

Walking Tour of Ridgway

Bonnie Koch, Ridgway Railroad Museum

The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad came into Ridgway from Montrose. The walking trail to the Ridgway State Park is roughly on the track right of way.



The tracks came through town on what is now Railroad Avenue. In this photo taken in 1893 trees had already been planted in the vacant area in foreground, which became City Park.

Present-day Colorado Highway 62 (Sherman Street) crossed over the siding in the foreground, which later became the connecting track leading to the second RGS roundhouse and machine shop.



The depot was on the west side of the tracks about where the community center is now located. When Rio Grande Southern tracks went in to Telluride, the same depot serviced both railroads. Many years later when the depot was converted into a house, the structure was moved and shifted 90 degrees.

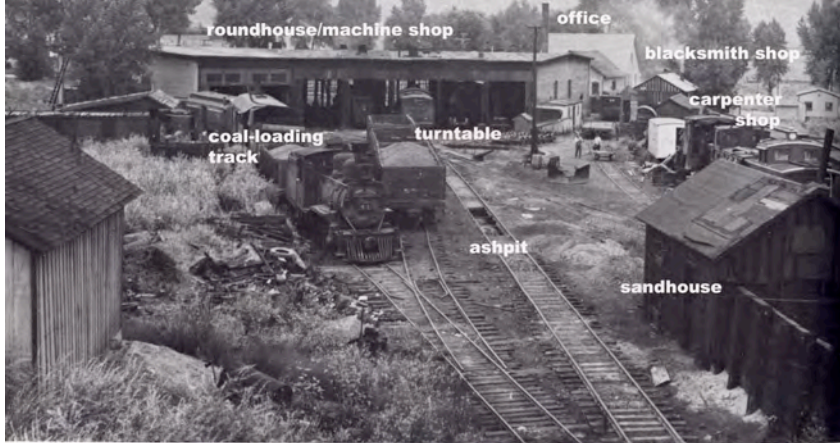
1895 - Located at corner of Lena and Clinton, the Rio Grande Southern Railroad offices occupied this brick structure. The offices were on the second floor with businesses on the first. The original wooden framing for this building blew over in a windstorm, forcing Otto Mears to rebuild.

Notice the coal shed and impressive Mentone Hotel to the rear of the building.

This building was used until 1907. When new locomotive facilities were built just south of the depot, a new brick office building was erected next to the brick roundhouse.



**See What A Railroad Yard looked like
Ridgway, Colorado 1940**



The railyard was fully equipped to service all aspects of the railroad. It stood behind what is now Mountain Market until the railroad closed down in the 1950's.



This modern bank building served as a Post Office and had a drug store connected to it. In the middle of the building is the entrance to a hotel. The Mears Building was just to the right of the photo on the corner of Lena and Clinton.

The Mentone Hotel was on the corner of Clinton and Cora. The main entrance is in the center. It led to the registration desk.

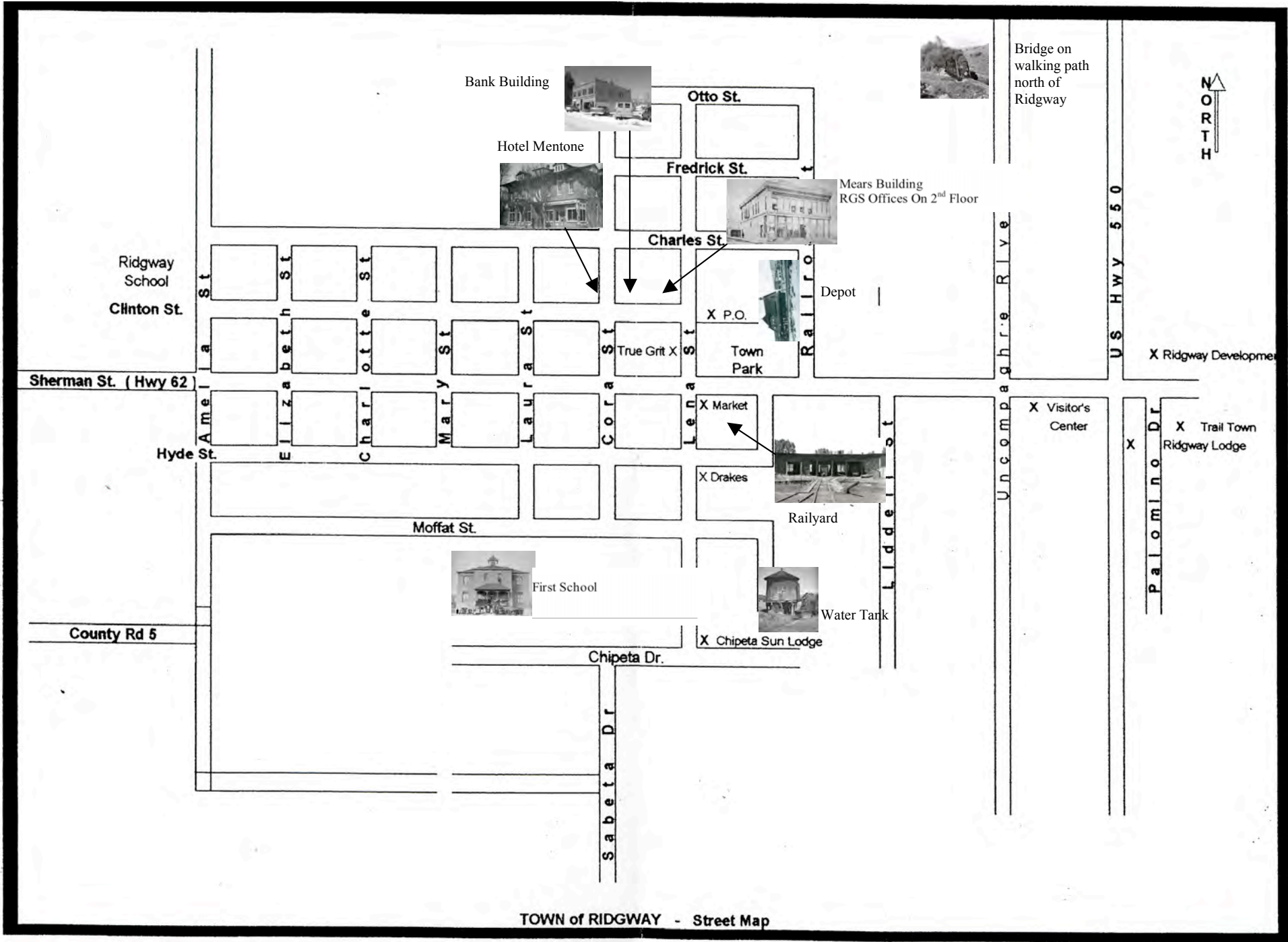
Farther back (to the right), along Cora Street, another entrance provided access to the desk, dining room and a stairway to the rooms above.

This was a favorite boarding place for RGS railroaders – where they could obtain sack lunches and covered tins of coffee for their shifts on the railroad. Enginemen would warm their coffee on the engine's steam pipes, and typically enjoy lunches of sandwiches, fruit pie and hot coffee. The men in the caboose usually had a coffee pot warm on the caboose stove.



First schoolhouse – 1910

B&W Photos Courtesy of Dell McCoy



TOWN of RIDGWAY - Street Map