

THE OBSERVATORY ON LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

The Presbyterian College of the Southwest



In 1883, establishment of the Presbyterian College of the Southwest in Del Norte, CO was approved, and construction began in 1884.

Del Norte's Presbyterian minister George M. Darley, planned for the main college building to be a large, four-storied stone structure that was topped by a tall spire, but this structure never got past excavation for a foundation.

Rev. Darley spent much time as the college's major fundraiser, and financial solvency of the college was a constant problem, and eventually resulted in its closing.

The Presbyterian College of the Southwest opened its doors to students on September 11, 1884.

[Museum Trail Site](#)

[Observatory Home](#)

[The Rio Grande
County Museum](#)

[Lookout Mountain
Observatory Assn](#)

Contact Us

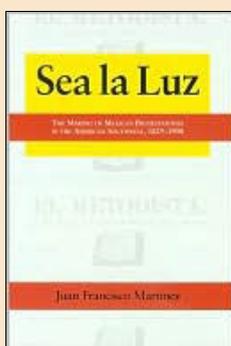
The Lookout Mountain
Observatory Association
PO Box 432
Del Norte, CO 81132
Or Email [Alva Hibbs](#)

Its first President was the elderly Reverend Dr. Willis Lord, formerly president of the College of Wooster in Ohio; the president's position was assumed by the Rev. George M. Darley later that year.

Among the initial faculty members was Professor Frank N. Notestein of New York, a recent graduate of the College of Wooster who taught mathematics and natural sciences, and became involved with the observatory.

*Dr. A.J. Taylor
Rio Grande County Museum*

Center for Early Mexican-American Education



The Presbyterian College of the Southwest began training Mexican-Americans for the evangelical ministry beginning in 1890, and was the only college in the region to do so. Students from both Colorado and New Mexico were attracted to its three-year program.

Although the college had, since its inception, provided general education courses catering to the Mexican-American community, after 1890 it focused on training pastors. Numerous notable graduates of the program went on to start their own churches in the San Luis Valley.

There was a short-lived gold rush in the Del Norte area, but it didn't last long enough to provide real financial stability to the college. Tuition could not be counted on to support the college because many of its students were poor and couldn't afford to pay much for their education.

Because of the lack of funds, the college closed in 1901.

Juan Francisco Martinez

Sea la Luz: The Making of Mexican Protestantism in the American Southwest, 1829-1900