



*In an area of not much more than 10 square miles, there were some 70 miles of railway line at Cripple Creek. This map from Colorado Rail Annual #13, shows all that existed over the years.*

was a considerable source of revenue and the Golden Circle purchased a powerful 0-4-4 tank engine to operate it- after which the narrow gauge resembled nothing so much as a branch of the Denver Mint itself.

In the spring of 1896, Cripple

Creek burned down almost in its entirety. The rebuilding, swift beyond measure, strained the F&CC- it had to borrow 20 engines from the Denver & Rio Grande to supplement its own 10 to service the sudden traffic need.

By supporting the construction of

smelters at Florence, the F&CC ensured much traffic would head down its line, rather than out via its competitors. It was not an easy life though, clinging to the walls of the narrow valley. The line was washed out and later supplemented by a subsidiary branch rising out of