

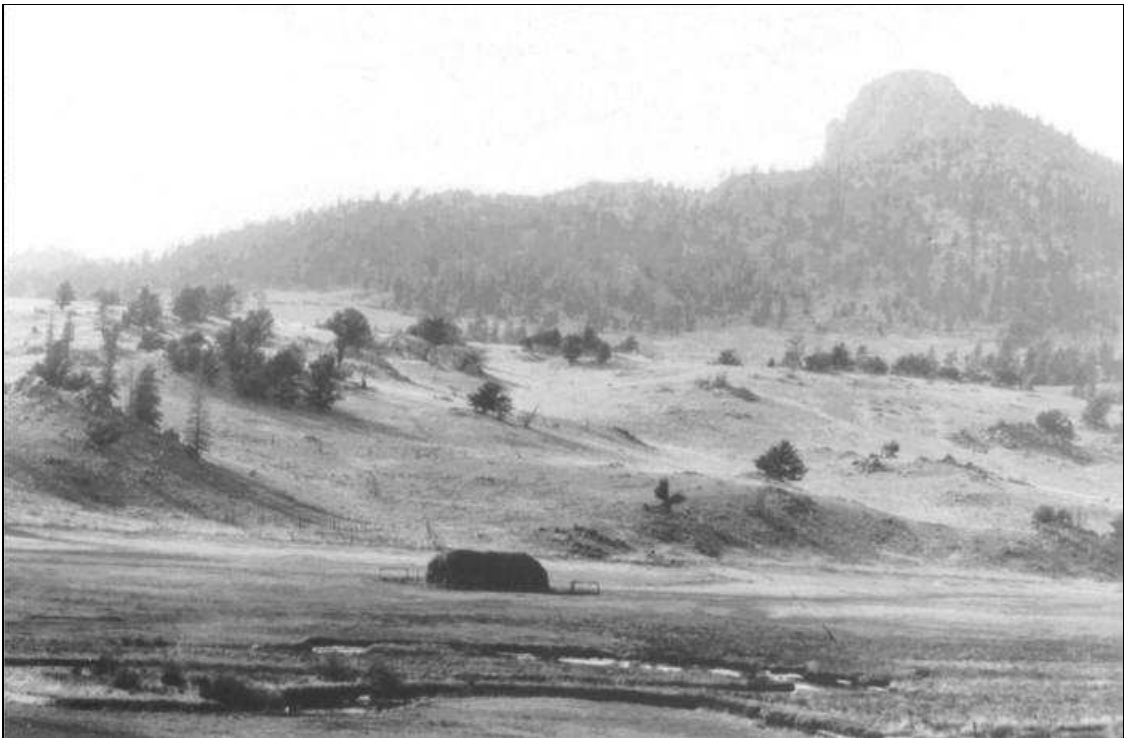
A GUIDE FOR THE TARRYALL ROAD

(Park County 77)

Between Jefferson and the Tarryall School

By

The Park County Local History Archives



A view of the Bordenville area is shown in the early 1900s. Observatory Rock is in the background. Photo is courtesy of the Wilkin collection.

INTRODUCTION

This guide for the section of the Tarryall Road between the Tarryall School and Jefferson has been compiled in order to enhance the traveler's understanding of the history of the Tarryall area. It is by no means a complete history. The ranches are identified by their historic owners not the current owners. No attempt was made to present a complete history of the ownership of the properties beyond the original owners after the properties were sold.

This guide was written by volunteers from the Park County Local History Archives. It is hoped that it will serve as a contribution to historic preservation in Park County.

Nearly all the properties described in this guide are privately owned. Please do not trespass in any way; and please respect the privacy of property owners and/or residents. Take only pictures, leave only tire tracks.

From Tarryall School: 29.2

JEFFERSON

Jefferson was founded in 1879 by rancher Willard Head. He donated some of his land for the depot and opened a store. A store and hotel were then added. The population in 1880 was 55. By 1884 the town had 2 butchers, a saloon, a lumber mill, and a blacksmith. A cheese factory was built and used during the 1890s. The railroad ended operations in 1937 and the town remains a ranching community.

From Jefferson: 0.1

From Tarryall School: 29.1

HEAD RANCH

This ranch is located on both sides of Tarryall Road, northeast of Jefferson Creek. It is on 725 acres which Willard R. Head received from the state of Colorado on March 28, 1888 for \$1,935.25. The residence was built by Head in about 1900 and was attached to a log dwelling which is no longer present. The residence is a good example of Queen Anne architecture.

Willard Head, the founder of Jefferson, was born in 1842 in Nauvoo, Illinois. His father, a Mormon minister, passed away in 1851 and the family moved to Utah. When the U.S. Army arrived in Utah to suppress a Mormon rebellion, Head terminated his ties to Mormonism and began working as a freighter at Camp Floyd, near Provo. He then went to Fort Bridger as a government stock herder in 1858 and came to Colorado in 1858, after hearing about the gold discoveries. He then went to Nebraska where he worked for the Hockady & McGraw Stage Company, later moving to Fort Kearney where he was a stage driver for Ben Holliday. Beginning in 1866, he worked as a freighter for the government and as a contractor for the Union Pacific Railroad. He freighted supplies to Fort Laramie and Fort Kearney. From 1869 to 1872 he operated a stage house on the road to Georgetown. He then operated a store and farmed at Bradford Junction, now Conifer, until 1875. In 1878, Head obtained a contract to supply railroad ties for the Denver, South Park & Pacific Railroad. He also began a livery business along the line while his wife, Christy, operated a bakery and restaurant.

Head settled on his ranch in South Park in 1879 and platted the town site of Jefferson on 40 acres of his ranch, established a hotel and store, and began selling lots. He also operated a steam sawmill 4 miles from Jefferson until 1881. The ranch grew to 1000 acres, which included 500 acres of mown hay. His many business activities were probably conducted at the ranch. He was elected Park County Commissioner in 1889.

Willard Head died in 1920 and his wife, Christy, sold the property to the Singleton Realty and Investment Company in 1929.

From Jefferson: 3.7

From Tarryall School: 25.6

SANBORN RANCH

The oldest buildings are located on the east side of Tarryall Road. The land was first acquired as part of a Homestead Entry patent in 1920 by the heirs of William R. Sanborn. Sanborn was born in Living Springs, Colorado in 1871 and was a prominent cattle rancher in the South Park area until his death in 1918 or 1919. He apparently began to occupy the ranch in 1907. He leased a ranch in South Park in 1893 and then purchased a 1,600 acre ranch south of Jefferson in partnership with Christ Kaiser in 1898. He owned another ranch of 1,050 acres northwest of Jefferson where he resided for some time.

The 2 primary residences were built in the 1950s and the outbuildings were built in the 1930s.

From Jefferson: 4.4

From Tarryall School: 23.1

WRIGHT HOMESTEAD

This ranch complex includes a large residential structure and several outbuildings on a slope above Michigan Creek, mostly on the north side of Tarryall Road. Silas Wright, a native of New York, was granted a Homestead Entry Patent for the land in 1912. In his final proof testimony, Wright stated that he arrived on his claim in May 1895, and that the log residence he was occupying was already on the land. In 1908 Wright had 3 acres under cultivation and used the remainder of the land for grazing about 70 head of cattle. In 1919 Silas and his wife Mary Wright sold their property to Ethel Bartlett and A. L. Archer.

The log residential structure was constructed in about 1879 with additions made into the 1890s. The residence and other structures at the site have survived with virtually no alterations. The site is a good example of a ranch complex from the initial settlement period along Tarryall Creek.

From Jefferson: 5.3

From Tarryall School: 24.0

MILLER RANCH

Buildings are located on both sides of Tarryall Road. 2 original buildings, log cabins that were built in the 1880s or 1890s are on the west side. The primary residence, which was built in 1935, is on the east side. William H. Miller filed a preemption claim in 1881 and acquired the patent for 160 acres in 1887. The products of the ranch in 1884 included 50 tons of hay and 100 pounds of cheese. William Miller, a native of Kentucky,

was the brother-in-law of Olney Borden, who married his sister Mary. The property remained in the Miller family until it was sold to Sam L. Rudd in 1961.

From Jefferson: 6.1

From Tarryall School: 23.2

MICHIGAN SCHOOL SITE

The Michigan school, which was located on the north side of Tarryall Road, is best known as the place where 3 school board members were killed by Ben Ratcliff in 1895. Ratcliff, whose wife had died in 1882 and was buried in the Bordenville Cemetery, got in a dispute with the school board. According to reports, he was living back in the hills and creating some salacious gossip so an effort was made to keep his children out of school. While the school board was meeting Ratcliff appeared and murdered all 3 – Samuel Taylor, Lincoln McCurdy, and George Wyatt.

Ratcliff rode to Como where he gave himself up. He was tried and hanged in Canon City. The school was burned a few years after the incident. The site is now used by fishermen.

To put the Ratcliff event in perspective, one only has to stop and think what would take place if it had happened in our time. Barring anything short of war, Ben Ratcliff would be the lead story on all the network and cable newscasts. A dozen satellite trucks would be lined up on Tarryall Road; and microphones would be thrust in the face of any local who happened to wander by.

From Jefferson: 6.2

From Tarryall School: 23.1

BOWSHER RANCH

The abandoned buildings and remains of buildings are located on the north side of the Tarryall Road. The site is on land acquired as a 20-acre Second Homestead Entry Patent by Anthony D. Bowsher, a native of Ohio, in 1918. He reported that he first settled on the land in 1905 and that his house was already present. At the time that Bowsher acquired the land he was 60 years old and had a wife and 5 children. In addition to the house, the property also had a barn, sheds, a well and a chicken house. He had 41/2 acres planted in potatoes, oats, and vegetables.

Anthony Bowsher died in 1930 and is buried in the Como Cemetery. The property remained in the Bowsher family until it was sold to William Miller in 1951.

DUNBAR/ ROBBINS RANCH



The residence of the ranch, built in 1872, as it appeared in the early 1900s. It has changed very little. Photo is courtesy of the Wilkin Collection.

The land was granted as a Cash Entry Patent to Thomas M. Dunbar in 1875 after he filed a preemption claim. Dunbar, a native of Massachusetts, paid \$200 for his 160 acre claim. Dunbar, by that time, had been on the land since 1872 and had built a house, stable, corral and made other improvements. By 1885, his holdings had increased to 1600 acres. Sons James and Charles acquired adjoining homesteads on Rock Creek. The primary residence has had only minor window alterations and non-historic siding on the wing addition. It is a good example of late Victorian/vernacular wood frame architecture. 5 outbuildings, built between 1893 and the early 1900s, are connected to form 1 side of a large corral area.

Thomas Dunbar died in 1891 and is buried in the Bordenville Cemetery. His wife, Georgiana, sold the property to Lew Robbins in 1899 for \$2000.

OLNEY BORDEN RANCH (BORDENVILLE POST OFFICE)



The Olney Borden ranch is shown during the early 1900s. None of the original buildings remain. Photo is courtesy of the Wilkin Collection.

Olney Borden was born March 11, 1831 and grew up on a farm in New York. In 1865, after his wife died, Olney was persuaded by his brother Tim to move to Colorado. After mining for a short time near Golden, Olney arrived in South Park in 1865. That fall he and his brother located ranches along Tarryall Creek. Olney built a sawmill on his property in 1867 and sold lumber which was used locally. Profits from the sawmill allowed him to increase his land holdings to 3,000 acres and to stock his ranch with cattle. In 1870, Olney reported ownership of 13 “working oxen”. They may well have been used in his logging/sawmilling activities.

Prior to the coming of the railroads and products from more temperate agricultural areas, Park County ranchers grew surprising amounts of vegetable and grain crops to supply their needs and local markets. Olney Borden was no exception. He reported growing 200 bushels of oats and 100 of barley, along with 6,000 pounds from his 10-acre potato patch in 1869.

In 1880, Olney married Mary G. (Miller) Barlow. Mary, who had 4 children from a previous marriage, was related to the Millers who had a nearby ranch. By 1885 Olney had a 2,200 acre ranch with 100 acres of hay. He also had 21 horses, 1 mule, 114 cattle, 6 milk cows, 15 chickens and 2 hogs. He received the patent for this homestead in 1886.

On March 16, 1900 Olney Borden sold his holdings to his stepsons, William H. and Edward N. Barlow. Olney died in 1900 and Mary in 1923. Both are buried in the Bordenville cemetery.

Bordenville was a minor center of activity along Tarryall Creek from the middle 1860s to middle 1880s. It had a post office from September 29, 1879 to November 28, 1884. The post office served a population of 50 at its peak including a stage stop, general merchandise store, blacksmith, and mineral surveyor. The facilities available were at the ranches of Olney and Timothy. It also had a cemetery and a school. Although Bordenville was not a town as such, it did provide a focus for widely separated ranches of the area.

From Jefferson: 11.4

From Tarryall School: 16.2

BORDENVILLE CEMETERY



The Bordenville cemetery is shown in the early 1900s. The oldest marked graves go back to 1880 and it is still occasionally used. Photo is courtesy of the Wilkin Collection.

TIM BORDEN/WILKIN/JOHNSTON RANCH



The Tim Borden ranch as it appeared in the early 1900s. Some of the original structures remain and are good examples of early log ranch buildings. Photo is courtesy of the Wilkin Collection.

Tim Borden was born on September 27, 1826 and grew up on a farm in New York. He married Adelia A. Williams in 1849. In 1858 they moved to a farm in Iowa and in 1861 they came to Colorado where he became a successful miner in Summit County. He and his brother Olney began ranching along the Tarryall Creek in 1865. Tim built a 14 by 15 foot log residence.

With no railroads to bring in supplies from less harsh climates, Tim Borden raised several crops as he could in the early days. In 1869, he grew 200 bushels of oats and 100 of barley, along with 7,200 pounds of potatoes. From about 15 cows, he also produced 600 pounds of butter that year. Not yet having a big market for hay, he cut only 6 tons in 1869. He received the patent on his land in 1876 and by 1885 Tim had a 1,360 acre ranch which had produced 200 tons of hay in 1884. He also had 24 horses, 147 cattle, 20 chickens and 3 milk cows.

On July 6, 1894 Tim mortgaged the property to William Chambers. After Tim's death in 1907, the ranch went to Chambers' daughter, the wife of Fairplay lawyer Charles Wilkin (who owned another nearby ranch). The ranch was later home to 3 generations of the Johnston family.

Adelia Borden died in 1892. She and Tim are buried in the Bordenville Cemetery.

From Jefferson: 11.4

From Tarryall School: 16.2

BORDENVILLE DISTRICT SCHOOL SITE



This old school is shown in the early 1900s. The school was located on the east side of the road. It is not known what happened to the building. All that remains today is the site. The building appears to have been abandoned when this picture was taken. It is unsure exactly what the school was called, but it was in the Bordenville District, as was the Michigan School where Ben Ratcliff killed the school board. Depending upon the distribution of families with children, early school locations changed surprisingly often. It was common for the buildings to be recycled by way of being moved to nearby ranches.

A number of old school sites are scattered along Tarryall Road. A factor in the abandonment of this site may have been the distance to water. Photo is courtesy of the Wilkin Collection.

From Jefferson: 14.8

From Tarryall School: 14.9

HOLST/PAIGE RANCH (EAGLE ROCK RANCH)

By 1870, the nucleus of this ranch had been settled by German immigrant Louis Holst. His holdings by 1880 were 320 acres. He reported cutting 50 tons of hay from only 20 acres of lush meadow in 1879. The ranch eventually passed to Borden descendant May Paige prior to several subsequent ownerships. Only one or two small, historic buildings remain.

TARRYALL RESERVOIR

Approval for appropriation for the construction of the reservoir by the state was given in 1925. Construction of the reservoir and the administrative site took place in 1929, after

the site was acquired from Colorado Farms Co. The reservoir seems to have been constructed by the Colorado Division of Wildlife as a trout rearing facility, which was not very successful. Lands and water rights surrounding the reservoir were acquired and managed as the Tarryall State Wildlife Area.

The building complex at the west end of the reservoir and on the north side of Tarryall Road was constructed by the State of Colorado for employees who were assigned to oversee the construction and operation of the reservoir. Most of the buildings were constructed in 1929. The complex also became the location of a big horn sheep experimental station.

The site for the building complex is on land granted as a Homestead Entry Patent to Lawrence Bonis in 1881. The property was sold to N. H. Silliman, D. J. McKay, and W. R. Sanborn in 1902. The reservoir inundated much of the historic ranches of Bonis and Gilbert Packer. The two ranches produced some 260 tons of hay in 1884.

From Jefferson: 19.1

From Tarryall School: 10.2

DERBY/TERHUNE RANCH

The Derby cabin is located on the southwest side of Tarryall Road and was probably part of the Terhune Ranch, which is across the road. The land was acquired as a Homestead Entry Patent by William A. Derby in 1894. Derby, a native of Canada, and his wife Inez, a native of Colorado, moved onto the Wilkin Ranch in 1885. They had been hired to take care of cattle owned by Charles A. Wilkin, an attorney in Fairplay. In 1886 the Derbys filed a Homestead Claim on land adjacent to the Wilkin Ranch and built a small 14 by 18 foot, one room log cabin there. From that time until his contract expired with Wilkin in April 1889, Derby cared for both his and Wilkin's cattle at the Wilkin Ranch and his own homestead claim, living interchangeably at both places depending on the work to be done and the amount of feed available for the cattle.

On his homestead claim, Derby began irrigating some his land and planted grass, hay, potatoes, and turnips. Derby was paid \$500 for his work for Wilkin and was able to complete improvements on his claim, including a barn and a new dwelling house.

In 1889, Inez died suddenly, leaving Derby to care for the ranch and 2 young children. He provided final proof for his claim in 1892, sold the property to his brother Milford E. Derby in 1894 and moved to Como. The ranch later came under the names of Terhune, Wallace and Eavenson.

The log cabin is an excellent example of late 19th century log architecture. The log walls have half dovetail and flat notches and are chinked with mud and cement on the exterior and wooden wedges on the interior. A school, which was used prior to World War II, was moved from Ruby Gulch to the Terhune Ranch and is now a garage.

UTE TRAIL RIVER RANCH



The main building for the guest ranch is shown in the 1920s. Photo is courtesy of Margaret Howell McArthur.

The Ute Trail River Ranch is located on the north side of Tarryall River Road. It is located on land acquired as a Homestead Entry Patent by George W. Wheeler in 1924. Wheeler acquired relinquishment rights to the land from Daniel W. Denny of Tarryall, who had applied for the land in 1907 and apparently built the residence. Wheeler moved into the home in 1921. Wheeler cleared about 12 acres and planted potatoes, barley, oats and had a vegetable garden.

Because the Wheelers could not make enough to support themselves from what they could raise on the homestead, they left their claim for several months every winter so that he could pursue his trade as a cabinetmaker.

Wheeler died in 1931, leaving his estate to his widow, Ellen Wheeler, and daughter, Lillian Howell. The site may have begun to be developed as a resort in the 1930s or 1940s but most of the development was done by Charles Robbins, whom Lillian had married, in the middle 1950s.

The resort consists of the lodge/store building, a log barn, and several log guest cabins. The name was given after the property became a resort.

From Jefferson: 22.1

Tarryall School: 7.2

FARNUM RANCH

William Farnum, a native of Rhode Island, came to Colorado in 1858 to join the gold rush. He went to Hamilton and tried his luck with gold mining before settling on the ranch along the Tarryall Creek in 1867. He built a small cabin that had dirt roof and floor. Later a new house was built and the ranch became a popular stop for travelers. A small cemetery on the ranch is visible from the Tarryall Road. In it are buried Luna, an Indian boy who lived briefly with the Farnums. He died from pneumonia in 1878. Also, 2 Farnum children and a daughter of the Allens, nearby ranchers, are buried there.

In 1869, Farnum cut 10 tons of hay, and grew 150 bushels of oats and 50 of barley, as well as 10 acres of potatoes producing 21,000 pounds. In 1870, he owned 21 milk cows, but had produced only 250 pounds of butter in 1869. His one lonesome pig was no doubt destined to become breakfast, dinner, lard, and soap.

In 1880 the post office was established with Farnum the postmaster. It became known as the Mountaindale Post Office. By the latter 1880s, the Mountaindale Post Office had moved to the Allen Ranch. In 1888 the Farnums moved to Colorado Springs where William died in 1888. His wife, Mahala, died there in 1900.

From Jefferson: 22.9

From Tarryall School: 6.4

LAZY RIVER RANCH

The main part of the ranch is on the west side of Tarryall Road. The ranch is on land acquired as part of a 160 acre Cash Entry Patent by Anson A. Allen in 1880. Allen built a ranch nearby on the property. In 1894 his land was sold to Albert L. Richardson in order to satisfy a mortgage for \$763.65. Charles Volz, Nels "Pete" Anderson and the Hammer family were among later occupants.

The rear portion of the residence, which may have also served as a store in the 1950s, was probably constructed prior to 1905. It is architecturally significant for its decorative rustic exterior. Mill end boards have been placed vertically, horizontally and diagonally in a style that is unique among structures on Tarryall road and indicates a Bavarian or Nordic influence.

The outbuildings are not historically significant, either because they are too recent or are in poor condition.

ALLEN RANCH



The Allen ranch, also known as Mountindale, is shown in 1898. Photo is courtesy of U. S. Geological Survey. 20th Annual Report 1898-99.

This ranch, on the west side of the Tarryall Road, was settled by Anson A. Allen in 1870. He was a native of New York and later moved to Wisconsin. His wife Charlotte, the daughter of William Farnum, received good reports from the Farnums from their ranch along the Tarryall Creek. In 1870 the Allens took the train to Cheyenne to Denver then hired a man and his team to bring them to the Farnum Ranch.

Allen, a carpenter, helped the Farnums build their house in addition to constructing his own in 1871. He later supplemented his income by helping others in the region build their houses and barns. The ranch had cattle, a few pigs and a garden, which consisted of potatoes, rutabagas, turnips, carrots, cabbage, onions, lettuce and radishes. On 3 ½ acres the Allens' daughter Addie and son Anthony produced nearly 19,000 pounds of potatoes in 1884. The industrious Allens also churned out some 500 pounds of butter in that year. The ranch was also the site of the Mountindale Post Office after it left the Farnum Ranch.

In building the house, Allen used aspen logs and hewed them down to 112" boards for the lumber. With a hand broad axe, he also cut blocks from aspen logs, split them made shingles with a drawing knife. The original house still stands. It has had some additions,

including asphalt siding resembling brick which was placed over the original wood to help keep out the cold winds.

Anson Allen died in 1911 and Charlotte died in 1931. Both are buried in the Lake George cemetery.

From Jefferson: 24.6

From Tarryall School: 4.7

BRADLEY/WILLIAMS RANCH

This ranch is a complex of buildings on both sides of Tarryall Road. Albert W. Bradley filed his Preemption claim for the property in 1881. He paid \$200 for 160 acres. At the time of the filing he reported that he settled on his claim in 1878 and that there was already a house, corral and stable built by S. M. Lasell. After Bradley arrived, he finished the house and another building, built a ditch, improved the hay land and plowed 10 acres. Prior to receiving title to the land, Bradley sold the property to next-door neighbor John E. Williams in 1885. This portion of John Williams' land eventually passed to son Albert and then to son Edmund, who built the existing log house after the turn of the century. The property remained in the Williams family until it was sold to Kenneth E. Gloss in 1951. The ranch has several early 1900s log buildings and is a good example of a ranch complex from that time period.

From Jefferson: 25.7

From Tarryall School: 3.6

WILLIAMS/GOLD RANCH

The verdant meadow setting of this ranch is one of the most photogenic in Colorado. It retains several historic buildings, probably including the original Williams home. They may be seen in the meadow some distance away on the northeast side of the road.

John E. Williams, a Welsh immigrant, came to Colorado in 1859, where he mined in Tarryall Gulch (above present-day Como) for some 7 years. After 7 more years in Montana, he married (Mary) and farmed in Kansas before bringing his family to Colorado in 1877. He then worked as a freighter for the next five years during the Leadville boom. The family had come to the Tarryall area by 1880, and purchased the ranch from William Edwards in 1882. John Williams died at age 55 in 1877, but the family continued on the ranch. In fact, several descendants proved up on additional homesteads to the east and northeast of the 1882 purchase. The Williams and Gold (in-laws) families continued to operate the ranch for generations. (There must once have been a chicken fancier among the Williams clan, as the ranch reported producing 600 dozen eggs in 1884). The Golds may still own most or all of the 1882 nucleus of the ranch.

John and Mary Williams and a number of descendants are buried in the Lake George Cemetery.

From Jefferson: 26.8

From Tarryall School: 2.5

TARRYALL RIVER RANCH



The Tarryall River Ranch is shown in the 1940s. Photo is courtesy of Margaret Howell McArthur.

This ranch, on the northeast side of Tarryall Road was originally made up of several small parcels dating back to the 1880s. After a series of owners, Leon Snyder bought the ranch in 1937 and began the dude ranch. Although there have been several owners over the years, the ranch has continued as a guest ranch. The portion south of the ranch is now a subdivision.

From Jefferson: 28.5

From Tarryall School: .7

DERBY RANCH

This site is located on both sides of Tarryall Road. The most prominent component is a large root or possibly potato cellar on the west side of the road. There are few remains of other structures. The land was acquired by Sidney M. Derby as part of a 168 acre Homestead Entry Patent in 1893. Derby, a native of Vermont, came to Colorado in 1880 and acquired a ranch near Bordenville in 1883. He sold that ranch and took up a Homestead claim at what later became the Derby Ranch. He provided final proof for his claim in 1893 in which he stated that he had built a 24 by 27 foot frame dwelling with 9 rooms, a cellar, 2 log barns, a work shop, a cabin, a hen house, a slaughterhouse, 6 corrals, a well, an irrigation ditch, and some fencing.

Derby had a meat market and a hay and grain business in Florissant from 1889 to 1896. When Puma City became a town, he sold his store in Florissant and opened one near his ranch in Puma City. For the next several years he operated a general merchandise store and was the postmaster in Puma City. He sold a portion of his ranch to William E. Moses in 1902 and the remainder to John A. Peterson in 1904.

Sidney Derby died in 1931 and his wife, Eleanor, the daughter of Anson A. Allen, an early rancher along the Tarryall, died in 1901. Both are buried in the Lake George cemetery

From Jefferson: 29.2

TARRYALL (PUMA CITY)



Puma City's Main Street is shown in 1898 looking north. Photo is courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey. 20th Annual Report 1898-99.

Puma City was begun in 1896 when a miner staked a claim in the area. Word spread quickly about the mining possibilities and before long there were 50 houses, tents and log cabins. There were also 2 sawmills, 5 saloons, 3 hotels and boarding houses. By 1897 the population was 1000. Daily mail was delivered by stage from Lake George. 5 mines shipped ore to Lake George where it was loaded on the Midland Railroad. The name was

changed to Tarryall since the old town, located near Como, no longer existed. By 1905 the population was 25. A few more live in the town today.

TARRYALL SCHOOL



The school is shown in 1941. Photo is courtesy of Sydney Johnson.

The original school was built in 1895 and was replaced by the current one in 1921. It was used until 1947.

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