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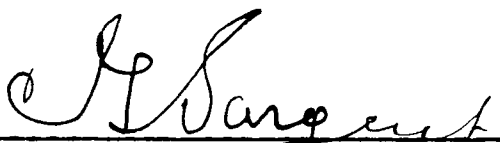
AN EDUCATIONAL SURVEY
OF
COSTILLA COUNTY
COLORADO
WITH
A HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

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FORT COLLINS, COLORADO

Submitted by
Luther Elmo Bean
for the Degree of Master of Arts
Colorado Agricultural College
Fort Collins, Colorado
April 22, 1927.

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THIS THESIS HAS BEEN READ
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A handwritten signature, likely "H. Sargent", is written in cursive above a horizontal line. A vertical line extends downwards from the end of the signature.

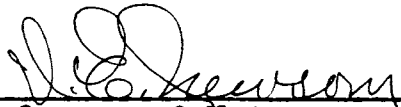
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April 22, 1927.

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THIS THESIS HAS BEEN APPROVED AND RECOMMENDED FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS


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FOREWORD

In preparing this thesis, I have gathered much of the historical material from early settlers of the valley and their descendants. It is no more than just that due recognition be given them. The following should be mentioned in this connection: A. Choury, of San Luis, former county superintendent, and an early settler; A. A. Salazar of San Luis, deceased, former representative and one of the earliest settlers in Costilla County; Alfred Meder of Fort Garland, former bugler at Fort Garland; P. V. Jacquez of San Acacio, descendant of the Jacquez Bros. who first came to San Luis to trap and hunt before there was a settlement there; Eleuto Medina of San Acacio, descendant of early settlers; W. S. Parrish of San Luis, owner of the first mill established in Colorado; E. L. Brennaman of Fort Garland, an early settler; Steve Calkins of Fort Garland, whose father was an early physician of the county and a friend of Tom Tobin; Kit Carson, III, of Alamosa, a descendant of Kit Carson and Tom Tobin; and others to whom I have gone to ascertain some of the facts contained herein.

Recognition must also be given the county officers for their help in locating certain records in their offices. Dr. Frank Spencer and Mrs. Lillian J. Rosenberger have often offered valuable suggestions.

AN EDUCATIONAL SURVEY OF COSTILLA COUNTY, COLORADO

HISTORICAL

Costilla County lies in the southeast part of the San Luis Valley. It is bounded on the east by the Culebra Range of mountains, on the north by Mt. Blanca, on the northwest by Alamosa County, on the west by the Rio Grande River and on the south by the state of New Mexico. Most of the county lies at an elevation of 7,500 feet or more. The highest point in the county is the top of Mt. Blanca, which is listed by the United States Geological Survey as 14,390 feet. There are some authorities that claim it to be the highest point in Colorado and list it as 14,464 feet. The lowest place in the county is at the mouth of the Rio Costilla, where it empties into the Rio Grande River.

The county is called Costilla from the Spanish word Costilla, which means rib. It is given this name because the shape of the county formerly resembled a short cut of beef clinging to the Rio Grande River as a rib.

The area of Costilla County is 1,185 sq. miles. The population, according to the 1920 census is 5,032. From this it is seen that the population per square mile is slightly over four people. Most of this population, however, is crowded into settlements along the creeks.

In the census, the population of Spanish descent is classed as American so there is no way to determine what

per cent of the people are of Spanish speaking descent but a perusal of the school census lists indicates that more than 70% are Spanish-American.

The principal occupation of the people is farming and grazing. On the mountains, lumbering is carried on to a considerable extent. There are usually three or four saw mills running, most of their cut being railroad ties. A larger amount is hewed into props for mine use and ties for mines and railroads. The production of props and hewn ties requires that there be many small camps located in isolated places in the mountains. The educational and social effect of this will be discussed in a later part of this survey.

This county is sometimes called the "Land of Manana," (The land of tomorrow), because the people so often put off till tomorrow the things which need doing today.

A historical sketch of the county is necessary for the better understanding of the educational and social conditions which will be presented.

Costilla County was formerly a part of the New Mexico Territory. It is probable that the Spanish had discovered it about the time that Coronado made his trip in search of the Seven Cities of Cibola. When the early trappers came, they found it in the possession of the Ute

Indians. The Utes continued to claim it until almost recent times. Their claim however was contested by many plains tribes such as the Cheyennes, Kiowas, Comanches and even by the detested Apaches. Tradition tells us that there were many fierce battles between these warriors usually with the result that the Utes maintained their claims to this territory. We are want to give credence to these traditions for children find numerous arrowheads in many places and too, we find hieroglyphic writings of these primitive peoples in the canons of the Trinchera River. We are told by old trappers that the Utes each year made a trip across the San Luis Valley coming from the West down Rock Creek, crossing over the Valley and climbing through the Culebra Mountains by way of a path that followed the Trinchera. These Utes were probably going to the plains of eastern Colorado in quest of buffalo meat.

The earliest American explorer to see the county was Zebulon Pike. He was here in the winter of 1805 and 1806. We are quite sure that he hunted deer on the east side of the Rio Grande and this would have put him in Costilla County. He found that he was in Spanish Territory and was carried to the Spanish Territorial Capital at Sante Fe by Spanish Dragoons and after a time was released to return to the United States.

The Valley remained a paradise for the Indian and the trapper for nearly half a century. The Spanish from Taos and Sante Fe often made hunting trips to these parts for deer were plentiful.

On Jan. 12, 1844, the governor of New Mexico, in behalf of the King of Spain, granted to Lewis Lee and Narciss Beaubien the land now included in Costilla County. It is interesting to note the manner in which the land was transferred. Following an old Spanish custom, the two grantees with a Justice of the Peace journeyed on horseback to a point near San Luis which is approximately the center of the grant. Here the Justice of the Peace read the grant and caused Lee and Beaubien to pluck dirt and grass and throw them in the air, crying in Spanish as they did so "Long live the King." Upon their return to Taos they planned to take a company with them and colonize the tract during the following summer. But in those days there was need that several members comprise the company for safety against the Utes who were regarding any newcomers with jealous eyes. Enough settlers could not be assembled and so the colonization scheme had to wait. In the meantime the War with Mexico came and the Taos Massacre took the life of Beaubien. His interests were acquired by his

brother Charles who later bought out the interest of Lee. He began actively to plan the settlement of the grant and in 1849 crossed the Taos Mountains and made a settlement on the Rio Costilla. We feel that a part of this settlement was on the north bank of the river and so would be the first settlement in Costilla County. This was not, however, a permanent settlement for they returned to Taos on the coming of winter to escape the depredations of the Utes and to have better accommodations. The next summer they returned and began cultivations, taking a ditch from the Costilla River. The ditch rights for this project were established under the date of 1852, being the third ditch rights in Colorado. Most of the settlers were of Spanish descent.

In 1851, the Jacquez brothers decided to cross over the Mesa and made a settlement near San Luis. This was to be of short duration for the Utes chased them out and they were glad to escape to Taos. They told of the rich meadows and the opportunity to trap on the Culebra and persuaded others to return with them the following summer. This time they remained. It is interesting to know that they maintained this settlement by dividing the labors and putting the inhabitants on shifts, thus one shift was to herd the stock, another to till the gardens, another to carry firewood and still others to hunt, to trap, to stand watch

against the Indians. They prospered in a frontier way and tradition tells us that in 1853 there were settlements at San Luis, San Pedro and San Acacio, and that during that same year a school was established at San Pedro. It was conducted in Spanish, as were all the schools until about the year 1879.

The statements in the above paragraph have often been contradicted by those who held for earlier settlements in Colorado. The contention has always been that these settlements were not permanent and that the people all returned to Taos each winter. There has recently come to light a letter written by G. H. Heek which states that in 1853 he crossed the San Luis Valley and that he visited two settlements on the Culebra which no doubt were San Acacio and San Luis. He continues that these people were engaged in farming and had livestock. He further states that at night the pigs, goats, and sheep came into his room. He relates that next day he went to Costilla and found farms with facilities for irrigation. Now it is quite evident that a people having pigs, goats, and sheep and living in houses were not a people who lived in the Valley only in summer time.

Lieutenant Beckwith, one of Fremont's staff, also crossed the Valley in the same year and relates much the same story. He comments that San Luis and San Pedro were

busy farming using irrigation methods.

Priority Number One in Colorado Water District Number 24 under date of April 10, 1852 gives San Luis Peoples Ditch water from the Culebra and is the earliest ditch right in Colorado. Priority Number Two is to the people of San Pedro and as previously stated, Priority Number Three is to the people of Costilla.

Therefore in view of the above facts, I believe that I am correct in saying that these people in Costilla County were the first permanent settlers in Colorado. The descendants of these settlers still live in the county and are proud of their ancestry. This has an educational bearing which will be brought out later.

Little thought was paid to the fact that a new territory had been established here and that the people were now in Colorado instead of New Mexico. In fact this was not brought noticeably to their attention until the organization of the county in 1863.

Records of the State Historical Society indicate that the county was formed in 1861 but records in our local court house indicate that the organization was set up in 1863. It is my opinion that the State Legislature created the county in 1861 but the people did not form an organization until they held an election in the fall of 1862, these

officers taking their offices in January, 1863.

The County officers were few at this time and schools were maintained by each settlement with no thought of supervision. In fact, the first record that we find that there was any county supervision was in 1878, two years after the Territory had become a State. In 1880 Charles Johns a discharged soldier of Ft. Garland was selected as County Superintendent of Schools and began to keep a more complete school record for the County.

Thus far the story has been of the southern part of the county. We will now turn our attention to the northern portion. Here we have three creeks. The Ute named from the tribe of Indians which so often camped in that vicinity, the Sangre de Cristo meaning "Blood of Christ," and the Trinchera, an Indian name of uncertain meaning. There is an interesting story told of the naming of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains which gives name to the river. It seems that in the very early times of exploration a young priest of the Catholic faith had journeyed into the San Luis Valley. During the journey his small band had been engaged by the Indians with the result that the Spaniards had to escape by building a raft and pushing out into the San Luis Lakes. The young priest had been mortally wounded and soon after leaving the shore realized that his

time had come. He asked to be lifted so that he could see the mountains that he had been exploring and as he gazed at them in the reddening evening glow he suddenly exclaimed, "Sangre de Cristo" ("Blood of Christ") and expired. Since that day the mountains have been known as Sangre de Cristo.

When gold was discovered in California, the people rushing westward generally took either the Oregon trail or the Sante Fe trail. However there were many who wished to go on westward from Bent's Fort to Salt Lake City and thus into California by an old Spanish trail. This necessitated their crossing the north end of the San Luis Valley and out to Salt Lake over the Cochetopa Pass on the west. But Indians were to be contended with on this trail as well as on the other more prominent trails. The U. S. government was finally persuaded to place a fort in the Valley. It was located on Ute Creek at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Pass. It was an ideal place from the standpoint of scenery and of grass supply for the horses and wood and water for the Fort but it was in a very poor place to repulse attacks from the Indians.

At the point where the Fort was located, Ute Creek divides into two parts. The Fort was located on the island thus formed. On either side of the creek are high bluffs covered with scrub pinon trees and sage brush. The

Indians would steal up under cover of the brush and shoot the sentry or men herding the horses. The trouble became so great that in 1858 the fort was moved down stream away from the bluffs and about half way between the Sangre creek and the Ute.

The name was changed and it was called Fort Garland, after the commander of the western division administering this part of the War Department's territory. The Fort continued in this location for nearly thirty years and had much influence on the development of the country. Many of the soldiers, when their term of enlistment expired, became settlers and acquired ranches in the vicinity.

In 1869, the placer mines had been discovered on the upper stretches of the Sangre Creek and immediately there was a rush to that place. The D. and R. G. had made this the end of the line that they were pushing to the southwest to carry the freight and supplies for the San Juan mining region. Prospecting was carried on over the hills in this vicinity, for the miners reasoned that the gold that they found in the stream must come from some mother lode and this they strived in vain to locate. Until this date, there are still old prospectors living in the region that maintain that some day a master vein will be located and that Cripple Creek and Leadville history will be repeated. This

region is nearly deserted at the present, for there are only a few timber workers left in the old town. The school house, a well built frame building, still stands but has not been used for several years. The few children who live there are transported to the school three miles below at the Timber Company's headquarters. The railroad was soon pushed on to Fort Garland and finally to Alamosa. Later the roadbed was changed to get a better grade and to avoid the heavy snow on the top of La Veta Pass. The railroad is now a standard gauge and crosses Veta Pass, which is about six miles south of the old location. The old roadbed has been deeded to the county and is now used as a State Highway. Attempts are now being made to keep it cleared of snow in the winter, but, as in former times, this is a difficult task.

In 1890, the Mormons, who had settled in the early history in the Valley, came across the Rio Grande River and settled on the Rio Costilla near the present site of Jarosa. They established a church, a school, and a small village called Eastdale. The locality is still known by this name, although the Mormons have been gone for twenty years. There are a few families of this sect still living in some of the communities.

In 1907 certain parties in the East bought up

a large tract of land in the north part of the county. This was divided into small tracts, most of which were five acres in size. There were a few of ten acres, about half as many twenty acres and a very few of forties and eighties. These were sold to people throughout the east and middle west. The San Luis Valley was represented as a country flowing with milk and honey. In 1908 a drawing was held and the non-resident owners were assigned their respective tracts. A new town was founded and named Blanca from the high mountain peak to the north of it. Soon many of these holders began to come and settle on their small places. Of course the five acres was too small to produce a consistent living. Then, too, these men were not used to irrigation and farming results were not what might have been expected. Another difficulty was that there was not enough water to supply all the land. A bond issue was voted and reservoir facilities were increased but the watershed is not large enough to supply the need. Much of this land has gone delinquent for taxes and yields no revenue. The people coming to this new settlement were cosmopolitan and as soon as they arrived, they demanded better schools with the result that a new district was formed and a high school established. Teachers and a principal were brought from the outside and a school on the par with schools of

other counties has been maintained.

In 1909 another land company established a small town called Mesita in the south part of the county. This community was settled largely by people from Iowa and they too demanded better schools and have maintained a very creditable school although it has meant that they had to vote high taxes. They too have a small High School. On the same tract, but farther north, the land company founded San Acacio, a small town. This has been known as a company town, as most of the employees and officials of the company have lived there. It has maintained good schools but has done very little in the High School work, for it has been the policy of the company to maintain low taxes.

In 1910, the development company formed a new village on the Colorado-New Mexico line which was named Jarosa. To this settlement came a great many Adventists. They wished to have a church school and accordingly built an Academy and carried on for a time, the work of the common school and the High School. Many of their number have moved away and the school has been reduced to one teacher with about a dozen pupils.

In 1923 and 1924 this same company brought in a settlement of Japanese to farm head lettuce and cauliflower.

These were increased in 1925 but at this time (1927) are beginning to move away.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the population is made up of a great many peoples. These elements have considerable bearing on the schools of the county. Until recently, the traditions of the early Spanish-speaking settlers have had a great influence on the methods used in the schools. In the southwest part of the county, the standards have been more like the schools of Iowa at the time when these settlers left their native state. The Mormons have not influenced the education to any extent. The Adventists have had a marked influence in their vicinity, and even now the school board of that district is under the control of that faction.

POLITICAL

A statement of the political tendencies will also help to understand the situation of education in the county. In nearly every election a complete ticket of either the Democratic or Republican party has been elected. There has been very little marking of tickets. The influx of easterners has led to some change but even now, the county officers are, with one exception, of one party. This has made of the County Superintendent largely a political office

at the disposal of the party leaders. It must be said here that the choice has very generally fallen to persons more capable than would be anticipated under these conditions. The greatest criticism is that there is a frequent change in the occupant of the office, and that about the time that a superintendent gets well acquainted with his work and in a position to render efficient service, election time comes and there is a change and another to learn the demands of the office. During a period from the organization of the county in 1863 until 1881, the officers were Republican. For a two year period the Democrats were in power. From 1883 until 1917, the Republicans were again in office. In 1917, there was a land slide to the Democrats and they have been in control since although at nearly every election there are one or two Republicans elected. This was not true, however, in the election of 1926 and only one commissioner is a Republican, he holding over from the previous election.

SOCIAL

The social situation of the county should also be mentioned as it too has an influence on the educational interests. The Spanish-speaking people retain many of the old customs which were brought here with the earliest settlers. Likewise, the old miners and some of the early day

settlers cling to their traditions most tenaciously.

We shall first look at the habits and customs of these early Spanish settlers. As has been stated, they came from Taos. No doubt many were of mixed blood at the time of their migration to the county. This intermingling of blood has continued and they present a very mixed race. Much Indian blood, some French, some Jew, considerable German, some American and a very little negro blood is evident. This crossing of blood-lines has been accomplished mostly through marriage but these people have sometimes been abused by other races. This condition has made them suspicious of "outsiders" and there was a time when a teacher from outside the county was not welcome in these Spanish districts. This condition is changing and, although there is still a general preference for native instructors, many teachers from other parts of the state are coming to these schools.

These Spanish-Americans, until the use of the automobile became very common, did not go about much. Consequently they did things much in the manner of the earliest settlers. The older women wore long black mantillas, they baked the bread of the family in a crude adobe brick oven, and washed the clothes of the family in the nearest creek using the Mexican soap weed "Yucca"

instead of soap. These conditions still prevail, to a certain extent, in places where the population is largely of Spanish origin.

Most of these people are Catholics. A few are Protestants, either Presbyterian or Methodist. The Presbyterian church maintains a missionary who works with them in the vicinity of San Pablo. They have a church there and no doubt the organization is a permanent one for it has persisted for more than twenty years.

The Catholics maintain many of their ancient customs such as accompanying the corpse from the church to the cemetery by singing very loudly. This is supposed to drive away the evil spirits.

Among these Catholic people is an organization known as the Penitentes. These are very active at Easter time when they celebrate by beating themselves on the back until they are nearly exhausted. They contend that this will make them realize the agony suffered by the Master at the time of His crucifixion and that they will therefore be more consecrated to Him. A few punish themselves by walking barefooted on the cactus of the plains.

All of these people are quite loyal to their church, and the priests and sisters wield a strong influence over them.

Another custom coming from the early days is that of the houses being over-crowded. Most of the houses are of adobe and are low and nearly flat. There is little light or ventilation. The houses are often built in a hollow square. The center is called a plaza. In the winter the workers return from the northern Colorado beet fields and from sheep herding in Wyoming, and often more than one family is crowded into these cramped quarters.

In former times the inheritance of the families was ruled by the Spanish law. This was that the land estate of the father was to be divided among his sons. Consequently, we find in many parts of the county, that the farms have been divided and subdivided until they are very small, sometimes not exceeding an acre. There has been a tendency recently for these to be gathered into larger tracts. This is usually accomplished by purchase.

Another early custom has prevailed, that of living in the settlement and going out to the farm to work during the day and returning at night. This also causes a congestion of houses as is illustrated in the accompanying photographs.

The marriage customs are rather ancient too. There is a great celebration of the wedding accompanied by much dancing, eating, and drinking. The parents of the bride give a big dance on the evening preceding the wedding

and the groom or his father prepares a large celebration for the evening of the wedding day. There is usually a grand parade and most celebrations are excuse for some to become hilariously intoxicated.

There has been much intermarriage among these people as is evidenced by the fact that in one school district nearly one fourth of a school population of over two hundred are of the same surname. This condition is on the decline for the auto is giving these folks a chance to mix and a better condition is apparent.

Their diet consists mostly of meat, beans, and bread or "tortillas" as they call it. They dry some vegetables and keep pumpkins into the winter. They often jerk meat and dip it in a salt and pepper brine, then hang it on lines to dry. This method seems to come from the Indians. They wish their foods highly seasoned and drink coffee freely. No definite survey has been made into the question of their diet but the work that has been done points out that much change is needed. There is little doubt that canning should be practiced and that more vegetables should enter into their diet.

Various attempts have been made to introduce cooking and canning clubs among the children but little has been accomplished because there have not been available leaders.

This spring (1927) there is increased interest and we hope for a club at San Luis under the supervision of the Extension department of the State Agricultural College.

The Japanese have not been in the county long enough to have much influence on the social conditions. They are congregated near Mesita and near Blanca. The families are generally large. All the family work and they appear to be very industrious. They do not mix much with the other nationalities and generally consider themselves above the "Mexicans" as they call them. It is evident that their home-life differs from that of the American, and that they will not yield themselves readily to the cooperation needed in a well functioning community. A difference between them and the Spanish speaking population which is readily noticed is that the Japanese seem eager to get the English language. Many of the children will not speak the Japanese in the presence of their teacher.

There is a type of American which presents a social problem. This type is the old settler who is usually a retired cowboy or miner. They have fresh in their minds the day when "all the land belonged to God, the Government and us." They cannot see that conditions in the county have changed, and that change demands new ideas. They would retain the taxes, the roads, the schools and

other things the same as in the days of old. No doubt other communities have this type but Costilla County is blessed with many of this caliber.

EDUCATIONAL

In 1861, the county of Costilla comprised a large part of the San Luis Valley. It has been subtracted from many times, the last division coming in 1913 when Alamosa County was created. The county records of schools are now in the care of the Superintendent of Alamosa County, therefore this survey will deal with the conditions since this last division.

School Population

At the time of the division the school population in the county before the division was 1970. The division left 1583 in the twelve districts. The next census list in 1914 showed an increase to 1648. In this census list there was reported two illiterates over twenty-one years of age. We are certain that this statement does not take into account a great many of the older settlers. The list of 1917 gives twenty-four illiterates over twenty-one years of age. This figure is probably not high enough.

The highest point in recent school population was reached in 1922, when there were 1931 of school age in the county. The present population (1926) is 1771. The

following table will show the distribution and comparison between 1914 and 1926.

<u>District</u>	<u>1914</u>	<u>1926</u>
1	393	316
2	105	112
3	43	Now consolidated
4	114	162
5	153	108
6	232	208
7	120	138
8	Not formed	79
9	Not formed	92
10	146	128
11	40	53
12	43	78
13	153	140
14	Not formed	9
22	<u>106</u>	<u>148</u>
Total	1648	1771

From this it is seen that there has been little change in the total school population. Nor has there been very much change in the individual districts. Most can be accounted for in the re-forming of districts. It is noticeable however that, although Number Ten has combined

with Three, still there are not as many in the consolidated district in 1926 as there was in 1914.

The above has shown the potential school strength. Let us present statistics to show the real school attendance. These figures are for the year 1925-26.

<u>District</u>	<u>Average Attendance</u>	<u>Percent of census</u>	<u>Percent of Enrollment</u>
1	69	20	58
2	58	42	57
4	65	49	68
5	21	19	29
6	110	52	60
7	61	44	58
8	33	41	63
9	50	54	53
10	105	83	68
11	14	26	37
12	58	75	60
13	72	50	56
14	Pupils attend at Blanca (No. 10)		
22	57	46	73

Little attention can be paid to the percent of census attending for there are so many factors entering that make it uncertain, that no predictions will be attempted. It is well to note however that the Blanca and Mesita districts where the Japanese are congregated

show the highest percent. It might be of interest too that in both of these districts, the enrollment exceeds the census list. This is accounted for by the fact that the Mexican laborers are at home in other districts when the census is taken but are enrolled in the fall and in the spring when their parents are working for the Japanese and others.

In the column presenting the percent of enrollment attending we notice that District 22 has the highest percent of attendance. This is the location of the Presbyterian Mission but whether there is a connection, we are unable to tell. The lowest percent of attendance is District 5. No explanation is evident for this. The next lowest is District 11. This is a district in the hills and the roads are often impassable and perhaps this will partially account for the low figure. The rest of the districts are much the same showing a lack of interest as expressed through attendance. It is very evident that the compulsory school law is not enforced. There is no evidence that an attempt has ever been made to enforce it. Some county superintendents and teachers have stimulated attendance by talking to parents and by interesting the children in the school work. There is sore need in the county for some systematic way of increasing attendance.

Finance

There are three sources of revenue for school districts in the county; district tax, county mill levy, and general state tax. In 1914 there was no county mill levy, thus there was only two sources of school revenue. The state general school fund in 1914 amounted to \$6803.21, or \$4.128 per person of school age, and was distributed among the schools according to the census as follows:

<u>District</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>General Tax</u>
1	393	\$1622.39
2	105	433.45
3	43	177.50
4	114	470.61
5	153	631.62
6	232	957.75
7	120	495.37
10	146	602.76
11	40	165.10
12	43	177.50
13	153	631.59
22	106	437.57

The County Records show that in the year 1925-26 the distribution of the general tax was as follows:

<u>District</u>	<u>Census</u>	<u>General Tax</u>
1	313	\$2939.25
2	122	1378.78
4	145	1439.35
5	114	1357.72
6	298	2899.75
7	118	1368.26
8	74	1252.41
9	79	1791.70
10	106	3177.59
11	52	665.72
12	89	2075.29
13	167	2026.05
14	7	169.29
22	138	1949.69
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1822	24,440.85

A comparison with the taxes and incomes of 1914 is rather difficult for we are operating under a different law and the above represents both the state general tax and the county general tax. The county fund for teachers and apportioned according to the teachers employed in the district was distributed as follows:

<u>Dist.</u>	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>First Distribution</u>	<u>Second Distribution</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	4	\$352.15	\$344.45	\$696.60
2	2	176.08	172.22	348.30
4	2	176.08	172.22	348.30
5	2	176.08	172.22	348.30
6	4	352.15	344.45	696.60
7	2	176.08	172.22	348.30
8	2	176.08	172.22	348.30
9	3	264.12	258.33	522.45
10	5	440.20	430.55	870.75
11	1	88.04	86.12	174.16
12	3	264.12	258.33	522.45
13	3	264.12	258.33	522.45
14	None	40.00	62.68	102.68
22	3	<u>264.11</u>	<u>258.33</u>	<u>522.44</u>
		3209.41	3162.67	6372.08

It should be stated here that District 14 does not maintain a teacher but conveys their children to the Blanca consolidated school. They pay a tuition fee which is less than the real cost of instruction but as both districts seem to be satisfied and without a doubt the children are doing much better in the consolidated school, no complaint should come from outsiders, although it would

seem proper for District 14 to pay the actual cost of instruction.

It will be seen from the above that District 1 or San Luis has a low cost as compared with their school population. There is located there a Catholic Convent which enrolls many of the children. In 1925-26 there was an enrollment, in this school, of 165 in the common school and 25 in the high school. A few of these came from other districts but we can easily determine that the public school at San Luis is relieved of about half their load.

The cost of education runs highest in District No. 10 or Blanca because they maintain a full four years high school course, also because only about 27% of the land in the district pays taxes. The other lands, nearly one fourth of the district, have been sold for taxes, and are being held by the county or the irrigation district. It has seemed that these folks have been struggling against almost insurmountable barriers, but they are loathe to give up their high school and are maintaining it under great odds. Fortunately for them there is considerable mileage of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railway which helps keep them going.

We shall next look at the complete tax levy for the year 1926. The following table indicates the action

taken by the Commissioners and now on record in the county clerk's office. Parts of Districts 8, 9, 10 and 14 have formerly belonged to other districts but as bonds are levied on the land involved rather than the district, we show here the additional levies required in these portions to maintain their bonds and interest.

In November of 1925 the following levy in mills, for the various districts, was made by the County Commissioners:

<u>Dist.</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Special Fund</u>	<u>Sinking Fund</u>	<u>Interest Fund</u>	<u>Redemp- tion Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	2.50	1.50	1.00	1.00		6.00
2	1.20	2.00	2.00	1.50	6.00	12.70
3	Consolidated with No. 10. See below.					
4	2.00	1.80	1.00	1.70	2.50	9.00
5	3.50	2.30	1.00	1.00		7.80
6	1.80	1.40	1.00	2.00	10.00	16.20
7	2.20	1.70			.10	4.00
8	3.60	2.40	1.00	1.00		8.00
For bonds on lands formerly in						} 13.00
Dist. { 2			2.00	1.00	3.00	
{ 12			1.00	1.00	2.00	

<u>Dist.</u>	<u>General</u> <u>Fund</u>	<u>Special</u> <u>Fund</u>	<u>Sinking</u> <u>Fund</u>	<u>Interest</u> <u>Fund</u>	<u>Redemp-</u> <u>tion</u> <u>Fund</u>	<u>Total</u>
9	1.00	.50	1.00	1.00		3.50)
(5						4.409
(12	none			.909		.909)
10	3.90	8.00	1.00	1.00	2.50	16.40)
3			.50	.04		.54)
11	1.20	1.20				2.40
12	3.70	2.80		2.50		9.00
13	2.20	5.50	1.00	.30		9.00
14	3.00	1.50	1.20	.50	6.00	12.20)
(3			1.00	1.00		2.00)
(5			1.00	1.00		2.00)
22	1.60	1.30	2.50	2.00	7.60	15.00

It is apparent that the districts having the highest mill levies are those which find it necessary to levy a redemption fund levy. This redemption fund is to pay outstanding warrants which have accumulated during former times and still remain unpaid. This has usually been caused, not by the mismanagement of the districts, but by the fact that taxes are not paid on much of the land. Reference has already been made regarding this in connection with District 10. If we eliminate this condition it will be noticed that Blanca, District 10, would still have

the highest mill levy, but we would expect this because it is consolidated, has transportation to pay, and likewise has a four-year high school. The lowest would be District 11, a large district on the mountains with a large railroad mileage, but having few children. The mill levy in this district is hardly noticed by the taxpayers.

It seems to me that the above substantiates the fact that a good school is costly, but that it can be maintained if the people are willing to sacrifice and pay the price.

A comparison of the above costs with the cost of instruction throughout the state would be interesting. The 1926 Colorado year book gives the following facts:

<u>Average cost of education</u>		
<u>County</u>	<u>Based on Enrollment</u>	<u>Based on Average Attendance</u>
Alamosa	\$80.41	\$117.96
Costilla	36.90	57.94
Denver	145.74	203.40
Summit	164.52	221.97
Average for State	104.74	143.53

I have chosen these counties for the following reasons: Alamosa county is an adjoining county, Denver has a large educational system and probably well managed,

Summit County has the highest cost of any county, Costilla County has the lowest cost of any county. No doubt it also has the poorest schools.

It will be noticed that Costilla County's cost runs considerably less than one half of the average for the counties of the state of Colorado.

No doubt local pride should be aroused and the county made to realize that the citizens are not affording their children the proper opportunities for education.

Next we shall look at the bonded indebtedness against the various districts. The valuation of the districts will also be shown so as to draw inference whether the districts are overbonded or not.

<u>District</u>	<u>Bonds</u>	<u>Valuation 1926</u>
1	5,500	364,508
2	2,300	103,212
4	2,000	74,565
5	5,700	116,570
6	3,000	118,106
7	None	58,505
8	5,000	242,149
9	5,000	385,183
10	20,000	1,464,194

<u>District</u>	<u>Bonds</u>	<u>Valuation 1926</u>
11	None	339,970
12	22,500	539,343
13	8,000	1,026,225
14	3,000	332,665
22	<u>2,400</u>	<u>78,065</u>
Total	84,400	5,244,260

District 12 with a valuation a little above the average district has the highest bonded indebtedness with \$22,500. Blanca, District 10 comes next with \$20,000. This district however has the highest valuation and the bonds are not out of proportion to the valuation of the district.

There are two districts which have no bonds. Both have fairly good school houses. These could be repaired and improved some with little cost and then their facilities would at least be the average.

Thus we see that the financial condition of the districts, taken as a whole, is very good but that the expenditure in some districts might be increased with profit to their equipment and teaching conditions.

Instruction

Blanca, District 10 is the only district to have given any intelligence tests. In 1925-26 they gave a battery of tests to their high school pupils. The results of these are not available, only some general comments given by the Superintendent. He said that the tests indicated that the pupils were very close to the average intelligence. It would be interesting if some widely used test could be given through the entire county. Such a plan was under way but the county superintendent who was planning the work was defeated in the election and nothing has been undertaken.

A few educational tests have been given in various schools but no battery of tests has been given in any school. In very few cases has any remedial work been undertaken. In the Mesita school in 1925, a test based on the Ayres Spelling list was given and in 1926 the Horn-Ashbaugh spelling system was introduced in the school. The indications are that the school is about average. The average of the school has been improved by the use of the Horn-Ashbaugh system.

Someone has said that the test of a good school is the percent of students they hold and pass from the eighth grade. This is only partially true. We shall look

at the graduates of 1914 and of 1926.

<u>District</u>	<u>1914</u>	<u>1915</u>	<u>1926 Graduates</u>
1	None	None	3
2	None	None	1
3	None	None	Consolidated
4	None	None	1
5	None	None	None
6	None	None	None
7	None	None	None
8	Not organized		2
9	Not organized		3
10	6	6	6
11	None	None	1
12	3	3	4
13	None	6	1
14	Not organized		None
22	None	None	1

In 1914 only two districts had graduates. In 1915 there were three districts with graduates. It had increased to five districts in 1916. The number of districts had decreased to four in 1917. In 1918, the number jumped to six. In 1926 there were ten districts out of fourteen having graduates. This indicates a marked increase and there is little doubt that the schools are functioning

better in this matter. However there seems, from the records, to be a very low percentage graduating from the schools where the Spanish speaking children predominate. This is probably due to the fact that there is little probability of the children going to high school, for they are not able to pay their way at the Convent School, which is the only high school in their vicinity.

The qualifications and preparation of the teachers will, in a way, indicate too, the quality of the instruction given in the schools.

The following statement will give a comparison of the teachers of 1914 and of 1926.

Certificates of Teachers

	1914	1926
State Life	None	5
State - Five year	None	3
County - First	16	12
County - Second	10	14
County - Third	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	32	38

Perhaps this is not a fair comparison for the certificates of today are graded at Denver and those of 1914 were graded by the County Superintendent. Also the first and second grade certificates now require examinations

in additional subjects. A casual glance at the above would seem to indicate that there had not been a marked improvement but if we realize the new conditions, I believe we can say that the qualifications of the teachers show a very definite improvement.

In 1916, the county superintendent's records first show the schooling of the teachers. The records show that there were thirteen who had some college training and thirteen more who had done some work in Normal. This leaves ten who had not done any work above high school, and probably most of them were not high school graduates. The record does state that three of them were not even eighth grade graduates.

In 1926, the records show that there is only one teacher in the county that does not have the equivalent of a high school education. There were thirty-four who had had some normal training. This is certainly much better than the record of 1916.

I have not been able to find any record showing the qualifications of Costilla County teachers as compared with other counties, but from observation and discussion with county superintendents, I am of the opinion that the standard is lower than the average, perhaps quite close to the bottom of the list. However the fact of improvement

should be recognized and from that we can look forward to a better future.

Health

There has been little work done in determining the health of the school children of the county. The Red Cross has conducted some clinics at Mesita, San Acacio, and Blanca. Also, some time ago, a Red Cross nurse was in the county for a week and weighed and examined the school children. The clinics that have been held have included all children who wished to be examined. There were many under school age and many children of school age were not examined. Very few older children were present.

However we can draw some general conclusions from the work done. There were a great many children underweight. This was attributed to under-nourishment due to unbalanced diet. Many cases of bad teeth and infected tonsils were found. There has been no attempt to remedy the under-nourishment except the advice given by the physician at the time of the examination. There has been some improvement in the tonsil and teeth situation. No doubt more would be attempted if there was a dentist in the county, but as the situation is now, a visit to the dentist means a trip of from thirty to sixty miles.

• Dr. L. K. Phares, an optician made a test of the eyes of the school children in 1924. He kept no records

but remarked at the time that the eye condition among the Spanish-speaking children was below the average. No consistent follow-up work has been done but the county superintendent says that she can notice that more children are having their eyes cared for than before.

From some work done by the agents of the Extension Service of the State Agricultural College at Fort Collins, it is evident that the diet in many parts of the county is not what should be desired. The Extension Service is planning to start work in helping these people remedy the condition.

Buildings

The school buildings of Costilla County are constructed largely of adobe, which is generally used by the Spanish-speaking people of this vicinity. There are only two frame buildings in the county. Some of the larger schools are built of cement blocks and one is made of stucco. There are eighteen school houses in the fourteen districts of the county. Two are un-used, one, because the children are sent to a school in another district, and the other has been abandoned on account of consolidation. There are seven one-room schools, four two-room schools, two three-room schools, three four-room schools, one five-room school and one school of nine rooms. Of course not all rooms are used.

Jarosa, District No. 9, has no school building, the frame building having burned to the ground during the fall of 1926. They are contemplating the erection of a suitable building during the summer of 1927.

Old San Acacio, District No. 5, does not have sufficient room for their present school population. They are planning an addition of adobe to their school building.

With the above exceptions the room space is sufficient to accommodate the present school population.

The type of the buildings is not very desirable. Most of them are of the oblong type with one, two, or three rooms and with light on three sides. In most schools the light is very poorly arranged and the children cannot be so seated that they will have the light from behind them. This cannot be readily remedied without an almost prohibitive cost and perhaps the situation must remain until new buildings are erected. It is to be hoped by that time that our state superintendent or some of our educational institutions will have someone in the field who can intelligently advise these people. The photographs of school structures accompanying this will better illustrate the type than a written description.

Course of Study

In 1914, there was no course of study consistently followed. However, times have changed and today the new State Course of Study is being followed quite closely. This has led to more uniformity in the work than in former times. The fact that thirty-four of the teachers have had some Normal training also leads to a better use of available materials.

The State Course of Study is not entirely suited to the needs of the county, but is perhaps as good as any general course of study could be. The conditions in the county are peculiar in many ways, as the reader has gathered from the historical and social part of this thesis. Many of our teachers have ideas which they would like to try out, striving thereby to more nearly meet the local needs.

Since the county is largely an agricultural and grazing territory, it would seem that agriculture and domestic science should play a large part in the course of study. Very little of either is given in the county. At Mesita, Agriculture has been stressed recently in the seventh and eighth grades. It would seem too, that shop work should find a place. Blanca is doing some of this work, but the schools which need it most, have done

little or nothing. Of course, under the present conditions, the teachers in these small schools have little time to incorporate this work, because the parents are constantly demanding what they term "essentials." They believe reading, writing and arithmetic to be the essentials. But with more of the teachers undertaking Normal training, it is quite certain that they will begin to enrich the curricula.

The county superintendent with a salary of a thousand dollars a year is not in a position to pursue the work closely enough to help in unifying the work of the various districts.

The Adams State Normal School is helping to make the work more uniform by conducting, during each winter, an extension class, where the teachers take work of college rank and are thus thrown together, so that they, almost unconsciously make their work more nearly of a uniform nature.

Textbooks

In 1913, when the county was divided there was no uniformity of textbooks. The books in use in the northern part of the county were nearly up-to-date but in the vicinity of San Luis, there were books being used which had been copyrighted in the 1870's. Neither was

there any uniformity. The first county superintendent in the new county realized that this was not a satisfactory condition. Accordingly, a meeting of teachers was called and the situation presented. It was determined to select a committee, which should recommend to the various districts a uniform series of recent books. In 1915 this was accomplished and the county superintendent went before each school board and secured the adoption of the recommended list.

This list has stood until this year (1926) when a new list was recommended. It must not be understood that there had been absolutely no changes. From time to time additions have been made and in a few cases an entire change has been recommended.

This list was for the grade texts only and no recommendations have been made for the high school. Consequently the courses and texts in the high schools are varied with little suggestion of uniformity.

The list recently presented to the teachers of the county has not been adopted by the districts but there is every indication that it will be.

These books have been carefully selected by a committee of well-trained, experienced teachers and no doubt is on a par with adopted lists of other counties.

In five districts of the county, children are furnished with free textbooks. There is much discussion as to whether this is a wise method of handling the book question. The teachers in the districts having this method argue that the children are always supplied with books on time and of the same kind. Books may be transferred from one class to the other, thus giving a greater number of books to the grade. Those, who are against the free-textbook system say that the child does not care for the free textbook as well as his own book, and that the free textbook, being used by many, is a carrier of disease. It is noticeable that in the districts not having free textbooks, there are often cases of children not being sufficiently supplied with books. There seems to be no agitation in the districts having the free textbook system to return to the individual ownership plan.

Supervision

The elected county superintendent is the only county supervisory officer in the county. As has been stated in a previous paragraph the superintendent is often chosen on account of party affiliation rather than for ability. This has sometimes made the supervision of a doubtful quality. Also the salary of this officer is so

low that it does not enable an attempt at consistent and regular supervision. Under present conditions the supervisory work cannot be satisfactory and there must be a revision in our rural school administration before we can hope for any marked improvement.

The supervision in the various schools must be of a very limited nature for most teachers, principals and superintendents teach every period of the day to cover their work. Many of the school-heads use recesses or noons to plan work with their teachers. Some remain after school for this purpose. Still others make no attempt at supervision.

No doubt much improvement could be made in this line. The county superintendent might call group meetings once a month and help the teachers plan their work. This would lead to more uniformity and might set a pace which would bring the slower teachers and pupils to greater efforts.

Activities

Activities have not held an important place in the education of the county until recently. In 1915 a County Teachers' Association was formed. This has been active all the time and has at present a marked influence

on the educational work done in the county. Formerly there were three meetings a year but of recent years only two have been held. Through its influence the Spelling and Oratorical Contests have been fostered and the county track meet organized. A uniform list of textbooks has been recommended and it has brought many successful educators into the county for addresses and other educational work.

At first there were very few schools represented in the Spelling and Oratorical Contests but this year every school, but one, was represented and there is an increasing number of contestants in the oratory.

The Track Meet was organized in 1922 and but three schools were represented. In 1926 seven schools were entered and in 1927 nine schools have already signified their intention of participating.

There are three classes in the Meet, known as the "A" Class, "B" Class, and "Girls" Class. The "A" Class consists of boys weighing more than 120 pounds or more than fourteen years of age. The "B" Class is composed of boys under fifteen years and weighing less than 120 pounds. All girls are eligible in the "Girls" Class.

A competent referee is secured and the other officers of the meet are chosen from the teachers of the

county. A silver cup goes to the school scoring the greatest number of points. A pennant is presented the school winning each class.

In cooperation with the Extension Service of the Colorado Agricultural College, Boys and Girls Clubs have been organized. Most of this work has centered around Blanca and Mesita. Creditable work has been done in these clubs and the winners have been sent to the state fair at Pueblo. Last year two of the winning entries in the calf clubs were sent to the fair and both took prizes there.

Plans are under way to extend this work to other schools. No club has been undertaken in a Spanish-speaking neighborhood, but no doubt such a club will be organized in 1927.

Basketball has been played by several of the schools, but no organization has been perfected to handle the competition between schools. An attempt was made in 1926 but sufficient interest had not been aroused. No doubt in 1928 such action will be taken.

In some of the schools, there are sufficient activities for the type of school. These activities should be extended into other schools. Little has been done with music and this should have attention for the

Spanish-speaking children are by nature, artistic and this would be a wonderful outlet for their talent.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the following facts are apparent.

The cost of instruction is the lowest in the state. The school districts are generally in a fair financial condition.

The qualifications of the teachers are slightly below the average but marked improvement is noted and this problem seems to be solving itself.

Few mental or educational tests have been given. When the supervision is sufficient these should be attempted. Under present conditions it is doubtful if they would avail much for remedial work could not be intelligently undertaken.

More and better supervision is needed. A marked improvement cannot be expected until there is a reconstruction of our rural school system.

The activities now carried on in some schools should be extended to others. No doubt other activities could profitably be added to the work of the schools.

The textbook situation is very good. There is

uniformity in grade texts and the texts are modern. The uniformity should be extended to the high school although this is not imperative for there are few high school students in the public schools.

The health of the children should be more carefully guarded. More attention should be given to undernourished children and to those having defective eyes and teeth.

It is very evident that a peculiar situation, educationally, exists in the county and that this situation is one which cannot be remedied in a day. There must be a gradual, constant growth towards better things. This must come from within the county if it is to be permanent.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Schoolhouse San Luis
Constructed of Cement Blocks



One Room Schoolhouse
El Rito District 22



Schoolhouse Mesita, Colorado
The Lava Rock found in the vicinity
has been used in this building.



One room Schoolhouse, Cordillera
District 1. The schoolhouses in
the Spanish-speaking Districts
have Cupolas.



Schoolhouse Garcia, Colorado
Just a few rods from the New Mexico
line.



Three Room school at San Pablo
District 4. One room is an
assembly room but is not high
enough for basketball.



The Los Fuertes School
District 22.



Old San Acacio, District 5
Constructed of adobe with
cement plaster.



Two Rooms. Lavalley District 7.
Poorly lighted.



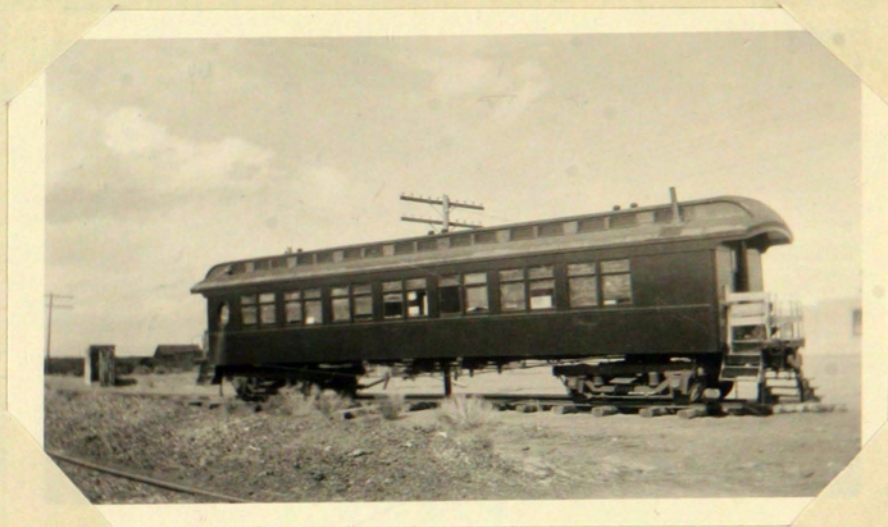
Three rooms.
Chama District 6.



Blanca District 10.
Nine rooms. Notice the fire escape.
Constructed of Cement Blocks.



Ft. Garland District 13.
Too much space wasted in halls.
Cement Block Construction.



A Railway Coach used for a Schoolhouse. It is divided and has two rooms. Jarosa District 8, whose house burned.



An Adventist Schoolhouse being made into a cheese factory.



An Adventist Academy--Public Education is putting it out of business. Only one teacher left.



The barn of the Academy shown above now used as a private dairy barn.



A Deserted Mormon Church.
The Colony has left Eastdale
but scattered families still
remain.



A Mission Church--Protestant.
For Spanish-speaking people.



A Cosmopolitan Group.
Primary Grades at Mesita. At the
left are Japanese, in the back
Russians, center is Americans and
right is Mexicans.



In the foreground is Culebra
River. Children drink from
the river even though there are
corrals on the opposite bank.



Beckwith Schoolhouse.
Unused for this District has been
consolidated with No. 10. See
Picture 11.



A Consolidated School.
It makes four trips each day.
District 12.



A Mexican Out of Doors Oven.
Many of these are used in
Costilla County.



A jolly time on the Giant Stride.
Many of the schools have no play-
ground equipment.



Getting ready for the County
Track Meet.



San Acacio, Colorado, District 9.
Well built and well arranged.



This type of toilet is used
at most schools.

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