

JUN 28 1951

HISTORICAL TOUR OF OLD TIME RANCHES OF THE LARAMIE PLAINS

Sponsored by the Albany County Historical Society and the University of Wyoming Summer School, and arranged by Bob Burns. Bring your own lunch and be at the Court House Square, North and East Side. Sunday, July 1, 1951 - 7:30 A.M.

The Laramie Plains can well be called the cradle of the western livestock industry for it was on these plains that pioneers noted the fat wild life including deer, elk, antelope and buffalo and they noted too that abandoned work oxen even after a hard summer of work on the freight teams, would fatten up quickly on the short, nutritious grasses. Residents of Laramie and others interested in seeing some of these early ranches are cordially invited to join on this tour and see some of the early day ranches and the neighboring places which lie on the selected route. Stops are scheduled for the following ranches as will be noted on the suggested schedule. Other ranches which will be passed have been indicated on the schedule along with some facts concerning them.

Location of Stops in chronological order:

1. Hutton or Hart Ranch
2. Riverside Ranch
3. Sodergreen Ranch
4. Buckeye Ranch
5. Wallis or Forbes Ranch
6. Palmer or Judsen (Herrick) Ranch
7. Alsop or May Ranch
8. Two Rivers Ranch (Old Wyoming Station)
9. King Bros. Ranch (Frank Bosler)

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RANCHES AND SOME FACTS ABOUT THEM.

	Mileages	
	Local	Tour
Leave Albany County Court House Square, 8 A.M. sharp.	0.0	0.0
Fort Sanders at left of road by present Country Club. Old roofless bakery building only standing building of Old Fort Sanders. Monument to Fort Sanders at edge of road in front of Tourist Cabin Court.	2.0	2.0
Monolith Ranch Headquarters at left some miles away by large grove of trees. Originally Simpson ranch and then owned in order by Bill Goode and Davis and Thomas.	3.0	5.0
Lembcke Ranch. Settled by Pete Johnson, but gained fame as the Oxford Horse ranch of Whitehouse and Stokes and later Whitehouse and Palmer.	4.0	9.0

Dr. Whitehouse was a graduate veterinarian and lover of sports and horses. The ranch had a 1/2 mile track, a pack of 54 hounds and carried around 3,000 Thoroughbred horses on their 16,000 acres. The large barn built in 1887 is typical of the large horse barns built on many of the early ranches founded by English people. Note the large hay mow with a drive-in on the rear side from the higher hill level, the stalls and the iron-grilled box stalls, so typical of these old English type horse barns. This barn is one of the few built in



the early days which remains standing in its original form, with the single exception that the box stalls from the east half of the barn have long since been removed. Many famous hunting trips, horse races and foot races were held on this ranch. The English ranchmen of the early days visited at the different ranches for the features which that ranch had the best facilities for. Of course Whitehouse and Stokes had a race track, fine horses and a pack of hounds so here were held the horse races and the hunts with hounds. Dr. Whitehouse purchased a famous race horse called "Fireball" and ran him against another famous horse for a side bet of \$1500. The money was in gold pieces which were kept in a buckboard by the side of the race track and none of the money was molested. Another interesting pasttime of the English "Sports" was to play billiards with the table pockets almost filled with \$20 gold pieces. Axel Palmer came to the ranch in the late 20's as a hired hand and his job was to keep the relief horses ready when a hunt was in progress. Scent hounds were used at first and sight hounds (gray hounds) unleashed later when the quarry was in sight. Coyotes, wolves, and antelope furnished the quarry. Dr. Whitehouse was involved in a tragic hunting accident in 1887 when he accidentally shot George V. H. Gordon, a young Englishman, who was dressed in tan hunting clothing and was mistaken for an antelope in the rusty cover of the upper Big Laramie country not far from the present Glendevay. Mr. Gordon's grave is in the Laramie Cemetery and is covered with a large slab of concrete. This grave is located about a hundred yards down on the left side of the fourth street on the right as you enter the cemetery. The accident occurred the other side of Sand Creek Pass (see Laramie Boomerang, September 15, 1887),

Whitehouse and Palmer sold out to Talmadge and Bunten who later sold to Mr. Leasenby. The large iron kettle used to cook food for the hounds was later taken to the Flag Ranch and used for many years as a hog scalding vat. Dr. Whitehouse was on the veterinary faculty of the Colorado A & M College from 1912-1922 and in 1930 was Principal of the Glasgow Veterinary College in Glasgow, Scotland. He died in Glasgow in 1944. Mrs. Whitehouse was an artist and writer. Axel Palmer has a drawing she made of the famous Oxford Ranch horses rearing up on their hind legs while hitched to the breaking cart which Axel used for many years. Bob Burns as a youngster had many a harrowing ride in that old breaking cart with Axel Palmer holding the reins and wearing his famous dogskin coat.

Cuts available on the Oxford Horse Ranch of Whitehouse and Palmer;

- | | |
|-------|--|
| B-225 | Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Whitehouse |
| B-226 | Cowpunchers at the Oxford Horse Ranch Barn.
Among the riders are Gus Palmer and Thornton Biggs. |
| B-227 | Oxford Horse Ranch |
| B-223 | "Busy Bee," a riding horse raised by Mr. Whitehouse |
| B-229 | Interior of horse barn at Oxford Horse Ranch |
| B-230 | Axel Palmer in his cart used for breaking horses |
| | (See article in "The Westerner," February 1946) |
| " | " " Laramie Republican, October 13, 1950 |

Retrace route toward Laramie and turn left at FLAG Ranch sign about half a mile north of the entrance gate to the Lembecke ranch. Cross railroad and through a gate and a cattle guard.

Two ranches in distance at left, 1.0 10.0

Left hand buildings are old Dan Livingston ranch. Dan was foreman for Bob Homer at the Flag Ranch prior to 1892 and settled on this ranch near Red Buttes. He died in 1898 at an age of 37. The buildings (sheds) at the right are all that remain of the Gilmore and Soule ranch. James Gilmore built the first buildings about 1865 and bought the place from a man named Simpson from New Hampshire (probably W. A. Simpson who had a ranch on Sportsman's Lake at end of Boulder Ridge). J. F. Soule was a friend of Gilmore in Cambridge, Mass., and came West. When the University of Wyoming was started he signed up as a member of the first faculty and spent his life at this institution. The Gilmore house was moved to the Flag Ranch by Bob Homer and Otto Burns lived in it for many years. When the Big House at the Flag Ranch burned in 1933, the Gilmore (Burns) house was completely remodeled into a beautiful modern home by the present owner of the Flag Ranch, Mr. Ralph Klink.

(The Flag Ranch. Sargent & Homer 1871-1880	2.3	12.3
Sargent, Homer & Evans 1881-1887		
Red Buttes Land & Livestock Co. 1888-1930		
Flag Ranch Inc. 1931 to Date		

Frank Sargent and Bob Homer were Bostonians who came to Laramie in August 1871 and pioneered in the sheep business. They learned the hard way the value of feed as winter loss insurance, when during the first winter they lost every last one of their sheep and started from "scratch" the next year purchasing additional hay land as well as sheep and building sheds for shelter. They brought out Merino rams from Vermont and some of the English breeds of sheep from Iowa. They sold rams for \$10 to \$30 a head to neighboring ranchers. Frank Sargent reports their first year's profit as \$1412 after the hard winter. Their wool sold for 30¢ and lambs at \$1 to \$2 a head. In the 80's, they trailed sheep from Oregon where they could be purchased at around \$1.25 a head and were worth around \$3 a head when they arrived in Laramie. Mr. Evans, a partner of Sargent & Homer in these years has left a very informative and interesting trail diary covering the period from May to October 1883 when some 10,000 sheep were trailed from La Grande, Oregon to Laramie, Wyoming, a distance of around 900 miles. (see Original Diary in Hebard Room of Wyoming University Library and articles in Mississippi Valley Historical Review for March 1942 and Wyoming Annals January 1951). The hard winter of 1889 wiped out the sheep flocks of Sargent & Homer and then Mr. Sargent and later Mr. Evans disposed of their interests. Mr. Homer organized the Red Buttes Land and Livestock Company, and started in the cattle business which he maintained during his life time. The Big House, a log mansion of some 21 rooms (sometimes called The Homer Castle) was built in 1892 along with the log barns. The Big House was burned to the ground in November 1933 and the loss was great not only to the owner but also to the Laramie Plains for there was no other ranch house like it.)

The hospitality of the Homers at their "Big House" was renowned throughout the country and their annual parties between Thanksgiving and New Years were long remembered by the fortunate Laramie residents who attended them. Bob Burns' father, Otto Burns, came to the Flag Ranch as general manager in 1892 and remained there during Mr. Homer's ownership of the ranch, a period of some forty years. The yellow buggy and monogrammed harness (RHH) of the Homers was one of the sights when, during pre-Henry Ford days, the Homers drove to town with

crossing. They also raised sheep and horses. In fact, Tom Alsop handled the sheep and horse business and also raised high grade Short-horn cattle. One of Tom Alsop's herders reported a live mountain lion imprisoned in the "Lion's Den" near Chimney Rock, well known today, and when the lion could not be brought out alive, it was shot and the skin was tanned and displayed on the wall of Alsop's home. It measured 8 feet 7 inches in length (Laramie Daily Sentinel, October 21, 1870). Tom Alsop raised fine livestock and his horses were in great demand in eastern cities for use as street car horses as well as for riding purposes. He raised the best kind of Shorthorn cattle and had a steer which measured 7 feet 3 inches in height at the shoulder and weighed 2360 pounds. The steer never got fat for he could not reach the ground directly to graze but had to get in a lower elevation such as a ditch in order to graze the sides and top of the ditch bank. Tom Alsop sold his Big Laramie livestock and holdings including his brand TA in 1860. His Shorthorn cattle, horses and the TA brand went to Dr. Harris of Laramie who had a ranch in Johnson County south of Buffalo. Later this brand and ranch became famous as the site of the famous Johnson County Invasion, when it was the site where the cattlemen (Invaders) were besieged by the settlers, Charley Hutton and Metcalfe and later Hutton and Haley ran a meat market in Laramie. In the early days, Mr. Hutton as well as other ranchmen sold hay. Mr. van Buskirk reports that Mr. Hutton sold hay in Fort Collins for \$20 a ton, a very good price.)

In the early days, the Creighton, Hutton and Alsop ranch was one of the social centers, and the Laramie people often went out there to visit and ride and watch the roundup and branding operations. Charley Hutton had a splendid philosophy of life with a merry laugh to back up his twinkling blue eyes. His philosophy is well illustrated in his statement as he left the bank after paying interest and renewing a note--"Thank God, that is paid." The buildings on the present ranch are very old and the long building used as a bunkhouse dates back to the 60's. The stage station was across the river on the west bank,

No cuts are available of the Hutton or Hart Ranch but the following prints are:

1. The long bunkhouse once used as a stage coach station.
2. Chas. H. Hutton, 1866.
3. The blacksmith shop.

(see article in "The Westerner," July 1945)

Farrin-Abbott Mail Boxes	1.9	32.5
Pahlow Lane. Pahlow ranch to right of lane about 1/2 mile west.	3.4	35.9
Site of Old Stage Station on left.		
Oda Mason Ranch. Formerly Al le Roy and Caldwell and Gardenier Ranches. Junction of Highway 207 and le Roy Lane	5.8	41.7
John A. Fischer Ranch to right.		

The Mason (leRoy) Ranch is about 4 miles down this lane across the leRoy bridge (Big Laramie River) and to the right. Al leRoy had a section of land at this site which was sold to the Riverside Land & Livestock Co. (Balch & Bacon) in 1897.

Stage Station on left.

Caldwell and Gardenier were Laramie business men, the first an attorney and the latter a dentist. They had two ranches on the Big Laramie which were sold to the Riverside Land & Livestock Co. in 1900,

Harmony Lane on right - to Nate Johnson Ranch 2.3 44,

STOP - Entrance gate. Hill overlooking meadows of Riverside Ranch of Balch & Bacon. 1.4 45.4

Original Bunk House 2.6 48,

This ranch was also known as the Lakeside Ranch for awhile and in recent years has been known as the Tarkio ranch although that name was changed back to Riverside upon its recent sale to Frank Bosler. Balch and Bacon were Bostonians and Mr. Balch was a banker while Dan Bacon was the ranchman. They brought over many fine horses from England and raised many sheep and some cattle. They had several ranches extending from the home ranch to the Northup place west of Lookout. They kept a fine set of books which contained cash book, ledger and 6-month inventories. For awhile the ranch was owned by Jeremiah Williams & Co., one of the old wool firms of Boston and in recent years the place was owned by Mr. Schmidt of Tarkio, Mo., who maintained a fine herd of Angus cattle here, recently dispersed when the ranch was sold to Frank Bosler.

No cuts available but prints and negatives are:

1. Aerial view of Riverside Ranch
(see article in "The Westerner," September 1947)

(see article in Laramie Republican, January 24, 1951.)

The ranches going up the river from Riverside are Louie Claha-Leach (Con Hammond) Holland (Hans Olson).

Entrance gate 3.7 51.7

Dryer (Charlie Sodergreen)

Sodergreen Lake. Named for Oscar Sodergreen. Source of Laramie's secondary water supply and a few good fish if you can catch them.

- 2.0 53.7

Entrance Gate to Sodergreen Ranch 1.4 55.1

STOP - Sodergreen Ranch .5 55.6

Oscar and Charley Sodergreen came to the Laramie Plains in the 70's and built up a fine ranch on the Big Laramie River. Charley Sodergreen had a ranch just below Oscar's on the Big Laramie River. They were great sportsmen and in the pre-Henry Ford days used to outfit a wagon and take their friends over to the Platte River and elsewhere to entice the finny tribe. In 1874, Oscar took Kennedy and some other friends on a wagon trip to North Park to hunt elk and their wagon was the first one in the park. Their later trip after the finny tribe was very successful and some real big ones were landed. Oscar remembered one weighing six pounds and they had more fish than they could use and gave some to the cook house at a nearby tie camp. (See article in Laramie Republican, February 7, 1951.)

WAES Negative #2713 shows Sodergreen house in 1899.

Entrance Sodergreen Gale	0.5	56.1
Bridge at left, entrance to Johnson ranch	0.4	56.5
<p>The Johnson ranch, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to south, was started by Alex Johnson and his brother Jacob Elge in the 80's. Wesley Johnson, a son of Jacob, is now on the place and Nate and Carl, other brothers, have land in this area.</p>		
Dip Vat on right		
Jake Lund Ranch, now Mountain Meadow Ranch.	2.8	59.3
<p>Jake Lund Ranch is one of the early small ranches and one of the first apple orchards in the county. It was homesteaded in 1880 and sold in 1916. (See article in Laramie Republican, February 7, 1951.)</p>		
<p>WAES Negative #2712 shows Lund Ranch house in 1899.</p>		
Notice Buck fence.		
(Erickson Ranch, formerly Gus Burg Ranch.	.9	60.2
<p>Gus Berg had this ranch and also a small sawmill at Woods Landing. Lee Kerfoot and Gus Burg trailed 1000 sheep to Wyoming from Missouri about 1877. Kerfoot kept 600 and Burg 400 head. Lee Kerfoot had a place on Spring Creek below the present Wm. Rice ranch in the Sand Creek area. (See article in Laramie Republican, February 7, 1951.)</p>		
Junction with Fox Creek Road. Turn right on Fox Creek Road. On right is the School House for District 26 which was used in scenes of the motion picture "Man From Painted Post" starring Douglas Fairbanks.	0.2	60.4
Fence Creek picnic ground	1.6	62.0
John Larson Goat Ranch on left side of road.	Est. 2.0	64.0
Junction with Dry Park-Foxpark Road.	3.1	67.1
Junction with Albany-Keystone Road	1.1	68.2
Buckeye School on left of road. Bill Hecht ranch on right of road.	2.6	70.8
Notice Hay Cribs on left.		
Allan Geddes or Deerwood Ranch, formerly Tom Bird Ranch, about 2 miles to the left just showing among trees along Middle Fork.	0.7	71.5
<p>Tom Bird was a native of Canada and came to Colorado when 16 years old and mined there for 4 years. In 1869 he came to Laramie and worked on ranches. He was foreman for Judson & Sutphin and in 1879 went to Centennial. He bought a section of land in 1883 and built up a ranch of around 4700 acres. His brother George Bird was shot by "gunman" McDowell while unloading logs about 1888. Land jumping caused the trouble. (See Laramie Republican, February 21, 1951.)</p>		
Entrance gate	0.3	71.8
(Buckeye Ranch of John Connors, formerly Dole Brothers		

This ranch was settled originally by Charley Bussard who operated an extensive tie business. Then Edward Iverson owned the place and then

Charley Hecht who sold it to Dole Brothers. These brothers came here from Ohio, the Buckeye state, and hence the name of the ranch. They did a large amount of ditch work and developed irrigation for meadows with many desert entries.)

STOP-

Buckeye Ranch House

0,3 72,1

Entrance out -

0.2 72,3

There is a delightful story about the book count of cattle, which was generally accepted in the early days. The Dole Brothers did not want to accept such a count and demanded a tally of the cattle so Charley Hecht drove the cattle by them. The cattle went out of sight around a hill and the story goes that a good count was obtained and the Dole Brothers wanted to know how many yellow steers he had for they had seen the same (?) yellow steer go by several times!! (See article in Laramie Republican, February 21, 1951,

Entrance to John Olson Ranch Mailbox. Originally the George Mandel ranch, Mail box on left. This home of fine cattle and a favorite fishing haunt of many is over the hill. 1.4 73,7

Buck fence square nail and peg construction.

Ed Hall Ranch at left among trees, Ed Hall is a pioneer rancher and interested in ranch history. 1.1 74,8

(Entrance gate to Sanders 91 Ranch. Originally the Brown Bros. Then Gresley-Robbins-Logan and until recently the Bill Irvine ranch. - 1.2 76,

The Gresley-Robbins-Logan ranch was purchased from the Brown Brothers in the early 90's. George and Josh Brown were the first ranchers in the Centennial valley and were there in 1872 when W. H. Lovett came to the country. Gresley, Robbins, and Logan were among the many Englishmen who helped to establish the livestock industry in the west. They were among the first to set up the dude business. Bob Burns knew John Robbins personally and in 1937 along with his father, Otto Burns, accompanied John Robbins on a trip over the Laramie Plains to his old haunts which he had not seen since he went to New Mexico in the early 90's. He was very much interested in the set of elk horns which hung on the end of the Bengough cabin near Morgan as he had helped "Ben" hunt this trophy. He was also very much interested in the ivy growing on the end of the cabin, for he had brought over the original plant from England in 1886. Mr. Robbins was one of the partners primarily responsible for bringing over Clement Bengough, that interesting recluse ranchman (the first dude) who spent many years alone with his cattle and dogs and books in his low-ceilinged log cabin near Morgan, and who is buried on the hillside east of Morgan) under a favorite quotation of his from Stevenson---"This is the verse you grave for me; Here he lies where he longed to be; Home is the sailor, home from the sea; And the hunter home from the hill. R.L.S."----

A bookful of incidents have been recorded concerning Clement Bangough, who rightfully may be regarded as the forerunner of the army of dudes, who delight in living the spirit of the west. He paid \$500 a year for the privilege of working hard at the daily tasks of the ranch

including fence making, riding for cattle and horses, putting up and feeding hay, bringing down timber from the hills and all of this was mixed in with a lot of riding and hunting, and I'm told occasionally a dance or party with the other English folks who enjoyed a good time, a good horse race, and a good poker or pool game.

Gresley, Logan and Robbins had a few head of cattle and horses and Mr. Gresley spent considerable effort developing the irrigation ditches for the meadows. Mr. Robbins, according to his own words to the writer, was more interested in a good time and spent his time riding and hunting and visiting and some good horses for he never opened a gate for his horses could clear any fences in the country. He had some favorite hounds and when here in 1937 he pointed out the window in the house through which his hounds gained entrance to his room where they slept with him. Mr. Gresley did not like this arrangement and quarreled with Robbins and told the latter he would find a new partner. Robbins paid little attention and left for a week's trip and when he returned Gresley had Mr. Logan as a buyer of Robbins' interest. Robbins told the writer of his ride of 70 miles to Laramie and return, without stopping, to advise of Mr. Gordon's accidental death on the Whitehouse hunting party.

Clement Bengough was well educated and at his death left an estate of some \$34,000 which reverted to his sister in England. He was truly one of England's remittance men of the early range days of the west. Mr. Robbins in 1890 went on a buffalo hunt in the Red Desert which was one of the last hunts in that area (Laramie Daily Boomerang, November 5, 1890).

Cuts available on Gresley-Robbins-Logan Ranch and Clement Bengough, the first Dude:

- A-355 Brown Bros., Gresley-Robbins-Logan Ranch House
- A-356 Clement Bengough; His shanty and the English Castle
(see article in "The Westerner," November 1945)
(see article in Laramie Republican, April 11 and 25, 1951)

(May Brothers Ranch on Little Laramie River to the left. 1.3 77.3

Jim May Hill

James May was one of the first ranchmen in this area, settling on this ranch in 1879. He trailed cattle for Charley Hutton from Iowa to Laramie in 1874 and was three months on the trail. He raised around 300 head of cattle and some very good Percheron horses. His sons are carrying on the business today and Claude May has collected a considerable amount of information concerning the early day ranches and has helped out the writer in his study of Laramie Plains ranches. (See article in Laramie Republican, May 23, 1951)

Junction Albany and Centennial Roads	0.9	73.2
Centennial	6.5	84.7
Recreation Camp	0.6	35.3
Libby Camp ground	1.5	86.3
Junction Albany-Centennial Road (retrace)	8.6	95.4
Lunch at Lower Libby or Recreation Camp - 12:30 P.M.		

(Hein's Ranch in trees to left.

1.3

96.7

This ranch was owned by Millard Fillmore and later by John Wright who settled on the Little Laramie in 1903, just 12 miles from the Old Overland Trail which his father crossed with an ox team on his way to California in 1861. John Wright's daughter, Agnes Wright Spring, has written several publications dealing with the early day cattle industry and other historical subjects.) (See article in Laramie Republican, May 23, 1951.)

Jacks Place. Filling station on highway 0.5 97.2
Turn to left through cattle guard beyond bridge. 0.2 97.4

Wallis Summer Place. Originally the James Daugherty place and later purchased by the Wallis Brothers. To left of road. 0.2 97.6

Gus Olson Ranch. Originally the Deerlove place. 1.6 99.2

Mrs. Deerlove claimed kin to English royalty. They raised some fine horses and drove a striking gray team. The original filing on the place was made by Fletcher Campbell who sold it to John Deerlove and moved to North Park in 1882. They had one of the finest gardens on the river. They sold to Weir in 1908 and title then passed in turn to Spieckerman, Clark and Gus Olson.

John Reid Ranch at left in trees. 0.2 99.4

John Reid came over from Scotland and located in Wyoming in 1875, where he worked in the Laramie Rolling Mills for several years. He started ranching in 1884. He sold his cattle to Bob Homer in 1909 and his ranch was sold to E. J. Bell. Later C. P. Arnold had the place and today it is a part of the Forbes holdings.

Cut available on John Reid Ranch.
A-641 John Reid

Negatives available on John Reid Ranch.

1. Milking Shorthorn cattle.
2. Reid Ranch. Drawing by Houghton.
(see article in "The Westerner," December 1945)

Frank Croonberg Sign, Turn left across railroad. 0.9 100.3

Frank Croonberg Ranch. Turn right at sign. 0.3 100.6

Croonberg ranch straight ahead on river. This is the Towle ranch of early days. Wm. Towle came from Iowa in 1874 and filed on a quarter section. Bob Homer with the help of Steve Frazer selected a team of Towle's good grey horses to use on the yellow buggy. Wm. Towle died in 1893 and Mrs. Towle ran the place for many years finally selling it in 1911 to Clifford Sawyer who in turn sold it to Frank Croonberg in 1917.

John McGill Ranch on left. Barn roof shows plainly. 1.3 101.9

This place was originally owned by John McCreary, a brother-in-law of Ed Creighton of Omaha. McCreary had a farm in Iowa and his plan was to raise feeder cattle on the Little Laramie ranch and send them

back to Iowa for fattening. He bought the Maxwell, Clugston and McDonald ranches between the Towle and Farrell ranches. Mike Coughlin went out as manager for McCreary in 1889 and bought the ranch in 1896 and sold out in 1907. Now owned by John McGill.

Junction McGill - Wallis Lane 101.9

Keep straight ahead into Wallis lane after crossing cattle guard,

Turn right into Forbes Ranch (formerly Wallis Brothers Ranch)

Wallis Lane 1.3 103.2

This is one of the oldest ranches on the Little Laramie and was first owned by Edward Farrell, who built the original 12 x 16 foot house in 1868. Previous to that time he had a dairy on land which is now a part of the Maynard Ranch. The Farrell ranch was tied up in litigation and was foreclosed by the bank and eventually passed to the ownership of the Wallis Livestock Co. in 1895, consisting of Noah Wallis and his two sons, Bert and Oliver. It has remained in that ownership until recently when it was sold to George Forbes. It has always been considered one of the leading ranches on the river and the cattle have won many prizes at Denver, and have commanded high prices on the market.

STOP - House 0.5 103.7

Cut available on Wallis Brothers Ranch.

H-305 The Wallis Brothers, Ollie and Bert,

Negative available on Wallis Brothers Ranch.

1. Feeder calves which were in demand by satisfied customers.
(see article in "The Westerner," May, 1948)

Continue along Wallis Lane

Millbrook School on left. 0.4 104.1

Sanderson Ranch. Formerly the Motley Place. On left side of lane. 0.1 104.2

The barn at the south side of the ranch was built by Motley to house his elk teams. John Motley came from Boston and had plenty of money. He was a nephew of the historian of that name. Motley used to make up a hunting party with a pack train and some milk cows and go up into the Freezeout Mountains. There they would pick up elk calves a few hours old, put them with the milk cows to suckle, and bring them back to the ranch where they were raised and trained to drive under harness. Oscar Sodergreen told the writer of a mishap Motley had with his elk team. He was on his way to the Balch and Bacon (Riverside). His elk team jumped the newly constructed Pioneer Ditch and the buggy landed in the middle of the ditch and stayed there, with Motley thrown out and the elk team streaking across the country with the doubletress. Motley was quite a sport and ran a footrace with Frank Sargent for a side bet of \$200. Sargent was too fast-afoot for him. (See photo Motley Elk Team in Albany Co. Historical Society Museum, basement courthouse.

Markley Ranch in distance to the west - Red roofed barn,

This ranch was the John Webb place and was settled in 1874. John Webb came to Wyoming on August 15, 1873 and located on the Alsop place where Ralph May is now living (Little Laramie Ranch). He located

on Mill Creek in 1874. Ed Farrell had a bunch of sheep on Mill Creek when John Webb located there. Webb came west with a group of people from Iowa including Wm. Dunning and wife, James May, S. Titus and a brother Albert Webb. In the 80's John Webb trailed sheep for Sargent and Homer. Webb had sheep until 1882 and cattle after that. He sold out around 1890 and lived in California until his death. This ranch was owned by Davis and Thomas for many years and was fitted up to raise purebred Hereford cattle.

Wallis Lane

0.4

104.6

See left - turns into the Willan Lane.

1 Mile to Northwest ruins of William, Sartoris & Co. ranch.

The Willan ranch on the Little Laramie was one of the famous ranches built up by English capital in the 1880's. John Douglas Willan, the promoter of the Company, was born in Ireland of Scotch parentage and came to Colorado in 1875. He had cattle ranches in Colorado and later in Douglas, Wyoming. Noting the possibilities of the business, he went back to England and interested English capitalists, among which were the Sartoris brothers. The Company was organized in 1883 and raised blooded horses as well as cattle. The Willan ranch was purchased from Rand, Briggs and Steedman who purchased it from Ora Haley in 1876. Steedman wrote a book on the cattle business entitled "Bucking the Sagebrush or the Oregon Trail in the Seventies." He states that Bill Nye drew up the partnership papers and with his usual levity stated that all that was needed was some cattle to become cattle barons as we had all of the prairie at our disposal. Cattle could be bought cheaply in Oregon (\$5-16 a head according to age), and trailed to Wyoming at a cost of \$2.70 a head. Sheep in Oregon were priced at \$1-1½ a head. The Willan Company imported horses from England and built an enormous barn which held 125 tons of hay and hundreds of horses. The company had 21,000 acres of land and an investment of two million dollars. It also had holdings west of lockout and in the northern part of Albany County. The Company pioneered in irrigation development on the Laramie Plains and built the large ditch around Corner Mountain in an attempt to irrigate the country on the Willan farm (now called the Blackburn Flats). The ditch would not hold water and another one was built lower down which is still in use. The Sartoris brothers were interested in mining and financed the Rambler Mine at Keystone. Otto Burns helped in hauling the mining equipment from Old Wyoming Station to Keystone. The Willan Company went bankrupt in 1892 and the owners left the country. Mr. E. J. Bell came in control of the property and split it up into parcels and tore down many of the Willan buildings to construct buildings on the smaller parcels. Today only two small buildings stand and the ice house and blacksmith shop can be recognized by comparison with the lithograph picture of the Willan ranch, published in the Special 1889 Edition of the Laramie Daily Boomerang, a copy of which is in the Albany County Historical Museum. The old Windsor stable in Laramie on the corner of Third and Custer Streets was built by the Willan Company for their city stable and they maintained a "taxi" service to the ranch for their numerous guests and parties. Bob Burns' father, Otto Burns, worked for the Willan ranch when he first came to Albany County and Steve Frzer had charge of one of the large barns. Pete Smart was range foreman for the ranch. All of the boys enjoyed working there immensely for there was always something going on "in a big way."

Mary Bellamy tells of the fine parties at the ranch when she and other girls from Laramie used to go out to the dances and had a most enjoyable time. The Willan house (torn down by E. J. Bell) was built around a central court and was located north from the ruins of the barns near the row of trees which is visible about a mile to the north.

Cuts of Willan Ranch available:

- A-193 Windsor stable in Laramie
- A-194 Douglas Willan Sartoris Ranch. Copy of Laramie Boom-crang print.
- A-195 Jack Douglas Willan
(see article in "The Westerner," October 1945)

Willan Lane	0.2	104.8
River Bridge. Bill Dallas	0.2	105.0
Old Haley holdings on the left. Dalles ranch near road and Gurley ranch in distance. The Dallas ranch includes some of the Willan land. Joseph Dalles drove stage from Laramie to Centennial in the early 90's. The Gurley ranch is a part of the Willan land sold by E. J. Bell.	0.1	105.1
Turn left from Willan Lane into Mandel Lane	1.6	106.7
Mandel Ranch on the left.	0.9	107.6

Frank Darcy lived here for many years but the place is now deserted and is part of the Gurley ranch. The old blacksmith shop is visible just south of the house. Phil Mandel was the stagemaster at the Little Laramie stage station on the Overland Trail. He was the first settler on the Laramie Plains and went through Wyoming first in 1854. He fought Indians in Utah in 1859 and made the first land entry from what is now Albany County and at that time was a part of Dakota Territory (1864). The original state station was southeast of the present Lawrence ranch (Abrams) on Brown Creek (a large branch of the Little Laramie River). Phil Mandel moved to Section 10 in 1880 and Jesse van Buskirk told Bob Burns that he cut hay on the Mandel ranch (Section 10) in 1881 which was the first time that hay had been cut there. Phil Mandel had many narrow escapes from the Indians but patrols of soldiers between Fort Sanders and Fort Hallock (north end of Elk Mountain) saved him. He started his livestock business with discarded sorefooted ozen and milk cows sold to him by the emigrants. He moved to Laramie in 1912 and died in 1917. The ranch remained in his family until recent years.

Negatives available of Mandel Ranch:

1. Wyoming's Laramie Plains as they looked in Phil Mandel's time.
2. Map of Laramie Plains showing Mandel and other ranches. (see cut 9362 under Alsop)
3. obituary and photo of Phil Mandel in Laramie Republican, October 22, 1917)

Lawrence (Abrams) Ranch on right of road.	1.1	108.7
Miller (Hecht or Swift) Ranch on left of road.		

Ludolph Abrams was in the hotel and real estate business in Laramie and took over the ranch from George Mandel on a debt. He ran the place from 1897 until 1900.

Charley Hecht lived in Cheyenne and operated the ranch on the Little Laramie which was originally settled by Phil Mandel who built the stone house. The ranch was traded by Hecht to Goose of Omaha for a hotel. John Ernest purchased the place in 1899 and the Swift Company had the ranch for several years until 1933 when the Miller Brothers purchased it.

End of Mandel Lane on top of hill overlooking Willan Farm (Blackburn Flat). Far to the left near the foothills is the Basin ranch of George Eykyn, now owned by the Miller Brothers. 0.3 109.0

Straight ahead is the Meeboer ranch, a more recent development under the irrigation scheme of Herrick and Augsburgs. To the right near the grove of trees is the WILLAN FARM which was developed by the Willan Company and later by E. J. Bell and Roland Blackburn, a coal dealer in Laramie whose name is now applied to the area.

Herrick Oil Field to the right

Herrick and Augsburgs developed the irrigation district in this area and Herrick owned the Judson ranch now owned by Palmer.

STOP - Palmer Ranch, formerly Judson-Sutphin ranch and also known as Herrick Ranch 0.5 109.5

This is one of the early day ranches and was run as a sheep ranch in the 70's by Thomas Fisher who had about 4000 sheep. Judson was a Chicago business man who was interested financially as was his relative by marriage, Black. Judson came out for a few years with his bride and built the log house. Sutphin, a resident of Laramie, was also interested in the ranch and it was known at various times as Judson & Fisher, Judson, Black & Sutphin and the Empire Land and Cattle Company. Judson, Sutphin and Company sold the ranch in 1885 to the Douglas Willan, Sartoris and Company; in 1910 the ranch passed to Augsburgs and Herrick and is now owned by Axel Palmer.

Bath School House 1.2 109.7
(watch errors in addition for trip mileage)
Bath Brothers Ranch 0.4 110.1

This ranch was formerly the Kellogg ranch settled by John Kellogg around 1874. John Kellogg's sorrel horse lost a race to John Wright's roan pony for \$50, a side, according to the Laramie Daily Sentinel of May 4, 1870.

Wessel Ranch to left. Formerly Fleming ranch. 0.3 110.4

The large barn was built by Ezra Fleming in the 70's. Oscar Sodergreen and Jesse van Buskirk both worked with Fleming on the roundup in 1873. Land entries of Fleming are dated in 1879 and 1880. The Fleming ranch was a part of the holdings of the Willan Company and Bill Whittingham was the foreman of the Fleming place for the Willan Company and Jabe Smith worked with him.

To the left of the road by the grove of trees is the Maddock ranch. Further in the distance is the Jack Fee ranch. 0.3 110.7

The Maddock ranch was developed by Chris Jones, a brother of A. C. Jones who for many years was with the First National Bank. Chris Jones came to the Little Laramie in 1860 and purchased the Taylor ranch which he ran until he left the country around 1909.

The Jack Fee ranch was a part of the holdings of the Fee family who were in the country when Oscar Sodergreen arrived in 1373. This ranch is now owned and operated by Harry Maddock.

Henry Bath Ranch (Old Stone or Vallee Bath Ranch) 0.1 110.3

Henry Bath came to Laramie in 1868 and erected the first frame building in Laramie which was a hotel. He sold the hotel after two years of operation, and purchased a ranch on the Little Laramie about 15 miles northeast of Laramie. He built the stone house which still stands and gives the ranch one of its names. It is sometimes known as the Vallee Bath place after Mrs. Fred Bath, Jr.

STOP - Alsop Ranch. Now the Ralph May Ranch, .4 111.2

This is one of the well known ranches. Tom Alsop moved over to the Little Laramie in 1882 after selling out his interests on the Big Laramie River. He is the person who noted the fact that abandoned work oxen came through the winter in good shape without feed on the Laramie Plains (see account under Hart or Hutton ranch), and after his freighting was completed, he came back and started in the livestock business with Charley Hutton backed by the capital of Ed Creighton, his boss in the freighting business. Tom Alsop was a lover of all livestock and in common with many other early day ranchmen he loved and improved horses in particular. When he moved to the Little Laramie and purchased the Chase and Metcalfe ranches, he moved the houses from Brown Creek to the present location and built there a large horse barn which still stands. He also planted cottonwood trees which have died during the years and some of which still stand. The brand T on a horse was an indication of top quality and performance in riding stock. Tom Alsop has some land on the Little Laramie as early as 1874 when he was still living on the Big Laramie. He had a sheep corral on the north bank of the Little Laramie River. At this time he was running sheep on Sand Creek near Chimney Rock as well as on the Little Laramie. He had many friends in the livestock business not only in Wyoming but also in Iowa and Wisconsin, where he often went to purchase high quality livestock for himself and his friends. One such purchase was the first livestock which Governor B. B. Brooks bought when he came to Wyoming as he had known Tom Alsop for many years. He imported draft horse stallions from England at a cost of \$2000. His saddle horses brought from \$125 up to \$700. He had a horse ranch on Dutton Creek which in recent years was owned by Ted Irvine. The large horse barn is typical of early day barns but does not have the box stalls of the barn at the Whitehouse & Palmer (Lembcke) ranch at Red Buttes. Tom Alsop was one of the originators of the range cattle business and was the first to bring in the best types and breeds of livestock to improve the quality of the livestock grazing the Laramie Plains. He was a pioneer in the livestock business who noted the natural short grass which produced fine livestock and as a boy in England and he knew and appreciated the best breeds of livestock. He brought these to Wyoming to found

the prosperous livestock industry of these Laramie Plains. He died in 1889 and his family operated the ranch until 1903. Bert King remembers vividly the year of 1888 when he went out to see a large bunch of cattle at the Alsop ranch. Some 5000 steers were being re-branded before trailing them on to Montana. He remembers clearly the fancy "trappings" of the Texas cowpunchers who brought the herd. They had fancy horses with silver mounted saddles, nickel horns, bridles, etc.

Cuts available on the Alsop Ranch.

- 9365 Alsop buggy and horse taken in Laramie
 - 9357 Mary Bringolf Alsop
 - 9358 Thomas Alsop
 - 9362 Topographical map of the Laramie Plains showing the early-day ranches
- (see article on Alsop Ranch in "The Westerner," May 1945)

Junction of Herrick Lane with Sprague Lane	.6	111.8
Darcy Ranch to right of lane. Formerly Gallagher and Beaumier Ranch. This was part of the Alsop ranch.	0.4	112.2
Sprague lane school at right. James Johnson living in adjacent house recently since his ranch house burned.	1.5	113.7
James Johnson ranch to right. Note barn with gambrel roof. Warren Rogers married Emma Bath, a daughter of Henry Bath, Sr., and started this ranch on the Little Laramie which later passed to James Johnson.	0.3	114.5
Sprague Ranch. On the left	0.4	114.9
<p>Mordecai Sprague came to Laramie in 1867 from New York State, as Superintendent for Durrant & Company, tie contractors. Soon after, he purchased a ranch on the Little Laramie and obtained a land patent in 1883. The Sprague lane was laid out and graded in 1886. Sprague raised fine Percheron horses and knew each one of the 1000 brood mares in his herd. He imported stallions from France and sold horses at \$125 each. He lived in town and built a fine residence at 183 North Fourth Street. The ranch was sold to T. Ross in 1906 and passed through receivership. Chappel Brothers purchased it in 1930 and then it passed to its present owners, the Miller Brothers.</p>		
Cross cattle guard at top of hill and turn right	1.2	115.7
Take left hand fork of road along ditch	1.0	116.7
Go through wire gate		
Pass under Power Line	0.9	118.3
Harris Ranch (White Buildings) in distance at left	1.6	119.9
Old Railroad Grade. Turn to right and over bridge over Little Laramie.	1.7	121.6

STOP - Old Wyoming Station. Known at different times as
Fillmore, Haley and Two Rivers Ranch 0.8 122.4

The Wyoming Station building was torn down and moved a few years ago and the scraps and plaster from the building can be seen at the left of the road. Some of the old barns and bunkhouse buildings can be seen at the right. The Masonry tower was the water tower over the well for the dairy which Haley built. Don Cameron started a dairy at Wyoming Station in 1871. Wyoming Station was quite a shipping center in the early days, for the ranchmen of the Little Laramie Valley. Ora Haley came to Fort Sanders in 1868 where he operated a butcher shop. Later he had a butcher shop in Laramie and the firm Haley and Fox in February 1871 slaughtered a 4-year-old steer, the first one raised from a calf on the Laramie Plains, fed only the native short grasses of the region. The carcass weighed 982 pounds and the fat was fully two inches thick over the ribs. He carried on businesses in several states and founded one of the first fortunes based on the natural grasses of the western states. Luther Fillmore, who owned this land for awhile, was the Wyoming Superintendent of the Union Pacific Railroad and came to Laramie in 1869. Oscar Sodergreen stated that Fillmore lived on his ranch at Wyoming Station in 1873 when he visited there. The ranch passed to Talmadge and Bunten, land promoters, who in turn sold it to eastern people who still own it.

Cut available on Haley Ranch.

9038 Former Haley residence, now American Legion Home.
(see article on the Haley Ranch in the "Westerner," September, 1945).

On the left is the Jack Biddick Ranch 0.3 122.7

The first ranch on the right, 1 mile south, is the Three Bar Ranch which was developed by Paul Pascoe and is now owned by Burns. Second ranch on the right, 2 miles to the south is the Carroll Ranch. The third ranch on the right, 3 miles to the south, is the Stickney or Lashlin Ranch owned in recent years by Duck Yarborough and now by James and Leonard Johnson.

Jack Biddick came to Wyoming from England in 1873. He worked for Bob Homer and Charley Hutton and took shearing contracts. His shearing tally for Bob Homer in 1878 shows good speed for hand shearing of the Merinos of those days with a tally of 25-45 head per day. He was in the sheep business on Rock Creek in the 80's and shortly afterward he came back to the Big Laramie River and settled there. He liked Shorthorn cattle and started with a high grade herd which has been maintained throughout the years and is still carried on by his daughter, Ethel Biddick. His brand is the ace of clubs on each hip.

The present Three Bar or Burns Ranch was started in 1879 by Paul Pascoe who came from England with a short stop in Nebraska where he ran the stockyards at Nebraska City. In the 80's, Frank S. King and later Bert and Joe King came to the Pascoe ranch to work with and in partnership with him before starting their own ranch business. In 1907 Pascoe sold this ranch and moved to the ranch north of the present King Brothers Ranch. The ranch was owned by James Coen for a few years and then was sold to Otto Burns.

The Carroll ranch is one of the oldest in the county. Mike Carroll came to Laramie by ox team in the 60's and was master of transportation at Fort Sanders. He moved to the Little Laramie on September 5, 1866 and prior to that time lived on the Fort Sanders ranch. He cut hay on Willow Creek in 1867. He cut hay on the ranch and hauled it to town for his teams as he was in the contracting and teaming business. The family lived in town and did not move to the ranch until 1889. The ranch has been in the family now for three generations.

Dan Stickney came from Canada and married Mrs. Bramel, a widow with considerable capital which had been loaned out on ranches. Stickney took over the ranch on the Little Laramie and built it up. He imported horses such as shire and some light horses. Previous to this time, L. L. Laughlin was on the ranch. The large barn was built up by Mr. Stickney. He also ran a meat market in town. Recent owners were Chuck Yarborough and James and Leonard Johnson.

Von Powell Ranch on right 4.2 126.9

Baron von Powell came to Laramie at the time of the First World War and purchased land under the North Ditch of the Lake Hattie system. The farming venture like many others failed, because of lack of water and he moved back to Kansas City. The barn still stands but the house was torn down a few years ago.

Fitch Ranch, by grove of trees on left across Big Laramie River. 0.5 127.4

This is one of the oldest ranches under one ownership in the county. Mr. R. E. Fitch was superintendent of schools in Laramie and obtained the ranch land in the 70's. The family lived at the ranch in the 80's and up to 1895. Ned Fitch lived at the ranch during his boyhood days and went to school in the winter months and worked on the ranch during the summer. The ranch house was torn down and moved over from Fort Sanders about 1883 where it was the Surgeons' Quarters. Sheep were purchased from an Oregon Trail herd in the early 80's and later cattle and horses were raised. Some good Percherons were raised from a stallion bought in Iowa at a cost of around \$2000. Since 1895 the ranch has been leased out most of the time and the present lessees, the Lloyd family, have been there since 1913.

Harry Maynard Ranch to right across railroad tracks 2.3 129.7

Joe J. Fisher, who was the original owner of this ranch, was boss roller at the Laramie Rolling Mills and a great fancier of race horses. He bought fine horses from England and obtained this ranch on the Big Laramie River as a place to raise these race horses. Valentine Spindler was the original settler and he sold to Tom Abbott who sold to Joe Fisher who sold to Harry Maynard. Harry Maynard located in Wyoming in May 1884 and was in the mining and ranching business in the Ferris district until 1888. He held various county offices in Albany County from 1892-1917.

Photo of Bloomfield Ranch of J. J. Fisher (Laramie Boomerang 1839) Albany County Historical Museum

Howell Station. Cross railroad tracks and pass through two gates 0.4 130.1

Junction with Highway 30	0.7	130.8
Entrance to KING BROTHER RANCH, at left hand side of highway - now Frank Bosler's Angus Ranch	0.4	131.2
STOP - King Bros. House.	0.6	131.8

The King Brothers, Frank, Bert, and Joe, started in the sheep business in the 30's. They began with the new, larger type of French-Merinos which had just gained favor at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. They purchased the best animals they could find from Kansas to California and gathered together the foundation of one of the finest Rambouillet flocks in the country. Their fame developed until sheep breeders from all over the world came to Laramie to see these famous sheep which had proved their worth at leading livestock shows and in the flocks of many sheepmen in various parts of this country and other countries. In 1914 the King Brothers, always alert to anything worthwhile and new in the sheep business, went to Australia and New Zealand, and in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, brought back the first Corriedale sheep which have become one of the leading dual-purpose breeds of sheep to produce both mutton and wool for the western sheepmen. The King Brothers ranch was sold in 1949, the sheep going to Mr. Rendle of Rawlins and the land to Frank Bosler of Laramie. Frank and Joe King have passed on, and only Bert remains of the original brothers. Art, a son, and Jerry, a grandson of Frank King, carry on the Corriedale flock started by their father and uncles, and have one of the outstanding flocks in the country at their ranch near Cheyenne.

Cuts of King Brothers Ranch available. See following articles.
 "King Brothers Rambouillets," National Wool Grower, December 1948, 37 illus.
 "King Brothers Corriedales," National Wool Grower, December 1949, 39 illus.

Vine or Cyrus Mann Ranch - 3rd double pole south of hill.	1.5	133.3
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The deserted buildings of this ranch are to the left about 1½ miles to the east. James Vine came overland to Laramie in 1867. He was employed to build the officers' quarters at Fort Sanders. He had a furniture store which was later sold to W. H. Holliday and J. W. Stryker, and he then engaged in the real estate business. He retired and passed away in Laramie in 1907. He had a ranch about 4 miles northeast of town which was known as the Cyrus Mann ranch. At one time he owned the red brick house out by the city springs which was built by Noah Wallis in the early days.

Aunt Mary Earhart's Ranch	2.2	135.5
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The rock house to the right of the highway marks the site of the Earhart ranch. Aunt Mary, as everyone in town knew her, came to Laramie about 1868. She built the house where the John Thees paint shop stood prior to the great Holliday holocaust when this little frame building facing on Third Street went up in smoke with the rest of the block. She lived in a tent in the street while this little frame house was being built. Later she moved to the little place north of town (land leased from the State) where she raised horses and chickens and milked cows as well as served meals. A great number of teen-age boys from town used to love to go out to her place for a good "hand-out" and then they would either go on to ride horses at the Jim Williams place (Old Vine ranch) or sometimes try out some of

Aunt Mary's horses. Aunt Mary used to peddle milk and the primitive methods of those days would not do today, but everyone patronized Aunt Mary and liked and thrived on the milk which she dipped out of a large can with a long-handled dipper!!!

Guy Holliday has a photo of Aunt Mary Earhart which is available for reproduction here in Laramie.

Albany County Courthouse Square. End of tour. Hope you have enjoyed yourselves.
3.6 139.1

This tour has been arranged in an effort to acquaint Laramie residents and other interested persons with the early day ranches of the Laramie Plains, the people who established them, and their efforts at improving the livestock business which utilizes one of the most important natural resources of these Laramie Plains, namely the short, nutritious grasses of this high-elevation plateau.

Only a few of the key ranches and their neighboring places which have been on our route have been included in this tour. Many other ranches with interesting histories are located in Albany County on the Laramie Plains and future tours will be held under the auspices of the Albany County Historical Society if enough public interest is shown.

The information in this account of the Laramie Plains Ranches is the best available from the files of Bob Burns. It is hoped that if any information is incomplete or incorrect that those who have documented information will get in touch with him in person or by phone. Office Phone, 4851, Branch 240; Residence Phone, 4250. Thanks again, folks, and let us hear from you.