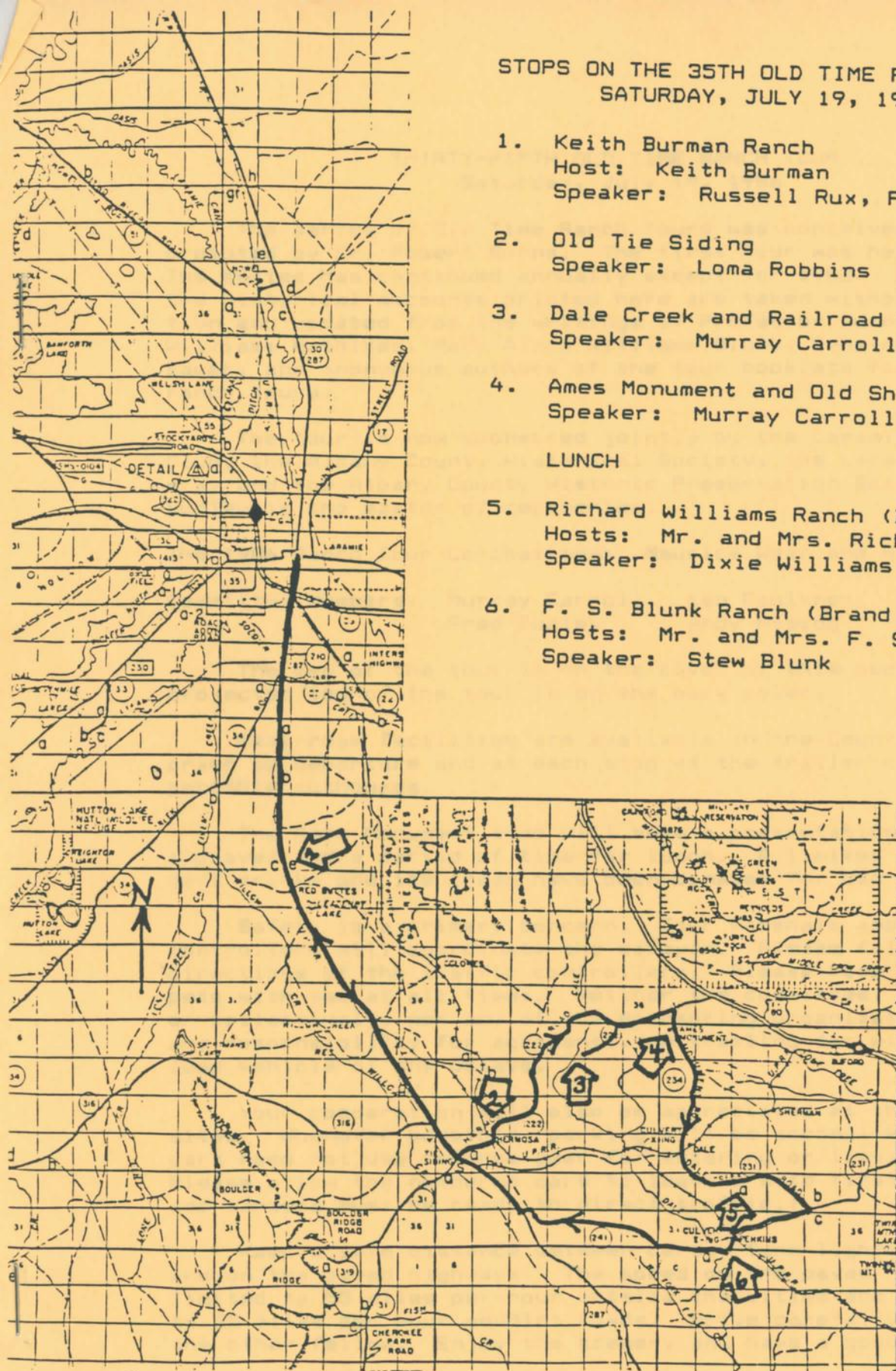


STOPS ON THE 35TH OLD TIME RANCH TOUR
SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1986

1. Keith Burman Ranch
Host: Keith Burman
Speaker: Russell Rux, Foreman
2. Old Tie Siding
Speaker: Loma Robbins
3. Dale Creek and Railroad Trestle
Speaker: Murray Carroll
4. Ames Monument and Old Sherman
Speaker: Murray Carroll

LUNCH

5. Richard Williams Ranch (Brand AX)
Hosts: Mr. and Mrs. Richard Williams
Speaker: Dixie Williams Mathisen
6. F. S. Blunk Ranch (Brand XX)
Hosts: Mr. and Mrs. F. S. Blunk
Speaker: Stew Blunk



35TH
OLD
TIME
RANCH
TOUR

Sponsors: Laramie Kiwanis Club
Albany County Historical Society
Laramie Westerners
Albany County Historic Preservation Board

THIRTY-FIFTH OLD TIME RANCH TOUR
Saturday, July 19, 1986

The series of Old Time Ranch Tours was conceived and promoted by Dr. Robert Burns. The first tour was held in 1951. The series has continued annually except for 1982. Portions of the historical accounts printed here are taken without attribution and updated from the writings of Professor Burns, Dixie Williams Mathisen, Mary Alice Williams Blunk, Penelope Hanchey Bauer, and anonymous authors of the tour booklets for previous ranch tours.

The tour is now sponsored jointly by the Laramie Kiwanis Club, the Albany County Historical Society, the Laramie Westerners, and the Albany County Historic Preservation Board. Fred Dudley is the master of ceremonies.

The 1986 Ranch Tour Co-chairmen: Maurice Wear and Henry Bauer

Committee Members: Murray Carroll Ken Faulkner Bill Riedl
Fred Dudley Andy Hysong Paul Stratton

The map of the tour is on the cover of this booklet; the projected log of the tour is on the back cover.

Rest room facilities are available in the County Courthouse prior to departure and at each stop at the trailer carrying the portable outhouses.

The Ames Monument stop will have a presentation followed by a prayer and a period of time for lunch. A limited supply of soft drinks and ice cream have been donated for use during lunch.

Safety is a primary concern. Tour marshals and traffic controllers will coordinate the caravan. Please follow the directions of the traffic controllers. Please keep children and pets with you at all times. Neither the committee, individually or collectively, nor any of the sponsoring organizations accept any responsibility for accidents. A trailing car will inform the lead vehicle of any delays.

Your cooperation will also be appreciated at the parking sites. Whenever possible, parking will be accomplished so that cars need not use reverse gear for entering or leaving a site. Please allow the numbered cars to leave a site first. (Flaggers and parkers must be ready to direct traffic.)

Keep a safe distance between cars. Turn lights on while we are on the paved highways. The speed on the paved highways is limited to 55 miles per hour outside the cities and should be 25 to 35 miles per hour on dirt roads. Drive carefully. Respect the other fellow. Enjoy the scenery and have a good trip.

Many persons have helped organize and promote this year's tour. In particular, we thank the Coca-Cola and Pepsi Bottling Companies and the Valley Gold Dairy for the refreshments at

lunch. Thanks also to the Union Pacific Railroad who provided pictures and historical accounts. We greatly appreciate the publicity given to the tour by the Laramie Daily Boomerang, the Branding Iron, the Laramie radio stations KOWB, KCGY, KLDI, KRQU, and KUWR. We also thank the Wyoming Recreation Commission as well as Steve and Roger Sheaffer of Sheaffer Signs for lending the equipment for the rest room facilities. Finally, we thank the officers of the law who escorted us in various places along the route and the members of the Laramie Kiwanis Club who assisted in traffic control.

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Stop 1. Keith Burman Ranch (formerly Otto Lembcke Ranch)

This ranch was first settled by Peter Johnson prior to 1873. Johnson sold the ranch to A. W. Whitehouse and Stokes in the late 1880's. Both were Englishmen who appreciated good horses and hunting parties and the entertainment of their friends, many of whom came from England. They named the ranch the Oxford Ranch, probably in honor of their alma mater. They undertook the raising and training of fine horses, including race horses, hunters, riding horses, and matched teams. The ranch included a half mile race track located near the site of the present Albany County Fairgrounds and boasted a pack of fifty-four hunting hounds. At one point, it carried about 3,000 horses on 16,000 acres. Coyotes, wolves, and antelope were the quarry for the frequent hunting parties.

The large horse barn, which is now on the National Register of Historic Sites, is quite unique. It was built in 1887, and the iron-grilled stalls can still be seen in their original condition on the west side of the barn. The loft can be reached from the back with a drive in from the hill into which the barn is built. The ceiling of the loft is high enough so that the loft could be used in winter for breaking teams to harness.

Axel Palmer, a colorful, early day rancher, was first an employee of the ranch and later became a part owner when Mr. Stokes sold his interest. Another early employee was Thornton "Thornt" Biggs. Biggs was one of the few Black cowboys in Wyoming. An all-around cowboy, he was particularly expert at breaking horses. The Oxford thoroughbreds were known as "hot bloods," and Thornt had the skill and firm hand necessary to gentle them without breaking their spirit. Thornt later worked for Ora Haley, and although never called the foreman, he was the key man in Haley's extensive and lucrative cattle operations.

The ranch passed through several owners before being acquired by Otto Lembcke and then Keith Burman.

Stop 2. Old Tie Siding

Tie Siding was founded in 1868 and by the 1870's the fifty citizens of the town had built two stores, a saloon, a school-house, a livery stable, a hospital, a town hall, and three hotels: the Keys Hotel, the J.W. Price Hotel, and the Shaw House. The railroad added a depot and a telegraph and station house.

The town was one of several in southeastern Wyoming established to provide railroad ties and cord wood for steam engines for the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1874, 250 men employed by J.S. McCool had produced 100,000 ties from timber in the Tie Siding region. Tie hacks (choppers) received 35-65 cents per tie, and Union Pacific paid the tie companies \$1.00 to \$1.30 for each tie. Timber was also used for lumber and fence posts. The tie contractors soon stripped the land for miles north of Sherman Station (Ames Monument) and Tie Siding.

Before the creosote plant was built in Laramie in 1902, ties were treated at Tie Siding. Ties were loaded onto a train of small cars which were then run into cylinders 6 feet high and 117 feet long. The ties were steamed, and then zinc chloride was applied by pressure. About 1000 ties were treated each day.

In its day, Tie Siding was a boom town and a lively place to visit. A copper mine established in 1900 failed to be economically profitable. As the demand for timber declined, most Tie Siding residents moved on, and in 1931 the post office was moved to its present location on U.S. 287. All that remains of the original town site are a few ruins and a cemetery. In a letter to Dr. Grace Hebard (undated), Eva Maxwell Mariethe says "the earliest marked grave is Mr. Barton's-1880. Others are Moore, 1883, Whitmire colored baby, 1884. Wooden markers are older, but unreadable." Unfortunately, the cemetery has had to battle more than the elements; vandals have damaged or destroyed many of the grave markers.

Stop 3. Dale Creek and Railroad Trestle

The original bridge crossing this canyon was completed by the Union Pacific Railroad in April, 1868. It was 125 feet high and 600 feet long, one of the highest railroad bridges in its day. It was constructed entirely of wood and almost all of the timber was transported from Chicago (probably Michigan white or Norway pine). The files of the Union Pacific Railroad report that it was completed in 30 working days. As railroad equipment became larger and heavier, it was necessary to replace the wood frame with steel construction in 1876. This light weight steel bridge was known as the "spider web" bridge, and it was replaced by heavier steel construction with iron girder spans in 1885. Records of the Union Pacific indicate that the "Spider Web" bridge was 707 feet long and 127 feet high and cost \$39,450. It is reported that fire destroyed the wood part of the bridge in 1884, and according to the Union Pacific a brisk wind was blowing that night and embers from an engine ignited the fire. A small

community named Dale City was founded at the base of the canyon in 1868. It was abandoned when the tracks were moved, and the bridge was torn down in 1902.

Minnie Williams, who founded the Williams Ranch we will visit later, always claimed the bridge was burned by Indians. She also remembered that when the bridge was standing, an old cowboy living in the area would get drunk and ride his horse over the bridge. Minnie said that she would not ride her horse over it, but she had walked across it several times. The bridge swayed and was scary. (A picture is at the end of the booklet.)

Stop 4. Ames Monument and the Old Town of Sherman

Ames monument was constructed by the Union Pacific (U.P.) railroad between 1881 and 1882 in tribute to Oakes and Oliver Ames, who were instrumental in the construction of the railroad across Wyoming. These two men were brothers and successful businessmen from Boston, Massachusetts. It was one of Abraham Lincoln's dreams to have the railroad completed from coast to coast. After construction began, it became apparent the available funds were insufficient to finish. Massachusetts Congressman Oakes Ames obtained passage of a bill permitting the railroad to issue its own bonds equal in the amount to the total sum lent by the Government to construct the railroad, about \$60 million. Oliver Ames was then president of the Union Pacific.

The monument is a pyramid, 60 feet square on the ground and 65 feet high. It stands 600 feet from the old railroad track at the site of Sherman station, the highest point on the railroad (8242 feet) where trains were stopped and checked before descending the steep grades on either side. The gray granite came from an outcropping one half mile west known as Reed's Rock (named for the first Wyoming Surveyor-General). The medallions of Oliver on the east and Oakes on the west were chiseled from Quincy granite in Massachusetts. One of the best architects of the 1800's, Henry Hobson Richardson, designed the monument, and the medallions were completed by the artist Augustus Saint-Gaudens. Captain A. L. Sutherland was the builder. The monument was completed in October 1882. The cost was \$64,773.50.

The site for the monument was chosen in 1880 when the Union Pacific directors were on a cross country trip. The train stopped at Sherman, then a thriving town. It was such a spectacular sight that they decided to build the monument there.

W. R. Williams, whose ranch we will visit next, used his freight teams to haul the stone from the quarry to the monument. He had two old oxen he was taking to the XX Ranch to fatten for beef. Mr. Sutherland bought the oxen. The pair, named Sam and Buddy, were used for three years to haul stone.

Several stories are related to the monument. One related that on December 30, 1903, Ames Monument was the background for

the wedding of Guy Holt and Annie Gearhart. Gearhart was born at Tie Siding and later moved to Laramie. Holt was born at Hecla, Wyoming, and was from Granite Canyon at the time. He was a famous bronc rider who won the title of World Champion Saddle Bronc Rider at the 1903 Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo. The couple wanted a quiet wedding where they could get away from "friends," so they chose this site. Guy Holt, riding the famous bucking horse Steamboat, was later drawn by an artist for the Wyoming license plates. Special recognition has been given Guy Holt and Steamboat by the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

A second story involved a Laramie justice of the peace, Judge William Murphy, who learned that the monument had been located by mistake on government land instead of U.P. land and filed a homestead claim for the site. His demands that the U.P. either remove the "pile of stone" or purchase his claim was rebuffed when the railroad attorneys pointed out the scandal that would result if citizens learned he was involved in a conspiracy to take advantage of his "neighbor." He traded the claim for several city lots in Laramie. In 1916, the railroad authorized \$16,000 to move the monument closer to the site of the present tracks, but it was never moved.

Another scandal involved the financing of the railroad and touched national figures including the Vice President of the United States Schuyler Colfax, and several congressmen, senators and Federal judges. As noted above, Massachusetts Congressman Oakes Ames obtained passage of a bill permitting the railroad to issue its own bonds equal in amount to the total sum lent by the government to construct the railroad. The Ames brothers and other railroad stockholders established the Credit Mobilier of America and established it as the construction company. As directors of the railroad, they authorized grossly exaggerated construction costs by the Credit Mobilier. Oakes Ames gave gifts of Credit Mobilier stock to several national figures, and stockholders profited handsomely although the Union Pacific was unable to pay its debts to the government and went into receivership. As a result of quarrels among stockholders concerning disbursement of dividends and profits, suits were brought against the directors. Congressional investigating committees cleared the most prominent among the accused, but Oakes Ames, described as "The King of Frauds", and Congressman James Brooks of New York, a former Union Pacific director, were censured. They both died two months later in 1885.

A suit by the government to recover "illegal" profits from the Union Pacific and Credit Mobilier stockholders was dismissed by the U. S. Supreme Court. In its decision the Court found that the railroad had fulfilled its purpose and had proven of benefit to the country in many ways. But the suit probably delayed the construction of the monument which was approved by Union Pacific stockholders on March 10, 1875.

LUNCH

The Laramie Daily Boomerang on May 31, 1974, in the "50 years ago" column reported:

"Perhaps the largest automobile caravan that has ever been organized at Cheyenne will journey on June 1st to a natural amphitheater in the Sherman Range, 30 miles west of Cheyenne and 19 miles east of Laramie, where the annual student play of the University of Wyoming will be staged with a cast of 300. Several thousand Cheyennites, led by Governor W. B. Ross and Mayor Archie Allison, are expected to make the trip. The region is in the Fort D. A. Russell maneuver reserve. Should the reserve ever be abandoned it is regarded as certain that the portion of it in which Veedauwo is to be presented will be made either a national, state or city park."

The Veedauwo area of the Medicine Bow National Forest lies to the northwest of Ames Monument across highway I-80. The name "Veedauwo" is an Arapahoe Indian word meaning "earth born." This name was conceived in 1924 by Mabelle Land DeKay, an English professor at the University of Wyoming. "Veedauwo" was also the name of the principal character in the pageant which was presented on the rocks and in the canyons of the area. The military location became known as "Veedauwo Glen" and later simply as "Veedauwo." In 1925 the military reservation was transferred to the National Forest by Executive Order.

Stop 5. Richard Williams Ranch (The AX Ranch)

The AX Ranch was homesteaded in 1909 by Arthur H. Williams and his wife Minnie Collins Williams. Art Williams was the son of W. R. Williams of the XX Ranch, which is last on today's tour. All the buildings were built by Art Williams, Blackie Cota, and Charlie Clark. All the lumber was cut and milled on the ranch. The ranch house was added onto by moving a building from the vacant Impson homestead. The original house is occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Gary Mathisen and their daughter, Amber. In 1979 a new house was built. The new house is occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Williams. A lovely view of the valley can be seen from the kitchen windows of the new house.

Art and Minnie Williams started out by milking 30 or 40 cows and sold the milk and cream. They were taken to Sherman and shipped by train. Eventually the Williams bought some Hereford cows, and these were crossbred with the dairy stock. They later bought the Holliday place from Hans Nielson and the Impson land. Hans Nielson filed water rights in 1875. Art Williams built a nice log cabin on the Holliday place. Fred Impson once held an Albany County office.

Art Williams was a county assessor for several years in the 1920's, first under W. A. Comly and then Earl A. McKay. In 1931

he was commissioned as deputy sheriff and stock inspector at Tie Siding by Sheriff Eugene P. Smith. Later he transferred from Tie Siding to Sherman to be nearer home. He held this office at the time of his death in 1935.

In 1946 Richard and Gussie Williams purchased the ranch from his mother Minnie Williams. Since that time the John and George Lindstrom place and the Ole Sanden place have been purchased. In order to get a start Richard and Gussie Williams also milked cows for several years. Eventually the crossbred cattle were converted to an entire herd of Black Angus cattle. Only in the recent years have they once again used cross breeding.

Much land development has been done to produce more hay land. Many water conservation projects have been completed.

Today the ranch is a family owned corporation. Richard and Gussie Williams are the major shareholders with each of their daughters, Dixie Mathisen, Julie Houchin, and Lynn Warfield, also being shareholders. The ranch is operated by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Williams and Mr. and Mrs. Gary Mathisen. All five of the grandchildren--the fourth generation of Williams on the ranch--spend as much time as possible on the ranch. Amber is the only grandchild who lives on the ranch.

This ranch is a cow and calf operation. The calves are born in February and March. They are summered mostly on forest land. In late October, the calves are gathered from the forest, weaned and shipped. The rest of the cattle are wintered on the ranch. They are fed hay and a supplement in the winter months.

Stop 6. The F. S. Blunk Ranch (The XX Ranch)

William Richard Williams, often referred to as Dick or W. R., was 26 years old when in the spring of 1867 he travelled by train from Nova Scotia to St. Joseph, Missouri, and then by wagon train as a bullwhacker to Denver. He made his way to southeastern Wyoming in search of silver at a mine called silver City near the Happy Jack but found greater opportunity in freighting and ranching.

Dick teamed with W. H. Holliday in 1867, the same year the Union Pacific reached Cheyenne, to provide lumber for construction of the transcontinental railroad. It was a profitable partnership. W. R. Williams supervised hauling wood to and from Holliday's three sawmills. One of the sawmills was located where the large horse barn at the XX now stands.

The ranch was homesteaded in 1868. However, it was 1882 before Dick received his citizenship papers and homestead patent. By 1872 W. R. Williams had accumulated enough money to return to Nova Scotia to marry Maggie Keyes at Gays River. Paying for all their fares on the Union Pacific, Dick returned to Wyoming with his 17 year old bride, a brother, and two sisters. In time,

eight of W. R.'s brothers and sisters would follow him to Wyoming along with six members of Maggie's family including her father. Most of them would settle permanently.

By 1879 W. R. owned 400 head of oxen and operated one of the two largest freighting companies in the area. In 1875, he freighted from Cheyenne to Deadwood, South Dakota. In 1878-79, he hauled wood and supplies between Forts Fetterman, McKinney, and Custer in Montana.

Dick's freighting outfit was commandeered to go to Meeker, Colorado, when the Meeker Massacre took place. It was fall. The men were snowed in for the winter and most of his oxen died. He replaced his herd and wagon in order to haul lumber and ties from the Sand Creek Pass country and Boulder Ridge to Red Buttes for the construction of the Union Pacific. After the horrible winters of 1886 and 1887 when W. R. lost most of his oxen, he sold his freighting equipment and went into ranching full time.

Maggie provided four sons and three daughters the first 18 years of her marriage. She was a pioneer wife who refined the Williams household. She lived to be 88. Dick died in 1906.

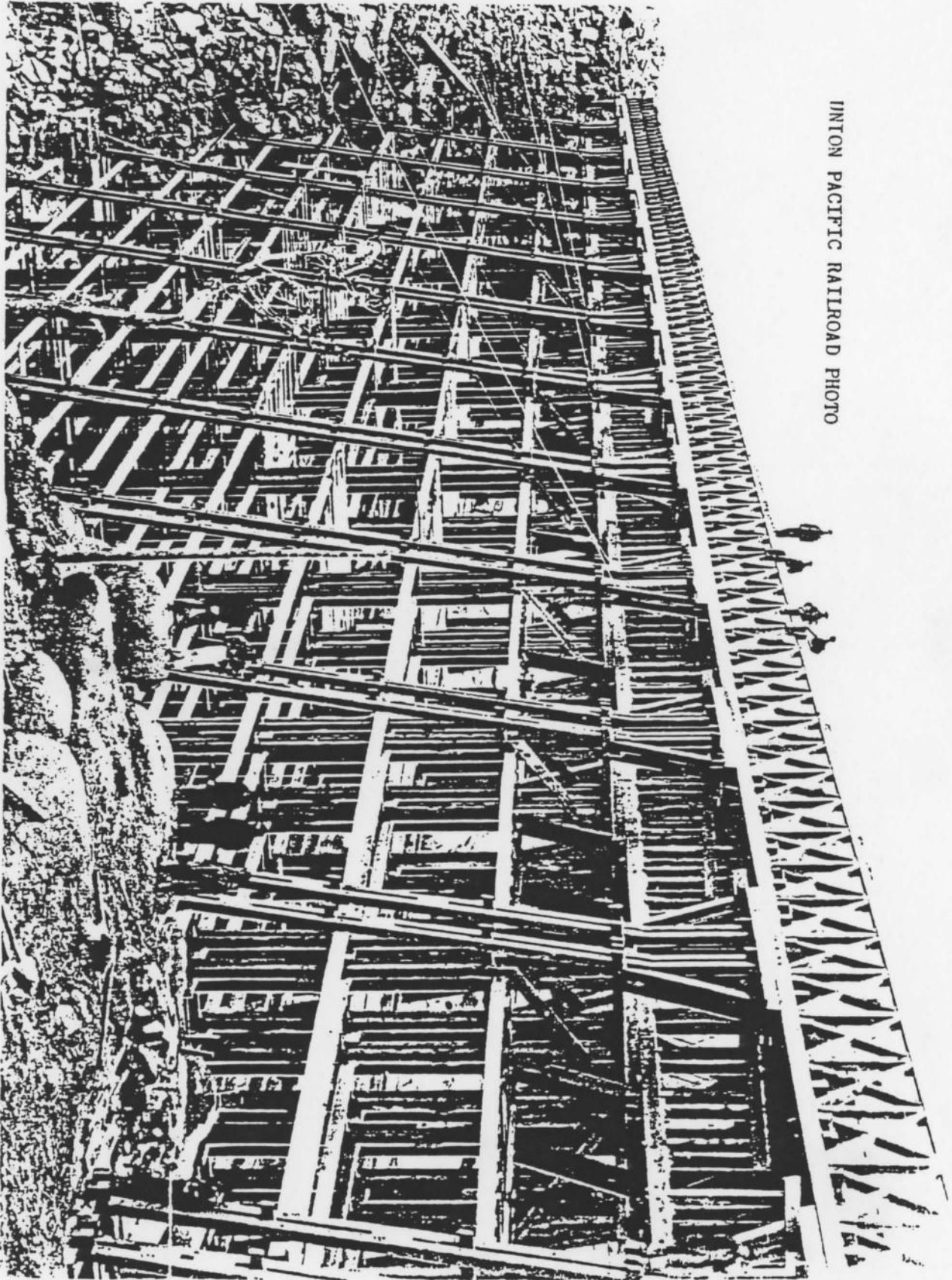
After his death the XX Ranch was operated by his widow and his sons and daughters. The sons and daughters who married at one time or another all lived on the ranch with their mates. Minnie Williams and Stella Williams did a lot of riding for strays, and it was their job to get their horses in the corrals. Many times they rode as far as Red Buttes and the Twin Mountains to find the horses. Chet Williams bought Angus bulls in Casper. He rode horseback to get them and bring them home. After leaving the XX Ranch there was not another fence until he got to Casper.

During the 1930's, 40's, and early 50's, Chet and Edith Williams and Stew and Edith Margaret (Williams) Blunk purchased the ranch from the other heirs. Edith Margaret was the only daughter of the Chet Williamses. On July 1, 1970, Mrs. Blunk passed away. In 1971 Stew Blunk married Mary Alice Williams, the daughter of Earl Williams and a first cousin of Edith Margaret. A fourth generation, Scott and Sally Jo Blunk are active in the operation of the ranch today.

The XX Ranch is the oldest ranch in Wyoming still in the same family and one of the oldest Angus ranches in the state. W. R. Williams brought the breed to the territory in the 1880's.

NOTE: The Ranch Tour will disband the caravan at this point. To return to Laramie you may follow either of two routes. If you retrace our path to Ames Monument, you will reach I-80 at the Veedauwoo area. If you leave the ranch and turn left, you may follow the road easily until you reach the old Pumpkin Vine Road where you should turn left to reach US 287. Turn right onto US 287 in the direction of Laramie.

INTON PACIFIC RAILROAD PHOTO



Ranch Tour Log

<u>PLACES, LOCATIONS AND STOPS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MILEAGES</u>	
		<u>LOCAL</u>	<u>TRIP</u>
Leave Courthouse Square	8:00	0.0	0.0
Intersection of Russell and Third Streets	8:02	0.7	0.7
Turn left into Keith Burman Ranch	8:12	7.8	8.5
Stop 1. Keith Burman Ranch	8:15-9:00	0.2	8.7
Turn left onto US 287	9:01	0.2	8.9
Turn right toward the Tie Siding store	9:10	8.8	17.7
Turn left and cross US 287 onto County Road 222	9:11	0.2	17.9
Union Pacific crossing at Hermosa--OBEY SIGNALS	9:14	1.1	19.0
Park along road near Old Tie Siding	9:15	0.2	19.2
Stop 2. Old Tie Siding	9:15-9:50		
Leave Old Tie Siding continuing on main road	9:50	0.0	19.2
Cattle guard	10:05	4.8	24.0
Dale Creek	10:06	0.2	24.2
Turn right--DANGER--high center between tracks	10:10	0.9	25.1
Stop 3. Dale Creek Trestle (Walk 500 yards--10 minutes--to trestle footings)	10:25-11:20	2.6	27.8
Return to County Road 222 and turn right	11:40	2.6	30.4
Reed's Rock on right	11:44	0.7	31.1
Sherman cemetery	11:48	0.6	31.7
Turn right at County Road 231 to Ames Monument	11:51	0.2	31.9
Stop 4. Ames Monument	11:55-1:30	0.6	32.5
A presentation will be followed by a prayer and a break for lunch. Refreshments available.			
Leave Ames Monument area	1:31	0.1	32.6
Microwave tower	1:36	1.4	34.0
Union Pacific crossing at Dale--OBEY SIGNALS	1:42	1.2	35.2
Stop 5. Richard Williams Ranch	1:50-2:35	2.2	37.4
Bear right onto County Road 241 at fork	2:43	2.2	39.6
Union Pacific Railroad underpass	2:50	2.4	42.3
Old cabins	2:51	0.3	42.6
Turn left into the Blunk Ranch	2:53	0.2	42.8
Stop 6. F. S. Blunk Ranch	3:00-3:40	0.8	43.6
The caravan will disband. Return to Laramie either by retracing our route to Ames Monument and onto I-80 or by following County Road 241 to US 287 (below).			
Turn left onto County Road 241	3:45	0.8	44.4
Turn left onto Pumpkin Vine Road	3:59	5.6	50.0
Turn right onto US 287 to return to Laramie	4:00	0.1	50.1
Red Buttes	4:12	11.2	61.3
Arrive in Laramie	4:24	9.0	70.3