



**A, D, I, & J. SIDNEY SCHOOLHOUSE
32995 County Road 14, Steamboat Springs**

The first Sidney School was organized in 1894 and operated for the next fifty years. Classes were first held in a 14' x 16' sod-roofed log cabin, previously a saloon and tobacco-selling establishment, located across the road from the current building. In 1895, a log house was built on the Sidney School site and was replaced by the present clapboard structure in 1910 or 1912. The extant schoolhouse, two outhouses with coal and wood shed between, and a barn for students' horses were the initial buildings. A bell hung in the cupola of the schoolhouse; a teacherage was built in 1919. A student recalls that when he entered first grade, the school had 30 pupils, but only approximately twelve by the time that he had completed the eighth grade and only two when he graduated. He said that the reduction was due to families forced to move away due to the inability to survive in the mountains on 160 acres of land. The school was heated by a coal stove, but children often lingered in the outhouses to keep warm. The teacher conducted classes, cleaned and swept the building, and banked the fires, for which she was paid between \$60-to-100 per month. Over time some of the school's students became its teachers. The Town of Sidney, once on the Wolcott Stage line (See Unincorporated South Routt, Rock Creek Stage Stop), dwindled to the school site,

a home, and a few deteriorating buildings, primarily because U. S. Highway 40 became the main route rather than the stage road that passed through the town; schools were consolidated in 1953-54, and trucks replaced the railroad as transportation for produce, on which the town had depended for its economic existence. The Sidney School, like all rural schoolhouses, was a social center for community dances, meetings, and fundraising box socials, and remains a reminder of the settlement of and change in the American West.