerial combat training America could offer. In an age that saw aerial combat play an integral part in the success of the war, fighter pilots, bomber crews, transport crews, and ground specialists trained at various bases located in Colorado cities. "Fort Morgan was selected as one of four Army training centers for 3,000 men to receive primary flight and ground instruction to carry out their duties as glider pilots and participate in commando raids."[39]

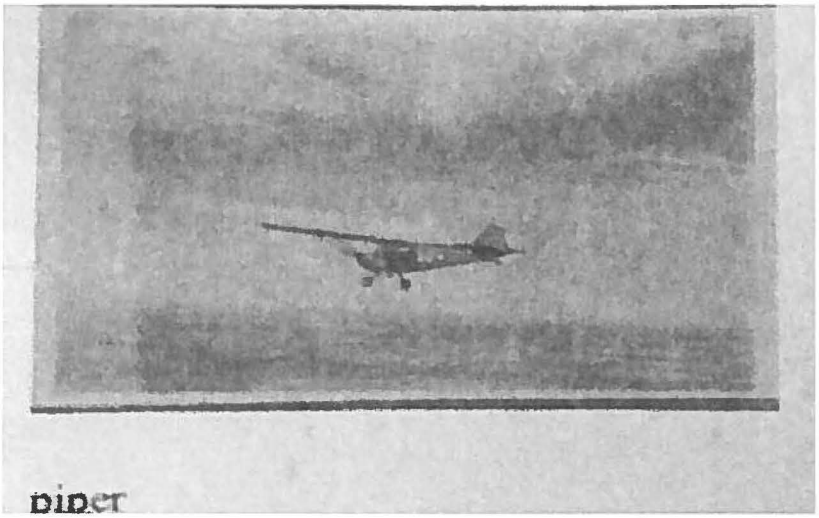
The first barracks for these soldiers were located in present day Fort Morgan Middle School before being relocated to the high school and finally the hospital. "The training consisted of 10 weeks of actual flying instruction, eight weeks of light plane instruction and two weeks in actual glider flying."[40] The school itself contained five training fields, with all of the locations within a 10 mile radius of the community. Flight training was a dangerous endeavor and although most trainees completed the course without incident, two crashes involving the death of three men occurred while the school was in operation.



gov johnson and glider students

A majority of the details about the program itself came from first person accounts published in *The Times*. John Snyder of the 1st Army Air Force Glider Training Detachment wrote about the

students at the pre-glider training school and referred to the Fort Morgan facility as "the country club of the glider pilots."[41] Snyder went on to say that in their free time bonehead stunts were quite common recalling one incident when, "one student made a forced landing—in a nearby farmer's backyard, and in keeping with Colorado hospitality, the farmer invited the student to eat with the family. The student readily accepted and more than that, he made a date with the farmer's daughter."[42] The instructors at the training school were typically civilians with the "necessary flying hours", and Plains Airways, Inc. worked with the army to turn out pilots. Civilian maintenance men, mechanics and dispatchers also worked alongside the Army, and each auxiliary field manned their own crews to minimize the congestion at the main field.



The pilot training facility operated just shy of one year, and the barracks were dismantled May 4, 1943.[43] Additional information regarding the glider pilot training in Fort Morgan can be found in the Fort Morgan Museum. An exhibit highlighting the history of Fort Morgan's pilot training includes a number of photographs of the trainees, a replica model of the aircraft used in training, and copies of a flight record and log of one pilot when he was in training in Fort Morgan and later in combat.

As the war raged on in the Pacific and across the European landscape, the conflict overseas was brought to the confines of Morgan County. With Roosevelt's Executive Order

9066 initiating the relocation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, local suspicions began to surface that the community would see an influx of new inhabitants. This suspicion arose from the fact that Morgan County had an abundance of agricultural jobs working in the fields and the common perception was that the federal government would encourage these Japanese Americans to take up residence within the local communities. "Local fears that a large number of coastal evacuees would locate in Morgan County were termed 'ridiculous' by the federal district attorney in Denver."[44] Given the social climate surrounding the Japanese after Pearl Harbor, the overwhelming opinion of the populace was typified by a series of highway billboards proclaiming "Japs keep going."[45]

The *Fort Morgan Times* also published a story from the local Farmer's Union that voiced their displeasure that Japanese might be brought to Morgan County to fill labor needs.

> *In reference to the Japs: Whereas it is rumored that the Japanese from the West Coast are to be transferred to the Rocky Mountain region as beet labor; The Spanish Americans have been satisfactory as laborers in the past and Mexico as our ally can furnish this type of labor if necessary, Therefore, be it resolved that the Farmers Union, Local No. 274, go on record as being absolutely against the transfer of these Japanese aliens on the West Coast to the beet growing section of the Rocky Mountain region.*[46]
>
> *J. Charles Parker, President.*
> *J.R. Sergeant, Secretary.*

By April 3, 1942 eleven cars with Japanese evacuees had been cleared by local officers carrying papers and heading farther north to settle in Sterling.[47] Local authorities stated "The only Japs emigrating now are those who received travel permits before the Sunday deadline fixed by the Army out of the coastal region. There is no reason to expect a sizeable influx from now on."[48] Once the Japanese were cleared to relocate it became the responsibility of local officers to check on the families and ensure that they had the proper paperwork. The Fort

Morgan Police Department announced they would "appreciate the cooperation of the Fort Morgan citizens in notifying them when Japanese families moved into Fort Morgan so they could be checked immediately."[49] The Japanese were informed of what was expected of them when approached by officers and were expected to have their travel cards on them at all times. As the war dragged on the select few families that decided to stay were slowly integrated into mainstream society and the paranoia surrounding their relocation subsided.

The Japanese were not the only people that the local population had to adjust to interacting with throughout the duration of the war. Prisoners of war also arrived in the county and were brought in to help with the beet harvests. German POW's made up the largest numbers of this new population but Italian prisoners also arrived in Brush and Fort Morgan. On Oct 12, 1944, the proper methods to be employed when handling German prisoners stated they were to work in the fields where posted and meetings were also called to discuss instructions on the proper protocol.[50] Farmers attended these meetings and in cooperation with the Great Western Sugar Co., the prisoner command guidelines were established for housing, field work, and factory management. Town meetings addressing proper protocol such as this were typical in communities that were host sites for POW's throughout the war.

Many of the German POW's worked in the surrounding outlying fields of Fort Morgan in smaller groups closely monitored by local farmers and guards. One of the biggest concentrations of workers was at the Prisoner of War Camp at Wiggins, Colorado. The camp was located on the west side of town with the guard barracks built behind Tiemans Grocery store and facing the railroad tracks.[51] Many of the German POW's reluctantly complied with the orders of their superiors but in some cases adamantly defied the guards yelling "Hail Hitler" and

refused to work. William Brethauer who worked with the World War II prisoners at the Wiggins facility recounts the following such instances.

> *"One morning I got a group of prisoners to the beet field for thinning and showed them how to space the beets. This day I had a guard who was sort of mean. 'We'll let them work for awhile,' he said 'then check up on their work.' He took his rifle and I thought he was just using the scope to observe them, but he shot between one of the prisoner's legs. They all fell flat on their faces. After that they went to work and did a very good job.*
>
> *Another day when I was working them in a field near the camp, a S.S. man started cussing me and calling me a S.O.B. It was during their lunch break and I never had a guard but a T/Sgt. checked up on us every so often. He was cussing me in German and I understood everything he said. One of his fellow prisoners was scared and told him to shut up. 'You'll get us all in trouble, he's got a German name maybe he understands you. 'When T/Sgt. pulled up in his jeep to see how I was getting along, I pointed to the S.S. boy and told him what he was calling me. He hit the prisoner with the butt of his rifle on the side of the head and took him back to camp to be put on bread and water for a week."*[52]

Local papers also kept up on the doings of the German POW's and the Fort Morgan Times recorded one of the German's first war casualties on American soil shortly after their arrival:

> *"A German prisoner of war, Col. Karl Haefner, was killed instantly early this morning when he charged a guard in the alley back of the state armory where the prisoners, being used by county farmers in the beet harvest, are quartered.*
>
> *'The prisoner was one of four who escaped about 11 o'clock last night during the change of guard and was believed attempting to slip back into the enclosure without being detected,' Lt. J. Northcutt, commanding officer, said.*
>
> *'Haefner came down the alley,' the guard told Lt. Northcutt, and he was ready for him as he knew several of the prisoners were out. The guard called out to him to halt but he quickened his pace. The guard called out twice more for the prisoner to halt and Haefner ignored the order.*
>
> *'A second guard, who came up at that time, called out three more times for him to halt and as Haefner came faster, the guard raised his gun and fired, the black striking him in the shoulder, chest, and neck'."*[53]

For the better part of the rest of the war the prisoners got along without any other major incidents. They labored at various jobs in the area thinning and topping beats, picking

potatoes, and threshing beans. Three meals per day were provided to them by their employers and a small portion of their wages were given to them directly so they could purchase cigarettes, toothpaste, soap, and shaving cream.[54] The rest was paid to the U.S. Government.

After the war the prisoners were allowed to go home, and the housing barracks at the Wiggins camp was used as apartments for extra housing. The barracks where the soldiers stayed were moved next to Highway 6 and made into a motel, while the remaining ones behind the grocery store were torn down.[55] It was the end of an era, never to be forgotten by those living through those terrible years. World War II touched the lives of everyone across the nation and the presence of POW's working in the fields around Fort Morgan only brought the conflict closer to home for the local community.

The home front for most towns changed dramatically during the course of World War II. One of the most evident was the rationing of raw materials and agricultural produce. For Fort Morgan the first stages involved the rationing of auto tires on January 2, 1941.[56] As the rationing system expanded other items included: rubber, tin, beef, pork, lamb, mutton, butter, cheese, other fats, oils, and canned fish.[57] The lack of availability and acquisition of seemingly essential products tested the fortitude of citizens both rich and poor. As the director of the rationing system in Fort Morgan said "We have always been a country of plenty, yet a drastic change has been made. We found that we are a country of have-nots." [58]

Other radical changes occurred in the realms of urbanization and manufacturing. The American population for some time had been migrating out of small towns and farming communities such as Fort Morgan. Many of the large scale industries in cities converted to ammunition supplies and war vehicles, and thousands of new workers were needed to keep up

with the growing demand. Cities such as Denver grew exponentially and many civilians moved across the country during the war to places like California to work in defense industries.

One of the most dramatic impacts of the war was the change in gender roles for women. With so many men sent off to the battlefields of the Pacific and Europe, women now found a number of opportunities in the employment industry that were once predominately occupied by men. For the women of Fort Morgan jobs could be found in the sugar beet factory, and farming wives filled the vacancies left by their husbands tending to the family farms. Women by the millions entered the work force during the war and challenged the traditional female roles. Women's image changed and the popular symbol of "Rosie the Riveter"[59] came to personify the "can do" attitude demonstrated by working mothers and wives around the country.

Mexican Americans found life in America during World War II anything but equal. Much like African Americans, Mexican Americans had already begun the process of migrating out of the South and agricultural related jobs in search of employment in industrial fields. Labor unions despised the new competition though and hostilities between ethnic groups led to discrimination and in some cases acts of violence. The events of Pearl Harbor however demonstrated the United States impending need for farm workers and many of Fort Morgan's farmers welcomed the new labor force.

When the war finally ended in 1945, the local papers triumphantly proclaimed that "WORLDS WAR WILL OFFICALLY END"[60] and all of Fort Morgan rejoiced and celebrated the acts of patriotism displayed by so many of its young men and expressed its gratitude to those who had given the ultimate sacrifice for their country. It was a time of mixed emotions and like the

rest of the country, Fort Morgan sets its sights toward the future, never forgetting how the war touched so many lives in profound ways. For the soldiers coming back home Deputy Sherriff Norton Carlson of Fort Morgan advised the veterans "To jump right into work after they get home to help them forget about their war experiences. While men are in the service they think about home, the folks, the movies, and good steaks. They grip about getting out and so when they do, they should get right to work and then take their vacations six months later."[61]

Post war America witnessed tremendous growth in states such as Colorado and as Carl Abbot describes "Coloradans attributed the state's population surge to soldiers, who tasted the splendors of the Rocky Mountains during the war, deciding to return afterward."[62] Colorado also saw thousands of civilians move to states to work in the defense industry throughout the duration of the war. During the 1950s alone Colorado added approximately 425,000 new residents. The population surge represented an increase of 32.5 percent to the to the state's overall population.[63]

The most significant growth took place around metropolitan areas such as Denver, Colorado Springs, and Boulder. Those who preferred life outside urban centers settled in suburbs such as Longmont, Loveland, Aurora, and Littleton. Middle class families found that suburban areas offered ample opportunities for housing and still provided many of the high-paying jobs that had previously attracted many people to the cities. The suburbs grew by more than 560,000 people between 1950 and 1970, while the city of Denver grew less than 100,000.[64]

To keep up with the growing demands of infrastructure and to accommodate tourists, Colorado and the federal government began major projects geared toward improving and

expanding the state's interstate highway system. In August 1958, construction began on I-80S (now I-76) in northern Colorado. By 1966, I-80S consisted of 36 miles of older roadway between the Nebraska state line and Crook, 50 miles was completed between Sterling and Fort Morgan, followed by a nine-mile segment between Fort Morgan and Wiggins.[65] The national impact of I-76 provided a critical link to the rest of the United States by connecting I-80 as well as I-70. The interstate highway system through Fort Morgan has had a profound effect upon the local economy and contributed significantly to the communities' improved economic efficiency and productivity.

CONCLUSION

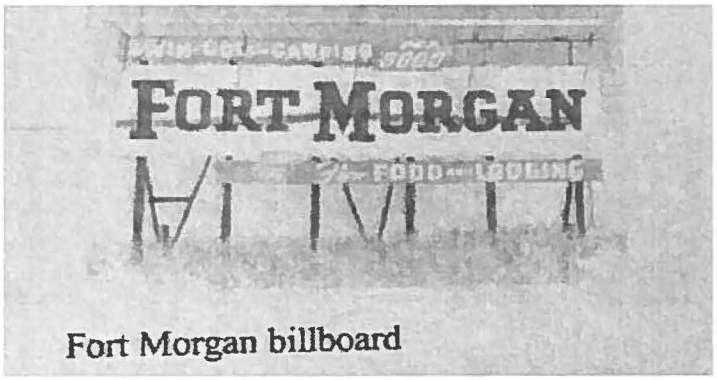
In an effort to protect the mail service and immigrants along the Overland Trail the city of Fort Morgan was built along the South Platte River all of those long years ago; but today the communities' history runs much deeper than a military fort in northeastern Colorado. The presence of Fort Morgan may have originally acted as a deterrent to Indian attacks in the immediate vicinity, but it also acted as a gathering place for individuals traveling west and provided a reprieve from the endless sea of nothingness and prairie grass. The characteristics that drew people to the area back then still attract countless people today, and those who have chosen to make Fort Morgan their permanent home take great pride in the small town traditions and hospitality they have become known for.

Dating back to the undisputed founder of Fort Morgan, Abner Baker; some people have seen the potential in the area when others only saw its limitations, and set about developing the area by laying out a town site and digging canals to support the emerging agriculture and manufacturing based community. With the completion of the canals, the railroad soon followed and the dream of a permanent settlement became a reality. A few short years later in 1887 Fort Morgan was incorporated, and by the early 1890s witnessed the construction of its first public school and public hall. Public utilities, other government buildings, and even a downtown park became the next investments for the community. By the turn of the 20th century Fort Morgan had evolved from a tent city into a thriving and opportunistic community on the rise.

The sugar beet factory helped foster the growth of the small town, and not even the Great Depression could completely inhibit the progress of the city. Men went off to serve their

country in World War II proudly representing their families and hometown of Fort Morgan; and the community even today celebrates their sacrifices and dedication to our nation.

Economic prosperity and sustainability for Fort Morgan was transformed by the interstate highway system and the beef processing industry have ensured the local population that employment can be found and families can grow and prosper here even today. Given Fort Morgan's adaptability to the times the community has experienced a number of immigration influxes over the years, and although at times this has created varying degrees of tensions between the newcomers and the towns current residents, the city today still proudly boasts of its cultural diversity and willingness to accept people from all walks of life.



Fort Morgan billboard

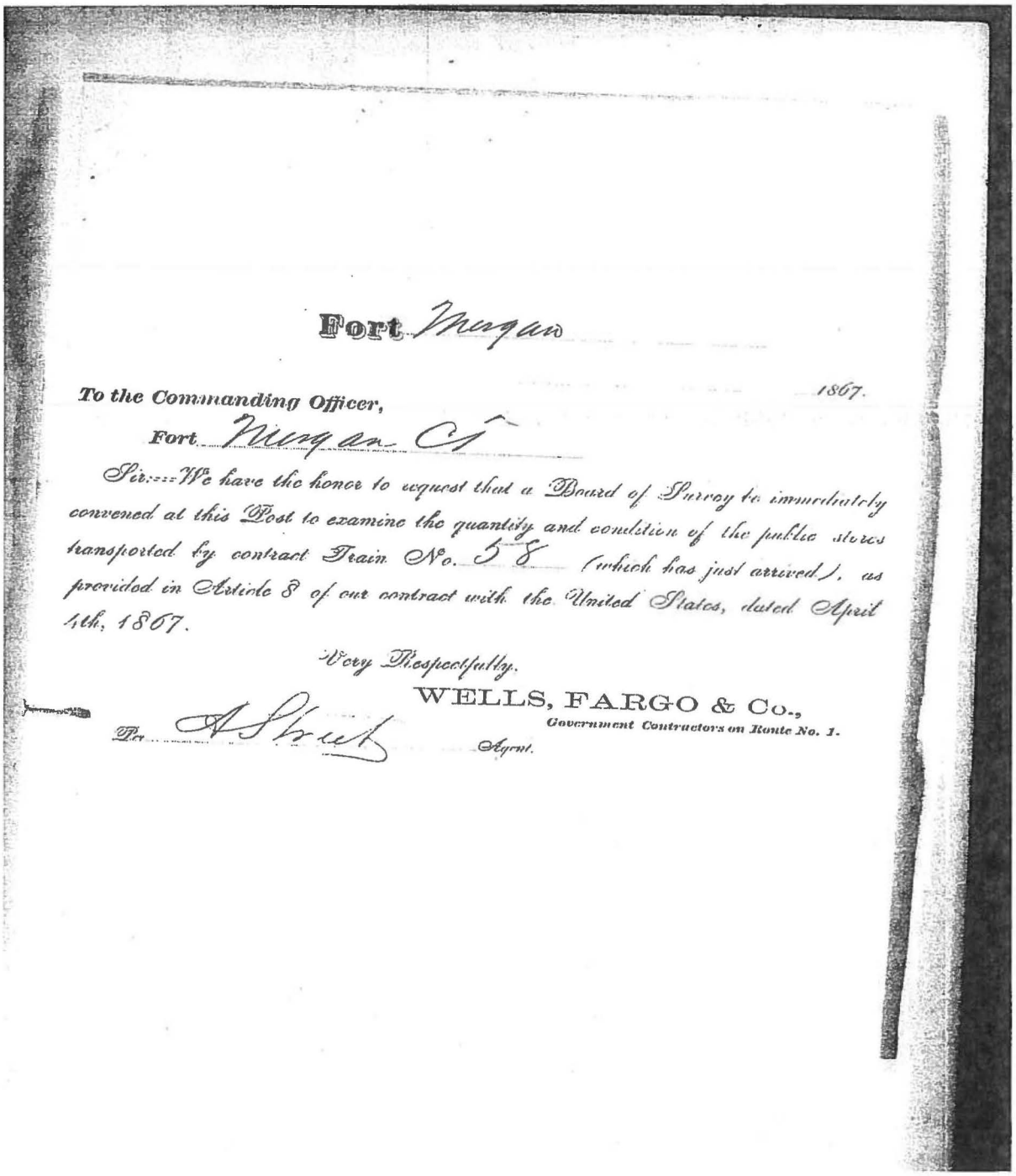
Fort Morgan now as it has always done has exemplified the pioneer spirit of the time, and its evolvement has been observed and emulated by other communities within the surrounding area. It is true Fort Morgan will most likely never rival places like Denver just 80 miles south along I-76, but it at least offers a convenient resting place for those along their journey, and has a very extraordinary and unique history all of its own. Fort Morgan is rich in history and all one has to do is visit the local restaurants, explore the museums, or walk along the historic Main Street to be reminded what was once just buffalo grass and open space has now become a thriving community that others have made as their permanent destination.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A.

WELLS FARGO CORRESPONDENCE

(Overland Mail Route. 1867. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.)



Fort Morgan

1867.

To the Commanding Officer,

Fort Morgan C[illegible]

Sir:—We have the honor to request that a Board of Survey be immediately convened at this Post to examine the quantity and condition of the public stores transported by contract Train No. 58 (which has just arrived), as provided in Article 8 of our contract with the United States, dated April 4th, 1867.

Very Respectfully.

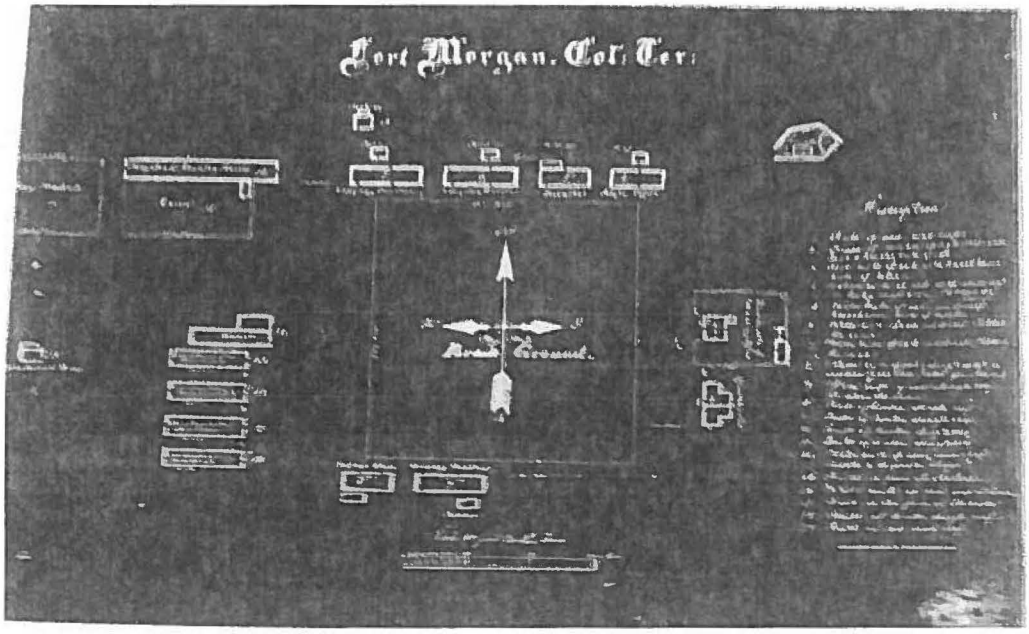
WELLS, FARGO & Co.,
Government Contractors on Route No. 1.

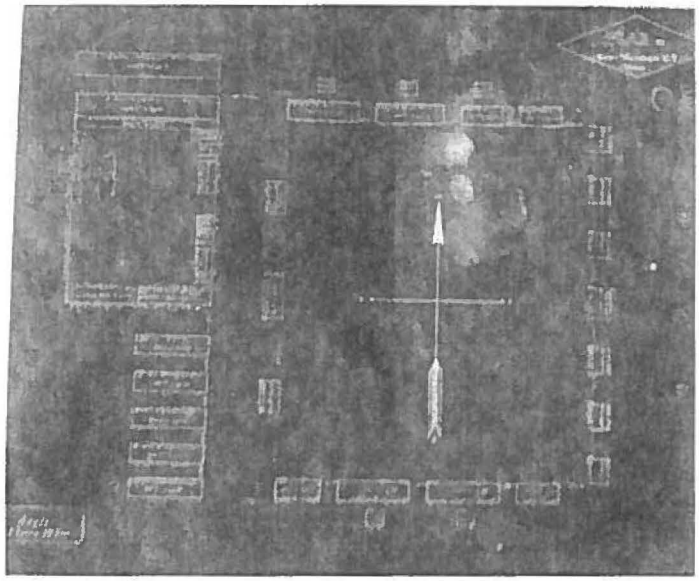
Per A Street Agent.

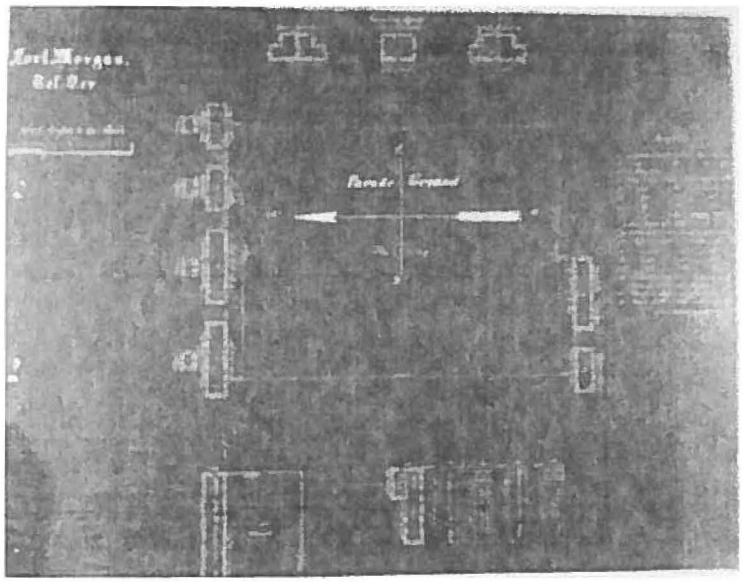
APPENDIX B.

PLAN OF CAMP WARDWELL

Obtained from the National Archives in Washington D.C. Believed to have been produced in 1866 by the U.S. Army. The maps show camp buildings, which are in a square with a parade ground in the center. The "Plan of Camp Wardwell" later became Fort Morgan. Sources courtsey of Fort Morgan Museum.







APPENDIX C.

SUPPLY REQUEST

(Camp Wardwell. 1865. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.)

6

Head Quarters Camp Wardwell C.T.
July 17" 1865

Graham Lieut. James S.
A. A. A. Genl
Denver C.T.

Lieut.

I have the honor to request that the following Blanks be forwarded for the use of Troops at this Post

40 Muster and Pay Rolls
40 Company Monthly Returns
20 Des. Lists
30 Des. Lists of Deserters
25 Cavalry Reports
40 Final Statements
10 Quarterly Returns Dec. Soldiers
20 Inventory of Effects of Dec. Soldiers

Very Respectfully
Your obdt Servt
N. Willard Smith
Lt. Col. [illegible] Comdg Po.

Head Quarters Camp Wardwell C.T.
July 17 '65

Graham Lieut. James S.
A. A. A. Genl
Denver C.T.

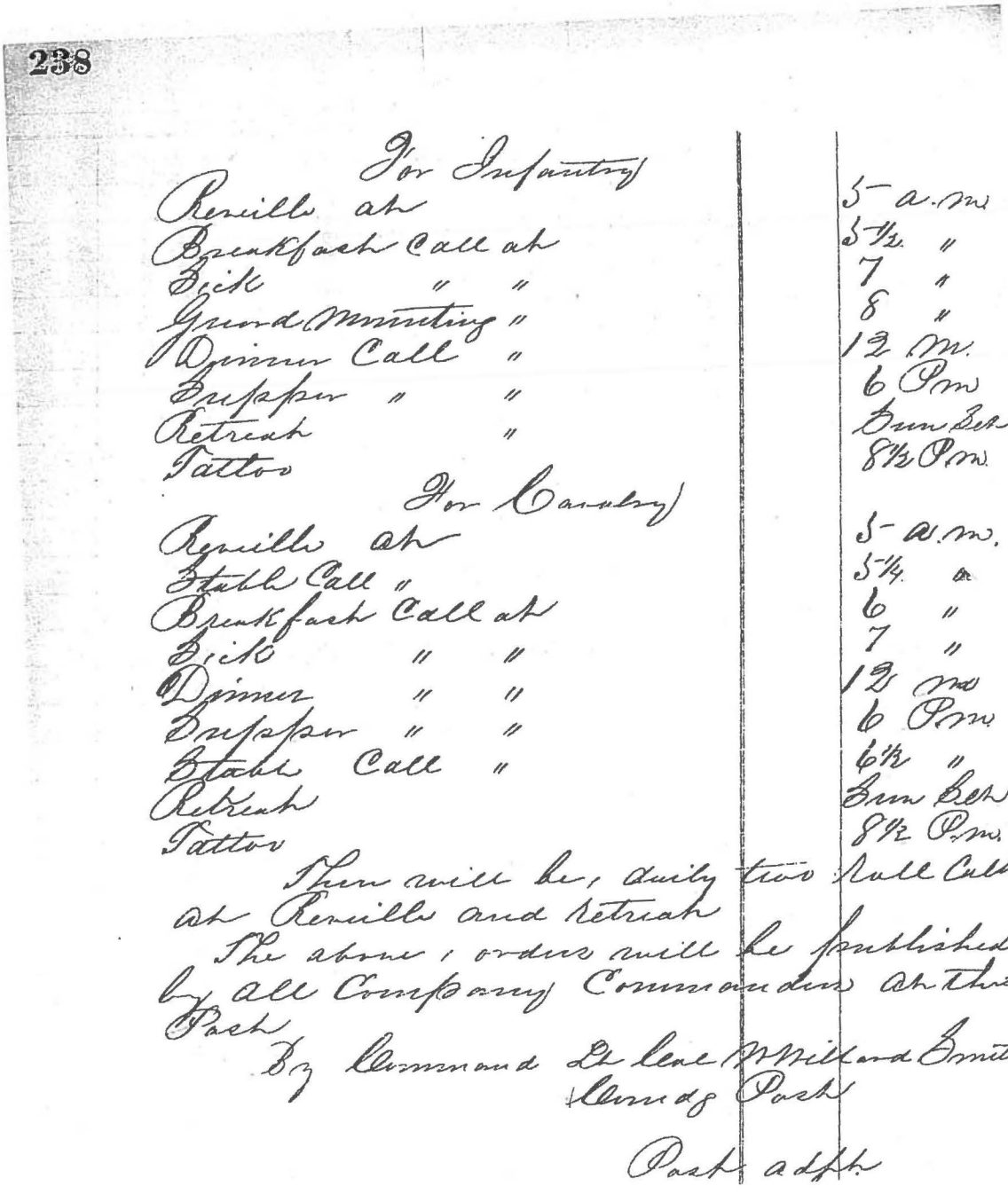
Lieut.

I have the honor to state that on July 11" 1865 I received a Special Order from

APPENDIX D.

DAILY SCHEDULE

(Camp Wardwell. 1865. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.)



238

For Infantry

Reveille at	5 a.m.
Breakfast Call at	5½ "
Sick " "	7 "
Guard Mounting "	8 "
Dinner Call "	12 M.
Surspan " "	6 P.M.
Retreat "	Sun Set
Tattoo	8½ P.M.

For Cavalry

Reveille at	5 a.m.
Stable Call "	5¼ "
Breakfast Call at	6 "
Sick " "	7 "
Dinner " "	12 M.
Surspan " "	6 P.M.
Stable Call "	6½ "
Retreat	Sun Set
Tattoo	8½ P.M.

There will be, daily two Roll Calls at Reveille and Retreat

The above orders will be published by all Company Commanders at this Post

By Command Lt Col McMillan Smith
Comdg Post

Post Adjt

APPENDIX E.

VOTE FOR MORGAN COUNTY

"That's Politics." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), November 16, 1896. Colorado Historic Newspapers.p4

VOTE OF MORGAN COUNTY

AS CAST

November 5th, 1895,

FROM OFFICIAL RETURNS IN COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

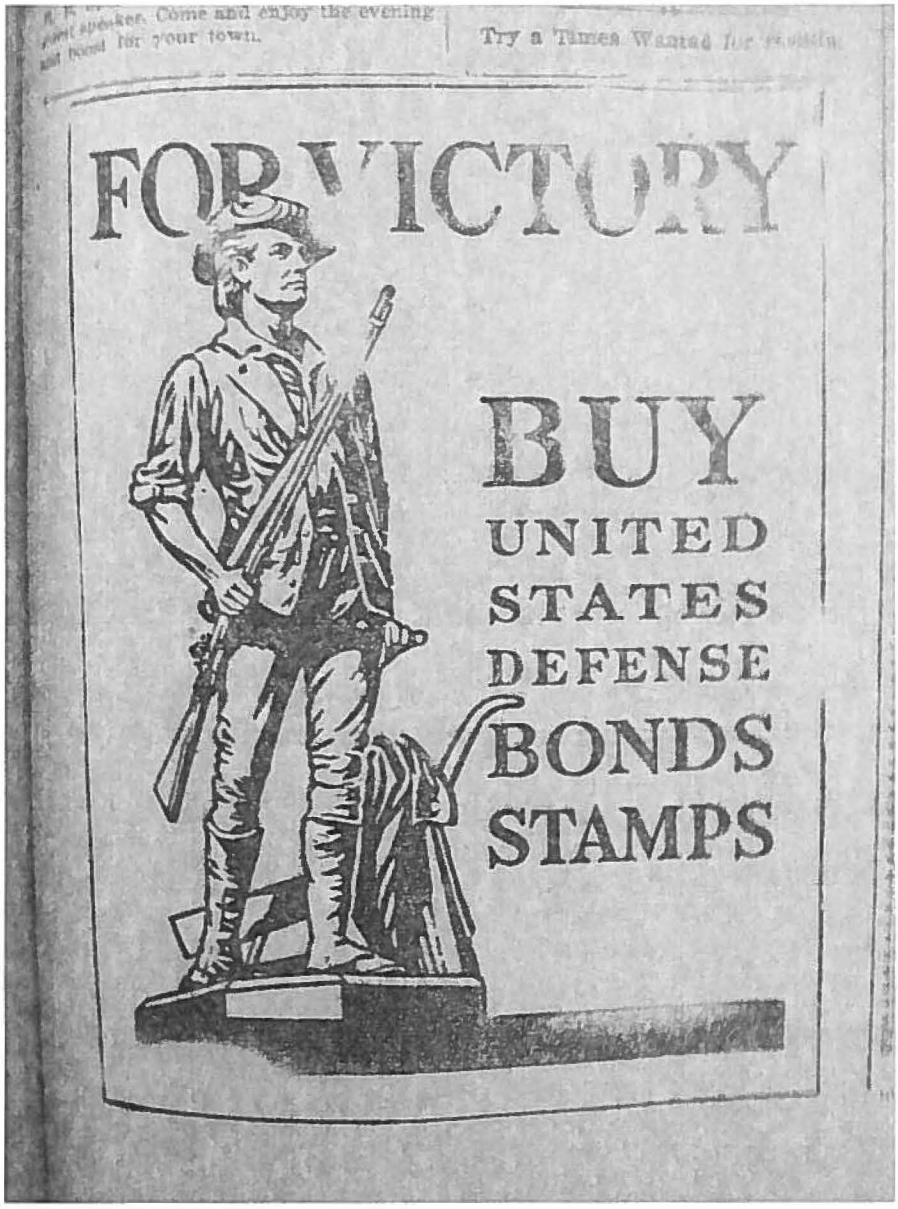
CANDIDATES.	Precinct No. 8, Orchard	Precinct No. 10, Weldon	Precinct No. 12, Snyder	Precinct No. 16, Brush	Precinct No. 22, Fort Morgan	Precinct No. 28, Corona	Total Vote	Majorities and Pluralities
COUNTY CLERK.								
Tyler D. Heiskell, D	7	89	16	110	104	10	286	
T. J. Landrum, P	28	18	3	110	131	8	298	+7
M. S. Richeson, R	38	11	1	44	114	6	214	
TREASURER.								
L. W. Kimball, R	35	16	7	58	203	10	329	
R. Nelson, P	36	41	13	206	141	13	450	121
COUNTY JUDGE.								
James H. Jones, R	40	36	16	117	210	4	423	68
C. C. Wideman, P	27	25	5	135	142	21	355	
SHERIFF.								
C. W. Scoville, P	38	15	10	104	133	11	366	
G. A. Gordon, R	38	46	10	95	215	11	410	44
COUNTY ASSESSOR.								
Horace Pyott, R	18	39	16	72	195	14	354	
Wilfred Mauck, P	52	23	5	175	148	8	411	57
COUNTY COMMISSIONER.								
C. I. Colwell, R	34	38	9	132	165	14	387	
W. H. Edwards, P	30	23	12	131	183	9	388	1
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS.								
A. L. P. Garver, R	31	37	14	124	202	9	417	50
Z. S. Bowen, P	38	23	7	140	145	14	367	
CORONER.								
E. S. Osler, P	41	38	16	171	205	15	486	477
Joe W. Williams, R					9		9	
COUNTY SURVEYOR.								
R. M. Handy, D	39	38	17	185	217	15	511	511

+Plurality.

APPENDIX F.

FOR VICTORY

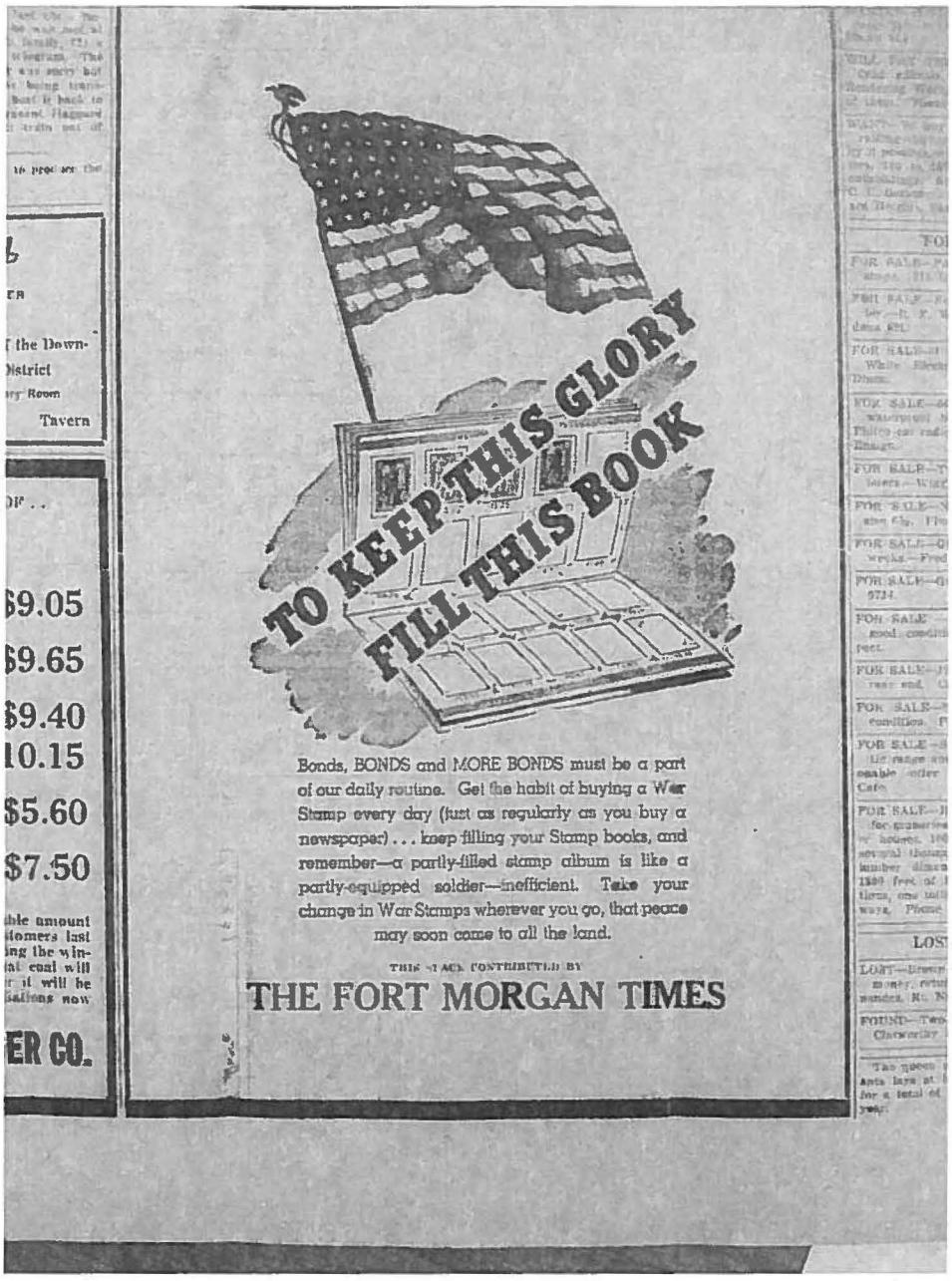
"For Victory." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 10, 1942.



APPENDIX G.

TO KEEP THIS GLORY FILL THIS BOOK

"To Keep This Glory Fill This Book." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 27, 1944.



NOTES

Introduction.

[1] Herbert Hart, *Old Forts of the Far West* (Seattle: Superior Pub., 1965).

Chapter One. Necessitating a Fort

[1] Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Gold seekers, & the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence, Kansas University Press of Kansas, 1998), 77.
[2] Jennifer Patten, *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado* (Amazon Printing, 2011), 54.
[3] Ibid., 56.
[4] *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. 1860* (Washington: George W. Bowman, 1860), 138-139.
[5] West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, & the Rush to Colorado*, 170.
[6] Ibid., 179.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid., 72.
[9] Karl Ubbelohde, Maxine Benson, and Duane A. Smith, *A Colorado History* (Pruett Pub. Co, 1976), 67.
[10] Patten, *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado*, 4.
[11] John Townley, *The Overland Stage: A History and Guidebook* (Reno, NV: Jamison Station Press, 1994), 6-7.
[12] LeRoy R. Hafen, "Early Mail Service to Colorado," *Colorado Magazine* 2, 1925: 23-32.
[13] Townley, *The Overland Stage: A History and Guidebook*, 36.
[14] Patten, *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado*, 6.
[15] Propst, Nell Brown, *The South Platte Trail: Story of Colorado's Forgotten People*. (Boulder, CO: Pruett Pub., 1989), 47.
[16] Patten, *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado*, 7.
[17] West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, & the Rush to Colorado*, 108.
[18] *Rocky Mountain News*, May 30, 1860, 5.
[19] Overland Mail Route. 1867. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.
[20] Hart, *Old Forts of the Far West*, 7.
[21] "Plan of Camp Wardwell." Map. In *National Archives in Washington D.C.* U.S. Army, 1866. Courtesy of Fort Morgan Museum.
[22] Patten, *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado*, 8.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Hart, *Old Forts of the Northwest*, 182.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Camp Wardwell. 1865. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.
[27] Ibid.
[28] "Indian Affairs." *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), June 14, 1867. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[29] Louis Kraft, *Ned Wynkoop and the Lonely Road from Sand Creek* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 2011), 97.
[30] Ibid., 131.
[31] Ibid., 134.
[32] Ibid., 133.

[33] Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 12.
[34] Ibid., 18.
[35] Ibid., 19.
[36] Ibid., 278.
[37] Ibid.
[38] "Indian Affairs." *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), June 14, 1867. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[39] "Government Sale." *Daily Colorado Tribune* (Denver), April 28, 1868. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers. Government Sale Fort Morgan May 6, 1868.

Chapter Two. Envisioning and Enlarging Fort Morgan

[1] Bill Spencer, "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial ed., B Page 9 sec.
[2] Wesley Kellogg Rickel, *One Hundred Eleven Trees: A Compilation of Biographies*. (Fort Morgan, CO: Foundation, 1976), 4.
[3] Spencer, "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream."
[4] Rickel, *One Hundred Eleven Trees,* 4.
[5]Colorado Mortgage and Investment Company. *Farmlands in Colorado*. (Denver, Co. 1879).
[6] James Sherow, "Watering the Plains: An Early History of Denver's Highline Canal." *Colorado Heritage*, no. 4 (1988): 9.
[7] L.H. Johnson, "Fort Moran Was Inspiration and Achievement of A.S. Baker." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 19, 1934.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Spencer, "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream."
[11] Ibid.
[12] Rickel, *One Hundred Eleven Trees,* 4.
[13] Ibid.
[14] G.W. Warner, "The One Man Who Saw the Future of Fort Morgan." Fort Morgan Times, January 28, 2000, Hundred Year History sec.
[15] Spencer, "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream."
[16] Rickel, *One Hundred Eleven Trees,* 4.
[17] L.H. Johnson, "Fort Moran Was Inspiration and Achievement of A.S. Baker."
[18] Carl Abbott, Thomas J. Noel, and Stephen J. Leonard, *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State*. (University Press of Colorado, 2011), 161.
[19] Article XVI, Sections 5 and 6, Constitution of the State of Colorado, 1876.
[20] Abbot, Noel, and Leonard, *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State*, 161.
[21] Jerome Smiley, *History of Denver, with Outlines of the Earlier History of the Rocky Mountain Country.* (Denver: Denver Times, 1901), 439-440.
[22] Richard C. Kistler, and James J. Reisdorff, *The High Plains Route: A History of the McCook Division of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad*. (David City, Neb.: South Platte Press, 1986), 5.
[23] Ibid., 6.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Spencer, "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream."
[26] Abbot, Noel, and Leonard, *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State,* 76.
[27] Spencer, "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream."
[28] Johnson, "Fort Moran Was Inspiration and Achievement of A.S. Baker."
[29] Don English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan, Colorado* (Fort Morgan, Co. March 1, 1975), 21.
[30] Ibid., 22.

[31] LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado and Its People; a Narrative and Topical History of the Centennial State* (New York: Lewis Historical Pub., 1948), 430-432.
[32] "Ordinance No. 74." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), March 14, 1902, XVIII ed., sec. 32. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[33] English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 21.
[34] Ibid., 25.
[35] "Beet Culture." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 14, 1902, Volume XVIII, Number 27 ed. Accessed June 25, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[36] English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 27.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Annual Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, 1868, 143, 173-198. The early climate records are given in the Fifth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, for the Years 1865-86, 180.
[39] Elliott West, Richard Smith, *Industrial Resources of Western Kansas and Eastern Colorado. Kansas Pacific Railway. Saint Louis* (Levison & Blythe, Printers, 1871), 22-26.
[40] David Wishart, *The Last Days of the Rainbelt* (LIncoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 21.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., 50.
[43] Ibid., 81.
[44] Ibid., 124.
[45] Ibid., 138-143.
[46] Ibid., 144.
[47] English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 27.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] "Government, County, City." Morgan County All You Ever Wanted to Know... but Were Afraid to Ask, 1985, 12.
[51] English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 28.
[52] Ibid.
[53] James Edward Wright, *The Politics of Populism: Dissent in Colorado* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 15.
[54] Ibid., 18.
[55] Frank Fossett, *Colorado; a Historical, Descriptive and Statistical Work on the Rocky Mountain Gold and Silver Mining Region* (Denver: Daily Tribune Steam Printing House, 1876).
[56]Wright, *The Politics of Populism*, 23.
[57] Elwood Mead, *Irrigation Institutions; a Discussion of the Economic and Legal Questions Created by the Growth of Irrigated Agriculture in the West.* (New York: Macmillan, 1903. Chap 8).
[58] Wright, *The Politics of Populism,* 33.
[59] Ibid., 128.
[60] Ibid., 153-157.
[61] Ibid., 187-189.
[62] "That's Politics." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), November 16, 1896. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Wright, *The Politics of Populism,* 131-136.
[66] Ibid., 213.
[67] "McKinley for President." *Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 18, 1896. Accessed April 15, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.
[68] "McKinley Is Strong." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), April 24, 1896. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[69] Peabody quoted in George G. Suggs Jr., *Colorado's War on Militant Unionism. (*Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972), 74.

[70] "Populists Are to Blame." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 7, 1894, Volume XI, Number 3 ed. Accessed June 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[71] English. *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 31.

Chapter Three. From Beets to Beef: Industrial and Demographic Diversity

[1] Don English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan, Colorado* (Fort Morgan, Co. March 1, 1975), 32.
[2] Rebecca R. Pritchard, *A Calendar of the Papers of Charles Boettcher: A Holding of the Library of the State Historical Society of Colorado* (Denver: Western Business History Research Center, 1969).
[3] "Charles Boettcher Returns from Long Trip Abroad." *Herald Democrat* (Denver), May 9, 1902. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.
[4] "German Seed Beets for Colorado." *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins), May 29, 1907. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] May William, "The Colorado Sugar Manufacturing Company: Grand Junction Plant." *The Colorado Magazine*, September 15, 1899, 28.
[8] "Sugar Day at Sugar City." *Park County Bulletin* (Fairplay), October 24, 1902. Accessed July 7, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[9] "Want It Bad." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 6, 1901, Volume XVIII ed. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.
[10] "New Sugar Factories." *Fort Morgan Times,* (Fort Morgan), November 28, 1902, Volume 20 ed. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.
[11] "Large Incorporation." *Longmont Ledger* (Longmont), March 3, 1905. Accessed April 30, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[12] Ibid.
[13] "Sugar Factory at Fort Morgan Assured." *Longmont Ledger* (Longmont), January 20, 1905. Accessed April 30, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[14] Steve Lebsock, "Great Western Sugar Company." *Case Study*, 2002, 1-10.
[15] Peggy Anderson, "Persuasive Citizens Help Trigger GW Factory Construction." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. G.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] "Beets Big Factor." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 27, 1906. Accessed April 27, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.
[20] Chris Marcheso, *Fort Morgan Times Western Sugar 100TH Anniversary*. August 4, 2006 "Sugar Beet Factory Opens in Fort Morgan." Reprint from the *Fort Morgan Times*, December 28, 1906, Volume 22 Number 4 sec.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Lebsock, "Great Western Sugar Company."
[26] "Beet Culture." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 14, 1902, Volume XVIII, Number 27 ed. Accessed June 25, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[27] Lebsock, "Great Western Sugar Company."
[28] William Wyckoff, *Creating Colorado: The Making of a Western American Landscape, 1860-1940.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 167.
[29] Lesile Bernard, "Area Farmers' Hopes for Income Frozen in the Ground in 1929." *The Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. F.

[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Eloise Hanson, *From the Steppes to the Prairies: A Brief History of the German People from Russia in Fort Morgan, Colorado. Fort Morgan, Colorado*: (Centennial Commission of Fort Morgan, 1984), 6.
[33] Lebsock, "Great Western Sugar Company."
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] "Sugar Beet Buyout." *Denver Post* (Denver), May 02, 2002. Accessed April 15, 2016.
[37] Jennifer Patten, *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado* (Amazon Printing, 2011), 242-243.
[38] Ibid., 242-249.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41]"Editorial." *Greeley Daily Tribune* (Greeley), April 4, 1961. Accessed April 27, 2016. NewspaperARCHIVE.com.
[42] Gene Mapelli, "Cattle Industry Future Bright." *The Fort Morgan Times*, Feb 28, 1966.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Jon LaPorte, "Beef Plant Overcomes Obstacles and Expands its Operations." *The Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed. Sec G.
[45] Mapelli, "Cattle Industry Future Bright."
[46] Ibid.
[47] LaPorte, "Beef Plant Overcomes Obstacles and Expands its Operations."
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] LeRoy R. Hafen, *Colorado and Its People; a Narrative and Topical History of the Centennial State* (New York: Lewis Historical Pub., 1948).
[56] English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 36.
[57] Ibid., 37.
[58] "Beet Culture." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 14, 1902, Volume XVIII, Number 27 ed. Accessed June 25, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[59] Sidney Heitman, *Germans from Russia in Colorado* (Fort Collins, CO: Western Social Science Association, 1978), 74.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Hanson, *From the Steppes to the Prairies A Brief History of the German People from Russia in Fort Morgan, Colorado*, 7.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid., 8.
[64] "Mrs. John Utterback Talks at the Club about Immigration." *Steamboat Pilot* (Steamboat Springs), November 30, 1939. Colorado Historic Newspapers.
[65] Hanson, *From the Steppes to the Prairies A Brief History of the German People from Russia in Fort Morgan, Colorado*, 8.
[66] English, *The Early History of Fort Morgan*, 37.
[67] Ibid., 37.
[68] Ibid ., 38.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.

[71] Barbara Keenan, "County Has a Long History of Immigrants." Lecture, History of Immigration, United Methodist Church, Fort Morgan. Accessed June 28, 2016. Fort Morgan Museum.
[72] Jo Ostwald, "Volga German Immigrants in Morgan County, in *A Land of Immigrants*. (Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014), 25.
[73] Ruth Tryon, "Hispanic Roots." In *A Land of Immigrants*. (Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014), 7.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 10.
[76] Ibid., 40.
[77] Tryon, "Hispanic Roots." In *A Land of Immigrants*," 7.
[78] Ibid., 8.
[79] Ibid., 9.
[80] Bill Hosokawa. *Colorado's Japanese Americans: From 1886 to the Present*. (Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2005), 57.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Jo Ostwald, "Japanese American Immigrants" In *a Land of Immigrants* (Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014), 17.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid., 18.
[85] "George Kato." Interview. April 4, 1995.
Interview conducted by Barbara Keenan's FMHS Language Arts Class.
[86] Ostwald, "Japanese American Immigrants" In *a Land of Immigrants,*" 17 -18.
[87] Brenda Zion. "East African Refugees" In *a Land of Immigrants* (Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014), 19.
[88] Ibid.,19.
[89] Ibid., 20.
[90]Ibid., 18.
[91] Ibid., 21.
[92] Ibid., 20.

Chapter Four. Remaking the West

[1] Community History Writers, comp. "Community History: Revisiting the 'Dirty Thirties'" *Fort Morgan Times*, March 10, 2016. Accessed April 4, 2016. http://www.fortmorgantimes.com/fort-morgan-local-news/ci_29617900/community-history-revisiting-dirty-thirties.
[2] "Various Editions from 1929-1935." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] *Fort Morgan Community*. Denver, CO: Denver Post, 1929.
[6] "Area Farmers' Hopes for Income Frozen in the Ground in 1929." *Fort Morgan Times*. Fort Morgan. November 7, 1929.
[7] Ibid.
[8] J. Agayo, *Los Beta Boleros (The Beet Workers)*. In V.C. Baca (Ed.) La Gente: Hispano history and life in Colorado. (Denver, CO: The Colorado Historical Society), 105-119.
[9] "Brush And Ft. Morgan Sugar Factories Close This Week Until Harvest Is Resumed." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 10, 1929.
[10] "Twenty Below Record Temperature Here." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), January 9, 1930.
[11] "Thirty- Four Below Zero Breaks Record Low Temperature Records Which Have Stood For Many Years." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), January 17, 1930.

[12]Community History Writers, comp. "Community History: Revisiting the 'Dirty Thirties'" *Fort Morgan Times*, March 10, 2016. Accessed April 4, 2016. http://www.fortmorgantimes.com/fort-morgan-local-news/ci_29617900/community-history-revisiting-dirty-thirties.

[13] Studs Terkel, *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), 220.

[14]Ibid.

[15] Robert and Anna Baer. *History of Morgan County, Wiggins, Hoyt and the Surrounding Areas*. Compiled January 30, 1967.

[16] Paul K. Conkin, *The New Deal* (New York: Crowell, 1967), 45-57.

[17] "Government, County, City." *Morgan County All You Ever Wanted to Know... but Were Afraid to Ask*, 1985, 13.

[18] Richard W. Etulain, *Beyond the Missouri: The Story of the American West*. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 318.

[19] "Morgan County Centennials Committee." Morgan County All You Ever Wanted to Know... but Were Afraid to Ask, 1985, 13.

[20] Shirley Gilliland, *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado (*Curtis Media, Inc. 1995), 10-13.

[21] Gerald D. Nash, *World War II and the West: Reshaping the Economy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990) , xii.

[22] Ibid., 4.

[23] Ibid., 305-306.

[24] Ibid., 301.

[25]Ibid., 303.

[26] Gilliland, *World War II and The People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado*, 14.

[27] Ibid., 14.

[28] "History of the Armory | Brighton Performing Arts, CO - Official Website." History of the Armory | Brighton Performing Arts, CO - Official Website. Accessed April 05, 2016. http://www.brightonarmory.org/151/History-of-The-Armory.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Gilliland, *World War II and The People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado*, 11.

[31]Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid .

[34] "For Victory." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 10, 1942.

[35] "To Keep This Glory Fill This Book." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 27, 1944.

[36] "Letter From Captain Keller Is Answer to Many Questions." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 16, 1941, Volume LVIII.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Gilliland, *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado,* p 105.

[39] Troy Turner, *Colorado's Lost Squadron*(Loveland, Colo.: [publisher Not Identified], 1997), 57.

[40] Gilliland, *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado,* 105

[41] John Snyder,. "Glider Training School." Editorial. *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 1942.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Gilliland, *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado,* 105.

[44] Fort Morgan Times Files. "Japanese Relocated, German POW Killed Here During War." September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. K. Reprint from the *Fort Morgan Times*, April 3, 1942.

[45] "Ralph Carr: Defender of Japanese Americans | Colorado Virtual Library." Colorado Virtual Library. 2015. Accessed April 05, 2016. http://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/digital-colorado/colorado-histories/20th-century/ralph-carr-defender-of-japanese-americans/.

[46] "Farmers Union Against Japs Being Brought In for Labor." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 18, 1942.

[47] Fort Morgan Times Files. "Japanese Relocated, German POW Killed Here During War." September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. K. Reprint from the *Fort Morgan Times*, April 3, 1942.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Gilliland, *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado,* 117.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Fort Morgan Times Files. "Japanese Relocated, German POW Killed Here During War."
[54] Gilliland, *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado,* 117.
[55] Ibid.
[56] "Rationing of Auto Tires to Start Jan. 2." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 16, 1941, Volume LVIII.
[57] "Rationing System Only Fair Method to Distribute Goods on Hand, Director Says." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), March 9, 1943.
[58] Ibid.
[59] David M. Kennedy, Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945 (Oxford University Press, 2001), 776.
[60] "WORLD WAR WILL OFFICALLY END TODAY." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 1, 1945, Volume LXII.
[61] "Vets Advised to Go to Work." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 26, 1945.
[62] Carl Abbot, *Colorado, a History of the Centennial State*, (Boulder: Colorado Associated University Press, 1976), 314.
[63] Ibid., 315.
[64] Ibid., 323.
[65] "About CDOT." Interstate 76. Accessed April 06, 2016. https://www.codot.gov/about/CDOTHistory/50th-anniversary/interstate-76.html.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"About CDOT." Interstate 76. Accessed April 06, 2016. https://www.codot.gov/about/CDOTHistory/50th-anniversary/interstate-76.html.

Agayo, J. *Los Beta Boleros (The Beet Workers).* In V.C. Baca (Ed.) La Gente: Hispano history and life in Colorado. Denver, CO: The Colorado Historical Society. p 105-119.

Annual Report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, 1868, 143, 173-198. The early climate records are given in the *Fifth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Board of Agriculture, for the Years 1865-86*, 180.

"Area Farmers' Hopes for Income Frozen in the Ground in 1929." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), November 7, 1929.

Article XVI, Sections 5 and 6, Constitution of the State of Colorado, 1876.

Baer, Robert and Anna Baer. *History of Morgan County, Wiggins, Hoyt and the Surrounding Areas*. Compiled January 30, 1967.

"Beets Big Factor." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 27, 1906. Accessed April 27, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Beets Big Factor." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 27, 1906. Accessed April 27, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Beets Big Factor." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 27, 1906. Accessed April 27, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Beet Culture." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 14, 1902, Volume XVIII, Number 27 ed. Accessed June 25, 2016. https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/cgi-bin/colorado?a=d&d=FMT19020214-01.2.52&srpos=7&e=-------en-20-FMT-1--txt-txIN-hobos-------0-Morgan#.

Bill, Hosokawa. *Colorado's Japanese Americans: From 1886 to the Present*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2005.

Bill, Spencer. "Fort Morgan: Fulfillment of One Man's Dream." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial ed., B Page 9 sec.

BOETTCHER FOUNDATION RECORDS, 1887-1991. MS, Western History and Genealogy, Western History Collection of Denver Public Library. Boettcher Foundation; gift; 2003

Brenda, Zion. "East African Refugees" In *A Land of Immigrants*. Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014. P19-21

"Brush And Ft. Morgan Sugar Factories Close This Week Until Harvest Is Resumed." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 10, 1929.

Camp Wardwell. 1865. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.

Carl Abbott, Thomas J. Noel, and Stephen J. Leonard. *Colorado: A History of the Centennial State*. University Press of Colorado, 2011.

"Charles Boettcher Returns from Long Trip Abroad." *Herald Democrat* (Denver), May 9, 1902. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

Charles, Drage. Oral History Interview. *Charles Drage - Oral History Interview.* 15 Feb 1985. Colorado State University Digital Repository. 12 Apr 2016.

Chris, Marcheso. "Fort Morgan plant home to 100 sweet, sweet, years" *Fort Morgan Times Western Sugar 100TH Anniversary.* August 4, 2006.

Chris, Marcheso. *Fort Morgan Times Western Sugar 100TH Anniversary.* August 4, 2006 "Sugar Beet Factory Opens in Fort Morgan." Reprint from the *Fort Morgan Times*, December 28, 1906, Volume 22 Number 4 sec.

Colorado Mortgage and Investment Company. *Farmlands in Colorado*. Denver. 1879.

Community History Writers, comp. "Community History: Revisiting the 'Dirty Thirties'" *Fort Morgan Times*, March 10, 2016. Accessed April 4, 2016.

Conkin, Paul K. *The New Deal*. New York: Crowell, 1967.

"Contract Assured." *Yuma Pioneer* (Yuma), January 20, 1905. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

Cynthia Peabody, Anderson. *Pioneer Voices: From Plymouth to Breckenridge: The Peabody Family over Eleven Generations*. Lexington, MA: Summit Books, 1999.

David, Lavender. *Bent's Fort*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1954.

"Editorial." *Greeley Daily Tribune* (Greeley), April 4, 1961. Accessed April 27, 2016. NewspaperARCHIVE.com.

Elliott, Richard Smith. *Industrial Resources of Western Kansas and Eastern Colorado. Kansas Pacific Railway*. Saint Louis: Levison & Blythe, Printers, 1871.

Elliott, West. The Contested Plains: Indians, Gold seekers, & the Rush to Colorado. Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1998.

Eloise, Hanson. "German Russians: Their History, Their Lives, Their Gifts." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. F.

Eloise, Hanson. *From the Steppes to the Prairies A Brief History of the German People from Russia in Fort Morgan, Colorado*. Fort Morgan, Colorado: Centennial Commission of Fort Morgan, 1984.

English, Don. *The Early History of Fort Morgan, Colorado*, March 1, 1975.

"Farmers Union Against Japs Being Brought In for Labor." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 18, 1942.

"For Victory." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 10, 1942.
"George Kato." Interview. April 4, 1995.

Fort Morgan Community. Denver, CO: Denver Post, 1929.

Fort Morgan Times Files. "Japanese Relocated, German POW Killed Here During War." September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. K. Reprint from the *Fort Morgan Times*, April 3, 1942.

Fossett, Frank. *Colorado; a Historical, Descriptive and Statistical Work on the Rocky Mountain Gold and Silver Mining Region*. Denver: Daily Tribune Steam Printing House, 1876.

Gene, Mapelli. "Cattle Industry Future Bright." *The Fort Morgan Times*, Feb 28, 1966.

Geoffrey C. Ward, and Dayton Duncan. *The West: An Illustrated History*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1996.

"German Seed Beets for Colorado." *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins), May 29, 1907. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Government Sale." *Daily Colorado Tribune* (Denver), April 28, 1868. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

G.W., Warner. "The One Man Who Saw the Future of Fort Morgan." *Fort Morgan Times,* January 28, 2000, Hundred Year History sec.

Heitman, Sidney. *Germans from Russia in Colorado*. Fort Collins, CO: Western Social Science Association, 1978.

Herbert M., Hart. *Old Forts of the Far West*. Seattle: Superior Pub., 1965.

"History of the Armory | Brighton Performing Arts, CO - Official Website." History of the Armory | Brighton Performing Arts, CO - Official Website. Accessed April 05, 2016.

http://www.brightonarmory.org/151/History-of-The-Armory.

http://www.fortmorgantimes.com/fort-morgan-local-news/ci_29617900/community-history-revisiting-dirty-thirties. Courtesy of Fort Morgan Museum.

http://www.historycolorado.org/sites/default/files/files/OAHP/crforms_edumat/pdfs/649.pdf. Interview conducted by Barbara Keenan's FMHS Language Arts Class.

"Indian Affairs." *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver), June 14, 1867. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

Jack, Bain. "Events Affecting Cattle Industry." *The Fort Morgan Times*, March 25, 1965.

James Edward, Wright. *The Politics of Populism: Dissent in Colorado*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.

Jennifer, Patten. *In View of the Mountains a History of Fort Morgan, Colorado*. Amazon Printing. 2011.

Jerome, Smiley. *History of Denver, with Outlines of the Earlier History of the Rocky Mountain Country. (*Denver: Denver Times, 1901), 439-440.

Jo, Ostwald. "Japanese American Immigrants" In *a Land of Immigrants*. Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014. P17-18

Jo-An, Barnett. "Year of Stock Market Crash Loaded with Local Activities." *The Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. C.

John, LaPorte. "Devastating Floods Hit County Twice: 1935, 1965." *The Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. F.

John, Townley. *The Overland Stage: A History and Guidebook*. Reno, NV: Jamison Station Press, 1994. 6-7

Jon, LaPorte. "Beef Plant Overcomes Obstacles and Expands its Operations." *The Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed. Sec G.
Karl, Ubbelohde, Maxine Benson, and Duane A. Smith. *A Colorado History*. 1976.

Keenan, Barbara. "County Has a Long History of Immigrants." Lecture, History of Immigration, United Methodist Church, Fort Morgan. Accessed June 28, 2016. Fort Morgan Museum.

Kennedy, David M. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. Oxford University Press; Reprint edition April 19, 2001.

"Large Incorporation." *Longmont Ledger* (Longmont), March 3, 1905. Accessed April 30, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

"Letter From Captain Keller Is Answer to Many Questions." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 16, 1941, Volume LVIII.

LeRoy R., Hafen. "Early Mail Service to Colorado," *Colorado Magazine* 2 (1925): 23-32.

LeRoy R., Hafen. *Colorado and Its People; a Narrative and Topical History of the Centennial State*. New York: Lewis Historical Pub., 1948.

Leslie, Bernard. "Area Farmers' Hopes for Income Frozen in the Ground in 1929." *The Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. F.

Leslie, Bernard. "Memories of Life on the Farm: Hard Work and Long Days." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. E.

Linda, Meyer. "Guide to the Records of the Great Western Sugar Company." *Colorado State University, Colorado Agricultural Archive*, 2010. Accessed December 30, 2015. http://lib.colostate.edu/archives/findingaids/agriculture/agws.html.

L.H., Johnson. "Fort Moran Was Inspiration and Achievement of A.S. Baker." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 19, 1934.

Mathew Paul Bonnifield. *The Dust Bowl: Men, Dirt, and Depression*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1979.

May, William. "The Colorado Sugar Manufacturing Company: Grand Junction Plant." *The Colorado Magazine*, September 15, 1899, 28.

Mead, Elwood. *Irrigation Institutions; a Discussion of the Economic and Legal Questions Created by the Growth of Irrigated Agriculture in the West*. New York: Macmillan, 1903.

"McKinley for President." *Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 18, 1896. Accessed April 15, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper. p4

McKinley Is Strong." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), April 24, 1896. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

"Morgan County Centennials Committee." *Morgan County All You Ever Wanted to Know... but Were Afraid to Ask*, 1985.

Morgan County A Land of Immigrants. Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014.
Jo, Ostwald. "German-Russian Immigrants in Morgan County." In *A Land of Immigrants*. Fort Morgan.

Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014. P14-16.

"Mrs. John Utterback Talks at the Club about Immigration." *Steamboat Pilot* (Steamboat Springs), November 30, 1939. https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/cgi-bin/colorado?a=d&d=STP19391130.2.70&srpos=3&e=-------en-20--1--txt-txIN-German families child labor-------0-#.

"New Sugar Factories." *Fort Morgan Times,* (Fort Morgan), November 28, 1902, Volume 20 ed. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Not a Populist." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 4, 1896. Accessed April 15, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper. p2

"Ordinance No. 74." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), March 14, 1902, XVIII ed., sec. 32. Accessed April 26, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

Overland Mail Route. 1867. MS, Fort Morgan Microfilm 1864-1868, Fort Morgan Museum, Fort Morgan.

Peabody quoted in George G. Suggs Jr., *Colorado's War on Militant Unionism.* Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1972. p 74.

Peggy, Anderson. "Persuasive Citizens Help Trigger GW Factory Construction." *Fort Morgan Times*, September 4, 1984, Centennial Edition ed., sec. G.

"Plan of Camp Wardwell." Map. In *National Archives in Washington D.C.* U.S. Army, 1866.

"Populists Are to Blame." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 7, 1894, Volume XI, Number 3 ed. Accessed June 26, 2016. https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org/cgi-bin/colorado?a=d&d=FMT18940907-01.2.74&srpos=2&e=-------en-20-FMT-1--txt-txIN-Populist to blame-------0-Morgan.

Propst, Nell, Brown. *The South Platte Trail: Story of Colorado's Forgotten People*. Boulder, CO: Pruett Pub., 1989.

"Ralph, Carr: Defender of Japanese Americans | Colorado Virtual Library." Colorado Virtual Library. 2015. Accessed April 05, 2016. http://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/digital-colorado/colorado-histories/20th-century/ralph-carr-defender-of-japanese-americans/.

"Rationing of Auto Tires to Start Jan. 2." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 16, 1941, Volume LVIII.

"Rationing System Only Fair Method to Distribute Goods on Hand, Director Says." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), March 9, 1943.

Rebecca R, Pritchard. *A Calendar of the Papers of Charles Boettcher: A Holding of the Library of the State Historical Society of Colorado*. Denver: Western Business History Research Center, 1969.

Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. 1860 (Washington: George W. Bowman, 1860), 138-139.

Richard C., Kistler, and James J. Reisdorff. *The High Plains Route: A History of the McCook Division of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad*. David City, Neb.: South Platte Press, 1986.

Richard W., Etulain. *Beyond the Missouri: The Story of the American West*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006.

Rocky Mountain News, May 30, 1860, p 5

Ruth, Tryon. "Hispanic Roots." In *A Land of Immigrants*. Fort Morgan, Colorado: One Morgan County, 2014. P7-9

Sarah, Deutsch. *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Scott C., Zeeman. *Chronology of the American West: From 23,000 B.C.E. through the Twentieth Century*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2002.

Sherow, James. "Watering the Plains: An Early History of Denver's Highline Canal." *Colorado Heritage*, no. 4 (1988): 9.

Shirley Gilliland. *World War II and the People and Events of Morgan County, Colorado.* Curtis Media, Inc. 1995.

"Should Honor Flag, Each Day, Says Hinkley." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), June 15, 1943, Volume LIX.

Snyder, John. "Glider Training School." Editorial. *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 1942.

Steve, Lebsock. "Great Western Sugar Company." *Case Study*, 2002, 1-10.

Studs, Terkel. *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1970.

"Sugar Beet Buyout." *Denver Post* (Denver), May 02, 2002. Accessed April 15, 2016.

"Sugar Beets." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), July 11, 1902, Volume XVIII. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Sugar Day at Sugar City." *Park County Bulletin* (Fairplay), October 24, 1902. Accessed July 7, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

"Sugar Factory at Fort Morgan Assured." *Longmont Ledger* (Longmont), January 20, 1905. Accessed April 30, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

"That's Politics." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), November 16, 1896. Colorado Historic Newspapers.

"THE BOETTCHER TIMES - Boettcherfoundation.org." Accessed April 14, 2016. http://boettcherfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/The-Boettcher-Times-A-Colorado-Legacy.pdf.

"Thirty- Four Below Zero Breaks Record Low Temperature Records Which Have Stood For Many Years." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), January 17, 1930.

Troy, Turner. *Colorado's Lost Squadron*. Loveland, Colo.: [publisher Not Identified], 1997.

"To Keep This Glory Fill This Book." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), February 27, 1944.
"Vets Advised to Go to Work." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 26, 1945.
"Want It Bad." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), December 6, 1901, Volume XVIII ed. Accessed April 29, 2016. Colorado Historic Newspaper.

"Twenty Below Record Temperature Here." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), January 9, 1930.

"Various Editions from 1929-1935." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan).

"Welcome to an Engaged Community." Fort Morgan, CO. Accessed December 15, 2015. http://www.cityoffortmorgan.com/index.aspx?nid=673.

Wesley Kellogg, Rickel. *One Hundred Eleven Trees: A Compilation of Biographies*. Fort Morgan, CO: Foundation, 1976.

William, Wyckoff. *Creating Colorado: The Making of a Western American Landscape, 1860-1940*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

"WORLD WAR WILL OFFICALLY END TODAY." *Fort Morgan Times* (Fort Morgan), September 1, 1945, Volume LXII.