

KENNETH JESSEN

COLORADO HISTORY

THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY



The Great Western Railway, a subsidiary of the Great Western Sugar Company, was designed to bring freshly harvested sugar beets in from the fields of north-central Colorado to Great Western factories for processing. It also hauled raw materials to the factories and delivered refined sugar to common carriers. With such a specialized purpose, it is a tribute to the short line that it still survives today. This book, complete with 186 photos, 14 drawings and 6 maps, provides an overview of the railroad from its beginning in 1901 to modern times, including its later role in TV shows and movies.

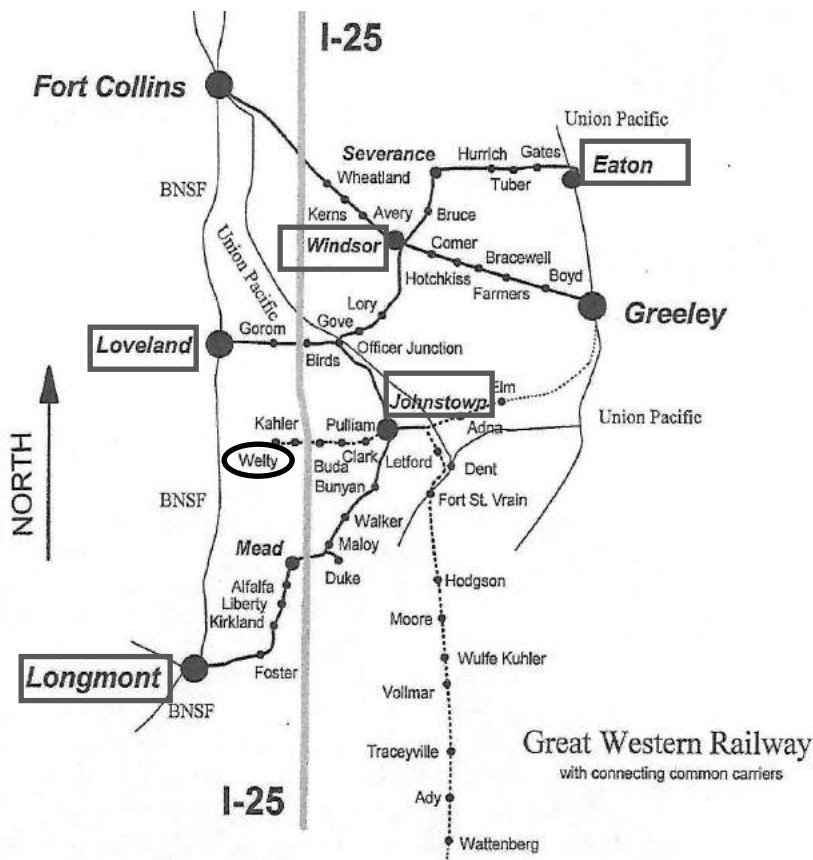
THE AUTHOR

Colorado historian Kenneth Jessen has over nineteen books to his name, including *Colorado's Best Ghost Towns*.

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Many topics of interest are covered in the book:

- Ch 1—4 are filled with historical background — Ch 1,3, & 4 of the railway & Ch 3 of the sugar beet industry
- Passenger service ... (& McKean motor cars), Ch 5
- Last steam locomotives (and accidents), Ch 6
- Rolling Stock, Depots, Blizzards,, Ch 7



The Great Western Railway brought sugar beets to sugar factories for processing. This map shows the Eaton & Welty branches with the addition of the Colorado & Southern line between Fort Collins & Greeley. Loveland, Windsor, Eaton, Johnstown, & Longmont were served by the Great Western.

From: Jessen Kenneth, The Great Western Railways, J.V. Publications, 2007, p. 3.

With the exception of the Loveland factory, the first phase of development of the Great Western Sugar Company was the construction of factories originally built by local, independent sugar companies. In 1905, these companies were merged into one firm under the Great Western Sugar Company name and included factories at Eaton, Greeley, Windsor, Fort Collins and Longmont.

Between 1905 and 1910, the Great Western Sugar Company expanded with the acquisition of plants in Sterling, Fort Morgan, Brush and Scottsbluff, Nebraska. In 1916, another expansion period began with the addition of Billings, Montana, and the construction of a plant at Gering, Lovell, Bayard and Mitchell, all in Nebraska, and the construction of the plant in Brighton. By 1920, the Great Western Sugar Company had 16 operating sugar factories. Beginning in 1925, the company acquired the factory in Fort Lupton and built a factory in Johnstown. By 1930, the Great Western Sugar Company had 22 factories including Minatare and Lyman, both in Nebraska, Ovid in Colorado and Wheatland in Wyoming. The last factory to be built was an MSG plant in Johnstown completed in 1954. It also acquired factories in Fremont and Findlay, Ohio.

Economic conditions turned against the Great Western Sugar Company. Equipment was antiquated, and little had been done to improve productivity. Under the ownership of the Hunt Corporation, the Great Western Sugar Company went bankrupt in 1985, and its factories were either closed or sold.

From: Jessen Kenneth, The Great Western Railways, J.V. Publications, 2007, p. 131.