REMINISCES OF OLD CHUGWATER

BY

Harold E. "Pete" Remster

2015

Chugwater History

"As I have always had an abiding interest in history, some historical facts I've found about my adopted home town deserve some dispersal to others. This first section first saw the light of day in the August 14, 1952 issue of THE WHEATLAND TIMES. [And I give them the thanks and credit for unearthing these facts! Other parts and pictures from many sources.]

"Wyoming's hero, John "Portugee" Phillips, was the first to receive a patent on land where Chugwater is now located. His official land entry was dated March 15, 1876. About this same date Richard Whalen, Hiram B. "Hi" Kelly and his brother-in-law, Thomas A. Maxwell, also took up land upon which the town was later built.

Chugwater's location was used as a camping spot for the government troops on the Fort Russell – Fort Laramie trail. Frank W. Foss is said to have been the first governmental telegraph operator there. More about Frank W. Foss later, as he had a lot to do with later events in the town to come.

In 1886 the town-site was dedicated. It was located on the southeast side of the railroad, although it was never developed. This was on the northwest side of the tracks at the present location.

The old original Town Ordinance Book shows that the first ordinances were made in September 1919. Alfred B. Sheldon was the first Mayor, with Frank A. Beard, Edmund A. Haney, and Ernest M. Hedges Councilmen, and L.E. Hastings Town Clerk.

Chugwater had a municipal light plant until 1948, when it went on REA. In 1938 it installed a complete water system with a 100,000 gallon, concrete reinforced, water storage tank located about halfway up the bluff behind the town. This assured an abundance of good water. The light plant was operated by Carl E. Good [CHS class of 1924]. At present [1952] Chugwater may well boast of a newly constructed, concrete building to be use as a combination Town Hall and firehouse for the 350 gallon pumper truck.

Although the settlement is old, it did not develop into much of a town until about 1908 or 1910, when the homesteaders moved into the vicinity. It now has a population of 283, and has the only bank in Platte County, outside of Wheatland. The present [1952] Town Council is made up of Russell L. Staats, Mayor; Fred R. Cashner, Johnny Chasteen, Walter Larson, and Tom Tarpley. Mr. Staats, who was first elected to the Council in 1927, has served as Mayor continuously, with the exception of one term, since 1932. He points with pride to the fact that his town is free of debt at this time."

This portion is from "THE TRAVELERS JOURNAL, 1994":

"Chugwater: the fame of the town's name precedes the town itself! When you talk of the communities of the United States with very distinctive names, you have to include the southern most community of Platte County- Chugwater! The community's name ranks right up there with Walla Walla, Washington or the communities of Ishpenning, Paw Paw, Wyoming, and Wyoming Park, all in Michigan, as far as having a name that will stick in your mind. And please remember, the emphasis is on the first syllable- that's CHUG'-water, if you please!

The name has historically been traced back to an old Indian legend, but the community itself was formed as a result of a huge cattle ranching operation formed by a group of stockholders from Scotland, called "The Swan Land and Cattle Company", known locally as "The Two Bar".

In recorded History, the area of what is now southern Platte County, was first inhabited by the Native American Indians. The Commanche Indian Tribe were nomads and roamed most of what is now southeast Wyoming. The Commanche left the area and moved south sometime during the 1700s. After they left, the Kiowa Tribe moved in to take their place, not knowing the trouble heading their way. Around the beginning of the 19th Century, the Cheyenne Tribes had moved into central Wyoming from the Dakota Black Hills and merged with the warlike Staitan Indian Tribe. It wasn't long before the warrior Cheyenne nation had pushed the Kiowas out of the area. The Sioux, who had been following the Cheyennes from the Dakotas, also laid claim to the area.

The Cheyenne and the Sioux controlled most of the area until the Indian Wars began in 1879. Other tribes ventured into south-east Wyoming from time to time, but were usually convinced by the Cheyenne, Sioux, or Arapaho (their friend to the south), that this was not the best place for them.

There are many legends which have been handed down through Indian inspired folk-lore, but probably the one best known, is the one which describes the origin of the name, "Chugwater". Sometime before the white man arrived in the area, it was occupied by the Mandan Tribe. As the story unfolds, the Chief was, in theory at least, a mighty hunter. Unfortunately, a confrontation with a bull buffalo had not gone in his favor, and he was badly injured. He then ordered his son, who was called "Dreamer" to lead the hunting party for him. "Dreamer" was a thinker and considered manual labor an unecessary evil and avoided it whenever possible. He figured that the simplest way to kill buffalo was to just drive them off one of the chalk cliffs in the area, and that is what he ordered the hunters to do. The word "chug" is said to describe the noise that the buffalo, or the falling chalk, made when it hit the ground below or fell into the water under the bluff, depending on the version of the legend you prefer to believe. The Indians began to call the area "water at the place where the buffalo chug." Whites adopted the Indian name and called the area "Chug Springs". Chugwater Creek was named after Chug Springs, and from that came the name of Chugwater. [During the time of Frank W. Foss, rancher and local postmaster, he united the names "Chug Water" into the singular "Chugwater", about 1896.]

In September 1886, J.A. Epperson, an engineer from the Swan Land and Cattle Company, and several others, laid out the Town of Chugwater on the east side of the Cheyenne and Northern Railroad. Almost immediately building materials were shipped to begin construction of warehouses, cabins, storage sheds and other buildings, to house the railroad's winter quarters. The original site was comprised of 160 acres of land that was subdivided into 12 rectangular blocks. In that same year, the first Post Office was begun under Postmaster Richard Whalen, a local rancher, and the town was still called "Chug Water" until 1896 when Postmaster Frank W. Foss united the names.

The town was surveyed and officially filed as a town on September 29, 1877. However, with some movement to the area, the town did not begin to really take root until after the turn of the 20th Century. Being unimpressed by the growth of the town, the Swan Land And Cattle Company and the railroad, now known as the Colorado and Southern, began surveying for a new plat for the town in 1913. This new plat, filed in 1914, placed the town on the opposite side of the tracks, and was 240 acres, where some businesses had earlier moved to. Following an extensive advertising campaign, an auction was held on Tuesday May 26, 1914, to sell over 400 lots of land in the "new" town. The advertising claimed that Chugwater was the "Gateway To Platte County's Great Dry Farming District." The influence of the Swan Land And Cattle Company would stay strong for many years to come. One of the most influential personages right after the 1914 move was Curtis Templin.

Curtis Templin, from Chicago, came to Chugwater in 1915 as manager of the Swan Land And Cattle

Company. He immediately took the reins and instilled a new sense of work ethic in the company, but his intrusion into the town was minimal. When not in the office, he spent most of his time in the "White House." The "White House" was the nickname of the hotel that housed many of the company's management personnel. Mr. Templin was seen in town only on occasional visits. Although thrift was the rule in his handling of the company's affairs, Templin was somewhat of a philanthropist so far as the town was concerned. Many churches and charitable organizations benefitted from his generosity over the years. Many individuals also benefitted from his help, also. He supplied the funds for several young people to go to college, and in his will, established a trust to provide scholarships for Chugwater graduates.

The Swan Land And Cattle Company employee who was most directly involved with the town was Russell L. Staats, who first came to Chugwater from Central City, Nebraska, in 1922. He was employed as Company Cashier. In 1927 he won a seat on the Chugwater Town Council. He was elected as Town Mayor in 1934, and with exception of a single term, remained as the Mayor until 1985, a span of 51 years.

Homesteading brought most of the people into the area during the early part of the 20th Century. These homesteaders quickly moved into the flats that sprawled east of the town and had once been the horse pastures for the Swan Land And Cattle Company. There were three major areas in the "flats." Immediately to the east was "Chugwater Flats", beyond that, further east, was the "Iowa Flats", called that because almost all of those homesteaders came from Iowa, to the northeast was "Slater Flats."

Robert Kletzing, an Iowa Flats resident, was a real estate promoter, and in a 79 page booklet that was printed in 1910, filled with stories, pictures, and other information, he told people to "throw your beer bottles away and cast your cigarettes into the sea, and come and help develop the wonderful resources God has placed in Wyoming....." [It might be noted here that Chugwater had outlawed alcoholic beverages in the town when it was re-platted in 1914, and Mayor Staats managed to keep it that way throughout his 50 years reign as the town's top elected official.] Kletzing also noted in his booklet that there were 500 people living within a five mile radius of the town. Only three businesses were listed in the town: Kletzing's Real Estate business, L.E. Hunt's Chugwater Trading Post, and J.W. Porter, who was in farm implements and real estate.

One of the most important businesses of the area was the Farmer's Cooperative Association, founded in 1912. The story goes that a meeting was held at the Methodist Church out on the flats. At that meeting 21 homesteader discussed the need for a company to sell their crops. By the end of the year the Co-Op was in business under the management of L.E. Hastings, who was a farmer in the area. [see previous paragraph concerning L.E. Hunt's Chugwater Trading Post of 1910.] Problems began almost immediately, and were blamed on the management. The Co-Op went through several managers in a short period of time, and board members had to put up their own collateral to get the credit they needed to keep the operation going. The operation was in trouble until 1920, when Archie Blow took over the management of the company. Blow took the Co-Op and put it on the right track, turning it into a profit making concern.

Many businesses started to open in town as the immigrants poured into the flats. Hotels, grocery stores, lumber yards, garages, and many others took root. The garage of E.M. Hedges was one of the longest operating businesses in town. The pharmacy was run by Bill Corry. The Chugwater Drug Store, and the Swan Mercantile Company, which was founded in 1911. In 1914 the town's first newspaper was published. THE CHUGWATER RECORD was moved to Wheatland and began carrying less of the Chugwater news. To fill the gap THE CHUGWATER NEWS was first published in 1928. THE NEWS had

a rough go of it, and went through several publishers. For brief periods it was published in Wheatland before its demise in 1952. [ed. Note: I was fortunate enough to have written a high school sports entry in the News in the latter 1940s.]

Virgil Nickeson, a barber, had immigrated into the Iowa Flats from, of course, Iowa. He began working on the homestead and is also credited with opening the town's first barber shop. The barber shop was set up in a railroad box car, where he provided haircuts, shaves, and baths.

Chugwater was not actually incorporated until 1919. The first Mayor was A.B. Sheldon. After this incorporation major improvements in town services were made. Before 1924, businesses had to provide their own electrical power or tap their power from someone else's generator. In 1924 the town bought a diesel generator called "Tom" which was used to provide the town with electrical power..at least sometimes. "Tom" only ran during the evening hours on a daily basis, and was turned off at about 10:30 p.m.. Users were warned that their power would be turned off when their lights would dim a few times before the power was actually shut down. Occasionally the power would be turned on in the mornings so that people could wash and iron their clothes. After a time, the "Dick" and "Harry" generators were added and the town was able to furnish electrical power 24 hours a day. In 1948, Chugwater was added to the REA system and the three generators were retired.

Another major improvement to the town's services was the WPA installation of the modern water system in 1938. This project cost the town $10,000.00, and was, probably, the most significant single project ever done. Windmills and outhouses became things of the past, and with people being able to water their lawns and plant irrigation, trees were planted, which had not been possible before. Before this system had been installed fires were a common occurrence, and usually resulted in the complete destruction of the unit which had been on fire.

The population of Chugwater has remained fairly constant since 1920, staying in the range of 200 to 300. The average age of the town's residents has slowly risen over the years.

[The Town of Chugwater web site has this above information. Thank you for this information]

Frank W. Foss came west as a member of the U.S. Army, being a member of "The Department Of The Platte", commanded by Brig. General George Crook. This unit was awaiting reinforcements at Camp Cloud Peak on June 17, 1876, when the 7th Cavalry, under George A. Custer, made strategic errors at the Battle Of The Rosebud. Foss's unit assisted in the burial of the remains of that massacre. Frank was a private in Company "I", 2nd Cavalry. The following is the obituary of Mr. Foss, written by A.R. Bastian, a long-time resident of the Chugwater area, and will give some idea as to his contributions to the area.

F.W. FOSS BURIED WITH MASONIC HONORS [Feb. 1, 1937]

"Frank W. Foss was born in Hiram, Maine, September 7, 1852. At an early age he moved with his parents to Chelsie, Vermont, and later to Cornish, New Hampshire. Here he entered the U.S. Army, and was immediately transferred west to help put down the Indian uprising in 1872. General Crook was then in command.

He took part in some of the Indian battles, and at the time of the Custer Massacre was on duty in the National Park. His company was ordered on a forced march to the battlefield to bury the dead. After leaving the Army he did several and various kinds of work: drove stagecoach, built telephone lines, carried mail, and became a telegraph operator. He was transferred to Chugwater in the old stagecoach days to take care of the work here, and later when the railroad was built, was made station agent in

addition to his other work. This was in 1884.

Mr. Foss was associated in the growth of Chugwater, especially ever since it's beginning, in fact, he WAS Chugwater for many years, Station Agent, Postmaster, Justice of The Peace, banker, and general advisor for years. Ranchmen depended on him in many ways.

In 1880, a young lady, Frances "Fanny" Doolittle came west from Wisconsin. She became the community seamstress. She wasn't long in the country when it became evident that Mr. Foss was interested. They were married January 17, 1882 in Cheyenne, and at once were home to their friends. The young people, in addition to their Chugwater home, began to plan on a ranch home, also. They soon had some holdings on Chugwater Creek, near Diamond, and to that they added year by year.

In 1913 he resigned the agency of the Colorado & Southern Railroad, built himself a home in Chugwater, and moved the Post office there, continuing as Postmaster. In 1914, he resigned the Postmastership also, and began to take more interest in his ranch. He also went into partnership with Mr. Luke in a plumbing and small hardware business. In 1916, the Banks Hotel burned, taking the Foss residence, and from that time on, until his death, the ranch was his home.

Frank W. Foss, during his long and useful life, made many friends. The rough, sometimes seemingly on the surface, he was as tender as a child inside. Someone has aptly out it in this way, 'He had a heart as big as an ox.' He lived quietly, caring little for public show or display. In his thinking he was decidedly independent. He admired achievement wherever he found it. Loved the beautiful things in music, art, and literature. Counting friendship as his greatest asset, he lived it loyally to the end.

Sam W. Foss, the poet and relative, puts it right in these lines, 'Let me live in a house on the side of the road, and be a friend of man.' This was Frank Foss.

In the spring of 1912, Mrs. Foss was accidentally killed while riding with Mr. Foss in a small motor car. They were traveling by rail, and were on their way back to the ranch. How it all happened was never definitely known, but it was an experience from which Mr. Foss never fully recovered. Grief stricken for weeks, it was a long time before he could reconcile himself to the inevitable.

Funeral services for Mr. Foss were conducted in the Masonic building at Wheatland by Chugwater Lodge # 23, of which the deceased was a charter member. J.B. Milstead, Junior Warden, acting as Chaplain, and the body was laid to rest by the side of his wife, who had preceded him by almost 25 years. The Watson Funeral Home was in charge. Acting Pall Bearers were Bert Morrison, Hugh McDonald, Gus Miller, Magnus Larson, E.M. Hedges, and Henry Gustafson. Honorary Pall Bearers were Ed Banks, Robert M. Grant, William Wilde, F.B. Stanfield, A.R. Bastian, and D.M. Carley. Mr. Carley, on account of sickness, was unable to attend.

He leaves to mourn, one son, Nedmond, of Chugwater, a sister, Myra (Foss) Batchelder, and her daughter, Hazel Dunn, both of Denver, other relatives in Vermont, as well as a host of friends."
[By A.R. Bastian]

The Foss ranch has more "claims to fame" as written by Joyce Furstenau in "Old Steamboat: Famous Bucking Horse Of The Old West" The bucking horse and rider seen on the Wyoming State Quarter is a registered trademark of both the State of Wyoming and the University of Wyoming. It has become a recognizable symbol of Wyoming, and is more often referred to as the BH&R (Bucking Horse and Rider) symbol. One of the best-known bucking horses of all time, named 'Old Steamboat' is said to be the horse behind this icon.

Old Steamboat was born on the Foss Ranch in Wyoming in 1894. The black bronco grew big and strong. His owners say he bucked from the time he was a colt. After several attempts at breaking the horse, in 1898, he was sold to the Two Bar Ranch. The top Two Bar bronc rider, Jimmy Danks, stayed on him for about 2 seconds. An injury created an obstruction in his nose, and from that time on, whenever the horse went to bucking, they say he whistled like a steamboat. He thus became known as "Steamboat, the whistlin' hoss.Another source says that the injury to Steamboat's nose came about when he resisted the branding iron, and in so doing, struck his nose, breaking a small piece of bone. Sam Moore, foreman at the Two Bar, bought the horse and trimmed away the small protruding piece of bone. The result was that peculiar whistle. Cowboy Jimmy Danks told the foreman that the horse 'sounds like a steamboat'. He thus had a name. Jimmy Danks is said to have been one of the few who made a successful ride on Steamboat. Steamboat had a storied career bucking off cowboys, however that came to an end as a result of a lightning storm in Laramie. The corralled broncs 'spooked' and in the turmoil Steamboat suffered wire cuts. He was returned to Cheyenne, where he died October 14, 1914 of infection resulting from the cuts.

The Foss ranch raised and sold many horses to the U.S. Army. One competitor was an Indian, whose name I have forgotten, but I have read some of the letters the Army sent to Foss mentioning the man's demeaning statements about the horses sold by Foss., attempting to bolster his claims to sell his. At the death of Foss' son Ned in 1962, I was privy to reading many of the collection of letters saved by Ned, and after offering them and other items of interest to various parties, and no one wanting them, they, were, unfortunately destroyed. I did, however, salvage a few items, including a picture painted by "Fannie" Foss, which is now in the Chugwater Museum.

TOM HORN

No article about Chugwater and the Two Bar could ever be without some mention of Tom Horn! It is said that Tom's autograph is written in the old barn at the Swan Company in Chugwater. I have not seen it, but have heard that many times. He occasionally stayed at the Swan Company, so it is assumed that that is where he stabled his horse. Looking at 1900 census records, I looked with surprise as two of the families interwoven with the killing of Willie Nickell, and the subsequent hanging of Horn in Cheyenne, were one after the other on the same page! James C. Miller, his wife Dora C. and his family- six sons and three daughters and his brother, Benjamin. The next entries are Kels P. Nickell and his family, wife Mary, five daughters and four sons. I was able to talk to Ned Foss and Gus Miller about that killing, but far more was left out than included so I know no more than anyone and probably less than most!

HIRAM B. "HI" KELLY

The old "Hi" Kelly house was located on the Jim Brown ranch, and while the Vern Vandiver family worked for the Brown's I had the opportunity to visit there several times. Unfortunately it is no longer there. This obituary of "Hi" was of interest to me, and I hope to you, as well.

DEATH OF HIRAM B. KELLY MARKS PASSING OF PIONEER WHOSE LIFE WAS ROMANCE

[from Express Courier, Ft. Collins, Colorado; June 8, 1924, by: Ansel Watrous]

"Hiram B. Kelly, one of the real pioneers and commonwealth builders of the west, died on Monday, June 2nd at 12:30 p.m. at his home at Edgewater, after a short illnss, aged 89 years, 7 monthsand 19 days. These words, so full of meaning, mark the close of a long, eventful, and active life. A life that for the most part was spent on the frontier amid dangers, coupled with hardships, privations, and with trials and struggles that would have broken down and discouraged a less hardy and resourceful—a life that was full of adventure fraught with danger to life. The following thrilling story of the life of Mr. Kelly is copied from the CHEYENNE TRIBUNE of June 4th, and the Tribune took it from THE HISTORY OF WYOMING compiled by a lifelong friend, after a personal interview with Mr. Kelly: 'Hiram B. Kelly was born in Sheridan County, Missouri, October 14, 1834, one of the family of 10 children of Hiram S. and Mahala Kelly, who went to Missouri from Kentucky. In 1849, when he was 15 years old, young Hiram crossed the "Great Plains", accompanying his father, to California during the gold rush. In 1852, they returned to Missouri. In that same year, 1852, the son drove a bull team to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and for several years thereafter, was engaged in freighting along the Santa Fe Trail, frequently driving a six-yoke ox team or a 10 mule team. In 1855, he carried the United States mail from Independence, Mo. To Santa Fe. For

550 miles along the trail there was not a house. It was not an unusual thing to see bands if Indians, while at times the plains were black with buffalo as far as one could see. Mr. Kelly remained in the mail service until December 1857, when he froze his feet so badly that he returned to Independence. In the fall of 1858, he and his brother-in-law, Tom Maxwell, took a train of 36 eight-mule teams to Salt Lake for the firm of Ford & Smith, making the trip from Atchison, Kansas. It was late summer when they started, and winter caught them, they becoming snow-bound at Ft. Laramie, Wyo. Where they spent the winter with the train. The goods which they were freighting belonged to Kincade of Salt Lake City. They wintered the mules at Goshen Hole, and in the spring of 1859 continued the journey to Salt Lake City, where they left part of the goods, the remainder being taken to Camp Floyd, 40 miles south of Salt Lake. They then returned to Independence, Mo. That summer with the teamsters, but left the mules to sell to the government. Later, however, the mules were returned to Independence. In the fall of 1859 Mr. Kelly took the same mules to market in St. Louis, where he sold them. In March 1860, he drove four mules to Denver for Hi Harrison and Sid Barnes, who had accompanied him, driving teams. They brought with them loads of nails, which sold for 25 cents per pound. The next May Mr. Kelly drove a team of mules to California Gulch, now known as Leadville, and worked in the mines for one month. He next went with a party through the hills prospecting for the balance of the summer, and in the fall of the same year returned to Denver, spending the winter in what is now Blake and Sixteenth Streets, the present site of the Inter-Ocean Hotel. In 1861 he went to Ft. Laramie with a four-mule team. He took a hay contract for supplying 100 tons of hay to the government at $29.00 per ton. All of this was cut with a scythe on Fox Creek, 40 miles distant from the Fort, to which this was hauled. That fall Mr. Kelly began work at Horseshoe, Wyo. for Ben Halliday Stage Company, and for a few months he was messenger between South Pass and Julesburg, during which period he was never held up, for the country was safe from thieves. At that time Slade was division superintendent of stages and put Mr. Kelly in charge of the bull teams, delivering supplies to Julesburg and South Pass, and also engaged in putting in hay and provisions along the route, leaving several teams at each station, and one man in charge. Mr. Kelly made trips to and from the different stations to superintend the work. In 1862, the stage line moved from North Platte to Denver, changing the route to pass Ft. Bridger, with headquarters at Virginia Dale, Colorado. Mr. Kelly then got out logs and built stage stations, barns, etc. long the new route. In 1863 he returned to Ft. Laramie, severing his connection with the Stage Line. He then bought bull teams and took contracts with the Government for furnishing hay and wood at different points. In 1865 he went from Ft. Laramie to Ft. Halleck, but in the fall of the year returned to Fort Collins where he spent the winter. In 1866 he bought beef at Fort Collins to take to Ft. Laramie for an Indian Contractor. This was at the time of the big treaty which was made at Ft. Laramie. The Indians at that time were manifesting an exceedingly unfriendly spirit. Mr. Kelly started from Ft. Laramie one night at dusk, rode all night, and at daylight stopped where Camp Walback, an old fort, had been, 25 miles north of where Cheyenne was to be built years later. There were then a few shanties. He went out into the foothills to wait for dark, and then, on to the Cache le Poudre, where Fort Collins now stands. After purchasing 100 head of cattle at $50.00 per head, for Joe Mason and E.W. Whitcomb, he started the task of driving these cattle back to Ft. Laramie with the men who were to deliver them. He remained and got word to buy 200 head more, after which he sent them over to the designated place under the care of Ab Loomis and John Colome. Mr. Kelly waited for a few days longer, until the stock were well over to Cherry Creek, when he bought another horse that had been raised on Crow Creek by 'Little Gary'. He then followed the stock on to Ft. Laramie, riding the 100 miles in less than a day. He met the cattle at Cherry Creek, got the money, and completed the deal by turning the cattle over to the control of one 'Everhardt', who was representing Mat Ryan, an oil Government stock buyer, of Leavenworh, Kansas. In 1866 Mr. Kelly went to Nebraska City, where he bought five bull teams and loaded his wagons with groceries and other commodities. He then returned to Horse Creek, 40 miles below Ft. Larimer on the Platte. He bought a storehouse, out the goods in it, and established a store. It was about this time that he took a contract for cutting telegraph poles on Bar Mountain for Ed Creighton, of Omaha, two men hauling the poles with four-mule teams, to his store, where they were piled. On one trip they encountered an Indian war party, and the men hauling the poles were killed and scalped, after which, the Indians took the teams and escaped. A party following found the dead bodies by the wagons, frozen stiff, and the report was carried to the Kelly store. Mr. Kelly then sent men to Bear Mountain, got his wagons, and returned with the bodies of the murdered men. As time went on, the hostility of the Indians increased, and Mr. Kelly removed his store to Bordeaux, near Ft. Laramie,

where he spent the remainder of the winter. In the spring of 1867 he took a contract to get out wood for the Government at Ft. Laramie, and in the fall of that year went to Horse Creek, 25 miles north of the just founded Cheyenne, which was the terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad. In the spring of 1868 he took his train of freight wagons and went to Ft. McKinley where he secured a sub-contract to move out the settlements before the Indians would sign a treaty. The removal was made to Ft. Smith and Ft. Reno. Mr. Kelly hauled stuff to where Ft. Steele was later established. In 1869 he took his train to Ft. Fetterman to secure a wood and hay contract. His partner, John Richard, was to put up the hay, but he shot a soldier in the fort, got away, and joined the Indians, after which Mr. Kelly had to complete the contract himself, securing the hay near where Casper now stands. Indian hostilities drove his men away and Mr. Kelly removed his outfit to near Cheyenne, where he found he was 100 tons of hay short. He then went to Omaha to try to get relief from the contract, but failed and had to go to Cache le Poudre, where he bought hay, which he hauled to Ft. Fetterman in the dead of winter, thus meeting the terms of his contract, but at a loss of several thousand dollars. In 1870 he bought 200 head of Texas heifers and put them on a ranch at Chugwater and engaged in raising cattle until 1884. These he sold under contract at different forts over the country, but in 1884 disposed of his ranch to a Scotch Company of Edinburg. Mr. Kelly personally making the trip to Scotland and selling to the SWAN LAND & CATTLE COMPANY for a quarter of a million dollars, John Clay, of Chicago, then being head of the company. While in Europe Mr. Kelly visited various parts of the continent. The story of Mr. Kelly's life record, if written in detail, would be as thrilling s any that is to be found on the pages of fiction. He not only encountered many hardships, but also had many narrow escapes from death at the hands of hostile Indians. One day in 1853, when on the Arkansas River, he and his party had stopped for lunch and one of his men was frying bacon, when one of the Indians approached and asked for food. One of them, becoming angry, kicked over the frying pan, whereupon the white man hit him, he fell under a pony, which kicked him in the hand badly infuriating him. The Indians then held a pow-wow and the whites prepared for trouble. They placed chains around their cattle so they could not be run off and prepared for a fight. All night the Indians threatened and demanded the man who had struck the member of their tribe, but he was hidden under cover in a wagon. After much parley, a compromise was made, by giving the Indians a quantity of groceries and provisions, after which the white men escaped. In 1856, while Mr. Kelly was hauling the mail, he also found the Indians very hostile. On the Little Arkansas, while passing through the sand hills abut dusk, he discovered about100 yards away, about 100 painted Cheyennes. They pulled Mr. Kelly off his load, and put him with three other men in the circle of fire. They said that eleven of their men had been killed, and that they wanted revenge. Mr. Kelly argued, telling them what 'The Great Father' would do to them if they hurt him, and finally, fearing the troops, they let their captives go, but took all their food, anf they had to journey 30 miles to meet a team and get food. The Indians, later repenting of their tolerance, had later decided to kill the white men, and followed, but by fast driving the latter managed to effect their escape. Six years later Mr. Kelly met one of these same Indians, who recognized him and told him that they had tried to overtake him in order to kill him. After selling his ranch, Mr. Kelly built a home in Cheyenne, [now the home of Fred Boice, just west of the Capitol Building] and resided there for 18 years. He afterward spent two years in Seattle, two in Portland, Ore., and four years in Denver, and about six years also located in Edgewater, a suburb of Denver. For some years he has been interested in gold and silver mining. Mr. Kelly made many visits in Fort Collins, and at one time owned considerable property here. He was well known to all the pioneers and early settlers of the Cache le Poudre Valley, an had many warm friends here. In 1881, Mr. Kelly, associated with A.H. Patterson, H. Ralph, and others, built what is known as the Jefferson Block, on Jefferson Street, and the building at the corner of Pine and Jefferson Streets was Mr. Kelly's. He also owned, in company with Abner Loomis, what is now the City Park." In 1864, at Ft. Laramie, Mr. Kelly was married to Elizabeth Richard, a daughter of Pete Richard, an old mountaineer of the American Fur Company. She was born near Ft. Laramie. They became parents of eight children: Frank B., Benjamin L., John A., W.H., Charles, Katherine, Cora and Clara. Years ago Mr. Kelly joined the Masons in Cheyenne, and became a member if the Shrine in Rawlins. He is a man 5'11 ¾" in height, and at the age of 84 he stands erect, his abundant hair but slightly gray, his eye clear and clean- a remarkabl3 speciman of physical preservation, as thin and wiry as a young man."
[also printed in THE HISTORY OF WYOMING, vol. 3, edited by Ichabod Sargent Barrett] I have not been able to ascertain the relationship of Pete Richard and John Richard ("Reshaw") of Platte County fame.

John "Portugee" Phillips

by John D. McDermott

Reprinted by permission, from 'PORTRAITS of Fort Phil Kearny.'

"As the man credited for carrying the news of the Fetterman Disaster through hostile Indian country 236 miles from Fort Phil Kearny to Fort Laramie, John "Portuguese" Phillips has long been celebrated in histories, novels, and poems, as Wyoming's frontier hero. While time has diminished his achievement, as fact has replaced fiction, he remains a man worthy of respect and admiration, exemplifying pioneer qualities of self-sacrifice and endurance.

John Phillips was born Manual Felipe Cardoso on April 8, 1832, the fourth of nine children of Felipe and Maria Cardoso. Born near the town of Terra, on the island of Pico, in the Azores, he entered life as a citizen of Portugal. At the age of 18, he left the Azores aboard a whaling vessel bound for California, where the youth intended to pan for gold.

For the next 15 years, he followed the lure of yellow metal in California, Oregon, and Idaho, reaching the Montana fields in 1865. In spring of 1866, he joined a party of miners headed for the Pryor and Big Horn Mountains, prospecting until the first snows of late summer. Arriving with 42 of his compatriots at Fort Phil Kearny on September 14, he apparently worked as a water carrier for a civilian contractor.

Following the annihilation of Capt. William J. Fetterman and his command on December 21, Phillips volunteered to ride to the telegraph office at Horseshoe Station on the North Platte with Col. Henry B. Carrington's dispatches, about 190 miles in subzero weather. While the general story is that he rode alone on this perilous mission, Phillips was in fact accompanied by one Daniel Dixon to Fort Reno and by others along the way, including Robert Bailey. The pay for the service was $300 apiece for Phillips and Dixon, which they received in January, 1867.

In a reminiscence, Carrington stated that Phillips chose one of his horses for the ride. Jack Wallace, a contractor's employee, reported the name of the animal as "Dandy," a blue grass horse, black with three stocking feet. Wallace also stated that Carrington gave Phillips a Spencer repeating rifle and 100 rounds of ammunition, which he strapped on his ankles, the weight keeping his feet firmly in the stirrups. The first stop was Fort Reno, which the couriers reached in the early hours of December 23. There they received an additional message from Lt. Col. Henry Wessells to carry to Col. Innis Palmer at Fort Laramie, thus extending their obligation.

According to the telegrapher at Horseshoe Station, Phillips, Dixon, and Robert Bailey arrived about 10 a.m. on December 25, when the dispatches were wired to the headquarters of the Department of the Platte in Omaha and to Washington. To deliver the message from Wessells to Palmer, Phillips went on to Fort Laramie, arriving at 11 p.m., where a full dress ball was in progress. The appearance of the huge form of Phillips, garbed in a buffalo overcoat, pants, gauntlets, and cap, quieted the festivities, and his message caused preparations for a rescue party, delayed in departing by deeps snows until January 6. In addition to receiving his pay, Phillips was given the best horse in Company F of the 2nd Cavalry.

Although Phillips did not ride alone, he was certainly of the stuff from which heroes are made. When carrying mail back to Fort Phil Kearny from Fort Laramie in mid-April, 1867, he at one point found himself surrounded by fifteen Sioux in war paint. With humorous self-deprecation, he wrote in a report to his superiors that he had escaped, but noted that "without aid of my faithful horse, and good revolver, I would have lost my hair, the part of my body I feel most anxious about on the prairies."[1]

Phillips continued to work as a mail courier for the government, but when the army abandoned Fort Phil Kearny, he moved to Elk Mountain, west of the present day city of Laramie. There he supplied ties to the Union Pacific Railroad, then being constructed across southern Wyoming. In the decade that followed, he made his living by contracting with the army to furnish supplies and transportation at Fort Laramie and Fort Fetterman. On December 16, 1870, in Cheyenne, Phillips married Hattie Buck, a native of Crownpoint, Indiana, then 28 years old. The couple had several children, one of whom was appropriately named Paul Revere Phillips.

About the time of his marriage, Phillips established a ranch on Chugwater Creek as a base for his contracting activities. The ranch also accommodated travelers and served as headquarters for a small stock raising venture. In 1876, he built a hotel on the property, as travel had increased with the Black Hills gold rush. One acquaintance describes him as having a fine dairy herd and growing watercress's with diverted river water.

In 1878 he sold his Chugwater ranch holdings and moved to Cheyenne, arriving on October 18. There Phillips remained until his death from nephritis on November 18, 1883. He is buried in Lakeview Cemetery. Hattie Phillips died in 1936 in a Los Angeles nursing home at the age of 94.

During a visit to Milwaukee in 1876, Phillips attended a parade in honor of General Grant, who was running for the presidency. Upon seeing the scout in the crowd, Grant stopped the procession and insisted that Phillips ride with him in his buggy. Although of humble origins and not particularly successful in life, Phillips was a national figure then and today he remains a symbol of courage and devotion to duty.

(Editor's Note: The John "Portuguese" Phillips monument just east of Fort Phil Kearny, is listed as part of the National Historic Landmark designation for the Fort Phil Kearny sites.)

CURTIS TEMPLIN

[December 28, 1968] "Private funeral services for Curtis Templin, longtime resident of Chugwater, will be held at 3 p.m. today, at the Schrader Funeral Home.

Templin was born on his father's homestead near Palmer, Nebraska, Feb. 11, 1884, andcame to Chugwater in 1906. He was associated with the Stock Growers National Bank, now the First National Bank and Trust Co. of Wyoming, until 1915, when he went to Chugwater as Manager of the Swan Land and Cattle Company, Ltd.

He married Lillian Frances Friebe on September 1, 1915. Templin was a member of Cheyenne Lodge #1 A.F. & A.M.; Wyoming Consistory #1, Cheyenne; Korein (Shriners) Temple, Rawlins; Elks Lodge #660, Cheyenne, and the Chugwater Lions Club.

The home ranch in Chugwater is still owned by the Templin family. The house was originally a hotel on the Cheyenne-Deadwood stagecoach route.

Survivors include his widow, Lillian; a daughter, Mrs. Harry E. Paulsen of Pasadena; two granddaughters, Mrs. Kenneth H. McAfee of Dinuba, CA; and Mr. John W. Mercer of San Gabriel, CA; and five great-grandchildren.

Pall Bearers will be Fred R. Cashner, Chugwater; Robert R. Larson, Cheyenne; Fred W. Marble, Cheyenne; Russell L. Staats, Chugwater; Frank C. Carlin, Chugwater; and Henry G. Goertz, Chugwater.

This obituary was obtained from the internet, and the author was not noted.

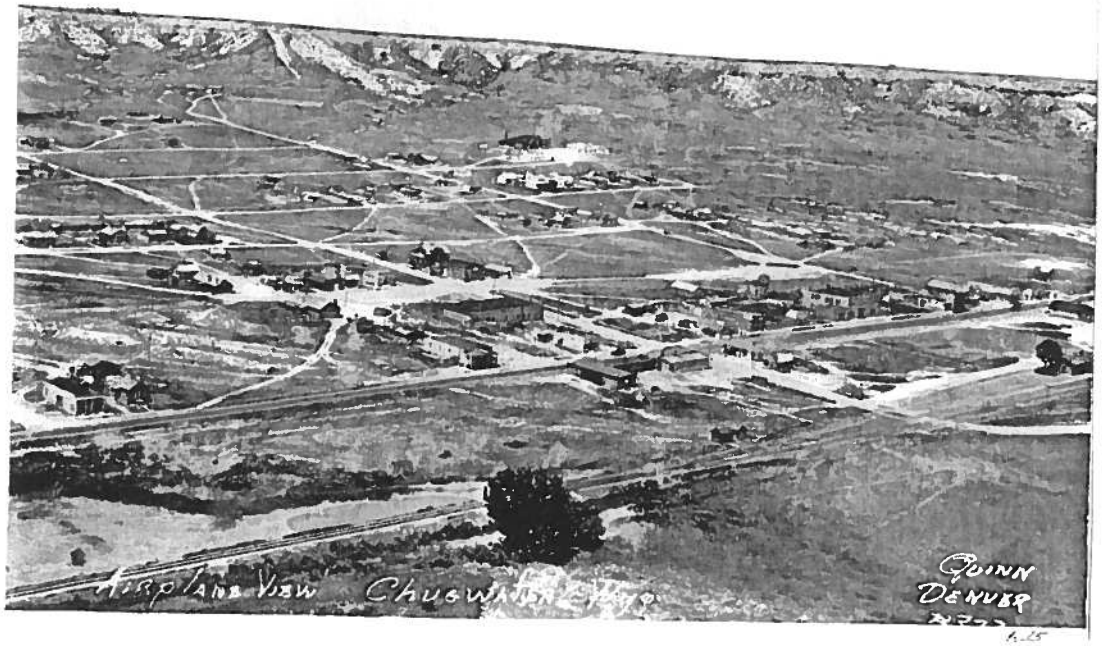
[ed. Note: Sofar as I know, the Swan was never owned by the Templins, he only managed it.]

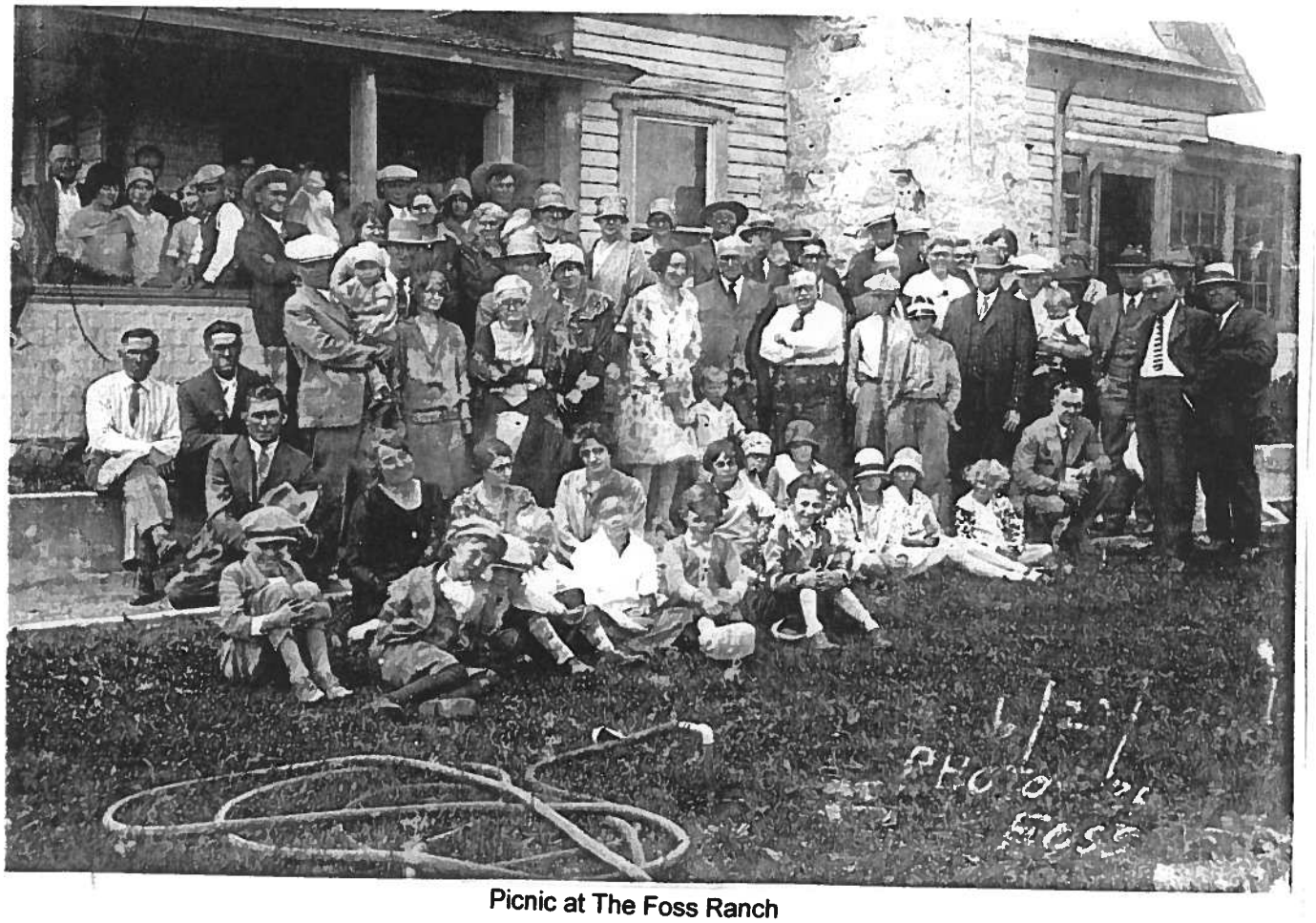
THE SWAN LAND AND CATTLE COMPANY

As noted by the Historical Historic Landmarks, The Swan Land and Cattle Company was one of several well-known foreign companies that engaged in the cattle business in the United States; and was one of the largest in the nation. Organized in Scotland in 1883with a capital of $3 million, it, at one time, held more than 600,000 acres of land. Its cattle ranged from as far as Fort Fred Steele in the west to Ogalalla, Nebraska in the east; and from the Union Pacific Railroad in the south to the Platte River on the north. Its principal range ran along the Chug and Sybille Creeks and over the mountains to the Laramie plains. The company books carried more than 113,000 head when the severe storm of 1886-7 struck, but by the spring the number was only 57,000. Going into bankruptcy following the disaster, the company reduced its inventory, and the capable John Clay, well-known stockman of the northern plains, took over the management. He reduced the capital, and in 1893 cut the herd to 40,000. Though he resigned in 1896, the company continued to run about 40,000 head until 1904, when it went into the sheep business. At the peak of its sheep operations, in 1911, it was running about 112,000 head. Continuing to operate until 1945, it then began to liquidate.

So the local population well knew of all these businesses and civil leaders, and although memories have faded, it is well to look back and hear of the travails and successes of those who were here first and who laid the groundwork for all that is here, now. Many others, in the proximity of several miles around, are not named or located in this sketch, but are also remembered in local lore, as well as print and pictures!

Chugwater Air View – 1935
. Thanks to Darla Teters

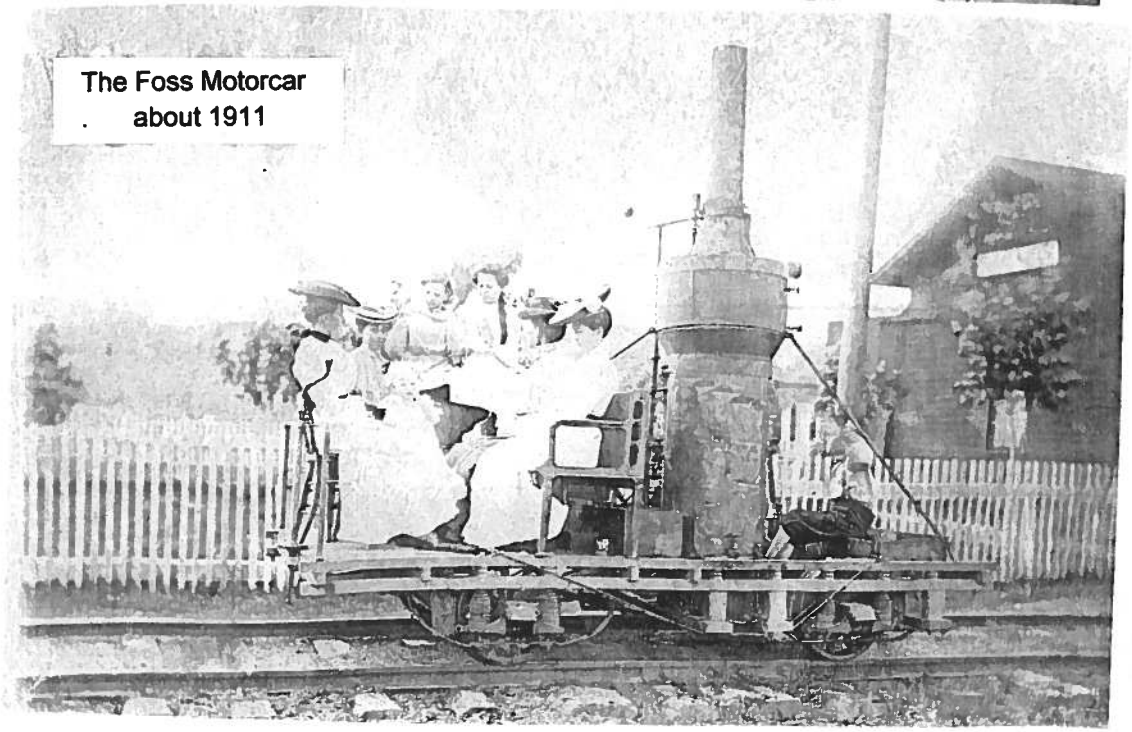




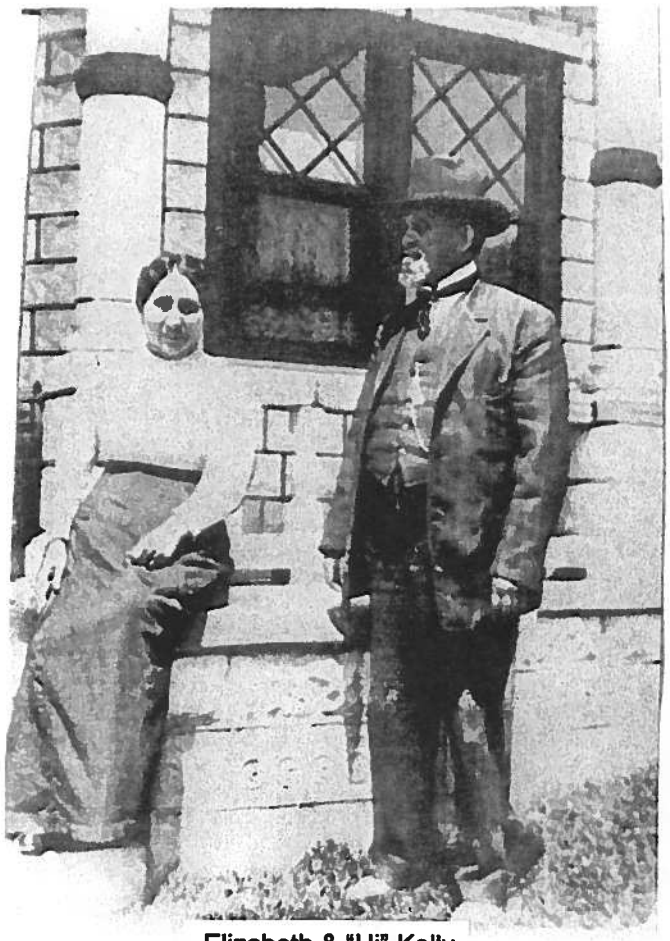
Picnic at The Foss Ranch
Frank Foss, right center

Chugwater Band about 1912

Fannie & Ned Foss

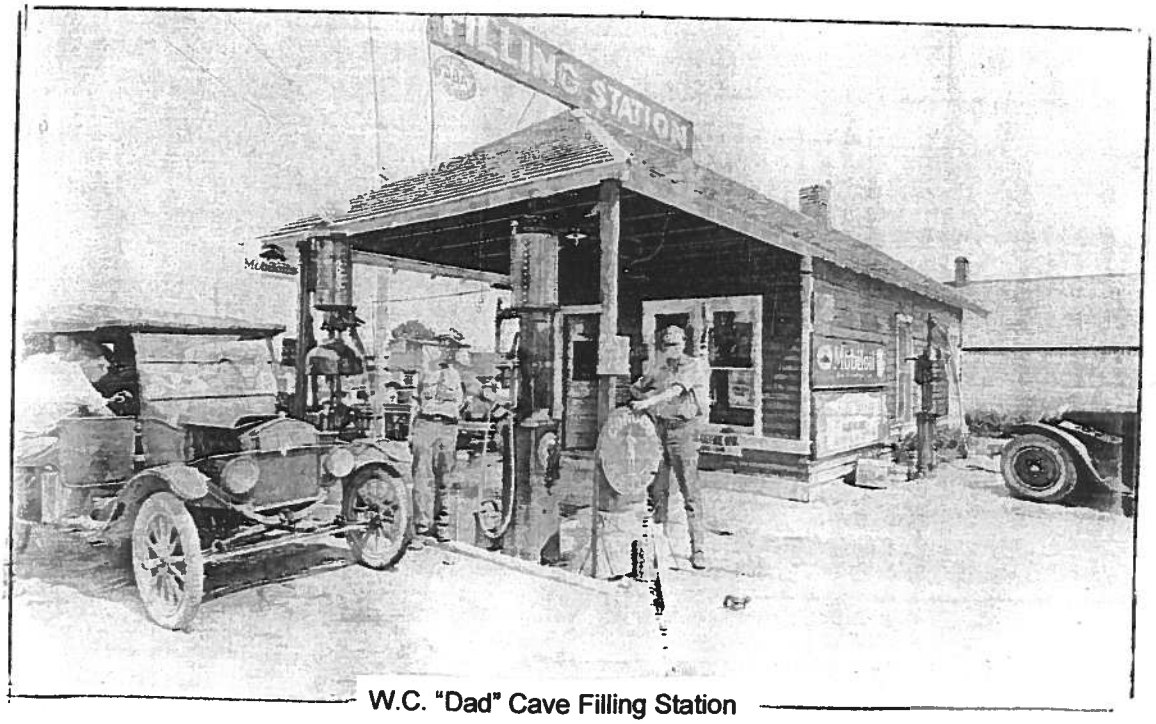


The Foss Motorcar
about 1911



Elizabeth & "Hi" Kelly
Spring 1916

Hazel Dunn & Myra (Foss) Bachelder
Denver, Colorado



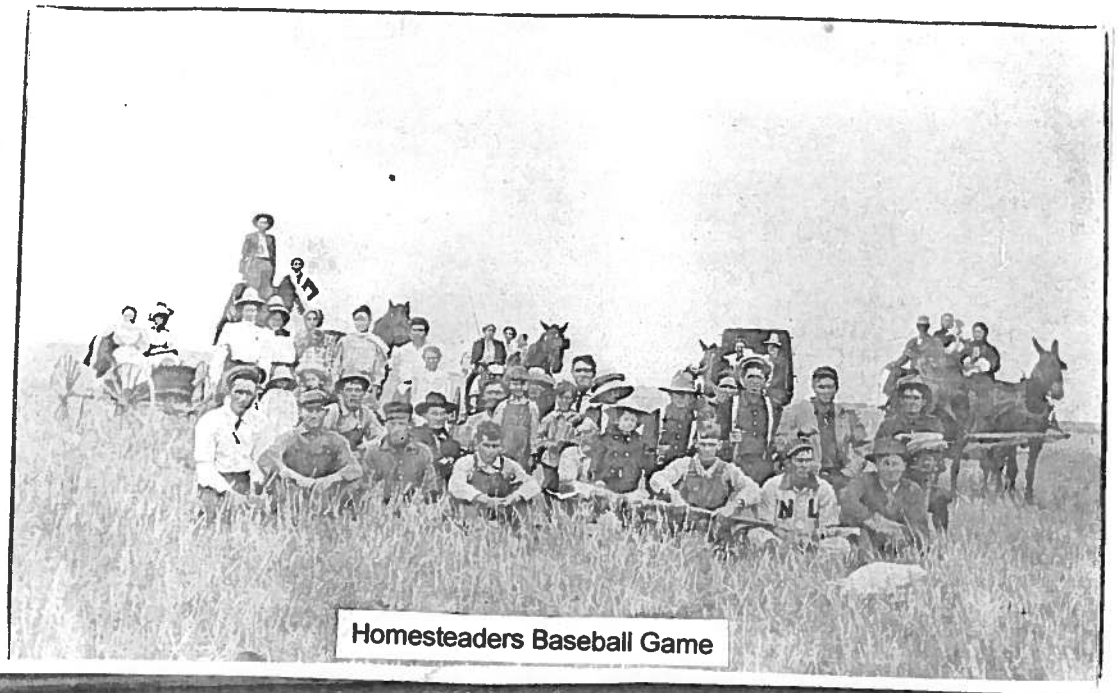
W.C. "Dad" Cave Filling Station
Enos Cave on right – 1927

Curtis Templin
Chugwater Wyo.

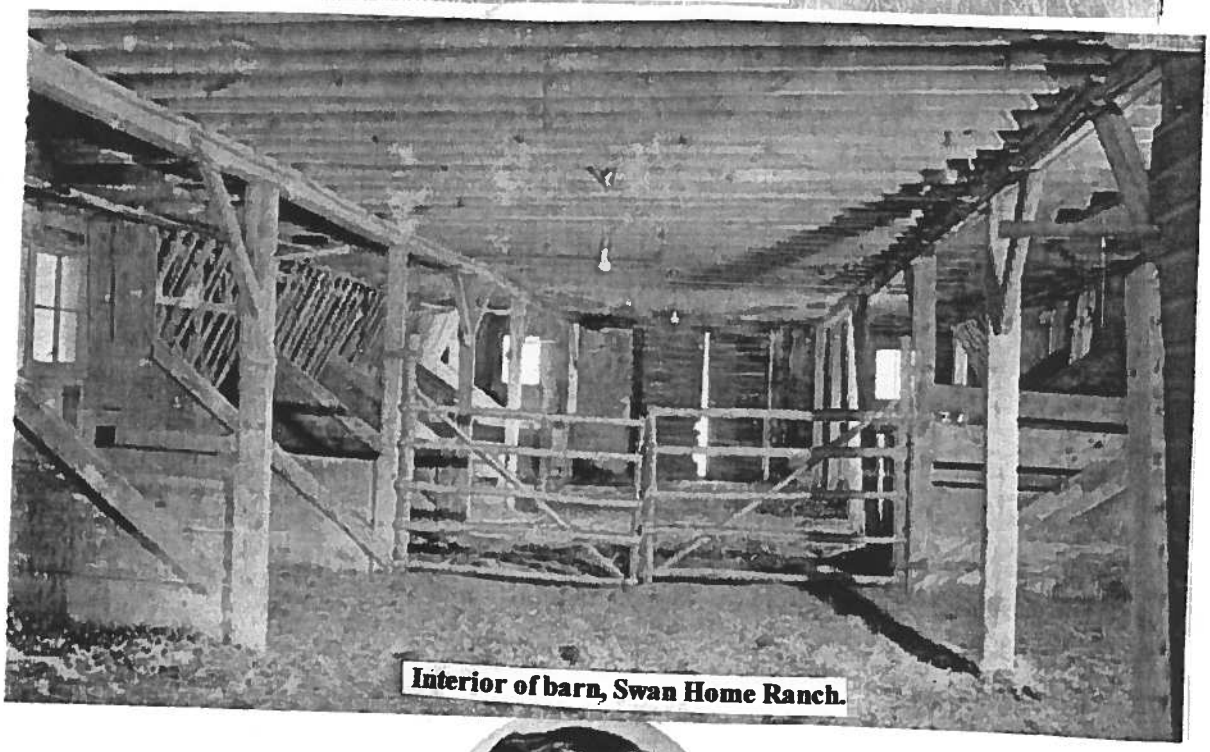
Sam Walter Foss

In 1912 The Ladies Gathered, Too!

Joe & Ed Janousek – Joe Kasper – Jim & Rudy Krisl - Early homesteaders – about 1911



Homesteaders Baseball Game



Interior of barn, Swan Home Ranch.

Tom Horn