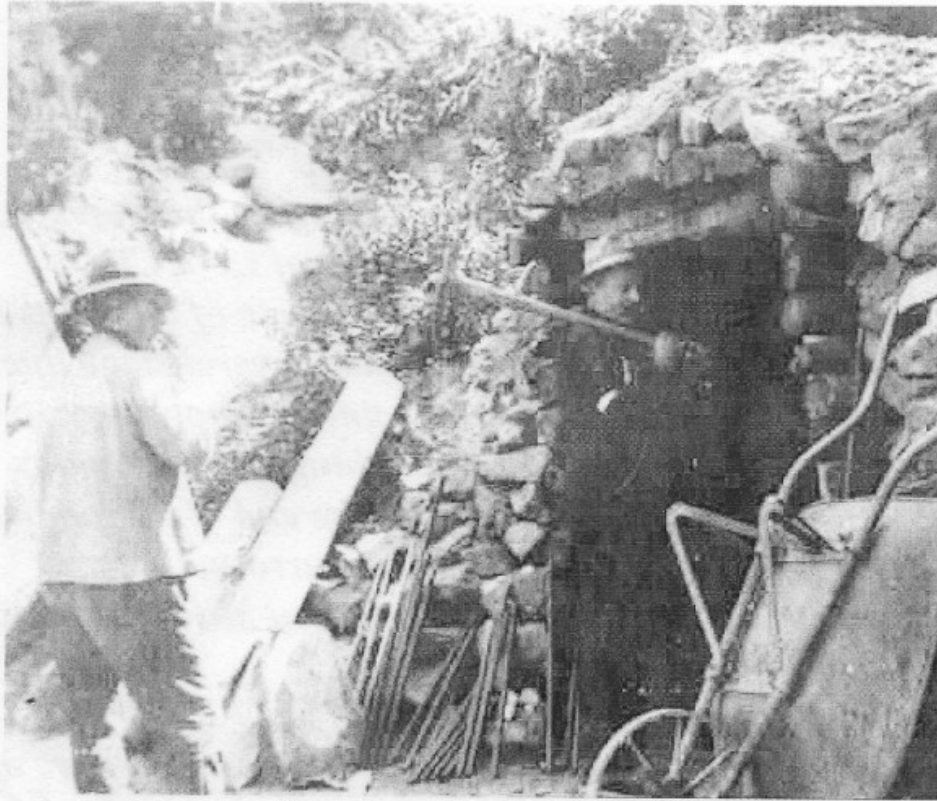


Mining

In the 1880s a mining boom occurring on the west side of the park leading to the establishment of Lulu City, Dutchtown and Gaskill. By 1881 the sale of town lots in Lulu City had doubled; the town had several stage lines, two sawmills, a general store, a mining supply store, a grocery store, a barbershop, a clothing store, an assay office, a hotel and restaurant. By the end of the summer there were 40 houses in Lulu. The surrounding countryside became the Lead Mountain Mining District, yielding some 450 mining claims.

The community of Grand Lake grew up on the shore of Colorado's largest natural lake to serve the needs of the new mining camps. James Cairns established a general store in 1881 and in 1884 the Harbison store was opened as well. Many mines were established with the help of large investment companies but there was no railroad and no equipment to break down the ore. The silver and gold mining boom lasted for about five years ending in 1884.





Harbison - Bob Wheeler at mine

Squeaky Bob Wheeler at his mine

Mining History

Mining came late to the Grand Lake area, and primarily to the mountains and hills of what is now Rocky Mountain National Park. As local historian and author Mary Lyons Cairns wrote, "Neither the Forty-niners nor the Fifty-niners seem to have visited the Grand Lake region in search of precious metals. None but sketchy legends remain of any prospectors having been there before the late seventies when the town of Grand Lake became the distributing point for supplies to Lulu, Gaskill, and Teller, and mining towns which had sprung up like mushrooms."

There was great excitement associated with these little towns near the headwaters of the Colorado River and with the potential of striking it rich. As early as 1873, J.E. Shipler prospected the area around what would become the town of Lulu City. In about 1878, Benjamin Burnett followed the lead of several others mining for gold in the area, laid out 19 streets intersected by four avenues, began selling cabin lots for \$20 to \$50 each, and named the his new town after his daughter, Lulu. By 1880, it had become a boom town, with stores, a hotel, roads leading out, and some 200 miners. The post office maintained twice-a-week deliveries from Grand Lake to Lulu.

Grand Lake's population and services grew rapidly during this time of heavy mining activity. By 1881, Grand Lake had overtaken in population and importance the town of Hot Sulphur Springs, which had long been the County Seat. There was a movement by various political factions and local businessmen to demand that Grand Lake become the County Seat, and it was moved here in 1881 after much bickering and litigation. The move was followed by a great deal of bitterness and feuding as people from the area, and several ambitious politicians aligned themselves with one or the other side, creating even more tension. It all led to a very unfortunate event in 1883, now often called "the Fourth of July Massacre", when armed men of one faction hid behind a boulder along the shore of the Grand Lake, and waited in ambush for a group of county commissioners and others of the other faction to come along the shoreline footpath. When all the shooting was finished, three county commissioners and a county clerk were killed, and a sheriff committed suicide shortly afterwards, all over who should have political control of the county. The incident was widely publicized, and people were afraid to come to this dangerous Grand Lake, which postponed the growth of summer visitors and summer home sites.

By 1883, the mining town of Lulu City was also in decline, as gold and silver deposits were found only in pockets and the ore was of a low grade. In addition, a smelter was never set up and it was difficult to get the ore to an outlying smelter as there was no railroad service, so miners had no efficient way of removing the metal from their ore. One can hike to the Lulu City site today, but there is nothing much to indicate a town ever was there. As Lulu declined, a neighboring mining town, Gaskill, gained in importance. Miners who continued to work the area needed a home base, and by 1884 Gaskill had overtaken Lulu City as the principal source of supplies. Gaskill was remembered as a fairly lawless and tough-living town encompassing about 60 acres, and with a population of about 100 store owners, hotel operators and others providing services. Gaskill too was completely gone in a few more years, joining a list of other hard rock mining towns like Dutchtown, Pearl, Teller City.

Placer mining, searching waterways for bits of precious metals that have been transported from veins or other deposits upstream, became more popular after the failure of other forms of mining. Miners would often use a rocker box, a device that sifted water to separate metal bits from the sand and waterway materials. One such miner, Isaac "Ike" Alden, prospected on Willow and Soda Creeks in the early 1880s. Ike broke a loose rock open, and found what he thought might be gold. He had to send specimens of the metal to Denver to be assayed, and in order to do that had to walk on foot to Grand Lake and the stagecoach. Before leaving, he carefully noted landmarks so he'd be sure to relocate his mining site. When the report came back from Denver, after nearly a month of stagecoach travel, it tested as gold and was valued at an amazing \$1600 per ton. Ike hurried back to his site to stake a claim and begin digging and blasting up his riches. Alas, while he had been waiting in Grand Lake for the assay report, a forest fire had burned a huge area including the site of his find, and he couldn't identify any of the landmarks. He spent the entire rest of his life working odd jobs in Grand Lake, saving his money so he could search every summer and fall for a trace of lost mine. He high hopes, saying that he'd mine \$100,000 of ore and then sell it, but he never found it.

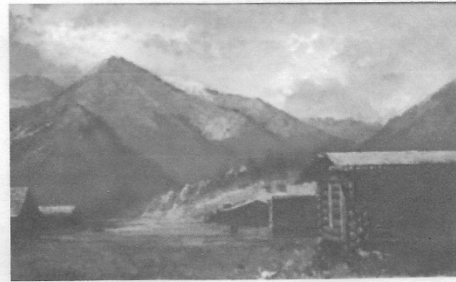
Gold and silver weren't the only metals mined in the area, but statistics show that mines in the entire Grand County never produced much of value. According to the Grand Lake Prospector newspaper, the entire output of mining in 1882 and again in 1883 was only \$10,000. It wasn't long before ranching became the important area economy. Grand Lake continued to be a supplier of goods and services, but draw summer visitors and summer home owners.

Credit :

Mary Lyons Cairns, author of Grand Lake in the Olden Days: a Compilation of Grand Lake, the Pioneers and Grand Lake in the Olden Days, page 10, Grand Lake Area Historical Society, 1971.

Lulu City

B. F. Burnett founded the town and named it after his daughter. Mr. Burnett was from Fort Collins and owned a supply store for miners.

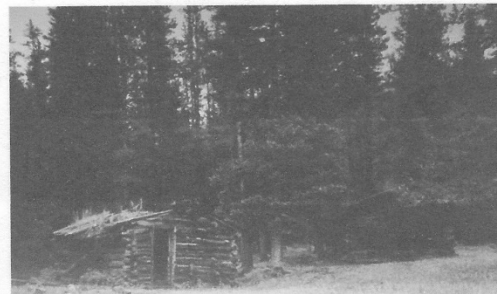


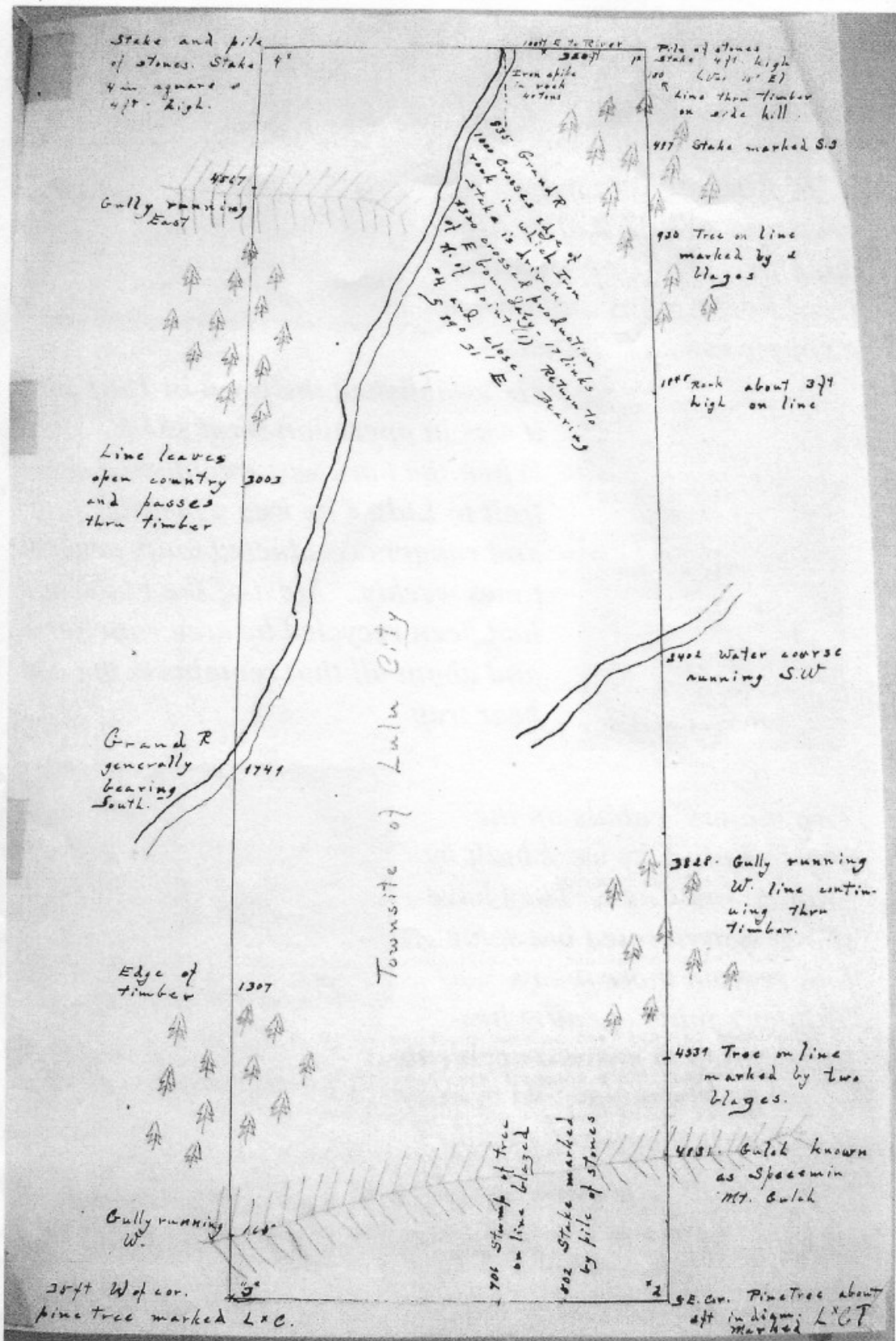
He established the town in 1881 and it was in operation until 1884.

When the park was established the trail to Lulu City was a popular one and rangers conducted tours several times weekly. Most of the buildings had been recycled by area ranchers and about all that remains is the old bear trap



Two miners' cabins on the way to Lulu City were built by Shipler and Coon. They have slowly deteriorated but some logs remain there today. Shipler's mine opening has been closed to prevent accidents by park visitors. An old ore cart is still visible along the trail. Lulu City became part of RMNP in 1949.





LULU CITY

During the summer of 1879 William B. Baker and Benjamin Franklin Burnett, visited the future location of Lulu City and played important roles in its development. William Baker went into the future Lead Mountain Mining District and located a 160-acre ranch at the head of the Grand River. Baker camped there until Nov. 24, 1879 at which time he built a log cabin measuring 14 x 16 feet. It was reported on Feb 26, 1880 that Wm. Baker had been spending the winter at Lulu City. This was the first mention found of Lulu City by name.

Burnett erected a general store made of logs and they built several log cabins that summer. This, then, was Lulu City which he named in honor of his oldest daughter Lulu Burnett. With the building and supplying of his general store, along with the claims Burnett, Shippler, Rigdon, Renetzky, E. M. Harmon and other miners staked out, Lulu City began to boom. Burnett and Baker were both charter members of the Middle Park and Grand River Mining and Land Improvement Company which was organized for the purpose of establishing Lulu City and owned the following mines: Galena, Mountain Gorge, Snow Flake, Fairplay, Pioneer, Lulu, Diamond, Crystal and Silver Streak.

The news of Lulu City and its environs comes to us today through newspaper accounts of the years 1879-1884. As was frequently the case, a reporter, or correspondent, wrote regular letters to the editor of a nearby newspaper, telling of the news of the day. We are left, then, with the impressions of these reporters which most certainly provide acceptable accounts, sometimes embellished, of the events which took place. In the case of the main reporter from the Middle Park area, whose letters were published over a five-year period, we are safe to assume that since his contributions continued to be printed, his accuracy was not often questioned. Surely the events reported happened. Perhaps the details reflect his editorial approach, enthusiasm and style; he became a chronicler of the time.

March 1880: *The miners worked as best they could until the 20th of February, when they found it would be necessary to vacate as they had not sufficient provisions to last until the snow would go off in the spring. They made snow shoes and each took one blanket and what "chuck" they could carry and started for Estes Park, distant about twenty-five miles, which point they made in five days hard traveling, pleased beyond measure at escaping death by starvation. Lots are selling rapidly in Lulu at from \$20 to \$50 each. We have a butcher shop, run by Burnett Bros.; a real estate agency and mining exchange, by H. F. Sturdevant; a hotel; a general store, by Stots, Houston, and Ramer; and about 20 dwelling houses, besides many others under course of construction.*

August 1880: *... a twice-weekly postal route had been established from Fort Collins to Lulu on the Stewart Toll Road. The first stage carrying passengers and mail arrived on August 12 and was met at the outskirts of the city by the band.*

From Grofutt's Grip Sack Guide of Colorado in the 1880's: *Lulu City is a new mining camp situated on the North Fork of the Grand River, in Grand County, (Middle Park,) about 15 miles north from Grand Lake, with which it is connected by a good wagon road. Lulu has a post office, stores, hotels, and a scattered population of about 500. Lulu is 76 miles north from Georgetown, via Grand Lake; stage four times a week, fare \$10; from Denver, by rail and stage, 113 miles, fare \$14.30.*

Further indication of Lulu City's development was the establishment of an election precinct and a road district. These were petitioned by the citizens of Lulu and granted by the Grand County Commissioners in late August. Elections were to be held in the Post Office building and D. M. DeLong, F. B. Parker and Hiram Churchill were appointed as judges of the election.

1881 proved to be a boom year for Lulu City. Georgetown Colorado Miner reported that some men were working through the winter and that a large number of people were expected in the spring. Late snows in the spring of 1881 made the roads virtually impassable and it was mid-June before the Stewart road was open. Stewart and Deaver reportedly started running their stage of four horse carriages from Fort Collins to Teller and Lulu on a tri-weekly basis. In July, the stage company announced that they were having to turn people away because of the high demand for passage. A stage run by the Northwest Line Stage Company also began running a tri-weekly line between Grand Lake and Lulu which connected with the Georgetown and Grand Lake line.

July 1881: *There has not been so much progress made in the place as I expected. Mr. DeLong is putting up quite an extensive building, but want of lumber prevents its completion. Messrs. Godsmark & Parker have a building 25 x 50 into which they will move their hotel as soon as it is completed. At present they are using a long tent, and a tent is not a bad place in the summer time. Indeed these gentlemen by their courtesy and anxiety to please, make this guest not at all regret their surroundings. As they remarked, they were not exactly running the Tedmon house, nor did they think they quite came up to the Windsor. But they do their best and give the traveler or sojourner a good meal, well and cleanly cooked. Godsmark & Parker's new hotel is nearing completion, and it is expected that it will be ready for occupancy by the middle of the month. As soon as completed, Godsmark & Parker will give a grand ball, and have already engaged the services of Professor McCracken and band.*

September 1881: *A wagon road is now being built up Baker gulch by volunteer labor, and partly by subscription.*

From Mary Lyons Cairns book, Grand Lake and the Pioneers: *As more miners and their families moved in, the hotel – the largest building in Lulu City was the focal point of their social life. Here dances were held once a week and the food was excellent. The finest of silver, china, crystalware and linens were transported over the same rough, makeshift roads to supply the hotel. Wild game was plentiful- pheasant, deer, sage hen - which the hotel served in abundance. Hot cakes and bear steak for breakfast; Colorado's famed rainbow trout for lunch. Rich preserves and desserts were made from the wild raspberry, gooseberry and current bushes. Everyone had a fine Christmas tree each year strung with cranberry and popcorn strands and paper angels colored blue and gold. Saloons were there, but there were also horseshoes, dances, quilting bees, hunting and fishing expeditions and much good conversation and laughter around the cozy fireplaces in the cool of the spring.*

The outlook in the early summer of 1882 was one of optimism; new buildings continued to be erected and the Episcopal Society of Fort Collins was making plans to build a church. There were about forty dwellings in the town. In June it was reported that thirteen new buildings, most for business purposes, were under construction. 1882 was the first year that Lulu made its first appearance in the Colorado State Business Directory. The population was recorded as 50 and the following businesses were listed: W. E. Backenest, assayer; Boyd and Harrington, lumber mill; H. Churchill, justice of the peace; Wm. Duguay, drugs; M. V. Gillett and Co., smelter; J. R. Godsmark, justice of the peace; Godsmark and Co., hotel; Hertel and Tabor, lumber mill; Howard Mining Co.; E. Snell, postmaster; Snell and Larosh, general merchandise.

June 1882: *John Simes, his wife and daughter moved to Lulu yesterday with their household goods – the first women that have graced the streets of Lulu since last September. Many of us had almost forgotten how the gentler sex looked, not seeing any for so long a time.*

September 1882: *Times are not so lively around this camp as when I last wrote you. The long-looked-for and many-time-promised smelter that was to have been put in this summer by the Grand Lake Mining and Smelting Company, is now, so we are informed, to be postponed until another year...*

The post office was closed on January 30, 1886. – Reports also were made to the effect that the post office was kept open, presumably by an enterprising postmaster, for a year after the town was empty. A few people lived occasionally in the cabins at Lulu up to the turn of the century while doing assessment work on the mines.

William Allen White, soon to be nationally known as an editor and political figure, visited Lulu City in 1889 while vacationing in Moraine Park with a group of his fellow college students from the University of Kansas. In his autobiography he described Lulu City: *We saw, forty miles from our camp, a deserted mining town – a marvelous picture like Pompeii. ...Overnight, it seems, the thousand inhabitants had pulled out. There was the post office, with the letters in the boxes; the saloons with the empty bottles on the shelves; the billiard tables with their green baize, moth-eaten and rat-gnawed; the stores with their shelves like grinning skulls empty of their fleshy furnishings; in the cabins the cookstoves stood in the kitchens, and iron safes standing open, too heavy to be moved. It was a dramatic picture – the little town of Lulu down on the Grand.*

The townsite of Lulu City was eventually sold on May 24, 1949 from the estate of Hugh J. Harrison to the US for inclusion in RMNP.

Today the site of Lulu City is a quiet meadow split by a peaceful stream, known originally as the North Fork of the Grand River, now the Colorado River. The remains of Lulu City are for the most part, barely discernable. No traces remain of the roads indicated on the original plat of Lulu City; the only entrance to the site is by way of a well-kept path maintained by RMNP. The ruins of one cabin and a bear trap are all that are easily visible. Upon closer inspection one can see the last rotting logs of the foundations of several additional buildings. These remains, some tree stumps, plus several regular discoloration in the grass and depressions in the ground (suggestive of the past existence of a building in that location) are the only physical traces of the existence of Lulu City today. Regrowth of the natural meadowland is almost complete.

You can hike to the site of Lulu City on the Colorado River Trail. The trail starts off Highway 34, 2 miles north of Timber Creek Campground. It is a four mile hike (one way)

Lulu City history
Estes Park Trail Gazette
June, 1983

To the Editor:

About that article on Lulu City (T-G, May 20), indeed it was named for my Aunt Lulu whom the Indians called the most beautiful woman they ever saw – as indeed she was.

My grandfather, Ben. F. Burnett, was not anything but a super gentleman as was my beautiful grandmother.

He was a captain in the Civil War under Lincoln. They had a farm next to Lincoln's when they were young in Laswell County.

They were very good friends.

Burnetts were French Huguenots in the 1400s. They moved to England for freedom of worship in the 1400 – we have a French cross.

Grandad also mined at Gold Hill and Ward with Horace Tabor. He had the first meat market and grocery store in Fort Collins in 1878 and he knew MacGregor well and also all the Englishmen who bought up acreage in Colorado. He had seven children and all lived to be a year or two from 100 years old.

My Aunt Pearl – married to Will MacFarlane of Walden, Colo., was the first woman to enter CSU.

Lulu City had several hundreds there when Grandad Burnett laid it out, which he did. He retired and moved to Denver.

What a man – intelligent, kind and generous to a fault and much loved.

Yes, Ben F. Burnett opened up much of the country in Northern Colorado and brought many of his friends to Colorado from the East.

I do not agree with Ernest Ingersoll, whoever he is.

Many of these men who came west were better educated than ones writing about them.

They found gold but most of all they loved our country and wouldn't have traded it for any mansions!

Many from the East found their health in our mountains when they were dying! What was money to health?

Why are people who know nothing of these marvelous men and women writing such fool things?

They sure as hell weren't trash!

My wonderful friend Harold Dunning could vouch for me were he alive. He knew my family well!

Ruth Burnett McDonald
Denver



Copy of original painting by Harrison Mills



Bird's eye view of Lulu City



Bear Trap at Lulu City



Dutchtown

Dutchtown site lies just below timberline in a valley of the Never Summer Range. Four decaying cabin ruins were there when the park was established. The story of Dutchtown was recorded in a letter written by a resident of Grand Lake to Raymond Gregg of the NPS as it was told to him in 1919 by Andy Eairhart who was in Dutchtown during the mining boom.

In the early 1880's there were living in one corner of Lulu City a number of persons (eight) of foreign (German) extraction, commonly called the Dutchmen. About 1883 a group of these men are said to have returned to Lulu City in a drunken condition and proceeded to eliminate some of the other people of Lulu City. Some of the more peaceful citizens were pretty badly damaged including one woman who came out of the fracas with a broken arm, one man with several broken ribs, and one fellow lost an eye. The next morning a meeting was held by members of the mining district and Mr. Burnett, Lulu City's unofficial mayor demanded that they all be run out of town, and that no more Dutchmen be allowed to build or live within the city limits. As soon as the Dutchmen were able to be around again they were all called together and told what the score was, and they believed it.

They climbed up into Hitchins Gulch where Mr. Hitchins had a claim and a cabin and about two miles above Mr. Hitchins claim they decided on a site and established the town of Dutchtown. When supplies were needed they went to Gaskill or Grand Lake. During the next two months they had plenty of trouble. They even went so far as to start a rock slide above the village hoping that it would wipe out the village and the men in it. The names of two creeks were given as Dutch Town Creek and Little Dutch Town Creek on a right of way map of the Grand River Ditch dated July 12, 1907. Dutchtown lasted some six months to a year longer than Lulu City and Mr. Hitchins stayed with his claim about twenty years longer.



DUTCHTOWN

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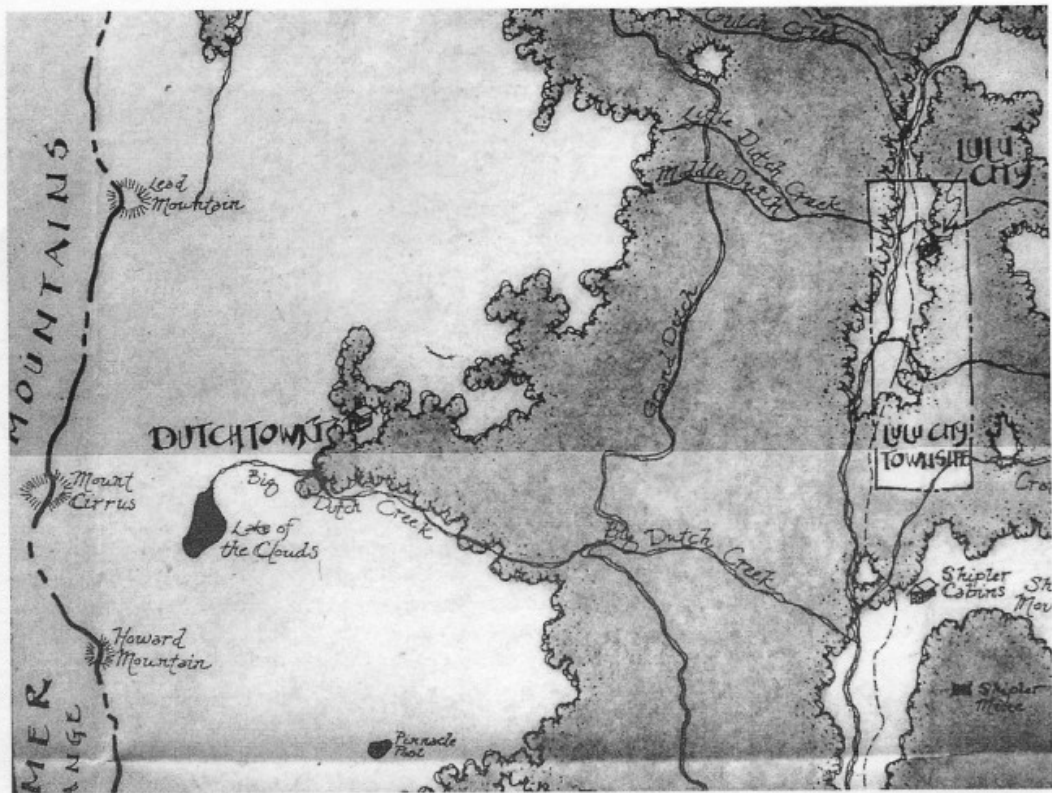
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During the next two months they had plenty of trouble. Some of the men at Lulu City were holding a grudge, and several times the Dutchmen were fired on from the hills surrounding their little village. One man being hit in the leg by a bullet. They even went so far as to start a rockslide above the village hoping that it would wipe out the village and the men in it. But the Dutchmen stuck and a natural barrier sprang up between them. There was a small ridge between the Colorado River Valley and Hitchins Gulch and this was declared as the border and it wasn't considered safe for either side to venture across this ridge.

The date ordinarily given for evacuation of Dutchtown is 1886, but occasional assessment work was done as late as the 1890's. The names of two creeks which are tributaries of the North Fork - Little Dutch Creek and Big Dutch Creek - were given as Dutch Town Creek and Little Dutch Town Creek on a right of way map of the Grand River Ditch, dated July 12, 1907. Dutchtown lasted some six months to a year longer than Lulu City and Mr. Hitchins stayed with his claim about twenty years longer.

There is only one source of information concerning the existence of Dutchtown, and it appears to be the basis of all later accounts of the town's history. No mention was found regarding its inhabitants or mines in contemporary newspapers or public records. It is the physical remains themselves which provide the major proof of Dutchtown's existence. They leave no doubt that a mining camp was inhabited at the site called Dutchtown, however, the story of how it came into being can not be corroborated.

Dutchtown site lies just below timberline in a spectacular valley of the Never Summer Range, flanked by Lead Mountain on the northwest and Mount Cirrus on the southwest. Four decaying cabin ruins and a rubblestone chimney are about all that remains.



Gaskill

In the town of Gaskill, a silver camp settled in 1880, was a rooming house built for miners, The Rogerson House. The house was eventually moved to the valley south of Grand Lake and served as the Lehman Ranch home and guest ranch. It was removed when the reservoirs were built in the 1940s.



The town was named for Captain Lewis Dewitt Clinton Gaskill, a Math professor in a New York College who came west beckoned by the pioneering, adventure instinct. Captain Gaskill built the first road over Berthoud Pass where he homesteaded. He had mine operation experience and was hired as Superintendent of the Wolverine mine above Gaskill. The town site is up Bowen Gulch and you can hike or snowshoe to it where you'll see remains of the road, and maybe a few tin cans.

Gaskill

In the town of Gaskill, a silver camp settled in 1880, was a rooming house built for miners. The Rogerson



GASKILL

Gaskill came into being several months after its neighbors Lulu and Teller and was surrounded by hundreds of acres of good meadowland and timber. Located at the mouth of Bowen Gulch and below Wolverine mine which was situated up the gulch about timberline, Gaskill came into being in August 1880 when Al G. Warner built a log cabin at the foot of Bowen Gulch and began offering miners provisions and liquor. His customers were the miners of Bowen and Baker Gulches. By the spring of the following year a post office had been established with John K. Mowrey as postmaster. Gaskill consisted of a post office, a saloon, and a few storehouses belonging to the Grand Lake Mining and Smelting Company. The town was named for the foreman of the Wolverine mine Lewis D. C. Gaskill, who was well known in the region as he had helped develop the road over Berthoud Pass a few years earlier. He was a Civil War veteran, a mining engineer and promoter, a surveyor, an accountant, a man of stability and many talents.

Impetus to the growth of the town was given when the mining company spread the word that it was bringing a smelter to the place and its use would be available also to the mines in the vicinity of Lulu. By the end of 1881 the town had added a store and a hotel, the latter apparently started by the town's postmaster. Not long afterwards the two-story hotel was taken over by Horatio and Emma Rogerson who named it the Rogerson House. In 1882 the town grew further and according to one historian it occupied 60 acres of ground and had 100 inhabitants. New additions included the Larosh livery service, a general store operated by P. J. Wade, Dewey and Martin's survey office, and Mrs. John Simes' boarding house.

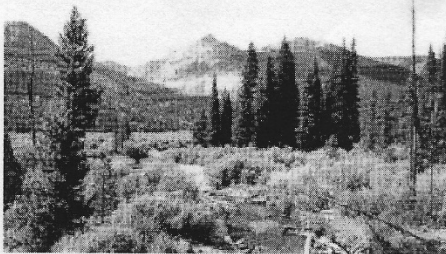
With an eye toward real estate profits, E. P. Weber, head of Grand Lake Mining and Smelting Company, laid out a larger town which embraced Gaskill. He named the town Auburn in honor of Gaskill's hometown in New York. The town plat called for eleven numbered avenues and fifteen named streets. Each block, 400' x 270' was to have 32 lots. Also, there was to be one public square equal in size to two city blocks. But the new town did not catch on, and the post office retained the Gaskill name.

As the fortunes of Lulu City declines, those of Gaskill, about 10 miles to the south, prospered. In January of that year Hiram Churchill opened a new store, and several months later brought his family over from Iowa. The closing in May 1883 of the Wolverine mine, the principal one of the area, seemed to have no immediate effect on the town as the remaining miners relied on Gaskill for supplies. After 1896 Gaskill was a ghost town. Today Gaskill is just a site and little but its memory remains.

Mary Lyons Cairns in her book, *Grand Lake and the Pioneers*, describes a famous race run during the summer of 1883. About once a month the miners from Teller, Gaskill and Lulu went down to Grand Lake to celebrate. A man named Sharp, who was working at the Wolverine, beat all the other miners at foot racing and was looked upon as a champion. His fellow-workers bragged about him when they went to Grand Lake, until a man there said he had a man named Montgomery who could beat Sharp. Immediately bets, starting at \$100, were placed, the bets totaling \$4,000. Sharp trained at Gaskill and Montgomery at Grand Lake, but the race was run on C Street in Teller City. Montgomery won by seven feet, and Sharp, who had a good part of the stakes in his possession, kept on running to the end of the street and then out in the timber where a saddled horse awaited him and rode away. He was never heard of again. With him went one of the girls from Teller's red light district. When the men at the Wolverine paid their bets they were all stony broke.

To reach Gaskill, drive into the park on Trail Ridge Road 4.6 miles north of the entrance station. Turn west for about ½ mile to a parking area. Walk the roadway west toward the mountains, crossing Baker Creek. A path into the trees will reveal some old foundations and the wagon road from over a hundred years ago.

Gaskill and the Wolverine and Ruby Mines



The Wolverine Mine was discovered in 1875 by James Bourn and Alexander Campbell. Bourn was the brother-in-law of James Crawford, the founder of Steamboat Springs. James Bourn was the twin brother of Crawford's wife, Maggie. A Grand County recording error forever changed the name of Bourn in the area to "Bowen". The mine was located in the Rabbit Ears Range on Bowen Mountain, up Bowen Gulch, approximately 10 miles northwest of Grand Lake. This discovery sparked additional exploration in the area that led to a number of new mines. Within a week of the original discovery, interested parties formed the Campbell Mining District which included Bowen Mountain, Bowen and Baker gulches. Some of the Middle Park residents who participated in the mining exploration were John Baker, Charles Royer, Charles Hook, John Stokes and the Redman brothers, William and Mann. The Redmans eventually discovered the Sedalia mine. Bourn and Campbell in less than a year lost the Wolverine mine by not fulfilling a grubstake agreement with the Georgetown grocers, Spruance and Hutchinson.

John Stokes leased the Wolverine Mine from the grocers until Edward Phillip Weber, an agent representing a group of Illinois investors, purchased the Wolverine Mine in the Summer of 1879. Weber continued purchasing other Campbell Mining District claims which created a great deal of local excitement. Weber hired Stokes to assist him and also hired Lewis Dewitt Clinton Gaskill to act as the first foreman for the Wolverine mine. Gaskill had mine operation experience, having successfully operated the Saco Mine, on Leavenworth Mountain, above Georgetown for several years. A mining camp was built below the Wolverine Mine that contained a large bunk house building and a more substantial mine office building.

Gaskill, a Civil War veteran of the 28th Regiment of the New York Volunteer Infantry, had come to Colorado in 1868 as a representative of a group of Auburn, New York bankers to invest in mining properties. He eventually successfully operated the Saco mine in 1873 and 1874. He invested in the Georgetown, Empire and Middle Park Wagon Road in 1874, which was a toll road that finally made the Berthoud Pass road passable for wagon traffic. Gaskill also acted as the foreman during the construction of the road. The principal investor in the road was William Cushman of the First National Bank of Georgetown. The bank had a financial collapse in 1877. At that time, Gaskill was the secretary of the road company and lived with his family in the company house just below the summit of Berthoud Pass on the west side. William Hamill, a wealthy Georgetown businessman, bought the wagon road in a foreclosure auction in 1881 for \$7,000. Gaskill continued to live with his family in the Berthoud Pass

summit house until 1885, when he moved his family into the Fraser Valley and homesteaded 160 acres along Elk Creek.

The settlement of Gaskill began when in August of 1880, Al J. Warner built a log cabin store in a meadow below Bowen Gulch on the trail/road that lead to both Bowen Gulch and Baker Gulch. The settlement was also strategically well placed midway on the trail/road between Grand Lake and Lulu City and the Lead Mountain Mining District. Another store was built in September by John K. Mowery. By that October, Mowery was appointed as the first postmaster of Gaskill. The following spring E. Snell, opened a large general merchandise store that prompted the original store keeper, Al Warner, to relocate to Grand Lake as Al's Place. The town was named to honor L.D.C. Gaskill, the greatly respected foreman of the Wolverine Mine, the road builder/operator and the Civil War veteran. By 1882, the town covered 60 acres. E.P. Weber of the Grand Lake Mining and Smelting Company got involved in the town real estate development by laying out a city grid and offering lots for sale. Weber's plat renamed the town Auburn after L. D. C. Gaskill's home town of Auburn, New York, but the Gaskill name stuck. By the close of 1882, there were over 100 residents living in Gaskill. The most substantial building was the Rogerson House, a well appointed two story, squared log hostelry, Horatio Bailey Rogerson, proprietor. Rogerson, would be elected County Commissioner in November of 1882, but would not serve because of a sudden discovery of ineligibility. Instead, lame duck Colorado Governor Pitkin, appointed E. P. Weber to the post. Weber was killed in the infamous July 4, 1883 shoot-out at Grand Lake.

The Bowen Gulch trail lead to many of the most productive and worked mines in the Campbell Mining District which included the Wolverine, now owned by the Grand Lake Mining and Smelting Company, E. P. Weber superintendent and the Ruby and Cross mines owned by Kentucky and Colorado Mining and Smelting Company, John Barbee superintendent. Barbee, who lived in Grand Lake, would go on to serve as superintendent of schools, Justice of the Peace and briefly the editor of the *Grand Lake Prospector*. Barbee's partner in many endeavors was Antelope Jack Warren. Warren was as rough as Barbee was refined. He acted as a foreman and, by one account, a bodyguard for Barbee. The Bowen Gulch trail continued up the mountain to Bowen Pass and then descended into North Park and the Jack and Park mining districts which were organized by the end of 1880, to the settlement of Teller City. Passable roads that could handle wagon traffic were needed and often planned but rarely built. The high cost of building and maintaining wagon capable roads in Middle Park was a difficult proposition for local governments and private entrepreneurs.

The Grand County Commissioners in July of 1877 had declared the trail from Grand Lake to the mining gulches of the Rabbit Ears Range to be a county road. However there was little county money to pay for improvements to make the trail a road. Private investors were reluctant to invest in wagon roads when there was the persistent rumor that railroads were coming spawned by the numerous railroad surveys that were performed in the area. Albert Selak, a Georgetown brewer, in August of 1878, organized a toll road that would branch off of the Georgetown, Empire, and Middle Park Wagon Road at the Ostrander Ranch on Red Dirt Hill, and proceed to Grand Lake and continue on to the Rabbit Ears Range mines and continue on into North Park and on to the Wyoming territory line. John Barbee invested in the Middle Park Toll Bridge Company, a toll bridge company that intended to build a bridge across the Grand River above the confluence of Willow Creek and the Grand River. However, this project languished, and was taken over by the county with an expenditure of \$150.

If ore wagons would need to haul ore to the nearest reduction mill which was over 60 miles in Georgetown, the toll road might have been a financial success. However, the lower grade ore from these

Rabbit Ears Range mines would not yield a sufficient profit to cover the transportation and processing costs in a market where the market value of silver annually declined. So the ore piles grew. What was needed was a nearby reduction mill or cheaper transportation, like a railroad or a higher price for silver. Weber had repeatedly promised that a reduction mill was coming, but nothing was ever built. By April of 1883 with tons of ore piled up and waiting for transport to be processed, Weber temporarily closed the Wolverine Mine and laid off his miners. He admitted in June of 1883 that the ore from the Wolverine was "rather refractory" and that it would not justify shipment without local reduction. Some hoped the closing was a strategic move by Weber to trigger a sell off of area mining properties so that he could acquire additional mines before he built the reduction mill, but it was not to be. Weber would soon be shot dead by his political rival, John Gillis Mills.

The favorable newspaper stories of Rabbit Ears Range mining would continue, but for the informed, it had become clear that without a major investment in improved transportation including a railroad or a major investment in a reduction mill in the area, the mining concerns were doomed to fail. Mining claims had to be worked in order to be kept. A minimum of \$100 of labor or \$500 in improvements had to be expended each year to maintain the claim or else the claim would be deemed abandoned. Many claim holders leased their claims to miners to work for a percentage of the return. Without the ability to sell and process the ore for a profit, there was no return. The speculative mining investment money began to dry up and the miners and their supporting merchants began to leave. By the end of 1886, the Middle Park mining boom had ended. To further add to the decline, a border dispute that arose between Larimer County and Grand County over the taxation and mineral wealth of North Park was finally decided in 1886 by the Colorado Supreme Court in favor of Larimer County. North Park was part of Larimer County, not part of Grand County. A lawsuit would follow so that Larimer County could recover the wrongly collected taxes of \$20,000 from Grand County. Grand County's total tax income at the time was less than \$3,500 a year.

Category:

Mining

Sources:

Perry Eberhart, *Guide to the Colorado Ghost Towns*, Sage Books, Denver, 1959

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Teller City

The remains of this town are in the National Forest over the Divide from Baker & Bowen Trailhead. You can drive there from Highway 125 west of Granby. It was named for Senator H. M. Teller and claimed a population of 1200 to 1500 in its heyday.

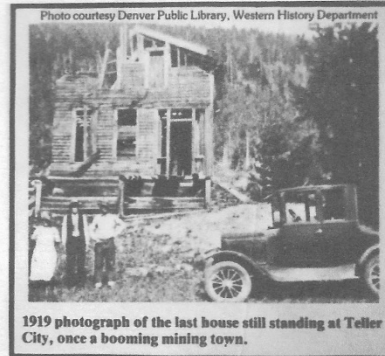


Photo courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Department

1919 photograph of the last house still standing at Teller City, once a booming mining town.

TELLER CITY

Teller City was established in 1879 and was located just north of the Continental Divide, northwest of Lulu City on Jack Creek in North Park and was first called Jack City. The name was changed shortly after to Teller in honor of Senator Henry M. Teller.

For a time it was the leading city of North Park and claimed a population of 1200 to 1500 in it's heyday. The Colorado Business directory of 1882 recorded population of 500 and listed 30 businesses which included a watchmaker, bakery and restaurant, several saloons and mining companies, a blacksmith, doctor, general stores and sawmills. A newspaper, The North Park Miner, was established in 1881. The Post Office operated from July 19, 1880 to December 16, 1885 when it was then moved to Walden.

A school was established in Teller City. The political structure of the city included a mayor, four trustees, two city judges, a recorder and a marshal. In 1880 a coach for passengers and mail operated between Laramie, Wyoming and North Park.

Teller City growth was rapid. In 1880 there were 60 houses of log construction with dirt roofs, blankets for doors and holes in the walls for windows. Some were clapboard, others hand hewn logs.

Yates House was the biggest rooming house with 40 bedrooms. In the plush lobby were red velvet drapes, thick Persian rugs and huge paintings by foreign artists, and a large fireplace with iridescent rocks.

The most promising mine was the Endomile, three miles above the town, producing both gold and silver. All that was needed was a means to reduce the ore and the promised smelters never arrived.

In Mary Lyons Cairns book, The Pioneers, she tells an interesting story. A contract was given by an eastern company to two men to sink a hundred-foot shaft in their mine to determine the quality of ore at that depth. The men dug a shaft fifty feet deep and struck water. Finding it hard to keep ahead of the water with their crude windlass and buckets, they abandoned one shaft, and moving sixty feet away, sank another fifty-foot shaft in the same vein of ore. When they had finished they signed a statement that they had done one hundred feet of work and sent it to the company. As soon as they were paid they skipped out and today the two shafts and two piles of earth and rocks mark the site of the swindle.

To reach Teller, go south on 34 to 40, turn right for approximately 2 miles until you come to 125. Drive up 125 for 30 miles until you come to the Old Homestead. Turn right and follow the road for approximately one-mile. Follow the arrows to Jack Creek and Illinois River. Continue for approximately 4 miles until you come to a sign pointing to your left "Teller City". Continue approximately 4 more miles and another sign will show Teller City to the left. Turn for 1 mile and you are there. Take a lunch.

Photo courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History Department



1919 photograph of the last house still standing at Teller City, once a booming mining town.

TREASURES OF TELLER CITY

THE YATES HOUSE HOTEL

Welcome to the very heart of town — C Street. The foundation before you is all that remains of what was the grandest structure in Teller City, the Yates House Hotel. Boasting two stories and as many as 40 rooms, it was both large and elegant. Persian rugs and fine European paintings decorated the lobby. If you listen closely, you might still hear faint echoes from the grand piano that graced the parlor.

Teller City's boom was dizzying; buildings and rooms sprang up overnight. There is even a story of a Yates House room built right around a newly arrived guest (from *The Medicine Bow Mining Camps* by Mel Duncan):



Courtesy of the South Park Forest Museum

"We took it and the room was built around us during the day. The windows and the doors were put in and the boarding of the walls completed while we occupied the room. It was the first time I had ever seen a room 'built around you while you wait.'"



Route National Forest

This Hotel from Teller City was moved to Stillwater by Henry Lehman and John Holzwarth and became the Lehman Ranch house (see Stillwater Ranch in Ranch and Homestead notebook)



In 1949 Muriel Wolle published the book "Stampede to Timberline". As the result of a single mountain drive an absorbing hobby was born. She dedicated herself to recording pictorially the mining towns of the state before they disappeared.



During the twenty-two years she was engaged on this project Muriel Wolle covered the mountain areas of the state and visited two hundred and forty mining communities. She had always liked buildings and enjoyed drawing them. She hiked the trails and rode horses to lost mining towns and produced hundreds of documentary drawings, recording the sagging cabins, the disintegrating wooden sidewalks, the rusting mills. This search was aided by six University of Colorado Research grants which enabled her to have a student chauffeur to drive on the extended and unpredictable trips. Other people often accompanied her on these adventures. The Denver Public Library has loaned some of her drawings for our exhibit.



