



Bradford – Perley site and Medlen School

2015 National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government’s official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture that contribute to an understanding of the historical and cultural foundations of the nation. Properties listed in the National Register are automatically listed in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties.

A property listed on the National and State Registers may apply for certain Federal and State investment tax credits for rehabilitation and other provisions. Listing the property may also provide eligibility for State Historical Fund grants.

For 2015, two notable historically significant structures in Jefferson County were nominated and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

On Feb. 2, 2015, the Robert Boyles Bradford Property – Bradford-Perley Site – in the Ken Caryl Ranch vicinity was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Bradford-Perley Site is important in the area of transportation because of its association with the Bradford Wagon Road, which conveyed prospectors and settlers into the mountains during the period 1860 – 1867. Along with W. H. Middaugh, Robert Bradford planned to have a toll road built west of Denver to transport miners and settlers to the mining communities of Tarryall, Fairplay, Breckenridge and others. The General Assembly of the Jefferson Territory (predecessor to Colorado Territory) issued a charter on Dec. 7, 1859, to the Denver, Auraria and South Park Wagon Road Co., of which Bradford was listed as president of the company.

Bradford-Perley Site
circa 1930-1940.

*Ken-Caryl Ranch
Historical Society*

A worker is repointing the mortar on the east facade of the house as part of a scheduled maintenance.

D Harrison

Today, looking to the east, you can see the older, smaller, portion of the house as well as the larger addition.

Rose Lewis



The road was later called the Denver, Bradford and Blue River Road Co. (locals simply referring to it as the Bradford Road). The wagon road opened in February 1860.

The Bradford-Perley Site is also significant in the area of exploration and settlement due to its association, albeit brief, with settlement of Bradford City (commonly known as Bradford) and the local history of what became the Ken-Caryl Ranch. Robert Boyles Bradford was one of the first Euro-American settlers in the area directly west of the Dakota Hogback and south of what is now U.S. Highway 285, having first arrived in Denver shortly after many gold seekers and emigrants arrived. In 1860 he claimed property in a meadow alongside his Bradford Road, about four miles south from Morrison, with hopes of creating a town to rival Denver or Golden.

Although only the walls of the main Bradford house and the foundation of the milk house remain, the site is significant as it may yield information important to our understanding of transportation, exploration and settlement through its association with Robert Bradford and the Bradford Wagon Road.

The 1886 District No. 17 School – Medlen School – was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 4, 2015. The school is significant for its long association with the education of South Turkey Creek area students. It is also significant for social history as the school building served as a community center, and the teacherage served as a community library after it was no longer used as a teacherage.



Additionally, the Medlen School is architecturally important as a good example of a one-room schoolhouse in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements style as applied to the schoolhouse and associated buildings. The Medlen School is also important for its potential to yield information important to history.

The building is a good example of a rural one-room schoolhouse and meets the registration requirements of the Schoolhouse Property Type as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) Rural School Buildings in Colorado. As noted in the MPDF, rural school buildings are eligible for not only education, but also for social history as a focus of community life and the primary gathering point for a wide variety of social and community events. 

The Medlen School served as the educational and social focal point of the Medlen community until school consolidation forced its closure in 1952. The School is now used as the Turkey Creek Community Center.

D Harrison

The Medlen School began in 1886 as a log structure. Around 1900, clapboard siding covered the logs and a small frame teacherage was constructed beside the school.

D Harrison

