



COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Colorado History Museum 1300 Broadway Denver, Colorado 80203-2137

April 4, 2001

Molly Minneman
Crested Butte Building Assistant
Board of Zoning & Architectural Review
PO Box 39
Crested Butte, CO 81224

Dear Ms Minneman:

We are pleased to inform you that the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House, Crested Butte, will be considered by the State Register Review Board for nomination to the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. The State Register is Colorado's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation.

You are invited to attend the Review Board meeting at which the nominations will be considered on Friday, May 11, 2001. The meeting will be held in Boettcher Auditorium at the Colorado History Museum, 1300 Broadway, Denver. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 12:30 p.m., immediately following a lunch break after the conclusion of the National Register reviews. A public hearing will be held during which all comments concerning nominations are welcome. Enclosed is a preliminary agenda. If you plan to attend, please call our office closer to the meeting date for an updated agenda.

Should you have any questions before the Review Board meeting regarding the nomination process or the criteria for listing, please contact our office at (303) 866-3392.

Sincerely,

Dale Heckendorn
National and State Register Coordinator

Enclosure
Agenda

OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation assists individuals, communities, and organizations to identify, protect, and preserve the State's cultural resources and to foster widespread appreciation of and respect for Colorado's cultural heritage.

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OAHPI414 (Rev. 12/97)

**COLORADO
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

FOR OFFICIAL USE:		
Site Number	<u>5GN3210</u>	
Nomination Received		
Determined	Eligible	Not Eligible
Review Board Recommendation		
Approval		Denial
CHS Board State Register Listing		
Approved		Denied

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES**NOMINATION FORM****SECTION I****Name of Property**Historic Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's HouseOther Names Colorado Coal and Iron Company Superintendent's House**Address of Property**Street Address 721 Maroon AvenueCity Crested ButteCounty GunnisonZip 81224

[N/A] address not for publication

Present Owner of Property

(in the case of multiple ownership, list the names and addresses of each owner on one or more continuation sheets)

Name Ralph Louis Dupps IIIAddress 050 Difficult Circle Phone (970) 925-6797City AspenState COZip 81611**Owner Consent for Nomination** (attach signed nomination consent from each property owner - see attached form)**Preparer of Nomination**Name Thomas H. Simmons and R. Laurie Simmons, historians Date 23 February 2001Organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc.Address 3635 West 46th Avenue Phone (303) 477-7597City DenverState COZip 80211-1101E-Mail Address frraden@msn.com**Legislative Information**Colorado House District # 61 or Name of Representative Carl E. MillerColorado Senate District # 4 or Name of Senator Ken Chlouber

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIESProperty Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House**SECTION V****GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Locational Information P.M. 6th Township 14S Range 86W Section 2 NW 1/4 of the NW 1/4
Lot(s) 25-27 (part) Block 59 Addition Original Townsite
UTM Reference: Zone 13 Easting 328420 Northing 4304090

Verbal Boundary Description of Nominated Property

(describe the boundaries of the nominated property on a continuation sheet)

SECTION VI**Photograph Log for Black and White Photographs**

(prepare a photograph log on one or more continuation sheets)

SECTION VII**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO ACCOMPANY NOMINATION**

Owner Consent Form

Black and White Photographs

Color Slides

Photocopy of USGS Map Section

Sketch Map(s)

Optional Materials

COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIESProperty Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House**SECTION III****Description and Alterations**

(describe the current and original appearance of the property and any alterations on one or more continuation sheets)

SECTION IV**Significance of Property**

Nomination Criteria

☒ A - property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to history☐ B - property is connected with persons significant in history☒ C - property has distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or artisan☐ D - property is of geographic importance☐ E - property contains the possibility of important discoveries related to prehistory or history

Areas of Significance

Social HistoryIndustryArchitecture**Significance Statement**

(explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Bibliography

(cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET**Page 2
Section IIIProperty Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House**Alterations**

The house was moved from Big Mine Hill south of town to its current location in a newer residential section of Crested Butte in 1971.¹ A 1951 photograph shows the house in its original location on a bench west of the other company structures associated with the Big Mine (See Figure 1). On that site, the house faced east; it now faces south. Photographs taken of the house in 1965 by Muriel Sibell Wolle show that the porch had been altered by that date. The porch originally had flared eaves and the supports were slender square columns atop paneled bases (See Figure 2). Other alterations, completed after the house was moved, include a standing seam metal roof and skylights on each gable. The original corbelled brick chimney has been replaced with a plain, shorter, brick chimney. Small additions have been made on the rear, including a semi-octagonal bay added in 1978. There is a modern greenhouse window on the east wall of the one-story rear gable, also added after the building was moved.

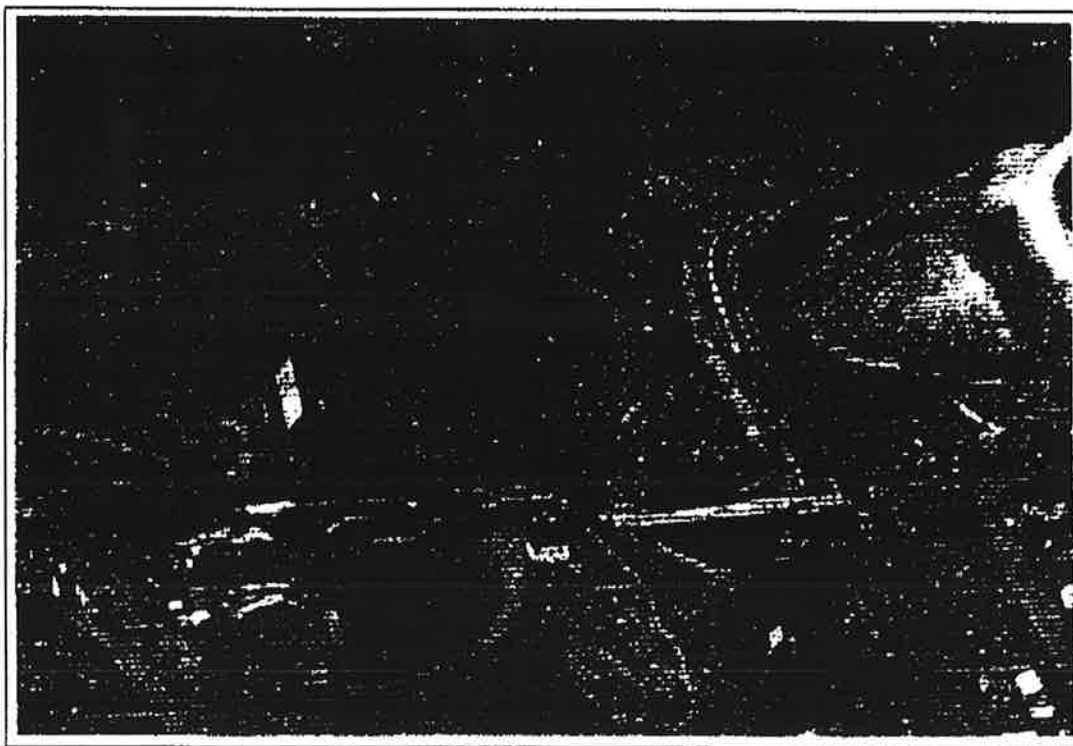


Figure 1. This August 1951 oblique aerial photograph (view west-northwest) shows Big Mine Hill and the southwestern edge of the Town of Crested Butte. The left half of the image shows (from top) the Superintendent's house, the mule barn, other mine structures (left), and the coal tippie (right). SOURCE: Extract of August 1951 aerial photograph, in the files of the Town of Crested Butte.

¹The original location of the house was 0.8 miles west-southwest of its present site.

**COLORADO STATE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
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Section IIIProperty Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House**Description and Alterations**

The Colorado Fuel & Iron Company's Superintendent's House, 721 Maroon Avenue, is a frame dwelling located on the east side of the historic coal mining community of Crested Butte, Colorado, east of the commercial district. Crested Butte, at an altitude of 8,885 feet, is located twenty-eight miles north of Gunnison, in a valley at the confluence of Coal Creek and the Slate River. The house is situated in a residential area which developed after the town's coal mining era ended in 1952, and newer houses are located on either side of the historic dwelling. The level yard is landscaped with grass, wildflowers, and evergreen and deciduous trees. There is a wood deck at the rear (north) of the residence and a driveway on the west.

The one-and-three-quarter-story house has a roughly cruciform plan of intersecting clipped gables (Photographs 1 and 2). The roof has overhanging eaves, standing seam metal roofing, a short brick chimney, and several skylights. The walls are clad with clapboard siding trimmed with corner boards, and the foundation is concrete. There are wide trim boards under the eaves. The front (south) of the house features a one-story porch that wraps around three walls of the front projecting clipped gable and south wall of the east projecting gable. The porch has a half-hipped roof (originally splayed or bellicast), full-height turned wood column supports, and a wood floor. There is an entrance with a paneled and glazed door facing the porch at the west end of the façade. The south wall of the front projecting gable has paired two-over-two-light double-hung sash windows with lintel trim which are centered on each story. Similar windows are found on the first story of the west wall of the front projecting gable and the south wall of the east projecting gable. There is also a single double-hung sash window on the east wall of the front projecting gable.

The east wall of the east gable has paired windows on the second story and two single windows on the first story (Photograph 3). The rear (north) clipped gable has an off-center, one-story, gable roof projection with clapboard siding and with an enclosed hipped roof porch (Photograph 4). There is also a small shed roof projection clad with drop siding on the east wall of the rear projection; the projection has a sliding window on the north wall. The rear clipped gable has a set of off-center, paired, two-over-two-light, double-hung sash windows on each story. The upper story windows have a wide plain wood surround, while the first story windows have a very narrow wood surround. The one-story gabled projection has a small greenhouse type above-ground window on the east wall with a shed roof, lap siding, and braces. The hipped roof clapboard-sided, enclosed porch has an off-center paneled and glazed door and a rectangular window on the north wall and a rectangular window on the east wall. There is a raised wood deck facing the porch. There is a semi-octagonal projecting bay on the west wall of the rear one-story gabled projection. The semi-octagonal bay has a two-over-two-light double-hung sash window on each face, lap siding divided by vertical boards, and a concrete foundation.

The west clipped gable has paired windows with architrave trim on the upper story (Photograph 5). At the north end of the west gable is a paneled and glazed door facing wood steps. There is a historic, off-center, one-story, gable roof projection clad with drop siding toward the south end of the west gable. The projection has a small shed roof projection on the north wall, a four-over-four-light double-hung sash window toward the south end of the west wall, and a window toward the east end of the south wall.

The interior of the house retains hardwood floors, a staircase with slender spindle balusters (Photograph 6), and original molding around doors and windows.

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Section IVProperty Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House**Significance Statement**

The Colorado Fuel & Iron Company's Superintendent's House is significant under Criteria A and C, for its association with the social and industrial history of Crested Butte and for its architecture. The residence was erected in 1883 to house the superintendent of the fuel company's mining and coke oven operations, and continued to serve in that capacity until the Big Mine closed in 1952. Although the house was moved into town in 1971, it retains significance as the most intact and important representative of the company facilities originally located on Big Mine Hill. The house is associated with the industrial operation which provided employment for most of the community and was the principal reason for its existence. The house is also associated with the social history of Crested Butte, having been an important symbol of the hierarchy of labor, ethnicity, and social status in the coal town. The Superintendent's House represented the pinnacle of career achievement in the community, and its superintendent occupants wielded power which strongly influenced the lives of the workingmen of the town. The house is also significant for its architecture, representing in terms of large scale, complex plan, and custom design, CF&I superintendent's houses in company towns throughout Colorado. As in many other towns dominated by the company, the Crested Butte Superintendent's House was built by the CF&I and was the most substantial and architecturally sophisticated residence in the community.

Coal Mining and the Development of Crested Butte²

Discoveries of mineral riches in the vicinity of Leadville in the late 1870s led to an influx of prospectors who searched the Elk Mountains for resources and created several small settlements. Howard F. Smith heard of the discovery of coal deposits in the vicinity of present-day Crested Butte and became convinced of the area's potential. In 1877 he ordered a sawmill to be freighted to the area to supply construction materials for anticipated growth. Smith also formed a smelting company after acquiring coal lands. By the summer of 1878, Smith and associates had established a settlement for smelter workers, improved roads and bridges, and erected a boardinghouse and a store. The population of the new community increased slowly as the location was isolated and difficult to reach and experienced harsh winter weather. In 1880, Smith and his associates created the Crested Butte Town Company, which graded streets, sold lots, and provided land for a church and a school. By this time, development awaited only the improvement of transportation systems, and William Jackson Palmer's Denver & Rio Grande Railroad planned to tap Crested Butte for its coal and coke potential. The railroad reached Crested Butte on 21 November 1881, and tracks were immediately extended to coal chutes west of town.

Beginning in 1881 the Colorado Coal & Iron Company (which became part of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company in 1892), another of William Jackson Palmer's interests, extracted coal that was used as domestic and locomotive fuel and in the manufacture of coke. By the following year, Crested Butte had become the leading mountain coal community in the state, according to historian Duane Smith.³ The company operated two major mines at Crested Butte: the Jokerville Mine, which opened September 1881 and was abandoned after fifty-nine men were killed in an 1884 explosion, and the famous Big Mine, which opened in 1894 and continued in operation until 1952. By the early twentieth century, the Big Mine was the third largest mine in the state, employing 400 to 500 men. For many years, much of its production was processed into coke at ovens operated by CF&I in Crested Butte.

² The following summary of Crested Butte history is based on the historic context found in "Historic Building Survey, Crested Butte, Colorado, 1998-1999," prepared by R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons, November 1999, on file in the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

³ Duane A. Smith, *When Coal Was King: A History of Crested Butte, Colorado, 1880-1952* (Golden, Colo.: Colorado School of Mines Press, 1984), 11.

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Figure 2. The Superintendent's house is shown in its original location on Big Mine Hill in this 1901 photograph (view west). SOURCE: Veltri and Veltri, 9, courtesy of Berneice Gardiner.

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fact that the town provided amenities such as schools, utilities, and fire protection saved the company great expense. At the same time, workers were able to patronize businesses which operated in competition with the company store and could work in the five other mines operating in the area.

The Superintendent's House was traditionally the largest, most architecturally ornate residence in a company town. The Crested Butte Superintendent's House, erected in 1883, was the finest dwelling in the community. Situated on Big Mine Hill overlooking the town of Crested Butte proper, the house symbolized the superintendent's separation from the workers, while still occupying a place in the community. Local residents reported that the boundaries of the town were always drawn to include the Superintendent's House so that he could vote in town elections.⁶ The large, two-story, custom-designed residence displayed popular architectural features of the late Victorian period, including a cross-gable roof with clipped gables, clapboard siding, tall double-hung sash windows, and a wrap-around porch. In assigning company housing, higher echelon workers were given preference for more desirable dwellings. Typical workers' houses were small one-story frame dwellings of simple design with little or no ornamentation and were based on a standard plan utilizing prefabricated materials.

The Superintendent's House also represented the ethnic division of the community, as its superintendent occupants were all of Anglo-Saxon descent.⁷ Crested Butte, like other company towns, experienced de facto segregation in its housing, with the most desirable dwellings in terms of quality and location being occupied principally by white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, and less desirable housing areas populated by more recent immigrants. Within town, these families populated streets north of Elk Avenue, especially Maroon Avenue. Italian, Serb, Croatian, and other people from Southern and Eastern Europe principally lived south of Elk Avenue. White Rock Avenue was the home of many Italian families, while Croatians and Slovenians were dominant along Sopris Avenue. Ethnic groups in Crested Butte patronized stores and saloons which catered to their tastes and joined organizations which preserved their cultural traditions.

The superintendent wielded complete power over the company's operations in Crested Butte and tremendous power over the affairs of the town as well. Scamehorn reports that many CF&I superintendents created what amounted to personal "fiefdoms" in their assigned communities.⁸ The superintendent's authority was particularly important in labor negotiations and during times of crisis. James Robinson, the first superintendent at Crested Butte, opened the Jokerville Mine, while Joseph Ball was superintendent when the Big Mine operations began. One of the best-remembered superintendents of the Big Mine was Andrew Alexander, whose descendants lived in Crested Butte for almost a century. Alexander was a native of Dailly, Scotland, and moved to Crested Butte in 1884. His first job was as a coal digger, an occupation that involved the extraction of coal by blasting and shoveling, as well as laying rails and installing timber supports.⁹ By 1898, Alexander had been appointed to the highest position at Crested Butte, superintendent. During the early twentieth century, he also served as mayor of the town, revealing the interconnectedness of the mine and the community during the early days. Alexander

⁶ *Gunnison Country Times*, 24 May 1976, 4. Contrary to this widely shared belief, however, both the 1881 Original Plat and the 1961 USGS map show the Superintendent's House outside of the town limits.

⁷ *State Business Directories* for select years between 1883 and 1950 record the following superintendents: J.K. Robinson, John Gibson, William Grant, Joseph Ball, A. Alexander, Robert McAllister, John Arnott, William Manley, James Tyson, E.F. Miller, H.D. Pinkney, L.W. Ingles, and F.C. Bennett.

⁸ H. Lee Scamehorn, Longmont, Colorado, Telephone Interview by Thomas H. Simmons, 3 July 1998.

⁹ Myrtle and Michele Veltri, *The Crested Butte Melting Pot*, 2nd. Rev. ed. (Myrtle and Michele Veltri: Crested Butte, 1986, 143.

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served as superintendent until his transfer to another CF&I coal town, Segundo, Colorado, in 1905.¹⁰

The Superintendent's House After the Departure of CF&I

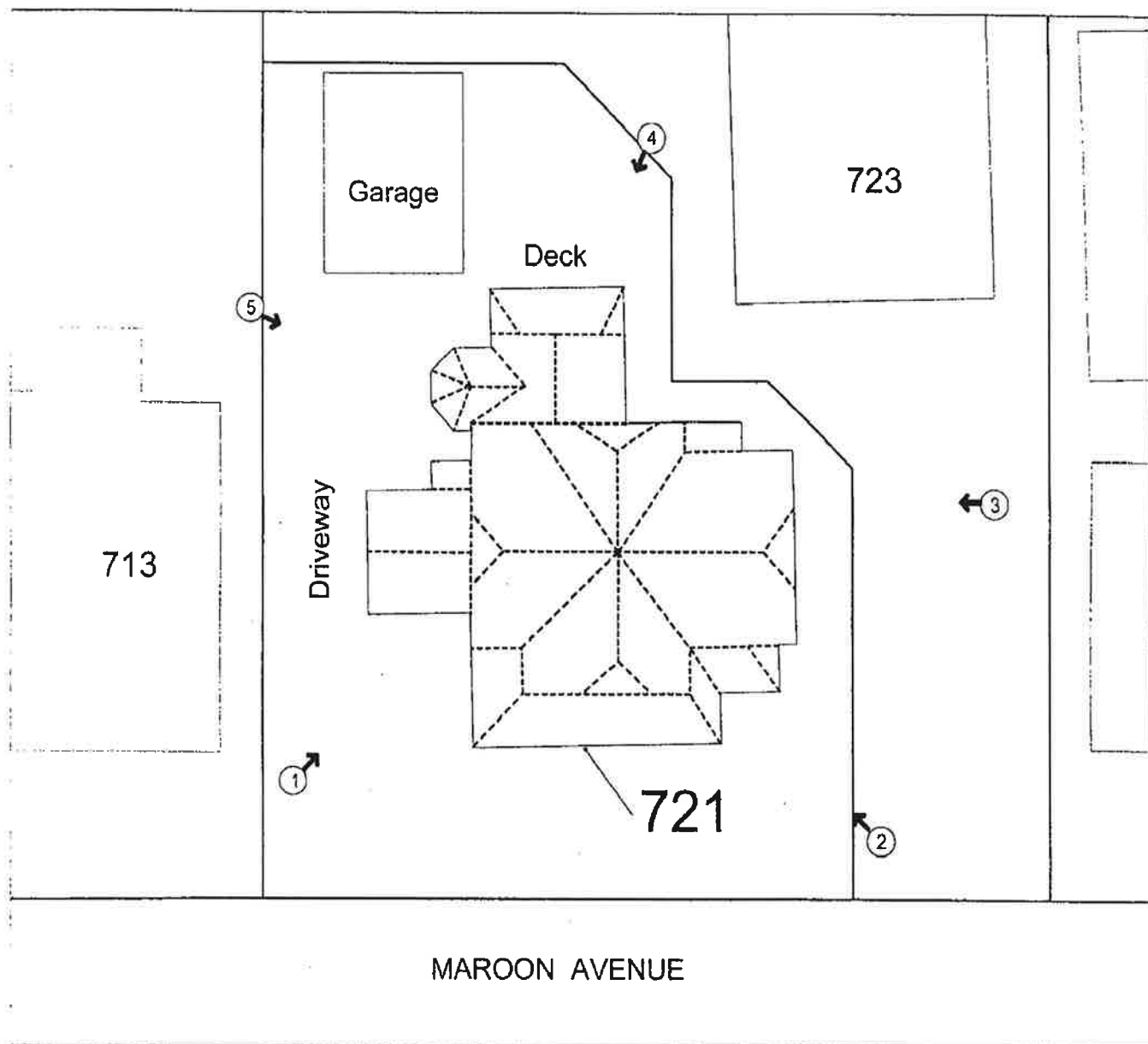
After the departure of CF&I in 1952, Crested Butte verged on becoming a ghost town. Residents sought ways to develop a new economic base for the community, advertising the local scenery and trout fishing opportunities. In 1952, Leonard Perry of Altadena, California, acquired the Superintendent's House and the other remaining mine buildings on the hill, including the large mule barn and a mine office. Beginning in 1955, Perry operated the Springtime Camp in the Rockies using these buildings. The Superintendent's House served as a dormitory for the camp. In 1959, Perry began using the house as a restaurant, the Red Lady Dining Room. The dining room was operated in conjunction with a summer theater group, the California Players led by Herb and Bev Booth, which had facilities in the barn and mining office.¹¹

In the 1960s, skiing facilities developed north of the town, the origins of a major new industry. Ski area expansion brought new people and new development to the community, which began to seek ways to preserve its historic resources, including the remaining buildings on Big Mine Hill. In 1971, Leonard Perry had the Superintendent's House, mule barn, and mine office moved into Crested Butte, proper. The road from the mine was rebuilt to enable the move, and the buildings were pulled by truck on a timber platform attached to a set of wheels.¹² Throughout Crested Butte's history, buildings were moved to town from mining sites and from one location in town to another. The mule barn was divided into two parts and the office became part of a bed and breakfast. The Superintendent's House was relocated to Maroon Avenue, where it continues to serve as the most intact reminder of the town's heritage from Big Mine Hill and as a family home to new generations of Crested Butte residents.

¹⁰ Veltri and Veltri, *The Crested Butte Melting Pot*, 9.

¹¹ *Gunnison Country Times*, 24 May 1976, 4.

¹² *Ibid.*

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The house footprint (perimeter) is the nominated area. Numbers in circles show photograph locations referenced in the narrative.

10 0 10 20 Feet



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Section VIProperty Name Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House**Photograph Log for Black and White Photographs**

The location and camera direction of photographic views are indicated on the Sketch Map. Information that is the same for all photographs:

Name of the Property: Colorado Fuel and Iron Company Superintendent's House

City and State: Crested Butte, Colorado

Photographer: Sandra Cortner

Date: August 1998

Location of Original Negatives:

Town of Crested Butte

507 Maroon Avenue/P.O. Box 39

Crested Butte, Colorado 81224

Photograph Number	Camera Direction	Description of View
1	Northeast	Front (south) projecting gable, porch, and one-story west section.
2	North-Northwest	East projecting gable, front (south) projecting gable (behind trees), and porch.
3	West	East wall of east-projecting gable and additions off rear (north).
4	South	Rear of house showing additions and wood deck.
5	East-Southeast	West side of house showing west wall of west-projecting gable, octagonal addition, and one-story west section.
6	N/A	Stairs to second floor.