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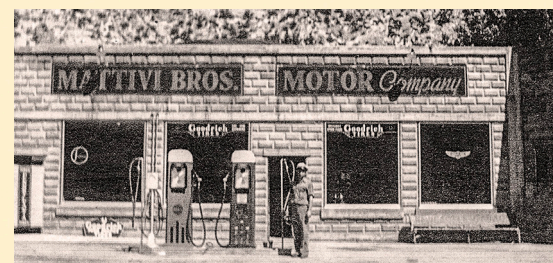
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A WALKING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN NEW CASTLE

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A WALKING TOUR OF DOWNTOWN NEW CASTLE

In 1882 Jasper Ward filed a homestead claim to 160 acres at the confluence of Elk Creek and the Colorado River. Other homestead claims quickly followed, and soon the original settlers began selling the land which would become the Town of New Castle. The town was incorporated on February 2, 1888.

The discovery of rich veins of coal in the Grand Hogback brought new residents—miners, their families and entrepreneurs to build businesses serving the miners. Many of the early settlers in the new town were coal miners from Great Britain, Italy and Eastern Europe. In the 1890's the population of New Castle fluctuated between 1500 and 2500 people. There were banks, grocery stores, livery stables, newspapers, drug-

stores, brothels, taverns and a brewery. The Colorado Midland Railroad finished tracks to New Castle on October 1, 1888. One year later, the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad arrived. The trains transported coal from New Castle to coke ovens in Cardiff and Redstone, then carried the coke to silver smelting facilities in the Aspen area.

The Vulcan Mine, located in the Grand Hogback just southeast of town, was the most renowned of the town's four mines. In 1896 the mine exploded, killing forty-nine miners. Thirty-seven more miners were killed in a second Vulcan Mine explosion in 1913, as were three more in 1918. A monument was erected in Burning Mountain Park in 2004 to honor them.



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1. *ST. JOHN’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH 100 W. MAIN. The cornerstone of the building was laid on November 2, 1908 and the first service in the new building was held on Easter Sunday, April 11, 1909. The building is the oldest existing church in town. Typical of small town churches in the Gothic Revival style, the church features concrete construction, gabled roof, and pointed arch windows. It was constructed using local labor and materials.

2. ST. JOHN’S GUILD HALL. Across 1st Street is the Guild Hall, which was originally a Civilian Conservation Corps building, moved to New Castle from La Junta. It was disassembled in 1948, transported over the mountains, and reassembled in New Castle.

3. *MATTIVI BUILDING 298 W. MAIN. Built in 1937 on the site of a livery stable and blacksmith shop. Masonry blocks for the building came from dismantled buildings in Cardiff. Former Mayor Pete Mattivi operated a Phillips 66 Service Station and Studebaker dealership here.

4. BANK OF NEW CASTLE 302 W. MAIN. The first bank in town was organized in 1889. From 1899-1909 the building housed the post office, then the New Castle State Bank, which closed during the 1930’s. Doris and Harry Flynn operated a drugstore here from the early 1940’s to 1979.

5. CONFECTIONARY SHOP 312 W. MAIN. The original building was constructed in 1889, with space between it and the buildings to the east and west. By 1899 a narrow office building was added on the west. The building served as a confectionary and cigar store, later as a barber shop and office space. In 1928 it was purchased by the ladies of St. John’s Church for use as a Guild Hall.

6. ROCK SALOON 316 W. MAIN. Built about 1890, this native stone and brick building was known as the “Rock Saloon” because of its rock construction. It originally housed a saloon and a grocery store. Charley Burrell later operated a “pas-time” in the building, with card tables, pool and billiard tables. After his appointment as postmaster, Burrell moved the post office to this structure where it remained from 1928 to 1985, when the new post office opened in the 100 block of West Main Street.

7. *MUSEUM (OLD TOWN HALL AND FIRE STATION) 116 N. 4TH. Originally built in 1893 of unglazed brick with a flat roof, the building housed the fire station in the front, along with town offices and council chambers. With the construction of the new Town Hall in 1984, the building became the town museum. Stop in to see some of the numerous items on display from New Castle and the surrounding area.

8. TOWN JAIL. (located behind the Museum) Constructed in 1893 of rough quarried stone, with walls two feet thick.

9. GARFIELD COUNTY LIBRARY—NEW CASTLE BRANCH 402 W. MAIN. The first public library in Garfield County was established in the New Castle School in 1938 (#21). This library served the entire county until the first dedicated library building was constructed on this site in 1967. After 33 years of service, the building was remodeled and expanded. The roof and most of the exterior walls were replaced and the floor space doubled in size. The rebuilt library opened in March 2012.

10. *ODD FELLOWS HALL 500 W. MAIN. The Odd Fellows insignia still appears on the façade of the building, built in 1890.

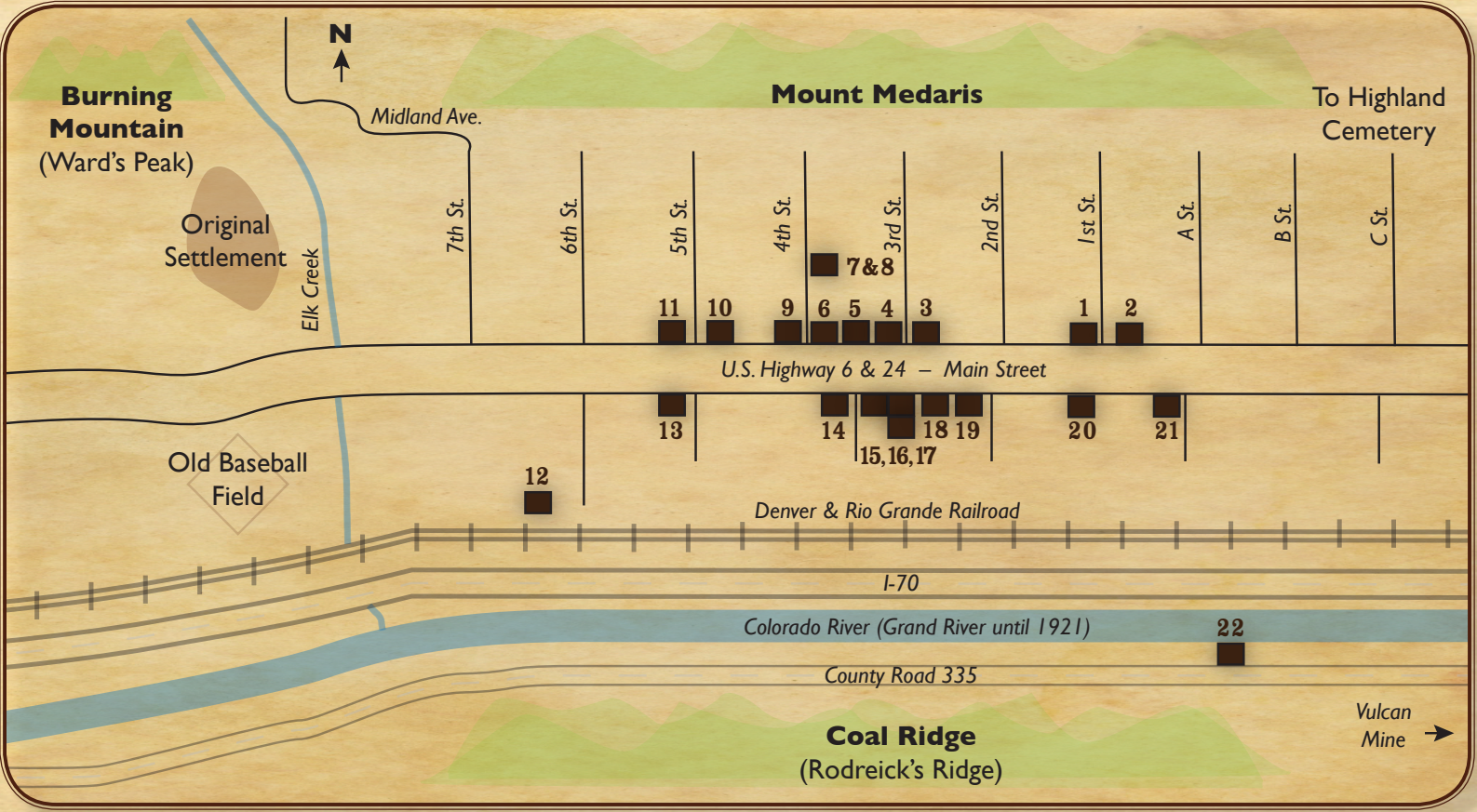
In 1893 the building was occupied by a saloon, later by J.W. Hauxhurst’s Meat Market, and then by Larsen and Young’s Mercantile. In 1898, after a fire destroyed their original home, the Grand River Lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows used the second floor until the lodge disbanded in 1987.

11. *BARRY BUILDING 502 W. MAIN. In 1893 this two story building served as a general merchandise establishment. Daniel Barry, the original owner of the building, was described as “a gentleman who has a prosperous business in the grocery, dry goods, boot and shoe line.” Barry operated his business here until 1897. Cohn, Doll & Co. (later Doll Bros. and Smith) operated a dry goods and general merchandise store here, followed by the Rocky Mountain Stores Co. from 1908-1915. Albert Nelson and Joe Brunetti later operated a garage and filling station in the building through the 1940s. The building’s

for hauling. Later Levi Strauss and A Schilling & Co. rented buggies for trips to Meeker, Craig and Steamboat Springs.

14. TRIMBLE BLOCK 303-331 W. MAIN. The brick structure was erected in the 1890’s for use as a saloon and theatre operated by W. H. Trimble. The second floor was used for entertainment, meetings and dances, and was known as the Trimble Opera House. In 1901 the building housed the first office for the Colorado Telephone Company. The building also served as a liquor storehouse, a barber shop, a grocery store and a meat market.

This building played a part in the infamous shooting of Town Marshall John Rennix. Billy Griffith, a former Marshall, saloon keeper and popular baseball player, lost a legal dispute and seeking revenge, he shot and killed Marshall Rennix. He fled



next identity was as “Tony’s Cue Club,” operated by Tony Manupella, with apartments on the second floor. Later occupants of the first floor were restaurants, first La Loma West, and then the Elk Creek Mining Company.

12. COLORADO MIDLAND RAILROAD DEPOT SITE. The Colorado Midland Railroad reached New Castle in 1888. The depot was constructed on the south side of Main Street, in the 600 block. It was shared with the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad which reached New Castle in 1889.

In 1905 President Teddy Roosevelt came to Colorado on a hunting trip and rode a special Colorado Midland train from Glenwood Springs to New Castle, where he met his horses and guides. The group rode up Divide Creek, where the hunting party shot 12 mountain lions and 12 bears. The depot was demolished in the early 1960’s.

13. EXCHANGE STABLES 503 W. MAIN. The business was operated by C.H. Noren & Son, who rented horses and rigs

to the second floor of the Trimble Building, where he had a room. From there he shot and killed William Davis, who was trying to aid Rennix. Griffith then shot himself. All three men are buried in Highland Cemetery. Look for the bullet holes in the walls of this building.

15. *H. R. KAMM STORE 299 WEST MAIN. Built in 1888, it was the size of its two neighbors (Bernoudy and Calhoun (#16 & #17) combined. Henry R. Kamm, who owned a grocery store in Glenwood Springs, opened this grocery and dry goods store, operated by J.W. Ritter. Ritter left to form a partnership with John MacRae, and in the late 1910’s the partners acquired Kamm’s building and expanded their clothing and dry goods business into the space, operating it until 1967.

Kamm’s store, like the two adjoining buildings, has been significantly altered from its historic appearance.

16. *CALHOUN’S CLOTHING STORE 239 W. MAIN. The building which housed Calhoun’s Clothing Store was constructed

around 1890. In 1892, MacRae partnered with J.W. Ritter and operated a clothing and shoe store here. Both Ritter and MacRae served as Mayors of New Castle.

The building served as branch of the Three Rivers Library System and was later joined to the general store to the east. The building was converted to a restaurant in 2001.

17. BERNOUDY BROTHERS’ SALOON, 201 W. MAIN. The easternmost of three adjoining buildings, the brick building was constructed around 1890 and operated for several years as a saloon. In 1904 it was used as a feed and storage structure and as the Mattivi Brothers’ gas station from 1929-1938. It was eventually purchased by Ritter and MacRae, who operated their store at the west end of the block. In the 1960’s it was refitted as a general store operated by several different owners until 2002, when it became a grocery store and then a restaurant.

18. *BLACKSMITH SHOP 161 W. MAIN. Originally a log structure, the building was a blacksmith shop and later an office and small engine shop. In the 1930’s, it was used for storage for Pete Mattivi’s Studebaker dealership across the street. In the 1980’s the building was reconfigured for use as a taxi-dermy business, and remodeled in 2002-2003 to the present structure.

19. 1890’S HOUSE 181 W. MAIN. Constructed on the site of an earlier house that was destroyed by fire, the one and one half story home is representative of the town’s early domestic architecture. It was moved from the rear of the lot to the front in 1905. The house has been owned and occupied since 1976 by Frank and Kim Breslin. Frank Breslin served twice as Mayor of New Castle.

20. MINERS’ MEMORIAL, IN BURNING MOUNTAIN PARK. Commissioned by the Town of New Castle, the Miners’ Memorial was created by sculptor Grant Ballin and dedicated in 2004. The names of the miners lost in the three Vulcan Mine explosions are listed on the memorial.

21. NEW CASTLE SCHOOL 151 W. MAIN. The first school in New Castle met in an empty cabin beginning in 1886. A frame school building was built at the east end of town a year later. In 1892 a brick school was built on the hillside between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Described as “substantial and lovely,” the building was in use for only seven years. The instability of the hillside caused the school to be declared unsafe and was razed in 1909.

The New Castle School on Main Street was constructed in 1913 using stone from a local quarry. The gym was added as a W.P.A. project in 1939, using adobe brick manufactured on site. The school closed in 1978.

22. COLORADO MIDLAND BRIDGE. The bridge served as the railroad spur to the Vulcan Mine on Rodreick’s Ridge. All that remains of the bridge is the pier visible behind the old school. Constructed in 1887, the bridge collapsed once before it was finally abandoned in the 1920’s.

MINERS’ LOTS. The original plat for New Castle was laid out in 25’ by 100’ lots. While most of these lots have been combined in order to accommodate larger buildings, a number of miners’ lots can be observed on the downtown side streets.