

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Webster, C. M.

Mr. C. M. Webster was born in Marietta, Washington county, Ohio. When just a young man, he worked as a cabin boy on a steamboat on the Ohio River, but this wasn't exciting enough to suit his tastes so in the summer of 1884, he started west in search of excitement and to become a cowboy, a wild and woolly cowboy. That was his ambition, to get out in the wild west where men were tough men and they rode horses, and drank whiskey and never did anything else. After riding for days, it seemed, he finally got to Haigler, Nebraska, just eighteen miles east of Wray. His first thought was to get a job, so he went up to one of the saloons, and after a couple of pegs of whiskey asked the bartender where he could get a job riding herd on some cattle. After some thought, the gentleman in question told him about a man out on the Arikaree River, who had been in that morning looking for a cowhand. This gentleman had said that he was going to Wray, and then go out home. Mr. Webster had never ridden a horse, but bought one to go to Wray to see this man. He evidently didn't ride very well because just as he was leaving town for Wray, he met Lee West, the foreman of the 3 Bar - who asked him where he was going. After telling West that he was going to Wray to get a job, Lee told him that if he didn't get the job to come back to Haigler and he would get him one.

Finally Mr. Webster arrived in Wray, then only a tent post-office, a depot and a section house, but he could not find the man

he wanted to see. The next day he went back to Haigler and Lee West gave him a job. The trip from Wray to Haigler was a very trying one for Mr. Webster as the day before was the first time in his life he had ever ridden, and as a result he was very stiff and sore. The first thing he had to do was to break the horse that the American Cattle Company, managed by West, had given to him. They were all unbroken horses and after being pitched off numerous times, he got one broken. He then picked out another, but his was one of those horses which are almost impossible to ride. Every ranch in those days had a couple, which they let the greenhorns try. He really went for a ride that time, sailing through the air just as if he could fly, but he finally met the ground with a crack that about finished him with the desire to be a cowboy. However, he had started so he had to finish, so after a number of weeks he was able to ride a horse fairly well, and within a year was breaking horses for the fun of riding.

One time when he was at Wray, he met Joe Masters, who was the postmaster in the little tent postoffice. He was a pious sort of fellow whom no one liked. It was because of his piety that the cowboys started to call him Holy Joe, and the little stream which ran through his homestead north of Wray, took that name too. It is still called Holy Joe Creek.

Chief Creek, a stream that is a tributary of the Republican River, was formerly called Papoose Creek, because a number of cowboys in the early days found a dead Indian baby on a funeral pyre at its headwaters west of Robb. As time passed, the name was changed to Chief Creek. This stream is a swift, cold, clear water, and crooked flow of water started by one large spring and fed by numerous other springs as it wends its way eastward.

An old buffalo hunter who was one of Buffalo Bill Cody's friends, was one of Mr. Webster's best friends. Mr. Webster and Bill Welsh were the men that showed J. J. Pete, Tucker, and Smith, survivors of the Beecher Island Battle, where Beecher Island was located. Mr. Welsh and Buffalo Bill hunted buffalo together near Wallace, Kansas. Mr. Welsh worked for a number of years for old man Benkleman, over by St. Francis, Kansas, then came to Wray and lived and worked for Mr. Webster on the latter's homestead on the Arikaree. Mr. Webster's oldest son, W. W. Webster, M. D., Ph. D. of Greeley, Colorado, was named after Mr. Welsh, his name being William Welsh Webster.

The last big cattle roundup was in the fall of 1887. The homesteaders were taking all of the good land, which left the cattlemen without the large tracts of free grazing land, so they decided to move their herds to places where there were still many square miles of free land. All of the big cattle outfits in the country for miles got together and herded all of the cattle together, and drove them to Haigler, where they were separated as to brands, and shipped. There for many days were three and four long trains in the town of Haigler, ready to haul the cattle out of the country. Most of the cattle were shipped to New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and Wyoming. The American Cattle Company or the 3 Bar ranch shipped most of theirs to Wyoming where under the direction of Jim Lusk, who named Lusk, Wyoming, after himself, they were put on the range. Lusk was the foreman of the 3 Bar ranch in Wyoming. Sheriff M. R. Lovell was the captain of the roundup, settling all disputes between the different outfits. This man was one of the witnesses at Mr. Webster's wedding. He later, after his last term in office went to Denver, where he worked for the city at one of the parks, until he died.

The American Cattle Company left all of their horses in the hands of Mr. Webster, when they left the country. He sold a number of them to the nesters, and after keeping them and breaking most of them, he shipped them all to New Mexico. 145

While working for the 3 Bar, Mr. Webster was under three different foremen, namely: Lee West, Jimmy Gray, and Dan Powell. The American Land and Cattle Company was a corporation, with J. W. McCrum as President, and most of the stockholders living in Cleveland, Ohio. The Colorado offices were in Denver, located in the new Tabor Building, and all the checks were sent to all of their employees from there.

After getting rid of the horses, Mr. Webster homesteaded a quarter section of land on the bottom lands of the Arikaree River. He did a little farming, just enough to feed his stock during the winter. He kept always some good horses, cattle, and other livestock, so during the dry years of 1893 and 1894, he had little to worry about as he had plenty of water, and that with the natural hay he cut in the valley, he could live comfortably.

After sixteen years of ranching on a small scale, he moved to Wray, and started working for Amos Carl in the latter's hardware store. This however, didn't appeal to Mr. Webster so soon afterwards he and Dick Mason went into the grocery and dry goods business. Their first store was located in the Odd Fellows' old frame structure. They operated their business there until the Odd Fellows decided to construct a new brick building, and Webster and Mason moved their stock of merchandise there just after it was finished in 1915. They then took in a partner, Harvey Cox, who invested \$2500.00 in the business. A few years later, Mr. Webster purchased Mr. Cox's part of the firm and again the business was Webster and Mason. In a few years, however, Mr. Webster

decided to start business for himself so he and Mr. Mason dissolved partnership by Mason taking the stock, and Mr. Webster the accounts receivable. Mr. Webster until this day has operated a business on the south end of main street, which has flourished.

One of the best known characters in Wray for years was "Charley "Pigfoot" Grant. He came to Wray with a threshing machine which he had stolen down near McCook, Nebraska. He soon sold the machine and opened up a saloon, for which he is best known. He was the outstanding man in getting the county seat for Wray. He was a member of the rustling gang that operated throughout the country, but never was sent up to the pen, as he was too smart for the authorities. However, three of the members of the gang were caught and sentenced to three years in the state penal institution. He ran a regulation saloon in typically western fashion, with gambling and everything else, and he was one of the best short-changing experts in that line of business.

Life in a cattle camp, although at times difficult, was interesting, and they always had three square meals a day, but never any luxuries. Luxuries to them were necessities today. Such things as butter the company would not buy for them, also fruit. They did get them once in a while as they had hide accounts at the stores. All cattle they killed for food or those that died from disease they skinned, and sold them in town for these little luxuries. Only in winter time did they have fresh meat, because as a rule when mealtime came in the summer, there weren't enough men to eat a whole beef, and it would spoil if they didn't. Their repast therefore consisted of smoked and salted meats, some beans, maybe a potato, bread, and coffee.

147  
There were always plenty of beans in a cattle camp. Although they only used the cream, they always had a milk cow on the ranch. Beer and whiskey were more to the liking of these western men.

Haigler, Nebraska, was named after an old cattleman who shipped all of his cattle from that point--Jake Haigler. Likewise, Benkelman, Nebraska, was named after an old cattleman.

The sod hotel in Wray was built by Wycliffe Newell, the man that killed buffalo for the men constructing the railroad. He, with Laffey Gilmore, an engineer graduate of an eastern university, laid out the country, and surveyed it. They were mainly responsible for Wray being inhabited as they were real estate promoters of a high degree.

A man well-known throughout Yuma County as Bat Eye Brown, received his name from Harry Cox who thought it was quite a joke. Mr. Brown's brand was B. I. B. Mr. Cox when he first saw the brand, didn't know whose it was, and upon asking someone, got the answer that it was B. I. Brown's brand. He promptly said Bat Eye Brown.

C. D. Thompson who owned a ranch north and east of Laird, Colorado, and who was quite a character. He was one of the best known cattle rustlers, and is supposed to have killed more than one man. If not, he got rid of some men who disappeared and were never heard from again. Mr. Webster, when he was working at a livery stable in Haigler in 1886, together with a man named Cole, an old buffalo hunter, took him out to the site of his ranch house. The ranch house is located in a deep valley in which there is a natural lake, the largest in northeastern Colorado. It was an ideal location for a ranch. When they took him out there, they left early in the morning and forgot their lunch which was lying on a counter in Porter's store in Haigler, and all they had

to eat was a piece of buffalo meat which Cole shot. C. D. Thompson's wife was the infamous Mattie Silks of Denver, in the red light district. She furnished the capital for the ranch and Thompson drank and gambled most of it away. He died in the old Commercial Hotel in Wray, after being drunk for two days, supposedly with heart failure.

Judge John Jennings, who died a number of years ago was an old cattleman. He brought a herd of cattle to Colorado from Texas, but sold them a year later and entered the saloon business in Haigler. He purchased the old Bon Ton Saloon, and with the help of his brother-in-law whose father owned a distilling establishment in Ohio, he made a great deal of money. Haigler at that time was the toughest town along the Republican River and the Burlington Railroad. Wray had a name similar to that later on, but there was only one man killed in an argument, here. He was killed in a pool hall with a billiard cue. A number of men were killed in Haigler. Judge Jennings was the county judge in Yuma County from 1908 until 1916.

The two Reecks brothers were one of the first ones in the country, and they operated a small cattle ranch on the south fork of the Republican river close to the country Benkleman operated in. Benkleman disliked them and for years tried to get them to leave but never succeeded.

From a section house, canvas post-office, and a depot, Mr. Webster has seen Wray, Colorado, grow into a small city. All in just a few years. He has been here through hard times and good times, but has weathered all the storms good and bad, and is therefore one of the builders of the town and the county.

During the times of the blizzards of 1886 and 1888 in which thousands of cattle were frozen to death, helped in cleaning up the cattle hides, and all through his life in this county he has been at the head of most every movement.

(Signed) C. M. Webster



J. I. Kearns

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150

BOWDOIN



COLLEGE

OFFICE OF  
THE ALUMNI SECRETARY

BRUNSWICK, MAINE

January 30, 1934

Mr. John T. Kearns  
310 E. Third Street  
Wray, Colorado

My dear Mr. Kearns:

Enclosed is a brief sketch of  
Frederick Henry Beecher. Other than this  
I can add but little information.

He was a member of the Psi Upsilon  
Fraternity.

The only reference I have found for  
him is "The Story of the Soldier" by  
Bvt. Brig. General George A. Forsyth, U.S.A.,  
pp. 206 seq., published by Appletons. I  
imagine this will give a good account of the  
Battle of Beecher Island, as General Forsyth  
was in charge.

Yours very truly,

*Elizabeth D. Riley*  
Assistant

Frederick Henry Beecher

Frederick Henry Beecher, the son of Charles and Sarah Leland (Coffin) Beecher, was born June 22, 1841 in New Orleans, La. He was graduated from Bowdoin College in 1862, and received his Master's Degree in 1865. He was mustered into the military service in the war immediately after graduating, was successively appointed sergeant, second lieutenant and first lieutenant; was in the battles of the Army of the Potomac from Fredericksburg, where he was severely wounded, to Gettysburg, where he was again wounded by a shell and narrowly escaped with his life; was promoted to captain, but his wounds disabled him from acting in that capacity. On his recovery, though maimed, he was commissioned first lieutenant Veteran Reserve Corps, acting as adjutant general under General E. Whittlesey of the Freedmen's Bureau; was appointed second lieutenant of the United States Army, was stationed on the frontier and was killed in Colorado on a scouting party by the Indians, September 18, 1868.

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Judge Irving L. Barker.

Judge Irving L. Barker came to Colorado from the Onandaga Valley, home of the Onandaga Indians just three miles from Syracuse, New York. He was born there and lived in that vicinity until he moved to Colorado. While there he went to Syracuse University receiving a diploma from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and after having been initiated into one of the foremost eastern fraternities--ZETA PSI.

In the year, 1883, together with a man named J. H. Rosenkrans, a life-long friend of his, he started for Colorado. Rosenkrans, however, had to stop at Rochester to visit some relatives and friends and thus the two of them lost each other for some time. Mr. Barker made his way to Denver, and went up into the mining district around Leadville which was then just starting to decline. For over a year he lived in the mountains, and then he met J. H. Rosenkrans in Denver and went with him to his ranch in northeastern Colorado, south and west of Haigler, Nebraska.

For over nine months Judge Barker worked on the ranch, but he decided that he would go into the mountains again. So he went to Denver and studied mining in the School of Mines at Golden for six months, and thereafter traversed the mountains until 1893. When the two railroads were built through Glenwood Springs, Mr. Barker was there and worked in the offices of the construction foreman.

There were only five ranches on the Arikaree River in 1884 when Mr. Barker was first out to Rosenkrans. When he came back in 1893 there were five times that many. From Haigler to Rosenkrans' ranch there were two ranches, the C Bar C, and the Three Bar, and on the west of Rosenkrans' there were the Reecks brothers, and Harry Stranway's ranches. There were very few people and no farmers in 1884, but in 1893, the big cattlemen were gone and the farmers had moved in to take their place. When he got off the train in 1893 to go to Rosenkrans' ranch, the town of Haigler, Nebraska, had grown so much in the few years he had been away, he hardly recognized it. And as he traversed the Arikaree River, south and west, there were numerous small farms with little sod houses, and little frame houses on both sides of the valley which a few years back had never even been thought of. When he arrived at the ranch, he was surprised to see the amount of fence that had been constructed to keep the sheep and cattle on the Rosenkrans ranch. Never before had there been over a mile of fence in the whole county and all of the land was free land, but now practically none of the good land was free as it had been homesteaded and pre-empted by the nesters and now was under cultivation for cotton and wheat. Prior to that year there probably hadn't been 1000 acres in cultivation the whole of this country.

Haigler, Nebraska, was then booming and Mr. Barker compares it to Leadville, Colorado, by saying that it was rougher and tougher in the ratio of its size to Leadville. In no ten years of his life before or since has Mr. Barker seen such a change in a community.

Wray, of course, was a little slower as it did not boom and was then in a place which made it hard for the farmers and ranchers to come to trade with the merchants. There were no roads down through the canyons of the Blackwolfe or into the canyon of the Republican, so most of the farmers went to Haigler as all they had to do was to follow the valley of the Arickaree River right into Haigler. At one time, there was a freighting line from Haigler to Idalia, Colorado. They employed large wagons with six to eight horse teams, and in this way transported much merchandise to the flats on the south divide. Wray grew steadily after the years 1893 and 1894, and yet today is growing, while Haigler is slowly declining and in a few years will be a mere skeleton of its former self.

In 1894, Mr. Barker was appointed foreman of the Rosenkrans ranch, due to the fact that Mr. Rosenkrans' children were old enough to start to school and he wanted them to be educated in the east. For over twenty years, Mr. Barker practically took charge and ran the ranch as he desired because Rosenkrans was there only half of the time. A great number of sheep were herded on this ranch, although there were a number of cattle the sheep were more important to Rosenkrans. At one time he had control of over 17,000 sheep, 8,000 were being fed in Beaver City, Nebraska, 4,000 in Haigler, Nebraska, and the remaining 5,000 on the ranch. There are very few cattle and no sheep on the ranch today. In those days the ranch was composed of 3,600 acres; today it covers a territory of 2,200 acres.

The first frame building in the whole of Yuma county was built on the Rosenkrans ranch in 1882 by the previous owner.

The lumber, the first in the county, was purchased from the Young Brothers Lumber Company, in Fort Lupton, Colorado. This building is still standing and was used in the early days as a bunkhouse. The ranch house itself was a one-story sod house, but later on was plastered on the outside and a wooden second story added. (I will send you a picture of this ranch house). The first barn and corral on the ranch was sod but this has been changed and is now wooden.

Sheep were easy to make money on, but it was almost as easy to lose one's whole investment. Sheep raising was a very precarious business, and the younger and more carefree men took this business up. Rosenkrans made more money than anybody else in this country grazing sheep. He, however, lost most of this money building dams on the Arickaree River. He built three dams at a cost of about \$15,000 and all three of them were washed out by large rains. The valley was cut in many places by deep arroyos which when it rained, did not soak up the water and thus let it run down into the canyon. These dams were improperly constructed in that they did not have adequate flood control, and when a large rain poured its waters into the valley, put too much pressure on the embankment. With the loss of property caused by the washouts and the cost of the dams themselves, it is unknown how much these ventures did cost J. H. Rosenkrans.

During the years of 1893 and 1894, the cattleman and sheepman who was located on a river was comparatively well off, but the farmer was in a precarious condition due to the two year drought. Many of the farmers left the country, and but few of the stockmen. The stockmen were glad to see them go and hoped they would not come back, as that gave them more grazing land for their stock.

During the years of 1886, 1887, and 1888, most of the settlers arrived and most of the land was filed on. In the decades following, there was much more land filed on and until late years there was plenty of land to be taken. The last forty acres was to be filed on and taken up in the month of February, 1934. This land will be taken by Basile Doyle and is located north and east of Laird in the sandhills. This sandhill land was taken last because it always looked as though it were worthless, however, a great percent of the corn in Yuma county is grown there.

When the cattlemen had to leave the country, their range having been curtailed, it hurt the town of Haigler, but it did very little harm to Wray, as soon after, roads were constructed and the farmers could come in from the south at their ease.

A man by the name of Porter had the first store in Haigler, Wray, and in Robb. He is dead but has a son, Sam, who is interested in the irrigation project for Nebraska. Porter sold his Wray store to Grigsby and Grigsby ran it successfully for a number of years. The store at Robb, Colorado, was torn down because of lack of business. They located the store at Robb because there was a railroad siding and they thought eventually there would be a town. Their dreams never came true, however. Their store at Haigler was a success and they made money in this business for years.

When Mr. Barker first was foreman of the ranch, they shipped all of their stock from Haigler, but later on as Laird grew, they shipped from there, as it was a few miles closer to the ranch. They also started trading in Laird. Today most of the shipping is done from Wray, and the Rosenkrans do most of their buying here.

One of the characters Judge Barker knew real well on this frontier was C. D. Thompson, who owned a ranch north and east of Laird. This man was supposed to have killed a number of men, but nothing was ever proved on him. He was formerly a Denver man and was noted as being a good sport. Always dressed in the latest clothes and always spending and gambling his money. He was married to Mattie Silks of Denver red light fame. She furnished most of the money for his different ventures including the ranch. He gambled most of it off, either that or drank it. He was noted for being a cattle rustler, but then it was not uncommon for anyone if he found a stray, to put his own brand on it. Thompson died in the Commercial Hotel in Wray, drunker than a confirmed sot.

This section of the country was as most of the west, settled by young men and their wives from the east. These people did not have a place to live as most of the land in the east was taken and the rental was too high. As a rule, these people were of a class who did not care for high life, and were contented with just making enough to live on. Most of these people had very little education, if any, although most of them could read and write a little.

Judge Barker received the name "Judge" from the fact that he has been County Judge since 1916, when he was first elected. Mr. Barker is adequately qualified for this office in that he has one of the best educations a man can have, and he has had wide experience in every line of work. Mr. Barker is one of the few men who came to Colorado in the early days who possessed a University education, because as a rule, the poorer people came west then.

(Signed)

I. L. Barker

Judge Irving L. Barker.



Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Heindel, W. F.

Mr. William Heindel was born in Galesburg, Illinois, in the year of 1870. His father soon after moved to Henry County, Iowa, near the site of Mount Pleasant, Iowa. His father was a shoemaker and traveled over the country making shoes and boots for the people. Mr. Heindel first learned to be a shoemaker, and helped his father make a great many boots and shoes, but as he didn't like the trade, he went into the blacksmith trade which he liked, as he was a natural mechanic. He worked at this trade for a number of years before he moved to Colorado.

In 1887, Mr. Heindel moved to Wray, Colorado, to try his hand at the far west as it was called then. In the first few years, he helped in a blacksmith shop and did odd jobs and in 1889, he pre-empted a quarter section of land west of Wray, but in the dry year of 1893, gave it up as bad work and started to work for Bowles on the Bar 11 ranch, where he worked until 1897.

Colonel Hitchings was the self-appointed road supervisor and he had what was commonly called a POLL TAX to keep these roads in good condition. For Mr. Heindel's first year's poll tax, he had to help construct a ford on the Republican River, so that the people could drive into town with their wagons without getting stuck in the river. He did this by hauling rocks from one of the nearby canyons and dumping them into the river, thus establishing a base for the wagons. The next year saw a bridge constructed for wagons as Mr. Heindel's second year's poll tax.

The water supply for the city of Wray for the first year or so was the river and the Burlington Railroad water tank. They, however, discovered a spring on the bank of the river, near the present site of the Smith blacksmith shop, and fixed it so that the public could get water from it.

For a number of years after Mr. Heindel went out of the occupation of farming, he and his brother-in-law dug wells. One well they dug, they had to sink three different pits. The first pit they dug, after getting down 80 feet, it rained and ruined it, and likewise on the second one, but on the third, after digging 120 feet, they struck water and finished the well.

During the years of 1901 and 1902, Mr. Heindel worked in the hardware store for Amos Carl at a salary of \$2.00 per day. The highest paid man in town was C. W. Hudgel, the depot agent, who received a salary of \$65.00 per month. After two years in the hardware business, Mr. Heindel decided to go into business for himself. He told Mr. Carl and Mr. Carl told him that he would give him \$3.00 a day if he would stay, but Mr. Heindel said he wouldn't and thus went into the construction business. In the year that followed, he was busy all of the time and after keeping track of the money he had made, he figured for every day in the year including Sundays, he had made \$9.25, which was a fabulous sum then. After that year, he decided that the construction business was the best.

In 1897, the first construction job he had was building onto the Catholic church. Then he went to Idaho for a few years and upon getting back, worked for Amos Carl. Credit is due to Mr. Heindel because he has probably done more towards building Wray than any one other man. The following are some of the homes, buildings and business houses he has built:

Al Sersey, Hedrick, John Spiers, Amos Carl, Cox home, Slick.

Buildings: Court House, Amos Carl, George and Fisher, Scott and Badger, and any number of others which he can't remember. After the fire of 1908, he constructed every building that today stands in the place of those buildings that burned down. Some of them are: National Bank, Lawrence, Patton, Kitzmiller, Drommond, Barber Shop, Commercial Hotel, People's State Bank, and Shumaker. In the year of 1905, he built my home, for P. J. Sullivan, and one in the next half block for William Fair. There are undoubtedly a great many more buildings, but he has forgotten them.

When Wray won the election for the county seat, they needed a court house. Mr. Heindel was awarded the contract for the construction of it. He finished the building that year, and twenty years later, due to the enlargement of the population, it was decided to add on to the court house and again Mr. Heindel was awarded the contract. The building is a good-looking, square building, and modern, and helps the town considerably.

In 1915, Mr. Heindel decided to go into the garage business and so he purchased two lots from the Odd Fellows, of which he was a member. After having started the building, he was assigned the position of building manager of the Odd Fellows, who had decided to build a building for themselves. They built a modern two-story building with a place for business on the first floor and the Odd Fellows' hall on the second floor. They rented the first floor to Webster and Mason, grocery and dry goods merchants, at a rental of \$100.00, which, when they put in steam heat, was raised to \$125.00. They leased the building to them on a contract that they could rent the building for eight years and have first option on it for seven more years thereafter.

From 1907 to 1911, Mr. Heindel was on the town board as a councilman, and in 1911 and 1912, he was elected consecutively for two terms. During the years of 1911 and 1912, the first water system was built. It was built good enough that it still stands today.

In 1919, Mr. Heindel was again elected Mayor, and during his office the purchase of the city municipal light plant was completed, and also they installed a complete and modern sewer system which the town had needed for a number of years. The light plant was purchased from Williams, who had purchased it from Lynam and Houck, who in turn had bought it from C. D. Pickett, who had built it.

The telephone company in Wray was first a private concern, and was started by two men, Cloyd and Letpper. They sold just two years after they started to Spiers and Pickett. These men sold the company to the Rocky Mountain Telegraph and Telephone Company, which is a part of the Bell Telephone System.

In 1915, Mr. Heindel entered the automobile business and sold Buick cars. His son, Bill, Jr. talked him into it and during the years he was in this business, he made a good success of it, although at times it was hard. In 1917, Mr. Heindel sold the business to Ed Robinson and left for the Pacific coast, where he purchased an orange ranch.

After staying in California for about a year, he came back to Colorado and took over a position with the Mutual Oil Company, constructing wholesale stations on the Union Pacific Railroad. He worked for about a year and a half at this and then came back to Wray and entered the automobile business with Harve Spiecher as his partner. They sold both Dodge and Buick cars and with such a degree of success that they couldn't get enough automobiles to supply the demand. He then bought Harve out and gave the business to his son Bill to manage.

Since 1924, Mr. Heindel has been the county road superintendent. Prior to that time, the roads in Yuma county were in a pitiful condition. Today we have some of the best roads in the state, mostly due to Mr. Heindel. Today he has charge of several C. W. A. projects, which will help the roads considerably, and with Mr. Heindel at the head of them and at the head of the relief committee for the county, the people of the county are getting real benefits from the money the government is expending. All through his life, Mr. Heindel has been one of the leading men of this community, and has taken more than an average interest in its affairs.

On August 4, 1887, the town of Wray had an "Old Settlers' Picnic." All they had to eat was pork and beans, barbequed beef and some bread, but they had a good time. This is one of the things Mr. Heindel has noticed. The steady increase in the standard of living. Today people would hardly be satisfied with such a frugal meal. Of course, there were more ways to look at it. The people then had very little money and they made the best of what they had. During that day, Mr. Heindel noticed that half the people were drunk, half or the rest dancing or just sitting down talking. There weren't very many people then and everybody knew each other.

(Signed) W. Heindel

William Heindel

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
State Records

ELECTION DATA.

Nov. 5, 1918

BONE-DRY PROHIBITION LAW

YES-----1834  
NO-----789

Nov. 3, 1914

An amendment to the constitution of the State of Colorado by adding thereto a new article, to be numbered and designated as "Article XXII--Intoxicating Liquors," prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors and the manufacture and importation of intoxicating liquors for purpose of sale or gift.

YES-----1800  
NO-----1008

Nov. 8, 1932

An act to amend Article XXII of the State Constitution by providing that after July 1, 1933, the manufacture, sale and distribution of intoxicating liquors within Colorado shall, subject to the United States Constitution and Laws, be under such agencies and regulations as may be provided by Statutory Laws, but that no saloons shall be permitted.

YES-----1617  
NO-----3585

SPECIAL ELECTION Sept. 12, 1933.

FOR WET-----10,570  
FOR DRY-----20,910

Yuma County is a dry county when it comes to voting, but I don't believe I have ever seen a small city so infested with bootlegging joints as Wray, Colorado. Even today with the repeal, there are a number of these speakeasies still running. It may look dry in the voting, but it certainly isn't when it comes right down to facts.

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Hearal, John

#### MY HOME COMMUNITY

My home is in Wray, Colorado, a small town located in the northeastern corner of the state. It is just 12 miles from the Nebraska-Colorado state line, and 30 miles from the Kansas-Colorado line. Denver is 186 miles west by highway and 160 miles by rail from Wray. Wray is situated in a valley, on the south side of which are cliffs past which extend miles and miles of farming and grazing land. To the west, north, and east, are many miles more of farming and grazing land. As one drives into the town, one is probably surprised because of the many trees, nice lawns, which abound there. The reason for this is that there is a small stream--the Republican River--which winds its way through the middle of the town. Wray is one of the few modern small towns to be found in the West. It has paved streets, modern sewage system, modern water system, and a modern light plant. All of these utilities are owned by the city, and are profitable investments not only for the city, but for the townspeople. The government of Wray is the Mayor and trustee system, and it is very satisfactory for a town of 1800 inhabitants. The schools of the town are very efficient and modern. In describing the industry of Wray, I have divided it into four different phases. I, Agriculture; farming, grazing, and dairying. II, Transportation. III, Business organization. IV, Manufacturing.

I

Agriculture is the life of the community. If it were not for agriculture, Wray would probably be just a water tank and a general store. It can easily be seen that if the price of grains goes down, or the crops are poor, the town of Wray and the country around it suffer. The farmers are dividing their attention between grain growing and some of the smaller products which can be raised and grown on a farm. They raise potatoes, and keep a dairy herd, chickens and other poultry. In this way, they always have something from which they can derive an income. They sell the potatoes, the eggs, the poultry, the milk and the cream to the business men in town, who in turn sell it to the people of the town or ship it to Denver or Omaha, where there are always some ready markets.

Agriculture uses many implements which cannot be made by the farmer. Combines, tractors, threshers, plows, discs, harrows and any number of other machines are employed. These have to be purchased in town. The farmer is now learning not to buy so much machinery because of the low prices of their commodities. This fact has been learned by many farmers of my home community. Now they are not buying hardly any implements which in turn hurts the business man of Wray who sells these implements.

The chief grains raised by the farmers are corn and wheat. Of course, there are many others including oats, barley, rye and some hays and alfalfa. Corn and wheat, however, surpass these others a great deal. Yuma County raises more corn than any other county in Colorado.



## II

Transportation facilities are very important to any town, but to a small town, they are more so. Wray has the wonderful advantage of having the Burlington Railroad. The Burlington main line runs through Wray, therefore giving it greater facilities than the average small town. The Burlington also employs a large number of men as it has extensive yards including a large round house. Every train, no matter of what kind, stops, freights, passengers, locals and limiteds.

Other transportation facilities are the Pickwick buses-- now the Nevens line--and numerous trucking lines which run north, east, south, and west. There is no railroad running north and south, therefore it necessitated having transportation of some kind going in these directions. The buses and trucks take care of this situation very well. The buses and trucks also offer cheap transportation, which with the railroad, gives Wray some good facilities.

## III

The business organization of Wray includes the usual number of small merchants who, as I said before, depend almost entirely upon the farmers. Each merchant depends either directly or indirectly on the farmers. The business isn't large, but it is big enough to take care of the needs of the town and surrounding community. There are the meat markets, grocery stores, chain stores, hotels and many other business of similar types. They all prosper when farm commodities are high. Elevators for grain, produce exchanges for milk, poultry, eggs, etc. You can see that the business caters to the farmer.

Banks are very stable in Wray, and are backed by individual fortunes. There are two banks, a First National Bank, and a National Bank. For a town as small as Wray, these are sufficient.

Business is at a standstill in Wray just like it is all over the world. There is only one thing that will help it, and that is a rise in the prices of wheat and corn. The depression did not reach the west until a year later than it really started in the far east.

#### IV

Manufacturing is not very active in Wray although for a town of its size it has proportionately the right amount. The manufacturing comes under three names: Pop and candy, flour, and dairy products. These three thriving industries make up the manufacturing of Wray.

The manufacture of dairy products is probably the most important of all three. The Wray Creamery supplies a large territory around Wray with all dairy products. It has a completely modern plant. They make ice cream, cheese, and butter. The town is supplied with these products and pasteurized milk and cream. There is a good profit in this business.

The Wray Mills has made a name for itself in the manufacture of flour. This company supplies a territory throughout Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Colorado, with flour and ground feeds. This mill, nearly new, and newly equipped, is run by water power from the stream which runs through the town. It is one of the few mills still run by water power.

The Wray Bottling and Candy Co. have enlarged their business until it is now serving a circle of territory around Wray with a radius of 200 miles. They make pop and candy. They also job

near beer, and many nationally known candies. A few years ago this small business was started in a small building at the outskirts of town and now it has moved into a new, modern building near the railroad tracks. It has been successful.

There is a medium sized ice plant in Wray, which manufactures artificial ice. This company also offers a very good grade of natural ice which is extracted from a lake in the winter and stored in an ice house until it is time to use it. This business is not as good as it was a few years past because electric refrigerators have cut into the business.

V

There are a few things, of course, that I haven't taken up. They are minor businesses. One of which is rather important and it is a lake resort. People come for miles around to this resort every year. It is ideal for picnics, dances and other things of similar nature. It offers swimming, dancing, fishing, boating, and pool. There is a large building which has a large dance floor, a skating rink, pool room, card parlor, luncheon and tea room. This resort offers many recreations to the people of the surrounding country at a very reasonable price.

In this short report on my home community, I have attempted to give you a general idea of the business which is located there. As I said before, the business caters to farmers and therefore in comparison with other towns of larger size, they wouldn't be the same. In this paper, I probably have implied the thought that Wray is an ideal town. Naturally I would think so, but I believe that anybody would do the same because of the many advantages it has over other towns.

I wrote this article a number of years ago, for a class-room theme. It may be a little helpful to you to know just what ~~Wray~~ was composed of in a general way. Later I will write a complete synopsis of the city of Wray.

(Signed) John Hearal

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference

Material gathered  
in interviews with  
Robt. Lynam and  
C. V. Dedman and  
Beecher Island Annual,  
Wray, Colorado.

HISTORY OF BEECHER ISLAND

The Beecher Island Battle Grounds are located seventeen miles southeast of the town of Wray, in Yuma County, Colorado. It was here on September 17-25, 1868, that perhaps the most determined fight against overwhelming odds ever put up by the white men against the Indians on the western plains took place.

The cause of this struggle, in large measure at least, may be traced back to the early sixties when the Brule-Sioux and Ogallalah Indians, which were the northern tribe of the Sioux Indians, murdered many settlers in three counties in the state of Minnesota, and captured their guns, ammunition and stock. In order to get rid of these Indians, the states of Minnesota, western Wisconsin, and western Iowa, organized home guards who never ceased fighting until the Indians had been driven across the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers into the vicinities of what is today Ft. Kearney, Nebraska, and Julesburg, Colorado. Here they united with other warlike tribes, the Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and the Red Cloud band of Sioux Indians, against the white settlers on the plains.

In the spring of 1865, Colonel Sculley had charge of the only regiment of United States soldiers then in service on this new western frontier. It is obvious that a frontier extending almost four hundred miles north and south by five hundred miles east and west, could not be adequately defended by such a small force against the frequent Indian raids.

Upon the reoccupation of the southern and western frontier by government troops at the close of the war, the Indians, who had grown confident in their own strength, were greatly exasperated. Also the continent to the Pacific coast directly through their hunting grounds, drove them almost to frenzy.

In the summer of 1868, they were restless and threatening, and early in June commenced depredations on trains and travelers crossing the plains. In May, a body of Cheyennes raided the Kaw Indians not far from Council Grove, Kansas, and captured their ponies. Late in the summer of the same year, they became arrogant and defiant. They boldly threw off all concealment, abrogated their treaties, and entered upon the war path.

A tabulated statement of the outrages committed by the Indians within the military department of Missouri from June until December of the year 1868, shows one hundred and fifty-four murders of white settlers and freighters, the capture of numerous women and children, the burning and sacking of farm houses, ranches, trains, stage-coaches, and gives details of horror and outrages visited upon the women that are better imagined than described. The general dread and excitement were high, and the civil authorities in Nebraska, Kansas, <sup>and</sup> Colorado, piled plea upon plea for prompt and energetic aid from the government, to save the frontier from further dreadful ravage.

At this time the department of Missouri was composed of the States of Missouri, Kansas, and Arkansas, and the territories of Colorado, New Mexico, and Indian territory, under the command of General P. H. Sheridan, with head-quarters in St. Louis, Missouri. It soon became evident that war was the only alternative on the part of the Government in dealing with the hostile Indians in this area. Brevet Colonel George A. Forsyth, Army Inspector-General of the Department of Missouri, serving under General Sheridan, volunteered for a command in the field.

On August 24, 1868, General Sheridan issued the following order:

"Headquarters Department of Missouri,  
Fort Harker, August 24, 1868.

Brevet Colonel George A. Forsyth,  
A. A. Inspector-General,  
Department of Missouri.

Colonel: The General Commanding directs that you without delay, employ fifty (50) first-class hardy frontiersmen to be used as scouts against the hostile Indians, to be commanded by yourself, with Lieutenant Beecher, 3rd Infantry, as your subordinate. You can enter into such articles of agreement with these men as will compel obedience.

I am, Sir, respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
(Sge.) J. Schutler Crosby,  
A. D. C. and A. A. Adjutant-General."

Colonel Forsyth at once engaged thirty men at Fort Harker, Kansas, and then marching to Fort Hayes, sixty miles west, obtained his complement, and in five days from the receipt of the order, he took the field. There was no trouble in obtaining capable and competent men for this new command. Hundreds of men who had served through the bitter civil strife of 1861 and 1865, either for or against the government, had flocked to the frontier, and were not only willing but anxious to assist in punishing the Indians, while many a frontiersman was only too glad to have an opportunity to settle an old score against the savages.

Consequently, the men selected by Colonel Forsyth for this special duty had, many of them, been trained to discipline and campaigning, in the Civil War, while others had been hunters, trappers, and Indian fighters of the border, all qualified by experience, acquainted with hardship, and most of them having unusual intelligence. These scouts, it ought to be remembered, were not enlisted men but were employed under private's contract between Colonel Forsyth and each of them, upon such terms of agreement as would enable him to enforce obedience to orders. They were to be paid from funds belonging to the quartermaster's department; this plan for procuring fighting men in an emergency being a temporary expedient of the War Department. Each man was to receive a salary of one dollar a day, and thirty-five cents a day for the use of their horses.

The government equipped each man with a blanket, saddle and bridle, a lariat and picket-pin, a canteen, a haversack, butcher-knife, tin plate, and tin cup, a Spencer repeating-rifle, (carrying six shots in the magazine besides the one in the barrel), a Colt's revolver, army size, and one hundred forty rounds of rifle and thirty rounds of revolver ammunition per man; this carried on the person. In addition there was a pack train of four mules, carrying camp-kettles and picks and shovels, in case it became necessary to dig for water, together with four thousand extra rounds of ammunition, some medical supplies, and extra rations of salt and coffee. Each man, the officers included, carried seven days' of cooked rations in his haversack.

Thus organized and equipped, this company of fifty scouts under the command of Colonel Forsyth, Lieutenant Fred H. Beecher,



Acting Assistant Surgeon J. H. Mooers of the Army Medical Corps, and an experienced guide in Scout Abner T. Grover, left Fort Hayes, Kansas, August 29, 1868, upon receipt of the following message from General Sheridan:

"Fort Hayes, Kansas,  
August 29, 1868

Brevet Colonel George A. Forsyth,  
Commanding Detachment of Scouts:

I would suggest that you move across the headwaters of Colomon (river) to Beaver Creek, thence down that creek to Fort Wallace. On arrival at Wallace, report to me by telegraph.

Yours truly,  
P. H. Sheridan, Major-General"

They arrived at Fort Wallace in the evening of September the fifth. Here Colonel Forsyth received reports of nearby Indian depredations. To each of these reports, he gave due attention; but, in the midst of numerous trails and unmistakable signs of recent activities, he pushed on in a northwesterly direction. The scouts soon discovered a large fresh trail which was followed to the north side of the Republican River, where several smaller trails, uniting with the larger ones, terminated in a wide well-beaten path over which a vast number of cattle and horses had been recently driven.

Following the trail with eagerness and caution, the company came, on the sixteenth of September, to the Arikaree at a point within a few miles of its junction with the Republican River, and at a distance of seventeen miles southeast of the site of the present town of Wray. They came from the southeast into the valley at four o'clock in the afternoon and noticing attractive grasses suitable for horse-feed, decided to camp on the north side of the stream for the night. This was a lucky decision, for it was learned

afterward that an ambush had already been carefully planned, into which, at a distance of about two miles, in advance, the troops would doubtless have been drawn and hopelessly slaughtered.

In the early morning on September 17, 1868, the Indians attempted to stampede the stock of the scouts, and partially succeeded in the attempt, capturing two horses and five pack mules.

Forsyth ordered his men to take up their position on the island, opposite their camping place, where some of the men protected themselves in shallow pits scooped out in the sand, and others behind the bodies of their horses, some of which presently went down under the Indians' fire.

This island, located in one of the most beautiful valleys to be found anywhere on the Western Plains, had in process of time been formed, but today has disappeared. The chief current, then, was on the northern side of the island. Its general direction was east and west; its length a hundred yards or more, and its width about fifty yards. The surface was little more than two feet above the stage of water at that season, it being two to six inches deep and five or six yards across on the sides. A shallow groove, now covered with grass, discloses where the southern edge of the island lay, at the time of the battle.

The valley here is comparatively shallow, but out some distance away from the river on both sides are bluffs; and especially to the north and northwest, at a distance of several hundred yards from the island, stands a moderately elevated bluff which then was destined to assume unusual importance in the few subsequent days.

At sunrise, Colonel Forsyth and his company of scouts were surprised by the appearance of nearly a thousand Indians, men, women, and children, upon the bluff-like opposite bank of the

Arikaree, under the leadership of the notorious northern Cheyenne Chieftain, Roman Nose. Roman Nose was one of the most distinguished leaders of the Indian race. He had formerly been on friendly terms with the whites, even after many signal battles had raged between bands of the two races, and he had recently cast his fortunes with his own kind of people.

Upon this occasion, he commanded a band of Cheyenne Indians, assisted by the Ogallalah, Arapahoes, Brule-Sioux, and "Dog Soldiers." The last named were the most dreaded of all, for they consisted of about one hundred warriors of the various Sioux and other tribes that were for some reason renegades and outcasts, in fact, bad men, generally criminals, who had been compelled to withdraw from association with their own people. Banded together they were practically Indian highwaymen, and it was this band that the head men of the various tribes claimed they could not control, and upon whom they laid the blame for attacks upon the outer settlements when they wished to avoid responsibility.

While the scouts were digging their pits in the sand on the island, the Indians formed a circle around them so they could not escape. The scouts knew the crisis was at hand and each repeating rifle was charged with six shots in the magazine and one in the barrel. During one of the early charges on the first day, Roman Nose was killed. The big medicine man was killed in the afternoon of the first day. The loss of their leaders and their surprising and unaccountable repulse disheartened them. They decided to suspend direct efforts to take the island and settle down to starve out the beleaguered scouts. The condition to which the white men became reduced, especially those who were wounded, may be imagined. As their supplies ran lower, they began to eat the

flesh of their horses that had been killed; and water could be obtained only by digging holes in the island sand. In this situation, growing worse day by day, they remained until the arrival of relief. To delay its putrefaction, flesh of the horses was buried in the sand.

In the night of the first day, two of the scouts, Jack Stillwell and Pierre Truedear, having volunteered to attempt to go to Fort Wallace for relief, succeeded in leaving the island and eluding the Indians. On the night of the third day, Forsyth, having written to the commanding officer at Fort Wallace, stating the situation, dispatched John Donovan and A. J. Pliley with the letter; and, since they did not return, he felt that they were successful in getting by the enemies' guards.

The conditions are vividly pictured in this letter which read as follows:

"On Delaware Creek, Republican River,  
September 19, 1868.

To Colonel Bankhead or Commanding Officer,  
Fort Wallace:

I sent you two messengers on the night of the 17th instant, informing you of my critical condition. I tried to sent two more last night, but they did not succeed in passing the Indian pickets, and returned. If the others have not arrived, then hasten at once to my assistance. I have eight badly wounded and ten slightly wounded men to take in, and every animal I had was killed, save seven, and Acting Assistant Surgeon Moeers probably cannot live the night out. He was hit in the head Thursday, and has spoken but one rational word since. I am wounded in two places--in the right thigh, and my left leg broken below the knee. The Cheyennes alone numbered 450 or more. Mr. Grover says they never fought so before. They were splendidly armed with Spencer and Henry rifles. We killed at least 35 of them and wounded many more, besides killing and wounding a quantity of their stock. They carried off most of their killed during the night, but three of their men fell into our hands. I am on a little island and still have plenty of ammunition left. We are living on mule and horse meat, and are entirely out of rations. If it was not for so many wounded, I would come in and take the chances of whipping them if attacked. They are evidently sick of their bargain.

I had two of the members of my company killed on the 17th, namely, William Wilson and George W. Chalmers. You had better start with not less than 75 men and bring all the wagons and ambulances you can spare. Bring a six pound howitzer with you. I can hold out here for six days longer if absolutely necessary, but please lose no time.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
George A. Forsyth,  
U. S. Army, Commanding Co. Scouts."

P. S. My surgeon having been mortally wounded, none of my wounded have had their wounds dressed yet, so please bring out a surgeon with you."

At the end of the sixth day, Forsyth, feeling that the danger from the Indians was much lessened, called together the uninjured men, and reminding them of the uncertainty of the fate of the messengers sent to Fort Wallace and the possibility of no relief, gave them permission to depart, and leave the wounded to take their own chances. This proposition was not sanctioned, the men declaring that since they had fought together, they were willing to die together, if necessary. Some of the men were very delirious and gangrene had begun its deadly work.

Two more days of seemingly interminable length and intense suffering passed. On the morning of the ninth day someone pointed to moving objects on the distant hills, which proved to be a troop of cavalry under Lieutenant Colonel L. H. Carpenter from Fort Wallace, and, in the words of Forsyth, "then went up a wild cheer that made the little valley ring, and strong men grasped hands and then flung their arms around each other and laughed and cried and fairly danced and shouted again in glad relief of their long pent up feelings." Upon receiving news of the situation through Donovan and Fliley, and later from Stillwell and Truedear, aid had been immediately sent on.

When the casualties were listed at the close of the ninth day of siege, it was found that besides Chief Roman Nose and the big medicine men, the Indians had lost about 75 men with twice as many wounded, some mortally.

Among the little band of scouts there were 5 killed and 17 wounded. The 5 that were killed were Lieutenant Fred H. Beecher, U. S. A., Surgeon J. H. Mooers, U. S. A., Lewis Farley, George W. Culver, and William Wilson. The dead were buried on the island in four graves, Culver and Wilson being placed in the same grave. The wounded, including Colonel Forsyth, were taken immediately to the government hospital at Fort Wallace, Kansas, where they were given the best of medical treatment and finally restored to their health.

These tragedies all occurred during the first morning of the fight while the scouts were rushing to the island and there digging their sand pits, using knives and tin plates as utensils for constructing them. It was at this time that all the horses and mules of the scouts were killed by the Indians who were firing at close range. It should be remembered by the reader that these Indians were heavily armed with modern instruments of warfare. Many of them had Springfield rifles which had been captured at the Fort Fetterman massacre a few weeks before and they had learned to use them and to use them effectively.

Unfortunately in the rush to the island, from their camping grounds the night before, the scouts omitted to take the medical supplies which soon fell into the hands of their enemies. This, coupled with the fact that Surgeon J. H. Mooers was mortally wounded soon after reaching the island on the first day of battle, made it impossible for the wounded and dying to receive the medical assist-

ance which they otherwise would have received. This condition of affairs contributed very largely to the intense misery and suffering during the days that followed.

History written in the blood of patriots is sacred, for it stands next to the writing of the living God. It cannot be forgotten. Thirty years had passed and this hallowed ground had been neglected, not one of the men besieged on the Island had returned and still they had not forgotten.

From that time on and until the present day, there has been a Beecher Island Reunion on September 15, 16, and 17. At the present time, there is a large monument, and an auditorium on the grounds which were donated by the State of Colorado. Each grave, or rather as nearly as possible, were marked with wood, now they have marble stones above them.

Lieutenant Fred H. Beecher, son of Reverend Charles and Sarah Coffin Beecher, was born in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, receiving an A. B. degree and the A. M. degree from the same institution three years later. His aunt and uncle, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher, both of whom were famous for their part in the slavery controversy between the North and the South, were sources of inspiration to him in his youth. He served through the Civil War with great gallantry, proving himself brave, reliable, and energetic. He fought at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and was lamed for life with a bullet through the knee at the battle of Gettysburg, July 2, 1863. In 1862, he joined the Sixteenth Maine Volunteers; First Lieutenant at the close of the same year; Second Lieutenant, Third Infantry, U. S. A., 1866; and reported for duty under General P. H. Sheridan at Fort Riley, Kansas, in June of the

181

same year. In the summer of the year 1868, while in charge of construction work at the Fort Wallace Army Post, in Western Kansas, he was designated by Sheridan as Forsyth's subordinate officer. He died in his pit, with his wounded commander by his side, in the Battle of Beecher Island, September 18, 1868. This battle ground was named after him.



This material was gathered in interviews with Mr. Robert  
Lynan, C. V. Dedman, and from THE BEECHER ISLAND ANNUAL edited  
by Rober Lynan. This annual was published in Wray, Colorado  
in 1930.

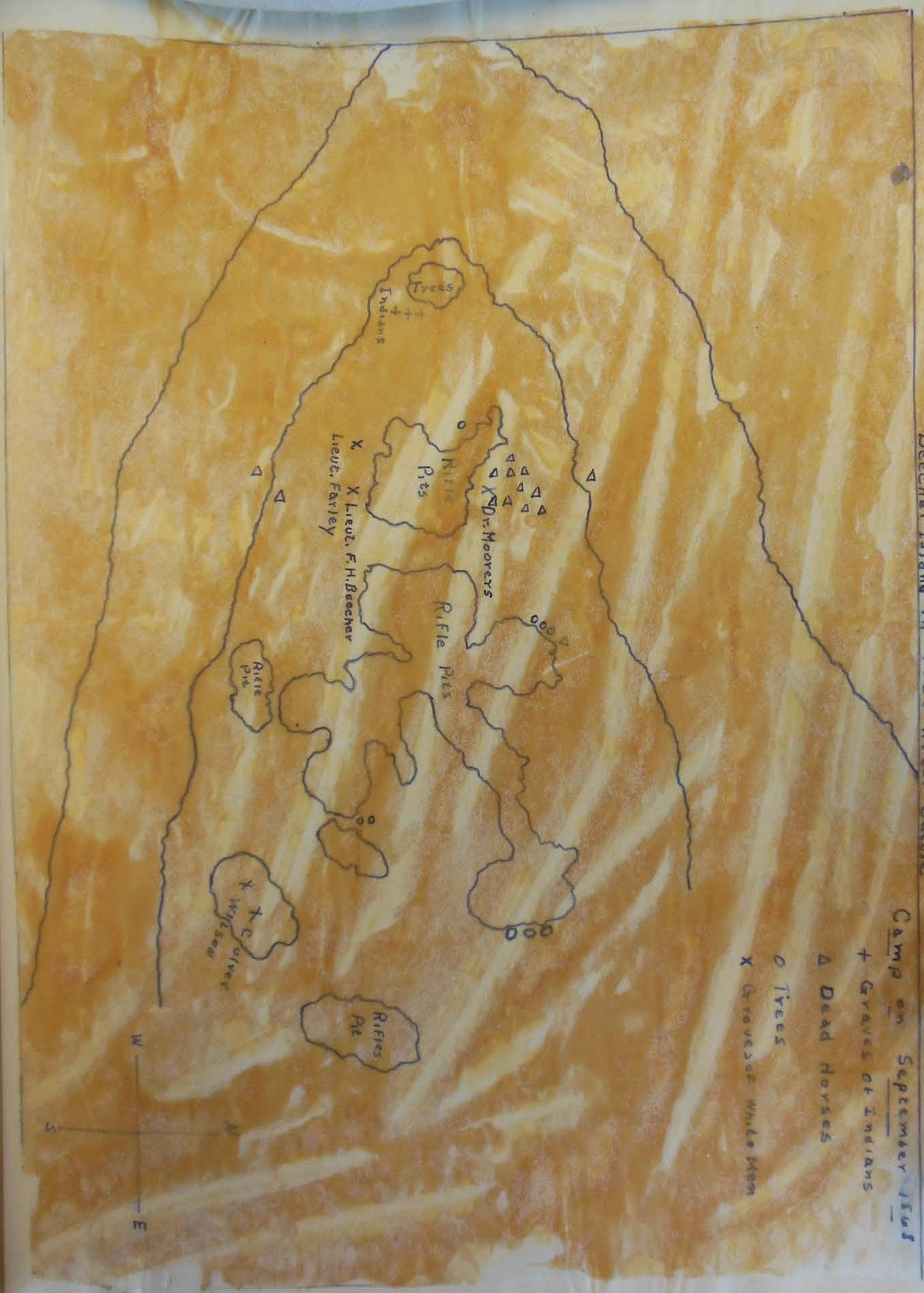
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Map Copied from one Drawn by J. U. Peter.

Beecher Island in 1869 Ameer Gacile.

Camp on September 1868

- + Graves of Indians
- Δ Dead Horses
- Trees
- X Graves of White Men



Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Carl, Amos

Mr. Amos Carl was reared and educated in Markelville, Perry County, Pennsylvania. He was born on May 31, 1861. After getting his education he went to Ohio and worked in an iron foundry at the age of 19 years. He worked there for over two years and decided to go west to Colorado. In 1883, he arrived in Canon City, Colorado, and immediately started to work for one of the smelting companies located there. In 1886, he, however, quit this and came to Yuma County where he filed on a quarter section of land and from then until 1889 intermittently farmed this land. In 1898, he moved to Wray and entered the hardware business which until late years, he operated with great success. In 1915, together with O. L. Mitten, he purchased the Standard Lumber Company which today he has complete control of, having purchased Mr. Mitten's interest in the business.

During the years between 1886 and 1898 when he wasn't farming he worked as an engineer on different railroad projects throughout the State of Colorado. Among some of the railroads he was a civil engineer on are: The Cog Road up Pike's Peak, the railroad from Glenwood Springs to Grand Junction, from El Moro to Engleville, Surveyor from Denver to South Park, and by the Burlington railroad on its tracks from Denver to James Peak.

When Mr. Carl first came here, the town of Wray amounted to practically nothing, there being only a sod hotel, section house, Porter's or Grigsby's store, depot, lumber yard, and a few miscellaneous buildings.

During the years Mr. Carl has been in Wray, he has become associated with the Odd Fellows, and the Woodmen of the World fraternities. He also belongs to the Rebekah degree of the Odd Fellows.

The first thing Mr. Carl did was to go to the top of the large sandhill north of Wray to look over the country. This hill when the summit was reached, gave an excellent view of the flat country extending for miles to the south. Nobody settled the northern part, as that was considered useless, so they always focused their eyes to the south where the good farming land was located. Today the land in these sandhills is very valuable because of its corn raising qualities and grazing facilities.

In these early days, there were no roads, and in order to go south out of the canyon of Republican from Wray, the early settlers had either to go west or east, the cliffs making a direct route south impossible. Likewise after getting on the flats, there were no roads, just trails that seemed to lead no place and were so crooked that it was nearly impossible to follow them. It was more to the advantage for the settler the first few years if he would just make his own trail, cutting across the prairie to their own destinations. In this way, many wagon trails were made and the settlers coming in later were lost if they didn't have a guide to lead them as the maze of trails seemed to lead them every place but the right place.

One of the men Mr. Carl remembers real well was Wycliffe Newell, the buffalo hunter who killed buffalo for the railroad contractors, and also the builder and proprietor of the "Grand Sod Hotel." He was a crack shot and often showed the different townspeople his marksmanship. One of his favorite tricks was to put

two or three bullets in the same hole in boards. Another was to hit without miss a pile of sod bricks on top of a hill more than a half mile from his sod hotel. This was, as he often said, his practice range.

The years of 1886, 1887, and 1888, brought the advance corps of the settlers. In other words, fences, tilled lands and many little homesteads dotted the once free land of the cattlemen. It was during these years that most of the homesteaders came to Yuma County. Thereafter a great many came, but not in such great numbers. They came slowly and surely, building up the land and making it prosperous, living in the good and bad years. Even in the poor years, they got along as most of them had been poor all of their lives and were used to going without certain luxuries.

Wray, unlike many western villages, was never boomed to any great extent, although a number of real estate booms were tried but without any great success. Wray has grown slowly and is still growing, while a great many other towns that grew up overnight have disappeared, or are slowly becoming dilapidated, rundown, little camps. The reason for this is that most all of the men and women who came to Wray, and the surrounding country came with the idea in mind of making a permanent home, which they did.

There were many ranches operating here during the first few years Mr. Carl made his home in this vicinity. The Benkleman ranch, Bar 11, or Bowles, and any number of others had all of this territory as their range. The homesteader soon made them leave the country as they took all of their range. Bowles, the largest ranch near Wray finally left in the nineties and since that time there have been no large ranches in the country.

A great amount of credit is due the railroad and its subsidiary, the Lincoln Land Company, as they brought many settlers into this country with their advertising and low rates on its trains. Wray would not be if it weren't for this great Burlington Route as they planted a water tank and as usual when they put a water tank some place, a town grew around it. This was the case in most small western towns.

(Signed) Amos Carl

Pam. 352  
29

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Strangway, Harry

Mr. Harry Strangway was born in India where his father was stationed as a general of the British Indian Armies. When he and his brothers were old enough to start to school, his mother took them to England to educate them. After receiving a good education, in the various schools of England, he went back to India, but he disliked the country and together with his cousin he went to Australia. After living in Australia for a year, they went to New Zealand to visit an uncle and from there started for British Columbia by way of San Francisco. Mr. Strangway left one brother in Australia who has since become commander of the British Armies in Africa.

When they arrived in San Francisco, they met a man named Bennett, who was the ticket agent for the Burlington Railroad. Bennett told the two boys wondrous tales of adventure back east in the territories of Colorado. These stories gave the young English boys a thirst for adventure so they allowed Bennett the privilege of selling them tickets to Denver, Colorado. He also gave them the names of the largest cattlemen in the district so that they could apply for jobs with them.

His cousin and he, after being in Denver for over a month, were without jobs and with little money to spend. Finally they heard of a cattleman named Benkleman whom they thought might give them something to do on his ranch. They went out to see him at his home which is now the block on California Street be-

18  
tween 17th and 18th Streets, and which was later built up by him into a brick block including the present Sears Hotel. His wife was a kindly old German woman who took pity on the boys. She warned them that it was a rough life and a life they weren't used to, but if they really wanted to go out into the wilds, they should come back tomorrow and she would make Mr. Benkleman or rather Benkleman as she always called him, stay and talk to them.

On the following day they appeared at the appointed time and saw Mr. Benkleman. After much talk, which was really just a blind, as Mrs. Benkleman had already fixed the way for them, Mr. Benkleman told the boys that he would give them a job on the ranch but that if they couldn't stand the hard life and were of no particular value, they would have to quit and find something else to do.

In a few days they boarded a train with Mr. Benkleman's son for Haigler, Nebraska, the closest railroad point to the ranch. They immediately left for the ranch in an old wagon. When they arrived at the ranch house, there was a poker game in session, and the Benkleman heir immediately forgot the two boys and started playing poker. Finally the cook came in and asked the boys if they had had anything to eat. They hadn't, so they sat down to their first taste of ranch food. Mainly corned beef, beans, potatoes and bread.

The punchers were nice to the boys and during the ensuing winter months taught them the principles of riding, roping and other ranch work. Not, however, without a number of jokes, both practical and otherwise, that were pulled on them. They took them with a grin and soon were just part of the ranch the same as the rest of the punchers. When spring finally came they went out with the other hands to get their cattle in the spring round-up



and even then, they were still the butt of many jokes from the men they met at the different chuck wagons.

One of the first things they found out was the fact that these western men were very sensitive about the names they were called. Above all things, a cowpuncher was not a cowboy, he was a cowpuncher, cowhand, hand, or cattleman, but never a cowboy. To their thoughts, a cowboy was a rider who followed rodeos in the east, and they wanted no connections with them at all. Rodeos were commonplace with them as nearly every morning there would be a good rodeo outside of the corral when saddling and starting the horse first began. Another thing that was never considered policy in those days was to ask a man who he was or where he came from. The men of the range were a conglomeration of all types and without doubt a great many of them were criminals who didn't want anybody to know who they were. Oftentimes the punchers knew only the first names of their associates or just nicknames and they never cared or asked the rest of their name. Thieves and other such criminals had little success at their trade out here, as they were hung to the closest tree when caught.

There were very few women in the country for the first few years, and the only woman that Mr. Strangway saw for years on the ranch of Benkleman's, was his nephew's wife. Of course, there were a number of prostitutes in the country, especially in the different saloons in the small towns on the railroads, but to these men of the range, they amounted to nothing. They would kill a man for insulting a good woman, but a bad woman they paid no attention to at all.

Without doubt, the people or cattlemen of that time were the most hospitable in the work and would entertain anybody but a sheep man and likewise they would ride for miles rather than stay all night or eat a meal at a sheep camp. It was the law of the land to feed

and room anybody who came by at mealtime or night time.

In the year 1884, when Mr. Strangway came to this part of Colorado, there were no farmers in the country and the only plowed ground were some furrows plowed over different parts of the range as fire precautions. A prairie fire, to the cattlemen, was their greatest danger as once started, it would devastate many miles of valuable grass which would feed a great many cattle. In those years most all of the inhabitants were men and most of these men associated with cattle. During those years and previous to Mr. Strangway's advent into this section there were a few Indians, but as a rule they were stragglers from the tribes that were on the different reservations throughout the country and as a rule they were harmless because they respected the cattlemen. Sometimes they did steal and burn down a few abandoned buildings, but their damage didn't amount to very much.

There were two types of cowpunchers, the fixture, and the drifter. The fixture or permanent one stayed in the same section or range of country, although he might work for different men. The drifter or wanderer might be on the Canadian border one year and down on the Rio Grande River the next year. The cowpuncher as a rule was a drifter because he had traveled and had the desire to travel some more. No matter which type of puncher he was, he always paid his bills at the different stores in the vicinity he was working.

There were a few that didn't pay their bills but as a rule the cowman was honest and never incurred bills he was financially unable to pay. Some of the big cattle companies only paid their employees once a year and by the time the year was at an end, most of the punchers had spent their money, but they were a hard, carefree, whiskey drinking bunch who never worried. The cowpuncher received as wages from \$25.00 per month in the small cattle ranches, and for top hands on the larger

192

ranches from \$45.00 to \$75.00. It was a rule that every man had to furnish his own bedding, saddle and rope, but the ranch furnished the board, room, and the horses. During the winter months, these men had little to do but play poker and such things, but in the summer and spring and fall, they had plenty to do. Most all of the time during these seasons they had to sleep under the stars and eat from the cook wagon. If it rained most usually they had to ride night herd on the cattle as lightning and thunder often stampeded the cattle. It is easy to see that the life of the cowman was not an easy life, but they were rough men and enjoyed it.

The pleasures of these men were few and they would often ride any number of miles up to 60 to go to a dance or some such an affair. When they would do this, they would stay for a week, or at least until they were broke. Poker and other gambling games were their chief diversion, and no matter where they were if there were enough men to make up a game, they would play. To these rough and tough men of the west, money was made to spend and they never kept a cent, spending it often times before they received it.

The buffalo hunters and the cattlemen were the real pioneers of the west and without them having been out here first, the country would not have been suitable for settling by the farmers. Together they made it safe for the homesteader and the small merchant. The buffalo hunters were here first and often times they killed meat for the men building the railroad. The cattlemen came just a short time later, and the railroad was built through this country so that they would have some means of sending their stock to the huge eastern markets. The railroad made it possible for the homesteaders to come west and make their homes. These buffalo hunters and cattlemen are rightly termed by Mr. Strangway the FRONTIER LEGION as the French call

their troops of men on the Sahara desert the FOREIGN LEGION. Some of the old buffalo hunters that Mr. Strangway knew well are: Billy Welsh, Billy O'Brien, Johnny Cave, Cole, Buffalo Bill Cody, and Wycliffe Newell. This section of country was a great hunting ground for buffalo because of the numerous streams and water holes. Thousands of buffalo were killed in this section of the country to feed the railroad construction workers and thousands more roamed the plains for years after.

The cattle country of the United States extended from the border of Mexico and the border of Canada, east of the Rocky Mountains, and including parts of Nebraska, half of Colorado and all of the states south. Over most of this land there probably wasn't <sup>a</sup> hundred miles of fence and the cattle roamed from one border to the other. Today there are thousands of miles of fences and cattle couldn't go far unless they followed the automobile highways.

Most all of the cattle in Colorado and through this part of the United States were Texas longhorns, many driven north from there as early as 1865. Of course, there were few cattle in this part then unless they were strays from large herds, but that was the year they supposedly started driving cattle from Texas. The large cattle drives driven through here were in the seventies and the eighties. The cattle were either driven direct to North Platte, Nebraska, which was in direct line with the driving route and shipped, or they were sold along the way to the different cattlemen. The size of these drives varied from 1500 cattle to 6,000 cattle. They were brought north by punchers of the drifter type who received about \$20.00 a month as their

salary. These cattle were driven single-file and when they had passed left a deep rut behind them sometimes three feet deep as they would follow the leader's footsteps.

In the days of the large ranches, each ranch had its own definite range, or that range it called its own although it really belonged to the United States government. They possibly owned the quarter section of land on which their ranch house was located but little else. These ranges which might mean an area of even 200 square miles, had no fence around it and most of the time other ranches' cattle grazed on it, but it was really the range of the man who owned the ranch which located its buildings on that range. There was, in other words, nothing definite in regards to a cattleman's range, just a sort of mutual agreement between the other ranchers of the district, or "first come, first served."

There was a system or an agreement between the ranchers, but it also was indefinite in that it was not written nor was it but very seldom spoken about between ranchers, it was mutually understood. There was nothing cut and dried about the cattle business, as each day was as a rule altogether different, and it could not be planned for months, weeks, or even days in advance. There were some things which could be planned for, but they in a sense were indefinite, because the date for starting such operations was unknown until just a few days before the start. They were the SPRING GATHERING, consisting of getting cattle back on to the home range after the winter months, and GATHERING BEEF CATTLE for shipping in the fall and late summer.

The SPRING GATHERING consisted of dispatching different riders with their string of horses, and bed roll to the south with some other ranch's chuck wagon, and taking a wagon of the home ranch along

with riders from other ranches and going south. The cattle always drifted south as the winter storms were from the north and drifted the cattle southward. These riders would round up all of the cattle in a certain area, bring them together and divide them as to brands, and then drive them north slowly to their home range. In this way and with the cooperation of the other cattle companies, everyone's cattle were returned to their respective ranges. This would often take a couple of months as the cattle would roam at their will often as far as a thousand miles away from their home ranch. Cowpunchers doing this during these months, if they saw a critter which they knew belonged to an outfit on the same range or a bordering range to his would take the critter back with his herd of cows.

GATHERING BEEF CATTLE took up the rest of the time during the summer and fall. This was known as the fall round-up. In doing this, a number of the larger cattle ranches would get together, brand the calves, and get the choicest cattle ready for shipment. After doing this, they would drive them to the nearest railroad station and ship them to the large eastern markets.

A cattle ranch was a cattle ranch and nothing else. Once Benkleman brought some hogs out to his ranch because he thought the punchers would like a change in diet. A few days later they disappeared and nothing was said about it. The idea was that someone disliked the smell of them and did away with them.

Among some of the larger cattle companies were Joe Bowles', Bar 11, The K-P outfit, the American Land and Cattle Company with the 3 Bar brand, and Benkleman's T Wrench (Inverted Wineglass Brand), which was the largest ranch which operated in this section of the plains, and one of the largest in the country. Benkleman often had thirty thousand cattle on his ranch, but something odd about it was that he never owned a milk cow. If a puncher wished to have

some milk with his coffee, he had to rope a critter, and hogtie it and then milk it.

The last big roundup in northeastern Colorado saw the departure of most of the cattlemen. This round-up was held in Kit Carson County on the Big Sandy, and is called the largest roundup in the history of the cattle business. In two days there were 120,000 cattle shipped requiring the services of over 2,000 punchers, and over 500 wagons. These men had decided to leave the country because the farmers were coming in faster and faster, claiming the land, putting up fences, and in general completely ruining the range. Also there were getting to be too many cattle on the range. The general public had heard that the cattle business was a regular bonanza and immediately bought a few head of the beasts and started running cattle. There were, in other words, too many cows per acre of grazing land.

One of the large cattlemen thought that putting up a huge fence would keep the cattle from drifting during the winter storms--Bowles. He immediately put up a fence embracing over 160 square miles of land. During the ensuing winter, thousands of his cattle were frozen to death, as they couldn't get past the fence and they stopped, lay down, smothered and froze. Fences were more of a hindrance than a help to the cattle men. Of course, they had to have such things as corrals, and pastures for their horses near the ranch house. These corrals were either made of sod, stone, or cottonwood posts. The cottonwood corrals were the best, but they were extremely hard to construct. They took a few thousand posts of cottonwood cut from trees near at hand, drove them into the ground and bound them together with strips of wet rawhide. When

the rawhide dried, it contracted and drew the poles closer together, thus making a very compact corral.

Wray was never a shipping center because of the difficulty in bringing cattle from the south into the valley. The sharp cliffs to the south of Wray almost prohibited this. Then another reason was that the stockyards and chutes were on the north side of the tracks, and cattle would absolutely not cross railroad tracks. They would ford rivers, jump banks, but they would not cross these tracks.

One of the earliest ranchers through this country was I. P. Olive, but he was not very well liked as he was not trustworthy. He later was hanged by the neck in Trail City, <sup>Colo</sup> Nebraska, for stealing horses. One of his foremen had a small camp near the present site of Wray, and when the railroad came through, they named the water tank here Wray. The foreman's name was Wray.

Mr. Strangway lives on the Arikaree River about one-half mile from the site of the Battle of Beecher Island on a ranch which he purchased and homesteaded in the early days. He has a few cattle, some hogs, and farms quite a bit of his fertile river bottom land. The valley of the Arikaree at one time was survey of the Burlington railroad for its road to Denver, but due to the fact that it would require a great number of bridges, they changed it to the valley of the Republican river north of there.

To Mr. Strangway, the period from 1884 to 1890 was the most interesting and most enjoyable period in his life. He enjoyed that time of life more than any other. The people then were much more honest and less scrupulous than today and he enjoys talking and thinking about them. He was employed by the Benklemans from



1884 until 1890 when he started ranching with Billy Welsh, the buffalo hunter, and was his partner until Billy died a number of years later.

In the early days when Benkleman spent a great deal of time here, he was considered the most respected man throughout the land. He always rode a horse, although he could have had even a top buggy, which was then considered as a Rolls Royce is today.

(Signed) Harry Strangway

Due to the fact that Mr. Strangway lives 18 miles from Wray, and that I have been out there twice, I am not going to have him sign it, as it would take too much traveling.

J. J. Kearns

352  
Doc. 30

199

The following is some information I found in some old papers and by talking to some different people

Joel, Colorado, a small inland town south 30 miles from Yuma, Colorado, was started by Charles H. White, who homesteaded, patented on that quarter section of land Dec. 11, 1911, and founded the town in 1912. (He purchased the old Fox store and postoffice which was located on the old Colpitts ranch east of the location of Joel, and moved it to his land. After much controversy he finally got the government to put a postoffice in the store, making it a continuance of the old Fox Postoffice.) This town is located in Section 31, of Yuma County. The town has had a steady growth, and among other things almost a national fame, due to their surprise basketball game some years back. Unlike most small inland towns, Joel is progressive in every way. It has a public swimming pool which no other town in the county can boast, although both Yuma and Wray expect to have one within the next year. Yuma now due to the SWA is having one built.

Among some of the old settlers around the Joel district are Joe Colpitts, P. J. Nickles, Charles Idler, Gerald Burkhardt, and Alec Shaw.

Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
McGinnis, W. D.

W. D. McGinnis was born in Creston, Iowa, on September 26, 1869, the son of Daniel B. and Sarah J. McGinnis, who were pioneers in western Iowa, and later pioneers in eastern Colorado. Together with his parents, W. D. McGinnis came to Colorado and they homesteaded some land north of Laird, Colorado, in the year 1887. For a number of years alternating between his father's home and ranches through the country, Mr. McGinnis started on his career in life. Before he came to Colorado, he had been well educated in the schools of Iowa, and was very fortunate in this matter, as the people who came to Colorado in those early days were not very well educated. He never attended schools in Colorado as he had gone farther than the schools here had extended in those days.

In the year 1901, after helping his father on the farm and working for various ranches in the country, Mr. McGinnis ran for the office of County Clerk and Recorder, which he won. For four years thereafter, he was the county clerk, and after his term, he had decided that he would go into the abstract business, which runs hand in hand with the County Clerk's affairs. He prospered, and in the year 1910, became associated with the National Bank of Wray, which was one of the oldest financial institutions in this section of the state. This bank was incorporated that year with W. C. Grigsby, President, W. D. McGinnis and T. B. Groves, Vice-Presidents, and Toumey as the cashier. In later years, W. D. McGinnis was elected President, which office he held for some years.

In 1918, he was elected as Representative for this district in the Colorado Legislature. Upon getting this office, he moved to Denver and lived there until his term had expired. He then moved back to Wray, and was again actively associated with the National Bank of Wray. In later years, he ran for the office of State Treasurer, to which he was elected, and alternately for a number of years thereafter, he was State Auditor and Treasurer, in fact until the last election, when he was defeated. All during his life, he has been active at the head of his chosen political party, the Republican party.

As Mr. McGinnis says, he was in Wray before they built either the city or the Republican River. Building the Republican River, is one of the most current jokes among the old timers. They really did build part of the present river, but they did this only so that the miller could have water power to run his flouring mill. The natural course of the river was very crooked, and wound its way almost to the railroad tracks. When they decided to change the course of the river, they moved it south upon a hill, and to this day, it still runs through a specially constructed flume to the local milling company.

Wray in 1887 had just started to have buildings on the south side of the river. The few buildings were George and Fisher's, General Store, Col. Hayes livery stable and a few small buildings of no consequence. The balance of the town was located down by the railroad's water tank, and on the north side of the tracks. In this way, they were protected against the winter blizzards, by the huge sandhills extending to the north. Most of the small western towns were built around the water tanks on the railroads, as water was one of the necessities, especially good drinking water.

In the year 1886, a great many settlers came out here, but in 1887, a great many more came, and they were the ones who were responsible for the demise of the great cattlemen, who were really the pioneers of the west. Those settlers who came in those years of '86 and '87 were just the vanguard of the hordes of settlers who came in the next twenty years. The buffalo hunters, cattlemen, and the scouts were the real pioneers, as they made this country safe so that the small farmers from the east could live here. They were the ones who drove out the Indians, building reservations or driving them farther west.

The railroads were primarily put through for the gold miners but at the same time, they were thinking of the cattlemen who had to ship their thousands of cattle yearly and these cattle when shipped, raised their shipping profit to a great extent. The railroad could be considered the philosopher of this country. The men at the head of the Burlington railroad knew that some day, thousands of people would be streaming out into this wide, vast, flat plain to claim land and make their homes here. With this thought in mind, they organized the Lincoln Land Company as a subsidiary of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad. The railroad owned huge tracts of land on either side of the railroad which had been given to them by the government, and their employes followed the custom of homesteading and pre-empting land along the railroad, and then selling it to the Lincoln Land Company. The employes always tried to get land near the sites of water tanks, realizing that this land would be more valuable as towns would be started there. The Lincoln Land Company with a huge advertising program brought thousands of people into the country selling them

land, or helping locate them in the country on homesteads or pre-  
emptions. In every town which was started along this great Burling-  
ton Route, the Lincoln Land Company possessed itself of one-half  
of all the lots when the town had been platted.

William Campbell platted the town of Wray, the first time,  
and later in that same year, 1886, A. B. Smith did likewise. The  
people who came to eastern Colorado were not a type used to high  
life, but were as a rule slow-moving, conservative, and many times  
with little education, but taking them all into consideration,  
they were a large group of born gamblers. Gamblers because they  
took a chance on land which at one time had been called "four  
hundred miles of uninhabitable space," by an easterner. The  
buffalo hunter, the scout, the cattleman, and then the settler in  
rotation came into this country, the settlers finally staying and  
building a community.

The Lincoln Land Company was undoubtedly a great factor in get-  
ting the settler out into this barren country. To them goes a  
great deal of the credit in getting this country civilized. Of  
course, their purpose was commercial and without doubt with little  
thought towards building our great United States into one component  
part of the world. Little did they realize that this vast country  
would some day be a prosperous farming community, they wanted only  
to sell land, and charge huge freight and passenger rates to the  
people who took the gambling chance of making a living in this  
vast country between Omaha, Nebraska, and Denver, Colorado.

Extending through Yuma County is a great ridge of sandhills,  
which in the early days were considered quite worthless, which  
in part was true. However, today a large percent of the corn in  
Yuma County is grown in these same sandhills, and Yuma County for

a number of years has led Colorado in the growth of corn. There are a great many square miles of worthless land in these hills yet today, worthless in the respect that no farm products could be grown on them. However, cattle are fed successfully and the grass which grows on these hills. There were two large ranches in the sandhills in the cattle period of Yuma County. They were the Halfway Ranch owned by F. D. Johnson, and the Thompson Ranch, owned by C. D. Thompson. These ranches were never the success that the ranches located in the valley of the Republican were, but they prospered and raised many cattle.

At one time, there were a number of irrigation ditches running directly through the middle of the present site of Wray. Some few years back they were abandoned, but not without doing a great deal of good towards the growth of the many fine trees and lawns in the town. The water in these ditches came from the North Fork of the Republican River. There is yet one of these ditches in use today, but the rest have been obliterated by time.

One of the most interesting periods of Mr. McGinnis' life was the time he spent on the range. They never in those days ate their own beef, but managed to find a maverick or a cow with a brand which did not correspond to any of the brands they were associated with. At the same time, miles south of their usual range, cattle which belonged to the outfit Mr. McGinnis worked for would be eaten by some other cattle outfit. In other words, it was the custom of the range never to eat one's own cattle.

The city of Wray has been built up slowly and surely, and at no time was ever boomed. For years there was seldom a vacant house which could not be rented. In later years, however, there have always been vacant houses, and especially these last few years.

Mr. McGinnis has been a leader in Yuma County for years, but today lives in Denver. He still has many interests in Yuma County, including some very valuable property.

Mr. McGinnis was in Wray a few short weeks past and he gave me some time, thus this interview.



Kearns, J. T.  
Interviewer

Reference  
Wray Republican,  
Friday, July 12, 1889

LAND LAWS

The following digest of the United States Land Laws may be of value to our readers both east and west, who contemplate locating on Government land, and will appear in these columns as occasion may demand.

Every person who is a citizen of the United States; or who has declared his intention to become such, that is, the head of a family, or over twenty-one years of age (male or female) has three rights to public land. One timber-culture, one pre-emption and one homestead right. Parties having used any one of these rights cannot use that right again; a timber-culture right and a homestead right at the same time; a homestead right and a pre-emption right can be used at the same time by one person, or a timber-culture right and a homestead at the same time. A homestead right and a pre-emption right cannot be used at the same time as both require residence upon the land entered. A person who wishes to use his three rights, should first take a timber claim and a pre-emption, and after six months' residence, prove up by paying \$1.25 per acre for minimum lands, and then take a homestead. This plan gives 480 acres of land to one person at a cash outlay of about 50 cents an acre. Settlement is the sole basis of the pre-emption right. A pre-emption filing made prior to the date of the alleged settlement is not in accordance with the pre-emption law. Hence, to secure a pre-emption; the party should make

settlement on the land and then present his declaratory statement and \$3.00 for filing to the Local Land Office. (The United States land office for this district is located in Denver). A settlement does not mean actual residence, but preparation for it, to be followed up in good faith. The claimant should in person, not by agent, start the erection of a house or begin some other improvement on the land he selects before he makes pre-emption filing.

Homestead filing costs in Colorado and the Territories, \$16. A soldier's homestead filing, \$3. A person taking a homestead has six months to get on his land to erect a house. After five years' residence, he can prove up by paying \$6 commission and no fees.

It costs \$14 to file on a timber claim. The applicant is required to go and see the land, and make his affidavit within the land districts. Five acres on a quarter section is required to be broken or plowed the first year and five acres the second year. The second year, the first five acres must be cultivated to crops or otherwise. The third year, the second five acres must be cultivated, and the first five acres must be planted to timber, seeds or cutting. Ten acres are thus to be plowed, planted and cultivated on a quarter section, and the same proportion when less than a quarter section is entered. If trees, seeds or cuttings are destroyed by grasshoppers or extreme drought, the time of planting may be extended one year for every year of such destruction. No patent can be issued on a timber-culture entry until after the expiration of eight years of compliance with the law, but any time from eight years to within thirteen years. It is required that 2,700 trees of the proper character be planted on each acre of the part cultivated, and that at least 675 living and thrifty trees to each acre

planted, are growing at the time of proving up. The list of trees classed as timber by the United States Land Department is as follows: Fir, cedar, pine, larch, elm, oak, black locust, honey locust, alder, beech, sycamore, spruce, chestnut, ash, birch, maple, box elder, walnut, cottonwood, white willow, hickory, white-wood, butternut and basswood.

A single woman must be over 21 years of age in order to exercise any rights under the land laws. A single woman forfeits her pre-emption filing by marriage, but does not forfeit her homestead or timber-culture entry if she continues hereafter to comply with the law, as to residence, improvements and cultivation. A married man under 21 years of age can exercise any of the land privileges.

J. J. Kearns

Doc

352  
33

209

References to Wilbur Fisk Stone's HISTORY OF COLORADO, Volume IV

	PAGE
Frank T. Hawks	9
George H. Yost	23
Henry J. Woodbury	24
Oliver W. Nash	32
George E. Waters	33
John Adcock	37
Buffer Roberts	43
William A. Sheedy	48
W. H. Hitchcock	61
Roy Shepherd	62
Francis M. Adams	71
Charles E. McKinson	74
George E. Rice	81
Max M. Bulkley	87
W. D. McGinnis	101
Philip T. Edmunds	104
George A. Mathews, M. D.	112
H. V. Kitzmiller, M. D.	114
Adolph G. Wolfe	118
Gen. F. Boggs	128
Dan C. McGinnis	132
G. H. Renzelman	143
William Heindel	147
Joseph E. Buchanan	151
William Petrie	161
F. Q. Conrad	178
Dr. D. A. Brown	183
Anos Carl	188
George E. Huey	195
E. E. Richards	212
William H. Gerdts	218
Archie J. Miller	223
Geroge W. Custer	230
Joe. Be. Campbell	243
C. A. Patton	250
Orville A. Kline	254
John H. Paile	256
Hudson W. Jackson	272
George H. Carl	274
E. Loring	281
Karl J. Ripper	284
Clarence C. Conover	291
J. E. Ryan	293
Clara V. Yegner	298
W. C. Grigsby	307
Wenzel Blach	311
Dr. Charles M. Tribbet	321
Claude Tribbett	322
Milton A. Wilson	331
Gottfried W. Hahn	337
Edward M. Patten	351
John H. Smith	354
Frank A. Leete	363

383	Ben F. Taylor
391	Francis H. Hammond
402	George Droese
407	William Cochrane
414	Mathew M. Dickson
425	Rolla A. Fisher
456	W. D. McGinnis
482	P. J. Sullivan
488	Bert L. McKenzie
494	Myron W. Haver
512	J. H. Larson, M. D.
518	Edward J. Dowlin
607	J. M. Gardner