



The town of Montrose, Colorado (this location), is located at the juncture of the original narrow gauge Denver & Rio Grande mainline, built in 1883, and its Ouray Branch, completed in 1887. The D&RG standard-gauged many of its lines around 1900, including the part of the original 1883 route from Montrose north to Grand Junction, but the narrow gauge mainline east of Montrose remained narrow gauge and was ultimately abandoned. At that point, the original 1883 grade south of Grand Junction became the Montrose Branch of D&RG standard gauge mainline (Tennessee Pass route). The Ouray Branch remained narrow gauge until 1953 when the Ridgway-Ouray segment, comprising the last 10 miles of this 35-mile branch line, was abandoned and the line from Montrose to Ridgway – the new Ridgway Branch -- was standard gauged. The Ridgway Branch was pulled up in 1977.

This northward view at south Montrose shows the end of standard-gauged track on the Ouray Branch grade. The branch at the upper right is a spur to a factory (see next photo) and may be on the grade of the 1883 mainline. Or, another spur about 100 yards farther north may be the junction of the mainline and the Ouray Branch.



This short spur may be on the grade that once carried narrow gauge tacks to Gunnison and over Marshall Pass on the D&RG (1883) original mainline.