



*Honoring Wyoming's 100-year-old farms and ranches*

**2017 WYOMING CENTENNIAL FARM AND RANCH YEARBOOK**



**ARTS. PARKS. HISTORY.**

Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources

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## Office of the Governor

Dear Centennial Farm and Ranch Families,

Congratulations on being honored in the 2017 Wyoming Centennial Farm & Ranch Yearbook. The yearbook records the history of Wyoming farms and ranches, selected this year, which have been family-owned and operated for 100 years or more. Thank you for keeping our ag industry strong and our ag heritage rich. Your commitment to Wyoming agriculture is significant. The 2017 Wyoming Centennial Farm & Ranch Yearbook recognizes your achievement.

As you well know, the State of Wyoming has deep roots in agriculture. One of the ranches recognized this year dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The ranching legacy in my family runs through four generations. Starting with my great grandparents in Teton County, then my grandparents, my mother, and my generation, we have been at it for over 100 years. We are proud of that, as we know you are proud of your family histories. Farmers and ranchers contribute so much – food and other valuable products, wildlife habitat, historic structures, and beautiful landscapes that benefit tourism, natural resource health, and quality of life.

I cannot imagine life in Wyoming without farming and ranching and don't have to. Agriculture will always be integral to our state. It will be part of my life, as it is part of yours. With long-time family operations, the industry remains vibrant and carries western lifestyle and traditions forward into the future.

I close with some comments about the ENDOW ("Economically Needed Diversity Options for Wyoming") initiative. A Rural Council is part of this initiative. The Rural Council will make sure rural interests have a strong voice in the formulation of the 20-year economic diversification strategy to be finished by August 1, 2018. The ENDOW planning effort is comprehensive and will include opportunities to grow the ag business in our state.

Thank you for your dedication to Wyoming agriculture. Carol and I send our best wishes.

Sincerely,



Matthew H. Mead  
Governor

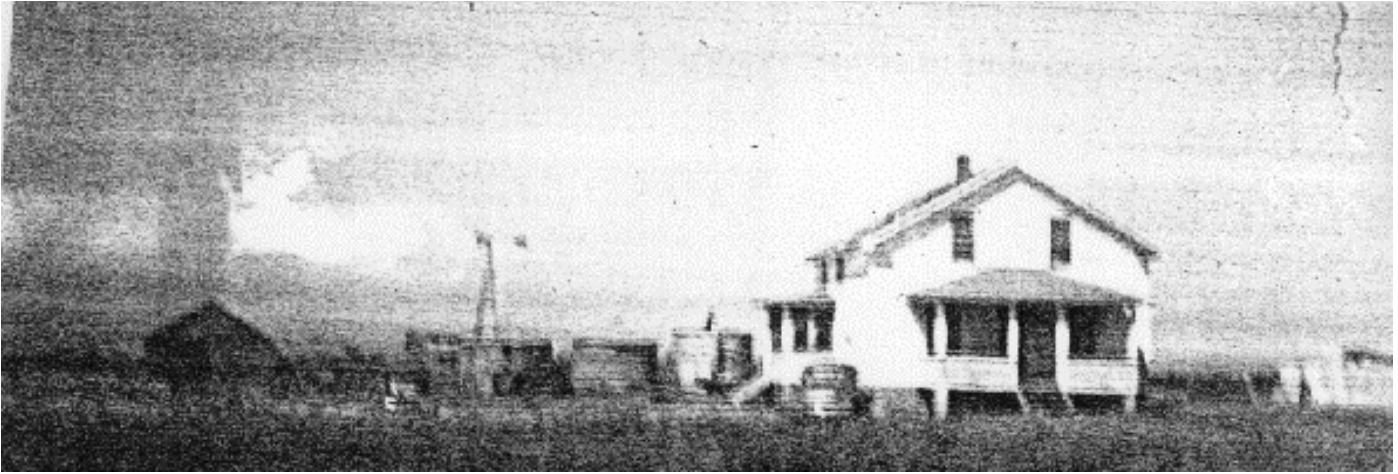


Sen. John Barrasso, Gov. Matthew H. Mead, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi.



# A J Bar Ranch, 1915

## The Johnson Family, Goshen County



House in the 1920s. Cement barn at far left.

*Written by Lenore (Pursley) Bremer and Susan (Pursley) Wilson, daughters of Kenneth and Margaret Johnson Pursley. Added to by Tracy Hladky Johnson, wife of David Johnson.*

I.A. (Doc) Johnson and Glenn Criss came to Wyoming from Nebraska in 1914 to stake claims on homestead acreages. The adjoining places were located six miles south and five miles west of Lingle in the Plainview community. Doc drilled a well on his place and Glen built a homestead shack on his, just across the line, thus beginning the necessary improvements.

In March of 1916, Doc moved his wife, Mary Elizabeth (Lizzie) Neis Johnson, and their three small children from Primrose, Greeley County, Nebraska to the homestead in Wyoming. They lived in the shack that Glenn Criss had built until their sod house was completed the following winter. They came to Lingle by train bringing only a few household items, a wagon, and a team of horses. A short time later, Doc and Lizzie's fathers each drove to Wyoming. Granddad Nels left his Model T and returned to Nebraska with Granddad Johnson. At the time of the move Gertrude (Ross) was 4 years old, Paul was 2 years old, and Margaret (Pursley) was only 3 weeks old. On November 27, 1918, Andrew was born and three days later, Lizzie died of influenza. Doc took

the four children back to eastern Nebraska where they were cared for by his parents and other relatives until he remarried. He returned to Wyoming to work his homestead.

Nels and Barbara Johnson (Doc's father and step-mother) moved to Wyoming sometime in 1919, bringing Doc's three oldest children. Andy had been left in the care of Lizzie's sister, Lou. Nels didn't like Wyoming and went back to Nebraska in the early 1920s. He would tell the little ones that if they went very far south of their house they would drop off of the edge of the earth!

In February of 1929 Doc married Nora Criss Cornelius at Spalding, Nebraska. Nora had been widowed and left with three small children, Lyle, Mildred (Pearcy), and Helen. They gathered their seven children and returned to Wyoming to make their home in the three room sod house. A wooden bunkhouse was moved in and set beside the house to be used for sleeping rooms. By 1924, bulging walls and the birth of another baby, Lillie Belle (Clowe) in 1922, made Doc decide to build a house. He hired Ab Hood to build the two-story house where David Johnson (Paul's son) and his family now live. Doc and Nora's family was complete with the birth of Betty (Rosenkrantz) in 1929.



Isaac (Doc) Johnson.

Some of the older children remember a dance being held in the sod house before it was torn down. A short time later, neighbor men came and using horses and wagons, helped move the roof from the sod house to be placed on the barn. The barn was constructed with cement walls and is still intact and being used today.

Gertrude said her dad was always afraid of fire and worried about the lanterns and oil lamps. Probably for this reason he was more motivated to modernize and the Johnsons were the first in the community to have electricity. Doc installed a 32 volt light plant in the basement. This was run by a wind charger and later backed up by a generator to produce electricity. This also offered them the luxury of having one of the first radios in the community. They were often asked by the neighbors what the news was from the outside world.

The first tractor that Doc got was a 1530 McCormick Deering in the late 1920s. He used this tractor for many years, at least into the early '40s. He acquired a combine in 1931 or 1932. Besides cattle, he raised wheat, barley, and rye. There was less demand for rye when prohibition ended and Doc commented on how many more people were willing to feed their chickens wheat rather than rye.



Betty Johnson Rozenkranz.

By 1937 the government was getting involved in farming and was encouraging conservation practices. They furnished trees and shrubs and planted them to be used as windbreaks. Doc had the windbreaks planted to the north and west sides of the buildings and north of the house along the road to the schoolhouse. He was very proud of the windbreaks and kept them cultivated with his team of horses. Doc was very fond of horses and kept them around. He was also very fond of the name Peg. One of the two horses in a team was always called Peg regardless of size, color, or gender!

Survival on the plains required a strong back, a stronger will, and a great amount of self-sufficiency. While Doc was busy raising grain and cattle and all that it takes to manage a farm, Nora kept the home fires burning. She endured many hardships including the death of 9 year old Helen. She was perhaps one of the strongest and most organized pioneer women. She managed her home and her family very efficiently. When one of the family members became ill or injured, she very capably nursed them back to health. She raised a large garden and there was always plenty of food on the table. Some of the children remember her telling them that they would have "beans and spuds" for supper and tomorrow they would have "spuds and beans".





Paul stacking hay 1944.



Paul and Evelyn 1943.

There was an ice house which was a hole dug approximately 20 feet square and 6 feet deep. It was lined with straw for insulation. During the winter, ice was collected from nearby ponds and put in the ice house. Water also had to be hauled to the house from the well until the late 1940s when a line was run to the house.

Nora was also a very proficient seamstress. Lillie Belle remembered one of her classmates being envious of her clothes. Lillie couldn't understand her friend's envy because the friend had store bought clothes! Nora always found time for the important things. Doc would tell the girls that they could use the granary for a playhouse if they swept it out first. Nora would gather up crates for furniture and give them old dishes to play with, then come calling to be served water and mud pies.

The social life centered around the school and church. Both were housed in a building located a mile north

of the Johnson home on the corner of the school section which was leased by Doc. The school was called Plainview School, but was part of the Lingle School District. When the Veteran School District was formed in the '20s they didn't want to maintain a country school. Lingle, however, was willing to continue supporting the country school. Doc didn't want the kids riding a school bus so he and Jack Lillie, a neighbor to the south, petitioned the districts and the lines were changed so that they could continue the country school. The country school closed in 1928 and Lillie and Betty had to go into town for all of their education. The older children all went through elementary in the country and to Lingle for high school.

The little country church was serviced by Rev. Roy Brewer from the Seburn community (several miles west of Plainview). His pay consisted of a free-will offering and Sunday dinner at the home of one of the members. The church remained active until the early



Front row left to right: Lyle Cornelius, Betty Johnson Rosencrantz, Nora Johnson, Doc Johnson, Andy Johnson. Back row left to right: Mildred Johnson Percy, Lillie Belle Johnson Clowe, Paul Johnson, Margaret Johnson Pursley, Gertrude Johnson Ross

'40s when the school district sold the building. Nick Johnson bought it and moved it to his place to be used for a garage.

The school/church also served as a voting precinct for the community. Both Doc and Nora served on the election board. Doc as a Republican and Nora as a Democrat. After the building was moved, the elections were held in the Johnson home well into the 1950s.

Another service that the Johnsons' provided was the use of their home as a branch library. Books would be brought to the Johnson home from the Goshen County Library and checked out to the neighbors. This was a much appreciated service as books were not very accessible at that time.

Doc and Lizzie's son Paul married Evlyn Brewer (the preacher's daughter) and moved to Washington to work in the Navy shipyards. After World War II he returned to Wyoming and bought the farm/ranch from his father and lived there until his death in 1970. Paul and Evlyn's son David was still in high school when his father died so he stayed on to help his mother with the ranch. In 1987 David married Tracy Hladky. They have two daughters, Kodi Johnson and Kelli Johnson. David and Tracy raised the girls on the



Paul, Evlyn, David, and Beth.

ranch. They each have their own careers, but come home to help with the work from time to time. David and Tracy have been married for thirty years and have been able to keep things maintained and as money allowed have improved the ranch. As trees are few and far between, David has a passion for trees like his grandfather Doc. He is on the Lingle-Ft. Laramie Conservation District Board and has planted two shelter belts over the past ten years. Some of the trees Doc had planted are still here today and remnants of some are still along the road toward the old school/church. The cement barn is still in use and the chicken house and brooder house are still standing. David and Tracy have developed a nice herd of cattle and put up hay on the place. Both the men and women through the generations have worked side by side to earn a living and keep the ranch in the family. There have been times when one or the other has worked off the ranch to supplement the income, a reality of today's world it seems. It hasn't been easy for any generation, but we all have cared for, improved, and added to the ranch in our own ways.

The ranch was incorporated in 1972. It became the A J Bar Ranch, Inc. Doc recorded the Lazy A J Bar brand in 1917 and is still used on the cattle today.





Tracy and Suzie.



2016.



Tracy haying. March 2009.



David feeding cows, 1992. Kelli (2 years) and Kodi (4 years).



Kodi and Kelli working with their 4-H steers. All show cattle over the years were born and raised on the ranch.



David feeding.



David and Tracy Johnson with daughters Kodi and Kelli in 2017.



Apple tree in 2017, planted in the 1920s.





House in 2017. Cement barn at far left.



Sen. John Barrasso, Johnson Family, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Anderson Livestock Inc., 1910

## The Reuben V. Anderson Family, Laramie County



Anderson Homestead 1960 – Change came to the homestead with the addition of many newer buildings and, of course, trees which had been nurtured for over 50 years.

Wyoming, as a territory and as a state, was settled by many different folks who moved here for many different reasons. The Reuben Anderson family was no different. Reuben's father Victor, a carpenter by trade, was a Swedish immigrant who came to the United States in 1886 along with his wife Hannah looking to escape the lack of opportunities in Sweden at that time. They lived and worked in Chicago, IL; Pomona, MO; and then in Des Moines, IA over the next 25 years. During this time six children were born into the immigrant family: Esther, Lawrence, Elam, Ruth, Reuben, and Delight.

But the damp climate of the Midwest affected Victor's health so the family began looking for a change to a dryer climate, which was recommended by his doctors. He had heard of a promising farming area in southeastern Wyoming already being settled by Swedish immigrant families. So, in 1910, he moved his family to a homestead eleven miles north of the Union Pacific rail stop at Pine Bluffs. He purchased the 300 acre homestead from a student for \$50 and after three years they gained title to the land.

Reuben was twelve years old when they moved to Wyoming. Victor, Reuben, and Lawrence, first lived in a makeshift barn until they could build a house for the women who were still in Des Moines. The materials for the house arrived by rail from a

lumber mill in Oregon and a two story farmhouse was constructed. This farmhouse is still used today and provides shelter and respite for Dwayne and Chaurisse Anderson. Their grown children are the fifth generation of Andersons to live in the century-old house and generation sixers are always welcome to visit and enjoy the homestead and farm.

Reuben, the fifth of six children of Victor and Hannah, was the only Anderson sibling to stay on the farm and in the Albin/Pine Bluffs area. In 1923, Reuben married Ruth Lundberg who was also a full-blooded Swede and began raising the third generation of Andersons at the homestead. He was always highly involved in church, community, and state affairs and took a significant leadership role in establishing a strong Farm Bureau in Wyoming during the 1940s. He also served in the Wyoming Legislature in both the House and the Senate. Since then, four additional Anderson family members have served in the Wyoming House of Representatives.

Two of his sons, Donald and Rodney, followed in Reuben's footsteps and returned to the farm after a two-year college stay for Donald, and college and enlistment in the US Air Force for Rodney. They continued to expand the farm's acres and in the 1970s began to install center pivot irrigation. In addition to farming, the newly incorporated Anderson Livestock





As an adventurous twenty year old, Reuben took his brother Lawrence on a tour of the state of Wyoming in his newly refurbished auto. He ordered the car body from a mail order house and installed it himself.



Anderson House 1930 - The homestead house looked as barren as did the countryside during the early 1930s as drought affected most of the West.



Anderson Farm 1913 - Typical of homestead farms, the Andersons started with what they had and used anything available to subsistence farm in 1913.

included a cow/calf herd as well as a beef feedlot and irrigated acres at the Pine Bluffs facility where Rodney took up residence.

In the late 1970s, fourth generation Dean (Donald's oldest son) returned to the farm after earning a degree in agriculture at the University of Wyoming. Eventually, Dean took over the day to day operation and management of Anderson Livestock. Donald and Rodney, never afraid of work, had started a commercial fertilizer/chemical dealership in the 1960s called DRW, Inc. This business served the farmers and ranchers in the tristate region for over thirty years providing fertilizer, chemicals, and application services.

Then in 1995, with both Rodney and Donald eyeing retirement, Dwayne (Donald's third son) returned to the farm and the homestead house after teaching high school agriculture/FFA in Wyoming for fifteen years. At the Anderson homestead, he and his wife Chaurisse, have raised their children to work hard, love God, and pursue integrity—values which have been passed down to each generation of Andersons. And now, in 2017, even though both Dean and Dwayne work off the farm, Anderson Livestock still operates on the original homestead in addition to purchased and leased ground. Hay, wheat, and dry beans are now grown on land that once also produced corn, sunflowers, chicory, sugar beets, peas, barley, oats, and various forage crops. But the most significant 'crop' produced on the Anderson Homestead has always been: Americans. At the last count in 2013 there were 286 descendants of Victor and Hannah who live across the country, each contributing to their communities and raising families in the greatest nation on earth. But it began with two Swedish immigrants who escaped the poverty of the Old Country to come to the opportunity offered in the United States. Finally settling in Wyoming over 100 years ago, they were the type of folks who not only survived but thrived to make Wyoming what it is today.



Pictured are the 3rd generation of Andersons, (L to R) Don, Melvin, Ila, and Rodney circa 1932.



Victor and Hannah Anderson, Swedish immigrants to the U.S. and their children, Esther, Lawrence, Elam, Ruth, Reuben, and Delight circa 1906.



Dwayne and Dean – Operating the family business, Dean is both the CEO and CFO of Anderson Livestock with Dwayne working alongside him in this typical scene during the growing season.





Anderson Homestead 2008 - We continue to upgrade facilities and, of course, plant more trees, not just for wind protection, but also for aesthetics.



Dean and Dwayne Anderson (standing L to R) and Donald and Rodney Anderson (seated L to R) appreciate recognition by the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office as operators of a Wyoming Centennial Farm and Ranch.



Anderson Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Clear Creek Cattle Co., 1917

## The Hendry Family, Natrona, Washakie, & Fremont Counties



Clear Creek Cattle Co. headquarters on Badwater Creek.

Clear Creek Cattle Co. was incorporated in 1950 but its roots go back much farther. In 1906 William “Scotty” Hendry emigrated from Scotland. As the third son he knew there was no future for him in his native country. He used to say “John got the farm, Alexander got to go to medical school, and there was nothing left for me”. He was apprenticed to an ironmonger (hardware) and worked for him long enough to earn passage money to America. After reading stories about the American West, he knew he wanted to become a cowboy. After he landed in New York, he worked at various jobs until he had enough money to come to Wyoming. He traveled by train to the end of the line (Moneta, WY) and took the stagecoach on in to Lander. Somewhere between Arapaho and Lander, the team ran away. The one other passenger, a fat lady, and the driver bailed out. Scotty, being a cautious soul, stayed aboard. The team ran straight to the livery barn in Lander. After securing a hotel room, he went for a haircut, and ran into a man named Bill Madden, who convinced him he didn’t want to be a cowboy, but a sheepman. Mr. Madden hired him on the spot, and took him to camp and showed him the boundaries where the sheep were to be kept, and left him. He said he nearly ran his legs off afraid the sheep would get away. He didn’t know all he had to do was keep track of the black ones to know they were all there. While working for Madden, part of his wages was paid in lambs and

that is how he started his own sheep herd. When he had enough sheep of his own, he moved to the Lost Cabin area. He leased land up until 1917 when he purchased the “Home Place” on Clear Creek.

In 1912, Anna Dana traveled from her home town of Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania west to become a school teacher. She taught in Shoshoni and Lost Cabin, where she met Scotty. They were married in the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, Colorado on March 9, 1917. They went on a honeymoon trip to San Francisco and the Grand Canyon, where they rode by mule to the bottom and back. Upon their return, they spent their first summer in a sheep wagon. When it became obvious there was to be an addition to the family, he bought the “Home Place” on Clear Creek. At that time, it was a two-room cabin made of logs and held together with chinking and square wood pegs instead of nails, so it was quite old. The roof was planked and covered with dirt. It was a real challenge to keep house in those days!! As the family increased, so did the house, ending up with three bedrooms, large living and dining room, kitchen, and service porch. Five children were raised there - Helen, Jean, William, James, and Margaret.

Helen started school when she was five, traveling by horseback 1 and 1/2 miles west to the neighboring ranch, where the school was located in a former





William "Scotty" and Anna Hendry wedding picture - March 9, 1917.

bunkhouse. By the next year, the Badwater School and barn was built 1 mile west of the Home Place. All five children started school there, but Jean and Helen were the only ones to go all through elementary school. When Jean and Helen were ready for high school, it was decided Anna would rent a house in Casper and move to town. Scotty stayed at the ranch and batched or sometimes had a couple stay, she to cook and keep house and he as the hired hand. All five children graduated from Natrona County High School in Casper.

Scotty made most of his trips to sheep camp by lumber wagon drawn by a four-horse team to take supplies. He wintered the sheep between Lysite and Moneta. When lambing time came, the sheep were split into small bunches and a herder hired for each bunch. All of the riding horses were pressed into service, since each herder had to have a horse. At this time, one of the lead team of horses, Bill, became a saddle horse. This was not to his liking, and the ritual was always the same. Scotty saddled up and came up to the fence. Anna and the kids were assembled on

the other side. Scotty mounted and Old Bill started to buck. He bucked, with Scotty yelling "whoa" until he bucked his hat off, then he quit. He got off, retrieved his hat, and they eyeballed each other. Lambing season had officially begun!! If the camp cook quit, or was hung over after a trip to town for supplies, Jean and Helen were pressed into service. This was no easy job--those men expected three full meals a day. As soon as lambing was complete, the sheep were sheared and trailed to the mountains for the summer. As the boys got old enough, they were given the summer job of herding the sheep on the mountain. This necessitated living in a sheep wagon, doing their own cooking and housekeeping--a job they both detested. Neither of the boys cared to hunt, fish, or camp after their summers on the mountain.

All five children attended college. Jim attended Drake and the University of Wyoming. He was at the university when Pearl Harbor was bombed and he promptly enlisted in the Army Air Corp. He flew missions over the Philippines and Guam. After the war, Jim returned home to begin ranching with his father. He had saved some money from his pay and wanted to get into business. Law practice looked interesting to him, but that meant another year and half of college. His parents were semi-retired at the ranch. His father had sold nearly all his sheep, dropped most of his grazing leases, and sold some of the other lands, but, if Jim wanted to become a partner, they would plow back into the livestock business with him. Cattle were purchased to run with the sheep. More land was added to the operation as well. In 1950, Jim married Mary Helen Cheatham in Casper, WY. They moved to the MO ranch that was purchased by Scotty for his daughter Jean and her husband Jim Luckett. After they left the ranch, Scotty had to purchase it back from them. So in essence he bought this ranch twice!! The MO ranch is located two miles east of the Home Place and today serves as the headquarters for Clear Creek Cattle Co.

Mary Helen was born in Texas, but raised in Craig, Colorado. She moved to Casper after high school when her dad was transferred to work at the Texaco Refinery. Mary Helen was not raised on a ranch. She was a journalist working for the Casper Star Tribune when she met Jim. She continued to write stories for the paper about her experiences on the ranch.



James D. Hendry.



Mary Helen Hendry.

She was called “Badwater Mary” because the title “Crazy Mary” was already taken. She had many interests including painting, pottery, photography, and writing. She wrote three books. One was on rock art and she visited and documented many of the rock art sites in the state. “Tales of Old Lost Cabin” were stories told to her by the locals in the area. Her third book, “Petticoats and Pistols” was about a madam, Lou Polk, and her adventures in Casper. She also was a strong supporter of education and served on the Arminto School Board and the Natrona County School Board for a number of years.

Their only child, Robert, was born in 1957 in Riverton, Wyoming. When Rob was five, Mary got her wish for a new house. This house is still in use on the ranch today. Rob attended schools in Lysite, Shoshoni, Arminto, Laramie, and finished up high school in Casper. He attended Casper College for one year, but knew the ranch was where he wanted to be. Growing up, Jim instilled in him the love of the ranch, agriculture, and the outdoors. In 1981, Rob married the neighbor, Leslie Coffman.

Leslie grew up on a sheep ranch north of Powder River, WY. Even though they had land that bordered each other, they did not meet until high school. Rob and Leslie graduated from Natrona County High School in 1976 and Leslie attended the University of Wyoming graduating with a degree in Mathematics. She graduated in May and they got married in June and moved to the ranch. Having grown up on a ranch, she fell easily into the ranching lifestyle helping every chance she got. Working with cattle was a lot different than sheep, but she learned (sometimes the hard way while running from an angry mama). When Jim found out she liked numbers and bookwork, he promptly turned over the books to her. She continues to keep the books today. She and Rob have two boys, J.W., born in 1984 and Jarrod, born in 1989. J.W. is married and has one child, Avery. He lives and works in Riverton. Jarrod is unmarried and works on the ranch with his parents.

Jim embraced the newest technology and innovations and was continually learning and he instilled that





Warming up after trailing cattle on a rainy/foggy day.

knowledge into Rob. Together they expanded the ranch to the size it is today. When Jim began ranching with his father, he wanted to incorporate cattle into the operation along with the sheep. They started with Hereford cows and that evolved into Black Angus cattle. Numerous bulls were tried (Hereford, Saler, Charlois, Limousin, Murray Gray) and they finally settled on Charlois. Today the ranch breeds Black Angus cattle to Charlois bulls for a terminal cross, selling both steers and heifers. They ran sheep until 1978 when 50 % of the lamb crop was eaten by coyotes.

The early 1980s were particularly hard for the cattle business. Both land and cattle took a severe devaluation. Major changes needed to be implemented to survive. The ranch expansion days of the 50s & 60s were over. The ranch changed from a cow/calf, yearling operation to just cow/calf selling all the calves every year and buying bred heifers and continues that practice today.

Clear Creek Cattle Co strives to keep up with the latest tools and innovations. The Hendrys completed Wyoming's Beef Quality Assurance program and adhere to the management practices they learned. Before electronic identification eartags for cattle became readily available, the Hendrys placed tags carrying their ranch name in their calves' ears. Today, calves leaving their ranch are fitted with an electronic button in place of the tag. Cattle are marketed on the Superior Livestock video auction and each year their calves are close to the top of the market. Beginning

in 2009, the Hendry family certified their calves as "non-hormone treated cattle." This newest addition to the information that accompanies the calves to market makes them eligible for sale anywhere in the world, including the European Union and Japan, as hormone free beef.

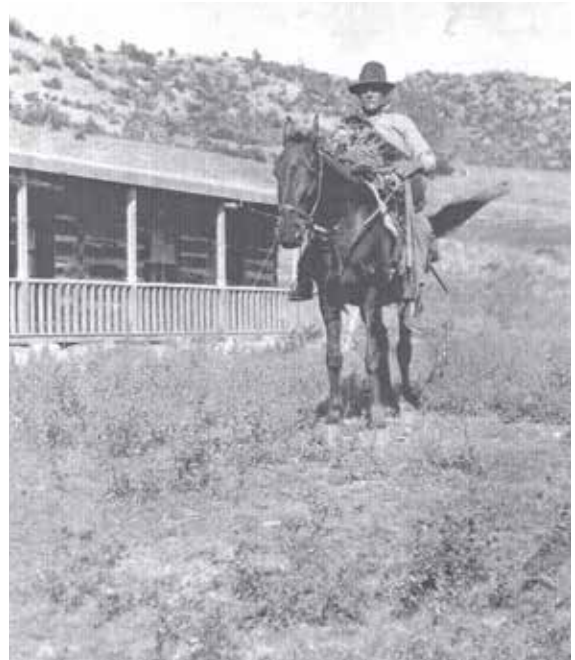
Clear Creek Cattle Co has partnered with the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Land Management to launch a monitoring program to ensure the health of their rangeland. They developed a monitoring program and document the health of both their private and public rangeland. The goal is to ensure that the ranch is managing their rangelands to the best of their ability and to develop the data necessary to protect them in the event of a lawsuit from activist groups that oppose ranching.

In 2001, Rob started an oilfield construction company doing work for Encana Oil and Gas on and near some of the ranch property. It was started to reclaim the locations and plant them back to grass quicker. As more equipment was acquired, the duties expanded to building roads and locations and other facilities that were needed for the oil company as well as selling gravel and maintaining the roads. The construction company still operates and is the dirt contractor for the new company, Aethon Energy in the Moneta Divide area.

Rob grew up wanting to become a pilot. He was able to fulfill this dream by getting his private pilot's

license after high school. His father purchased a Cessna 182 for use on the ranch at that time. It has become a valuable tool looking for lost cattle. In 2014, a Bell Jet Ranger helicopter was added to the fleet as well as a Supercub. With these eyes in the sky, management of the livestock has increased.

Today, Jarrod Hendry is working into the management of the ranch. He has been manager of the cattle operation for a few years and now is taking over the hay operation as well. Clear Creek Cattle Co runs on approximately 180,000 acres of deeded, state, BLM, and leased land. It's nearly 60 miles from the ranch headquarters to the southernmost property in the Rattlesnake Mountains. From the dream of a Scottish Highlander to the ranch today, Clear Creek Cattle Co has survived for 100 years and looks forward to the fourth and fifth generations to continue the legacy.



Burt Dana, Anna's brother, at the cabin in Snyder Pass - 1917-18.



William "Scotty" Hendry - lambing time.



Badwater School and horse barn at the Twidale Ranch turn off on Badwater Creek.



The five Hendry children, left to right: Margaret, Jim, Bill, Jean & Helen. Saddled up and headed two miles down the road to school. Picture taken in the late 20s.



Christmas Day 1946. Left to right: Slim Wade, Bill Wade (1 year old), Jim Hendry, Anna Hendry, Scotty Hendry, Bill Hendry, Helen Wade and Margaret Hendry.





Helen, Jim, Jean, Margaret & Bill Hendry visiting Grandma Dana's in Tunkhannock, Pennsylvania in 1928.



Left to right: Jim Hendry, Lucille & Bill Hendry, Margaret Hendry & Scotty Hendry - 1942 - Taking Jim to Bozeman, MT for army school.



1940s - Barn and sheep pens at the Clear Creek Ranch Home Place. Barn has the diamond dot sheep brand on it.



1915 - Anna Dana (before she married) and her pupils at the Lost Cabin School.



Anna Hendry - Her first home in the Badwater area - October 16, 1917, her birthday.



The Big Teepee - Owned and built by JB Okie, picture take May 31, 1915.



Scotty Hendry and hired man at the Home Place on Clear Creek.



Clear Creek ranch house circa 1930s.



Clear Creek ranch house after a big snow storm.



Jarrold Hendry moving cows on the Big Horn Mountains, 2016.



Picture taken at the Lybyer Ranch with the Badwater and Clear Creek Basin in the background.





Modern Day Horse. Rob Hendry is the pilot.



Rob & Leslie Hendry, 2016.



Rob Hendry - trailing some cows home for the winter. Circa 2000.



Left to right: Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Rob Hendry, Jarrod Hendry, Leslie Hendry, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matt Mead

# Davidson Rockypoint Farm, 1905

## The Stanley E. & Ruth E. Davidson Family, Crook & Campbell Counties



Charlie Jones barn built in 1908, stood until 1997.

In the summer of 1905, Charles “Charlie” E. Jones (1880-1972) and his brother-in-law, Earl S. Davidson (1880-1962), rode a train from Orchard, Nebraska to Moorcroft, Wyoming. From there, the pair walked fifty miles to Rockpoint, Wyoming to stake their homesteading claims. Charles and Earl established adjoining 164 acre homesteads at Rockypoint, on the border of Campbell and Crook counties in the northeastern corner of the state, seven miles south of Montana.

Once the two men built homes and began establishing their farms, Earl’s wife and Charlie’s sister, Eleanor (1883-1969), moved to Wyoming with their two-year-old son. Earl and Eleanor had nine more children between 1906 and 1920, seven of which lived to adulthood. Charlie never married or had any offspring.

Earl and Eleanor’s youngest son, Stanley, was born at the Davidson homestead in 1919, and from a young age worked on both his parents and Uncle Charlie’s farms. He recalls working in the hay fields, and trailing a team of horses behind a harrow as early as five years old.

Charlie moved back to Nebraska in 1924 to care for his and Eleanor’s ailing mother, upon which time Earl took over operations of Charlie’s property. Although

Charlie returned to Wyoming in 1937, Earl continued overseeing his property. Stanley continued to assist his father with the labor, or they would occasionally lease the land to neighboring farmers.

Stanley Davidson joined the U.S. Army October 18, 1942, and served state-side and overseas during World War II. Upon his honorable discharge from the military in February, 1946, he moved back to Rockypoint and farmed his Uncle Charlie’s land. That same year Stanley married Ruth E. Lee, and in 1947 the couple purchased Charlie’s farm. After working on their new acquisition for another year, Stanley and Ruth moved to Belle Fourche, SD. Charlie continued to reside on his homestead and Earl oversaw the operations of the place until 1954 when the Davidsons moved back to Rockypoint for a brief period.

No one has lived at the Davidson’s Rockypoint farm since the early 1970s, but Stanley’s family still owns and continues to lease the property to nearby ranchers for farmland.





Larry and Keith Davidson with the 4H steers at Rockpoint 1955.



Stanley E. Davidson, circa 1940.



Charlie Jones with sisters Eleanor Davidson and Gertrude West, circa early 1960s.



Stanley Davidson with his horse Annie, circa 1940.



Davidson Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Force Family Ranch, 1916

The Steve & Billee Jo Young, Paxton & Kristin Mackey Families, Campbell County



Ranch.

When Frank Force stepped onto the train leaving Gillette, headed to fight in the Great War in July 1918, his worries didn't lie with what lay ahead of him. Instead, how would his wife of one year, Orda, manage on the homestead by herself with a 14-day-old baby?

It was a question tens of thousands of men were asking themselves as they left their fledgling homesteads on ships bound for France that summer.

## *Rancher's daughter*

Frank Marshall Force was born to descendants of a French family who spelled their name "LaForce." The 19-year-old arrived in Gillette from Chicago in 1914, just two weeks before the Austrian assassination that triggered World War I. "He was kicked off the train in Gillette because he hadn't bought the four-dollar ticket," said his granddaughter, Faye Mackey. "He'd left Chicago with no money, and Gillette was as far as he got."

Force met a rancher named Bert Williams, who hired him to herd sheep west of Gillette. That fall, Force filed on a section just three miles north of Williams' homestead – and soon fell for one of the man's four daughters. Returning to Chicago to earn some money until 1916, Force then built a dugout into a cut-bank

on his land. By summer 1917, he and Orda Williams were married.

## *Perilous beginnings*

For two years, Force had done nothing but chop wood, haul coal, dig post holes through rock-hard red shale, stretch wire, vaccinate cattle, wean colts, tend the fields and garden, and try in vain to dig a water well that finally caved in, dry, at 65 feet. All the while, Orda had churned butter, plowed fields, drove livestock, and taught school, often in sub-zero temperatures.

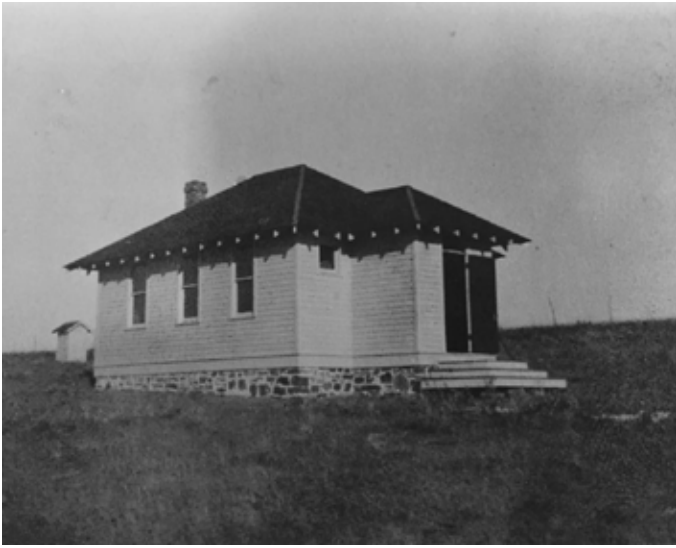
The primitive dugout in which he'd left Orda and her baby was a half-mile north of what's now Interstate 90, 13 miles west of Gillette on the east fork of Wildhorse Creek.

He wrote her almost every day until late September, when the letters abruptly stopped coming. He lay seriously ill in a makeshift hospital tent in France unable to even tell anyone back home of his plight. Several months later he was able to get a letter to his wife back in the states.

## *Flying Heart on Force Road*

Frank raised mostly sheep for years but switched to





Old house in 1950s.

cattle when neighbors with dogs encroached. He and Orda had eight children total, including their third son, Robert Hamilton (“Bob”) Force, in 1924.

“To bring in more cash, they milked cows and churned butter to sell in town; shipped cream and raised chickens and turkeys,” said Mackey. “Frank said he raised his help and didn’t need to hire a man very often.”

A heart condition caused Frank to retire in 1945. He went to work for Stockman’s Bank and then was elected an officer of the local National Farm Loan Association, of which he’d been president already for 25 years.

“Two of Frank’s sons, Frank and Jim, were fighting in World War II, so Bob stayed home and worked the ranch because of his father’s failing health,” said Mackey.

Later, Bob and his wife, Nellie, bought most of the land between Frank’s and Orda’s original homesteads, building the ranch to more than 5,000 acres (some was later sold). They won an award from Goodyear Tire for their conservation practices in 1952. Five years later, when a heart condition took Frank’s life at just 63, they bought the ranch from Orda.

Like his mother, who taught school, Bob took outside jobs to make the ranch work, including order-buying

cattle and even going to auctioneering school in middle age. He ran his businesses as simply, “Bob Force, Livestock,” and raised commercial-grade Herefords using brands such as the Flying Heart and the FM.

He and Nellie had three children – Fayette (“Faye”), Nicolette (“Nicki”) and Russell. Like their father had before them, they each rode horses to school and turned them loose in the schoolyard to catch again for the ride home.

“My mother worked outside alongside my dad, so Nicki and I did a lot of the cooking from the time we were old enough to hold a knife to peel potatoes,” said Mackey. “Frank used to tell us about the well water back in his day – he could light it and it would burn. Little did he know how profitable that methane gas would be.”

### *Sister power*

As Nellie’s health failed and Bob looked to retire, Nicki and Faye and their respective spouses leased the ranch in equal halves, and by the 1980s had bought out their brother Russell.

On the west half of the ranch lives Faye Mackey, her son Paxton Mackey, and his wife Kristin, and their two boys Denton Niles, and Ian Dean, who are the fifth generation to saddle up on the ranch. Paxton



Original house.

and family now own the ranch and run their own livestock.

Steve Young, Nicki's son, lives on the east half and runs cattle with his three sons.

"I always wanted to raise my kids the way I was raised," said Paxton, who lives on the site of his great-grandfather's original homestead. "You can still see his dugout in the bank of the reservoir by my house."

Recently, they tore down the barn that Frank and Bob had built in 1952 out of lumber from a much older barn – that of the McKean Ranch now under Keyhole Reservoir. The lumber is being used by Paxton's friend, Justin Holcomb, to build a horse barn.

Paxton works for a local energy company in Gillette and runs the ranch putting up hay on weekends and vacation days. Kristin teaches school. Paxton uses the K Reverse K brand that he bought from his uncle Jim Force, supposedly registered since the ranch was part of the Dakota Territory. Steve Young brands his cattle with his great-grandfather's Flying Heart iron, while Faye Mackey still owns her grandfather's FM brand.

There have been a lot of improvements on the place as any ranch that is 100 years old needs, but the ranch will be handed down to the next generation hopefully intact and with the same love for the land that it was homesteaded with.

"I think of the hard times that I have went through," says Faye, "but it is nothing like what my grandmother went through not knowing if her husband was dead or alive during those long months of no letters from him while he was in France fighting in the War. I guess that is where the grit and determination come from. I am happy to watch my son take over the reins and teach his sons the legacy that only a homestead can pass on."

"There is no better environment to raise children than on the ranch where their playground is the whole ranch. They will grow up getting to go outside and work and play as I was raised and learn early responsibility and know how to do things. I started

my own herd of Black Angus cows and have managed to lease some more land being able to add to my cow numbers," Paxton says. "Every year brings new challenges but there is no better way of life."



Barn in 1950s.



Frank and Orda.





Frank and Orda Force.



Mackey family left to right: Paxton, Kristin, and the two boys Ian and Denton.



Paxton and Denton.



Bailey, Steve, Tyler Young.



Force Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# The G-G Ranch, 1916

## The Nuckolls Family, Crook County



The barn, house, and white picket fence built in the 1920s.

In 1906, at the age of 18, William Swift Nuckolls left his family's plantation in Galax, Virginia and headed west alone. Will was the oldest son of four boys and seven girls, born to Steven and Leona Nuckolls on May 21, 1888. He traveled to a horse ranch headquartered in Tilford, South Dakota, which was owned by his father's best man and fellow Virginian, Jack Hale.

Jack took Will by team and buggy to his JH Ranch near Hulett, Wyoming. Will worked there several years breaking horses, riding on livestock, and watching for opportunities to build his own operation. There were no fences in the area at that time; the livestock ranged from the Belle Fourche River in Crook County, Wyoming, to the Little Powder River in eastern Montana. Will was the representative to brand colts for the JH Ranch on the spring and fall roundups. The spring roundup would last thirty days and he particularly remembered one year when he did not once have dry socks or a dry bed roll because it rained every day of the roundup. While riding for Jack Hale, Will found his dream acreage in the Little Missouri Butte area. In 1911 he took a homestead adjacent to his employer's property near Whitetail Creek with the hopes of someday selling it to the JH and financing a purchase near the Buttes.

One morning just before the spring roundup, a

Montana horse rancher named George Gerig went to rope a saddle horse out of his cavy and another horse kicked him in the head, killing him instantly. With no one to represent the Gerig brand that year at roundup, their eighty-plus colts were turned back with their mothers unmarked. Will thought George's widow might be willing to sell their brand, so he kept track of how many colts had been gathered. That fall, Will did a deal with Mrs. Mary Gerig, which entitled him to purchase the G-G brand and all its livestock. He also took over the contract that George Gerig had with the French army to supply four-year-old rough-broke horses. Unfortunately, there were only seven unbranded colts with their mothers come fall roundup, not the eighty some colts he had expected, so in 1914, Will sold his homestead to the JH Ranch to make the down payment. This "G bar G" brand was registered in the territory of Wyoming in 1886 and became the name of Will Nuckolls' ranch to the present day. After working several years to pay off the purchase, Mrs. Gerig met Will at the Hulett Bank's notary in May of 1921 to officially transfer the G-G brand to its new owner.

Meanwhile, John Wesley Lawrence, his wife Emma, and their six children moved from Elk Creek, Nebraska, in 1904 to settle in the Hulett area. Will was courting their daughter, Myra, when the opportunity arose to buy his dream property, the

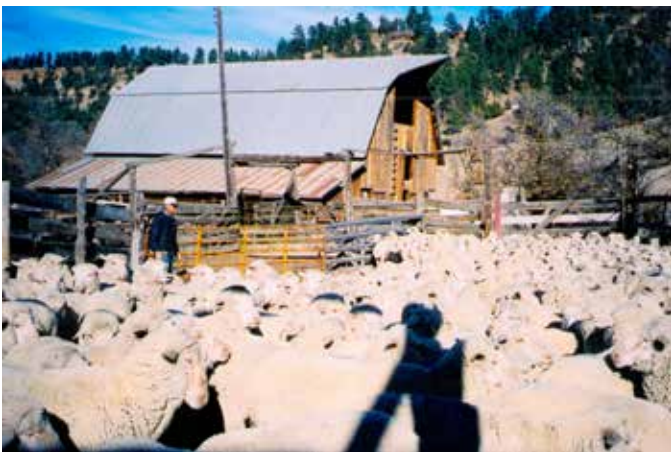




The first generation: Myra (Lawrence) and William Swift Nuckolls.



The family of William and Myra. Jw is youngest (second from the right in the front row).



Jw culling a band of ewes with the barn in the background.

800-acre Hugh Gainer homestead in Barlow Canyon, which was then owned by Charlie Hardy. There was government property adjacent to this, but Will had already taken a homestead, so Myra filed a 280-acre homestead in Barlow Canyon just two weeks before the couple married, and Will traded Charlie 100 head of horses for his land.

Will and Myra were married on June 21, 1917 in Belle Fourche, SD. To begin proving up on Myra's land, Will moved the substantial Hugh Gainer homestead cabin to the new property. This cabin was built from the ponderosa pines that were immense and abundant in the valley - it had eight-foot ceilings with walls that were fourteen inches thick but only four logs high! Moving a 24-foot square log house was no small feat; they jacked it up, put logs under it, and skidded it across a steep draw to its new location a quarter-mile away. To this, Will added a kitchen and a porch. He dug a chicken house into the rock bank behind the cabin and built a barn and corrals 75 yards below the house. Will broke horses, farmed to raise winter feed for the cattle, and fenced fields for crops. Will and Myra started a family with four daughters Wilma, Emma, Lois, and Eve, followed by three sons, Steve, Bill, and Jw.

Unfortunately, all the water for this house had to be hauled, so after about a decade, Will decided to build a home on the original Gainer homestead. Harrison Howard was hired to mill enough lumber from the ranch to build a new barn, house, and corrals. The barn was constructed first, while the best lumber was saved for the house and allowed to dry. Many of the ponderosas measured 3½ - 4½ feet in diameter at the stump and were over eighty feet in height. The last logs to be milled were the very largest trees, one of which Will Rogers had practiced rock climbing on before his infamous Devils Tower ascent. Unbeknownst to the miller, Rogers had driven 7/8" staples into the tree to tie his climbing ropes to, and over time the tree grew over the staples. This happened to be the first of the massive trees to be cut and when the saw blade hit those staples it sheared off all the saw teeth, ending Harrison's sawmill business.

Will built a traditional lofted barn in 1927 with the help of neighbors Bill Blakeman and Charley Baker. It stands 30 feet high, on a concrete foundation 54'



Sheep grazing near the Little Missouri Buttes which first drew William to this area.

by 34', and had a 16' lean-to along the entire west side. Inside, the east lane had stanchions for 12 milk cows, the west side could stable two saddle horses and three teams, the dividing aisle centralized the feeding chore, and full-length manure troughs along the edges simplified the mucking. A granary and two box stalls helped insulate the north end, and tack was stored along the south and west walls. The loft stored 30 tons of loose hay, which could be pitched down a chute to the hallway until the loft floor was sealed to make a basketball court. The steep barn roof was originally covered with 16" long pine shingles milled on the ranch, but in 1960, Jw replaced them with steel roofing. Early on, of course, lanterns were needed for morning feeding, milking the cows, and harnessing the horses in the dark of winter, which was good incentive to get evening chores done before dark. The barn still stands in excellent condition and is used today; as a landmark of the G-G Ranch it has been the backdrop for countless pictures and confirms for family members that we are home.

In 1929, the new house was built - complete with a white picket fence. Will had someone witch for water and found where two veins crossed. There, a well four feet in diameter was hand-dug and plastered to a depth of twenty-eight feet where excellent water was found that still supplies two families and a large garden. The house was designed by Will's sister, Bertha Nuckolls, and it included a small basement and a bit of their Virginia heritage in the screened-in porch where many a summer meal was eaten. In those days the sheet rock was a gray color and in the 1930s, paint was an unnecessary expense. The daughters called it "depression gray" and later bought wallpaper

to cover the walls and ceilings in every room of the house, which absolutely delighted their mother.

One of the unfortunate things about having lots of ponderosa timber is that eating the needles interferes with pregnant cows in their third trimester, temporarily cutting off oxygen to the fetus and causing them to lose the calf; local veterinarians labeled it "Black Hills Abortion". Consequently, a 65-70% calf crop was the norm, so Will started raising hogs and turkeys instead. The pigs were fattened on acorns from the huge bur oak trees growing in the valley, and Will raised enough corn to finish them for market. It took about two weeks to turn the oily fat from the acorns to white firm fat for selling. Turkeys were dressed out and sold in Belle Fourche, South Dakota prior to Thanksgiving. When the 1930s hit and severe drought conditions prevailed for several years all across the country, the government provided ranchers with 22-caliber bullets and 10 cents per head compensation to destroy all the young animals.

Will's brother Ben and wife Goldie moved to Wyoming and took a homestead near Will and Myra. He built a cabin, but his land didn't have consistent water, so when the Evans homestead on Barlow Creek became available, Ben bought it and they moved down to the lush meadows. He took an additional 320 acres south of the Evans place with no water and heavily timbered pastures, and put his homestead up as collateral against the purchases. When the market collapsed in the 1930s, livestock weren't worth enough to make the land payments, and Goldie didn't come to Will for help until a few days before the bank was ready to foreclose. With no



time to make arrangements, there was nothing Will could do without risking his own livelihood. A man named Henry Oudin bought the Evans place from the bank, and Ben and Goldie moved to town where Ben worked as a carpenter, helping build many buildings and homes in the Hulett area.

Sometime in the “dirty 30s” as it was called, the federal government loaned ranchers money to buy livestock feed. Will still owed some of this loan in 1940 when his dad called for help to save the Nuckolls Plantation from bankruptcy, and Will’s family loaded in their 2-door Ford V8 Sedan and went to Virginia. The youngest two sons, Bill and Jw, rode the entire trip balancing on T-post milk stools on the floor in the back. Will’s father was unreceptive to any of the changes Will wanted to try, especially the idea of replacing horse-drawn equipment with a tractor, and it was soon too late to save the place. After a mere six weeks of living and working back east, Will asked Myra if she would like to return to Wyoming. Myra instantly replied, “Are we leaving tonight, or in the morning?”

They returned to Wyoming, paid off the feed loan, and instead of pigs, Will purchased 500 head of “wool ewes” or white-faced sheep that produced both a meat and a fiber crop. When the ewes arrived at the Moorcroft train yards, an 11-year old Jw and a single dog trailed them cross-country the 26 miles home. From this point on, Will ran a debt-free operation. A true horseman, much work done under his management was accomplished with horse-drawn equipment and elbow grease. When tractors became available after the war, and whenever another piece of machinery was needed, timber was cut to make the purchase. He built several reservoirs, developed springs for stock water, did some cross-fencing as well as sheep-fencing, and developed hay fields. Will and Myra never added to their original 1080 acres, and their lives were spent in pursuit of building excellence into what they had.

Jw Nuckolls, born September 2, 1933, was the youngest of Will and Myra’s seven children. He rode the mile to Barlow Canyon Country School, for his first, fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. He attended town schools for second, third, and fourth grade, as well as his eighth through twelfth years. A fire



Loading out lambs at Rocky Point Grazing Association.



Welcome to the G-G Ranch, operated by four generations of Nuckolls.



Third-generation Will working the Angus cows and calves.

burned down the Hulett High School in January of '49, so in May of 1951, Jw and his three classmates were the first - and smallest ever - class to graduate from the new school.

Jw's sisters grew up and left the house, and one fall of Jw's adolescence, tragedy struck the Nuckolls family. His nearest brother, Bill, took a severe blow to the head during a football practice. The impact dislodged his leather helmet and caused a brain aneurism to burst, and Bill remained in a coma for several months until he passed away on Christmas Day, 1945. The oldest son, Steve finished high school that next spring, joined the Army, and returned home married. Steve tried to work the ranch with Will and Myra, but differences of opinion rendered this arrangement untenable, and Steve moved his family to town. Will thought his only remaining chance of a ranching heir lay in convincing Jw not to leave home, but since Jw's heart was set on attending the university, he made a deal with his father: in exchange for the opportunity to get a college education, he vowed to come home and work the land.

Jw attended the University of Wyoming, majored in Agronomy, graduated with honors in 1955, and returned home as promised. But oh, what he learned in those four years! New technology on the horizon was promising unprecedented production. Participating in student government started a life-long hunger to get involved in policy-making organizations and create change. Exposure to international agribusiness sent him home convinced that the entire US markets for meat and wool needed to become value-based, rather than traded on the open commodities market without regard to quality. He also saw what power producers could have if they banded together as co-operatives, rather than vying as individual competitors at the mercy of buyers.

In the 1950s, when Henry Oudin was elected county sheriff and moved to Sundance, he tried to sell his place to Will, but Will did not see any need for more property, nor did he want the debt. Jw, however, saw opportunities in expanding the operation with the goal of large-family participation. Soon after graduating college, the Ehlert place came up for sale. When Jw approached his father about buying it, Will said, "If you want to buy a place, why not buy the



Wool bales headed to the Center of the Nation Wool in Belle Fourche, SD.



One of many loads of winter feed.



Another year of abundant dry-land hay fields.





September 2016 – nearly all of us.

Oudin place?” Jw replied, “Because he doesn’t want to sell it.” Will said, “Oh hell, he’ll sell it.” So they approached Henry and, sure enough, he did not want to sell.

Instead, Will and Myra reluctantly agreed to co-sign a loan from Federal Land Bank for Jw to purchase the Frank and Arthur Ehlert estate late in the fall of 1956. The 1,225 acres lay against the south side of Will’s land and encompassed two of the Little Missouri Buttes. At that time Jw leased Will and Myra’s land and started operating the ranch. Wheat was a good cash crop in those days and the Ehlert property had 400 acres of farm ground, which Jw started to work in the spring of ’57. The ranch had a 300-gallon gas tank, as there were no diesel tractors back then. Jw was running two tractors and when the gas man pulled into the yard the third consecutive week, Will said, “you are going to break this outfit.” Believing that production was the way to increased profitability, Jw replied, “No Dad, I’m going to make this land produce a good crop.”

Shortly after returning to the ranch, Will, Jw, and Steve built a house for Jw and his first wife, Jo, but they divorced in 1958. Jw focused on the sheep business and started the long process of breeding for maximum production from each animal. In searching

out quality rams, he met the love of his life, Thea Amspoker, daughter of Sam and Patty Amspoker, who were raising registered Corriedale sheep on their ranch in Douglas, Wyoming. Jw and Thea were married on September 13, 1959, and moved into his house across the yard from Will and Myra. There they raised three girls and two boys, Nan, Dawn, Zeta, William, and Sam. Additions were made to this house in 1965 and 2006; it is still where Jw and Thea reside and where the Nuckolls family gathers.

Will died suddenly April 1, 1962 of a massive heart attack. Probate gave Myra one half of Will’s estate and divided the rest between the six living heirs, which meant Jw and each sibling inherited 90 acres. In 1963 Jw and Thea used an FHA loan to purchase the rest of the original acreage from Myra and his siblings. With a climate of predominately cool-season grasses, it became apparent that to best utilize the pastures, cattle were needed to graze with the sheep. So Jw and Thea started a fall calving program, which avoided the pine needle abortion problem because the third trimester was spent on plentiful summer grass. In 1966, they also bought shares in the Rocky Point Grazing Association and their sheep and cattle graze for five months a year on the same sagebrush flats where Will once rode for Jack Hale. Down through the years, neighboring and other properties were



The second generation: Jw and Thea (Amspoker) Nuckolls' family.

purchased to enlarge the ranch, including some of the land Ben Nuckolls once worked and separate productive acreages just east of Hulett. The land acquisitions included structures and water sources that provided means for livestock and various additional families who lived and worked on the ranch.

Many ranch hands have been employed over the years, but love - not labor - holds a family ranch together. Well, love, and the best right-hand-"man" Jw could have ever asked for. Thea, the eldest of four girls, grew up ranching and is as skilled with the livestock as she is in the kitchen. At age 12, when her own father traumatically lost his lower arm, Thea and her mother worked their ranch, nursed her father back to full health, cared for her younger sisters, kept up with all her schoolwork and milk deliveries, and so never faced the danger of losing their place. She poured that same dedication and work ethic into everything she touched, and her home, her children, her community, and her life's investment into the

G-G Ranch have borne incredible fruit. Like many ranch wives, Thea oversaw the household, fed all the help, and was in charge of ranch supplies, town outings, extra-curriculars, business paperwork, a large garden, and the great myriad of details that keep an operation running. She also loved the outdoor work, so she would finish the domestic chores early and join the work crews until it was time to prepare her next hearty feast.

Blessed with 5 healthy children in 5 years, Thea kept albums, scrapbooks, and a detailed baby book for each. As they grew, every child had multiple 4-H and FFA projects, played several sports, learned an instrument, and was a vital part of the ranch workforce. They helped by operating farming and haying equipment, riding on livestock, clearing new fields of weeds and rocks, and fixing wonderful meals to gather around. Their home was host to numerous foreign exchange students over the years, and the passion for education has been so strongly imbedded in the Nuckolls family that all five of their children





Celebrating a century! Will and Laura (Schultz), Thea and Jw, Kyle Nuckolls and Charlie McLain.

have a college or trade school degree, and all of their grandchildren have sought higher education after finishing high school.

On evenings the family wasn't at a school event, you might easily have found Jw gathered for a meeting, where he volunteered time and energy to promote, support, and further the livestock and agricultural industries in many local, state, and national organizations. He drove countless miles, served in leadership roles on boards and committees, provided testimonies, promoted policy changes, and worked to establish a fair market to get true value for the products the ag industry was generating. Where Thea could, she joined the Auxiliaries or covered the ranch work to make Jw's contributions possible, and Jw was recognized with top achievement awards for his service by many of these organizations. He served on the School Board and as a County Commissioner, was primarily active in Farm Bureau, Wool- and Stock-Growers Associations, Grazing and Predator Boards, and American Sheep Industry, and he had

an instrumental role in establishing the Center of the Nation Wool Corporation, and the Mountain States Lamb Co-op.

In his 61 years of involvement with Center of the Nation Wool, Jw helped change how wool is sold. In the past, maybe 70 years ago, producers were at the mercy of the wool buyer and the grease-wool commodity price at the time. Some producers tried to group similar wools together to market larger volumes, but the true ingenuity of the Center of the Nation co-op lay in changing wool pricing from grease-based to clean-based. Each bale of wool is cored to determine the micron (fiber diameter) and percentage of clean fiber yielded, so every rancher's wool can be offered up on its own merits to a buyer who knows exactly what they are purchasing. The way producers prepare their wool changed dramatically too. Skirting tables and wool classers became the law of the land if you expected to get a good bid on your bales. On the international stage, Jw also made numerous marketing trips to Mexico with Bob

Meyers where they secured sales to Mexican woolen mills, and Center of the Nation has sold wool to several other foreign countries in the past few years.

Next, tackling the lamb market, Jw has been a strong advocate for the Mountain States Lamb Cooperative. His collaboration with this co-op has resulted in production members being able to sell finished lambs on an age/weight grid where each carcass is individually evaluated and the price per pound is now paid accordingly. This helps every rancher know which classes of lamb pay the highest premiums and how their animals compare. In the past, owners never knew how their lambs finished out or graded at the slaughter plant, but this co-op changed all that! Now, producers can change their operations to meet the higher markets; they can strive to raise a higher quality carcass and get premium prices for it.

To expand the market for their beef, and in the wake of 2003's Mad Cow Disease fiasco, the Nuckolls have also participated in IM Global International, a system to verify cattle's age in order to qualify for international sales. Producers have to provide a calendar of first-born to last-born, to certify each animal's age, and the cattle have to be finished for slaughter before the age of 30 months.

Through the years Jw and Thea lived by their inherited value for excellence and the 4-H motto, "to make the best better!" The G-G Ranch has never had irrigated farm ground, so conservation and innovation have been of paramount importance. In the past 62 years, they improved the properties with miles of terraces, reservoir construction, stream bank erosion control, spring development, cross fencing, tree thinning, timber management, solar energy for well pumping, weed control, and numerous other developments. Many of these projects were the first of their kind in the county and were awarded for their ingenuity. Ask any relative or friend of the Nuckolls, though, and they'll tell you at least one story of their time spent helping Jw eradicate newfound weeds in some back 40, even if they climbed in his truck as visitors on a "tour". Minimizing noxious weeds was such a priority, an hourly wage was offered to those willing to help tackle the worst patches.

Years of striving for excellence has resulted in strong blood lines for replacement livestock, record amounts of wool production that consistently rate in the upper microns and yields, and market animals that finish out in the top grades. Multi-layered conservation practices have resulted in large tonnage of dry-land hay and crop production. Abundant wildlife have been present on the ranch ever since 1080 baiting was used to drop the large coyote population, and trophy hunting has generated a revenue stream for the ranch regardless of weather conditions.

Jw and Thea's first son William Swift was born in 1964, so he never knew the grandfather he was named for. Also called Will, he studied Auto Mechanics after high school and graduated from WyoTech's program in 1988. He and his wife Laura (Schultz) joined the operation in 1989 and Will has been the bronze work force of the ranch since then. Shortly after he came home, the business incorporated as Nuckolls Ranch, Inc., and they raised a family of two boys, Lance and Kyle. Will is the current manager, and his lifelong commitment to the ranch made it possible to add acreage when adjacent properties became available and to maximize cattle, lamb, wool, and haying production. Will inherited his father's desire to adopt new methods and technologies, as well as the family values of excellence, innovation, and conservation of resources. When coupled with his own mechanical prowess and ability to "MacGyver" clever, lasting solutions to ranch and equipment hiccups, Will has been an irreplaceably valuable part of the Nuckolls Ranch. In recent years, he has shifted the focus of the labor from intensive spring shed-lambing to intensive cattle grazing, and has allowed the ewes to lamb unassisted while out on summer pasture. Without irrigation, Will has experimented with no-till farming methods and the use of cover crops to salvage grass production in drought years.

From 1991 - 2001, daughter, Dawn, and husband Shannon Brengle were employed on the Nuckolls Ranch. Dawn and Shannon raised a family of three girls, Brandi, Teresa, and Kate. The girls had 4-H sheep projects, and they ran their own registered (polled) Rambouillets where they learned responsibility of caring for livestock and the hard work of the ranching business. All three girls are productive adults raising their families with Christian values and high ideals.



In 2013, granddaughter Brittany and husband, Logan Lindholm, joined the ranch for 4 years while Will and Laura's boys were away at school. Logan left his imprint of creative craftsmanship on the remodel of the original ranch house and improvements to Jw and Thea's home. He also made major progress on controlling those darn weeds scattered around the ranch by wildlife!

Will and Laura brought their younger son Kyle on board in 2017. Kyle is the fourth generation involved with the G-G Ranch operation, working alongside his girlfriend Charlie McClain. They live in the remodeled house Will and Myra built in 1929, across the yard from Jw and Thea, and sharing the hand-dug well, the large garden out back, and the many extra bedrooms that house family, friends, and hunters who gather on the ranch.

Jw and Thea's remaining children, grandchildren, and now great-grandchildren love the ranch as their second home, always looking forward to spending time there.



Nuckolls Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Harold's Place, LLC, Scott Family Ranch, 1917

## The Scott Family, Campbell County



Ranch headquarters, 2015.

The Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 brought Frank Scott, at age 52, a Missouri coal miner, his wife, Mollie, and youngest son, Harold 9, to Campbell County in 1917 to file on 320 acres of land to homestead. The Act provided that homesteaders could also file for an “additional” 320 acres of non-farmable land to be used for grazing.

At a time when many men would be looking toward their final years, Frank Scott embarked on a new life, hoping to become a landowner and a rancher. His son, Bill Scott, had talked his father into moving from Foster, Missouri, abandoning his life there for a chance to own free land, and helping fulfill his youngest son’s dream of becoming a Wyoming cowboy. The Homestead Act required they live on the land for 5 years and make improvements, which meant building some type of living quarters. Frank built a small soddy below the buttes between the Wildcat Creek and Middle Prong drainages. This was the family’s home for two or three years before the Scotts built a larger frame house. There is a small depression still in the land where their original sod house was built. From those bare beginnings, the Scotts forged a ranch that at its peak encompassed 18,000 acres—a ranch that continues to be a labor of love for Frank’s descendants.

A lot of the farmable 320 acres was broken up

and farmed using horses. The land was fenced as required by the Homestead Act and a small number of Hereford cows became the start of the cow herd.

The Scotts experienced all the hardships of homesteading and raising livestock and crops during the depression and drought years of the 20s, along with livestock & wildlife killing blizzards. His parents at one time talked of giving up, but Harold was adamant about wanting to stay in Wyoming and continue his cowboy dream. Neighboring homesteaders gave up and sold out. Many of the pastures on the ranch and surrounding area still carry the names of the original homesteaders, and a few still have remnants of fences, corrals, and old chimneys left.

When he was of age, Harold filed on his own homestead a couple of miles south of his parents, proved up on it and then sold it to a neighbor. He moved his homestead cabin to his parents place and after marrying Bertha Jane Anderson in 1932, they lived in it until his father passed away in 1935. That little homestead cabin remains on the ranch today, preserved and restored as a family history museum. It is featured on the mural of a building on 5th Street and Hwy. 59, in Gillette Wyoming, with Harold, Bertha Jane, and first born son, Marion in front of the cabin.





Frank & Mollie Scott-1920s.

When his father died, Harold took over the reins of the ranch at the young age of 28, purchasing it from his mother. After Mollie Scott moved to town he and Bertha Jane moved into the ranch house. They added onto the house by moving in another homestead house, cutting the house in half and skidding it with pipe and log rollers pulled by a Cat dozer. Harold dug a basement for the new half of the house with a team of horses and fresno, pouring concrete walls, then hand dug the rest of the basement under the original house by hand, building with concrete blocks. He only dug it deep enough for his height plus a couple of inches, making it 6' deep, so now 6'3 Dudley and 6'5 Scott Mackey have to duck their heads to keep from hitting the floor joists. Two upstairs bedrooms and an outside porch were added, and the entire house was then roofed and stuccoed. The original house siding is still visible in the basement entrance and was used in the basement to partition a pantry, storage room, and coal room with a hatch opening on topside to unload coal.

The house was heated with lump coal mined from a neighboring homestead. Neighbors worked together using horses and slip to remove the dirt from the top of the coal, then used dynamite to break up the coal into lumps, which was then loaded onto the wagons and hauled back to their homes. A stoker was installed in the basement, enabling the use of stoker coal hauled from area coal mines and is still the primary heat today.

Harold and Bertha Jane raised 5 children on the ranch, Marion, Bill, Jim, Kay, and Doug. All of the children helped with the many ranch duties as they grew up.

In 1936 after losing his wheat crop and selling his cows for 3 ½ cents a pound, Harold took a job as Deputy County Assessor, which he did mostly on horseback. The 40s were much better with good moisture and better prices for both grain and cattle. The Thurmond Homestead was added in 1942, along with a state school section lease. In 1947, he and Bertha Jane were able to purchase a 7000 acre ranch on the Middle Prong of Wild Horse Creek, known as the Fitch Place, consisting of deeded, BLM and state lands about seven miles west of their headquarters.

In order to build up a cow herd to stock the newly acquired land, Harold kept his calves, ran them as yearlings and summered them in the Fitch Place. He kept most of his heifer calves until he was able to build up his cow herd.

Harold was always proud of his beautiful rock barn featuring cement walls inside and lava rock on the outside, copied from the Daly Ranch barn. It was built in the late 40s and early 50s with help from his sons. They would take a team and wagon out to build fence, then on the way home, pick up lava rock which is in great abundance in this area, (a by-product of the underground coal fires). It took Harold two to three years to build the 30 by 90 foot barn. The floor in the horse stalling area looks like cobblestone, the effect created by putting small wood posts, approximately 6 inches tall upright on the floor and packing sand around them. That kept the floor dry and still survives today, worn but solid.

Horses were initially used in the farming and haying operation, along with hauling fencing supplies in



Harold, Bertha Jane & Marion Scott-1933.



Harold & Bertha Jane Scott family-early 1950s.

the rough country of the ranch. Although tractors had replaced the horses in most of the daily ranch operations, a team of horses was kept and still used occasionally until the mid-50s when age finally put them into retirement. The harness is still hanging on the wall in the barn from the last time Harold unhooked his team.

Farming equipment progressed from a John Deere steel wheel tractor, to rubber tired tractors and later to diesel four wheel drive tractors. Wheat and oats were the main crops raised on the dryland fields. In drier years, the fields were often put up into hay rather than being harvested as grain crops. The last of the farmed fields were planted back to hay in early 2000.

In the 40s, hay was cut with a mower put on a Farmall M. If hay was light enough, a dump rake was hooked on behind the mower, and one of the kids rode on rake. If the hay was too heavy, horses were used to pull the dump rake. Harold finally rigged it so that the tractor driver could operate the dump rake as he mowed. Initially the hay was stacked loose using a buck rake with a team of horses, bucking the hay into an overthrow stacker. Haying equipment improved through the years, reducing the time and manual labor involved in putting up and feeding hay. Little round bales were an improvement over loose hay and were eventually replaced with the big round balers of today, along with hydro-swing swathers for faster and easier cutting down of the hay. Feeding is now done with a pickup mounted hydraulic bale feeder and caker.



Ranch headquarters-1950s.

In late 40s, the Rural Electrification Act, or REA as it was known, brought electricity to the rural areas of the United States. Harold was an early believer in the value of electricity and was one of several ranchers who rode the countryside and signed up people. The Scott Ranch became one of the first in the area to get electricity. Harold served on the Tri-County REA board for many years and believed that electricity coming to rural area was something that improved people's lives and reduced the daily labor requirements of survival.

Neighbors, Ray & Nellie Gilstrap, planned on turning over their ranch to their nephew, Spud Eisele, but when he was killed in World War II, they lost interest in the ranch and leased it out. By this time, Marion had married Mary McClure and was actively involved in running the ranch with his dad. The Scotts leased the Gilstrap Place in 1957 and Marion and Mary moved there, with their family. Gilstrap used the historic P Cross Bar brand for many years and wanted it to stay with the ranch, so he transferred the brand to Marion and Mary when they moved into the Gilstrap ranch house.

The Scotts bought the Gilstrap Ranch in 1964 and in 1974, Marion and Mary bought Harold's original interest in the ranch. They use the P Cross Bar brand on their cattle and it became the name of their hunting camp which has developed into a premier award winning hunting and outfitting operation. Marion and Mary Scott raised four girls—Marilyn (Dudley) Mackey, Debbie (Butch) Knutson, Cathy (Dave) Morrison (1956-2011), and Cindy (Jeff) Lovelace.





Frank Scott threshing grain-1920s.

Harold signed up for the Great Plains program in the early 50s, a 10 year government program with the Soil Conservation Service designed to improve land and water. He bought a D4 cat and scraper. Marion then built several reservoirs and terraced hay fields during the length of this program. Harold was very active in the Intermountain Soil Conservation District, serving as a supervisor for many years, and being recognized as Supervisor of the Year for a 5 county area.

The 60s brought oil exploration, drilling and development to the ranch, bringing with it opportunities for added income through damage payments, royalties on minerals, and selling of water to the drilling rigs. Marion pumped several of the wells for a period of time. Some of these wells are still in production, although it has dropped considerably from the initial development.

The 70s saw all of Marion and Mary's daughters getting married. All have lived and worked on the ranch at different times, with Marilyn and Dudley and their family being on the ranch since 1984.

Several bad spring blizzards in the late 60s and 70s that hit during calving time, which was late February, March, and early April, killed a number of calves, so a large calving shed was built to have a place of protection during these storms. Calving dates have now been moved to April, May, and June, and greatly reduce the death loss and stress from winter's cold and snow, as well as reducing feed costs and labor needed. The shed is now primarily used for calving 2 year old heifers, but is seldom needed due to calving

during warmer weather and the use of calving ease bulls.

Harold and Bertha Jane's cow herd began with Herefords In the mid-70s, artificial insemination (AI'ing) was implemented by Marion, with he and Dudley becoming AI Technicians, and Marilyn doing the heat detecting. Various breeds were introduced including, Simmental, Murray Grey, and Gelbvieh. With purchasing Gelbvieh bulls, the cow herd gradually became predominantly Gelbvieh. When it was determined these cows were too big for the range environment, Marion began purchasing Red Angus bulls in the mid 80s. The cow herd is now a 100% Commercial Red Angus herd. Dudley & Marilyn, using Frank Scott's FM brand on their cattle, have recently began AI'ing to raise Red Angus bulls,



Harold Scott-1930.



Haying equipment 2017.

and are starting into a small registered Red Angus operation.

1971 saw the death of Harold's beloved wife, Bertha Jane, due to Hodgkin's disease. Several years later, he married Helen Francis, and they built a house on 10 acres south of Marion's and moved there, eventually moving into town as health and age-related problems made living out in the country more difficult. Harold leased his place to Marion and Mary in the mid 70s although he remained actively involved in the ranch as long as he was physically able and continued to run a few head of his own cows.

The 80s were again a challenge with extreme weather conditions, ranging from severe spring blizzards, long, hard winters with bitter cold wind chills requiring a great deal of extra feed, followed by drought and grasshoppers. Low cattle prices during those years added more financial pressure on the ranching operation requiring a return to the philosophys of the depression years, "fix it up, use it up, make do, or do without". Drought conditions and no runoff water to fill reservoirs brought a need for a reliable source of water. A deep water well was drilled, several miles of pipelines, a 10,000 gallon storage tank and water tanks along the pipeline have been a lifesaver in being able to utilize a large summer pasture that until that point only had reservoirs and a few not very reliable windmill powered water wells. Electric fencing has been put into use, cross fencing large pastures and helping with better rotational grazing.



Marion Scott heading out to feed cattle, 1950s.

Following Harold's passing away in 1997, Dudley and Marilyn purchased his ranch headquarters and the Fitch Place from Harold's estate putting the land into Harold's Place, LLC. The ranch began to operate in a partnership operational arrangement with Marion and Mary and their P Cross Bar Ranch. As in most modern day ranch purchases, income from the cows could not repay the debt required to purchase the land, so Dudley went to work at one of the local coal mines in order to generate needed income. Additional acreage has been added as neighboring lands have become available for purchase.

Butch and Debbie (Scott) Knutson purchased a portion of Harold's land north of the ranch headquarters, along Middle Prong Road, building their ranch headquarters and ranching with son Clint, wife Erin, Clancy and Claire. Additional lands have also been added as they have become available for purchase. Cindy (Scott) Lovelace has Harold's HW brand and has recently been using it on heifer calves purchased from Marion & Mary.

The late 90s ushered in the beginning of the coalbed methane gas (CBNG) development in Campbell County, bringing much appreciated additional income to many ranching operations, this one included. One of the beneficial developments for the ranch was the additional stock water tanks and reservoirs that were put into operation to utilize the water produced from the CBNG development. These helped with better utilization of areas of the ranch that were under



Winter feeding, 1950s.





Modern-day hay feeding.



CBNG well converted to solar stock water well, 2016.

watered, helped with better distribution of the cattle and was especially beneficial as the late 90s and early 2000 years were quite dry and there was very little weather related runoff water in those years. As the companies graveled many of the main ranch roads in order to access their operations at all times, these all weather roads have been another great benefit to the ranch. Several of these CBNG wells are now being converted to stock water wells, some utilizing solar power.

Scott and Carey Mackey, Preston and Macie, and Pat and Amanda (Mackey) Fiedor, Ty, Jerzey and Jarek, are now partnering with Marion and Mary in the operations of the P Cross Bar Ranch. Their oldest daughter Brittany is married and living in Cheyenne. Both ranches are still operated as a unit, with Dudley (now retired from the coal mine) and Marilyn managing the replacement heifer development for both operations, while mature cow herds are managed

on each entities land. All generations on the ranch own cattle and help with ranching operations as time, job, and schooling permit.

The ranch celebrated 100 years of family ownership and operation in the summer of 2017 by hosting over 100 members of Frank and Mollie Scott's descendants to a family reunion as well as inviting many friends and neighbors to come join in the celebration. The Scott family was pleased and honored to have Harold Scott inducted into the Wyoming Cowboy Hall of Fame in this same year.

It is mind boggling to think of all the changes seen in those 100 years, from horse drawn equipment, to diesel tractors and hydro-swing swathers, pickups with bale handlers and hydraulic cake feeders, from trailing cattle by horseback, to hauling cattle and horses in trucks and pickups with stock racks to gooseneck trailers and diesel stock trucks, from 2 wheel drive vehicles to 4 wheel drive with extensive computer technology, 4 wheelers, from no phones to cell phones that are mini computers as well, and now even drones to check water and look for livestock.

It is a challenge for multiple generations to figure out the transitions needed to meet the needs of all involved and how to keep ranching operations continuing for future generations. The love of the land and desire to do so, and recognition of the sacrifices past generations have made, help all to remain committed to handling those challenges.

There are still four generations of Frank and Mollie Scott living on the ranch they came to Wyoming in 1917 to start. These same generations on the land, owning and raising cattle are living the young boy, Harold's dream of becoming a Wyoming cowboy. The cowboy traditions of gathering and working cattle horseback, roping and dragging calves to the branding fire, doctoring sick cattle, and the myriad of other cowboy chores on a ranch are continued today. Harold's cowboy legacy has been honored and carried on by each successive generation.



Dudley Mackey moving red angus cattle in Fitch place, 2016.



Branding in the Fitch place in the 1950s before corrals.



Hereford cow herd, 1960s.



Harold's beloved rock barn, his pride and joy!





Frank & Mollie Scott's descendants-2017.



Hay hauling, 1960s.



Hay hauling, 2017.



Four generations of the Scott Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.



Ultimate cowboy honor.

# Keith Ranch, 1892

## The Keith Family, Natrona County



Keith Ranch.



Keith Ranch.

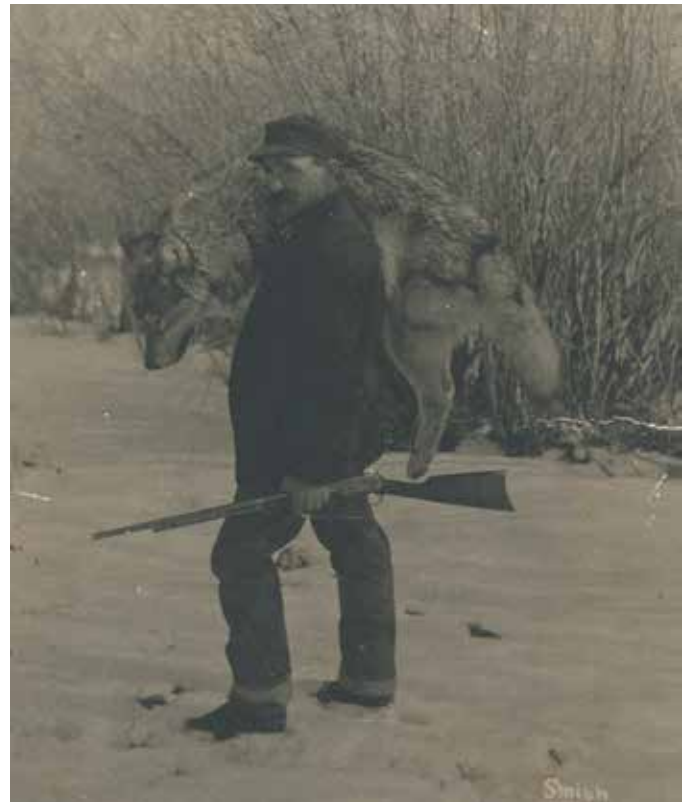


Keith Ranch.





William Keith.



William Keith.



Walter "Butch" Keith, Dean Keith, Deb (Keith) Dillon, Patricia Keith, Donna (Keith) Madia.



Keith Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.



Edith Keith.

# Lee - Davidson Ranch, 1917

## The Stanley E. & Ruth E. (Lee) Davidson Family, Crook County



Ole Lee on the wood saw on Strawberry Hill, circa 1920.

Norwegian born Even Lee (1861-1936), and his wife Astri (1847-1931), moved from Willow, North Dakota to Hulett, Wyoming with their three adult children in 1917. On June 3rd of that same year the Lee's eldest son, Ole (1889-1955), homesteaded 322 acres on Strawberry Hill approximately ten miles north-northwest of Hulett.

A decade prior, Ruth (Becker) Nemetz had been widowed upon the death of her husband, Joseph. She left South Dakota with her five-year-old daughter, Allegra (1903-1974), and homesteaded north of Hulett. In 1910 Ruth married Andy Johnson and had four more children. Over the following thirty years the couple greatly expanded Ruth's original homestead property.

Ole Lee married Allegra Nemetz in 1923, and their only child, Ruth, was born in 1924 in the cabin Ole built on Strawberry Hill. The family lived in the cabin on the homestead property until 1927 when the Lees bought 400 acres southwest of their homestead property. Ole set up a sawmill and the couple built another small log cabin on their new acreage. The family lived in the one room cabin, adding on over the years, and eventually turned it into their permanent home.

In addition to buying more property in 1927, Ole

also purchased a brand new Hart Parr 16-30 tractor and drove it 130 miles from Custer, SD back to his ranch. Not only did this allow Ole to work his land more efficiently, he was able to assist his in-laws and many other neighbors with work on their places as well. Ruth grew up helping her parents work the land and care for the many animals they raised including cows, horses, chickens, and turkeys.

Allegra's mother and step-father both passed away in 1941, at which time she and her four half-siblings each inherited one section of land. This expanded Ole and Allegra's property holdings to three separate places within a few miles of one another, and over 1,400 acres.

Ole and Allegra's daughter, Ruth Lee, married Stanley Davidson in 1946. The newlyweds lived briefly in Rockypoint, Wyoming with Stanley's family, and then moved to the Lee's place outside of Hulett for a time. The couple had two sons, Larry (1947-1991) and Keith (1950), and raised their boys in Sundance, only forty-three miles from Ole and Allegra's home. The boys spent many weekends and summers at their grandparent's ranch, helping with chores just as their mother had done as a girl.

Although Ole died in 1955, Allegra remained on the ranch where she continued to grow crops and raise a





Ole, Ruth, and Allegra Lee, circa 1934.

multitude of animals. She eventually converted the cattle operation to sheep and ran the place by herself until 1965.

Upon Allegra's passing in 1974, Ruth inherited all of her parent's property. Stanley and Ruth continued to reside and work in Sundance but, along with help from Larry and Keith, took over managing the ranch as well. While the Davidsons stopped running their own livestock and instead started leasing property to bordering ranchers, they continued to maintain other facets of the family business.

The Lee-Davidson ranch expanded once again in 1991 when Larry and Keith purchased 830 acres of property from their cousin. The land they bought was adjacent to the property their grandmother, Allegra, inherited from her parents, as it was owned by Allegra's sister. The procurement was significant because it rejoined two-fifths of Andy and Ruth Johnson's original property.

Stanley and Ruth built a new home and moved to the ranch full time in 1992. Since then, they have worked with Keith and their grandchildren to make constant improvements to the properties. Their most recent purchase being a 1989 John Deere 4755 tractor. They are proud to sustain farming operations and continue to sell hay and rent pasture ground to neighbors. They also manage the timber ground for a renewable



Ole Lee (standing) with his new Hart Parr tractor, circa 1927.



Lee Ranch branding, circa 1950.

resource and are happy to provide wildlife habitat for deer, turkey, grouse, rabbits, and numerous other animals.

Though Ruth passed away in 2016, Stanley continued to work in the fields alongside his family until his death in 2018; he was 99 years old.



Ole and Ruth Lee on Strawberry Hill cabin, 1924.



Ole Lee on Oliver tractor, circa 1943.



Allegra Nemetz Lee and Annie Lee, sisters-in-law, circa 1923.



Allegra, Ruth, and Ole Lee, circa 1932.



Ole Lee with his saw mill on Strawberry Hill, circa 1920.



Ole Lee with his horses Bonnie and Jimmy and dog Darky.





Ole and Allegra, horses Blondie and Bill.



Ole, Even, and Adolph Lee hosting a dance in Strawberry Hill cabin, circa 1918.



Ole Lee's great grandchildren Julie, Todd, Andrea and Heidi Davidson visiting Strawberry Hill cabin, 1985.



Stanley and Ruth Davidson, 1946.



Stanley, Keith, Larry, and Ruth Davidson removing an old shed, 1975.





Larry Davidson and his nephew Todd Davidson with Hart Parr tractor, 1983.



Ruth, Keith, and Stanley Davidson fixing fence, 1975.



Stanley Davidson raking hay, 2017.



Heidi, Julie, Todd and Andrea Davidson with Hart Parr tractor, 2000.



Ole Lee's great-great grandson Rhys Stanley Guzik in doorway of Strawberry Hill cabin, 2017.





Keith Davidson and one of his daughters, Andrea Maichak, hunting on the ranch.



The ranch.



Stanley Davidson with his son, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren at the Centennial Ranch Ceremony - this was one of the proudest moments of his life.



Davidson Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Lemaster Farms, 1920

## John Lemaster, Laramie County



Lemaster Homestead Aerial View in the 90s.

Lemaster Farms is currently being farmed by the 4th generation of our family. The farm was started by Orville and Carrie Lemaster, who first arrived in Wyoming in 1907 and then under the Homestead Act purchased a 160 acre farm in 1911. They later invited their nephew and his wife, Floyd and Alice Lemaster, to come and join them.

Floyd and Alice first leased and then purchased their own 160 acre farm from a neighbor, who was selling out. Later their farm would include parts of Orville's original homestead. This is where the current farm is located and where the Lemaster family and their descendants are still farming. Many additional acres have been added over the years.

Floyd Lemaster (born in 1898) and Alice Flattery (born in 1894) were married on February 16, 1920 in Iowa in the Georgetown Church, which had been built by Alice's grandfather and his farming neighbors in the Irish Catholic community. They arrived in Wyoming by train on February 22, 1920, six days later. During the last part of the trip, there was a terrible snow storm and the engineer did not want to stop, and as the family story goes, Floyd stood up, pulled the stop chain and the train stopped out on the prairie a little past Burns, Wyoming.

Alice and Floyd had to unload their items in the

snow and cold and walk back to the stop to meet up with Orville, who was waiting for them. When Alice stepped off the train into knee deep snow and bitter cold she told many family members in later years that she was ready to head back to Iowa. Then she saw a Catholic Church steeple on the prairie and saw it as a positive sign that everything would work out. She was a devout Catholic her entire life and when that same church near Burns many years ago was abandoned, she was given the altar and had it installed in one of her upper floor bedrooms on the family farm house. She often said the Rosary there with the grandchildren joining in.

Floyd and Alice first stayed with Orville and his family, until later on when they leased and eventually purchased their own farm acreage. A few months after they arrived in Wyoming, a terrible blizzard hit the eastern Wyoming and western Nebraska plains and killed livestock from Albin, (15 miles east of the Lemaster farm) to Burns (20 miles southwest). Floyd had to ride into town when the storm was over to get supplies and apparently saw dead cattle scattered over the prairie. Not used to Wyoming blizzards, Floyd returned home and was snow-blind for 3 days. Eventually his sight would return to full strength, but was always very sensitive to light from then on.

While Floyd and Alice were leasing their first farm,





Orville and Carrie Lemaster, homesteaded first April 24, 1911.

their oldest daughter Wreatha was born. Later, after they purchased their farm, 7 other children were welcomed into the family: Earl in 1923, Calvin in 1925, John in 1927, Eugene in 1928, Eileen in 1929, Viola in 1932, and Van in 1938.

All of the children helped with the chores on the farm and the older children helped take care of the younger children.

According to John Lemaster, an initial very small house was built in 1912; a newer house was built in 1913, renovated in 1928 and again in 1940. The outbuildings on the farm were constructed between the 1920s and the 1940s, including the Quonsets. All the children attended country schools and eventually at Albin when weather and farm chores allowed.

Floyd Lemaster began by raising hogs and wheat, and Alice raised different kinds of fowl and had a large garden. Later they added a few cattle.

Floyd would plow, work the fields, plant, harvest, and haul wheat to market with his horses and wagon. He was very proud of his horses and kept very good care of them. The horses were very important to the success of the farm and were the only way farming



Alice and Floyd Lemaster 1916.

was done in those early years. The first tractor he bought was an International and he stayed true to the International red brand throughout his life.

Alice kept different kinds of fowl including chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, pheasants, guinea hens, and later, peacocks. According to Wreatha, the chicken hawk vultures were so thick trying to swoop down and nab the fowl, that Alice often times had to fight them off with a broom.

On market days, Alice would gather the chicken eggs and bury them in the wheat in the back of the wagon so that they would not break during the journey. She would have the projected income they would get figured down to the penny and Floyd would get only what was on the list of absolute necessities. It would take one full day to get to Burns by horse and wagon and a full day to get back home.

The family had some very rough years accentuated by the dust bowl drought years and Great Depression, better known as the "Dirty Thirties" which broke many farm families and discouraged all of them. Crops and feed stock for the animals were extremely limited. Many family meals consisted of wild game like antelope, wild duck, rabbit, pheasant, and every

other kind of varmint. Viola says to this day she will "NEVER EAT ANTELOPE AGAIN!"

During one very bad dirt blizzard, the neighbor's horses escaped, and facing starvation, were literally trying to eat the window screens off Alice's kitchen because they could smell food cooking. Floyd and Alice had to endure the elements to chase the horses off. Alice was less than seven months pregnant and the experience caused her to prematurely deliver her fourth child, John, that evening at the family farm. John weighed less than four pounds and his first bed was a shoe box and blanket and Floyd would feed him every two hours around the clock with an eye dropper for several weeks until he could gain his strength.

One day, Alice was also cutting up chickens for the family to eat when she cut through her hand. It would later develop blood poisoning, nearly taking her life, and she would remain crippled in her hand the rest of her life. It did not deter her whatsoever in raising the eight children, cooking, cleaning, darning, and taking care of every household and farm chore that needed tending.

During the tough times they lived through blizzards, droughts, grasshopper swarms, and hail storms that destroyed crops. Eventually things got better and their lives improved dramatically with the good harvests of wheat and timely acquisition of additional acreages.

Alice had a large garden every year. According to Viola (Lemaster) Person, Alice would plant potatoes, corn, tomatoes, melons, and other vegetables that would be cooked for meals and preserved. The best meal of the day was Sunday supper and Alice would fix chicken and noodles, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable sides, and homemade bread. Chicken and noodles is still a family favorite.

Eileen (Lemaster) Bollig shared a story about the Lemaster Sunday dinner stating that she once complained that she got the same piece of chicken every time, which was a wing. Her mother started giving her a leg or a thigh every once in a while and when she did Eileen felt especially grateful.



Lemaster kids - 1934 - Wreatha, Earl, Calvin, John, Gene, Eileen, Viola. Van not born yet.



Alice Lemaster with Grandkids in pheasant pen.



Floyd Lemaster and his 1896 Market Wagon that he transported wheat in.



David Lemaster, Alice's grandson, remembers that one of the biggest treats she would bestow upon her grandchildren was to have a large goose egg for breakfast that would cover the entire plate. Eating fried pheasant for lunch was also a favorite among her 31 grandchildren.

Floyd Lemaster liked to hunt and was a very good trap shooter. He won a number of medals and his sons joined him in the clay trap shooting sport. Floyd was Wyoming State Champion in the singles and several of the sons also won state championships and regional blue rock shoots. The five Lemaster brothers had their own shooting squad and they all belonged to the Cheyenne Trap Club. The five brothers competed as a team and in individual competitions in the national competition at Las Vegas and were featured in a national gun magazine as the only known "all brothers" trap shooting team in America at the time. After Floyd's death in 1965, the Cheyenne Trap Club created a trophy in Floyd's honor.

After Floyd's death, John and Gene Lemaster managed the bulk of farming for their mother, Alice. John was steadfast and took care of her for many years until her death on February 22, 1992, exactly 72 years to the day after she arrived in Wyoming. John did well from that early nurturing with the eye dropper and the shoe box basinet and is still going strong. He celebrated his 90th birthday in 2017 and is now 92 years old. Many of the Lemaster nieces and nephews, great nieces and great nephews, and remaining siblings and in-laws joined him to celebrate. He continued to farm up to that year.

Today the farm is comprised of about 2,000 acres and is operated by Alice and Floyd's grandchildren, Robert, David, Doug, and Roger and other grandchildren run farms of their own nearby.

The family farm memories and the close-knit relationships built around the love of Floyd and Alice Lemaster have kept the family members close over the many years.



Lemaster Family - 1935.



Alice Lemaster stands with her original wagon and a tractor. Alice arrived in Wyoming on Feb 22, 1920, and passed away on Feb. 22, 1992 at the age of 98.



Floyd Lemaster on harvester.



Lemaster Farms Aerial Photo 1950s.



Floyd Lemaster and his beloved horse team.



Lemaster Family in front of barn on homestead.



The big Lemaster house.



Floyd Lemaster and sons, Earl, Calvin, John, Gene.



John, Alice and David Lemaster in a wheat field.





Eileen and Viola Lemaster.



Lemaster family, Back: Gene, Calvin, John, Earl. Front: Viola, Floyd, Alice, Eileen, Wreatha, Van.



John and Alice Lemaster 1987.



Alice and Floyd Lemaster, 1930s.



John Lemaster and his tractor 2013.



Lemaster Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Mill Iron Diamond Ranch, Inc., 1917

## The Jess & Bond Dickau, Gary & Gayle Dickau Families, Converse County



Bud, Frances, and their two daughters Patty and Kathy on horseback around 1955.

Walter A. Dickau, was born January 21, 1896 at Atkinson, Nebraska. Walt came to Converse County in 1917 and filed on a 320 acre plot under the Homestead Act 16 miles north of Shawnee, Wyoming. Since he enlisted in the U.S. Army before coming to Wyoming he didn't have to prove up on the land until he returned from WWI where he served his country in Germany.

On March 18, 1920 he married Lillian Mae Hoffman in Atkinson, Nebraska. Walt and Lillie moved their belongings by train to Lost Springs, Wyoming where they picked them up by wagon and team of horses to take to their homestead. They built a tar paper covered shack before winter as their first home. They would later build a more permanent home. A few short years later he was able to hand dig a well so water was right outside. The neighbors over the hill who did not have a well appreciated that they were able to get water from the Dickaus. Walt and Lillian had 6 children, all who were born at home. Norma Jean in 1921, Ilamae in 1922, Ivan (Bud) in 1923, Dwayne in 1927, Betty in 1929, and Beverly in 1933. One story told about the time Lillie was expecting their second child and Walt needed to get supplies from Shawnee. He set out with Norma Jean and on their way home a storm hit so they took cover in a little Sunday school 5 miles from home. Lighting



Walt's great-grandson Jess Dickau baling dryland triticale 2014.

struck both of the horses and killed them. Walt had to borrow a neighbor's team in order to get his wagon home.

The house that Walt's grandson Gary currently lives in was bought and moved up from Shawnee in 1945. The stories and pictures show how great of an accomplishment that had to have been in those times. In the end it took a tractor hooked to the front of the truck and a team of horses with a pulley system to finally get the house to its new home where it still sits today. The current barn was built around 1940. A few outbuildings, such as the old granary and little barn are still in use today. Red tin has been added to the outside of the buildings to preserve them.

During the depression Walt and Lillie provided for their family by doing various things. They had a few milk cows and were able to sell the cream. Walt raised a few pigs and when the government came in and paid the neighboring sheep ranchers to mass slaughter their sheep Walt would go and collect the carcasses to feed the pigs. Walt grew dry land wheat and he purchased one of the first rubber tire thrashing machines and would go around in the summers to thrash for the local farmers.

Walt served as a county commissioner from 1951 to



1959. He was also on the school board for Converse County School District #10 for several years. Walt passed away in 1970 with Lillie following him in 1975.

Walt's two sons, Bud and Dwayne, along with their wives, Frances and Mary, took over the ranch and as land became available they purchased neighboring homesteads to grow their ranch. Pasture renovation was started and is still being done today by Walt's great-grandson Jess Dickau. Pasture is torn up and wheat, barley or triticale is grown for a few years, then it's planted back to grass and alfalfa to graze. On good, wet years dryland hay is harvested. Hereford cattle were slowly replaced with the black Angus breed in the early 90s and is still the present day breed of choice on the ranch.

Eventually the ranch was taken over by Bud's son, Gary Dickau and his wife Gayle, who are presently living in the house that was moved from Shawnee all those years ago. Over his lifetime Gary has made many improvements and contributions to the ranch. One of them being a stock water system made from an old natural gas pipeline. The pipeline had long ago been abandoned, and since it ran across the entire property Gary decided to put it to good use. The system is still being used as an effective form of stock water throughout the ranch.

Currently the ranch is operated by Walt's great-grandson Jess and his wife Bond. They have two children Kayten and Kyle.



Walt and Lillian Dickau.



Walt on his new John Deere tractor in 1945.



Threshing wheat.



Dickau Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Myers Land & Cattle, 1917

## Thaddeus & Andrea Dockery, Fremont County



Original house.

**J**ohn Myers, born in 1842 in Pennsylvania, brother of Evan Myers, came to the Sweetwater Country in the early 1870s, probably from Kansas or Ohio.

John served in the Civil War prior to his coming to the Sweetwater, however there is no record of his service due to the fact he was hired by another man to take his place in the army. John was a carpenter by trade, but went to work as a blacksmith for the “71”, owned by Henry Clay. A few years later he homesteaded a place of his own, which is now known as the Countryman Ranch. The original Myersville Stage Station was located on this homestead. He spent most of his life in the area, marrying a Miss Westfall from the Flagg Ranch area. He died in Idaho.

Evan Myers was born in Uniontown, Fayette County, Pennsylvania February 9, 1840. He was a farrier by trade, and that is listed on his service record. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War, first in Company A, 60th Ohio infantry from August 7, 1862 until November 10, 1862. During this time he was a prisoner of war, being captured and released at Harper’s Ferry, September 15, 1862. On February 29, 1864 he re-enlisted in the 24th Independent Battery, Ohio Light Artillery and served until June 24, 1865 when he was mustered out at Camp Dennison, Ohio. Before leaving the service he was part of the honor guard for President Lincoln’s burial, and had a certificate to that effect. Cousin Bert Myers was in

possession of that certificate. In 1865 Evan married Lucinda Fenner, most likely in the state of Ohio. Their son William was born January 17, 1867. Lucinda died 11 days later on January 28, 1867 in Ironton, Missouri. On October 18, 1869 Evan married Ann Eliza Fenner, sister of his first wife, at Hillsborough, Ohio. This union produced the following children: Linnie May, May 27, 1873; John A., May 7, 1876; Albert and Myrtle, February 1, 1881; and Jennie G, April 10, 1886. Evan was a farmer and lived in Ohio until 1869, at which time he moved his family to Kansas where they resided for the rest of their lives. Ann Eliza died in Emporia, Kansas October 17, 1911, and Evan died there August 18, 1916.

Albert Myers and his sister Myrtle were born in Waverly, Kansas on February 1, 1881. Details of his early life are not available. He did learn farming from his father and farmed with him until 1900. At this time he came west to Wyoming with his brother John A. Myers to see their Uncle John. They went to work for the Barrus and Croft Sheep Company on the upper Sweetwater at what is now called the Ellis Place. They worked here for two years and then returned to Kansas. On March 4, 1904 Albert married Jennie Eliza Jacob, daughter of Samuel Jacob (of Jewish descent) and Celinda Alnora Ray. Jennie was their oldest child, born November 22, 1883. For a short while, following their marriage, they remained in Emporia where Albert was a switchman on the



railroad. Following that line of work they moved to Tonopah, Nevada, where he was a fireman for the Tonopah- Goldfield Railroad Company. Seven children were born to this marriage: Eugene Jacob, Tonopah, January 2, 1907; Evan Lyle, Tonopah, November 5, 1908; Roy Alvin, Emporia, November 3, 1910; Samuel Walter, Rawlins, December 2, 1912; Anne Celinda, Emporia, November 17, 1914; Arthur Warren, Lander, October 29, 1917; and Albert Vernon, Lander, May 19, 1919.

The family moved to the Sweetwater in 1910. Albert worked for his Uncle John on the homestead at the Countryman Place. A short time later he homesteaded some land of his own, a short distance from his uncle, and later sold the homestead to his uncle. In 1917 he purchased the present Myers Ranch from a couple name Harry and Laura Fredericks, and moved his family to the ranch.

There is some history on the ranch proper. In the late 1800s it was known as the Gates Ranch, and was a stage stop for the Government Stage Line, between the Home Ranch (in Graham's lower field) and Myersville (operated by John Myers) up by the Countryman Place. It boasted a very nice bridge, called the Sweetwater Bridge, made of logs with abutments of logs and plank flooring supported on piles driven into the river. Later the upper Myersville Station was abandoned and what had been called the Gates Ranch became Myersville. It should be noted that the first female prisoner in the Rawlins Penitentiary was a woman from the Gates Ranch found guilty of stealing money from the mail. The establishment also had an unsavory reputation for patrons who were rough and rowdy and some members of an outlaw gang. All of the spent shells in the corral attest to that fact.

The Myersville Stage Station was operated in the early 1900s by Philip Welty and a crew of four. His wife and daughter Elizabeth joined him for a year, coming from New York. Elizabeth wrote about her experiences in her book "Ann of Bar Ton Ranch". The station burned around 1905, when Welty built a fire in the cabin and went out to feed the horses. When he returned he found it on fire. He rushed in to try to save his collection of Indian relics, but was badly burned about the face and hands, and

the whole place, barns and all, burned down. The Fredericks place was across the river at the time and was unharmed. The stage station was never rebuilt.

After Albert Myers bought the Fredericks' ranch he filed a desert claim on adjoining land and added the Brush Patch to the ranch. Later in the 1950s Government Meadows was purchased from a couple of old sheepmen, and about 1960 Albert Myers Jr. purchased the Trent Place from Bill Scarlett. Albert Myers Jr. worked with his father until he went to war in 1940. His brother Sam stayed on the ranch and Albert and Arthur Warren joined the army. His older brothers all worked in the oil industry for the war effort and so were not drafted. After the war he came home to the ranch. On October 19, 1946 he married Barbara Scoggan of Lander, whom he met at a dance in Hudson, and brought her home to the ranch, which at the time was across the river. They lived in a two room bunkhouse, newly paneled with knotty pine. Later a bedroom was added.

Albert Myers Sr. died in Lander on December 15, 1950 of congestive heart failure. After his death the decision was made to move the ranch and the buildings to the south side of the river as irrigation water made it virtually impossible to access the homes by vehicle from April through the middle of July. The original home and two barns were left and everything else moved by truck - Albert's house and Sam's house, the garage, now a barn, the wash house, and the chicken house. A new home was built for Grandma Jennie and a bathroom and bedroom added to Albert's house. Electricity came to the place via the Rural Electrification Act in 1957. When the Crook's Gap Oil Camp shut down the current garage and heifer shed were purchased there and moved to the ranch.

Sam froze to death February 23, 1955 while driving home from Sweetwater Station in a blizzard. He had been visiting his wife Dewey who was staying with her parents. His pickup got stuck and he got out to walk and froze to death. When found by Albert, who was on horseback, he was running straight away from the ranch. Dewey left the ranch, and Bob Jamerman bought their house and had it moved to his ranch above the Flagg Place.

Grandma Jennie Myers died September 27, 1957 after a valiant fight with diabetes, which caused her to have a gangrenous leg amputated. She never recovered from the trauma and the disease. After her death Albert and family moved into Jennie's house. Jack Corbett was hired in 1958 and moved into Albert's old house. He worked for Albert until 1970, when he bought his own ranch, the Herner Place.

In 1970 Doug and Cindy Thompson moved home from Seattle and into Cindy's old home. In 1972 the Myers Ranch was incorporated and named Myers Land & Cattle. Albert and Barbara sold the ranch to Doug and Cindy in 1990. Albert passed away November, 1993 after a long battle with heart disease.



Dockery Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.



# Odegard Ranch, 1916

## The Duane Odegard Family, Campbell County



Ariel view of the Odegard Ranch early 1980s.

The Odegard Family Ranch is located in Campbell & Sheridan County, six miles East of Powder River, ten miles East of Arvada & nine miles West of Spotted Horse, in Campbell County. It is 46 miles North West of Gillette & 65 miles South East of Sheridan.

In the beginning, Elmer and Mary Odegard, with their family of six children, arrived in the North Fork Valley of Wild Horse Creek in 1916. Elmer had bought a homestead relinquishment in Campbell County and filed on it. The former would-be homesteader had started building a large one room log structure in the bank along a wide draw. This building was later completed and became the first home on the homestead for the Odegard family.

Elmer Severance Odegard and Mary Bertina Miland, both of Norwegian descent and born in Wisconsin, were married in Eleva, Wisconsin in 1903. Their first child, Casper, was born in 1904. The couple was living in North Dakota when Mamie Theresa (Barton) was born in 1905. They moved into Canada, making several moves before settling on a Canadian homestead near Lethbridge. Selmer Henry and Eric Ralph were both born in Canada. As there was little cash income from the homestead Elmer worked as a surveyor for the railroad or as a miner in the

coal mines while Mary and the children lived on the homestead. There was no school nearby and the winters were severely cold.

In the fall of 1913, Mary Odegard with her four children traveled by train back to Wisconsin where she and the three younger children lived with her mother for several months. Casper, who was nearly ten years old lived with his aunt and uncle and worked for his keep. Casper and Mamie attended school. Earl Theodore was born January 3, 1914. When the cold weather was over the family returned to the Canadian homestead. Elmer had worked all winter in the mines, but too much coal dust was causing him lung problems from which he never completely recovered.

In the fall of 1915 a new baby girl, Irene Bertina (Chambers) made her appearance. The couple decided to move back to the states. They sold the homestead, packed their belongings and came via train to Sheridan, Wyoming. They rented a house in town, enrolled Casper and Mamie in school and Elmer went to work for the Burlington Northern Railroad as a surveyor. In the spring, Elmer located some available homestead land in western Campbell County, approximately ten miles east of Arvada. Elmer had never been a farmer, but town was no place to rear a big family of boys.

Ralph Odegard, in 1984 when he was 72 years old, recalled the trip the Odegards made from Sheridan to the homestead. "I was nearly five years old. Father bought a team of horses, old Tom and Blake. He made a canvas cover over a hay wagon and set up a camp cook stove that burned wood for Mother to cook on. We had all our things and us kids under cover. It took us eight days to make the trip. Father and Casper took turns driving the team. We brought along a milk cow and a few other cattle and an extra horse. The road was only deep wagon ruts. At Arvada there was no wagon bridge over the Powder River. Mother and Mamie took us little kids and we walked across on the railroad bridge. Casper rode the extra horse and drove the cattle across the river while Father drove the team. The road angled east under the bridge.

Minnie Lucas, who lived on a homestead about six miles east of Arvada later recalled that the first thing she saw of the Odegard family was a covered wagon going east on the North Fork Creek road and a little five year old boy running alongside the horses. One can only imagine the excitement of the children as they reached their destination.

The house was a log structure, partly built into the bank. It was soon made livable and the covered wagon served as an extra room for a time. Friendly neighbors were soon stopping by to get acquainted, among them are Harvey and Minnie Lucas, Jim Miller, Charley and Minnie Okeson, the Fitzgeralds and the Carter brothers. Mary Odegard soon had a start in chickens from her friend, Minnie Lucas. She was also able to buy some weaner pigs. Sage chickens and grouse were often included in their meals.

The Odegards expected to produce as much of their own food as possible, with a milk cow or two, chickens and pigs and hopefully a good garden and potato patch.

They dug a large cave into the bank where they built a big storage bin for potatoes and vegetables and shelves for canned goods, and crocks of lard and butter. Fresh milk and drinking water were kept cool in the cave. There was no refrigeration. Wild gooseberries grew in abundance. Wild plums and chokecherries were picked for jelly making.



Theta and Casper, 1929.



Katherine and Duane Odegard, 1954.





**Elmer Odegard, Ralph Odegard, Mary Odegard, Irene Odegard, (Chambers), Theta Odegard, Selmer Odegard, Anne Stead (Odegard), Mamie Odegard (Barton), Fred Barton, Elmer J. Barton, Beverly Odegard, Phyllis Odegard, Duane Odegard, and Earl Miland.**

Water for the household, chickens and pigs was hauled from a hard water spring about a mile south of the house. The spring was all boarded up and water was pulled up in a bucket on a rope hand over hand. Melted snow was the source of water in wintertime. Years later drinking water was hauled from Tom Pretzman's artesian well.

Before any farming could be done the land had to be cleared of sagebrush. Casper, being the only boy big enough, used the grub hoe to clear small patches of sagebrush. Small fields could be plowed around and the brush burned. Jim Miller, a bachelor who had a claim in Sheridan County between the Lucas and Okeson holdings soon became a frequent visitor and friend of the Odegards. He was always willing to lend a hand with the work, especially when rewarded with a good home cooked meal. Casper was often called on to do return work for him.

Mary led a busy life cooking and caring for a big family and raising chickens. She became a member of the 4-G Ladies Club and enjoyed visits with the neighbor ladies.

As time passed two more rooms were added to the original structure of the Odegard home. More cows were acquired and more land cleared for farming. Crops of corn, oats, and spring wheat were planted

and harvested if they weren't hailed out or drouth out. Meadows were cleared of sagebrush with a grub hoe and native grass cut for hay. Surplus eggs, chickens and butter could be sold in Arvada or traded for groceries at McDermotts. Cream in five or eight gallon cans was later shipped to creameries in Nebraska by train. The mailman would pick up cans of cream or cases of eggs and deliver them in Arvada for a small fee. Raising hogs and butchering them for sale brought in some much needed cash.

Elmer Odegard 's health was failing and he could not withstand the cold air in winter and much of the time had to remain indoors. Casper often had to miss school to do the work at home.

During the Asian flu epidemic, Casper and Mamie were so severely ill they had to be hospitalized in the Sheridan Hospital for several weeks. Part of the treatment of the time was to remove a small section of the lower rib, insert drain tubes into the lung cavity and allow the fluid to drain off. Casper had to remain several weeks after Mamie was released. His right lung collapsed and remained so for the rest of his life. Macyle Odegard, the seventh child of Elmer and Mary was born in 1920 at the home of Lucetta Okeson, a practical nurse, who as a midwife delivered several babies in the area.

Casper had assumed much of the responsibility of the ranch work and worked out whenever he could to supplement the family income. Casper and Mamie attended attended High School in Arvada for a year and a half, then dropped out. Elmer had become so ill that doctors advised a warmer climate. He went by train to Riverside, California and lived with his half-sister and her husband for several months. His health was much improved when he returned. Mamie was able to go back to high school and graduated in 1925 and finished normal training.

On his twenty-first birthday, Casper filed on all the open government land around his father's place, increasing it in size as much as possible. That fall, Elmer with his wife and Selmer, Irene and Maycle drove to California. He was hoping this would be a permanent move.

Casper remained at home and sent Earl and Ralph.

They managed without a car. Casper had learned long ago to wash clothes, scrub floors and cook. He could make yeast bread and churn butter. He could butcher and cut up a hog, cure the hams and bacon and fry out the lard, make sausage and even headcheese. Earl and Ralph were old enough to help with the morning and evening chores.

Maycle died suddenly, while the family was in California. Mamie taught school until she married Fred Barton in 1929. Elmer married Anne Stead and enlisted in the Navy. Earl married Hazel Edlund in 1941. Irene married Rufus Chambers in 1935.

Elmer was killed in a pedestrian-truck accident in Pomona, California in 1941. He was brought back and buried in Sheridan.

Mary lived on the ranch for a few more years. She married Charley Okeson in 1945 and they made their home in Sheridan. She passed away at the age of 89 at the Amy Holt Nursing Home in Buffalo. She had outlived all her children except Earl and Ralph. She always said this was her greatest heartache.

Theta Helen Lang came to Wyoming to teach school. She had graduated from High School in Hamburg, Iowa. She attended summer school at Peru State Normal, Nebraska and came to Sundance, Wyoming, in July 1927 for another session of summer school. She taught Lower Bitter Creek School in 1927-1928. May 20, 1929, Casper Odegard and Theta Lang were married in Sheridan, Wyoming. They had met two years before in Sundance. For their two-week honeymoon, they traveled to Hamburg, Iowa to visit her parents, Daniel and Lucy (Hunt) Lang, and other family. They returned home to work the Odegard homestead, which they worked as one unit.

The farming on the Odegard place had been done with horses until 1929. Casper and his father with Selmer as a partner, bought a tractor and equipment and tried farming on shares. Then came the thirties, poor crops, low prices, drought, hail, grasshoppers and crickets, with very little income. Selmer went to work elsewhere, Casper worked out whenever he could leave the work at home. Milk cows could be depended on for milk, cream and butter. During these hard times, cream checks kept food on the table.



**Odegard family - Back: Beverly, Donald, and Phyllis  
Front: Casper, Duane, and Theta, 1946.**



Odegard Family Photo 2014.



Odegard Family Photo 2015.



Ariel view of the Odegard Ranch 2011.



Four children were born to this couple: Donald Casper, on July 19, 1930, Beverly Yvonne (Landrey) on March 20, 1932, Phyllis Jean, November 1933 & Duane Daniel, July 30, 1935.

The children grew up learning how to work, milk cows and ride horses. Bucket calves were fed skim milk and grain & often outweighed calves on the range. Several litters of pigs were raised and fed out. Casper ran a trap line in the wintertime, catching coyotes, badger or bobcat. One year Irene, Earl and Ralph had raised five bum lambs. That fall, coyotes killed them all. Casper evened the score by setting traps by their carcasses and caught five coyotes.

In 1923 Casper had hired out to the Bar C Ranch in Barnum, freighting and haying. He liked the Bar C brand so well the he used his initials and had the Bar C O brand recorded for himself. It was used by Theta, Duane and now Chris Odegard.

The original homestead house was a mile from the highway with a creek crossing and muddy roads. Charley & Lucetta Okeson were selling out and moving to Sheridan and as their house was near the highway, Casper & Theta decided to buy their place, in April of 1944. They began construction on a new ranch house in July 1949. In September of that year, tragedy struck and Casper died suddenly, at the ranch of a massive heart attack. Beverly married Roland Landrey in 1950 and they started their own place on the Powder River. Duane stayed on the ranch and expanded it as circumstances allowed over the years. Duane married Mary Katherine Steinmetz, in April of 1954. Tragedy struck again in 1954 when Phyllis passed away.

Duane and Katherine raised their four children on the Ranch: Vicki, Michael, Brenda & Daniel. Vicki lives in Gillette and has two sons, Rand & Casey Gates. Mike remained on the ranch and raised his sons, Chris and Loren there as well. Brenda married Darrel Ray and lives in Gillette and has two sons, Chancey & Shane Martin. Daniel lives in Panama.

Currently, the Odegard Ranch is a thriving, ranch consisting of a cow/calf operation, trucking & well drilling. There is always a lot going on. Duane &

Katherine live there as well as their son, Michael and his son youngest son, Delton. Chris & Tawnya Odegard also live nearby, with their three daughters Abbie, Khloe & Callie. Altogether Duane & Katherine have seven grandsons and eight great grandchildren. Our family has remained close and we get together at the Ranch for Holidays and Brandings as well as other Ranch functions.



Odegard Family Photo 2017.



Katherine & Duane Odegard 2013.



Odegard Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Riehle Ranch, 1917

## The Riehle Family, Converse County



View from East of the original homestead.

The Riehle family 100 year ranch history all began in Immenhausen, Germany when Jacob Riehle left home to find wide open spaces in a new country. He came over to the United States on a ship in 1901 and settled on some land near other family in Holden, Missouri. Once he was established there, he sent a letter to Germany for his bride (Lena) to come from Immenhausen as well. She arrived in 1903 to join him. They worked there on the farm and started a family, having seven children before leaving Missouri (Mary, August, Pauline, Anna, Herbert, Raymond, and Rowland).

In 1916, Jacob heard of the free land in the west. The desire for more land and more room for his growing family persuaded him to search for a homestead to call their own. After Jacob searched for prospective homesteads in both Montana and Wyoming, they sold their farm in Missouri in the spring of 1917. They loaded their belongings and 7 children into a rail car to travel to their new homestead 2 miles south and 1 mile east of where Bill, Wyoming is today. When they arrived on their new land, they set up two quick shelters that housed the family until they could establish a more permanent house. Those two shelters were eventually used as a chicken house and a tool shed. They managed to grow a garden and some crops, including potatoes, vegetables, and corn. They raised a few pigs as well. Two more children, Dora

and George, were born after arriving in Wyoming. It was very important to them to have good schools and a church for their family, and they worked hard to help establish those things for the community. Their 9 children went to different schools that they had helped establish in the area and were active in the community Sunday School. They eventually attended Dry Creek School in Bill and there is still a rural school at that site today.

Horse and wagon were the main mode of family transportation so when they lost their daughter Dora to influenza in 1923 and the other family members were still ill, only Jacob was able to attend the funeral. In 1924, Jacob was able to purchase a car.

Jacob added to his holdings by buying more land from neighboring ranchers who wanted to leave after proving up on their homesteads. Jacob had always dreamed of raising and managing livestock so when the owner of the nearby Fiddleback Ranch was offering to put sheep out on shares, Jacob took 200 head of sheep. In 1929, Jacob bought some sheep for himself and continued to raise sheep until his retirement in 1944. Jacob and Lena quit actively ranching and bought some land 2 miles north of Douglas that they moved to in 1947. They lived there until their passing in 1967 and 1959 respectively. Two of their children, August and George, stayed on and



continued to ranch on the family land.

August Riehle homesteaded on Cow Creek (northeast of Bill, WY) in 1925 and acquired a few cattle. Two of his sisters, Pauline and Anna also took out homesteads in the same area, which he eventually acquired from them. In 1935 August married Ela “June” Good and had two children, Wayne in 1936 and Donna in 1938. Jacob sold his sheep to August when he retired and they owned and raised sheep until they changed to raising Hereford cattle in the late 1940s. He and George began to transition to Black Angus cattle in the 1950s. In 1950, August and June bought some additional land on Lightning Creek and the family moved to that location. In 1954, they built a home on Lightning Creek where John Riehle, his grandson, currently lives and the ranching operation is still headquartered. August and June both lived on the ranch on Lightning Creek until their passing in 1995 and 2006 respectively.

George Riehle was too young to take out a homestead at the time that the homesteading act closed, but he returned to ranch with his dad after finishing school. He was drafted into the army and fought in World War II at the Battle of the Bulge where he froze his feet and spent six months in the hospital before returning home in 1945. In 1953 he purchased a ranch adjacent to the Lightning Creek place August had purchased in 1950. He and his nephew Wayne Riehle purchased a small irrigated farm together on the North Platte River south of Douglas, Wyoming in 1981, which is still used for hay production today. George moved to the Lightning Creek place in the early 1950s when he and August decided to combine their operations, and continued to ranch there until his passing in 2008.

Wayne Riehle returned to the ranch full time after graduating high school in 1954. Wayne was drafted into the army in 1958 and he served two years and was later recalled in 1961 and served until 1962. He married Georgia “Jan” Amsden in 1961 and they had three children, Pamela in 1962, Lori in 1964, and John in 1979. In 1961 they moved a house onto the place George had bought in 1953, and they continue to live there today. In 1966 they were one of the founding members of the Deer Creek Grazing Association south of Glenrock, Wyoming.



Left to Right, Back: Jacob, Anna, Pauline, Mary, August; Middle: Raymond, Herbert, Roland, Lena; Front: George (1925)



Left to Right: George, Wayne, June, Donna, and August Riehle in front of their house on Cow Creek.

John Riehle, the fourth generation, returned to the family ranch full time after graduating with a degree in Ag Business from the University of Wyoming in 2001. He is running the ranch as a Black Angus cow/calf/yearling operation and has continued to expand by acquiring another ranch to the east of the Lightning Creek place. His parents, sisters, nephews, nieces, and other family members help him whenever they can.

The Riehle Ranch, as any other operation, has changed over time. It has transitioned over the years from farming to sheep to Hereford cattle to Black Angus cattle, and from dams to windmills to solar wells today. The constant has been working together as a family. Any ranch that can persevere for 100 years can attribute its success to the forward-thinking vision and hard work of all the preceding generations.



Left to Right: Raymond, George and Roland Riehle with a calf on the homestead.



Family horse on Jacob's homestead.



Full corn cribs on the homestead.



Dora Riehle, age 4.



Farm hogs.





Left to Right: George, August and Wayne Riehle in the early 80s discussing ranch business at the scale.



Yearling steers ready to head to summer pasture (May 1965).



Cattle coming to feed on the Riehle Ranch in 2017.



Riehle Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Roy Bevan Homestead/Holmes-Churchill Ranches, 1914

Shirley & Brad Churchill, Laramie County



Bevan home in Iowa - John, Hannah, Roy, Mary, Georgella, and Edward. This was before Roy lost his leg in a wagon wheel in Iowa.

Roy Herbert Bevan was born December 6, 1887 in Chariton, Iowa to John and Hannah (Johnson) Bevan. He was their oldest child followed by two sisters; Georgella Bevan Holmes (1889), Mary J. Bevan Berry (1893), and younger brother John Edward Bevan (1897).

Roy came to Wyoming the first time in 1910 at the age of 22 with his brother-in-law Floyd R. Holmes, Sr. and Gene Curtis. The men filed with the land office for their joining homesteads and returned to Iowa to each rent a railroad car to bring their livestock, equipment, and housing goods to make a start in Wyoming. The three men lived in a barn Floyd had built until each could get their homestead shacks built.

Roy took his homestead on the east half of Section 6, Township 16 North, Range 65 West. This homestead was approximately 21 miles north-northeast of Cheyenne in the area which later became known as the Divide community. Also coming to the Divide area to homestead in 1910, along with Roy and sister and brother-in-law Georgella and Floyd R. Holmes, Sr., were Roy's parents John and Hannah Bevan and sister Mary (Mrs. J.C. Berry). Roy proved up on his claim and received patent for his homestead on December 16, 1914 from the United States Land Office signed by President Woodrow Wilson.

The Roy Bevan Homestead was transferred to sister and husband Georgella and Floyd R. Holmes, Sr. Floyd and Georgella passed this half section

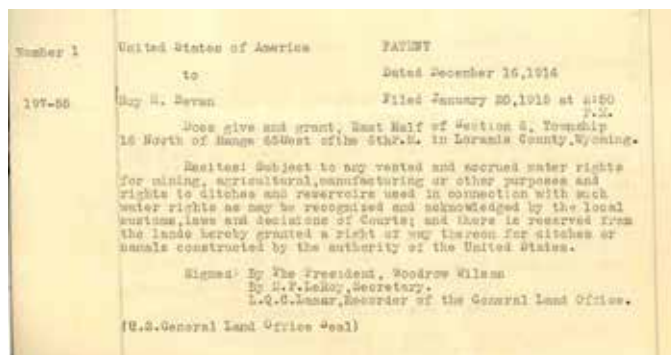


homestead to their son Floyd R. Holmes, Jr. and wife Berniece, becoming part of the “Down East” unit of their ranch.

At their passing this land transferred to their daughter, Shirley. Roy was her great uncle. Today the Roy Bevan Centennial Homestead is under the ownership of Shirley and Brad Churchill.



Roy with sister Georgella.



First entry on the abstract of the Roy Bevan Homestead.



Roy with family at Mary Bevan Homestead in Wyoming, 1914.



Bevan home in Iowa. Hannah Bevan, Hannah's mother, Mary Bevan, Georgella Bevan, a friend, Edward Bevan, Roy Bevan with colt.



Churchill Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Steinle Ranch, 1917

## Steinle Family, Converse County



Steinle Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

Gustav Adolf Steinle immigrated from Germany with his family in 1910. In 1917, he and son Ernest came to eastern Wyoming to homestead on a section 3 miles north of what is now Bill, Wyoming. The rest of the family followed shortly. Sons Ernest and Fred took nearby homesteads as soon as they were old enough.

In 1928 Ernie married Mary Riehle and their home became the site of the current ranch headquarters. Gustav, Ernie and Fred all bought out neighboring homesteaders, just in time for the 1929 stock market crash. Working together, they were able to hang on and make their payments.

In 1934 Gustav moved to Billings, Montana, where

a good job would help pay off his debts, and Ernie managed the ranching operations. Ernie bought out his siblings and consolidated the ranch in the years to come, adding lands as opportunity arose.

Ernie and Mary had 3 children. Bill, Carl & Betty. Son Bill was involved with the ranch all his life, and son Carl returned to the ranch in 1978. Ernie died in 1979, and Bill in 1988. Carl and his wife Darlene kept operations going until their youngest son Larry joined them in 1993. Carl continues to help Larry and his family as they look to the future.



# Sunny Slope Ranch, 1916

## The Michael & Dorothy Slattery Family, Campbell County



1940s, getting sheep ready for shearing.

Charles (Charlie) J. Slattery and Bridget (Bea) S. Boyle Slattery purchased the homestead land southeast of Rozet, Wy. with some of the money Bea had saved from school teaching. Charlie landed in Rozet on March 17, 1916 with his Emigrant Railroad car. In the car he had all his possessions, horses, milk cow, machinery, and household goods. They came from O'Neil, Nebraska, where Charlie, Bea, and son Joe were born.

They were one of many homesteaders that filed on a section of land with nothing on it but grass, sagebrush, and cactus. Charlie built a two room house with the help of Fred Duvall, and a four stall barn. Then Charlie helped Fred build his homestead house to the north. They were both frame houses. Bea and Joe, age 3, joined Charlie in May, after the house and barn were built. They built two more rooms on in 1928 the year before the big crash of the economy. Charlie and Bea bought out the other homesteaders land as they left which increased the size of their place.

Charlie spent half of his time wrangling his horses and hauling water, until he got some fences built and a well dug. Jack Wolfe and Charlie dug out a spring about a mile northwest of the house and northeast of Jack's homestead. Charlie and Bea hauled water from there by the barrellful for about a year and a half. He finally got Newt Hammil to come and drill a

well. Money was short so he traded a horse and paid the balance in cash.

In the twenties Charlie bought a Model T car. It had to be pushed or backed up hills. It sure wasn't like his horses. One day he drove up to a gate and hollered whoa-- sure didn't stop the car from going through the gate! One hot July day he laid his curved stem pipe in the seat and the sun straightened the stem, the car had to go. He didn't own another vehicle till 1935. He bought a Chevy pickup and had pickups the rest of his life. It bothered him that he was never a good driver.

Bea raised chickens and a big garden every year. She canned everything she could for winter food. There were a lot of hot days spent working in the fields but she always had a meal ready after Charlie and Joe took care of the horses. Her evenings were spent sewing and doing all kinds of needle work. Charlie and Joe were very sick from the World War I flu leaving Bea to care for them plus cook and do all the chores. She was very lucky not to get the flu.

Bea was a school teacher before she was married, saving her money so after they married they purchased feeder pigs to be brought to Rozet by train, which were raised for butchering. There was no schooling available for the homesteaders so Bea



1949, Bea, Charlie, and neighbors in front of sheep wagon.



1925, rabbit hunting party at the Slattery Ranch.



1926, threshing grain by Charlie, son Joe and Leo.

taught Joe for the first two years. Charlie and Bea helped folks promote the Rozet Consolidated School so Joe was able to graduate from Rozet High School in 1930. Charlie served on the school board for 16 years and later Joe served on the board for 12 years.

The Dirty Thirties came and between the grasshoppers and the drought you couldn't do anything. In 1934 the cows had the scab and were dipped in a vat on the neighboring Shipwheel Ranch. Plowing the fields was done with three head of horses until they were tired, then Charlie would grub sagebrush while Bea piled it up and burned it so he could plow the next day. Crops were planted. The price of beans was good so Charlie and Fred Duvall were looking at making a good profit. The crop was pretty good but by the time they found a huller and got them harvested the price had dropped. Not much profit was made.

Hogs, chickens, sheep, and gradually beef cattle, by the current generation, were raised. The crops were potatoes sold in town, hay, oats, wheat, barley, and rye to feed their own livestock.

Charlie passed away in 1949 leaving Bea, Joe, and his family to carry on. Joe's parents had helped Joe and Callie purchase Fred Duvall's place two miles to the north of their ranch where they raised nine children. Bea remained on the ranch until she passed away at the age of 87 in 1976.

In 1973 Mike and Dorothy were married and moved to the ranch. In 1980 the ranch was sold to Mike and Dorothy where they raised four children. Their grandchildren and great-grandchildren continue to be a part of the ranching life.

Now Mike and Dorothy continue to raise cattle with the help of their four children, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren who all help with the spring branding and fall shipping of calves.

Mike and Dorothy started Sunny Slope Loomix in 1989, a liquid cattle supplement for added income to the ranch and it is still in operation. Also, Dorothy, like Joe and Charlie Slattery, has driven a school bus for 34 years seeing three generations of rural families growing up.



In May of 2017 a 101 Celebration of the ranch was held with over 400 people attending. There was a bar-b-q of roast hog representing the way the ranch was started, a steak fry for the beef raised today on the ranch, and a dance in honor of Charlie Slattery's years he played his fiddle with his greatgranddaughter, Christina Foster, playing on his original fiddle that he played at many of the country dances. A display of ranch history, black tie/white shirt branding, and many of Dorothy's bus students, from the first ones to the last ones that rode with her, helped celebrate.

The dreams of the future are for the ranch to continue to prosper under the future generations as we are only the keepers of the land for a short time.



1947, Charlie and Bea 35 year anniversary.



1940s, sheep grazing east of ranch buildings.



Charles and Bea Slattery wedding day, 6-17-1912, O'Neil, Neb.



1940s sheep shearing.



Bea in front of homestead with pig and chickens, 1925.



1980s sheep shearing.



1930s, Charlie and Bea in front of the homestead.



Joe and Callie Slattery family (9 children).



Mike and Dorothy Slattery family, 1982.





Mike and Dorothy Slattery family, 2017.



Sunny Slope Ranch greeting sign in front of old homestead house.



Mike and Dorothy Slattery, 2017, 100 Year Celebration.

BRAND CERTIFICATE	
THE STATE OF WYOMING, BOARD OF LIVE STOCK COMMISSIONERS, SECRETARY'S OFFICE.	
I HEREBY CERTIFY that in conformity with Chapter 126 Session Laws 1915, the following described stock brand was recorded on the 20th day of March, 1917.	
in Book, 15, Page 106 of the 1915-1916 State Brand Record, in the name of Charles J. Slattery at Moorcroft	
for the Count of 2 at Frank A. Cawthell	
who claims the ownership and was placed for the purpose stated.	
BRAND	MARKING
J2	TO BE USED IN CONNECTION HERETO: RIGHT LEFT
	
Cattle Left Hip	
Horses Left Shoulder	
Stamp	
IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and official seal of the Board of Live Stock Commissioners this 20th day of March, A.D. 1917.	
Secretary Board of Live Stock Commissioners	
(This brand must be re-recorded in 1925.)	

Original Lazy S J Brand certificate, 1917.



2017, Ranch History wall at the 100 Year Celebration.

[illegible]

### Receipt of Homestead Compliance.



2017, Ranch History wall at the 100 Year Celebration.



Slattery Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.



# T-K Ranch, 1900

## The Clay Family, Albany County



The barn on the T-K Ranch still has the original wood floor.

In October of 1900, John and Hulda Olson and their children, Emma and Harry moved to this ranch, which they purchased from George Hutton. Originally from Sweden, John received his citizenship papers in 1894 and had worked in the area for the Union Pacific Railway and the Phil Bath ranch. This purchase was small, so the Olson's began buying land nearby. The upper and lower meadows were bought from Sarah Bird in 1905 and 1909, who had originally homesteaded the land.. This land patent was signed by Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States. John, Hulda, and John's brother Charley then homesteaded properties east and west of the ranch on Sheep Mountain. When Harry was old enough he proved up on a strip there as well. Many years later Harry proved up on a secondary homestead northwest on Bald Mountain. In 1934, the family bought meadowland which was part of the historic Walbol Ranch, more recently known as the Dinwiddie Ranch, in Centennial Valley.

For many of the early years, the Olson Ranch was a station for the exchange of passengers and mail to and from Albany and Keystone. Hulda Olson boarded and fed these guests. Many of these travelers were timber workers from the American Timber Company or the Carbon Timber Company. They developed a kindred feeling for this family from the 'old country' where many of them came from. Board was 25 cents a meal or 75 cents a day. This was the beginning of the original guest business.

Ole Anderson and Gust Westerlund, skilled Swedes, built the eleven room log family home in 1913. The remarkable craftsmanship is evident to this day, inside and out. Double-tapered dove tail building logs were used on the house. There are no nails in the logs. The big hip roof barn was built in 1917 with stalls for work horses, saddle horses, and a big hay mow to store hay. The Olsons used a team of horses and wagon to haul hay and cream to Laramie, 30 miles away. The barn was used for many community

events and dances over the years with friends and neighbors coming from miles away and is now a valley landmark.

In 1927, Wana Schroeder Clay, a widow with four young sons, moved from Missouri to west Laramie where her father John Schroeder had property and raised Angus cattle and Missouri mules. John Schroeder was a House Representative for Albany County in early 1900s. Wana taught in rural schools then and became very active in education the rest of her life. She was State Superintendent of Special Education at one time and advocated for children the rest of her life in Wyoming. In 1927 she finally married Harry Olson after many years of courtship and moved to the Olson Ranch.

Continuing the hospitality at the Olson Ranch, Harry and Wana became host and hostess to many guests from all over the world, who came to this beautiful place to rest and fish in the wonderful trout rivers. It became a working cattle ranch and dude ranch after Wana's son Perry and his family came in 1959. His wife Gloria, daughter Riki, and sons Bill and Jim became involved in all aspects of the ranch. They cared for guests in the summer offering horseback riding and fishing cabins. In the spring they stayed busy working cattle, haying, and calving.

The ranch had also been raising and showing Hereford cattle since the 1930s when John Olson and son Harry traveled to the National Western Stock Show in Denver. The cattle were shipped by rail. They also exhibited at the San Francisco Cow Palace where they had the Grand Champion Exhibit with their Hereford cattle pen. The University of Wyoming also exhibited and showed the ranch cattle at the Kansas City Royal and Denver Stock Show. The T-K Ranch has always strived to raise good cattle for the show ring and for the current markets. The ranch also has raised a number of good quarter horses and kept a band of registered mares throughout the years. Today the ranch still raises quality cattle and shows and sells feeder club calves for 4-H and FFA participants.

Perry passed away in the fall of 2017, leaving his wife Gloria, son Jim, and daughter-in-law Maggie on the ranch. Bill and his wife Amy are building a home on the ranch and are moving back to Centennial Valley.

Riki and her husband come home as often as possible and would like to retire and spend time on the river and enjoy the beautiful valley. Hopefully this ranch we call the T-K Ranch will hold many more memories for our family and friends. The sixth generation of children now come back for holidays and visits, and treasure this special place.



Harry Olson with his wife Wana Schrader Clay Olson, whom he married in 1954. Harry's parents purchased the T-K Ranch in 1900 when Harry was three months old.



The log house, completed in 1914 by two Swedes who each earned \$1.00 per day and room and board, is built without nails.



# Vollman Ranch, 1917

## The Vollman Family, Converse County



The original homestead that Vollman's bought from the Kurtz family in 1932. It also has the 1927 John Deere D tractor that they purchased brand new. This tractor is still owned by Bob Vollman.

Our story begins May 1, 1917, when William (Bill Sr.) Robert John Vollman married Flora (Flo) Elsen Brown in Lincoln Nebraska. One month later, the newlyweds along with Bill's mother Fredricka, made the journey to Douglas, WY and filed on two homesteads 30 miles northwest of Douglas. The trio lived in a tent and sheep wagon until they were able to build a rock house for Bill Sr. and Flo and a small wood shack for Fredricka on the second homestead. They shipped their household goods, machines, horses, and livestock by emigrant train car which they unloaded in Orpha, 10 miles northwest of Douglas. Bill Sr. often traveled 25 miles away to Glenrock, where he worked as an electrician and carpenter. Flo taught school and did so for 17 years. Although, they had an old Model T Ford car that had been converted into a pickup, most of their supplies had to be hauled by a team and wagon from either Douglas or Glenrock.

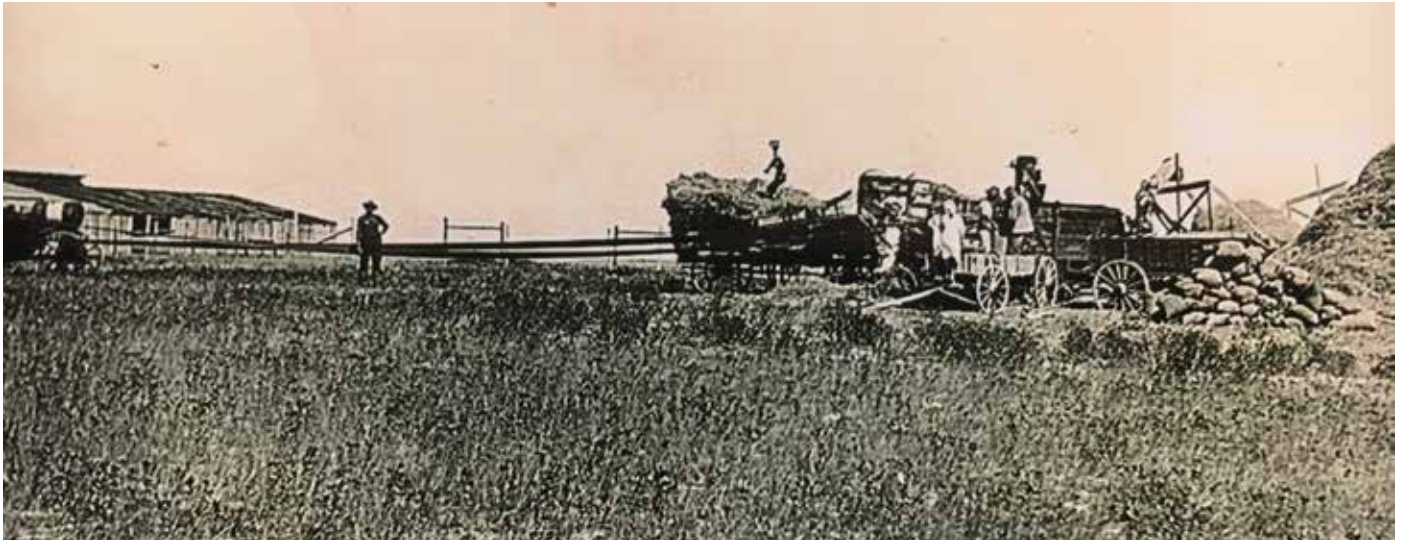
In the beginning of their homesteading adventure, there was still a lot of open range and they saw many roundups. Bill Sr. and Flo boarded a Range Detective with the Wyoming Stockgrower's Association when a fellow homesteader was under suspicion for rustling cattle. All the detective found was some stolen wire under a haystack. The thief was asked to leave or face prosecution. He left.

On August 5, 1921, Bill Sr. and Flo welcomed their only child William (Bill Jr.) Vollman. Being an only child was lonely for Bill Jr. but luckily his cousins, Kenneth, Iola, and Darrell Taylor lived nearby.

They purchased their first tractor in 1928, a John Deere Model D which was bought from Gene L. Payne Co. Gene sold and serviced many tractors in the area including a tractor owned by neighbor Albert Spillman. The Model D and the Spillman tractors are both owned today by Bob Vollman. Bill Sr. also purchased a threshing machine in 1928 after neighbor, Albert Spillman, lost his wooden threshing machine to a fire. Bill Sr. and another homesteader, Don Reeder spent about two months each fall threshing for neighbors as far away as 25 miles.

In 1932, the family began buying other homesteads from homesteaders that decided not to stay. The Kurtz place, which was one mile north of the original homestead, was the first one they bought. They decided to move there because the water was drinkable. Most of the buildings were moved to the Kurtz place and the original Kurtz house is now the middle section of the existing barn. The Martz place and Ridgeway's were bought shortly after followed by the Melvina and Ledgewood homesteads.

The land allowed them to farm and ranch, running



The Vollman and Spillman families threshing grain with Albert Spillman's tractor. This tractor is now owned by Bob Vollman.

Hereford cattle and a small herd of sheep; they sold off the sheep in the mid-1930s. 1932 to 1934 were extremely dry years and livestock prices were very low. In 1934 the government paid \$20 for a cow but the thin ones had to be disposed of. The fleshier cattle were shipped by train to Omaha or Chicago.

For a time they also raised hogs. In 1934 hogs were bringing \$4.00 a hundred so they butchered some and made sausage to sell at fifteen cents a pound or two pounds for a quarter. They also had milk cows, chickens, and a few turkeys which produced eggs and cream to sell. Every Thursday, they would butcher fryer chickens to sell, as well, for fifty cents each. Around 1945 they began phasing out the Hereford line and transitioned to Black Angus.

Fredricka died on March 20, 1947 at the age of 86. Bill Jr. married Alice Leeling on June 29, 1947 and they had three children, Vicki (1948), Bob (1952), and Lori (1958). All three grew up on the ranch and attended school in Douglas.

In 1958 they bought the Fred Domsalla place west of the main ranch. On April 5, 1967, Bill Sr. passed away; Flo and Vicki died less than a year later on March 25, 1968 in an auto accident. Shortly before her death Vicki married Kenny Pickinpaugh. In 1971 the Clay Layton place was purchased, Alice and Lori spent two winters there to look after the cattle while Bill and Bob looked after things at the ranch.

Vollman Ranch was incorporated in 1972 becoming Vollman Ranches Inc.

In 1972, Bob married Chris Anderson and they had two sons, Brady (1975) and Jared (1978). Shortly after the Don Hildebrand farm was bought and became home to Bob and his family. Brady and Jared were raised on the farm and went to school in Douglas. Extensive work on the ground and irrigation has been done over the years to optimize production of hay and corn silage. Bob started running sheep again around 1973 and has grown the herd substantially since then.

Growing up, Lori lived and worked on the ranch graduating from Douglas High School in 1976 and then attended Casper College for two years. In 1987, Lori married Darrell Brown and they moved to Missouri and still live there today.

Bill and Alice moved to town in 1987 to enjoy retirement which consisted of Bill driving 28 miles to the ranch most every day to take care of the livestock. Around 1993 some of the Morton Ranch was purchased which includes Box Creek, Skunk Creek, and Jenkins.

In 1997, Brady married Roni Hunter after attending two years at Casper College. They have a daughter, Lauryn (2006), and make their home on the farm. The Joe Whiting farm was acquired in 1999 and





Bill senior, Fredericka, and Flo Vollman standing by the wood shack that was built for Flo on her homestead.



Rock house Bill senior and Fredericka built on their original homestead.



Bill senior binding hay.



Vollman Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

neighbors the existing farm. This is where Bob calls home and brings all his treasures to rust.

In 2000, Jared married Mandy Hirsch, also after completing two years at Casper College. They have three children, Joslyn (2003), Cadence (2005), and Zander (2007) and they all live at the ranch.

Today, in addition to the land acquired through the years Vollman Ranches leases land from Lee Fowler, Bridget Combs Paich, and Pacific Corp.

A lot has changed over the past 100 years but our love for the land and livestock still remains strong.

# Wedemeyer Gard Schulz Ranch, 1913

## The Wedemeyer Family, Laramie County



Schulz homestead.

**H**omer W. Gard and Peter Schulz along with their spouses both homesteaded 2 miles apart in Platte and Laramie counties, south of Chugwater, WY. The two homesteads would eventually be merged into the current ranch after the marriage of Homer and Theresa Gard's son, Francis, and Peter and Hedwig Schulz's daughter, Hildegard (Hilda).

### *Schulz Homestead:*

Peter Schulz was born in Hamburg, Germany in 1877. All German boys were required to serve in the German army. Peter was trained as a sharpshooter for the German army. Prior to immigrating to America, he was employed as a horticulturalist in Germany. Peter immigrated to America in 1901 and made his way to Hartford, SD. He wired for his fiancée, Hedwig Pensold, the following year and they were married in Hartford, SD on December 25, 1902.

Hedwig's brother, Max Pensold had homesteaded in the area southeast of Chugwater, WY. He encouraged the Schulz's to homestead in the area as well. In 1912, Peter and Hedwig along with their two daughters, Meta and Hildegard, came to Wyoming and filed for a homestead claim southeast of Chugwater.

The Schulz's proved up on their claim for the next 5 years by raising cattle and selling grain, cream, and

eggs. They would haul their grain, cream, and eggs by wagon into Chugwater (10 miles away), to sell at the train depot. Many other homesteaders in the area failed to prove up on their claims. As a result they either sold to neighbors or the land was returned to the U.S. Government. Throughout the years Peter and Hedwig Schulz purchased some of these claims adding acreage to their homestead.

The Schulz's daughters, Meta and Hildegard (Hilda), were schooled at home through the 8th grade. A teacher lived with the family and provided education for the girls. Meta married Frank Bliss. Frank and his brother lived 3 miles north of the Schulz homestead. Frank and Meta had two boys, John Henry and Edward Carl Bliss. They eventually moved to their own place west of the Schulz's in 1936.

Hilda went to high school in Cheyenne, WY and boarded with a doctor and his wife, working for her room and board. She received a normal teaching certificate after high school and taught in Egbert, WY for a year. She then went on to the University of Wyoming and received her teaching degree in 1931. She taught school in Cheyenne for the next 13 years.

Peter and Hedwig would continue to ranch and live on the original homestead until Hedwig's death in 1954 and Peter's death in 1958. Hilda and her





Original Gard house.



Original Gard barn.



Peter and Hedwig Schulz.

husband, Francis Gard, would eventually continue the operation.

#### *Gard Homestead:*

Homer Willard Gard was born in Crown Point, IN in 1877. Theresa Massoth was born in Cordova, NE in 1880. She was a milliner by trade prior to coming to Wyoming. The couple married in Geneva, NE on October 23, 1906 and had two children, Homer (Francis) Gard (1907) and Regina Gard (1912). Homer W. came to Wyoming to homestead in 1913. The Gard homestead was located 10 miles south of Chugwater. The Cheyenne-Deadwood stage route went directly through their place. Years later I-25 was constructed and intersected the Gard place again. Homer W. worked around the Chugwater community as a carpenter. He built many homes and businesses in Chugwater and in the surrounding area. He wired back to Nebraska for his wife Theresa and their children. They joined him on the homestead in 1914. He had built a house, other outbuildings, and later a large barn. The barn was, and still is, a known landmark along Highway 87 (Old Yellowstone Highway). People came from miles around with horses and buggies for the popular barn dances that were held in the barn's loft. Theresa's piano was hoisted up into the hayloft for these dances, where other musicians would join her to provide music for the dances. This barn is still standing and has been preserved by the family to hopefully last for another 100 years.

Through the years Homer W. Gard and Theresa purchased more land from other homesteaders who had left the area. They raised cattle and grain on the place. Francis and Regina attended rural schools near their home and later Chugwater High School. Francis was in the very first graduating class of Chugwater High School in 1925.

Regina married Leanord Anderson in 1935 and lived in Douglas, WY. She died in childbirth in 1939.

Francis attended the University of Wyoming after high school for one year. He then returned to the ranch. During the depression he worked for the Farm Service Agency in Cheyenne. He then joined the Army and served as a sergeant during World War II from 1942-



Homer and Theresa Gard.



Sgt. Francis Gard.

1945 with the 37th Calvary Reconnaissance Troop as a Draftsman. He was discharged from the army in 1945 and returned home.

Homer W. Gard passed away in 1954 from the result of injuries sustained in a car accident. Theresa continued to live on the ranch until her death in 1967.

#### *Schulz/Gard Homesteads are Combined:*

When Francis returned from World War II, he married Hilda Schulz in 1946, which was the beginning of joining the Schulz and Gard ranches. Hilda finished her year out teaching and then moved to the ranch with Francis. They lived just down the road from the original Gard homestead in a one room house until their house could be completed. They farmed and raised cattle on the combined homestead places. The couple had two daughters, Patricia Ann born in 1947 and Karen Frances born in 1948. Both girls attended school and graduated from Chugwater High School.

Patricia left the ranch and graduated from the Barnes Business School in Denver. She married and had three daughters, Theresa, Lisa, and Pamela.

Karen attended the University of Wyoming and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in 1971. In 1970 she married Russell (Gregory) Wedemeyer, who grew up along the Laramie River, west of Wheatland, WY. Russ and Karen leased the ranch from Francis and Hilda until Hilda's death in 2003, With Francis's death in 2004 Russ and Karen assumed ownership of the ranch.

#### *Wedemeyer Ranch:*

Russ and Karen continue to ranch on the combined Schulz and Gard places. They have a cow/calf operation, raising Hereford cattle. They have lived on the original Gard homestead for the last 46 years. The couple had five daughters, Rebecca (died in 1976), Shelly, Carrie, Kristy, and Cindy. All four girls graduated from Chugwater High School, making them the third generation to do so. The girls have blessed Russ and Karen with 11 grandchildren. Their daughters and grandchildren come back to the ranch to help and continue the legacy and family traditions of the two pioneering families.

We cherish our ranching heritage and are privileged to be entrusted with the ranches operation.



*Lumber Estimate*

**TERMS**

*Handwritten Terms:*  
All accounts are due at end of the month in which charge is made. Settlement in full must be made within 45 days from date of charge, either by cash or bankable notes. Interest will be charged on all notes and past due accounts at full legal rates.

**STATEMENT**

**Ranch Supplies**

Chugwater, Wyo.

*2-6-15*

**CHUGWATER TRADING CO.**

In account with *H.W. Gard*  
*Harlock Neb.*

*16x24's*

Date	Slip Number	Charges	Credits
18	2x8-16	324 Balance	
5	2x6-16	80	
52	2x4-8	278	
26	2x4-12	208	
18	2x4-16	192	
		1142	
1400	11 Siding	35 00	
900	11 Siding	27 00	
480	11 Siding	16 80	
3	Bldg Paper	4 20	
4	10x24-4x12s	7 00	
4	- - - Frames	7 00	
2	2x6s Doors	5 50	
2	- - - Frames	4 00	
1	2x6s -	2 65	
1	- - - Frames	1 25	
1280	11 Board	47 35	
75	11 8x10 Nails	3 00	
25	- 16s -	1 00	
25	- 3s -	1 00	
6000	Shingles A+	19 50	
3	1x6x8 Trim	1 05	
12	1x6x8 Posts	25	
		813 25	
	5%	10 65	
		202 60	

Receipt for supplies for the original Gard homestead barn.



Wedemeyer farm, 1995.



Francis and Hilda Gard.



Russ and Karen Wedemeyer.



Original Gard Homestead barn, present day.



Wedemeyer grandkids.



# **U K Ranch, 1897**

Rosalie Brimmer, Crook County



Rosalie Brimmer, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Croonberg Ranch, Inc., 1917

Jean P. Croonberg & Belinda J. Croonberg,  
Albany County



Croonberg Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.



# Lane Ranch, 1917

## Lane Family, Converse County



Lane Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.

# Rice Ranch, Inc., 1914

## Gary Rice, Washakie County



Gary Rice, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.



# Schlautmann Ranch, LLC., 1917

## Ron Schlautmann Family, Campbell County



Schlautmann Family, Sen. John Barrasso, Rep. Liz Cheney, Sen. Mike Enzi, Gov. Matthew H. Mead.







Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources  
Historic Preservation Office  
Barrett Building, 3rd Floor  
2301 Central Avenue  
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Phone: (307) 777-7697



Front Cover Photo: Davidson Rockypoint Farm, Campbell County  
Back Cover Photo: The Lee-Davidson Ranch, Crook County