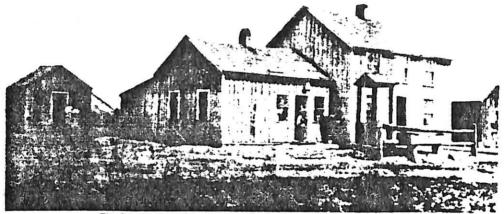
BROOMFIELD
An Early History
1864 - 1955



The George Henry Church house, located about 104th Avenue and old Wadsworth Boulevard as it looked in 1867. Standing in the doorway are Mrs. Church and son Frank.

(Photo courtesy Marcus F. Church)

Carol J. Schwenk HIST 3600 April 28, 1989 "Let's see, Broomfield, that is a very recent suburb," said the library assistant in response to my request for information on the history of that community. Even material from the Broomfield Chamber of Commerce says "Broomfield began in the late 50's as a developer's dream and incorporated as a city in 1961." I suspect that many people, if asked, would say that Broomfield began in the 1950's as a city built around the toll booth on the Denver-Boulder Turnpike. In fact, Broomfield's roots as a farming community go back to the 1860's. And before that, the area was inhabited by indigenous people.

For several centuries before the arrival of the white man the area that includes what is today Broomfield, was inhabited by several Indian tribes. The Utes were in possession of most of the land but there were also Cheyennes and Arabahoes. To the west of Broomfield about four miles, and in several locations to the North of the city, circular rings of stones are evidence of Arabahoe villages. The Arabahoes used stones set in a circle to form foundations of the build their tipis. The Arabahoes used stones set in a circle to form foundations of the set of th

G. Henry Church and his wife, Sarah, came to Colorado in an ox-drawn wagon as thousands of others had, in search of gold. Like many others, they too were unsuccessful, but decided to stay and make their home here. So in 1864, they became the first permanent, white settlers in the area that would become Broomfield. They bought a "squatters claim" where today the railroad tracks cross over Old Wadsworth Blvd. at 104th Avenue. On this site Henry Church built a stage station for the Overland Stage route to Sacramento, California via Chevenne, Wyoming. The twelve room house the Churches built provided lodging for the stage passenger's first night out of Denver. Sarah Church used to love to tell the story of their nine week trip to Colorado from Independ-

ence, Iowa. The highlight of that trip was when a band of Indians offered to buy Sarah for nine ponies and \$100! Among the guests that spent the night at the Church's stage stop in the spring of 1863 was President of the United States, Ullyses S. Grant and his daughter Nellie. — 50000007

In June of 1868 the Wells Fargo Company, that had bought the Overland Stage from Ben Halladay the previous year, discontinued the "Churches Crossing" stage route. The stage ston continued to be used, however, by oxteam drivers, "bull whackers", who were hauling hay to the mountains.

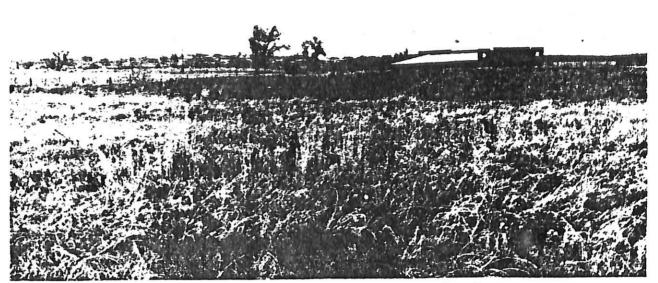
With the changes in his stage stop, Henry Church shifted his attention to farming. He acquired more land and began cattle ranching and wheat farming. He secured water rights from Clear Creek and built irrigation ditches to his ranch. The Church ditch, built in 1877, still exists today. He built two storage reservoirs, the first in Colorado. These reservoirs are now known as Church Upper Lake, near the Jefferson County Airport, and Church Lower Lake which lies beside Old Wadsworth Blvd at West 106th Avenue and can be seen from US 36.7

Henry's younger brother John had also come to Colorado, and the two brought the first Hereford cattle to Colorado in 1869 and planted the first wheat in the state. 8 - doubtful.

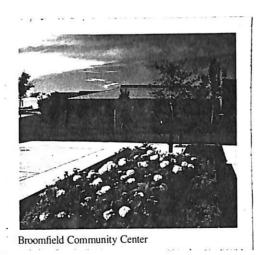
Large land areas of the west had been given to the rail- A roads by the United States government to encourage development and settlement by the white man. The land where Broomfield is today, was given to the Union Pacific Railroad. (This area is mostly within Range 69 West, Township 1 South, Section 35.) In 1935, Adolph J. Zang and two partners bought this as well as much adjacent land from the railroad. They started with 1195 acres. Ten years later, in 1895, Zang bought out his partners and also acquired 1200 additional acres which he for the low bought for \$7 an acre.

Adjacent to Zang's property was a little unincorporated Rocking community which had grown up around the railroad station. 11
This first community was actually located approximately one

mile east and a quarter mile north of the existing "old" Broomfield. It was served by the Denver, Utah and Pacific Railroad narrow gauge branch line that ran from Denver to Erie and Lyons. 12



Sight of original DUAP Depot (looking north) New Community Center in background



1988 view of the site of the first Broomfield DU&P RR

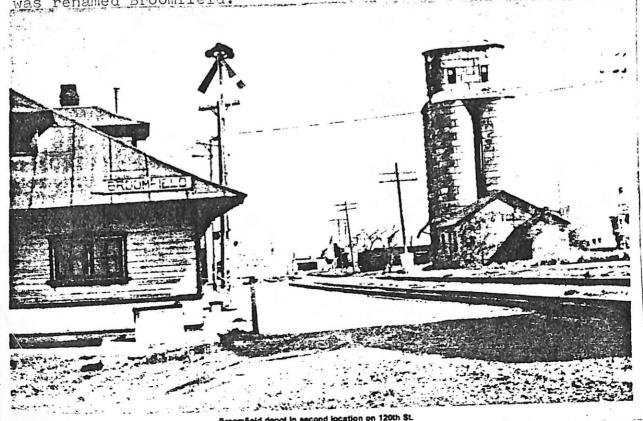
The train hauled coal from Erie and flagstone of Lyons to Denver. ¹³ The train stop was near a lake where the trains could take on water for the engines. This is where, on September 26, 1884, the first Post Office serving the area

was established. According to E. J. Jones, Broomfield Postmaster in 1935:

"when the officials wanted a name for the station and telegraph office, they came out to give it a name, one of the officials noticed a small field of broom corn growing near by, and suggested the name "Broomfield" for the new station, and Broomfield it was."

Broomfield's first postmaster was a woman. Her name was Miss Dreuella Coulson and she held the job for two years, from September 26, 1884 to July 9, 1886. Following her as postmaster, from July 10, 1886 to July 23, 1889, was Lewis E. Craine. 15 Interestingly, in the 1888 Colorado State Business Directory, the first year in which there is an entry for Broomfield, the are two listings. One is for a blacksmith, and the other is "L. E. Craine, physician." The population is shown as 100. 16

The narrow gauge route was replaced with a Union Pacific Railroad standard gauge line in the location which is seen today. This area became known as "Zang's Spur," a name it kept for several years. 17 When the Post Office was moved to the area of the new station in 1889, the Zang's Spur station was renamed Broomfield. 18



Broomfield depot in second location on 120th St.

In between the first Broomfield Post Office site and the Zang's Spur site there was another of the original parcels of farmland sold by the railroad. Daniel Mitze, who came to the United States from Germany in 1877, purchased 160 acres to farm in 1885. 19

Then, as now, the little farming community was solit between Boulder and Jefferson Counties. (As Broomfield grew in later years, it also annexed land east into Adams County) Children went to one of two one room schools, depending upon the county in which they lived. Those residing in Boulder County went to Broomfield School, which was located at the present day intersection of 10th and Main Streets. The Jefferson County students attended the Dry Creek Valley School, later known as the Lorraine School. This school, built in 1882, was at a site that today is 112th and Pierce Streets. 20



In 1888 by a dozen

Broomfield's first church was founded in 1888 by a dozen or so residents. The church was Methodist, it's first pastor was Reverend R. H. Rhodes, and services were held in the little one room Lorraine School. Services continued in the school until after 1900. From then until the new church, Warren Chapel, was completed in 1908, church services and Sunday School were held in a private home. It wasn't until the 1950's that other denominations built churches in Broomfield. 21

The 1889 Colorado State Business Directory has only one listing for Broomfield, "Graves, E. O., grocer." But like Dr. Craine, Edward Graves had two jobs, because he also was the Broomfield Postmaster. Post Office records show he served in that capacity from July 24, 1889 to May 22, 1894.

It was in 1894 that the Post Office installed its first lock boxes. They had glass fronts so the postal patrons could see their mail, and the charge was 10¢ for three months! A milestone in the development of the Broomfield Post Office came in 1898 when the issuance of postal money orders was authorized. ²³

The Crescent Grange, which was organized in 1898, was largely responsible for getting Rural Delivery Service in Broomfield. In 1899 a committee of "grangers" circulated of the Detitions and convinced the Post Office Department in Washington D. C. that Broomfield needed rural free delivery mail routes. The order from the Washington office, in 1900, read:

"You are hereby authorized to establish RFD from your office to commence on August 15, 1900, with two carriers, at a salary of \$500 per annum each, including horse hire. William P. Burgess and Charles F. McCormick have been appointed carriers."24

According to a letter found in the Post Office files, each of the routes was a full days work for a horse. Route 1 was 25 miles long, had 130 houses with a population of 650 people. Route 2 was 23 miles long, had 110 houses and 550 residents. Most of the area served by these early routes

was farm land. Three exceptions were the Monarch, Highway, and Lily coal mines. These mining camps were complete communities, with schools, grocery stores and residences. The mine residents would meet the rural carrier at the grocery store to pick up their mail and conduct other postal business.

In 1893, the Colorado State Business Directory showed Broomfield's population had dropped to 50 from the 100 shown in 1889. Thile I found no specific reference or explanation for this decrease, it is probably safe to assume that it was a result of the depression which was devastating the country at the time. Despite the reduced population, the listing still showed a grocer and a blacksmith, and a new listing for Mr. Robert Wright, "creamery and cheese factory." 26

For the next seventeen years, from 1893 until 1910, the population of Broomfield stayed at 50 according to the Directories.

Mary Wright became one of Broomfield's first women entrepreneurs in 1894 as "proprietor, cheese factory and creamery." Apparently Mrs. Wright lost her husband but continued to run the Caledonia Cheese Factory until 1910, when the listing in the Directory shows that she ran a boarding house. In 1900 Mary Wright also became the first Broomfield agent for the Colorado Telephone Company, a position she held until 1910.

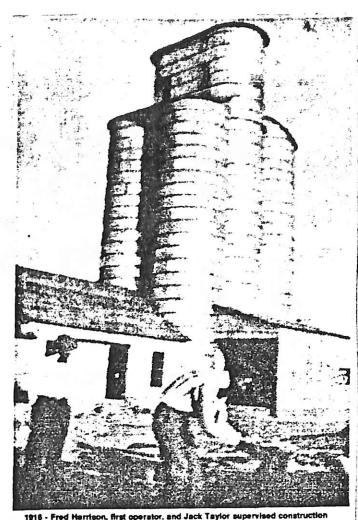
Broomfield seems to have been a good place for working women in those early years. The Colorado Telephone Company had become The Mountain States Telephon and Telegraph Company and the local manager was Mrs. F. M. Brandt. 29

In 1894 Broomfield's first "feed and grahm mill was opened. Mr. E. O. Graves, Postmaster, was also the proprietor of the mill. Opin to the establishment of mills in Broomfield, farmers hauled their grain to the Hungarian Hills in Denver by horse drawn wagons. One of the early Broomfield pioneers, Viola Crooks, moved here in 1895 when she was four years old. She remembers the trips to the Denver mills this way:

"The folks left in the morning in the dark, to go to the mills, and it was dark when they'd get home after a long, cold ride. We were so glad when they finally built a grain mill in Broomfield where they bought our wheat and barley."

Mrs. Crooks was probably referring to the first Hungarian Flour Mill, which was constructed in Broomfield in 1916. 32

Lby J. K. Mullen



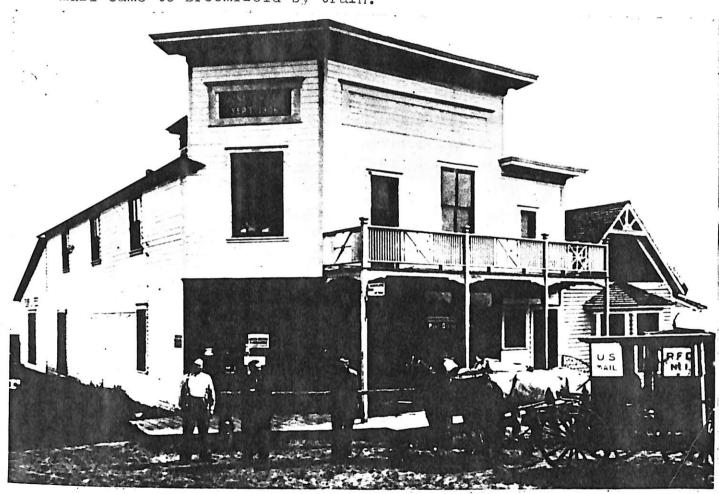
1916 - Fred Harrison, first operator, and Jack Taylor supervised construction of Hungarian Flour Mill

(Photo by Ray McKee of Englewood

The business district of Broomfield continued to grow up around the standard gauge railroad. Jones Hall was built sometime prior to 1901 and was remodeled in 1906.

The second floor was occupied by the Crescent Grange and also was used for community meetings. The first floor housed a general store, complete with a pot bellied stove surrounded by wooden chairs. The Post Office had moved to the Jones Building in 1901 and shared the first floor with the general store. Except for three years in the 1940's when the Post Office was temporarily moved to other quarters, it was in the Jones Building for a total of forty years.

From the first delivery of mail to the area, until 1951, the mail came to Broomfield by train. 33



Old Post Office — Jones' Hall, 1906. Left to right, O. P. Smith, Postal Route Carrier: E. J. Jones, Postmaster and W. P. Burgess, Rrural Carrier.

The first five years of the 1900's saw the addition of several apiarists, a notary public, a horse trainer, a civil engineer who doubled as the justice of the peace, and a grain buyer who was also the area's undertaker! 34

The little farming community was growing into a rip-roaring town as one early pioneer remembers:

"Gambling days in Broomfield? About 1906, where the grange is now, someone came in and started a gambling house and saloon, someone else burned it up. Then they tried a tent, on Wednesday night someone burned it up. Then they had the bright idea of trying it in Jefferson County but the Wednesday night fires continued, until the idea was eventually abandoned. But for a while, it was a 'Little Las Vegas'."

Then to top that off, the town had its first western-movie-style robbery on November 22, 1909. Thieves broke into the Post Office, blew open the safe and escaped with \$680. They stole a horse and buggy from A. M. Nissen, who owned the Feed Mill and Elevator as well as a stable, and were able to make a fast getaway! They were never apprehended and none of the money was ever recovered. The Denver Times reported it this way:

"Safeblowers entered the postoffice at Broomfield, 15 miles north of Denver, sometime between midnight and daylight this morning and after shattering the door of the strong box with nitroglycerin decamped in a stolen horse and buggy with \$500 in cash, about \$100 worth of stamps, a boxful of checks and securities and a valuable collection of old coins belonging to J. Jones, postmaster.

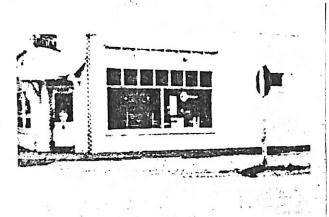
The robbers stole a horse and buggy belonging to A.M. Nissen and made their escape. The horse and buggy were found this morning near the Globe Smelter."³⁷

The Chicago and Southern Railroad built a new train depot in 1909. It served as Broomfield's train station until 1975, when the Burlington Nothern Railroad, who by now operated the line to Broomfield, donated it to the city. It was moved

to a site just west of Highway 287 on 10th Street in 1976, and became the Broomfield Depot Museum. Post Office records dating back to 1884, on long term loan from the Federal government are on display with hundreds of other items of nithistorical value to Broomfield. The Museum was founded and wis maintained by the Broomfield Historical Society. 38

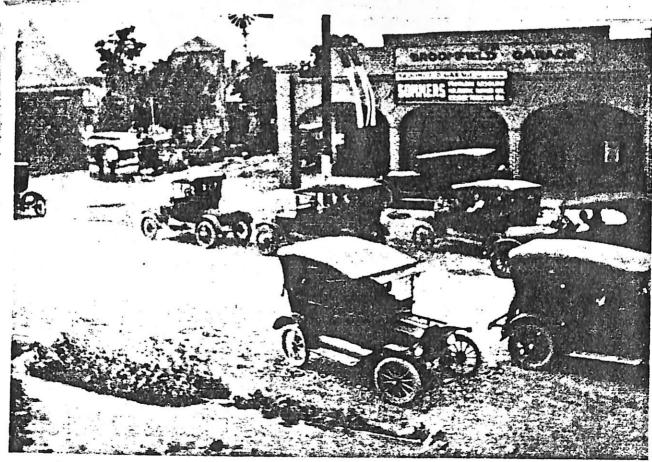
By 1910 the population was shown in the Directory as 65, and Broomfield was described as "a growing town on the C&S RR, 15 miles from Denver." There were a whopping 23 listings in the Directory. And in 1912 Broomfield got its first electricity.





Leiand's Rental in Broomfield was once the Red and White Grocery in Original Broomfield.





Original Broomfield garage 1915

(Photo by Ray McKee of Englewood)

During the early 1920's, Broomfield was a lively community. It consisted of a pool hall, Grange Hall, barber shop, grocery store, hotel with a general store, flour mill and a cheese factory. In addition, there was a bank, lumber yard, filling stations, two garages and the depot. Nearby there was a beet dump and a pickle factory! Besides the business district Broomfield had about a dozen homes.



do in hooderk?

While the community was growing up around the railroad station, to the west Adolph J. Zang was developing his farm. Called "Elmwood Stock Farm", it grew to approximately 4000 acres. Zang acquired early water rights to bring water to the farm for irrigation. To store the water he built Zang's Reservoir, starting in 1903 and completing the dam in 1911. With this water he irrigated 2000 acres of the farm. The other 2000 acres were in dry land farms tended by tenant farmers. They grew wheat, oats, barley, beets and corn.

Today the reservoir, called the Great Western Reservoir, and some of the same water rights, provide a large part of the city's water supply. The reservoir and the Jefferson County Airport are on the part of the land that Zang developed for the dry land farming.

The irrigated land was the home section of Zang's property and is the site of present day Broomfield. A once lovely lake is the site of today's Safeway store. The barn and Zang's residence were in the vicinity of 6th Ave. and Poppy Way, and the main entrance to the farm was on 10th. The lovely white house stands today on the top of the hill on Poppy way.

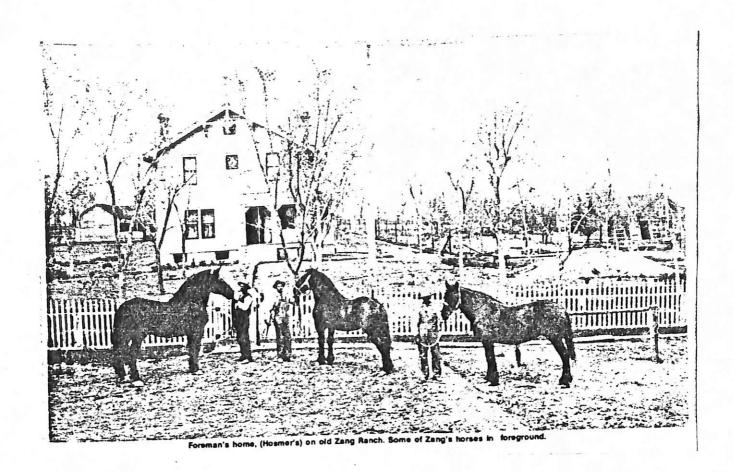
Much of the Zang property was in orchards. He was particularly interested in growing different varieties of trees, and planted fruit trees, nut trees and all different kinds of berries.

Mr. Zang was a lover of nature and one related interest was the raising and breeding of pure blooded horses. He exhibited his prize winning, French imported Percherons widely in stock shows throughout the United States and in France.

An article in the Denver Post said, "Prize winning horses he had bought in France were used to pull Zang Brewery Wagons around the 3600 acre farm."

The first sale of the Zang prized Percherons was held on April 6, 1920 at his Elmwood Stock Farm. The advertisements read: "Zang's Elmwood Stock Farm, 1st sale of Purebred Percheron Mares and Stallions, Colorado's Oldest and Largest Breeders of Purebred Percherons."

Zang's Farm remained in the family until 1947 when it was sold to Mr. L.A. Biddle of Holyoke. It was sold again several times. It was finally sold to the Turnpike Land Company, the developers of modern Broomfield.



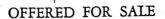




Owner's Residence



Main Barn at Headquarters



AT

\$150,000

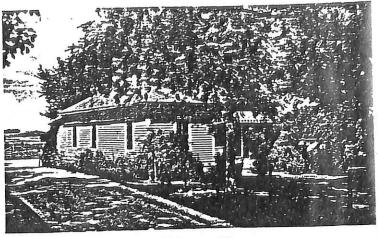
Previews Incorporated has made every effort to provide accurate information, but offering is subject to errors and omissions, as well as change, sale or withdrawal without notice of approval of purchaser by owner.

THE ADOLPH J. ZANG INVESTMENT COMPANY

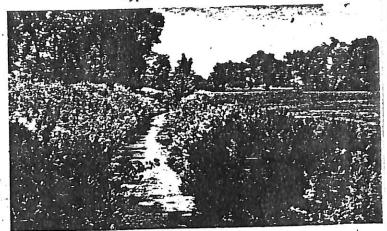
503 SYMES BUILDING
DENVER 2, COLORADO

TEL TABOR 4719

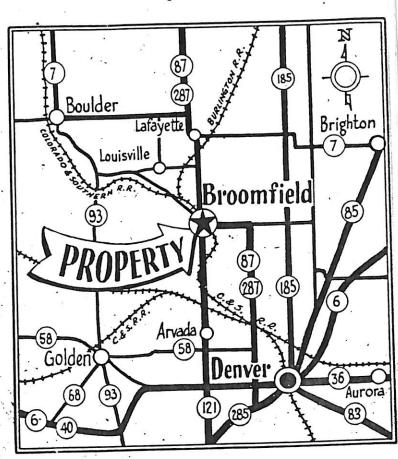
Previews Listing No. 70044



Typical Tenant House



Irrigation Ditch



By 1922 Broomfield's population had reached 90. Two years later it grew to 120. The community now had added an auto supply business, a firm selling farm implements, an insurance company, a shoe maker and a lunchroom. The population increased to 150 by 1930 and several filling stations and a greenhouse were built.

In 1935, the first hints of the boom that was to transform the little community began with the construction of the Boulder-Denver Turnpike, U.S. 36. The Turnpike was opened in 1952. 48 The toll booth was located at the interchange of Highway 287 and the Turnpike - right at Broomfields front, and is credited with starting Broomfield on its way to new growth.

In 1955 the Turnnike Land Company was formed by Bal Swan, President of Emoire Savings; K. C. Ensor, President of K. C. \(e^{e^{s^2}}\) Ensor Construction Company; Aksel Nielsen, President of Title Guaranty company; Roger Knight, President of the Denver-US National Bank; and John Sullivan of Bosworth and Sullivan. These five men wanted to build a model city. Their plan was for it to be self sufficient and not a "bedroom" community for Denver. They purchased the land from the Adolph Zang Brewery interests and started building a community which was nationally recognized for its careful planning.

Broomfield became an incorporated city in 1961, with a nobulation of approximately 6000 people. ⁵¹ Today that figure has grown to over 27,000 and is expected to double by the year 2005.

Despite its growth, Broomfield has maintained the "heart" of its small, close knit community roots. A story of one of Broomfield's well-known and beloved residents is testimony to this.

One day shortly after the turnpike opened, a little black and white dog appeared at the toll booth, and then wandered away again. The next day he was back and the toll booth attendants betted and made over him and he stayed

around. The men began bringing him special treats and before long he became a permanent resident of the toll booth area, and a welcome companion for the attendants. One of his favorite resting places was on the concrete buffers of the booth from where he could greet each car. Since he appeared to be part shepherd, he became "Shep". Soon the motorists became fond of him and dropped off food and toys, or asked to have their change go into a fund for the little toll booth guardian. I was a daily traveller on the turnpike in the early 1960's, and like hundreds of others grew very attached to the friendly, smiling dog I saw most days as I stopped at the toll booth. Shep maintained his vigil for all of his life, and spent his years in contentedly patrolling the area he had adopted. Only in the worst of blizzards would he come inside to sleep. He died in 1964 and was buried on the hill overlooking the toll booth. When the toll booth was removed and the access roads built, the Broomfield citizens insisted that his burial place remain untouched. One story that circulated at the time was that the highway plans were changed so that Shep could rest undisturbed. One of the highway workers parked a trailer in front of the grave so that it could not be accidently damaged. A Boulder firm donated a plague to mark his grave, and later a headstone was added. An unknown ironworker made a fence to protect Shep's monument. Today, if you look off to the left of the exit ramp to southbound US 36, you'll see the headstone which says:

SHEP

1950-1964

N: (74.

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The grey granite marker says simply, "SHEP, Our Pal". Broomfield citizens, twenty five years later, still put fresh flowers on Shep's grave. 52



Shep is buried near the old Denver-Boulder turnpike toll station

NOTES

- ¹Broomfield Area Chamber of Commerce, <u>Community Guide</u> (no date), p. 5.
- ²Laura L. Spitler and Lou Walther, Gem of the Mountain Valley, A History of Broomfield (Boulder, 1975), p. 1.
 - ³Spitler, p. 33.
 - ⁴Broomfield Star, <u>It Ain't Like it Usta Be</u> August 18,1972.
 - Denver Post, October 17, 1960, p. 44 col. 1.
- ⁶Spitler, p. 16. Original personal interview notes which were used to gather information for the book are in the clipping files of the Broomfield Historical Society.
- ⁷Laura Spitler, untitled article, with credit given to Arvada Historical Society, <u>Waters of Gold; Arvada 1850-1870</u>, no date is given, pp. 23-24.
 - ⁸Denver Post, October 17, 1960, p. 44, col. 1.
- 9 Spitler, p. 3. The same information was found in an untitled article, signed only VJD in the clipping file of the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library.
 - 10Denver Post, April 17, 1963, Zone 3, p. 20.
 - 11 Spitler, p. 3.
 - 12 Spitler, p. 44.
- 13 Crawford, Hiles, Broomfield, Colorado Postmasters, undated. The article was in the clipping file of the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library. It was obviously only the first page of a longer article but I was unable to locate any of the remaining pages.
- 14 This quote is from a letter dated January 17, 1935 from E. J. Jones, Broomfield Postmaster, to the Colorado State Historical Society. It was in response to a letter from Julia Stokes from the Society, dated January 14, 1935 requesting information for a special study of Place Names in Colorado. Both letters are on file at the Colorado Historical Society.
 - 15Crawford, p. 1.
 - 16 Colorado State Business Directory, 1888, p. 512.
 - 17 Spitler, p. 46.

There is a discrepancy in dates for the move of the Post Office and the changing of the name from Zang's Spur to Broomfield. Laura Spitler and Lou Walther, p. 76, show the move in 1894, but on p. 3, according to an interview with Mr. Zang's daughter, Minnie, the date would have been 1895. The article signed only VJD, cited in note 9, shows 1889, and the Crawford letter, note 14, says, "The Post Office was then moved to Zang's Spur about 1886."

¹⁹ Spitler, p. 26.

Spitlet, p. 61. Reference was also found in another untitled, unsigned article, p. 3, found in the clipping file of the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library.

²¹Spitler, p. 21.

²²Crawford, p. 1.

²³Spitler, p. 76. Two other sources were Crawford, p. 1. and an untitled article by Lou Walther dated July 30, 1975, from the clipping file of the Colorado Historical Society.

²⁴ Spitler, p. 42.

²⁵Spitler, p. 76. On p. 73 Spitler and Walther list nineteen mines in the area of Broomfield. The Monarch Mine was along Highway #36, on the right, about two miles out of Broomfield. The Highway Mine was near Johnson's Corner, at Highway #287 and Dillon Road. There was no location given for the Lily Mine. The authors also note that there were seven stills producing in the area during prohibition. They added: "We have been asked to forget their locations."

²⁶Colorado State Business Directory, 1893, p. 164.

²⁷Colorado State Business Directory, 1894, p. 168.

²⁸ Colorado State Business Directory, 1910, p. 195.

²⁹Colorado State Business Directory, 1915, p. 184.

³⁰ Colorado State Business Directory, 1894, p. 168.

³¹ Spitler, p. 5.

³² Spitler, p. 37.

³³ Spitler, pp. 76-77.

34 Colorado State Business Directories, 1900, p. 163. 1901, p. 167. 1902, p. 180. 1903, p. 176. 1904, p. 180. 1905, p. 184.

35 Snitler, p. 19.

³⁶Spitler, p. 76. Information about A. M. Nissen was found in Colorado State Business Directory, 1910, p. 195.

³⁷Spitler, p. 65.

38 Boulder Camera, Broomfield Bicentennial Projects, October 26, 1975, p. 10.

39 Colorado State Business Directory, 1910, p. 195.

40 Spitler, p. 37.

41 Colorado State Business Directories, 1920, p. 177. 1921, p. 176. 1922, p. 163.

and Spitler, p. 3.

⁴²Spitler, p. 11. The untitled article signed VJD (note nine) provided the additional information on the dates of the construction of the Great Western Reservoir. Also Rocky Mountain News, October 24, 1934, clipping with no page number, Tri City Journal, by Lou Walther and Laura Spitler, August 13, 1975, p. 3.

43 Spitler, p. 33.

44 Spitler, p. 47.

45 Denver post, September 25, 1983, p. 16, col. 3.

46 Spitler, n. 11.

47Colorado State Business Directories, 1922, p. 163. 1924, p. 164. 1930, p. 160.

48 Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department, Exploring Boulder County (Topeka, 1988).

⁴⁹Denver Post, April 17, 1963, Zone 3, p. 20.

 $^{50}\mathrm{Rocky}$ Mountain News, by Walter Saunders, RMN Writer, July 24, 1966, p. 1B, col. 1-5.

51 Spitler, p. 3.

52Spitler, p. 71.
Denver Post, by Nancy Sworts, Denver Post Correspondent,
August 19, 1981.

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Crawford, Miles. Broomfield Colorado Postmasters.

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