

COLORADO CITIES – FOOD, CLOTHING & SHELTERS

Clothing

What do these photos tell you about the kind of clothes they wore?

Elitch Garden Theater

The people in this photo are gathered outside the Elitch Gardens theater in Denver. They are dressed for the theater.



People outside of the Elitch Gardens Theater in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

This photo shows the women's dresses and men's suits that were in style in the early 1900s. Long, white dresses with sleeves puffed at the shoulder were popular for summer wear. Women wore wide-

brimmed hats for dress-up occasions like attending the theater. Men usually wore plain dark suits and felt hats.

Their Own Words

"Ladies those days wore big hats held on with a long hairpin. It was pointed on the end to penetrate any kind of cloth and some of the softer heads. I recall my mother used to feel that thing very carefully through her hair, until it came out the other side."

Source: Forrest Coulter, "65 Years of memories," p. 13. Denver Public Library Manuscript Collection.

Woman With Bicycle

The woman in this photo is wearing a sports outfit. The photo was taken beside the lake in Denver's City Park about the year 1900.



Woman with a bicycle near Denver's City Park

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

The bicycle and other recreational fads of the 1890s had an impact on women's clothing. They could hardly ride a bicycle in the long skirts and dresses fashionable at that time. The proper sports clothes included shorter skirts, riding gloves, and a sporting hat.

Their Own Words

"I liked to look at ladies' high button shoes and at their long, buttoned gloves. They used to have full sized buttoners for the shoes called a button hook, and tiny ones for the gloves. And gloves were supposed to go on easier if powder was shaken into them from a small, dainty wooden container somewhat in the shape of a bottle."

*Source: Quantrille D. McClung, *Memoirs of My Childhood and Youth in North Denver* (Denver: Colorado Genealogical Society, 1979).*

William Jackson Palmer

This is a photo of William Jackson Palmer, who founded the city of Colorado Springs. He posed for this photo wearing a white shirt and a tie, a long sack coat, and trousers that fit into his boots.



William Jackson Palmer

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Most men of the late 1800s owned a sack coat for informal, everyday wear. Sack coats were not tightly fitted. The cloth hangs, like a sack, in a relatively straight line from the shoulders to the hem. The long coat that Palmer wore in this photo was especially popular in the 1870s and 1880s.

Their Own Words

"Ladies--Three to twelve petticoats were usual and at least three had to be taffeta to create a swish.

Men--The man who escorted the Gibson Girl through City Park on a Sunday afternoon wore a Prince Albert coat with a silk hat and a cane. . .when he went to work he togged out in a derby and cutaway coat. . .in summer he changed for a straw hat with a black cord anchoring it to the lapel of his short seymore coat."

Source: Reflections of Frances Melrose, Rocky Mountain News, September 15, 1946.

Two Young Boys

These boys are wearing long-sleeved, winter shirts, short pants called knee breeches, and long stockings. The boy next to the tree is wearing a tie with big polka-dot bow.



Two young boys in winter clothing

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

The boys in this photo probably were wearing their best clothes. In the late 1800s, young boys usually wore short pants when they dressed up.

Workers In a Blacksmith Shop

The men in this blacksmith shop in Denver wore work clothes and aprons that protected them for the kind of work that they did. For example, blacksmiths often worked with hot metals for making such things as horseshoes.



Workers in a Blacksmith shop in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

The standard work outfit for men included pants and a shirt or overalls. Many men wore suspenders rather than belts to hold up their pants. It was common for men to wear hats when they worked.

Their Own Words

“There was a blacksmith shop. . . . I used to love to go past that as I was going downtown and watch the blacksmiths shoeing horses and making horseshoes. Hearing the pounding of the hammers and anvils and seeing the red-hot metal that they shaped.”

Source: Franklin Folsom quoted in Maria M. Rogers, ed., In Other Words: Oral Histories of the Colorado Frontier (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1996): 55.

An Immigrant Family

This is an immigrant family in Denver. They are wearing everyday clothes. The photo was taken about the year 1900 in the family’s apartment.



Immigrant family in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Colorado Historical Society

More About This Topic

Women wore skirts and blouses at home. Boy usually wore shirts and short pants. Immigrant women often wore kerchiefs on their head like the woman standing in this photo.

Their Own Words

“About the time we built our Bell Street house (1893) there was a great influx of Italians into Denver. They settled in North Denver and began truck gardening in the Platte River bottoms. . . . These women were always soberly dressed in black calico, shapeless dresses, black aprons with little black shawls around the shoulders or over the head.”

Source: Quantrille D. McClung, Memoirs of My Childhood and Youth in North Denver (Denver: Colorado Genealogical Society, 1979): 32.

Houses

What do these photos tell you about the kind of houses they lived in?

A House In Early Golden

This is one of the earliest houses built in Golden. It was built in 1859. The original house was made of logs. It was later covered with weatherboarding made of sawn boards.



OLDEST HOUSE IN GOLDEN, COLORADO
Built in 1859. (Constructed of logs, since weatherboarded.)

House in early Golden, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Many of the first houses in Colorado towns were made of logs. Most later were replaced by frame or brick houses. Some were added onto and the logs covered over with boards. Many old houses in Colorado have been expanded and “remodeled” over the years.

A House In Colorado Springs

This is a photo of a wooden frame house in Colorado Springs. It was built with a wooden frame covered with weatherboard.



House in Colorado Spring

Photo: Colorado Historical Society

More About This Topic

Most city homes built in Colorado in the late 1800s were frame houses. They were cheaper to build than houses made of heavy timbers or brick. The boards were sawn from logs at a nearby sawmill.

A Frame House

This is another frame house built somewhere in Colorado in the late 1800s. It has a porch facing the front yard.



A frame house in Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Most houses built in Colorado cities in the late 1800s had porches. The one in this photo extended over half of the front of the house. Porches serve a useful purpose. They are shady places to sit during the summer. Some porches were screened in, which made them cool, summer rooms.

“Our Shanty” In Grand Junction

This house in Grand Junction was owned by the John Reider family. The caption at the bottom says “Our Shanty.” What did the owner mean by that?



House in Grand Junction, Colorado

Photo: Colorado Historical Society

More About This Topic

Someone in the Reider family had a sense of humor. A “shanty” is a run-down shack. This is a fine, two-story frame house. It has several special features. These include the large bay windows on the side and at least three screened-in porches.

Their Own Words

“This house was a square house, four big bedrooms. . . . Dad was really an early health nut, I guess, because he built sleeping porches on so every bedroom had a sleeping porch. [We slept in the fresh air] and it was cold, but none of us had tuberculosis. . . . [We slept on a screen porch] in the winter, and we didn’t have any heat. Later we had window put in but no heat. It was still cold out there.”

Source: Elizabeth Demmon quoted in Maria M. Rogers, ed., In Other Words: Oral Histories of the Colorado Frontier, (Golden: Fulcrum Press, 1995): 83.

A Brick House In Denver

This is two-story brick house built in Denver in the early 1890s.



Two-story brick house in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Many of the large houses in Denver and other Colorado cities were built of brick. Brick houses were more expensive than frame houses. However, brick houses were easier to maintain.

Cornwall Apartments In Denver

This is a photo of the Cornwall Apartments Building in Denver. This building is on 921 East 13th Street still exists.



Cornwall apartments in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Some city dwellers lived in apartments. The Cornwall in Denver was a very fine apartment building. It contained eighteen apartments, each with six or seven rooms. It also had a ballroom, open porches, and a rooftop garden. The garden provided a good view of the mountains.

Mansions

What do these photos tell you about how rich peoples' mansions were like?

A Trinidad Mansion

This is a photo of the Bloom mansion in Trinidad. It was built in 1892 for Frank G. Bloom, who raised cattle on his ranches on the plains.



Bloom mansion in Trinidad, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Many of the wealthy men of Colorado built large and very expensive houses. These are called mansions. The three-story Bloom mansion was the largest house in Trinidad. It was built of brick and had a porch that extended around all four sides. The house has a French-style roof called a mansard roof. That means that it has a flat top and that the upper story has sloping sides.

The Briarhurst Mansion

This large, two-story house was built for William Bell in Colorado Springs. He was one of the founders of the near-by resort town of Manitou Springs.



Briarhurst mansion in Colorado Springs

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

The wealthy people of Colorado built houses of stone as well as brick. The mansion in this photo was built of sandstone. Red sandstone was cut from quarries near Colorado Springs. These people also visited one another quite often.

Their Own Words

“The general round of life in the Springs is agreeable. The large leisure class, gathered from many parts of the world, makes it a practice to laugh and be gay, to ride or drive in the morning, to arrange luncheons and dinner-parties, picnics, teas, bicycle or plain, and receptions in the afternoon; and now and then dances in the evening. . . . The reason why Denver and Colorado Springs are such acceptable places to live in is easily explained. They are so new, and so recently settled by Eastern people of affluence that Eastern standards of life and manners still prevail.”

Source: Lewis Morris Iddings, “Life in the Altitudes,” Scribner’s Magazine (February, 1896): 144, 151.

The Croke Mansion

This large three-story mansion was built in Denver in 1891. It was the home of Thomas M. Patterson, a United States senator from Colorado.



Croke mansion in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

The mansion in this photo was built by Bernard Croke. He was a schoolteacher who made a fortune investing in farmland and railroads. Senator Patterson bought the house in 1908. It is located at 430 East 11th Avenue.

Their Own Words

"Not long ago I had the pleasure of seeing the interior of the residence of one of the wealthiest men in Colorado. The finest part of the house was its ball room. It was illuminated by electric lights shining through stained glass. Large mirrors reflected all which passed in the room. There were quantities of carved wood, a polished inlaid floor, beautiful and handsome draperies, a balcony for the orchestra. An alcove with a cushioned seat where the dancers would rest or those who did not dance would watch those who did. . ."

Source: Henrietta Hitchcock Manuscripts, MSS#1344, Colorado Historical Society.

A Denver Mansion

This was another of Denver's large stone mansions. It was built in 1890.



Denver mansion

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

The house in this photo was located at 1007 Pennsylvania Street, which once was a very fashionable neighborhood. The house no longer exists.

Their Own Words

“The traveler finds a city [i.e., Denver] that compared favorable with any in America, or even in Europe. The magnificent blocks of buildings of stone and brick, equipped with all modern improvements, the private residences of varied architecture, reproductions of French chateaux, surrounded by insurmountable stone walls or huge iron fences, villas of Italian Renaissance with their beautiful terraced gardens, great red brick colonial mansions with stately white pillars and white fences. Denver has rightly been named the ‘City of Homes.’”

Source: Mrs. Crawford Hill, “East vs. West,” Harper’s Bazarre (May, 1910): 314.

The Orman Mansion

This large stone mansion was built in Pueblo for the James B. Orman family. He was governor of Colorado from 1901 to 1903.



Orman mansion in Pueblo, Colorado

Photo: Colorado Historical Society

More About This Topic

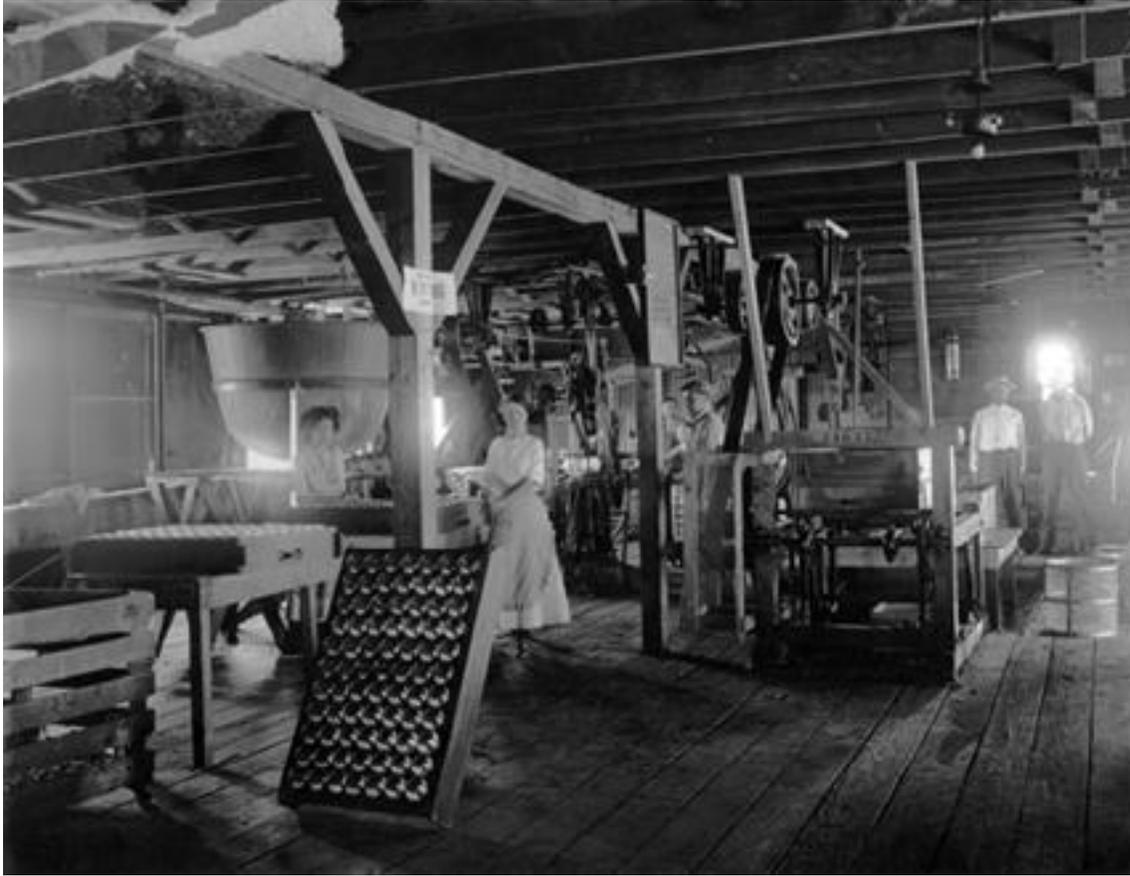
The house in this photo was later owned by the Alva Adams family. Adams also served as governor of Colorado. It is located at 103 West Orman Avenue in Pueblo.

Food

What do these photos tell you about the food people ate?

A Food Canning Factory

This photo was taken in a food canning factory. The woman is standing beside a rack of cans. The photo was taken about the year 1900.



Food canning factory

Photo: Colorado Historical Society

More About This Topic

People who lived in cities raised very little of their own food. They went to a General Store to buy food in cans. The food was processed at canning factories located in Longmont and other towns along the Front Range. The cities of Colorado provided farmers with a market for vegetables and other farm produce.

Their Own Words

“In 1890 there were relatively few packaged or canned items on the grocer’s shelves. One variety of each was the general rule. Grandma took what she could get. Distribution was pretty strictly local; she bought the kind of groceries her neighbors chose to produce. It was up to grandmother to turn these basic products into appetizing dishes over the coal range.”

“She ground her own coffee; laboriously measured the ingredients for puddings, pancakes, and pies; canned or dried all fruits and vegetables; made catsup chili sauce, jellies, and jams; baked her bread and

beans; rendered her lard and made her soap. . . . Practically everything was stored in bins and barrels.”

Source: Marguerite Frink Counter, “Pioneer Canning Industry in Colorado,” Colorado Magazine, 30 (January 1953): 38.

A General Store

This is a photo of Leikauf’s Meat Market in Denver. The display cases on the left hold beef roasts, pork chops, sliced bacon, and other cuts of meat. Animal carcasses and strips of dried meat are hanging on the wall on the right.



Leikauf's Meat Market in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

People living in cities went to the meat market to buy meat. Most of the meat sold there was fresh. The pigs, chickens, and cows were killed by a local butcher. He cut up the meat and sold it to the city's meat markets. As the meat markets had no refrigeration, they had to sell the meat within a few days.

Their Own Words

"[At Stoddard's Meat Market] there were a great, round "chopping block," at least 18 inches thick and three or four feet across, which must have been a section of an enormous tree. Much of the meat was in the form of "quarters." Some hung from hooks in the ceiling and often several would be hung outside to advertise the business.... For 5 cents one could get a really good soup bone that would make the base of a soup that would serve the four of us. For 15 cents one could get enough meat for the main meals."

Source: Quantrille D. McClung, Memoirs of My Childhood and Youth in North Denver (Denver: Colorado Genealogical Society, 1979): 13.

A Lunch Counter

This photo was taken at a lunch counter located in a Denver drug store. The lunch counter was called the Dutch Mill Restaurant. The waitresses are dressed in Dutch-style outfits. The photo was taken about the year 1915. You can tell what season of the year it was taken by looking closely at the photo.



The Dutch Mill Restaurant in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

People in a hurry ate at lunch counters like the one in the photo. They were the cheap "fast food" outlets of their time. Soups, sandwiches, and desserts were their specialty.

Their Own Words

"It was reported that Denver in 1890 served the cheapest meals, for the food put out, in the United States. Steak, French fried potatoes, bread and butter, coffee and a dessert, raisin pie or bread pudding, was 15 cents."

Source: "Colorado Eats," WPA Files, Box 5 Denver Public Library

The Watrous Café

This is the interior of George F. Watrous's café in Denver. It was furnished with long wooden tables. The dining room was decorated with mirrors on the walls.



Watrous's café in Denver, Colorado

Photo: Denver Public Library, Western History Collection

More About This Topic

Business people, shoppers, and tourists visiting Colorado's cities ate in cafes or restaurants like this one.

Their Own Words

“Soup: Beaver Tail, St. Julien, Oyster

Fish: Baked Specked Trout, Fried Yampa River Grayling

Boiled: Sugar Cured Ham, Chicken, Elk Tongue with Horseradish

Roast: Loin of Elk, Chili Sauce, Leg of Venison, Mallard Duck, Oyster Dressing

Entrees: Rocky Mountain Elk Steaks, Hunters Style; Elks Brains on Toast; Strawberry Flummery, Cream Sauce; Mayonnaise, Salmon Salad, Pickled Beets.”

“Relishes: Hartford Sauce, Home Made Catsup, French Mustard

Vegetables: Baked Sweet Potatoes, Scalloped Tomatoes, Sugar Corn, Mexican Beans

Pastry: English Plum Pudding, Mince Pie, White Cake, Gold Cake, California Peaches, Crackers, Nuts, Tea, Coffee, Milk Chocolate.”

Source: “First Christmas in Routt County,” Steamboat Springs, 1885, CWA Interviews, Doc. 358/22a, Colorado Historical Society.