



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

2020-2021 WYOMING CENTENNIAL FARM AND RANCH YEARBOOK



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Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources

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Governor Mark Gordon and Jennie Gordon at the Wyoming Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony, 2021.



Dear Centennial Farm and Ranch Families,

Jennie and I are honored to congratulate you on your inclusion in the 2020-21 Centennial Farm and Ranch Yearbook. Every year Wyoming celebrates operations that have spanned a century or more and to highlight this accomplishment. It is a way to thank these remarkable outfits for helping to preserve our culture and history here in Wyoming. This year especially points out the value of perseverance and grit. Depending on where you ranch or farm, you demonstrate the character that distinguishes Wyoming's legacy. You have made it through drought and blizzard, flood and fire, kept your sense of humor and your eyes firmly on the future. Your inclusion in this book bears testimony to yours and your families' dedication to agriculture, your community, Wyoming, and our home. That takes the work ethic Wyoming people are famous for.

Lord knows it was not easy to start or run a business 100 years ago. It isn't any easier to keep one going today. In addition to the weather and markets, we now often have to protect our legacy from federal government policies increasingly unaligned with what makes sense here on the ground where we produce food and fiber. Still, ranchers and farmers are a hardy and canny lot. The operations we celebrate today would not be here were it not for the following generations, which continue that heritage.

Markets will always fluctuate, styles will vary, technology will continue to expand and knowledge will improve ever faster. But your relationship to the land is what feeds our country. While many are moving away from the land and looking for food to come in boxes, your family would not have made it here if it didn't embrace the land and care for it. Wyoming still has more livestock than people, and we are still one big town with long streets. One can't talk about Wyoming without pointing out the care our ranchers and farmers have for their home place and their neighbors. We still ride for the brand.

As you celebrate this wonderful achievement in a remarkable year. Jennie and I extend our most sincere congratulations.

Sincerely,

Mark Gordon

Governor of Wyoming

The Ahlbrandt Homestead, 1921

The Ahlbrandt Family, Goshen County



Aerial view of Ahlbrandt Homestead looking north, 2019.

Herman Ahlbrandt, my grandfather, was a Volga German and emigrated from Russia to the United States as part of the Volga Deutschen migration in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Many Volga German immigrants became farmers in states including Pennsylvania, Colorado, Nebraska, Montana, and Wyoming¹. Herman won Tract 217 in the North Platte irrigation project drawing on September 9, 1921, as reported in the Torrington Telegram on September 8 and 14, 1921. Herman was a U.S. Army veteran of World War I and the town of Veteran was appropriately named for the many veterans who established farms in this area. Veteran was incorporated in 1922. The 160.13-acre homestead is in Goshen County, Wyoming. An adjacent homestead, the Peterson Homestead was acquired in 1925.

Most drawing winners initially built tar paper houses, because they had to show immediate occupancy of the land. Herman built a basement house there later; it was hand dug with hand-mixed and poured

concrete. It remains part of the Ahlbrandt Homestead today. The Ahlbrandt family lived in the original basement until 1963 when the above ground portion of the homestead house was completed.

The homestead was originally dry land. On November 24, 1926, the Goshen Irrigation District (GID) was formed following the construction of an irrigation system on the North Platte River. Irrigation water to the farm originates at the Guernsey Reservoir and passes through a series of irrigation networks, including the Fort Laramie Canal, which crosses the Ahlbrandt Homestead property.

In Goshen County, German immigrants, such as Herman, were known for their skill in growing sugar beets and winter wheat. Sugar beets were raised on the Ahlbrandt Homestead for many years following the completion of the canal. Originally sugar beet field work was done by horses; hand labor was required for many years. The horse-drawn plow that Herman used to break the homestead sod is incorporated into an entry sign on the current farm.



Ahlbrandt Homestead with original walk behind, horse drawn; plow that was originally used to farm the land.

Prior to completion of the canal, Herman raised crops including watermelons. Hazel Denney (English teacher to my father, mother and siblings) wrote a book entitled *Veteran, District 13: Homesteading in Goshen Hole*². In this book she writes:

It seems that a number of the settlers planted watermelons that year. Herman Ahlbrandt had an abundant crop. For some reason watermelons do very well on sod newly turned. So, Herman decided to take a load of watermelons to Wheatland to get money to pay the freight for a riding plow which his mother sent him. (Note: this walk behind, horse drawn plow now resides at the Ahlbrandt Homestead sign at the farm). He had a big team but the road up over the rim was so steep that the horses couldn't make it up the hill.

Luckily, Herman ended up selling the watermelons; at first, he sold them for 25 cents and later 5 cents (Denney, 1976, p.69-70). Cattle and livestock were also raised. Receipts show that during the Great Depression, Herman sold eggs in Torrington for as little as 1 cent apiece.

During World War II, the town of Veteran housed a P.O.W. camp for Italian and Japanese soldiers. Interestingly a pistol (Ruger-style) was found in one



Herman and Catherine Ahlbrandt.

of our fields. Some of these prisoners stayed on in Goshen County after the war and became farmers.

Herman and Catherine had five children: Helen, Woodrow, Art, Roland and Calvin. Education was very important to the Ahlbrandts. Roland became a pharmacist and Calvin was a professor of mathematics at the University of Missouri. Woodrow attended the University of Wyoming, but was drafted into the U.S. Navy in World War II, serving on the aircraft carrier, U.S.S. Tarawa. Herman passed away in 1971 and Catherine passed in 1999. Woodrow passed in 2003; his wife, Mary Helen, is currently 96 and resides in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

I (Thomas) am the eldest son of Woodrow and Mary Helen Ahlbrandt. They had six children: Thomas, Susan, Ray, Peggy and John. (A son, Brian, died



Mary Helen and Woodrow Ahlbrandt's wedding photo.

¹Karen Schulte, 2010, *The Ticket*, London Street Press, 340 p.

² Hazel Denney, 1976, *Veteran, District 13: Homesteading in Goshen Hole*, Dorrance and Company, Philadelphia and Ardmore, PA, 251 p.



Mary Helen, Thomas, Woodrow (on couch), Susan and Ray at Homestead, 1958.

shortly after birth). All of Woodrow and Mary Helen's children graduated from the University of Wyoming with many awards and scholarships.

Woodrow and Mary Helen Ahlbrandt lived on the farm for their entire married life and raised all five children there. Although the homestead was principally devoted to farming, cattle were also raised there. Angus and Murray Gray cattle comprised most of the 100-cattle herd. Holstein cows and chickens were also part of the homestead.

The homestead experienced a variety of challenging episodes, including major blizzards in 1949 and 1988. A windstorm did extensive damage in the 1950s and hail was a constant threat. In 2019, the Fort Laramie canal tunnel collapsed and the ensuing washout caused irrigation to be halted for most of the 2019 season. This had a devastating impact on farmers in Goshen County and western Nebraska who relied on this canal for irrigation.

John Deere tractors and equipment were favored on the farm. Woodrow was innovative and progressive, and was among the very first in Goshen County to implement technological advances. These included a John Deere self-propelled combine, a Farmhand pull-behind sugar beet lifter, a John Deere electronic sugar beet thinner, pre-emergent herbicide weed control in sugar beets, and a Vermeer round-baler, among others. Woodrow was a talented craftsman, and if a machine part was unavailable at the local dealer, he would simply make it on his lathe. He



Woodrow, Thomas, Susan, and Ray Ahlbrandt in front of the original basement home on the homestead, 1957.



Ahlbrandt Family gathering at Homestead, 1988.

was a flintknapper who made beautiful arrowheads, and the entire family spent many Sunday afternoons hunting arrowheads in the vicinity. The family has an extensive collection of arrowheads, all locally found.

Nebraska, Colorado, and Wyoming all are part of the Ahlbrandt Homestead heritage. Herman lived in Wellington, CO with his family prior to winning the drawing at Veteran. This Colorado farm property is now in the Bender family, which was part of the Ahlbrandt family and it became a Centennial farm in Colorado many years ago. Many Ahlbrandts and Ehrlichs (my grandmother's maiden name) and other relatives farmed in northern Colorado, western Nebraska, and southeastern Wyoming.

Ahlbrandt Homestead LLC is the current owner of the original farm and consists of the five children of Woodrow and Mary Helen Ahlbrandt: Thomas Ahlbrandt, Susan Bennett, Ray Ahlbrandt, Peggy Starr and John Ahlbrandt. Two other farm entities represent expansion of the original farm. Ahlbrandt Farms LLC, which purchased the adjacent land of the Dewey Langwell homestead, lands originally homesteaded by Tingstrum, Barron, and the Ryan property (note: this land was not a homestead). The Ahlbrandt-Bennett Corner encompasses 160 acres that Herman purchased were originally the Heneger Homestead. All together these properties encompass about 1100 acres. Crops raised included watermelons, potatoes, wheat, barley, sugar beets, dry beans (Great Northern and Pinto), alfalfa and corn. The five children of Woodrow and Mary Helen continue to manage and farm the Homestead and additional nearby properties.

Altogether, four generations of Ahlbrandts (Herman, Woodrow, Woodrow's children and their spouses, and grandchildren) are associated with this original homestead. We are still farming it today.

- Thomas S. Ahlbrandt



Ditch irrigation in alfalfa field with tubes; view to south towards Homestead buildings.



Ahlbrandt Homestead current house and yard.



Ahlbrandt Thanksgiving gathering, 2002.



Mary Helen and Woodrow Ahlbrandt at the flower garden on Homestead, 1998.



Woodrow Ahlbrandt with John Deere 4030 and 4430 tractors, 2000.



John, Peggy, Ray, Susan, Thomas (siblings) and Mary Helen Ahlbrandt (seated) 2020, owners of the Ahlbrandt Homestead.



Wheat harvest with 1946 John Deere 55 combine and Chevrolet truck, 1950.



Harvesting corn silage with John Deere 4430, dumping on 1973 Chevrolet truck.



Sugar beet harvesting with John Deere 4430, 3 row beet lifter and John Deere 4030 on topping unit, loading on 1973 Chevrolet truck.



Plowing with John Deere 4840, five bottom spinner plow with Homestead equipment in background, 2019.



Alfalfa bales with wheat in foreground on the Homestead, 2000.



Wheat harvest with International 1660 and Massey Ferguson 510, 2021.



Sunset looking west from the Homestead, 2021.



The Ahlbrandt Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordan at the Wyoming Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

The Childs Ranch, 1910

The Childs Family, Weston County



John McCarter in front of Fiddler Creek homestead shack.

John McCarter, born January 2, 1876, grew up and lived in Indiana. In his mid-thirties he yearned to move west and take out a homestead. In 1910, he ended up south of Upton in Weston County, Wyoming near Soda Creek.

Life on homesteads in the early 1900s was hard work, self-reliance, and community. John farmed and raised cows, hogs, and turkeys. He also built a shop with a forge, so that he could provide blacksmithing for his neighbors as well as himself.

Ranching is not all work, so the community would gather for barn dances and other fun activities. John was in a group of fiddlers that provided the music and entertainment. The main creek in the area was named Fiddler Creek after the group.

Ranching became a family affair when his brother Walter and mother Martha “Lett” McCarter joined him to homestead in Wyoming in the early 1920s. By the late 1920s, his widowed sister Lydia J. (McCarter) Rinehart came to live and assist him on the ranch.

Lydia was fascinated with unique rocks, which she gathered wherever she traveled. It was her passion for and collection of rocks that ignited the idea of building a rock house. Lydia recruited her brother Tom McCarter, a stone mason, to help. He moved from Illinois to Fiddler Creek and built the rock house. Many of her friends and family got in on the project by mailing her unique rocks from all over the country. This long endeavor resulted in a house that



Rock house under construction 1934.



Digging basement for rock house in 1931.



First corner of rock house 1932.



John, Lydia and Tom in front of rock house completed 1936.



Ben, Lydia Jane, Mary and Lydia in 1938.

had a rock from every state in the continental United States being included in its construction, which was completed in 1936.

Lydia also wrote many poems and composed the Wyoming Indian Paint Brush song, which later became the Wyoming State Flower Song; it was dedicated by the Wyoming Governor Milward L Simpson.



Governor Milward L. Simpson with Lydia in center at dedication.



Wyoming's Indian Paint Brush song by Lydia.

Lydia's only child, Ben Rinehart, who lived in Indianapolis, helped the ranch financially during the hard times of the Great Depression years in the 1930s. He later acquired the ranch from John.

The Blizzard of 1949 hit the area hard. John McCarter had to shovel out the coal chute to get outside and then was able to shovel to the doors.

In the 1950s, Ben and his wife Mary (Sharp) Rinehart moved from Indianapolis, Indiana to the ranch where they raised cattle and gardened until 1960.

Ben and Mary's only child Lydia Jane (Rinehart) Childs and her husband Lyndon Childs moved into the rock house with their five children Louis, Linda, Laura, Larry, and Luann in 1963, when Ben and Mary moved to town. The rock house ranch was closer to



Rock house in blizzard of 1949.



Ben and Mary Rinehart working on ranch 1950.

school. It was also the perfect place for calving their Hereford livestock in the springs. The Child's family previously worked summers on the ranch to assist with cutting hay.

Louis ranched with his dad Lyndon from the mid-1970s until the late 1980s when he moved to Arizona to pursue an adventure with cutting horses.

Luann, her husband Dennis Borgialli, and their girls Deena and Jodene brought in a few cattle for a while and assisted Lyndon in his last years as a rancher.

The rock house has always been in the heart of the whole family. Lydia and Lyndon celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with the community at the rock house. Deena was married on the ranch to her husband Alex Wolf.

Deena and Alex and their two daughters Lorelai and Piper - who live in Casper - along with Jodene, her husband Christopher Foy and their children Ella and Paxton - who live in Severance, Colorado - now enjoy coming to the ranch for work and play days.

Larry with his wife Alene (Holwell) Childs and son Tell - who live in Trinidad, Colorado - come up when they can. Their son Wyatt and his wife Christina (Detlefsen) and their children Sydney and Orrin - who now live in Texas - also come up when they can.

Laura and Dick Stull summered their registered bucking bulls on the place and continue to run cattle there in the summers. Linda and Greg Layton - who live in Houston, Texas - now spend their summers living in the rock house. Lydia Childs still enjoys the beautiful Wyoming summers.

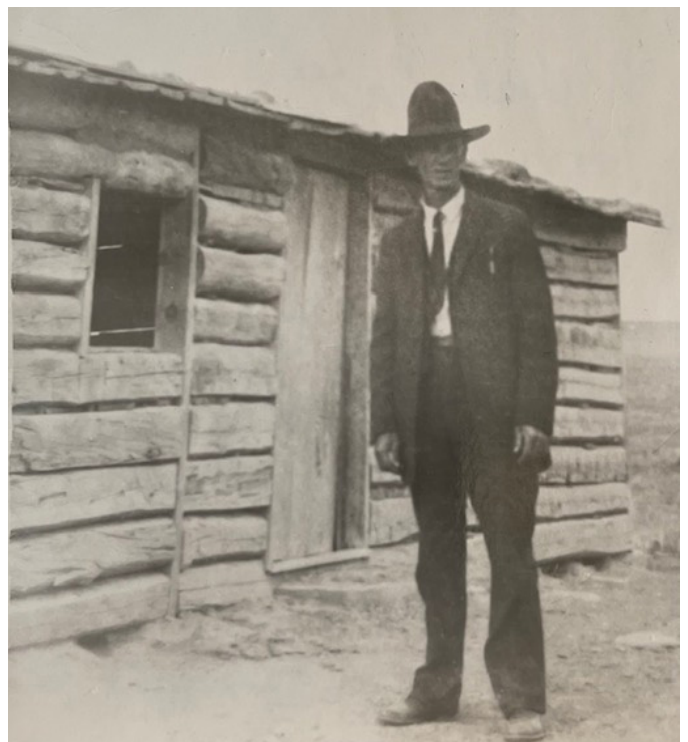
- Lydia Childs



Fire place inside rock house with the more special rocks.



John's horses.



Wild Cat Creek homestead shack.



John's livestock.



Childs calves at Rock House Ranch 1969.



John's barn and corral.



Rock House 2002.



Lyndon, Lydia Jane, Larry, Laura, Louis, Luann and Linda Childs 1963.



Group family picture at Lydia Jane 90th birthday party.



Rock House Ranch 1971.



The Childs Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

Circle Nine Cattle Company, 1918

The Podio and Adkins Families, Weston County



Overhead entering the ranch in the 1980s.

In 1918, Claude and Marie Adkins purchased their homeplace south of Newcastle. They lived at the Cambria Coal Mining Camp, east of Newcastle near South Dakota, where Claude worked for a few more years. Claude and Maria, with Marie's parents and two of Claude's siblings moved from Cambria to Fairview. Claude's siblings, Eva Johnson and Monroe Adkins, each homesteaded near the ranch Claude had purchased. Claude, Eva, and Monroe's homesteads are now part of the main ranch. On October 16, 1929, Monroe's homestead house burned, killing his wife and baby. This was the first-time tragedy struck the Adkins family on the ranch.

Claude and Marie raised three children on the ranch; Theta, Kenneth, and Bob. Claude and his sons, Bob and Kenneth, ranched together for several years. During the Great Depression, they sold the bones of bison that were piled near teepee rings on the ranch to survive. Bob served in the Navy in World War II before returning to Newcastle, where he set up his own ranch. Kenneth was also drafted, but a heart murmur kept him from serving. When Claude broke his leg in a ranch accident that required it to be amputated, Kenneth and his wife Toots moved back from Rock Springs to run the ranch.

Kenneth and Toots had two daughters, Linda Lee and Marie, and raised them on the ranch. Tragedy struck again when the original ranch house burned down in 1945. Kenneth and Linda Lee, a toddler, were severely burned. Their neighbors were terrific helping them move temporarily to a motel and helping them rebuild a home.

In late 1945, a Japanese balloon bomb landed in the Adkins winter pasture. At the height of World War II, this was a scary moment and a unique story in the history of the ranch and Wyoming.

Things were difficult for Kenneth and Toots, especially in the winter of 1949 when they lost almost their entire herd of cattle.

In the 1950s, Marie Adkins was diagnosed with bone cancer. The family mortgaged the ranch to pay for treatments for her in Denver. She died following the treatments. The family struggled for decades with the burden of the extra debt on the ranch.

In 1968, the ranch was the setting for a series of national commercials for Ken-L-Ration Dog Food. The ranch was an overnight site for camping for a wagon train reenactment in the 1970s.

Neighbors and community were integral parts of life on the Adkins ranch. Kenneth was always willing to give cowboys and ranch hands a place to stay and



Linda Lee and Marie Adkins



Fairview Country School in 1934 with Theta, Kenneth, and Bob Adkins.



Kenneth Adkins and hired man before taking antelope hunters out.



Claude, Kenneth, and Bob Adkins

a meal. There was always food for any neighbors that stopped by. Toots was a talented musician who played with many bands at local dances, including performing on KOTA, South Dakota television.

Kenneth, Toots, and their daughters traveled to rodeos across Wyoming and Western South Dakota. Kenneth was a rodeo announcer for over 30 years. He announced the weekly rodeo at Joey's Arena in Newcastle. He loved rodeo and helped found the Northwest Ranch Cowboys Association and the Weston County Junior Rodeo. His grandkids and great-grandkids competed in both associations. Kenneth also loved kids, and served as the bus driver for three generations of neighbor kids for over 50 years. Kenneth and Toots were affectionately known as Grammy and Pappy to generations of neighbor kids.

Kenneth and Toot's daughter Marie moved back to the ranch in the 1970s with her husband, Joe Podio. They raised their sons Joe and Andy on the ranch. Linda Lee's son Monty Trumbull would also spend his summers and any time he could on the ranch with his grandparents.

In 1983, Joe and Marie Podio purchased Marie's Uncle Bob's half of the ranch.

For over 65 years, the ranch has hosted hundreds of antelope hunters from all over the world, many of who have become close family friends.

Joe and Andy raised their daughters on the ranch. Andy's oldest, Rebecca, returned to the ranch after attending the University of Wyoming.

The family has been long-time supporters of the Future Farmers of America (FFA), with three generations serving as officers of the Newcastle Saddle and Sirloin FFA Chapter. Joe, Andy, Monty and Joe and Andy's daughters have all shown home-raised cattle at the Weston County Fair.

Over time, the ranch has produced Herford Cattle, Buffalo, Beefalo, Corriente, and Longhorn roping cattle, horses, oats, wheat, and dryland hay. Today, they raise commercial black cattle, rodeo bucking bulls, horses and grow some dryland grass and alfalfa hay.

Circle 9 Cattle Company, as the ranch now is referred to, has raised bucking bulls that have competed at the National Finals Rodeo (NFR), and the family operates a Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) Stock Contracting Company.

- Marie Podio



Kenneth and Bob Adkins at branding.



Claude Adkins on the Ranch in the 1950s.



Kenneth Adkins taking clothes off the line at the ranch.



Kenneth Adkins horseback at branding.



Kenneth and Toots Adkins with the grandsons Andy and Joe Podio.



512 Propaganda raised and owned by Circle 9 Cattle Company and the 2020 Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Arlington, Texas.



The Podio and Adkins Families with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

F.A. Bush Family Ranch, 1906

The Family of Fount and Alice Bush, Crook County



Overlooking the main buildings, circa 1957.

In 1857, Jeremiah Porter Bush traveled through Wyoming by wagon train on his way to Sonoma County, California. Nine years later, he returned to Rockport, Missouri where he married Isabelle Hunter. They had a family of nine children: Richard, James, Felix (passed away at about age one), Fount, Herbert, Elizabeth, Roy, Walter, and Erma.

In the spring of 1882, Jeremiah with sons James - age twelve - and Fount - age eight - along with Green Todd set out for Wyoming with a team pulling their wagon, two saddle horses, and one hundred head of cattle. Although just eight, Fount rode most of the way on horseback since the wagon was filled with things Green Todd would need to see him through the winter. They arrived in what is now Crook County in the latter part of June. Jeremiah settled on the Bell Fourche River two miles northwest of the current town of Hulett, Wyoming. They began to build a house, which was completed by the fall. Jeremiah and his sons returned to Missouri arriving on December 1, 1882. The cattle remained in Wyoming in the care of Green Todd. The following spring the entire Bush



Bush Family - Fount is the first young man in the back row.

family returned to Wyoming with an additional 200 head of cattle.

Fount was born in Rockport, Atchison County, Missouri on November 30, 1873. Fount attended school on a hill across the river from the Ernest Smith Ranch near Hulett and later went to Spearfish Normal. He also went to business college in Lincoln,

Nebraska. After college, Fount returned to Wyoming and ranching. He rode as a “rep” for the T+T and other large cattle ranches. As a rep, Fount would collect cattle that had roamed into other herds and return them to the ranch that he worked for at that time.

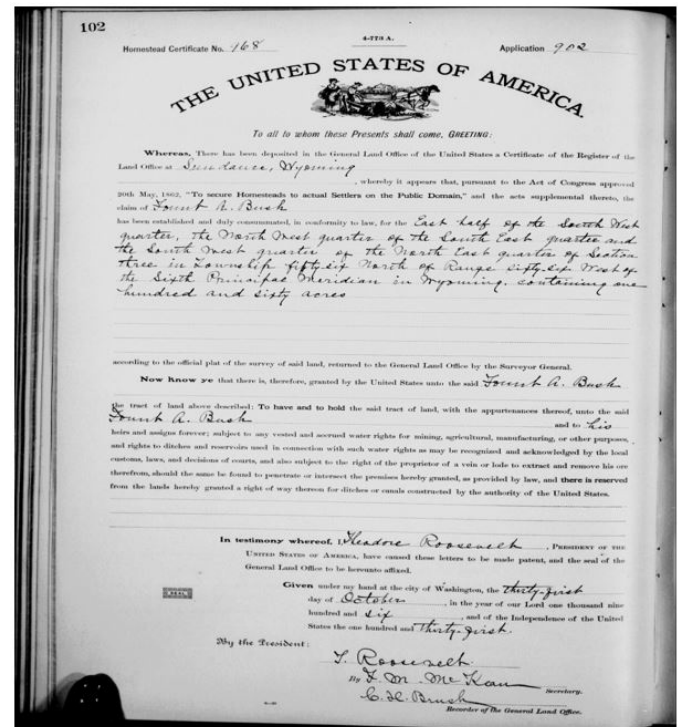
Fount was not yet settled. He spent a bit of time traveling before returning to Wyoming to settle permanently. He traveled to Cuba and worked on a banana plantation. He and his brother Herb then headed to Alaska for the Klondike Gold Rush. They didn’t find their fortune, but had enough money to pay their grub-stake and later returned on a ship bringing whale baleen to southern ports.

In May of 1899, Fount settled in Wyoming and filed a homestead on one hundred and sixty acres about 18 miles northwest of Hulett on the Little Missouri River. Homestead Certificate #968 for this land was signed by Theodore Roosevelt, and issued October 31, 1906. This land became known as the F.A. Bush Ranch.

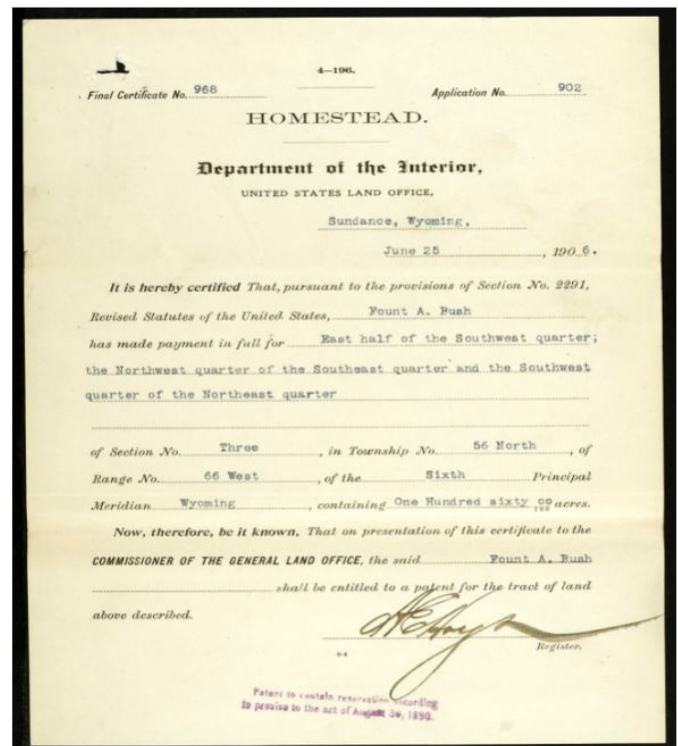
Alice Burkett was the daughter of Lee and Lydia Burkett, of Beaver Crossing, Nebraska. She had taught school in Nebraska with Ethel Porter who married Fount’s youngest brother, Walter. Alice came to Wyoming to visit Ethel, which is when she met Fount. On June 29, 1916, Fount and Alice were united in marriage. Fount and Alice had two children, Audra and Warren.



Fount and Alice.



Homestead Certificate signed by President Theodore Roosevelt.



Homestead Patent June 25, 1906.

Throughout their lifetimes, Fount and Alice developed and expanded the ranch. In 1917, a land acquisition of nine hundred sixty acres was made when Fount bought out his brothers' interests. During that time the ranch was predominantly a sheep operation.

During the 1920s, Fount inherited one thousand two hundred acres from his father on the south divide of Crook County. These lands were commonly referred to as the Plant, McCoy and Glassburn places. In 1930, cattle were added to the operation. The above acreage was used and continues to be used as summer pastures for the cattle operation. Fount has used two brands: "the Three O" and "Quarter Circle Lazy E". The "Quarter Circle Lazy E" was transferred to the F.A. Bush Company (becoming Fount A. Bush, LLC) on September 4, 1965. The brand was relinquished on December 31, 2016 when it was NOT renewed by the LLC.

In the late 1920s and into the 1930s, Fount also began purchasing the original homesteads along the Little Missouri River. In 1936, Fount and Alice expanded the F.A. Bush Ranch by adding the TL Ranch to its holding. In the fall of 1977, a major land acquisition of 8,000 acres was made when the Storm property was acquired at a forced land sale. With this acquisition, they had expanded their holdings and improved the property, which originally consisted of the one hundred sixty acres, and now totals fourteen thousand acres of deeded land.

The ranch was not exempt from hardships of the Great Depression or the worst droughts that swept the plains in 1934, 1935, and 1936. In 1936, Fount drove his livestock to Moorcroft where they were all slaughtered. Years later, Fount's daughter Audra said it was the only time she can remember ever seeing her father cry. Gradually in 1937, a few sheep were acquired, and in 1938, the ranch brought cattle back into the operation. Today the ranch is only running Angus cattle. There is also a fall hunting program.

Barley and oats were farmed on the meadows. This was done to breakdown the grasses so in subsequent years the land could be replanted with alfalfa or an alfalfa grass seed combination. Native wildlife consists of white tail deer, antelope, wild turkey, Canadian geese, prairie dogs, coyote, fox, porcupine,



Warren, Fount, and Audra.

skunk, and beaver. The land varies from mud flats, sagebrush and cacti, to grassland, meadows, and timber.

Fount was widely known in the cattle circles of Crook County, Wyoming. He had an active career as a pioneer and builder of the ranching industry and was a member of the Wyoming Stock Growers Association. Fount persisted against all hardships using his wide knowledge and his well-developed abilities to work through all that came his way. The ranch was a gratifying reward for his life's work.

In 1954, Fount and Alice retired from ranching and moved to the town of Hulett. This was the hardest thing Fount had ever done, but he made the most of it by gardening. The Bush children had started

lives outside of Wyoming. After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a nursing degree, Audra enlisted in the Army, becoming a Captain in the United States Nurse Corps. She served in the European Theater, North Africa, and Italy during World War II. She later went into social work as a public health nurse in California, and then became a school nurse until retirement when she returned to Wyoming. After graduating from the School of Dentistry at the University of Minnesota, Warren started a dental practice in Englewood, Colorado. Warren also served his country from 1951 to 1953 becoming a Captain in the Dental Corps of the United States Air Force.



Grandpa Fount and Grandma Alice.



Fount's children Audra and Warren.



Fount and Alice's house in Hulett.



Fount Alden Bush.



Fount gardening.

Although both children had grown up on the ranch, the role they eventually played would be that of absentee owners while remaining actively involved in the high-level management of the operation. An on-site manager was hired to handle the day to day operations. There have been five on-site managers – Bill Borchgrevink, Warren Wood, Gary Bush, Nick Bohl, and the current on-site manager is Hal Bowles.

In 1957, Audra and Warren entered into a partnership agreement. On October 14, 1968, the ranching operation of the partnership was broken out as F.A. Bush, Inc. when issued a Certificate of Incorporation by the Secretary of State of Wyoming. Audra and Warren both remained involved in the operation of the ranch until their passing – Audra in June 2005 and Warren in July of 2012. After Audra's passing, Warren's son Steve began taking over the high-level management role of the ranch with Warren as his mentor. By 2007, Steve became the President of F.A. Bush, Inc., which was the position Warren had held for years. Ownership and operation of the ranch continues to this day with shares of the ranch held by the five grandchildren of Fount and Alice Bush: Stephen Bush, Thomas Bush, Tracy Bush, Patrice Oltman, and Susan Skrove.

A Few Tales

Fount eventually bought a tractor for the ranch. He rode out on horseback to see how the hands were doing using the new tractor. Fount climbed on and struggled, popping the clutch to keep it running and trying to maneuver it. Frustrated, he decided his horses would do him just fine. He never did drive the tractor again, or any other vehicle for that matter.

Dean Bush, nephew to Fount, tells of a bad day at the ranch. One day a guy came to the ranch looking for Fount. When he found Fount, they got into an argument. As the argument escalated, they both dismounted from horseback. The guy drew his gun and shoved it into Fount's mouth twirling it around. Fortunately, he did not pull the trigger. Fount's mouth was so sore he had a hard time eating anything solid for about a week. This tale was also told to Tracy, daughter of Warren, one afternoon while driving around the ranch. Warren took Tracy to the place



Fount with horses.

where it happened. "Thank goodness my grandfather was not shot."

Effie (Taylor) Jolley, a neighbor and country school teacher, wrote a book entitled "Triumphs and Tribulations of the Little Teacher." In her book she wrote about Fount and Alice. She and her family used to go fishing in the F.A. Bush Reservoir. "Bullheads were easy to catch. We took potatoes to bake in the coals." Effie goes on to say, "Mrs. Bush always had cookies ready when any children came to visit, and Mr. Bush would stop any kind of work to talk to the children." Alice was also one of the first members of the Buttons and Bows Organization, which helps the community in times of need, such as preparing meals after funerals.

The Centennial Reunion of the Bush Family was held June 20-June 21, 1982. This celebration was dedicated to the pioneering spirit of Jerry (Jeremiah) and Belle (Isabelle) Bush, who came to the Wyoming Territory 100 years prior to establish a home and raise their eight children. The festivities began with registration at the Hulett Civic Center. Some of the family toured the original homestead. Dinner was served and reuniting took place at the Civic Center later that evening. The following day, a picnic took place at Devil's Tower with about one hundred in attendance.

- Tracy Wendell Bush



The family of Fount and Alice Bush with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

Folded Hills Ranch, 1920

The Elsom Family Descendants, Johnson County



Folded Hills Ranch homeplace on the banks of the North fork of Crazy Woman Creek 1982.

David A. Elsom was born to George and Esther Elsom on October 16, 1892 in Britton, South Dakota. His father was a rancher and farmer in the state. David received his education in county schools and South Dakota State College, which he attended for two years. His brother James T. Elsom, homesteaded in Johnson County, Wyoming in 1914. A year later David joined him and homesteaded on his own one hundred and sixty acres. His original homestead was in what was known as the “Buffalo Wallows Area.” According to historical recordings of David located in the Johnson County Library, he chose this area because it was real good grass country, which was typified by the fact that the buffalo chose to congregate there to make their wallows. He proved up on his original homestead following his service in World War I. He continued to file on land until he had acquired a complete section. David started his operation with just forty sheep; he brought his stock to market on a hay rack.

David was married to Lila Patch on August 26, 1920. Lila was born in a covered wagon in the sandhills

of Nebraska near Broken Bow on September 27, 1896 to Murray W. and Sarah P. Patch, while the family was enroute to Wyoming. In 1901, the Patch family homesteaded on the Little North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek on the east slope of the Bighorn Mountains. The family moved into Buffalo when Lila was 8 years old where her father was the County Assessor for fourteen years and was also elected to the Wyoming House of Representatives for one term. Lila attended the Klondike School, Buffalo High School and attended college in Fremont, NE. She taught in Wendover, NE as well as in Recluse, WY before returning to Buffalo. Lila also homesteaded her own section, holding a position in the county assessor’s office in Buffalo and driving fourteen miles twice weekly in a one-horse shay so as to be able to prove up on her homestead. Part of Lila’s section was in the mountains and continues to be summer range for the ranch.

They established the family brand in 1923. The brand is a crazy reverse J lazy D combined, also known as the “Hay Hook” brand. It is located on the right rib

for cattle, right shoulder for sheep, and right shoulder for horses.

David and Lila had three children. James David (JD) Elsom, born on September 23, 1921, Gwendolyn Elsom (Criss), born on April 25, 1929, and Ellis Murray Elsom, born on October 27, 1931. Through the 1920s and 1930s David and Lila continued to grow their ranch by purchasing neighboring parcels and trading lands. The original homesteads and earliest acquisitions only had seasonal streams and stock reservoirs built by David with a horse and Fresno scraper. In order to survive, they dug shallow wells and created a concrete cistern to hold water from snow melt and rain runoff. They were some of the hardest homesteaders to have survived on “dry land” in Wyoming. It was during this time that the ranch became known as the Folded Hills Ranch. Named after the “Folded Hills” which make up the skyline on many parts of the ranch.

In the mid-1920s, David and Lila escaped the one-bedroom homesteader cabins by buying a home on a neighboring homestead. They proceeded to tow the home on hay wagons with a Model T and small tractors to what is now the center of the ranch. They raised all three children in that home. The walls were filled with sawdust for insulation. On one occasion, Lila found herself alone with the two younger children in one of Wyoming’s spring thunderstorms. A bolt of lightning struck the home sending Lila across the room. To this day, every building on the ranch built by David and Lila contains a lightning rod and ground wire; a sure sign of Lila’s dreaded firsthand experience with a Wyoming thunderstorm.

In the early 1940s, David and Lila realized their dream of getting a good and consistent water supply.



David and Lila Elsom, Johnson County, WY. Pioneers and original homesteaders of Folded Hills Ranch.

It was then that they bought what was known as the John May Place. The North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek flowed through a portion of the May Place providing precious water rights for irrigated land and two large reservoirs for storage water. The reservoirs were built in 1906 by the Kingsbury Todd Cattle Company, which was one of the larger ranches in the county at that time. The May Place also bordered the TA Ranch to the North, where the culmination of the Johnson County War took place. After extensive renovations, David and Lila moved to the Covington house, named after the original patentee of a portion of the May Place, which was a two-room cabin at the time. It has always been said that the cabin was used as a staging area for the townspeople prior to heading south to the TA Ranch to surround the hired gunmen of the cattlemen. Even after subsequent remodeling, the original “L” shaped log cabin is still noticeable as the interior walls of the Covington house are almost two feet thick.



Brand.



David, Lila and JD Elsom on the ranch, circa 1922.

Over the years, David, Lila and their children continued to grow the ranch. They ran close to 1650 mostly Rambouillet sheep on the main ranch during the fall, winter and spring and then trailed the sheep up the mountain to summer grass; David stayed on the mountain for months at a time. None of them were carpenters by trade. However, they were very skilled in “Lean-To” construction and built numerous sheds throughout the ranch. They built a very large two-story lean-to lambing shed, preferring to shed lamb instead of letting the lambs fend for themselves on the open range. Although this was much more labor intensive, it provided greater protection from the elements and harsh spring conditions often found in shadows of the Bighorn Mountains.

David and Lila’s daughter Gwen eventually married Sonny Criss and moved south to Wheatland, WY to the Criss Ranch located just west of Greyrocks Reservoir. She ranched there for her entire life until her death on April 21, 2021. The Criss Ranch is run by their son Bill Criss and was recognized as a Centennial Farm and Ranch in 2013.



David Elsom and neighbors moving the original ranch house to its location at the center of the ranch, circa 1924.

In 1962, David and Lila’s sons JD and Ellis bought out their parents and looked to further expand the ranching operations. Through additional purchases and leases, JD and Ellis grew the sheep herd to over 4,000 head. The brothers worked well together expanding the farming and irrigated lands and adding additional storage water capacity. They both raised large families on the ranch.

In the late 1960s, Interstate 25 was constructed and bisected the ranch from east to west. The historical stock drive was spared by the construction of a bridge which allows for easy access between the west and east portions of the ranch.

David Elsom died in November of 1978 and is buried in Willow Grove Cemetery in Buffalo beside his wife Lila, who passed away on February 14, 1979. They were true pioneers of the Johnson County ranching community.

Although there were many trying times for JD and Ellis, the blizzard of 1984 was especially difficult. A spring storm blew in bringing rain and then freezing temperatures which turned into a blizzard. They spent

countless hours digging the sheep out of the snow, hauling them to dry sheds, covering them with straw, and trying to bring them back to strength. While their efforts helped, the rain prior to the storm was the real killer. The brothers lost over 1000 head of sheep in that storm.

In the late 1980s, JD set out to retire and Ellis bought out his portion of the ranch. Ellis survived through the many price collapses of the 80s and 90s. His legendary work ethic and generosity continues to pour from the lips of all that knew him. He lived in his hay fields “chasing the water” across day and night. He was a mountain of a man and kept the ranch in times that many found impossible in the ranching industry.

By the turn of this century, it was clear that the ranch needed to diversify in order to continue on in the family. Ellis, his daughter Susan Moyes, and her husband Tim embarked on doing just that. Tim, a carpenter by trade, along with help from Susan and their son Sean Belliveau, who was still in high school at the time, built a hunting lodge and six guest cabins. The untimely passing of Ellis, on August 28, 2001, tested Tim and Sue’s resolve but didn’t break their spirit. They finished the lodge and cabins and eventually put them to use for their hunting and fishing business. Over the years, they diversified even further hosting countless weddings, reunions, business meetings, and community gatherings for not only the residents of Johnson County, but clients across the country. Tim and Sue worked diligently in the hospitality business, supplementing the ranching side of the operation. Tim and Sue also started a herd of bison and run between 20 and 30 head annually.

In 2004, daughter Lindsey’s love for her family pulled her back home to help Tim and Sue on the ranch with their hospitality business. She raised her daughter Laney in the house Ellis built on the banks of the North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek, just a short walk from the Covington house where Tim and Sue made their home. They’ve both worked alongside Tim and Susan for the past 18 years. Lindsey has also been fortunate enough to always have additional work in Buffalo, WY. Laney is attending college in Sheridan, WY. Her families strong work ethic will guide her well as she too hopes to return to the ranch one day.



David, Lila and JD Elsom in front of the original ranch house.



David Elsom pulling water from a hand dug well on the ranch.



Wheat harvest on the May Place, circa 1940.

Sean graduated from the University of Wyoming College of Law in 2011 and embarked on his legal career with the goal of one day returning to the ranch. He and his wife Bonnie moved back in 2015. Since returning to the ranch, Sean continues to practice law full time, and little by little, they have begun to build upon the family legacy. Along with help from Tim, they built a home on the ranch just a short distance from the Covington house. They have converted a portion of the century old irrigated hay fields into center pivot irrigation systems and handle all aspects of the agricultural side of the operation. They are raising their four young children, Landen, Brynlee, Aubrey and Colten on the ranch and are looking forward to passing on the work ethic only a ranch kid can truly comprehend.

Susan passed away unexpectedly at the age of 62 on October 3, 2021. Prior to her passing, she was interviewed by the Buffalo Bulletin. She stated that it was because of her family that she kept the ranch going and that she was happy she got to live between her son, daughter, and her grandkids. She also stated that she hoped her children and grandchildren would keep the ranch going, and if she had it her way, they would.

Susan's desire to keep the ranch going and in the family is not lost on the current generation. Although most days it may seem that the world has raised the price of ranching so high that they will never be able to pay, they are grateful to those that came before, for without them, this Centennial Ranch recognition would not be possible. They are, quite simply, grateful for their turn.

- Susan Moyes with additional contributions from Sean Belliveau



Gwen and Ellis Elsom heading to school in the winter in the mid-1940s.



David, Lila, JD, Gwen and Ellis Elsom.



The Covington house after being remodeled by David and Lila Elsom.



David, Lila, JD, Gwen and Ellis Elsom in the late 1940s.



Ellis Elsom and his daughter Susan after a good day of fishing circa 1962.



The two-story lean-to lambing sheds next to the original ranch house.



Tim, Susan, Angus and Candy out front of the Lodge and Cabins being built where the large lean-to barn used to sit in the summer of 2002.



Ellis Elsom, on the far left, and neighbors with fish from the reservoirs on the ranch.



Folded Hills Ranch homeplace on the banks of the North fork of Crazy Woman Creek 2019.



Lindsey and Laney preparing a meal in the lodge winter of 2021.



Tim, Susan, Sean, Landen, Brynlee, Aubrey, Colten, Lindsey and Laney summer of 2021.



Ellis Elsom loading his Farmall tractor and post hole digger.



Sean, Landen, Brynlee, Aubrey and Colten on the swather, summer 2021.



The Elsom Family descendants with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

Guild Ranch, 1867

The Guild Family, Uinta County



Guild Ranch Headquarters 1959.

Charles Guild was born on April 9, 1826 in Dundee, Scotland. He was the third child out of six boys born to James and Agnes Guild. On March 12, 1854, at the age of 27, Charles left Scotland aboard the John M Wood bound for New Orleans. During the almost two-month voyage, he met Magdaline Marie Cardon, who was also traveling to America after joining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Marie was born on July 6, 1836 in St. Bartolommeo Piedmont Region of Italy. They were wed on February 19, 1855 in Ogden, Utah. Charles worked as a weaver, which was a profession handed down through the Guild Family in Scotland. He and Marie had 11 children; two children died in infancy and their youngest daughter Katie died at the age of 22. With his family in tow, Charles left Utah in 1867 to join his brother-in-law Moses Byrne in running a Pony Express Station west of Fort Bridger, Wyoming.

The year 1867 was a busy time in the west as the Central and Union Pacific Railroads were racing to connect the rails. Piedmont, like a lot of small

western towns, was settled to provide for the needs for the incoming railways. Charles capitalized on the opportunity and established The Guild Mercantile and Guild Land and Livestock Companies; he ran both with the help of his boys. The store expanded to several other locations; the most notable one in Fort Bridger, which also sold farm implements. Meanwhile the Land and Livestock Company was homesteading and raising Hereford cattle and some sheep on roughly 9000 acres. Reservoirs and ditches were dug to produce hay for the long cold winters. One meadow, which is still in use today, was the first ever mowed in Uinta County for the purpose of providing feed for the teams being used for the railroad construction.

George Thomas Guild was born on January 5, 1863 and was the fifth child to Charles and Marie. George and his brothers helped their father with the Guild Mercantile and Livestock Companies. He homesteaded down the Muddy Creek about 2 miles from his father and about 2 miles upriver from the town of Piedmont. A quiet man who had a knack for



Charles and Marie Guild.

business, he served as treasurer for both businesses' his father started. George, his father, and his brothers were featured in Progressive Men of the State of Wyoming.

George had four children with his wife Anne Swartfager. Their oldest child, Leonard, was tragically killed by lightning while riding at the age of 32. Lester Thomas Guild was the second child of George and Anne and was born on December 18, 1898. Lester, like his father, was a very business minded man and operated the ranch with his father until George's death in 1927. When the railroad left Piedmont, so did many of its residents. The Guild Mercantile store shut its doors in the early 1940s. Lester then concentrated on building the ranch with his brother-in-law Delmar Dean.

As citizens moved out of Piedmont, they sold their homesteads and lots. Lester was able to acquire some of the lots and homesteads in the surrounding area. This was the last big addition to the size of the Guild Ranch and brought the total to approximately 16,000

deeded acres. The herds increased to about 150 head of ewes and 350 head of Hereford cows. Calves were retained for a year on the ranch and then sold as yearlings when they weighed about 600 pounds. When shipping time came, they drove the animals to the railroad stockyards in Altamont, WY. The Guild Ranch sold to a buyer from Producers Livestock named Van Moss; to this day, the ranch still sells to his son, Russ Moss.

The ranch then passed from Lester to George Charles Earl, the youngest of Lester and Melba's five children. Earl and his brother-in-law Ferd Christiansen ran all operations after Lester's death; Lester died from a heart attack in 1973. Earl concentrated on improving the genetics of the cow herd by introducing Angus into the herd, which brought the yearling weights up to roughly 1,000 pounds.

Earl also worked hard to bring the ranch to operate in financial solvency. He also improved the amount of hay production to support a growing herd, which increased to 500 mother cows. Coyotes got the best

of the sheep and by the late 1970s the sheep herd was sold.

In 1982, Kelly, who was the oldest of Earl and Jody's four children, came back to the ranch; he bought out his Uncle Ferd Christiansen. Since then Earl and Kelly have continued to operate the Guild Ranch. They have added to it another 600 acres and further increased hay production with the addition of an 80-acre wheel line and 220-acre center pivot producing alfalfa. They also enlarged the dam 12 feet on one of the three reservoirs, which almost tripled the capacity.

Genetically the cow herd is now using Angus, Limousine and Hereford bulls, thus increasing the hybrid vigor. Kelly has seen the demise of using horses for haying and feeding and the introduction of large bales and equipment to feed.

One thread that continues from the ranch's beginning until now is that it's a legacy, it's not yours. You only operate it now; your responsibility is to improve it and pass it on to the next generation. It is now being passed onto Kelly and Dixie's sons.

- Caleb Guild



Guild Ranch Headquarters 2014.



Branding of pure Hereford Calves; Lester, Ferd, and Delmar.



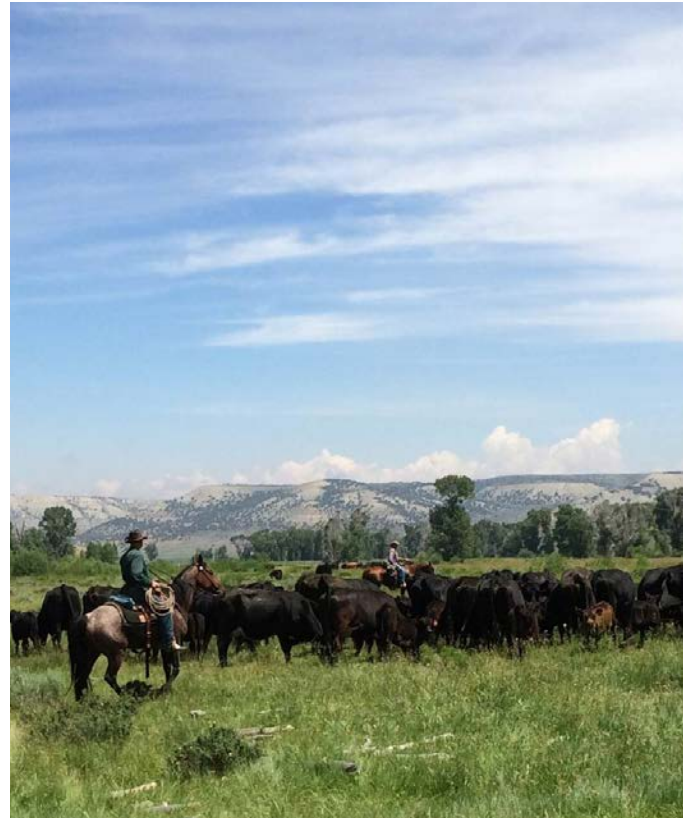
Piedmont, Wyoming 1901.



Sage Field the first meadow ever mowed in Uinta County.



Calves at branding 2016.



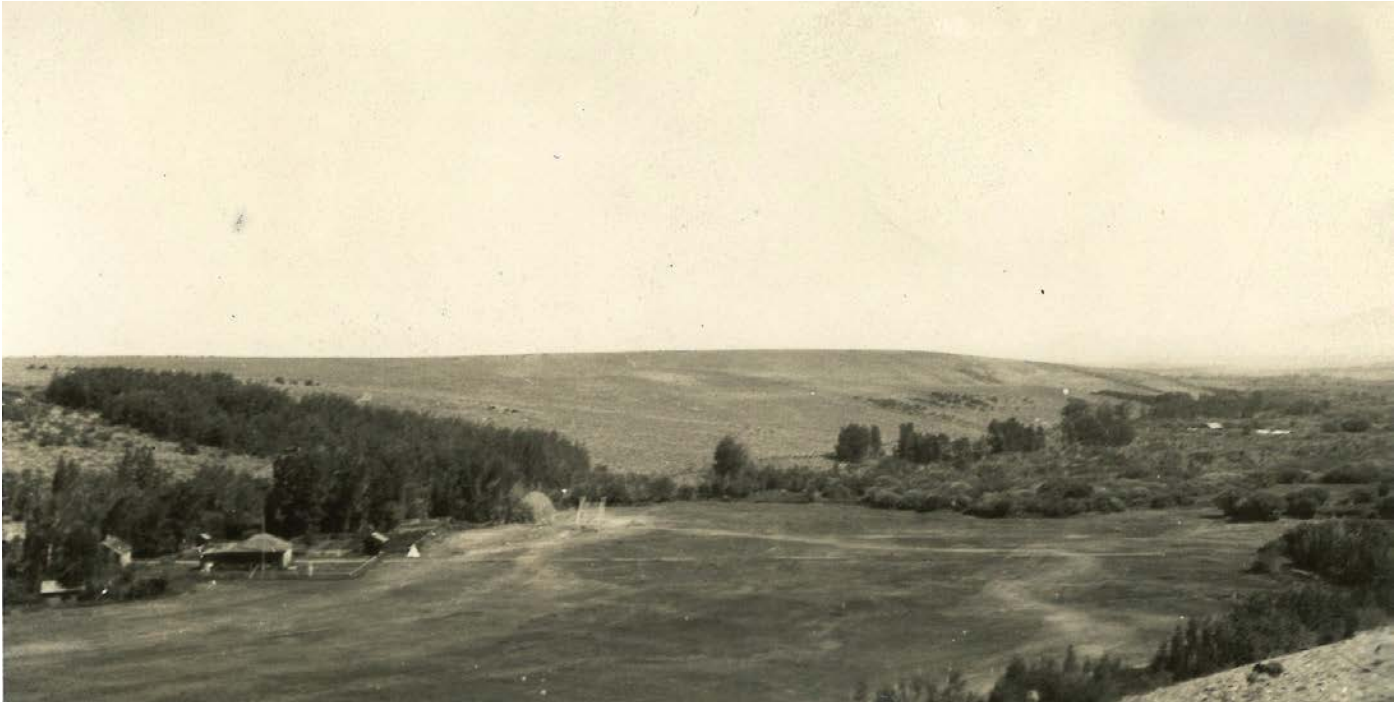
Kelly and Earl pairing cows and calves.



The Guild Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

Indian Rocks Ranch, 1898

The Evans Family, Carbon County



A view of the meadow, corrals, and house circa 1940s.

After leaving his native Sweden in 1873, it is no wonder that John Swanson began to pine for the lush, green lands of his former home. He found himself working as a section foreman for the Union Pacific Railroad stationed at Fort Fred Steele in Wyoming Territory. The landscape must have seemed incredibly bleak with only sagebrush flats for miles around and the few cottonwoods that had once grown by the river cut by the locals. The surrounding mountains beckoned.

John kept working as did his wife, Mary, who operated a boarding house - the Worthy Hotel, - at Fort Fred Steele, and together they saved enough money to begin making land purchases. They looked to the south where the Sierra Madre mountains rose above tributaries of the North Platte River. Much of the good bottom land on South Spring Creek (once known as Muskrat Creek) had been homesteaded and “proved up on”, so it was already in private hands. They began to purchase property and sent their eldest son, August, with his younger brother, Ben, age 16, to spend the winter in a cabin that was

on the place. The young men were to care for stock and watch the place, which they did. Ben must have spent some time looking down the creek toward the neighbor’s house, because in 1902 he married Sadie Cripe, whose family lived less than a mile away.

In 1898, John Swanson purchased the first piece of land that was destined to become part of the current ranch. This parcel, located at the mouth of Spring Creek Canyon where the land began to flatten, could be cleared of willows to form hay meadows. This parcel was made up of lands originally homesteaded by Samuel Garbor and Isaac Bashore. Bashore had acquired both homesteads and sold them to Swanson who already owned land about three miles further down the creek.

John Swanson must have had a knack for making money with his property; Swanson almost immediately sold his entire new holding to the Spring Valley Placer Company, but he held the mortgage. By 1901, the placer company was out of business (gold being pretty scarce in Spring Creek’s

gravels) so Swanson foreclosed and recovered the land at a sheriff's sale. The house that was present on the land made a home for John's son Ben and his growing family. They soon built a new home nearer the creek of hand-hewn logs hauled from the forest about 5 miles from the site. The logs were shaped in good Scandinavian style with a broad axe. The house was also constructed with a few left-over materials from the officer's quarters from the decommissioned Fort Fred Steele. Mary Swanson purchased those buildings, the family tore them down, transported them to Spring Creek and built the main ranch house with them. There was plenty of wainscoting left, so that was used to create the pantry ceiling of the house on upper Spring Creek. Much later, when running water came along, that pantry became the bathroom, still sporting its historic ceiling.

Ben ranched, but he tried his hand at other pursuits. He worked briefly at the copper smelter in Encampment. At one point, he loaded up his wife and six children and moved to Washington State to find work there. They were back on Spring Creek soon and living again on the ranch. Ben spent a lot of time bringing wheelbarrow loads of rocks to the stream bank where he reinforced the bank with perfectly placed walls of stone. While it has been known to breach the banks, Spring Creek generally behaves itself and does not flood the house. When he ran out of creek bank, Ben was known to haul those wheelbarrows of rocks out to level the road that led from the main road across the meadow to the house. He loved to take photographs and documented every interesting event, much to the disgust of his grandchildren who were frequently lined up from oldest to youngest and photographed. Many of the photographs of Ben include his faithful dog, Judy, who was his constant companion.

In 1918, John extended credit to a neighbor, Lester Mowry, who wished to purchase lands adjacent to Mowry's own on Centennial Creek. These had been homesteaded by Hugh McMahon in 1912, and J.T. McNulty in 1917. John Swanson and the Stock Growers State Bank of Saratoga foreclosed on Mowry, and Swanson acquired all of those parcels in 1923, which gave the ranch considerably more acres and has been invaluable in producing pasture and hay for cattle. The historic Cherokee Trail ruts and an engineered creek crossing dug by the passing



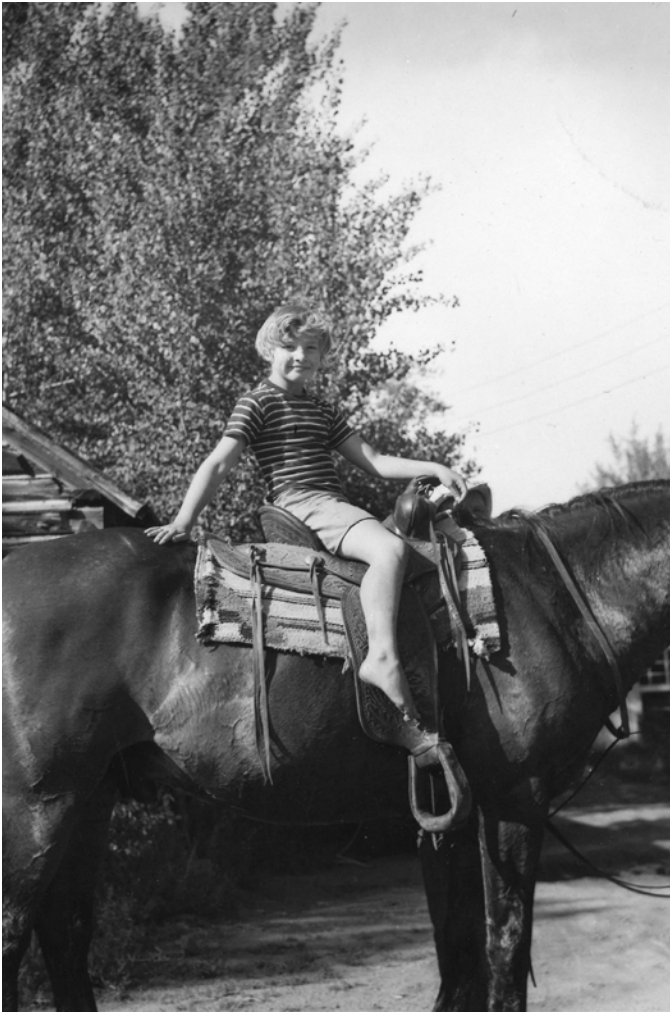
Sadie Swanson, daughter Gladys and son Vernon on Captain.



Ben Swanson with team (King and Queen) in front of the ranch house circa 1950.



Feeding cattle in the Foutz Place.



Joyce Swanson riding her dad's horse, Captain, late 1950s.



Vernon with a small winter task.

Cherokee Indians on their way to the California gold fields in 1850 are still visible on this parcel. Lester's nickname was "Spud", so this field is still known as the "Spud Place" by the family and neighbors alike. John and Mary Swanson believed the only way to secure the future for their five children was for each of them to own land. To this end, they acquired enough land to give each child a ranch large enough to provide a living at the time. John and Mary divided up their ranch prior to their passing. John passed away in 1928 and Mary passed away in 1927. John and Mary's first son, Frank, passed away from appendicitis on October 6, 1924; after his death, his younger brother Ben took over management of his property. Ben also inherited property from his parents.

Ben and Sadie had not been waiting idly for an inheritance. Sadie had filed on land adjacent to the Swanson land in 1913 and was awarded a patent in 1920. Ben and Sadie had been working the main ranch for several years by then. They sold a parcel to W.D. and Katharine Nichol (spelled Nickle in some documents) in 1922, of course, holding the mortgage. In 1932, they recovered this land at a sheriff's sale. Ben and Sadie's children told of going out on this large tract of unfenced land to gather the milk cows every evening. Ben and Sadie had also added more ground by purchasing another parcel just downstream, which was originally homesteaded by Robert Day in 1891 and then sold to Erastus Foutz in 1919. There were several other owners until Ben Swanson bought it in 1928. Someone on that property optimistically planted two small golden willow trees at each corner of their garden. Today they are enormous golden willow trees, but there is no sunlight for gardens at that spot.

Ben and his wife Sadie branded their cattle with the ZX brand, now owned by their grandson, Ray Waliser.

In 1939, Ben and Sadie purchased an adjacent field just east of their property from Charlotte Brown (Hilliard). Family lore holds that Charlotte and her father, who had homesteaded that land in 1917, did not get along well and she sold her part of the property in retaliation. That may or may not be true, but the land was added to the ranch.

Ben's son, Vernon Swanson, purchased the upper ranch from Ben in 1948, the same year he married his wife, Helen. Together, Vernon and Helen added one more former homestead to the ranch with the purchase of the "Brownie Place" from Roy Brown. Brown had been a cook in Saratoga at the Sisson (Wolf) Hotel during the winters and spent the summers at his cabin. It was quite modern with "running water" in the kitchen; actually, the well was dug through the kitchen floor which was probably convenient, but possibly not very sanitary. He was also a mechanic and had a forge in his "garage". Rhubarb plants grew just out of sight along the edge of a nearby aspen grove, perhaps because they can be converted to alcohol in a still.

Vernon and Helen raised Hereford cattle, grew their own hay, and lived out their lives on the land. They used the YT brand, which had belonged to a close friend, Louie Cluff, who was lost during the invasion of Normandy. Vernon was able to heft a broad axe, too, and built a two-room cabin at the ranch as well as a cabin in the mountains on property owned by a mine. He guided hunters, which he did enjoy, but was thoroughly upset if the hunters failed to practice ethics. He took advantage of any opportunity to drive his Jeep just about anywhere, a habit recalled by his nieces and nephews: "We were in the mountains, and there came Uncle Vernon in his Jeep!" He remembered the poems he had memorized in the one-room country school and he had a grand time spending evenings singing old songs with family members.

Vernon loved nothing more than taking his dozer out to plow a path through the snow, regardless of temperature or wind velocity. Vernon passed in 1990, leaving the ranch to his wife Helen and his daughter and son-in-law, Joyce and Michael Evans. They continued to operate the ranch, converting to Red Angus cattle, maintaining the YT brand and adding ^^<, which was the brand Mike's grandfather had used on the Western Slope of Colorado. The ranch was placed under a conservation easement held by The Nature Conservancy. Helen passed in 2000, and Mike and Joyce operated the ranch themselves until 2015, when it was leased to Bo and KayCee Alameda.

In 2021, the ranch looks much as it did 100 years ago. More meadow land has been cleared of willows, more ditches have been pulled, and different fences have been built. The house has been given some more space and a fireplace, but the walls are still sturdy logs. The meadows are as green and the trees as lush as John Swanson must have hoped to see when he first made this country a home for his family. We intend to keep it that way for as many generations as possible.

- Joyce Evans



Ben Swanson driving the stacker team; Vernon stacking hay on the stack.



Moving the stacker.



Clearing land and pulling ditches with neighbors, Harvey and Mowry and Vernon Swanson.



The men sawing firewood into lengths, using Caterpillar power instead of manpower. Vernon is running the saw. Circa 1940s.



The Evans Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony, 2021.

The Klondike Ranch, 1920

The Tass Family, Johnson County



Klondike Ranch Cabins, 1920s or 1930s.

In 1918, Joseph and Franziska Hakert and their children Francis, Joe, Frank, George, Mike, Julia, Kate, John, Andrew, Bill, Henry, and Mary acquired several homesteads southeast of Buffalo, Wyoming. These homesteads were dry land grazing areas. The Hakert brothers tried to buy hay from local ranchers for their livestock. However, the ranchers would not sell them any hay, probably because of old bitterness to homesteaders because of the Johnson County Cattle War of 1892. So, Grandfather Joseph Hakert and his sons returned to their home farm in Hinckley, Minnesota. There they harvested hay, put it in boxcars, and sent the hay to Buffalo, Wyoming. They hauled the hay from Buffalo to the homesteads to feed the livestock. Grandfather Hakert said, “We are not doing this again. Either we return to Hinckley and let the homesteads go, or we sell the home farm in Minnesota and buy a hay base in Wyoming.” The family members voted to buy a hay base in Wyoming. So, in 1920, the Hakert family purchased the Klondike Ranch, which has been in the family ever since.

Klondike Ranch has a unique name. Estelle (Stella) Cook and her brother Orrin Cook took out homesteads in this area in 1886. Stella had the original patent on the land that is known as the Klondike Ranch. There was a fellow by the name Frank A. Jones who had made a gold strike in the early days of the Klondike Gold Rush. He arrived in the Buffalo area sometime around 1888. The local folks called him “Klondike Jones.” He married Stella and moved on to the homestead with her. So, when folks talked about the ranch out on Crazy Woman Creek, it was Klondike’s place, which then led to calling the ranch just “Klondike” as it has been known ever since.

During the 1920s, the family built up the dude ranch business. The Hakert brothers and friends all went to the Big Horn Mountains where they cut trees and skidded the logs down the mountain with horses. Then they built log cabins to accommodate up to 75 guests. Most of the guests came from Chicago or New York City. They would stay on the ranch for several weeks and occasionally make an additional trip to Yellowstone National Park. The family had a



Very early days when Joseph and Franziska Hakert first bought Klondike. Klondike was a stage stop as folks went over the mountains to Ten Sleep, Worland, and the Basin.



George Washington Bridge where Leo Tass worked as a rivet driver in the early years.



Leo and Mary Tass, 1928.

thriving guest business in the 1920s and early 1930s. John Hakert was instrumental in working to achieve the success of Klondike Ranch. John had served in WW1 in France. His brother Andrew also served, but he was killed in the war.

Mary Hakert, the youngest of the twelve Hakert siblings, married Leo Tass on January 23, 1928. They had been childhood friends back in Hinckley, Minnesota. They renewed their acquaintance when Leo came to help the Hakert brothers with the guests and hunting parties. After their marriage, Leo and Mary moved to New York City. Leo worked with a riveting crew on the George Washington Bridge across the Hudson River. Hot steel rivets were thrown up to him where he caught them in a funnel. Then he riveted them into the girders. The higher Leo worked, the better he liked it. He also worked on Hoover Dam and Alcova Dam here in Wyoming. Leo and Mary often returned to Klondike between jobs as they always thought of Klondike Ranch as home.

In the late 1930s, Klondike began to feel the pinch of the Great Depression. The family divided up the homesteads to some of the older Hakert brothers. Other siblings found work with the railroads and

various other jobs. Mary and Leo continued to come home to Klondike to work the fields, irrigate, and put up the hay. Mary organized the kitchen help and cooked the meals for the guests and ranch hands. She grew a large garden and canned vegetables for winter.

Much of the travel for guests and all Americans declined after the U.S. entered World War II. Consequently, the guest business began to diminish. After much deliberation, Mary and Leo decided to purchase Klondike Ranch. In 1943, they bought out other family members' interest in the Klondike. Mary's brother George bought out the rest of the family members' interest in the original dry-land homesteads. His descendants still live there today.

The original ranch house burned down in 1944. Leo managed to save the two older girls, Edith and Alice, getting them to safety. Mary secured Leona, the baby, in a crib outside the burning building. The house burned to the ground and very little was saved. Leo renovated the guest lodge into a family residence, which is quite the same today. We still live in it. Leo and Mary had a son, Richard, born in August of 1945. Klondike has been Richard's home ever since, except for his 2 years in the U.S. Army, one in Vietnam.

The guest business couldn't get to the level that it was before WW11. Leo did a guiding business for hunters in the years after the war. Mary took in guests beginning in the mid-1950s until her death in 1965. Leona and Richard were the wranglers for the guests.

Richard married me, Patty MacKinnon, in June of 1971. Richard worked the ranch and I taught school for 27 years. We began taking in a limited number of guests in 1993. Today we limit our guests to 10 folks at a time, which has worked well for us. We have two children, Mary and John. John and his family live on Klondike and continue to care for the livestock and fields. Mary and her family live in Kaycee. We are blessed to have the children and grandchildren so close. We are still operating our livestock and guest businesses today. We are proud that Klondike Ranch has been in the same family for 102 years.

- Patty Tass



Haying Klondike Ranch, 1943.



Klondike Ranch.



Klondike Ranch Hereford Cow Herd, 1949.



Klondike Ranch 1949.



Klondike Ranch.



Klondike Ranch Hereford Cow Herd, 1949.



Klondike Ranch Wild Turkeys.



Klondike Ranch New Lambs.



Leo Tass with his grandson John Tass (1 1/2 years old).



Left to Right: Xander Tass, John Tass, Kynzie Tass, Patty Tass, Kaitlynn Brown, Richard Tass, Mary Tass Brown, Tim Brown, and Ryken Brown.



Patty and Richard Tass with their children Mary and John.



The Tass Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummi, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony, 2021.

The Nichol Ranch, 1913

The Fry-Scheer-Nichol Family, Goshen County



Nichol Red Angus cattle happily grazing.

The Nichol Ranch is located in northern Goshen County. The land consists of rolling hills with short grass prairie; the area was mostly unaffected by humans and domesticated animals until the nineteenth century. The Fry-Scheer-Nichol Ranch acres were grazed by antelope, mule deer, elk, and bison until Mexican and Texas cattle were trailed north to be fattened and shipped east to market. Many of the herds crossed the North Platte River near the mouth of Rawhide Creek and followed it north. About 23 miles up Rawhide Creek, a much smaller stream, the Red Cloud Slough, enters the Rawhide. It is said Chief Red Cloud liked to camp near the spring, which is less than a quarter mile from the ranch buildings, but not part of the ranch. On the ranch, there are many old trails and buffalo wallows going to and near the slough.

The ranch has two separate family lines, the Fry family and the Scheer family. Each homestead is part of the present ranch.

The Fry Family

The bulk of the ranchland is from the Fry family. The Fry family lived in Virginia around 1730. Andrew Jackson (Jack) Fry's great grandfather served in North Carolina during the American Revolution. The family moved to Tennessee, then Indiana and emigrated to Iowa in 1855. Jack's grandmother, Catherine, rode side saddle from Indiana to Iowa at age 85 and lived to be 91. Jack was born in Logan, Iowa in 1861. He grew up helping on the farm, doing chores, and breaking horses. When he was about 17, he headed west on foot working as a bullwhacker and wrangling horses to earn his way to Oregon. He ran a saloon in partnership with a Frenchman in the town of The Dalles in Oregon for more than two years.

Jack received word that his father was very ill in Iowa. He sold his holdings and put his twenty-dollar gold pieces in a "money belt" his mother had sewed for him before he left Iowa. When he was coming home, he was riding on top of a stagecoach coming through some mountains and the wheels hit a rut breaking

the luggage straps and sending all the luggage over into a deep canyon. Jack lost all his belongings. His father had already passed when he arrived in Iowa.

Jack decided he had enough gold pieces to purchase a farm and married his childhood sweetheart Mary Jane McMillin in 1888. They had five children Florence [Kirkwood] in 1889, Ina [Burge] in 1890, Calvin in 1892, Clark in 1894, and Chloie [Morgan] in 1896. Mary became ill and died in 1901. Jack married Mary Jane Charlottie [Lottie] Shaw in 1903. They had three children: Arol in 1906, Melvo in 1908, and Bonnie in 1910. Jack raised mostly corn and hay and hogs, some cattle and always horses and mules. In the winter, he cut wood and delivered it by sleigh to businesses in Logan, Iowa.

In 1913, Jack's oldest son, Calvin, came west to homestead southwest of Van Tassell, Wyoming. Soon after, his younger brother, Clark, came to Wyoming and made a claim two miles south of Jay Em. Clark was called to serve in World War 1 and served in France. He was a wonderful, kind man and finished proving up on his claims and received his Patents for 608 acres on Nov. 29, 1920, and Jan. 5, 1927. Clark traded his homestead to the Jay Em bank for 320 acres of better land that joined the Fry homestead. Clark was very talented and soon had everything fixed and neat at his new place. He went to California during World War II and worked in the shipyards; while there, he was exposed to some chemicals and became sick and died in 1957.

Calvin's homestead house had two rooms with a small, covered porch. The house siding was ship lap with a pitched shingled roof. The inside walls and ceiling consisted of fiber board sheets that could be painted or papered. They hand dug a well putting a counter-balance windmill over it. Calvin and his new wife Jana Belle arrived at Van Tassel, Wyoming by train. His dad, Jack, had helped pack an "emigrant" train car with a wagon, horses, machinery, a wooden stock tank filled with grain; jars and crocks of food were packed in the grain. Calvin received his land patent for 320 acres on April 22, 1918. He received a second patent for 160 acres on June 9, 1921.

Calvin worked the required acres and had several milk cows and sheep. Unfortunately, cowboys from



Clark Fry, WWI photo.



Calvin Fry in front of original homestead barn.



Homestead House with Calvin and Jenna Bell Fry, 1914-1915.

the Red Cloud Ranch would come and take his milk cows down the Rawhide Creek and push them into the hills past the Patrick Ranch several miles south. When Calvin found the cows they would be losing their milk. Calvin made sure the cowboys saw him leave his place and then he circled back home and laid in wait with an old 'buffalo' gun his uncle had given him. He meant to only scare them, but the bullet knocked the hat off the head of one of the cowboys; they never bothered his cows again.

Calvin and Jana Belle had two children - Mary Edverda and Irvin - during their time at the ranch. Calvin and Jana Belle lived beyond their means mortgaging the homestead and taking loans at several banks. Calvin purchased a Reo car and truck and used the truck to haul for hire. He hired a brother-in-law of a neighbor to herd the sheep and do chores. The hired hand and Jana Belle took the children and left for Florida. Calvin found himself unable to pay his debts and left the ranch after selling most of their belongings.

Calvin's father, Jack Fry, had been purchasing land near the homestead as others proved up and needed to leave as they could not make a living on 320 acres. Jack felt he needed to clear the Fry name and try to get all the debts paid, so he moved his family to the homestead in 1922.

The Fry homestead had no trees, the house was small even after adding three rooms, there was no plumbing and they had to carry water from the hand dug well. There was little water for a garden and flowers, and the wind blew often. This was a great disappointment



Clark and Arol Fry on Harley in front of Homestead Barn.

for Lottie, who was far from her family who lived in fine houses in Denver. And now there was no money for anything. She made the best of it. She mopped the floors twice a day in the summer to cool the house. She always welcomed callers and seemed to find room for relatives that were in need. She was astute at killing a chicken and soon having dinner on the table. She was raised to be a lady and worked hard to have her house in order and study her Bible. She was good at sewing and made many quilts and comforters and clothing. She raised many chickens to sell eggs and sold cream in Jay Em.

Jack was busy dealing with banks in Ft. Laramie, Van Tassel, Jay Em, and Harrison, Nebraska to pay off Calvin's loans. He sold his holdings in Iowa and Texas to be able to keep the Wyoming land. The interest was high and he was now in his sixties. His sight was leaving him and there was not much value to what a farmer could produce.

There were years the grasshoppers ate almost everything. They made portable turkey houses and moved them to the fields, so the young turkeys could eat the grasshoppers. One year a huge cloud burst flooded the pig pasture, and the pigs were washed into the creek and drowned; one hog house was found about five miles down Rawhide Creek hung up in a tree. Jack planted dry land corn, rye, potatoes, and had cattle. He thought the native grasses could fatten an animal as good as the corn in Iowa, but the winters could be brutal. One year when the rain came, he planted watermelons in his corn field and harvested a small wagon load to the delight of his family and to the surprise of his neighbors. He always raised hogs



Melvo, Arol, Bonnie, Jack, and Lottie Fry family photo.

and often took a couple wagon loads 16 miles north of the ranch to Node, Wyoming to go on the railroad. Jack appreciated a good horse to ride and could train excellent teams, but said nothing was better than a team of mules. The family took two or three wagons to Rawhide Butte to cut wood for fuel each fall. Sometimes the family would go to Jack's relatives in Nebraska to pick chokecherries and wild plums. His brothers played several musical instruments, and they had a good time singing and dancing.

Jack and Lottie's son Melvo purchased a house in Lingle. He worked for some farmers, and he unloaded coal and lumber from train cars. Jack and Lottie moved to Lingle with Melvo as Jack's sight was not good and the hard labor had taken a toll on their bodies. Lottie enjoyed having running water in the house, fruit trees, a big garden and a lawn.

Melvo and Bonnie had rode horseback and sometimes walked over a mile to a one room school. Later, Bonnie went to work at Dr. Recklings' hospital in Lusk. She married Arthur (Art) Scheer in 1930. They moved to and rented the Schlogic place with Art's brother Louie, about five miles east of the homestead. They raised corn, rye and seed potatoes. They had four children. Their daughter, Arbonna was born in 1931, they lost a still born daughter in 1933, Nadine was born in 1935 and Linda was born later in 1944. They struggled with dry years and poor prices.

Scheer Family

Louis and Rose Scheer came to America from Germany as babies, met in Nebraska and married in 1899. They moved to their homestead in 1913 with their children: George, Irene, Roy, Arthur (Art) and Louie. Their homestead was a 10 by 15-foot shack. The following year they added two rooms. Louis plowed with a walking plow and later used a gang plow pulled by three horses. They grew small grain and potatoes. Louis owned a threshing machine and would thresh as far away as Harrison, Nebraska. They grew a large garden and kept the vegetables in a potato cellar. Rose made new mattresses of spring rye straw each year covering them with a feather bed and comforters on top. Rose rendered lard in a large kettle for cooking and making soap. She cured meat in a smokehouse. The Scheer's made a trek to Van Tassell each fall to buy the winters supply of staples. Louis was on the Jay Em Bank board and was deputized to keep order at dances in Jay Em. Art purchased his parents land many years later.

Art and Bonnie (Fry) Scheer moved from the Schlogic place to the Fry homestead. Art's brother, Louie and his new wife moved into the Schlogic house. Art and Bonnie were to care for their cattle as well as Jack's



Arthur and Bonnie Scheer Wedding.

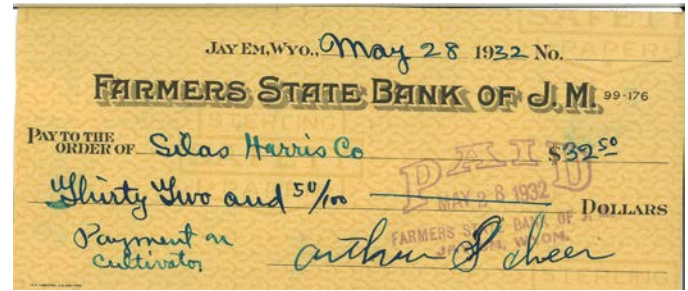


Louis and Rosa Scheer Anniversary.

cattle and take care of the ranch. Before moving to California, Bonnie's older brother Clark sold them his 320 acres. They also purchased 620 acres east of the Scheer place. Art and Bonnie planted small grains, cut and stacked hay with horses, raised hogs, sheep, Hereford cattle, milk cows, chickens and turkeys.

They made improvements by putting up a wind charger with batteries in the cellar under the house, which enabled them to have a radio. There was also a phone line attached to the barbed wire fence that had a big phone on the wall; it was a party-line on which everyone could listen in on, if it worked. Canned food and bins and barrels of vegetables were kept in the cellar. They dug a new cased well with a new Aermotor windmill closer to the house, but never piped water to the house. There were several outbuildings that Jack had built: a sheep barn, a shop/garage, an alleyway with a head catch at the end that had doors on each side to brand or work on cattle, a roofed corn crib, three or four hog houses, a coal shed, a woodshed, a large chicken house with two runs covered with chicken wire. Lottie had left an established asparagus bed, rhubarb plants and currents.

Sadly, in November 1943, Lottie passed away. She never lived to see the loans paid off on the ranch and was always worried they would lose the land.



JM Check for cultivator.

Calvin's son Irvin, and his two cousins, Jack and Lyndell Morgan, were serving in World War II. Irvin went down in the Pacific in 1942 and was never recovered. Irvin had been raised by his aunt Chloe in Washington and graduated high school there, but came back to Goshen County to enlist. His name is on the courthouse wall as one 'who gave all'.

Art and Bonnie's daughters, Arbonna and Nadine, attended Prairie Center School through tenth grade and then attended Torrington High School. They both married soon after.

On the evening of January 1, 1949, after a mild fall and winter, a blizzard struck. For the next three days, a blizzard raged across several states killing livestock, people and wildlife. The drifts were 20 to 30 feet high and up to a hundred yards long and packed cement hard. The National Guard was called in and air dropped hay and supplies to stranded ranchers. They plowed roads, which would then drift shut soon after as high winds and snow continued until March. Art and Bonnie were visiting friends at Laramie Peak. It took them three or four days to get home after the storm stopped. Melvo, Jack, Arbonna, Nadine, and Linda were home at the ranch. They had fed the livestock and brought coal and wood into the house. They closed off all the rooms except for the kitchen, which had the wood range to heat it. They could hardly keep it above freezing. They took turns staying up all night keeping the fire going. It took weeks to dig out and assess the losses.

It was wonderful to finally get electricity to the ranch in 1950. Bonnie went right out and bought a refrigerator.

Art liked vehicles and driving. He talked Jack into loaning him the money to buy a truck with a stock rack so he could haul livestock. He could haul lumber, coal and rock for the Jay Em hardware store with the rack down. They purchased another straight truck and eventually a semi to haul cattle. Bonnie drove and hauled sheep and cattle.

Bonnie and Art divorced in 1951, with much animosity. Art received the trucks and a cash settlement causing the sale of the 640 acres. Bonnie received the 320 acres they had purchased from Clark and the cattle. She purchased a Ford N tractor and mower, still using horses to sweep and stack. She hired a man from Lusk to help part time. No farming had been done for several years. The old fields had been planted to crested wheat. She ran a herd of Hereford cattle and still had a few chickens, turkeys, and geese as well as saddle horses and a couple teams.

When Jack was 90, he spent some time with his daughter, Florence in Missouri, but mostly lived at the ranch. Melvo helped a lot at the ranch. He was dedicated to caring for his dad. In 1959, Jack passed away at the ranch at the age of 98 having never taken any medicine.

Bonnie and Art's daughter Linda attended Prairie Center School and Lingle High School where she met and later married Tom Nichol. Tom had grown up on a farm and ranch west of Lingle until his dad suddenly passed and, sadly for Tom, their place was sold. Tom studied drafting in Denver for two years, but he didn't like the city. Bonnie had ranched out of necessity and asked Tom and Linda to come take care of the ranch, so she could move to town. Linda always loved the ranch and Tom saw it as a chance to get back into agriculture. Bonnie purchased a house and moved it to the ranch. It was built in 1917 and withstood the twenty-mile move. Tom also worked for a neighbor and the Holly Sugar Factory. Tom and Linda had two boys - Yancy and Quint. Linda worked at Montgomery Ward catalog store in Torrington for three years until their daughter Tonia was born in 1970.

On December 2, 1972, Art - Linda's dad - was riding on a hillside and the horse slipped and fell badly breaking his leg. Art had remarried and taken over his



Linda and Tom Nichol and Quint, Yancy, and Tonia, 1972.



Tommy Nichol in from feeding after storm in 1967.

folks place a little over three miles south of the ranch. His wife, Edna, had a stroke a couple years before that, and she was unable to walk or talk. They also had a twelve-year-old son, Jim. Linda was called to help, and Tom was asked to care for Art's livestock. Linda stayed in the hospital helping her dad for 20 days and then she brought him home and cared for him for three months. Tom cared for his livestock. The doctors told him if he was lucky his leg might heal in a year. He wanted to sell his cows and lease his place to Tom and Linda. Art would carry the note. Linda could never make it work out on paper, but finally gave in to Tom who wanted a herd of his own.

They put Simmental cross bulls on the cows and raised 600 lb. calves. They were hit with a bad spring blizzard and many calves froze even in the barn and cattle prices were not good. They could make interest, but not the full payment. Art had an offer from his brother to buy the cows; he repossessed the cows, which left Tom and Linda badly in debt to the bank. During this same time, Bonnie had bought a farm and more cattle, but would not increase Tom's salary. Linda had been working for three years at the sugar factory. Tom decided to go to work at Colorado Fuel and Iron (CF&I) mine in Guernsey and quit ranching. That meant the end of the ranch to Linda and moving to town as there was no one else to work the ranch. It was a very hard decision; Tom had always done all the ranching while she helped him when needed. Tom had always raised a big garden, which they canned and froze. He milked; she made cottage cheese and ice cream and homemade bread.

Linda made an agreement with her mom. She and Tom sold their equipment to Bonnie, so they could pay down the bank. Linda kept five cows that she and Tom had owned before the deal with her dad. She quit the sugar factory Feb. 2, 1979 and began running the ranch. Tom helped when he had time, but it was a long drive to Guernsey Sunrise Mine and he would not miss his kids' activities. Linda purchased a house in Lingle. This allowed the kids to be close to school, and Tom had a shorter drive to work. Linda had to learn to calve heifers, how to choose bulls, service the pickup, buy tractors, swath and bale hay, and put a prolapse back in. She could chain up all four pickup tires in fifteen minutes. In addition, she learned to pack, plant, and irrigate the farm. Bonnie had bought



Bonnie (Fry) Scheer, 1985.



Tonia Nichol playing in front of original sheep barn, small bales all stacked by hand.

a farm forty miles south of the ranch. When times were tough, Linda used her grandmothers and great, great grandmother as inspiration to push through her challenging times and prayed.

In 1991-1992, Linda started purchasing Red Angus bulls to put on her Simmental cross cows. She liked the results. Over the past 30 years Linda has

developed a reputation herd of Red Angus. The cattle are branded with a C lazy reverse F brand that was recorded in 1915 by Calvin. The M hanging 5 brand was recorded in 1935 by Melvo. The 5-cent brand was recorded in 1968 by Thomas and Linda.

Tom and Linda's three children, Yancy, Quint and Tonia grew up riding horses, helping work cattle, putting up hay, stacking bales, fixing fence, holding calves, attending brandings and participating in 4-H. They had the freedom of roaming the ranch, making mud pies, playing in the creek, ice skating, fishing, hunting and always watching for rattlesnakes. They developed outstanding work ethic. They all attended school in Lingle and University of Wyoming. Yancy is a civil engineer and the principle of his company in Colorado. Quint lives in Torrington, does engineering work and helps friends and neighbors like his dad did. Tonia has a Masters in Education and has taught for 28 years.

Tom died suddenly February 2, 1994, at age 49. Tom had been instrumental in keeping the ranch in the family. He was well liked and was always willing to help his neighbors and friends. Linda continued to run the ranch as well as caring for her mother and Uncle Melvo. Art passed away July 5, 1992 at age 84. Linda purchased her grandparents homestead from Arthurs' estate wanting to keep it in the family and adding it to the Nichol Ranch. Bonnie passed away December 11, 2002 at age 92. She had loved to garden and dance and would drive to Cheyenne or wherever to attend dances until age 89.

Melvo entered the care center in 2000. Linda visited him often and he enjoyed going for rides and keeping up with the ranch. He was ecstatic when Linda told him the ranch was finally debt free. They talked of the homesteader's land, which was now part of the ranch: John and Elisabeth Serafin, Frank Rider, Albert and Elizabeth Eissler, Inez Benshoof, William Ritzdorf, Joseph and Helen Korus, James Glenn, Anton Lang, Charlie and Emma Rejda, Fred and Anna Rejda, Clarence Simon, Sanders, Malmborgs, and Albert and Anna Lorenzen. Melvo received a big 100th birthday party and rode in the Goshen County Fair parade in 2008. Melvo peacefully passed at age 104 on January 23, 2013.

Linda's grandchildren Kendra Nichol, Kallie Nichol,



Quint and Yancy Nichol holding calf during branding.



Quint Nichol getting water to cows after 1997 blizzard.



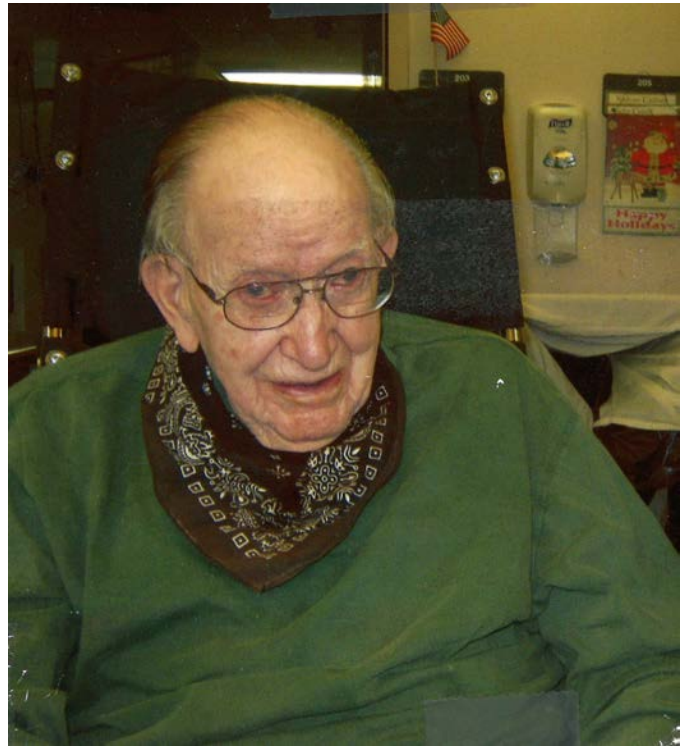
Shantz and Yancy Nichol hunting antelope.

Shantz Nichol, Emily Reed and Macey Reed as well as their parents make every effort to come home each spring for the traditional branding and in the fall for antelope hunting. Everyone in the family has benefited and some have sacrificed for the ranch.

Doing heavy, dangerous ranch work has not been accident free. Linda was kicked in the mouth by a steer at age eight and lost her four front teeth, bit by a rattle snake, thrown and stepped on by a horse, and many stitches over the years. Linda continues to manage the ranch, enjoying her time caring for the livestock and the prairie with its diverse plants and wildlife. Linda has installed several solar wells and keeps water available year around for animals. She served on the county Farm Service Agency (FSA) board for several years and is presently serving on the Lingle Ft. Laramie Conservation board. She was very honored to be chosen in the first group of recipients of The Heart of Agriculture Award.

The Nichol family is so pleased and proud to have a Centennial Ranch.

- Compiled by Linda Nichol, her daughter, Tonia Reed, and stories told to Linda by her grandpa (Jack Fry), uncle (Melvo Fry), and father (Arthur Scheer).



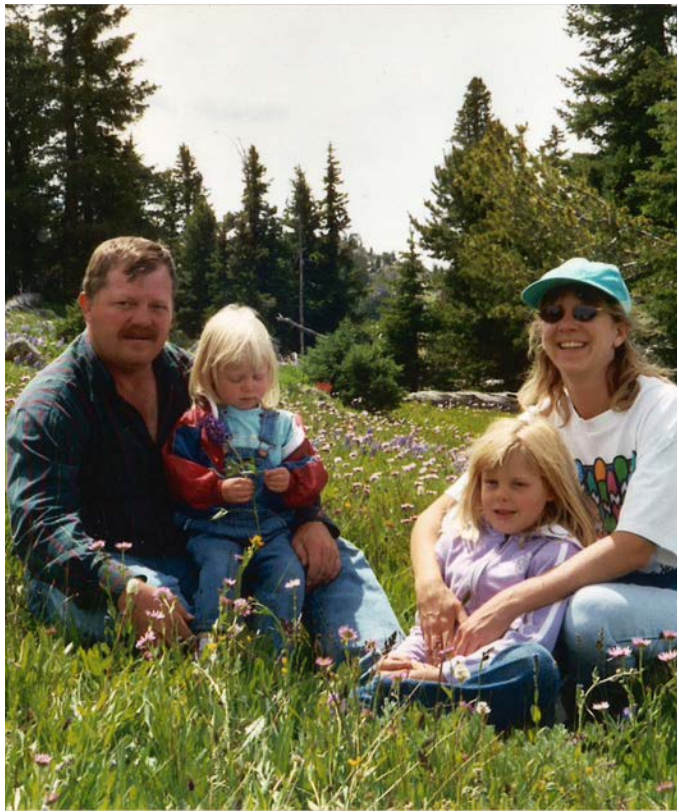
Melvo Fry, 100 years old.



Macey Reed with Baby, her steer she raised with a bottle, taken out in open pasture at the ranch.



Kallie with Linda's ranch horse Stitches. Linda did most of ranch work on Stitches.



Quint, Kalli, Kendra, and Trina.



The Fry-Scheer-Nichol Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

Patchwork Partners Ranch, 1921

Family of Ellis and Nellie Patch, Johnson County



Current photo of Patchwork farmstead and house.

Ellis G. Patch homesteaded on Muddy Creek, Johnson County, WY in 1921. Ellis was a fourth-generation homesteader whose family had moved during the latter half of the 19th century from Massachusetts to Iowa to Nebraska to Wyoming. His uncle, Walter Patch, Sr. homesteaded first on North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek before later moving to Muddy Creek where he raised his family. Ellis's parents, Murray and Sarah Smith Patch, were next; they homesteaded on Little North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek. Uncle Pete Smith homesteaded in the foothills between Muddy Creek and Billy Creek. Wanting to live close to his family, Ellis filed on a nearby section.

Ellis was lucky to find good ranching land, because most sites were homesteaded four decades earlier. Uncle Pete told Ellis about land that was homesteaded previously but never "proved up." Ellis filed on the relinquishment after asking the original homesteader if he minded. Old Man Mattox replied, "Go ahead, Ellis. I never lived there nor improved it; my time is up, so you might as well have the claim." Ellis filed

and began planning for his cabin. Uncle Pete told Ellis: "I don't care where you build your cabin. Just be sure I can see the lights in your window from my cabin at night, so I'll know you are home and okay. It gets lonesome out here."

Ellis learned early and well how to work hard and survive in a rough country. As a small child, Ellis



Patch brothers – early homesteaders on Crazy Woman Creek.



Ellis Patch at his newly built homestead cabin.

worked with his father and uncles cutting timber, raising cattle, and working with horse-drawn machinery. In 1906, his father moved the family to Buffalo because Murray intended to run for public office. He was elected, but he kept his homestead. Ellis and his siblings attended school in Buffalo. In 1912, Murray asked his fourteen-year-old son to take the team and wagon to the homestead to look after cows and horses that winter. Ellis' widowed grandmother, Eliza Patch, declared she would go also: "I can at least cook for the boy and keep the house warm for him." Ellis was forever grateful to his grandmother for her companionship that winter as he struggled to care for his father's livestock. In the evenings, Eliza read the Bible to Ellis.

Years later Ellis dictated memories of homesteading to his daughter, Saralee Patch Haskins. In this chronicle, Ellis recalled:

In 1921 I homesteaded my ranch and built my cabin. It was constructed of logs, but when I built the roof, I didn't have money to buy tarpaper to weather-proof it. I criss-crossed boards across the roof over my bed, hoping . . . to keep it dry. I had a wood-burning stove for warmth . . . When I told my mother that I didn't have enough money to buy windows for my cabin, she said, "Ellis, go get the windows from my chicken coop and put them in your cabin. Seems to me that you need them more than my chickens do."

Ellis framed the windows into his cabin. Although the glass has been replaced, the original window frame remains in the ranch house.

In his chronicle, Ellis explained how he obtained drinking water and improved his land:

To provide water for my horses I had to haul from Muddy Creek a quarter mile below the house. I hitched a sled to the horses, put the barrels on, filled them from the creek and brought them back up. In the winter, after one or two cold nights, these barrels of water would freeze pretty solid. I built a barn, mostly a windbreak, to keep the horses in. I first fenced the north line by the land originally homesteaded by Charlie Basch, then, as money became available, I fenced the southeast area by the creek, and then across the gulch on the southwest.



First barn built by Ellis – it is still in use.

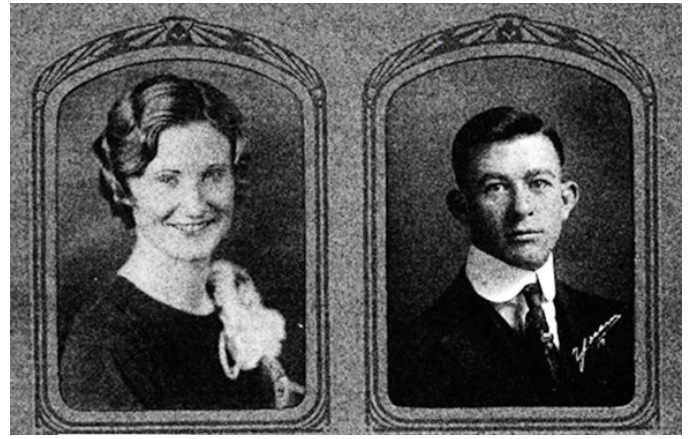
Sometimes the winds would sweep down with such force that the log homestead cabin would shake, and it seemed as if the whole building would be blown down around me. I would take my blankets and go sleep in the dugout cellar just to be safe.

Ellis's brand is *E Box*: a capital E with a box attached to the bottom of the E. He wanted the E positioned on top of the P, to read "E over P" for his initials. However, that brand was already registered with the Wyoming Livestock Board, so he eliminated the tail of the P, resulting in a square with E sitting on it.

The homestead on Muddy Creek was Ellis's base, but his cattle herd was too small to provide much income. For two decades, Ellis held various jobs; he worked for the county as census rider, road construction worker, fire lookout at Muddy Guard Station, oil field worker, sawmill laborer, railroad tie hack, ranch hand, and supervisor of CCC camps. Between jobs or on leave time, Ellis improved his homestead. He dug into the hillside and constructed a roofed corn crib. In 1925, he harvested 500 bushels of corn. He built a log shed and barn for livestock and a log granary.

While Ellis was working away from his homestead, his younger brother, Murray Patch, Jr., was living in Ellis's cabin. Murray Jr. had homesteaded nearby, but had no cabin. He took care of Ellis's livestock, planted trees, cleared meadows, and courted a neighbor girl, Viola Holman, whose family lived downstream at the Grinder ranch. Murray, Jr. and Viola married in 1933 and wanted more space, so Murray and Ellis built on another bedroom and a kitchen, making the original one-room cabin into a comfortable three-room house, even though they did not have indoor plumbing and electricity.

Through the twenties and the bitter Depression years of the thirties, Ellis worked and saved and planned. In 1936, Ellis married Nellie Cook, a country-school teacher. Their romance began in 1930. Ellis was riding to town when he came across Nellie with a flat tire on her *Terrapin coupe*. He dismounted, tied his horse, and changed the tire for her. Ellis recalled in his homesteading chronicle:



Ellis and Nellie Patch.



Current photo of the granary built in the 1920s.

Nellie Cook and I started going together in 1930 to the card parties and dances in the Buffalo area... she was teaching [in Newcastle]... In order to keep her job, we had to keep our marriage a secret because a woman with a working husband was not allowed to teach because of the shortage of available jobs in the Depression. When the school year ended, we lived in a log cabin at the Dayton CCC camp, and then rented a house [in Buffalo] and then Dayton. In 1939 we bought a Dayton house.

While Ellis worked for the Forest Service as a CCC Supervisor, he and Nellie had three daughters: Saralee, Shirley, and Sally. Then the CCC program was discontinued because all available men were needed for the war effort. Ellis considered his options. He was too old to be drafted; he was not academically qualified to advance in the Forest Service. Oil field work was out because he and Nellie thought the rough



Uncle Pete's homestead cabin.



Uncle Pete Smith in his 90s.

and tumble life in oilfields was a poor environment for their daughters. They decided to sell their Dayton house and return to his homestead.

At this time, Murray Patch, Sr. was widowed, in poor health, and retired from politics (he served as County Assessor, County Treasurer, and State Representative). He had a mortgage on his homestead but no income, so he turned over the land to his three sons: Ellis, Murray, Jr., and Charles. Murray Jr. and Viola Patch moved to the homestead on Little North Fork of Crazy Woman Creek. Not interested in ranching, Charles Patch worked as an auditor for the Forest Service. These family decisions enabled Ellis to acquire by inheritance, swap, or purchase, 520 acres of land he called the Upper Pasture, which was located close to Uncle Pete's cabin and originally homesteaded by Murray Patch, Jr. Ellis also acquired one-half of his father's summer grazing permit in the Bighorn National Forest, allowing Ellis to take 40 cow/calf pairs to mountain pastures during the summer thus saving grass on his ranch. The permit was increased in later years and the Patchwork/McPhee combo ran 300 head on the forest permit.

Ellis became an early member of the Muddy Creek Stock Association, a dues-paying organization of about a dozen ranchers. The Association cooperated with the Forest Service. They trailed stock up in June, hired summer riders to watch their cows, and cooperatively rounded up the cows in the fall. Ellis served as President of the Association for many years, eventually stepping down to become the Secretary for several terms.

Settled in at the Muddy Creek homestead, Ellis and Nellie had two more daughters, Sherrie and Kathleen. They increased their herd of white-faced Hereford cattle, bought a Ford tractor, built a log barn, enlarged their house, and planted trees. Winds from the west and north were brutal in winter. As the trees grew, they protected the house and outbuildings and gave shelter to cattle.

Each year we planted trees – plums, cherries, cherry hybrids, apple, pear, . . . some grape vines. Each year when I irrigated the meadows, I watered the garden, the yard, and the trees. Nellie and Dad planted roses and other flowers, and we grew a vegetable garden



Cattle drive to mountain pasture on Pole Creek.

and potatoes every year.

One day in springtime, a neighbor stopped by to ask Ellis about a horse, but the Patch family was not home. The next time the neighbor came by, he apologized, saying, “I knew you folks were not home, but your yard and orchard were so beautiful with the lawns rimmed with flowers and fruit trees and shrubs in full bloom that I could not stop myself. I walked through the orchard with the sun shining on the fruit trees. I admired the roses and hollyhocks, tasted the raspberries and gooseberries on the bushes and noticed the big garden without a weed to be seen. You have a beautiful homestead.”

Not everything was beautiful and easy in those years. The Patch family dealt with drought and grasshoppers, transition from horse-drawn, and difficult cattle markets. The devastating blizzard of 1949 hit while Ellis was in Billings, MT for surgery. He lay in his hospital bed and worried about Nellie and his family on the ranch. But he had planned well, asking his father to stay at the ranch to help Nellie feed the cattle while Ellis had surgery to remove a bone growth that was cutting off circulation.

Ellis’s homestead was in what Native Americans described as “good winter country.” The snows came and winds blew, but hills, ridges, and creek bottoms gave livestock protection, and Ellis had plenty of hay in corrals, plenty of coal for heat in the ranch house, and plenty of food.

During the worst of the storm, the family stayed inside. When the blizzard stopped, Nellie and her father-in-law hitched the Ford tractor to a hay wagon and drove to the nearest stack yard. Before they could load hay, they shoveled heavy, crusted snow from the stack. They pitched hay on the wagon to feed cows sheltered in trees near the ranch house and

horses in the barns. After parking the tractor, they slogged through drifts to reach the house and warm up with hot coffee. Eventually the sun came out, temperatures warmed, drifts melted.

A friend said, after hearing about Nellie and Murray’s successful efforts to keep livestock alive: “Well, if a woman and an old man in his 70s could take care of their stock without losing a single cow in that miserable blizzard, maybe it wasn’t as awful as I thought when I was out in it!”

In the 1950s, drought threatened the Patch Ranch, but Nellie renewed her teaching certificate and began the second half of her teaching career. Students and parents called her “Aunt Nellie” because some pupils were nephews and nieces. Her income helped with ranch expenses and also paid for the Patch daughters’ living expenses while attending high school in Buffalo and then college expenses.

Ellis concentrated on increasing his hay production and obtaining a secure supply of water. He built a flume over the deep gulch of Dry Muddy to deliver water to the blue stem grass meadows over there. When the Rural Electrification Act (REA) brought electric power, Ellis installed an electric pump for house water and garden irrigation; for irrigating meadows, he depended on gravity-flow ditches and high-water in Muddy Creek. This worked fine until other ranchers with superior water rights asked Ellis to shut down his headgate.

In 1957, Ellis partnered with two neighbors to build the Patch Reservoir (320 acre-feet), which was filled by Muddy Creek during the winter. Up to this time, Ellis fiercely resisted any mortgage on his property having seen others lose homes and ranches during the Depression. Ellis allowing a mortgage on his



Patch daughter Kathleen driving buckrake.

homestead to finance his third of the Patch Reservoir is a clear indication that he knew reservoir water was the only way to save his ranch. Nellie said that Ellis never had a good night's rest until he paid off that mortgage.

In 1976, Ellis and Nellie joined neighbors to form the North Fork Irrigation District, which was a necessary step to secure low-interest, long-term loans from the Wyoming Farm Loan Board. The District then built the two Muddy Guard Reservoirs, which are well known in the county now as fishing spots. Ellis and Nellie's share was 50 acre-feet of stored water from Muddy Guard Reservoir 1. The next step was to form the Crazy Woman Watershed Improvement District, which provided partial funds to members for sprinkler systems, concrete headgates, gated pipe systems, and underground pipelines. Finally, Ellis had a secure supply of irrigating water.

His daughters became willing workers on the ranch, making a good hay crew and learning to be good stock raisers. As 4-H members, they raised bum lambs, showed them at the fair, and deposited lamb sale money in their college accounts. At age 10, the oldest, Saralee, was the first to ride with Ellis on the two-day trip to trail the cows to mountain pasture. Soon all five girls vied to drive the cows to the mesa, sleep in bedrolls at the base of Crazy Woman Hill on the Stock Drive Trail, push the cows up Crazy Woman Hill, and ride along the old stage road past Muddy Guard Station until they reached the Pole Creek pasture. Ellis did not own a horse trailer in those days, so he and the girls made the long journey

home on horseback.

As the older girls left home to go to high school and then to college, the younger girls stepped up to operate mowers, rakes, swathers, and bale wagons as Ellis purchased more modern haying equipment. Ellis taught his girls to work hard, long hours in the hot sun or freezing cold of winter. He often proudly declared: "They were the best hay crew – or cowhands – or irrigators - I ever had. They knew just how I wanted things done!"

As the girls worked in their professions and/or married and had children, Ellis and Nellie welcomed grandchildren vacationing from Boston, Chicago, South Dakota and Wyoming towns. Third and fourth generation young people enjoyed learning to irrigate, move cows, put up hay and build fence with Grandpa Ellis. Their lessons in the Patch work ethic were preceded by Ellis' gruff, "Let's go! There's work to be done!"

In 1972, Ellis and Nellie asked their youngest daughter, Kathleen, and her husband, Ron McPhee, to move closer to help with ranch work. Ron held a University of Wyoming (UW) degree in Agri-business; he grew up on a ranch northwest of Cheyenne. Kathleen held a UW degree in Business. As related above, Kathleen could do almost anything on the ranch from spending long hours on the swather, baler and bale wagon to pulling a calf or lamb (which means assisting with a difficult birth) by herself to fixing fence and killing rattlesnakes. With their two young children, Ron and Kathleen moved to Kaycee, WY where Ron worked for the Highway Department. They commuted on weekends and weekday evenings when Ron finished work at 4 p.m. They irrigated, harvested hay, calved, branded, and manged the cattle. Their children, Kevin and Melanie, were excellent ranch hands and were a valued resource to keep the ranch growing and profitable.

In 1976, the McPhees had an opportunity to buy part of the 41 Ranch. The property was adjacent to the Patch Ranch on the east with good meadows, pasture and an 1889 water right. At the same time, Ellis and Nellie bought 62 acres of the 41 Ranch adjoining their ranch on the north. In 1980, Ron transferred to the Buffalo Highway Department, moved his family



Garage hand dug by Ellis into the side of the hill by the homestead cabin.



New drill stem pipe corrals built by Ron.



Ellis and his grandson Thomas irrigating.

to the ranch, and bought 200 head of sheep to run on McPhee land. They built a house on the other side of Muddy Creek, close enough for Ellis and Nellie to see the lights in their windows and know when they were home and okay.

Ron and Kathleen worked at their jobs in town (Kathleen was legal secretary, office manager, real estate agent) while operating their own ranch and Ellis and Nellie's ranch. Ron kept detailed computer records for all livestock. He transitioned from Herefords to Black Angus (with considerable objection from Ellis) and upgraded the genetics of both herds. He trenched a water line to the two barns and corrals from the domestic well, added a 50-foot open shed to the red barn for calving and lambing, installed a maternity pen with equipment to assist with difficult births, and built sturdy pens of 2'x'6' sawn lumber to provide new moms and calves sheltered

private quarters. Ellis's pole corrals were aging, so Ron designed an expanded set of corrals adjoining the barn complex with sorting alleys and working chute. He built the corrals from drill stem discarded from the oil fields, doing the welding himself and securing the sections to solid wooden posts.

Ellis had four dugout garages built into the side of Windmill Hill, but after a horse fell through the dirt roof of one garage, Ron replaced the dugouts with a large metal garage/workshop. The new building accommodates large tractors and other machinery while providing workspace for repair and storage.

Ron and Kathleen were aware of the importance of reservoir water, so in 1976 they participated in the North Fork Irrigation District and acquired 97 acre-feet of water from Muddy Guard 2. They installed stock water pipelines and rubber tire tanks and made a stock watering system from an artesian well abandoned by an oil company.

During these years, Ellis participated in ranch activities as he was able. Nellie continued teaching until 1972. They enjoyed the company of Ron and Kathleen's two children, Kevin and Melanie, who helped in the hay fields, the calving sheds, and moving cattle as they developed ranch skills and work ethic. Kevin and Melanie attended college, earning Doctorate and Masters degrees, respectively.

After Ellis' death at 93 years of age in December 1991, Nellie formed Patchwork Partners Limited Partnership to own and manage the ranch, which had

increased to approximately 1500 acres. After Nellie's death at 89 years of age in March 2000, Ellis and Nellie's five daughters and their spouses inherited shares of the Partnership. The E Box brand continues in use by Patchwork Partners Ranch.

The three Patch girls (Sherrie, Shirley and Kathleen) who settled in Wyoming continued to work together on Patchwork Partners with their spouses, children and grandchildren. Sherrie ran the swather every summer, greasing it, changing sickles and guards until she was well past 70 years of age. The family smiled as she gently but firmly defended her right to operate the swather as younger family members jealously eyed the machine. Shirley provided delicious noon meals and cool drinks for all the hay hands in the summers. She is still well-known for her delicious cinnamon rolls at coffee breaks that are always provided to neighbors and ranch hands working cattle in the Patchwork corrals.

Ron and Kathleen McPhee with their son Kevin McPhee now manage in tandem their ranch and Patchwork Partners ranch, which together consist of about 3000 deeded acres plus state and BLM leases.

They own irrigation water from three reservoirs and two streamflow permits. Both ranches are cow-calf operations. They maintain their autonomy, but employ the economies of sharing labor, use of corrals and outbuildings, and machinery. They are pleased that many of the third and fourth generation of Ellis and Nellie's descendants still actively participate in the ranches. Kevin, his wife Shelly and daughter Mariah commute from Montana to help with cattle drives, shipping and haying. Sally and Dan's son Eric now lives at the ranch and is always available for ranch activities. Shirley's grandchildren in the Watson family commute from Casper for brandings and gatherings. Kolton Watson lived and worked at the ranch in the summers during high school, continuing to work part time as he attended Sheridan College, graduating in 2021 with a degree in Diesel Mechanics.

- Written by Shirley Patch Jacob and Kathleen Patch McPhee with excerpts from the compilation by Saralee Patch Haskins of Patch history as dictated to her by Ellis G. Patch



The family of Ellis and Nellie Patch with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony, 2021.

Pine Springs Ranch, 1919

The Potter Family, Sweetwater County



Pine Springs Ranch.

Pine Springs Ranch, located in McKinnon, Wyoming, had its beginning much earlier than the branded name; it was named by the third generation of the Anderson lineage. Let me introduce you to the early history of Pine Springs Ranch – one of Wyoming’s 2021 Centennial Farm and Ranch recognized ranches - with the following stories.

William Beach, the original homesteader, diligently developed the land in 1897. According to one of Beach’s daughters, her father built the Beach Desert ditch from Birch Creek, Utah, over to the homestead and combined it with the spring located east of his house. He cultivated the land and raised hay, grain, potatoes and a large garden. He would then take the produce to Green River, Wyoming to sell and buy clothing and food he couldn’t raise such as sugar, flour, and dried fruits. He also raised cattle, horses, pigs and chickens. He constructed a lot of sheds and buildings—a bunk house, meat house, ice house -- and boardwalks to each of them. He had a threshing machine and did threshing work for other farmers in the area. This was the beginning of the Pine Springs Ranch.

In 1916, Mr. Beach sold his property to Mr. Duncombe, one of the first sheep men in the area. At the time there was war between the cattle men and the sheep men. Mr. Duncombe’s daughter recalls a time when her father’s cows were shot in the corral while family members were away and when a sheep wagon was burned at what is known as the Pine Groves adjoining the Pine Springs Ranch.

John A. Anderson, the patriarch of our family, bought the Beach Place from Mr. Duncombe in 1919. A son, Cliff Anderson, operated the partially developed land for two years until John could move his family from Fairview, Utah, to McKinnon. John A. had been a prosperous sheep man in Utah, running about 5,000 head. All was going well until an economic crash hit after World War I and prices of livestock hit the bottom. Wool and lamb prices were so low that wool was going for 8 cents a pound. John settled his obligations in Utah, took what he had left and bought the partially developed ranch in Wyoming.

Life took a drastic change for the family. The family moved from a large ten room, two-bathroom, white



John A. Anderson - Purchaser, 1919.



Lucinda Anderson.

brick home to a small three-room log house with a privy at the far end of the lot. The ceiling and doors of the log home were so low that an ordinary sized person had to stoop. The floors had settled on each side of the room such that John's wife Lucinda walked up and down hill all day while doing her work. Years later a home was built with more comfort and room. However, it burned to the ground in 1941. Another home was built, which still remains and serves the present-day family. A plus for the family was that wonderful cold spring water was nearby.

When the final move was made from Fairview to McKinnon, John A. brought 50 head of registered white-face cattle and 500 head of sheep. They were shipped by rail and then trailed on to McKinnon. The first winter was so severe that most of the cows died. Hay was expensive and had to be purchased from M. N. Larsen in Manila, Utah, which was 14 miles one way.



Home in Fairview, Utah.



First home in McKinnon, Wyoming.



Four room log home for Chris, Jessie and their children.

The family worked hard and struggled to meet their needs. It seemed there was one set back after another. For example, in June 1939, just when they and their neighbors were beginning to get ahead and all the crops were planted, the Interstate Canal and Reservoir washed out. The community had worked to build this canal with picks and shovels, teams and scrapers to get the water on their land. There was no water for the crops that year.

Moving to the second generation introduces John A. and Lucinda's daughter, Jessie, the tenth child of twelve. She was ten years old when the family moved from Fairview. She had lived a very happy and carefree life in Fairview. Her new home brought many adjustments, such as meeting new friends, new schools, and a new way of life. The local school only took the students through the 10th grade, so completing the two remaining years meant students had to move away from home and live with other families wherever a school was offered and room and board could be found. Jessie moved to Lyman, Wyoming her senior year and there she met her future husband, Crystal (Chris) Youngberg. Their lives joined together April 3, 1930 after 18 months of courtship.

Chris was working in the first American Food Store built in Lyman and Jessie was working in the Lyman Post Office. Everything looked good. But changes developed quickly. The Depression hit shortly after their marriage, leaving them both jobless. Chris went to work for his father, Carl G. Youngberg, who at that time had a contract to build air strips



John A. shocking grain.

for the government. Jessie cooked for the 15-man construction crew in a little homemade trailer. She had never cooked in her life—poor fellows.

Money got so scarce that they moved to her father's ranch, and lived in a little log house with a dirt roof. The walls were nice and clean, papered with the Deseret News and the bare floors were scrubbed white. Three children were born there—one on December 22, 1933 with the temperature 28 degrees below zero. Later, when Chris and Jessie could, they built a four-room log home at one end of the ranch. There was always hard work on this new adventure but NO money. They traded horses for their first car. It was a 1935 V-8 bought in 1937. The family grew from three to six—3 girls and 3 boys.

As time went on and the family was nearly raised, Chris and Jessie purchased the 1100 acres of land from "Grandpa John A." In 1958, they paid \$20,000.00. It was a big financial step for them. While they had provided a good home and raised six children, nothing was plentiful. The following years entailed more hard work and little money. Chris worked carpentry jobs wherever available—one being Arch Dam Construction as Flaming Gorge Dam was developed. They had a small herd of Black Angus

and 250 head of sheep. Livestock prices continued to fluctuate from year to year, but with the help of the family, Chris and Jessie continued to manage the land until Chris became ill with Parkinson's disease and time limited his ability and strength to carry on. The decision was made to sell out to an interested child.

In 1973, David and Kay Potter, a daughter and the fifth child of the family, were offered the opportunity to purchase the ranch. The couple lived in Salt Lake City, Utah where David operated C & P Automatic Transmission Inc. Raising a family in the country was inviting—especially to their boys. Since Kay had been raised on this particular ranch in the mud, snow and cold, it took some persuasion for her to make the move. Salt Lake City had offered a different and more appealing type of life. As the weeks ran out, a decision was made to move, sell the home and business and “go for it.” In August 1973, David and Kay moved with their three small children—two boys, ages 7 and 10 years, and one daughter, 18 months. In 1985, another precious daughter joined the family. The third generation of the Anderson family to make a family life on the ranch had begun.



David and Kay - 3rd Generation Family



Christmas tree fun.



Crystal and Jessie - 2nd Generation Family.

Time has a way of moving on and 48 years later, David and Kay still live in the same home and on the same 1100 acres. Memories often return to David and Kay of their family life on the ranch. The children – David, Jr., Michael, Teresa, and Kandice - carried a daily load of chores and were responsible and dependable. David, Sr. worked off the ranch during the day, as did Kay, just to make ends meet. But there was time for play, too. Camping trips, cutting family Christmas trees on the ranch, hunting a first deer, high school and college, rodeo involvement and occasional vacations brought fun and excitement.

One happy memory was a day in 1975 when the children were young and Uncle Burl brought Dottie, a mare in foal, to be born in June. This new colt would belong to the boys. Oh, what excitement! (Grandpa Chris had donated his ranch horses, Ky-boy and Boots, with the ranch purchase but Dottie's new colt would not be a hand-me-down). Prince was born in the spring.

A team of horses, Pete and Babe, had also been added with excitement. They helped develop more skills of country life, as did the barnyard full of goats, chickens and turkeys. The old gobbler became a nuisance. When we fed the cats, he would come flying from the corrals, slide right in to the cat's dish and gobble their food. He would then jump in the pig bucket and eat Wilbur's grain, which was not tolerated for long.

But there were trials and challenges as well. When we had purchased the livestock with the ranch from Chris and Jessie in 1973, sale of the calves was good—best ever with \$1.00/lb. for calves. It was encouraging. The following year everything plunged to a new low. It was difficult to sell in the fall and when we finally did, calves brought only \$.24/lb. We either had to hang on or sell and move. We went job hunting and each worked outside jobs for many years to support the ranch, family, mission and education. Experience is a good teacher. And we found “no experience was wasted.” We continually learned from each one and still do presently.

As time passed, our family made many improvements to the land and animal production. Presently a portion of the ranch is under a pivot irrigation system. Hills of sagebrush and cedars have been grubbed and cleared and put under cultivation and irrigation. Cross fences for pasture rotation have been installed and springs have been developed for stock water. A mechanic shop was built. A cow-calving barn and working corrals have been built out of pipe. Animal calf weight has improved from the 1974 weight of 418 pounds to an approximate average of 550 plus in 2021. The sheep herd was eventually dissolved due to coyotes, except for a small herd that graze peacefully in the pasture close by.



Grandpa Chris' horse, Ky-boy, came with the ranch.



The “used-to-be” irrigation system.



Irrigation improvement with gravity flow pivot.

One by one each of the children grew up and left home to pursue their education, mission, marriage and career. But each one returned, when possible, to help lighten the ranch workload as needed. Eventually the two sons, David, Jr. and Michael returned to stay. They established their own homes on the Pine Springs Ranch and the operation was turned over to them in 2012. This created the fourth generation of the same family line. The fifth generation is now stepping up.

Despite the hesitancy of giving up city life for country life, we, Kay and David, look back over the past 48 years with hearts grateful to our ancestors who chose to challenge this undeveloped strip of land. David, Jr., Michael, Teresa and Kandice have had opportunities for growth in the country that may have not happened had we not made a move. They excelled in education, leadership, 4-H, FFA and rodeo. They have married and are now watching their own families open the same windows of opportunities and face similar trials and challenges. They have strong work ethics as well as an appreciation and respect for the land that sustains them.

Grandpa John A. and Lucinda perhaps saw a future in our family.



Installing pipeline for the new pivot.



Spring planting oats and alfalfa.



Winter feeding with the team. Double team: Flint and Amigo, Shorty and Duke, March 2018.



Family photo from 1986. Back row: Teresa Dawn Potter, David Potter, Jr. Susie Potter. 2nd Row: Kay Potter, David Potter, Kandice Kaye Potter, Michael Potter. Front row: Casey Potter and Megan Potter.



Potter Family - 3rd and 4th Generation.



Kandice Kaye was the fourth child added to the family.

Other Interesting Family Stories

Adding more to this story is that the valley was historically called “Coon Hollow” (now named McKinnon). There are various versions of how it got this name including one about a man named Sam Smith who camped by the spring at the Beach Ranch where there were many prairie dogs. So, he called them “coons” and thus the name of “Coon Hollow”.

William Beach had a man working for him by the name of Turner. Sometime before this, about 1898, the Red Sash Gang robbed a Union Pacific train. The loot was estimated at approximately \$85,000.00 in heavy-gold coins and bullion which they hauled off in Union Pacific buckets. (Some say it was hauled away in panniers of several pack mules). However,

it is believed that the gold was brought south to the Uinta Mountains, because a Union Pacific bucket was found in Dowds Hole, Utah. Some have thought the gold was buried at Beaver Creek, others say at Longs Park and still others say at Carter Dugway or Phil Peco, which borders Pine Springs Ranch. Turner seemed to be a player in this story. Turner had a map of the location. The book “Our Strip of Land, A History of Daggett County, Utah” by Dick and Vivian Dunham states he made the map while in jail with another man. Turner had drawn the map on the instep of his shoe. Ole Nielson said he helped him draw a map on paper from the map inside his shoe. The map showed the gold to be around Longs Park. Turner hunted for this gold, but no one knows

whether he found it or not. However, Turner did disappear from the area for a while. As told by one of Beach’s daughters years later, Turner attended William Beach’s funeral finely dressed with diamond rings on his fingers. One may speculate. Rumor also has it that Sundance Kid removed the gold in 1908.

- Written and compiled by Jessie Anderson Youngberg and Kay Potter



The Potter Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony, 2021.

Cook Ranch, 1916

Gilbert Ray Cook Family, Campbell County



Gilbert Ray Cook with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

Netz Ranch, 1907

Joe Netz Family, Converse County



The Netz Family with Senator John Barrasso, Senator Cynthia Lummis, and Governor Mark Gordon at the Centennial Farm and Ranch Ceremony 2021.

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BECAUSE OUR CULTURE MATTERS



Front Cover Photo: Indian Rocks Ranch, Carbon County
Back Cover Photo: Klondike Ranch, Johnson County