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Colorado School of Mines

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES

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The history of the Colorado School of Mines is something more than just a chapter in American education. The history of the mining and mineral industries of Colorado is the history of the Colorado School of Mines and back of the founding of the School is a story so interesting, so broad, and so filled with romance that it is the story of Colorado itself which is characterized as the "Spirit of the West."

Back of the founding of Colorado and the Colorado School of Mines lies the story of Spanish explorations, beginning in the sixteenth century followed by Pike's, Long's and Fremont's expeditions during the first half of the nineteenth century and finally the trappers, scouts, and gold seekers, culminating in the William Green Russell expedition in 1858 and the discoveries of gold by Jackson and Gregory. Then came the gold rush days immediately following Jackson's, Gregory's and Russell's prospecting, and Colorado, a part of Kansas Territory, was on the threshold of her career. After the famous Jackson and Gregory strikes, carrying fifteen thousand people to the diggings, other discoveries were made which added to the boom of 1859. Mining and metallurgical methods were crude and costly and a few years after the original discoveries of gold, real problems were encountered. The little town of Golden, nestled at the foot of Clear Creek Canyon, was destined to play a leading part in the history of Colorado and in the history of mining through the Colorado School of Mines. In 1865 the Right Reverend George M. Randall, of Boston, Massachusetts, was consecrated Missionary Bishop of the Episcopal Church

of Colorado. He arrived in Denver on June 11, 1866, and his first observation was the lack of higher educational facilities in Colorado--then but a territory and settled only since 1859. In 1866 he made plans for a university which would include a School of Mines. This university was called Jarvis Hall as the money for the buildings was given by Mr. George W. Jarvis of Boston, Massachusetts. The first building was erected on the present site of the State Industrial School, just South of Golden, on land presented by Mr. Charles C. Welch. On August 12, 1869, a terrific wind storm blew down the structure. Bishop Randall immediately set about to obtain more funds to rebuild. The Territorial Legislature of Colorado appreciated the efforts of Bishop Randall to found a mining school and in 1870 appropriated $3,872.45 for a special building. In 1871 E.J. Mallet was made professor in charge. He taught assaying and simple chemical tests for ores. He tested the fuel values of Colorado coals which were at that time considered unfit for use. His tests were favorable and showed the variety and value of the Colorado product. However, it became increasingly difficult for the Episcopal Church to finance the current expenses of the School of Mines and Golden citizens realized that the Territory must assume control or the School would either be moved to Denver or its brief existance brought to a close. On January 24, 1874, a bill was introduced in the Colorado Territorial Legislature by Honorable Charles C. Welch to deed the School of Mines to the Territory. On February 9, 1874, the bill was passed and approved by Governor Elbert. This bill established the School as a territorial institution, appropriated $5,000. for the support and named a Board of Trustees composed of prominent citizens.

The first Board of Trustees met in Golden on July 6, 1874, when Honorable W.A.H. Loveland, distinguished pioneer, executive, railroad builder, and empire builder, was elected president and Captain E.L. Berthoud, famous engineer and explorer, was elected secretary. Other members of the Board were Nathanial P. Hill, founder of the Argo smelter; Alpheus P. Wright of Boulder; C.C. Davis of Arapahoe; and W.W. Ware of Clear Creek County. The first catalog was prepared by Captain E.L. Berthoud and was printed by the Golden Transcript in 1874. This signalized the beginning of the Colorado School of Mines that was to take its place at the fore of Colorado educational institutions and also become the foremost school of the mineral industries in the world.

In 1876 the School passed to the control of the new State of Colorado. Gregory Board, from the Royal School of Mines, London, succeeded E.J. Mallett as professor in charge. On March 29, 1878, Dr. Milton Moss succeeded Gregory Board as professor in charge. Dr. Moss organized the first glee club and its programs were famous in the early days. It was during this period that our famous song, "The Mining Engineer", was adapted from the old English drinking song, "The Son of a Gambolier". We find the song featured on early programs and our oldest living graduates testify that they learned it at this time. The question frequently arises as to whether our song, "The Mining Engineer", originated at Mines or at Georgia School of Technology. The Georgia School of Technology was chartered in 1885 and the first instruction given was in 1888. We know that our much beloved song originated on this campus at least ten years before Georgia Tech held classes.

In 1879, the fifth of a mill tax levy was passed by the legislature for permanent support of the School. Also in 1879 the School was moved to the city of Golden and on May 29th, the Board of Trustees appropriated

$7,500. for a building, the first to be erected on the present campus on land which was contributed by the citizens of Golden. This building is still in use as the south third of the present Chemistry Building. In 1880 Albert C. Hale was appointed president and Arthur Lakes, who may be termed the Father of Colorado Geology, was appointed Professor of Geology. In 1882 the original building was extended by an addition which is the present middle section of the chemistry building. In the same year the first official recognition of atheletics was made when the trustees voted fifty dollars toward the equipment of a gymnasium although the School had baseball and cricket teams in 1873. The first formal commencement was held in May 1883 with only two graduates. This same year Doctor Regis Chauvenet was appointed president and continued to serve nineteen years. During his presidency the School developed from a small unknown institution into a mining school of the highest type with a national and international reputation. During this period the college colors of blue and silver were voted by the student body. In 1890 another building was added to the Chemistry group. In 1894 the Hall of Engineering was completed. This group of buildings represents the "old school", as our early graduates remember it.

The second group of buildings, Stratton Hall, erected in 1902, Assay Laboratory, erected in 1900, and enlarged in 1905. The Power House built in 1905 was remodeled into a modern building to house the Mining Department. Simon Guggenheim Hall was build in 1906. It houses the Administrative Offices, the Mathematics department and the Library, which contains more than seventy-five thousand volumes and is one of the largest and most complete technical libraries in the United States. The Gymnasium, the last of this group, bears the date of 1908.

The Experimental Plant was constructed in 1912. It was established for giving instruction in mining and metallurgical engineering and for the purpose of developing and conserving the mineral resources of Colorado. It provides laboratory facilities and cooperates with great industrial concerns which carry on research and original investigations in mining, metallurgy, petroleum and fuel.

The Colorado School of Mines maintains the Edgar Mine at Idaho Springs, Colorado, as a working laboratory for purposes of instruction, experimentation and tests. Mine surveying, mineral land surveying, mining geology, stoping, drilling, blasting, hoisting, sampling, valuating, ventilating, and other problems of mining engineering are taught here. The School also maintains a geological and petroleum camp at Wild Horse Park, which is situated fifteen miles north west of Pueblo, Colorado. In 1926 the Geophysics Department was organized which has no parallel in the United States. Berthoud Hall was dedicated in 1940 and named in honor of Captain E.L. Berthoud. It is the most beautiful building on the campus. The main unit is occupied by the Department of Geology. The east wing by the Department of Geophysics, and the west wing by the Museum, which also contains the Hoffman Murals.

An Engineer unit of the R.O.T.C. is maintained by the School and for twenty three years it has received from the War Department a rating of "Excellent", which is the highest rating that can be given. A tremendous percentage of Mines men served in World War II. They acquitted themselves with honor and distinction. Our Honor Roll has 99 names; this does not include the names of our Chinese and other foreign graduates, many of whom are known to be missing.

The Colorado School of Mines has long been distinguished for its publications. Beginning in 1870 at Jarvis Hall, and continuing as Annual Reports, the Scientific Quarterly in 1892-1893, The Bulletin in 1900-1905, The Colorado School of Mines Quarterly, now in volume 43, the Mines Magazine, 1910, Information Circulars published at irregular intervals. The Prospector, the year book, published by the Junior class and last but not least, The Oredigger, "The Voice of the World's Foremost Mining School", which was born in 1921. The Colorado School of Mines differs from other mining schools in America in that it has confined its educational activities entirely to training engineers for the mineral industries. The degrees given are E.M., E. Met., Geol. Engr., P.E. with Production and Refining options. The advanced degrees of Master of Engineering and Doctor of Engineering are conferred for advanced study in the fields of mining, metallurgy, petroleum, petroleum refining, geology and geophysics.

Presidents of the Colorado School of Mines since its founding are:

1871 - E.J. Mallett, Professor in charge of Jarvis Hall, preceding Territorial control of School.

1874 - Honorable W.A.H. Loveland, President of Board of Trustees.

1876 - Gregory Board.

1878 - Milton Moss.

1880 - Albert C. Hall.

1883 - Regis Chauvenet.

1902 - Charles S. Palmer.

1903 - Victor C. Alderson.

1913 - William G. Haldane.

1915 - William B. Phillips.

1916 - Howard C. Parmalee.

1917 - Victor C. Alderson.

1925 - Melville F. Coolbaugh.

1946 - Ben Hutchinson Parker.

The faculty has been increased from two members in 1874 to 100 in 1948. The first catalog gave a list of about nine regular students and two hundred special students. The number registered this year is 1,218; they come from all 48 states and from 33 nations. They make up a composite group the like of which is not to be found in any other engineering school in the world. Approximately 11,000 students have registered since the founding of the institution, of which 3,245 are graduates. The proof of progress is in the achievements of Mines Alumni who occupy important executive and engineering posts in every mineral producing country in the world. The big lighted "M" on Mount Zion is the symbol of that intangible something known as "Mines Spirit". It stimulates that courage and daring possessed by the pioneers and points the way to a certainty of growth and progress for all the years to come.