

CHAPTER V

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS, 1859 TO 1938.

First this circumstance, itself of a later period, need be given to show the source of information for the earlier periods:

In 1934 space in the court house for the keeping of county records and the transaction of county business was at a premium; every available foot was being utilized and the very last undisturbed spot had to yield to the pressure. This spot was on the top floor where old records of all the past years were stored, and George Horne was employed by the county commissioners to make a thorough overhauling, examine every scrap of paper found in the vaults, discard all of no value and condense the rest in as small a space as possible. During that summer the writer of this History had a desk in the office of the county commissioners and so came into contact with the work being done by Mr. Horne; and to that circumstance almost all the data for this Chapter is due. George Horne was himself deeply interested in all matters pertaining to the early history of the county, so laid aside all documents, records and even old newspapers that had a bearing upon such historical matters. Many, in fact most, of these documents were fragmentary, but George Horne helped to assemble the fragments in such a way that a fairly continuous story resulted. Since then he has passed from earth, but this Weld County History hereby acknowledges deep obligations.

THE CLAIM CLUB, First County Organization, 1859.

The first effort to form an organization in the area now occupied in part by Weld County was in 1859 when the settlers in and around St. Vrain met and organized a Claim Club. The chaotic condition of the country at that time made some sort of government necessary if settlers were to be protected from the marauding tactics of an unscrupulous element that was here. As a first step toward making homes for themselves and building a commonwealth, settlers had taken up government land, but their claims were being "jumped" daily and the only protection seemed to be the organization of a Club that should par-

take somewhat of the nature of a vigilance committee; and so a meeting was called. The following account of that meeting was found among the papers at the court house; in fact in the Minute Book of the Claim Club:

“At a meeting of the citizens of St. Vrain held October 6, 1859, S. P. Neall was chosen chairman and H. J. Graham secretary. The object of the meeting was stated by the chairman to be for the purpose of organization.”

Then follows the transaction of business relative to the land to be claimed by settlers and the manner of its recording, and then the record goes on—

“The jurisdiction of this Club shall be co-existent with the county of St. Vrain and embrace not less than 24 square miles with the town of St. Vrain near its center.”

The organizers were: C. P. Neal, S. H. Moir, H. J. Graham, William N. Byers, C. E. Miller, Dr. Cook, P. C. Lowe, R. B. Bradford, George Trowbridge, James Stock and L. Y. Jones. For recorder H. J. Graham was elected and allowed \$1 for each claim recorded. The claim of Louis Vasquez was one of the first entered.

That this organization partook rather more than “somewhat” of the nature of a vigilance committee is based on the further fact that at a later meeting a report was given of the following notice having been served on two men who evidently had been guilty of trespassing:

“We, the undersigned, acting as a committee for the citizens of St. Vrain county, do hereby notify you, Hiram Hopkins and Jeremiah Heenan, that you are occupying the premises of H. J. Graham much to his detriment, and that you are commanded hereby to quit possession of the same within the next twenty-four hours.”

What followed this drastic action is lost to history, no scrap of paper being found to give the information; but it is safe to conclude that the Messrs. Hawkins and Heenan moved within

the specified time, since no record was found of informal Western justice being meted out to them. The date of the meeting at which this report was made was October 12, 1859, six days after organization of the Club, proving that events moved rapidly in those early days.

When Jefferson Territory was organized in November of 1859 St. Vrain was one of the eleven counties created. It was, approximately, 75 by 150 miles in area; it occupied the entire northeast corner of the Territory with Wyoming and Nebraska its northern boundary, Nebraska its eastern, Arapahoe county its southern and Boulder and Larimer counties its western; and none of these boundaries were changed when, two years later, 1861, Jefferson Territory became Colorado Territory and St. Vrain county Weld county. The east and north lines have seven times felt the keen blade of the legislative knife as seven counties have been chiseled out of the original Weld, but the southern and western lines have remained almost identical with those of St. Vrain.

FIRST COUNTY SEAT—ST. VRAIN

The first County Seat of St. Vrain county was the town of St. Vrain. The County Seat remained there nine years, then, in October, 1868, moved to Latham, about three miles east of where Greeley now is. The center of population had shifted northward and eastward and naturally the County Seat followed.

The town of Latham was near the junction of the Platte and the Poudre rivers, a stage station for the stages on the Overland Trail with a good settlement around it and a splendid promise for the future. D. R. Bailey who had several hundred acres in and about the town offered the county suitable quarters for county business and the offer was promptly accepted. The county offices were moved there immediately but the legal acceptance of the new location had to wait for the regular election in the following September, which election gave legal status to the move already made. There seems never to have been any kind of friction between the town of St. Vrain and Latham because of the change of County Seat, a very great contrast to

what occurred later when the County Seat moved back and forth between Greeley and Evans. But, peaceful as were the two neighborhoods themselves, the second year of Latham's possession of the County Seat had not ended when the proverbial cloud, "no bigger than a man's hand" appeared on the western sky. No one guessed it then, but it was the cloud that was destined to develop into a cyclone and involve two towns, Evans and Greeley, in a bitter strife that should last through a number of years.

The speck in the sky was the first move made toward changing the County Seat from Latham to Evans, and Greeley was not in existence at the time.

Under date of November 15, 1869, records were found among old papers at the court house showing that "the county commissioners adjourned to examine lands for a County Seat and to receive proposals of donations within the surveyed limits of the town of Evans." This was found in the Minute Book which served as a record book for the county commissioners. No suitable lands were offered at that time and the matter went over to January 4, 1870. On that date a site was accepted from the Land Association and the commissioners ordered that the County Seat be located on Block 38 in the town of Evans. This is undoubtedly the date when the County Seat first located in Evans

The Minute Book does not make clear the legal procedure used in moving the County Seat from Latham to Evans. After the move was made a vote similar to the one that legalized the move from St. Vrain to Latham was taken, and, though the result was not found among the old papers it is taken for granted that the vote was favorable.

In the spring of that same year, 1870, came the Union Colonists to the neighborhood and established Greeley, and four years later laid claim to the County Seat. It was within the following three years that it made its historical journeys between the two towns, creating strife and bitterness that have taken years to eradicate.

THREE YEARS OF STRUGGLE BETWEEN EVANS AND GREELEY FOR THE COUNTY SEAT—1874-1877.

How the county offices were housed in Evans before 1873 does not appear in the Minute Book; but on January 6 of that year it is recorded that a committee offered plans and a donation of between \$6,000 and \$7,000 for the building of a court house and jail. It does not appear in the records that a building was erected, but it does appear that on July 30, 1873, the Weld County Building & Loan Association offered the use of a two story building already erected and that the offer was accepted. The agreement seems to have carried with it a stipulation that the commissioners were to remove all county property from the building whenever they ceased to use it for county purposes.

It was in the year following, 1874, that Greeley, then four years old, stepped into the picture on July 22 with a petition asking that a vote be taken at the next general election to be held on September 8, for the removal of the County Seat from Evans to Greeley.

This petition was granted by the commissioners and the vote taken. It favored the move from Evans to Greeley. On October 6, 1874, the county commissioners, therefore, gave an order for the removal of all books and records, and adjourned to meet the following day, October 7, in the Nichols Building in Greeley.

It was at this point that the conflict seriously began. Evans refused to permit the moving of the county property and the Building Association forbade the removal of vault doors and other furniture from the building that had been occupied by the county.

What is here given as happening next was not found in the Minute Book, but gathered from the thrilling stories of the pioneers who more than fifty years later still remembered well the conflict. An effort has been made to divest those stories of the local coloring which it cannot be denied tinged the picture, depending upon which town happened to be the home of the narrator.

The "vault doors" which evidently had been put on some kind of closet for the safe keeping of county papers, were the bone of contention. The legal question probably arose that the doors, being attached, were a part of the building, therefore not removable. The Evans people took that position, the Greeley people did not; and what followed is a story of daring and adventure; of doors being removed in the middle of the night; of a wild drive from Evans to Greeley of a wagon containing the doors and other furniture followed by other vehicles driven by irate citizens of Evans; of a conflict that barely escaped the status of a tragedy and that later had its repercussions in the courts of the district.

But not all the county property was transported from Evans to Greeley that October night, for, the record states, the county attorney was instructed by the commissioners to commence proceedings at once to recover the balance; this was by means of a replevin suit against the Weld County Building & Improvement Association. The result was in favor of Greeley, and it is recorded that on October 9, 1874, the County Seat was established in Greeley.

GREELY THE COUNTY SEAT IN 1874.

The next move was made by Evans. It was the serving of a writ of mandamus on the county commissioners to compel them to move the County Seat back to Evans, or, failing in this, to appear before the district court and show cause for such failure. The commissioners asked for a change of venue to Arapahoe county, but no records were found showing the outcome. As already stated, the records were fragmentary, and consequently gaps in the story cannot be avoided.

After this for almost a year the fires of conflict smoldered but never went out. In July, 1875, a petition designed to settle the question definitely was accepted by the commissioners and circulated by the people for another vote to be taken at the general election to be held September 14.

When this vote was counted by county clerk, W. C. Sanders it was declared to be in favor of Greeley. But the people of Ft.

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS

Lupton took exception to the manner of counting the vote, Clerk Sanders having excluded the vote of Ft. Lupton on the ground of "irregularities." And this, in the language of the Minute Book, "started the fireworks all over again." On October 4 the people of Ft. Lupton registered a protest against the action of the county clerk and demanded a re-count of the vote with their own precinct included. After a heated discussion before the board of commissioners a re-count was ordered, and, on the following day, October 5, was made. It was in favor of Evans. Quoting from the Records, omitting only the preamble:

EVANS THE COUNTY SEAT IN 1875.

"And it further appearing upon canvassing the votes of the legal voters of Weld county at the election held on the 14 day of September, 1875, that the town of Evans has received a majority of all votes polled at said election, it is hereby ordered by the board of county commissioners of said county of Weld, that, pursuant to, and by virtue of said votes, the County Seat be, and hereby is, removed from the town of Greeley to the town of Evans; and that said town of Evans is hereby declared to be the County Seat of Weld County in the Territory of Colorado."

That settled it—for the time being. On the following day the commissioners are recorded as having "met in the County Seat of Weld County in the town of Evans." And there they continued to meet for two years.

GREELEY THE COUNTY SEAT IN 1877 —AND EVER AFTER

Fires smouldered again for two years. Then, on July 24, 1877, a petition was filed with the board of county commissioners asking that the matter of the County Seat be again submitted to the voters at the next general election, October 7, 1877. This was done and the vote was found to favor Greeley by a majority of 64.

Here, again, is a gap in the records, not satisfactorily filled in by the memory of the pioneers; but the conclusion seems justified that following this election the County Seat was moved back to Greeley immediately. For a considerable time the records bearing on these happenings are confused, or, perhaps better to say, fragments found could not be pieced together so as to make a straightforward story. But there was some real confusion, too; the date of a meeting called in reference to the result of the election being given on a date *before* instead of *after* the election. It was an important meeting, too, and a graphic account of it was recorded. It evidently was held in the town of Greeley and was for the purpose of "hearing charges and claims," and it recorded that "the board requests that if any persons have any thing to say, pro or con, on the question, to so express themselves at this time."

It must have been recognized as a decisive meeting; a time when both sides marshalled forces for the decisive clash; a "war to end war," which in this case it proved to be.

At that meeting E. C. Page appeared on behalf of Evans and E. T. Dunning on behalf of Greeley. The arguments led by the two men were lengthy and exhaustive, evidently touching every phase of the controversy. Exhausting, perhaps, too, for the commissioners took the matter under advisement until October 25.

On that day the board held another meeting and a Resolution was offered by J. L. Brush naming Greeley as the County Seat. Objections were raised by the Hon. Hugh Butler of Denver on points of law governing county seat elections. The Hon. S. B. A. Hayes spoke on behalf of Greeley, and his arguments must have carried weight since the board decided that the objections of the Hon. Hugh Butler should not be sustained. But here again is found some confusion; for, though the objections of the Hon. Hugh Butler were not sustained yet a "re-canvass of the vote" was ordered. The records do not state whether "the vote" was that of the general election or some other, but at any rate the board adjourned to meet again on the following day, and at that time a new angle presented itself. This was by the

Hon. Hugh Butler and was in the form of a writ of injunction from Judge Victor E. Elliott of the district court restraining the commissioners from moving the County Seat from Evans to Greeley. More confusion. The County Seat was already in Greeley, so the order from the district court must have been intended to render that move illegal and to require the return of the County Seat to Evans.

The board postponed action on the writ for that day and to no other definite date, so the question hung in air until November 14, 1877, when another meeting was called. But before this meeting convened word had been received from Judge Elliott to the effect that the order issued by him restraining the board from moving the County Seat from Evans to Greeley had been dissolved. Whereupon, this communication being read at the meeting of November 14, J. L. Brush again moved the adoption of his resolution establishing Greeley as the County Seat of Weld County. No objections were raised, yet final action was postponed until the following day and another meeting called for that time; and that brings the matter down to the last Act of the drama:

November 15, 1877. (This from the Records, verbatim.)

The board of county commissioners met and the following Resolution was offered:

“Whereas—at a meeting of the board of county commissioners held on the 25th day of October, 1877, an order and Resolution was offered by Mr. Brush declaring the County Seat of Weld county to be at the town of Greeley, and,

“Whereas—Before action was taken on the passage of said Resolution an order and injunction out of the district court were issued restraining said board of county commissioners from ordering a removal of said County Seat from Evans to Greeley, also restraining all county officers from taking any action whatsoever in said removal, and,

“Whereas—Said injunction has been dissolved by order of the court, now, therefore, Be it

“Resolved—That the board of county commissioners do now adopt the aforesaid Resolution and order, with the following Amendments: to-wit—

“And be it further ordered and Resolved, That—The following rooms be, and they are hereby, designated to be the county offices in the town of Greeley: The offices of the county judge and sheriff at the office of James C. Scott, Esq. The offices of the county clerk and recorder, clerk of the county court, and for the meetings of the county commissioners in the banking house of Emerson & West. The offices of the county treasurer, county surveyor, and clerk of the district court in the Union Banking House. The place of holding the district court in the room known as Barnum Hall and rooms adjacent thereto; and the place for holding the county court in the offices of James C. Scott.”

On motion of F. H. Hammitt the above order and Resolution were adopted. And so ended the long, long controversy over the location of the County Seat. It has never been revived. Nor after sixty-one years is it even clearly remembered.

FIRST OFFICERS.

The first county commissioners were appointed by Territorial Governor William Gilpin, in 1861. They were: Robert Boyd, John A. Titus and G. B. Scidmore.

County clerk and recorder, Manville D. Alvord, appointed 1862.

Probate Judge, G. D. Scidmore, 1861.

Superintendent of Schools, Peter Winne, 1863.

Surveyor, A. Tiedman, 1863.

Coroner, A. Lumry, 1863.

Representative in Territorial legislature, District No. 1, embracing Boulder, Larimer and Weld, J. H. Graham, 1861 to 1864.

Territorial Judges, Charles Lee Armour and Allan A. Bradford.

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS

Clerk of the district court: the Minute Book states that during Territorial government this officer was located in Denver and that the clerk for Weld county was a deputy under him. The name of Manville D. Alvord is given.

THE JAIL AND WHAT BECAME OF IT.

Under date of October 9, 1874, the Minute Book states that funds had been subscribed for the building of a jail, and on that date accepted by the commissioners. Lots were given by Union Colony, where the present jail stands. This first jail was finished and accepted by the commissioners April 7, 1875. It was all ready for occupancy but no tenant appeared. Time went on, the County Seat went to Evans, and after eighteen months had passed by the building was rented on October 2, 1876, to the Rev. J. S. Folroy at \$200 for six months, for what purpose the Minute Book does not state, possibly for religious services. But be that as it may, the conclusion is obvious that it was not used for the housing of law breakers. But that, remember, was before the days of speed and Repeal.

SOME FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 1862-63

As reading matter, figures are generally tiresome, but before leaving the history of this early day it might be well to note that in 1862 and 1863 Weld county had but 195 names on the tax rolls; that its whole property valuation was but little over \$154,000; that the Territorial levy was 2 mills in 1862 and 3 in 1863; the county levy 10 mills, the school levy 2 mills and the poll tax \$2. The largest partnership taxed was that of the Brush Brothers, listed at a valuation of \$5,000 and taxed \$95. The largest corporation was the Overland Stage line which ran into big money, being valued at \$27,000, and taxed at \$450.

COURT HOUSES.

Weld county had many court houses during the first years of its existence without owning one. The *Greeley Tribune-Republican* in its big historical edition of October 10, 1930, is authority for the statement that prior to 1865 cabins belong-

ing to different settlers were used for court houses, among which are listed those on the ranches of D. J. Hopkins, Andrew Lumry, John Paul, and F. H. Hammitt on the Platte between the junction of that river and the St. Vrain in the neighborhood of Platteville.

One of these cabins, known generally as Weld County's First Court House stood for years on the farm of John Birkle, a half mile south of Platteville. But in the summer of 1937 it was moved to the site of the reconstructed old Fort Vasquez on Highway 85, a half mile farther south. It now stands near the entrance of the Fort at the south side and is intended to shelter many relics of the past.

The same authority, (The Historical Edition of the Tribune) states that the ranch of David Hodgson, father of George Hodgson, a county commissioner at the time of the building of the last court house, was the scene of many political meetings throughout the 1860s.

In 1937 the right angle turn in Highway 85 south of Platteville, always considered dangerous, was straightened, carrying it through the farm of Mrs. Pardue, joining the main road again south of the Fort, and leaving the Fort, consequently, on the east instead of the west side of the Highway.

THE FIRST COUNTY-OWNED COURT HOUSE.

The first court house actually owned by the county was built in 1883, twenty-four years after St. Vrain, later Weld, began to function as a county.

After the final location of the County Seat in Greeley in 1877 the need for a county building that should house all county offices and activities became imperative. and, finally, on October 7, 1882, the county commissioners ordered a vote for the next general election on the erection of a county building, to cost not over \$30,000 and to be paid for by a special levy of 2 mills on all taxable property for the years 1882 and 1883.

The vote was in favor of the levy, and, early in the following year, January 1883, a site was secured, plans drawn and a

real county owned court house ordered by the county commissioners.

The site was the northeast quarter of the block then bounded by Munroe street on the east, Adams on the west, Walnut on the north and Pine on the south. (Now Ninth and Tenth streets and Ninth and Tenth avenues.) The site now occupied by the newer and bigger building erected in 1915-1917. It was a good looking, commodious and well arranged building and served its purpose well until the county needs outgrew its capacity when, after more than thirty years of service, it gave way to the new one whose description follows.

THE PRESENT COUNTY COURT HOUSE, 1915-1917.

The First County Court House, extravagantly commodious when built, in thirty years was crowded to capacity—and beyond, and then the inevitable happened—an agitation started for a new court house that should be *big enough*; and this agitation, like a snow ball rolling down a hill side, gained impetus and size the farther and faster it went until at last, in 1914, when George Hodgson, W. C. Levis and T. B. Howe were county commissioners, it culminated in the decision to build a new one and build it *big enough*.

Remembering how entirely too large the first one had been considered when built, and how as needs developed it had shrunken to such small proportions, the commissioners decided to provide against such eventualities in the new building for at least some years to come. So with an eye to the future they planned far ahead, prepared to accept whatever of criticism might be theirs in consequence. And criticisms came. They planned a building to cost something like \$400,000. The people gasped with astonishment and apprehension. That is, most of them did; not all. True, they said, a bigger court house was needed, but this colossal figure was beyond all reason. The commissioners stood this storm of criticism as best they could, and when their voices could be heard above the clamor these were the words distinguished: "Before many years this splendid

building that seems so big today will be found none too large for the proper care of the county business that must develop."

These words were prophetic; even before the time that the commissioners themselves had foreseen, the prophecy was fulfilled. And as this story is being written, early in 1938, twenty-three years after that prophecy was made, the court house is so densely crowded that long ago, had such been possible, its walls must have bulged with the pressure for space. The court house has not been sufficient to accommodate the county business for several years past and outside space has been rented. The judgment of the commissioners has been sustained.

For several years before the building of the new court house the commissioners, anticipating the need that was sure to come, created a building fund wherein certain incomes of the county were impounded, and when the time arrived for the actual building no bond issue was necessary; all bills were paid as the work progressed and at the end when all was done the building was turned over to the county *entirely in the clear*. George Hodgson had been chairman of the board through most of this time, but before the finish in 1917 his term had expired and he was ably succeeded by John W. Birkle of Platteville.

Seerie & Varnum of Denver were the contractors and W. N. Bowman the architect. The contractors were paid \$280,230. J. D. Potter for plumbing, heating and lighting, \$37,077. Other costs, such as furniture, fixtures and the laying of the sidewalks took \$67,364 more; so the grand total, including incidentals not here listed, footed up to about \$414,000. The building was dedicated on July 4, 1917.

The following is a brief description of the building:

No wood was used in its construction except the hardwood handrails on the main marble stairway; that which looks like wood is polished steel and bronze. Marble, cement and steel were the principle materials used. The building is classed as absolutely fireproof.

It is of the classic style of architecture. Its outside walls are of Indiana limestone and terra cotta. Its first floor holds the offices of sheriff, coroner, justice of the peace, the depart-

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS

ment of agriculture, vaults for the storage of documents and books and large rest rooms for both men and women.

The second floor provided offices for the county clerk, treasurer, assessor, county commissioners and an adjoining room for clerk of the board with storage rooms for documents.

The third floor furnishes district and county court rooms, judges' chambers, clerks offices and quarters for witnesses; also offices for the county superintendent of schools and surveyor.

The fourth, top, floor was intended for the exclusive use of courts and juries with an emergency court room at one end of the corridor for use when two branches of the district court would happen to be in session at the same time; and with adjoining quarters for judges' chambers, district attorney, clerk of court, court reporter and grand jury. Two comfortable sleeping rooms were provided for jurors who were held on duty over night. But recent overcrowding has seriously interfered with many of these well planned arrangements. This "colossal" building with its "colossal" expense has long been too small for the county's business.

The corridors are ornamented with plaster and bronze and carved marble. Floor covering is of a cork composition, giving sanitation, cleanliness and resilience. The vaults have metal filing devices with metal drawers for books and papers. The arcaded corridor on the third floor is of a caen stone of a by-gone age.

The floors are of reinforced concrete between riveted steel plate girders guaranteed to hold up any weight that can be put upon them. Not all floors are the same as to composition, some being of marble blocks and ceramic tile; all differ in decorative style but are alike in the qualities of being sound proof, vermin proof and wear proof. Partitions are of gypsum tile blocks four inches deep with a finish of plaster. Interior doors are of hollow steel in solid frames with mahogany tone finish. The roof on steel trusses, is overlaid by a surface of tile blocks and finished with high grade fire and water proof roofing. The foundations forming the basement are of solid concrete with hard-burned brick in cement forming the partition walls. The whole

structure has stood the test of fire and water for many hours without showing mark or damage.

All materials used except the Indiana limestone are Colorado products. The marble is from the quarry near the town of Marble in Gunnison county. Real caen stone is found only in France, but the splendid imitation used in the building was manufactured on the job under the direction of Architect Bowman.

The heating plant is in the basement of the jail just west of the court house building, and heat is carried in by means of ducts through tunnels connecting the two buildings. Fresh air is driven by electrically operated fans into each room through registers, and foul air is removed by suction fans.

The building of the court house was just ahead of war time prices, much to the advantage of Weld county tax payers. It is estimated that the total cost was, approximately, \$5.25 on each thousand dollars worth of property. The cost of removing the old court house and preparing the ground for the new added several thousand dollars to the cost, raising grand total to about \$414,000 or a little above. But it is also estimated that the building could not be duplicated in 1938 for less than \$1,000,000.

OTHER WELD COUNTY FACTS, STATISTICAL AND OTHERWISE

(Taken almost exclusively from the Year Book, 1935-6)

LAND, AND HOW DIVIDED.

Weld has an area of 2,574,080 acres, divided, principally, as follows:

Irrigated	348,770
Non irrigated, (dry farming)	758,027
Grazing	1,158,691
In natural hay	6,226
Productive coal lands	1,544
Non productive coal lands	6,178
Railway Rights of Way	9,830
Town and city lots	8,850

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS

Ownership unclassified	88,868
State lands	178,490
Government lands	3,520

The rest are listed as Miscellaneous.

A somewhat surprising fact found in this table is that although agriculture has made such tremendous strides in development, placing the county at the head of all counties of the state, it has not yet claimed, for both irrigated and dry farming, one half of the country's area. This fact forms a good firm basis for great future expectations when the Grand Lake-Big Thompson diversion shall have become a reality.

Another fact that may be equally surprising is that although the cattlemen seemed to make a dramatic exit from the farming lands of the county after the coming of the early colonists, yet *almost half* the area of the county is still listed as grazing."

And another apparently unpromising fact is that the "non-productive" coal lands are almost four times greater than the "productive." This, however, does not mean that the "non-productive" are not capable of producing, but only—as explained in the Chapter on Coal—that approximately only a fourth has yet been tapped, leaving the balance in reserve as a *promise* for the future.

THE RATING OF WELD IN THE STATE

WELD STANDS FIRST ON FIVE COUNTS—Agriculture, Coal Mining and Dairy Farming, industrially, and in miles of Highways and Railways.

WELD STANDS SECOND in the number of automobiles, Denver county only standing above.

IT IS THIRD in manufacturing values, in area and in population.

IT IS FOURTH in bank deposits, the three counties above holding the three largest cities, Denver, Pueblo and Colorado Springs.

IT IS FIFTH in range cattle, the counties above being Los Animas, Mesa, Rio Blanco and Gunnison.

POPULATION, AND HOW CLASSIFIED.

According to the last census, 1930, Weld had a population of 65,097. Of nationalities Mexicans predominate, with 8,792. Foreign born whites number 6,204. Japanese are quoted at 712; Negroes at 111; Indians 19 and Chinese only 1. The average of population per square mile is a fraction over 16. The number of square miles is 4,022

There are 15,396 families of the average size of between three and four. These are divided almost evenly between home owners and tenants, the latter being a few hundreds the greater. Almost evenly divided also between town and country dwellers, the latter being again the greater. The average value of homes owned is given at \$2,735; the average rent paid, (1935) a fraction under \$20. But rentals are not easily calculated because those paid on farms are almost always by shares of crops and can only be estimated.

RAILROADS, TELEGRAPHS AND TELEPHONES

Weld is listed in Year Book for 1935-6 as having a fraction over 401 miles of railroad. These are divided between the Union Pacific and the Burlington. Their average value is \$12,011,980. Telephones have 17,703 miles and a value of \$540,640. Telegraph lines, 3,192 miles with a value of \$167,130. (page 155) Weld has a general total valuation of \$64,947,770. Only Denver county has a higher valuation.

MAPS OF WELD COUNTY

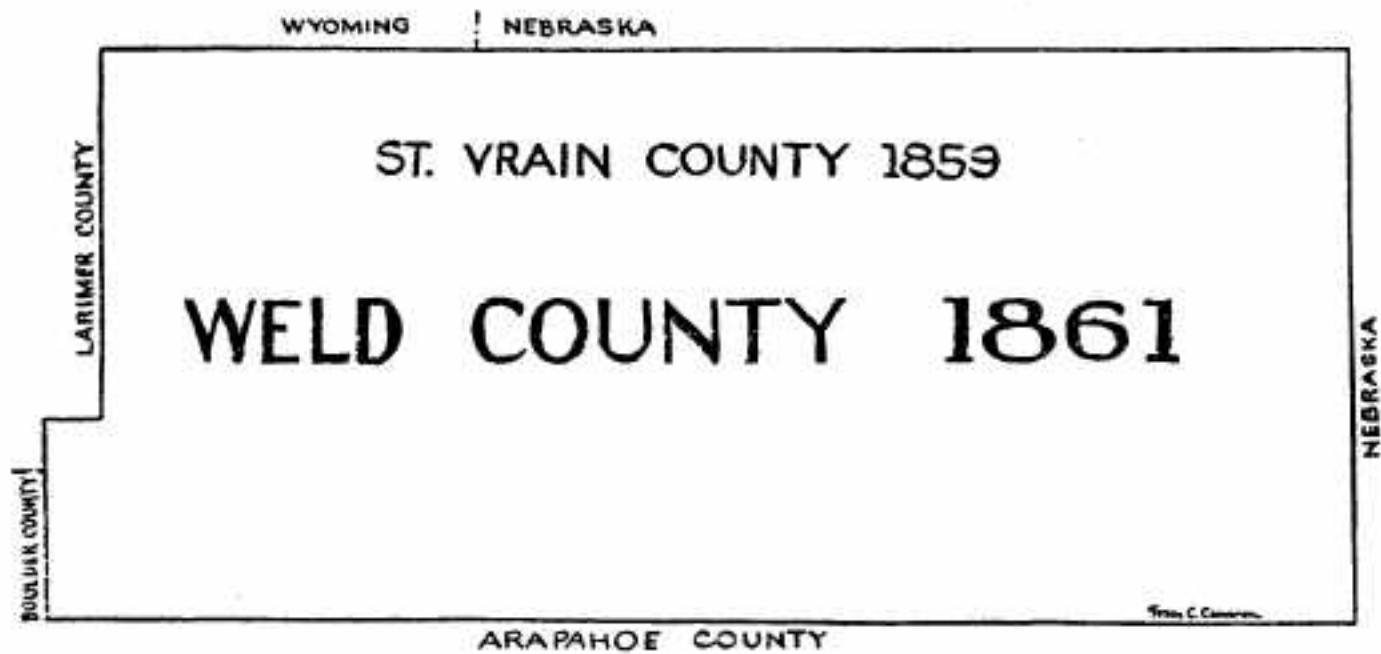
FROM 1859 to 1903.

The accompanying Maps were made by the professional draftsman, T. C. Cameron, in the Coronado Building, Greeley, who, with the writer went carefully over each legislative act, putting every little jog exactly according to the survey of the legislature at the time of making the various changes, hence is here given in full confidence. A map showing the main rivers and irrigation canals of the county, taken from *The Reservoir System*

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS

of the *Cache la Poudre*, by E. S. Nettleton in 1901, and also a map of Greeley as first laid out by the colonists in 1870. This map was loaned by George Hodgson, curator of the Meeker Museum, and can be seen there at any time.

MAP NO. 1. 1859, ST. VRAIN. 1861, WELD

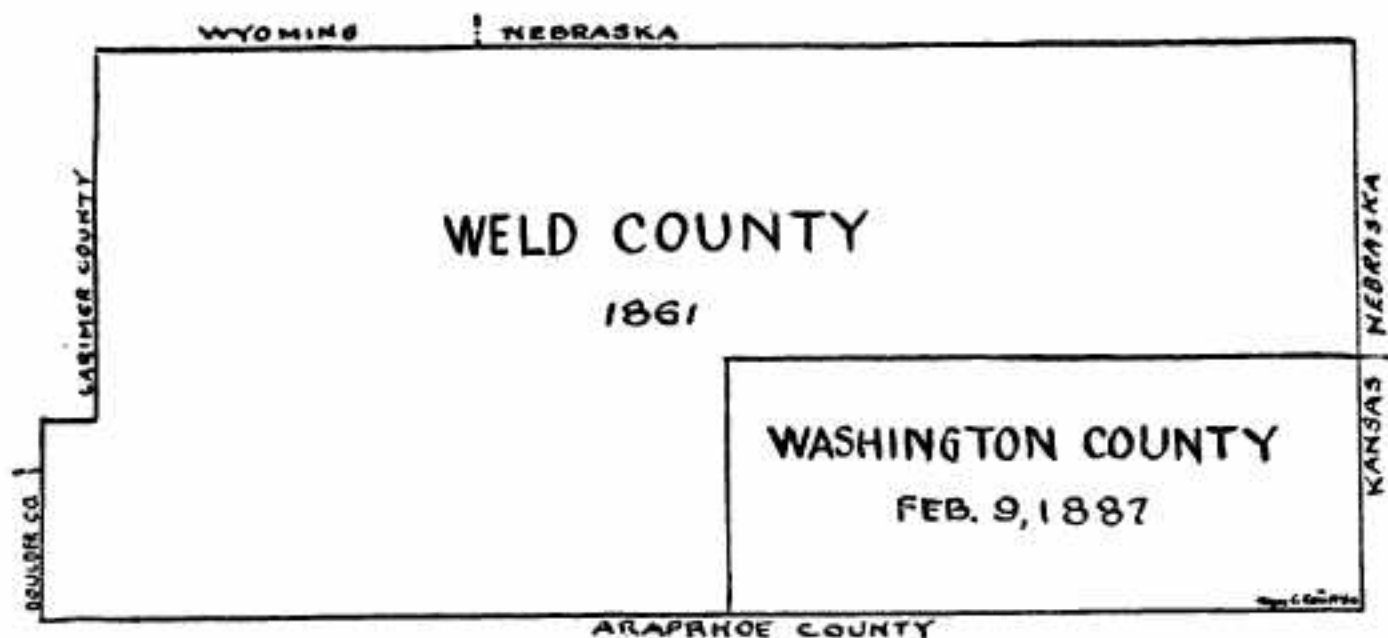


This map shows the first emergence of this area from the entirely indefinite boundaries that prevailed up to 1859 when the early settlers along the river bottoms organized the Claim Club and St. Vrain county, when this was Jefferson Territory. Then when, in 1861, the United States government recognized the Territory, changed its name to Colorado, appointed a governor and other colonial officers and gave it a legal existence, the newly constituted local government also changed the name of the county, giving it the name of the colonial secretary, Lewis Ledyard Weld. All boundaries remained the same, the county still occupying the entire northeast corner of the state. And so it remained for 26 years.

MAP NO. 2. FEBRUARY, 1887, WASHINGTON COUNTY.

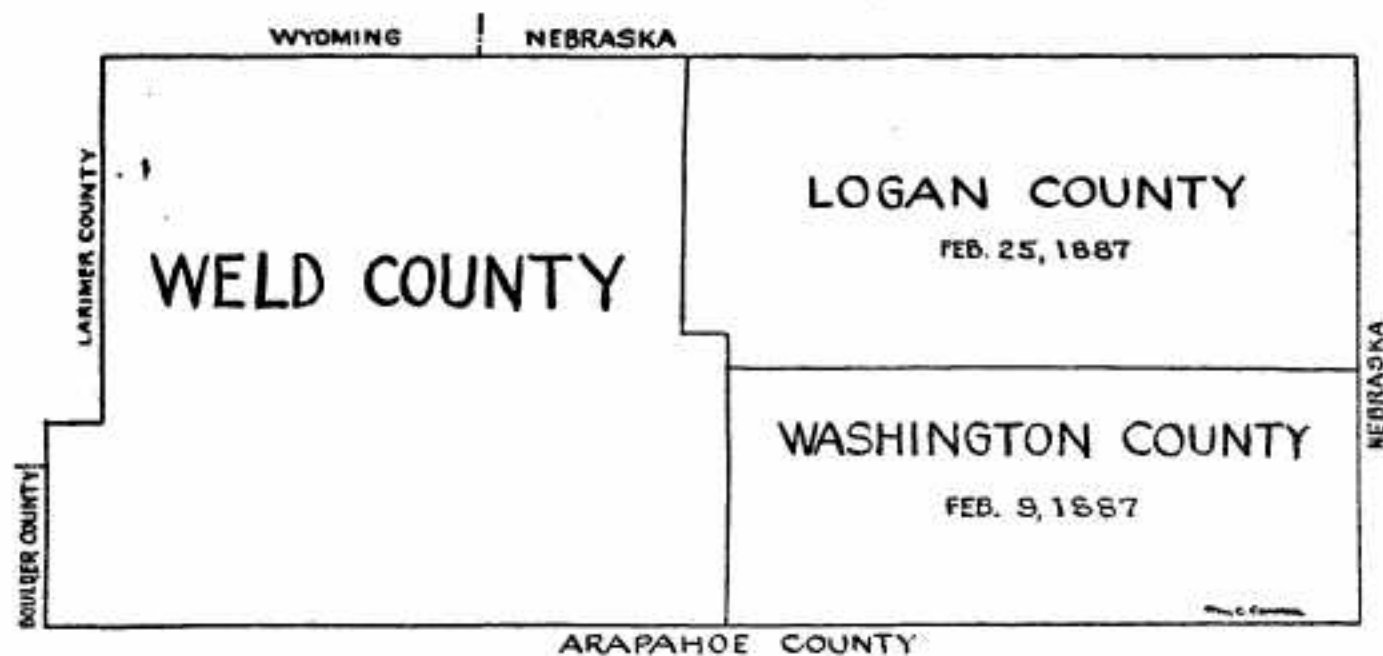
In 1887 the first change was made. On February 9 of that year the state legislature cut off the southeast corner of Weld county by running a line from about midway of its southern boundary, which was Arapahoe county to a little less than half the distance across the county northward toward Nebraska,

A HISTORY OF WELD COUNTY, COLORADO



thence turning a right angle eastward to its eastern boundary, which was also Nebraska; giving to this area the name of Washington County.

MAP NO. 3. FEBRUARY 25, 1887, LOGAN COUNTY

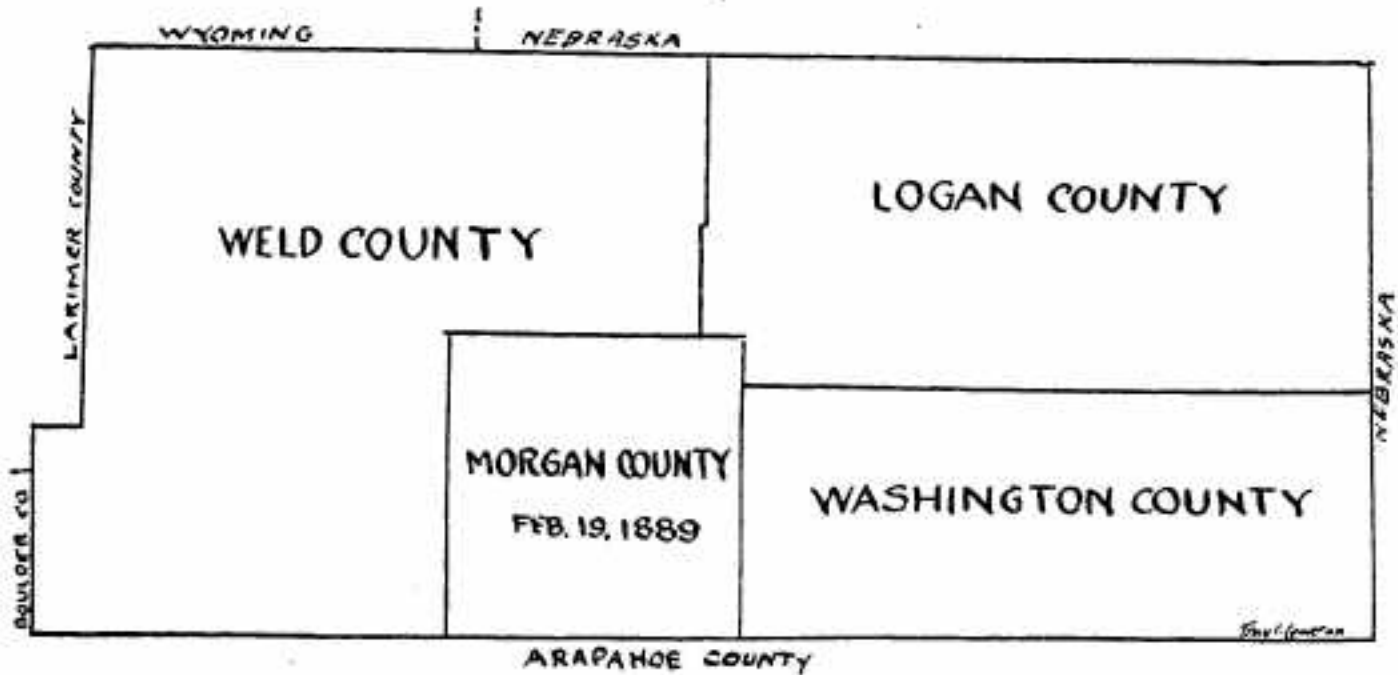


This first cut left Weld county much the same shape it bears today, a rectangle with one corner cut out leaving it with six instead of four right-angle corners. As a matter of fact, however, owing to a little jog of about five or six miles on its western Boulder county line it already had two extra corners, and now it had eight. But Weld held this shape only sixteen days, and then, on February 25, 1887, the legislature, after making another little jog just north of the Washington county line, ran

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS

the line straight on northward to the Nebraska line; and this area the legislature named Logan County.

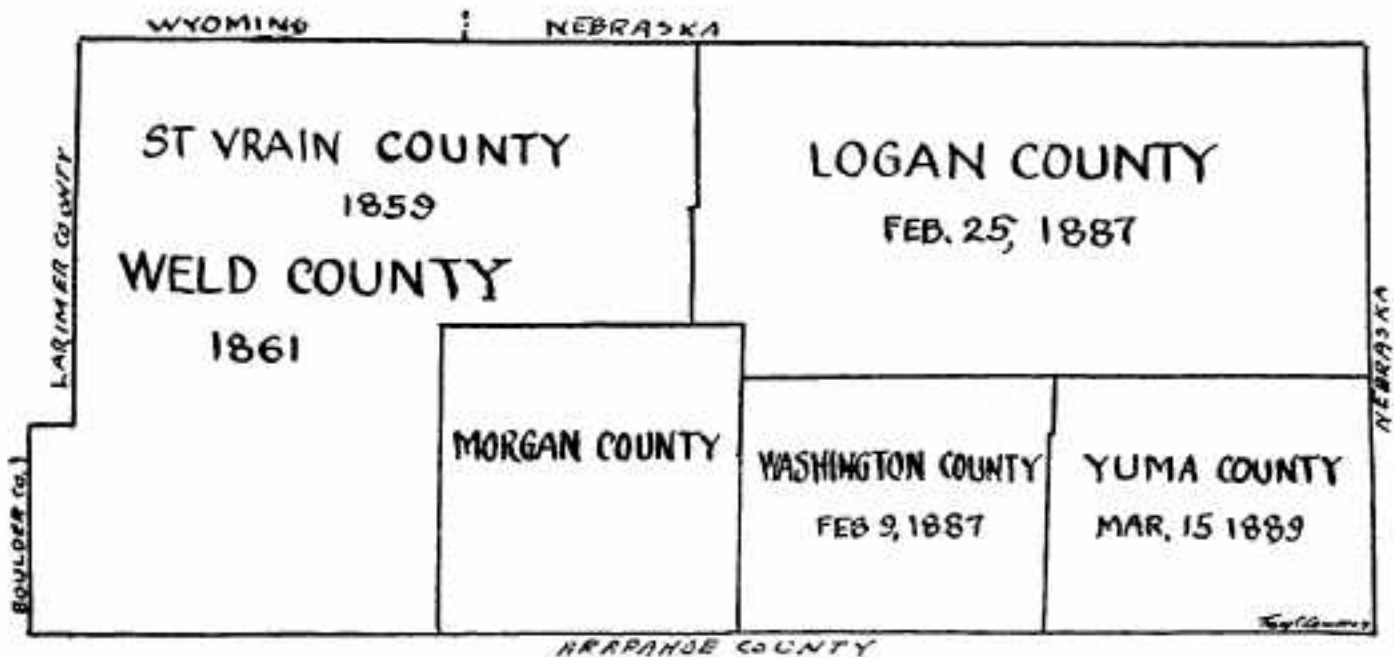
MAP NO. 4. FEBRUARY 19, 1889, MORGAN COUNTY.



The next time the legislative knife was applied to Weld was on February 19, 1889, when again its southeast corner was cut off; this time the area cut off was called Morgan County.

This was the last cut effecting Weld county, as such, but other changes were made that materially effected the territory that had originally been Weld county.

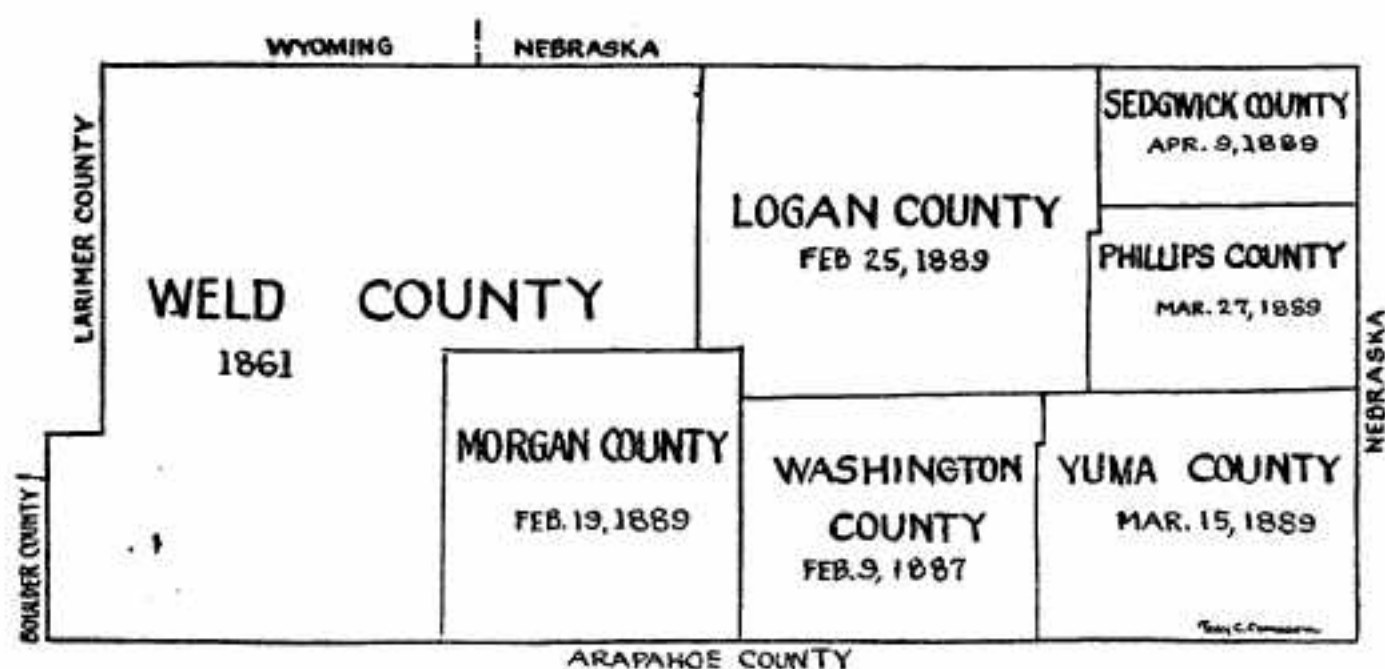
MAP NO. 5, MARCH 15, 1889, YUMA COUNTY.



A HISTORY OF WELD COUNTY, COLORADO

This map shows the cut that was made across Washington county running north and south near its middle on March 15, less than a month after the cut that made Morgan county. This cut divided Washington in two almost equal parts, and gave to the area east of the line the name of Yuma County. Closely following this, in fact only twelve days later, March 27, 1889, another change was made, this time effecting Logan.

MAP NO. 6. MARCH 27, 1889, PHILLIPS COUNTY

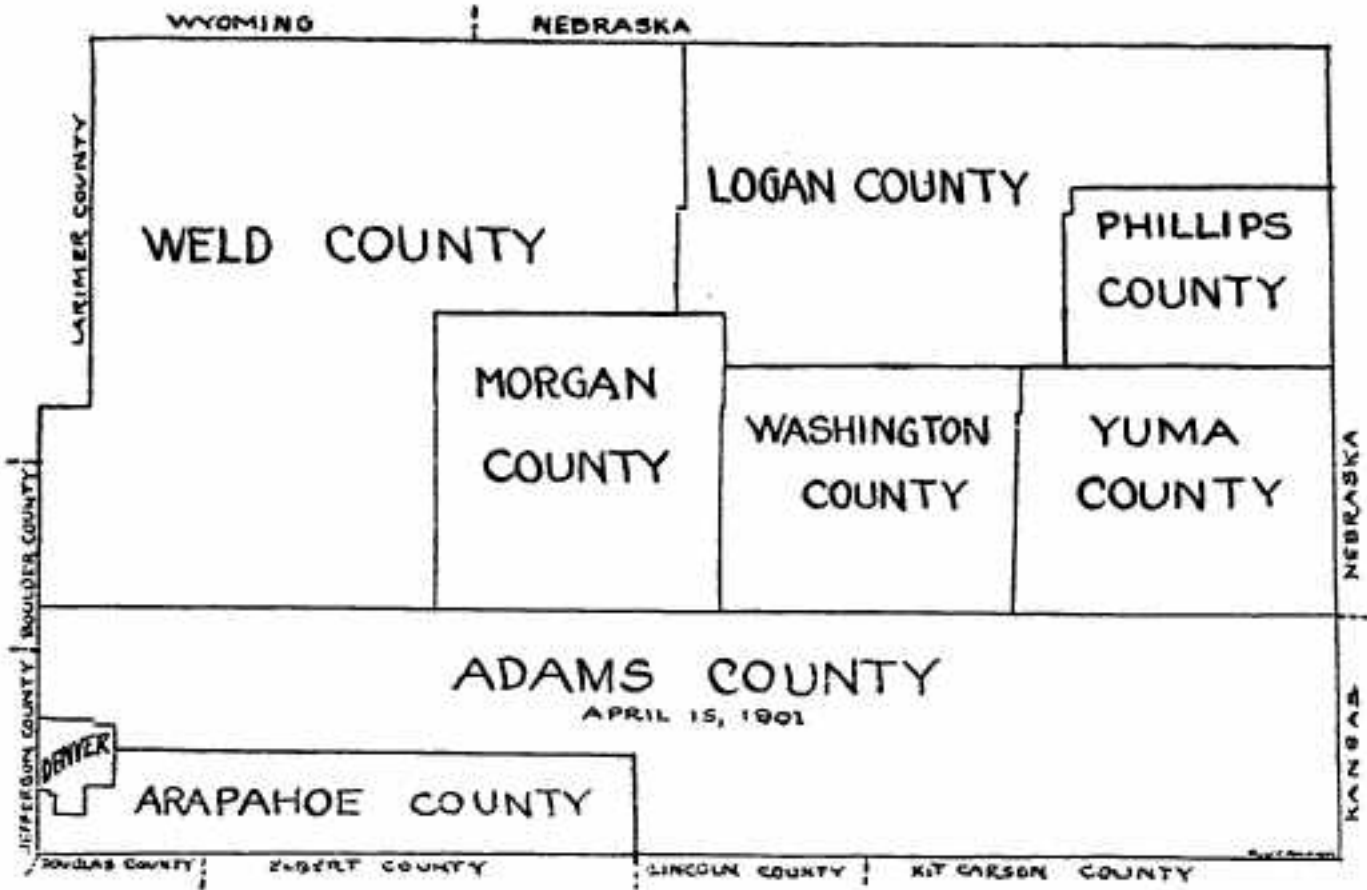


For this cut Logan county was called upon to give up its southeast corner, just as Weld had done twice before. This was on March 27, 1889, and the corner cut off was called Phillips County. Up to this time Logan still held the northeast corner of the state, but was destined very soon to give it up.

MAP NO. 7. APRIL 9, 1889, SEDGWICK COUNTY.

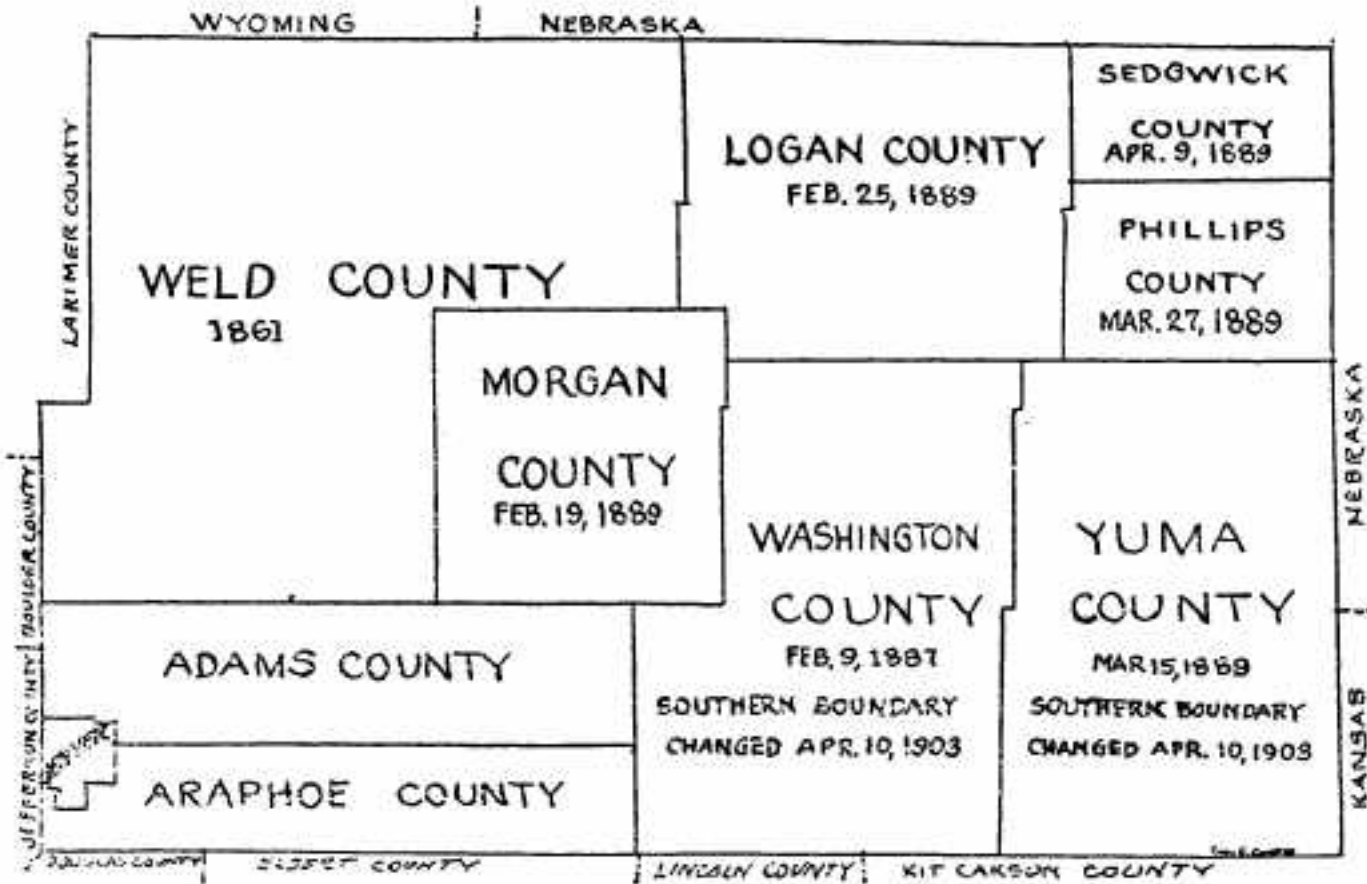
Thirteen days only did Logan hold the proud distinction of the northeast corner of the state after the cut that made Phillips, then, on April 9, 1889, the legislature run the line from the northwest corner of Phillips straight on northward across Logan county, cutting off the coveted northeast corner of the state and giving the honor to the newly created county of Sedgwick.

WELD COUNTY THROUGH A PERIOD OF 79 YEARS



That was the last of the changes that made seven counties out of the area that had originally been Weld County. But it was not the last of the changes effecting part of that area.

MAP NO. 8, APRIL 10, 1903.



Extending Washington and Yuma.

Fourteen years these seven counties retained the area and shape as given on Map No. 7. Then, on April 10, 1903, the legislature eliminated the southern boundaries of both counties and allowed them to run southward the full length of what is Adams and Arapahoe counties, down to the northern boundaries of Lincoln and Kit Carson counties, this being shown on Map No. 8.