

Firm: Sheely Construction Company
Other Firm Names Colorado Bridge and Construction Company
Office Location: Denver
Operating Dates: ca. 1905-ca. 1934
Principals: Charles G. Sheely

Information

Charles G. Sheely designed and erected steel bridges and building superstructures from a Denver base. Little is known of his personal life. Born in Redfield, Iowa, in 1871, he formed the Charles G. Sheely Construction Company sometime after moving to Denver around 1905. General contractor for the Gas and Electric Building, he built with reinforced concrete as well as steel and contracted for the Halligan Dam and several road paving projects in Arapahoe and Weld counties. Sheely, who lived in Bear Creek Canyon, also built the highway between Denver and Morrison. He died in 1934 of appendicitis in his winter home in San Antonio, Texas, and was buried in Fort Collins.

Several of Sheely's early spans remain. The Rifle Bridge, a long-span truss erected in 1909, and the Una Bridge, built in 1910, both over the Colorado River, are his most outstanding surviving steel bridges. The Una and Lacy bridges in Garfield County proved pivotal to Sheely's career, for it was their structural failures and the ensuing litigation that led to the reorganization of his firm into the Colorado Bridge and Construction Company. Colorado Bridge continued building concrete and steel roadway spans through the 1910s and 1920s. The last major span built by Sheely in Colorado was the Rainbow Arch Bridge in Fort Morgan, the longest Marsh arch bridge in the world at the time of its completion.

Firm history from Clayton B. Fraser, *Highway Bridges of Colorado*

Credited Projects (partial list)

Project or Structure	Location	Site Number	Date*	Status
Gas and Electric Building	Denver	5DV137	1910	National Register
Rifle Bridge	Rifle	5GF.457	1909	National Register
Una Bridge	Garfield County	5GF.364	1910	
Lacy Bridge	Garfield County		Ca. 1910	
Rainbow Arch Bridge	CO Hwy. 52 over the S. Platte River Fort Morgan	5MR.471	1923	National Register
Sheeley Bridge	Mill Street Park Aspen	5PT.23	1911	National Register
Denver to Morrison highway	Denver and Jefferson counties			

*Completion date or construction span is stated if known. Plan, building permit, or assessor dates are used if completion date or period is unknown.

Reference Material

Colorado Department of Transportation Historic Bridge Database, accessed 3-13-2002.

The Colorado State Business Directory. Denver: Gazetteer Publishing Co.
1915, 1916, 1917 and 1920

Fraser, Clayton B. *Highway Bridges of Colorado*, National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form, March 30, 2000.

Site Files Database, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, Denver.

Revised: August 22, 2006