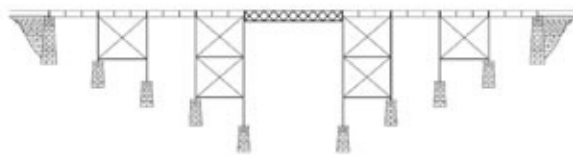
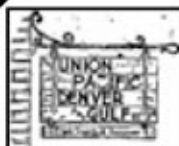


# The Bogies and the Loop



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Photo from Bill Elie collection

## Discovering Dake

This great, previously unpublished photo from the Bill Elie collection (Photo No. 1) is from a Miller and Nutt stereo view and is circa 1883-85, looking north.

The track view is eastbound, or down-grade, and in the foreground shows the fill across the (name unknown) creek which drained into Hoosier Creek beyond the right edge of the picture.

Hoosier Creek ran between the kilns and the log cabins in this view and emptied into the north fork of the Platte River just beyond Hoosier.

Twenty-five of the 30 kilns can be seen, along with 10 boxcars on the spur and large stacks of cordwood behind the kilns. Much of the town of Dake was to the left of this photo and Hoosier was to the right.

Please see Bob Schoppe's story on pages 4-6 for the history of this little-known town on the South Park Line.

# A.C. Dake and his town on the South Park line

by Bob Schoppe

Alvin Chamberlain Dake, who would prove to be quite the successful entrepreneur, was born Aug. 1, 1849 in Ellensburg, Clinton County, N.Y. and worked for a time with his father in the lumber business.

In July 1868 he left home and engaged in the coal business as an agent for a concern and after one year returned to Clinton County where he profitably engaged in the coal and wood business until 1873. He then went to Lake Superior and spent the summer in the coal business for an iron company, returning in the fall to Clinton County where he took part in a wood contract for the state.

In spring 1875 he moved to Northampton, Mass. and engaged in the fish and oyster business until fall 1876, when he sold out and again returned to Clinton County.

In spring 1877, he moved to Summit County, Colo. in the Breckenridge district and engaged in placer mining until that fall, when he moved to Denver. In February 1878 he went to Leadville, where he continued mining and during that summer began a very successful business manufacturing charcoal. He constructed kilns along the Arkansas River in the Buena Vista area and in 1883 at Dake on Kenosha Pass, which was named for him. He also had substantial works at Catskill and Maxwell, N.M. During his time in Leadville, he returned to Northampton in 1879 to be united in marriage to Charlotte E. Taylor.

The charcoal produced at Dake was shipped by rail to Denver and used in smelters in the South Park-Kenosha Pass area, and also in Central City and Blackhawk. At the height of his charcoal operations in Colorado, he had 400-500 men employed and was the largest charcoal dealer in the state, manufacturing nearly 1,300,000 bushels of charcoal per annum. After moving back to Denver in 1887, Mr. Dake continued in the char-

coal business until 1893 when he turned his attention to the cattle business, buying and selling large herds until he died in Denver in September 1902 at age 53.

The town of Dake was founded in 1883 for the purpose of manufacturing charcoal for fuel and lasted until around 1893. Dake was a center for the early charcoal industry and thus was associated with three important themes in Colorado history — timbering, railroads and mining.

There were 30 kilns and 2,094 feet of spur track servicing them. Dake was also a stop on the Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad at milepost 74.2, station no. 1045, about 2 track miles below/east of Kenosha Pass and 4.8 track miles above/west of Webster. There were approximately 210 men employed cutting timber and feeding the kilns.

The town of Dake had about 300 inhabitants and featured a post office, store, saloon, blacksmith shop, stables and boardinghouse. The post office opened on May 23, 1883 and closed on Oct. 8, 1892.

Most of the town was on the south side of Hoosier Creek, while the kilns were on the north side. A 1988 state of Colorado cultural resources examination for a wetland extension discusses efforts to process lime in the kilns, also noting a limestone deposit nearby.

This report also mentions a boardwalk built along Hoosier Creek on the bog of the original wetlands. It was used by workers to reach the kilns on the north side of Hoosier Creek from the town of Dake on the south side. Later, charcoal deposits dumped here provided a walkway across the creek. The railroad fill above the creek was probably used as a walkway as well.



Alvin Chamberlain Dake



Charlotte E. Dake



*Photo from Bill Boe collection*

**Photo No. 1B —** A close-up of the kilns and the boxcars on the spur. Wagons on the left and cordwood in the background can also be seen.

Jon Pankau found a reference indicating an earlier phase of charcoal manufacturing using the simpler pit method. When Jon and I walked the ground we found an area just north (see photo no. 3) where the earth has been moved to form a flat area above a semicircular hillside facing south. There is evidence of burning at various sites on that hillside.

Today, the Dake town site in Pike National Forest



*Photo from Bill Boe collection*

**Photo No. 1C —** A close-up of a family's cabin and the kilns with more cordwood behind.

is quite serene, with little evidence of the early industrial activity that transpired here. The 10 years of kiln operations had stripped most of the local trees, but new growth has since renewed the forest. Walking the ground one can still make out most of the kiln locations along the south side of Park County Road 58. The spur is also somewhat evident between the kilns and Hoosier creek.

On the hillside just south of the creek is where most of Dake proper was located and there are structure depressions, quite a bit of broken glass and old cans in evidence. CR 58, which initially utilizes the old South Park grade, sees an occasional car passing by, with quite a bit more traffic on nearby U.S. 285. Taking a much more direct – and steeper – route than the railroad grade, U.S. 285 intersects with CR 58 approximately 1.6 miles below Kenosha and 2.7 miles above Webster.

The railroad fill (partly washed away now) over Hoosier Creek is only a few yards south of CR 58, and is about .4 miles above U.S. 285. Beavers have once again filled in the gap and today there are good sized ponds on the upstream side of the grade on both Hoosier and ??? creeks. (Checking with the Fairplay Forest Service office and every map I could find on the area, I was unable to determine the name – if it ever had one – of that creek)

Hoosier (see ICC map) was just .4 miles east or down-grade of Dake, and today lies literally just off U.S. 285. Mac Poor



*Photo from Bill Boe collection*

**Photo No. 1A —** Close-up of Dake townsfolk on the South Park main above (name unknown) creek.



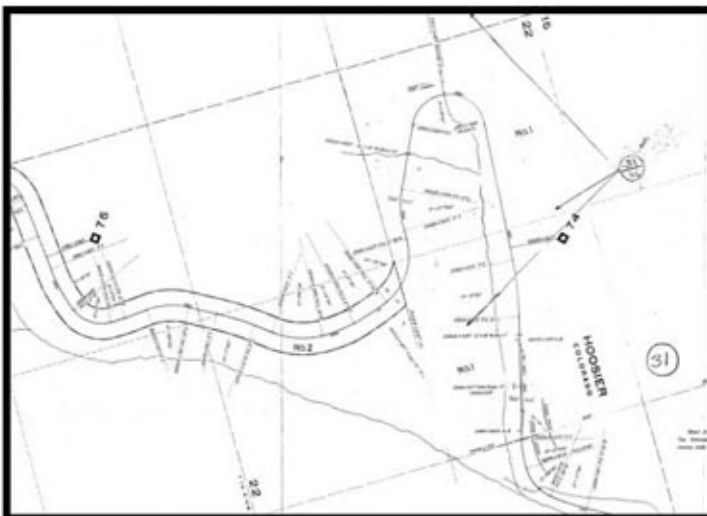


Photo by Bob Schoppe

**Photo No. 2 —** Front cover view as it appears today, from as close to the sight line as the trees will permit. The beaver pond in the foreground covers most of the fill seen in the cover shot.

states that it was station no. 1044 and had a 590-foot siding. The Hoosier siding east switch was on CR 58 just feet off U.S. 285. You can see the grade intersect 285, then it is not as obvious as it is under the first .4 miles of 58. It then is in evidence again as it diverges from 58, crosses Hoosier Creek, and can be easily walked from there up to Kenosha Pass.

At one time Hoosier also featured a 47,500-gallon water tank, but both the volume and quality of the water were reportedly low. The "1886 UP, Colorado Division,



**Colorado and Southern Interstate Commerce Commission map V. Colo. 14-34, June 1918**

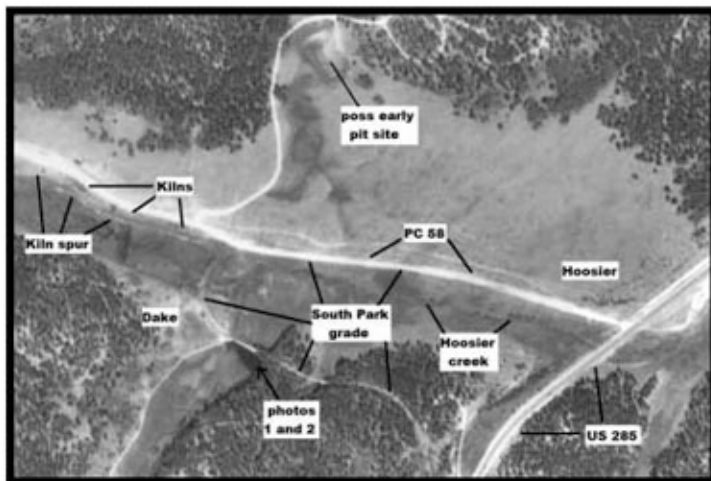
"Buildings Bridges and other Structures" notes that the tank was gravity fed by 1,707 feet of pipe, but from which creek is unspecified. The base of this water tank was located downgrade from Hoosier and can be seen on the flyleaf photo in Mal Ferrell's "C&S Narrow Gauge." Today, U.S. 285 covers the grade and the tank base stones are no longer evident.

The "1886 UP Bridges, Buildings and other Structures" lists the water tank, section house and bunk house, barn and blacksmith shop, possibly left over from the pre-railroad stagecoach days. The "1894 DL&G Buildings Bridges and other Structures" has nothing listed at Dake. Hoosier is listed on a 1912 list of C&S stations, but the only thing mentioned in the 1918 ICC notes on Hoosier is the station sign.

Thanks to Bill Elloe for the great photograph and Bill Reich for sharing additional information beyond that published in his book.

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**Photo No. 3 —** Satellite photo, circa 2000