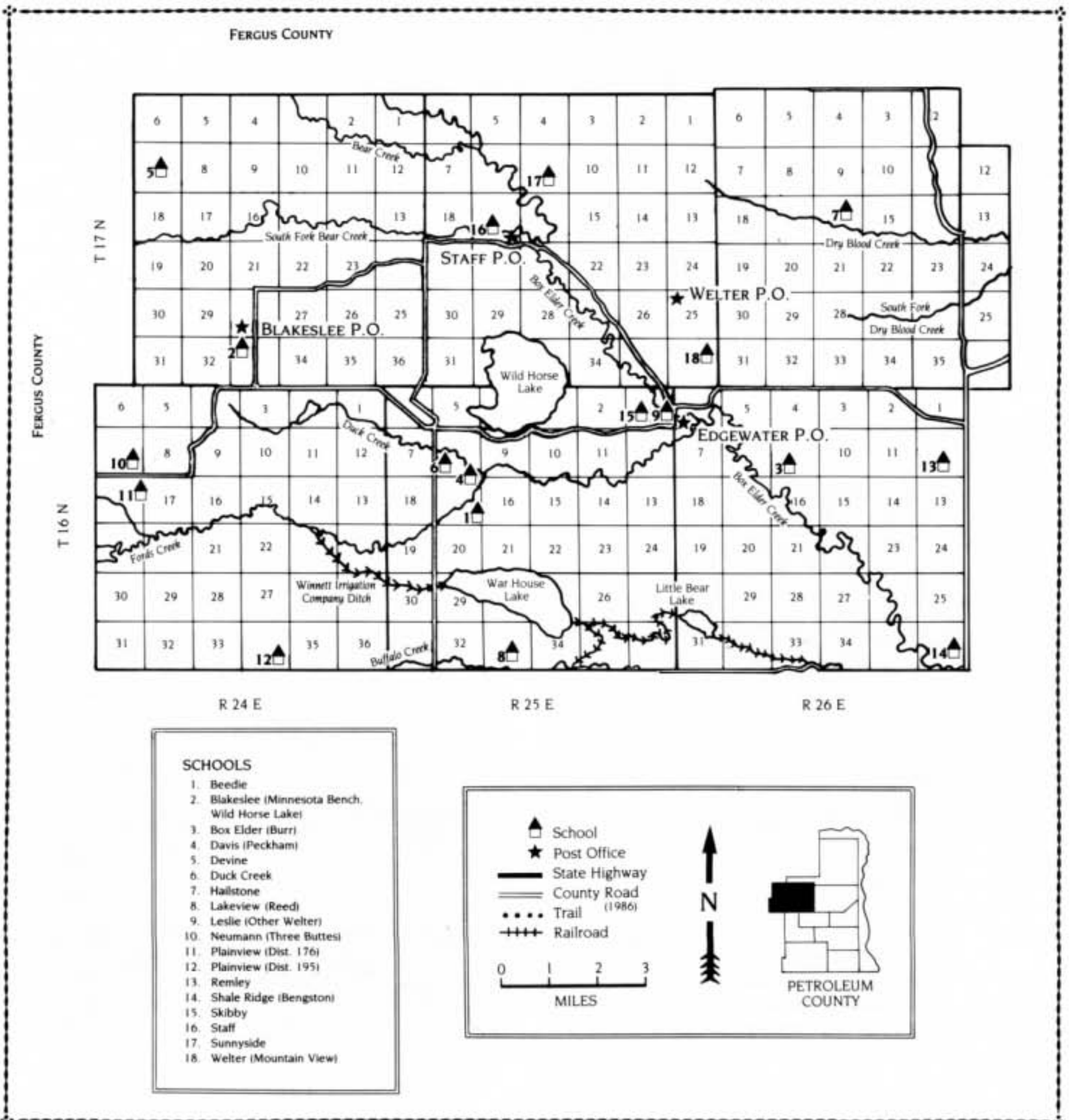


Blakeslee – Staff Welter – Edgewater





A gathering of Staff folks: From left: Katy (Welter) Learn, George Mutch, Jean Leslie, Mrs. Wardle, Charles Wardle, Mary Lias, Rachel Welter, William Lias, Gladys Thorsheim, Electa "Lettie" Kelley, Frank Marshall, Mary Kratochvil, Mark Kelley, Minnie Colver, Ella Marshall, Harry Colver, Elizabeth Mutch, Bill McEneaney, Jane McEneaney, James Kratochvil, Nicholas Welter. Children: Donna Marshall, Margaret Thorsheim, Beth Learn, Alice McEneaney, Roberta Thorsheim



*Mike and Gunilda Delaney
outside of Lutheran Church Ranch house*



Kurt Kruger and Warner Kruger in their grain field (1951)

Introduction

Six townships comprise the Blakeslee, Staff, Welter, Edgewater area. Today casual reference to the "Blakeslee area" or the "Blakeslee school bus route" may indicate the entire general area. In the days when the area was first homesteaded, however, each community was distinct with its own post office, schools and community spirit.

Twenty-five years before the large influx of

homesteaders, the entire area had been open range used primarily by the D-S (Davis-Hauser-Stuart) Ranch which had established its headquarters in 1880 on the headwaters of Fords Creek, 20 miles to the west. According to Granville Stuart in his book, *Pioneering in Montana*, the D-S ran 12,000 cattle on their range east of the Judith Mountains in 1883. This was all to change with the passage of the Enlarged Homestead Act in 1909.

Blakeslee

"So, what's this country look like?" the rapt listener inquired. "After all, Montana's a long way from Minnesota, and it'd have to be something for me to move my family that far from home."

Bill Rowland must have just shaken his head and grinned. "It's a land like no other, Dan — country a man can wrestle with, sink his teeth into — maybe win maybe lose." Dan frowned, so Bill continued. "At first glance, the land looks flat, but there are coulees, draws, hills and creeks hidden among the flats. The place has a rugged beauty all its own. I followed a rimrock that drops off into a natural basin. Another ridge covered with pines and cedar runs parallel to it farther north. There are a few good creeks, too."

"I'm a farmer, Bill. What about the soil — is it any good?"

"From what I could tell, the soil must be fertile. The grass looks good. Just sink your plow in, turn that sagebrush under, and watch the wheat grow." Now it was

Dan's turn to grin.

So the talk began around the Minnesota area, and by 1910, Bill Rowland, who had homesteaded on Bear Creek, had convinced Dan Sommerfield, Pierce and Nick Wirzfeld, Lewis Imsande, Jacob Kelzer, Herb Baker and Roy Greenfield to move their families to virgin land north and west of Winnett. The early homesteaders must have surveyed the vast sweep of land with mixed emotions.

There was not much water, no trees to speak of, and few neighbors. But, there were miles of relatively flat land, clean air, and a chance to begin a new life. They rolled up their sleeves, unloaded their wagons, and went to work.

First, a place to live was needed by the newcomers. Some used the native sod with its century's old web of roots to build their homes. Most, however, hauled lumber and tar paper from Lewistown, Montana, to build the small and unlovely shacks that soon dotted the area. These would have to do until time and a crop permitted



(Lto R) Back row: Florence Hofsvang, Myrtle Freburg, Clayton Kruger, Arthur Hofsvang, Ernest Freburg; Second row: Leo Brug, two Widifields (Widifields lived on the Jake Strait farm and ran a general store and post office in the early 1920s.), Emil Freburg; Seated: Edla Freburg, Alice Welch

improvements. The elements were the friend and foe: dry months, sub-zero weeks and an occasional rainy day, but always the wind.

By 1912 a number of families from Minnesota had joined the growing community, giving it the name, Minnesota Bench.

On May 27, 1914, a post office and grocery store was started in the Charles Blakeslee home, giving the community its present name. The post office moved from home to home, depending on who was the current postmaster. The mail route ran three times a week from Grassrange to Blakeslee and then on to Staff. At first the mail was hauled by horse and wagon. Supplies as well as an occasional passenger were on board. Some of the early day mail carriers were Henry Neumann, Floyd Harris, Ray Fleharty, Frank Learn, Jim Spencer, and George Mutch. The last postmaster was Mrs. Henry Freburg, when the post office closed in 1937. The grocery store's location also traveled from house to house with Jake Strait being the last to operate one.

The homesteaders weren't long in learning that water was a precious thing to them. There were creeks: Duck Creek, Fords Creek, Big and Little Bear, Big Box Elder Creek and Little Box Elder. Little Box Elder Creek was also known as Brick Yard Creek. Its clay banks farther west had supplied bricks for Ft. Maginnis. However, the creeks weren't always running, drinkable, or near ones' homestead. These people were dryland farmers, relying on rain for their crops and gardens. Water for stock and household use had to be hauled or saved in cisterns.

John Grindy's and William Wilke's places boasted springs which supplied the neighbors with water for ten years or so. Then the springs began to go dry. In the late 1920's, Mike Delaney, who had moved onto the Lutheran Church Ranch, allowed an oil well to be drilled on his place. He didn't strike it rich, but he did hit water, which may have been just as valuable to Mike and his neighbors.

Many hauled water from this artesian well until around 1934. At this time the government drilled a water well on what had been the Allie Thomas' place. "It was drilled to a depth of 769 feet where it hit the first Cat Creek sand and flowed 200 barrels a day. The FERA (Federal Emergency Relief Act) installed a storage tank on a ten-foot platform and a stock tank on the ground, the area being fenced by relief labor." (W. T. 5-24-35)

Life for these pioneer homesteaders was not easy. They didn't have much — didn't live or eat fancy — but the land could provide. There were always berries and rabbits to be had, though larger game eventually got to be pretty scarce. The homesteaders recall the folks seemed to take this hard life in stride. After all, everyone was in the same boat. They made the best of it, helping each other through the good and bad times alike. And they did have fun.

The Ledbetter Hall was built some three miles east of the Blakeslee schoolhouse on the rim above Wild Horse basin on the Ledbetter property. It was a great place for gatherings and dances. On one occasion, the Leslie



The Three Buttes School

brothers, from their place farther east, wore their kilts and played their bagpipes as entertainment. The hall was the scene of plays, yearly Christmas programs, political rallies, and Fourth of July celebrations. Horses were pitted against men in a tug-of-war. Also, many picnics were held on the Burnett Ranch, then operated by George Sercie.

The Blakeslee schoolhouse itself was the center of community activities. The people gathered there for community singing. It was enjoyed so much that a Sunday school was soon organized by a Methodist missionary, the Reverend Cottom, and continued many years. There were also skating parties on the various ponds and lakes with hot cocoa or some other treat provided by the hosts when their place was the scene of the party.

A big change in people's lives occurred when rural electrification came to the Blakeslee community in 1957. Elec-



"The power was disconnected in September 1987 and the doors were locked on the Blakeslee schoolhouse."

tric pumps for wells, electric lights, appliances to ease the work load and television! By 1961 the long arm of the Mid-Rivers Telephone Cooperative had extended itself into area homes. At first the families shared party lines, but by 1978 the phone lines were buried and each farm had a private line.

As the years passed, many families left the area. Newcomers came, and land changed hands. The number of students dwindled and so did the amount of activity at the school as cars became the speedier mode of transportation. Older students began attending school in Grassrange or Winnett. In 1965 the Blakeslee School was closed.

Neighbors continued to get together once a month at

the schoolhouse to play cards. For a number of years a Halloween party was held there to accommodate a new crop of youngsters. Finally the busy outside world won over the local get-togethers. The power was disconnected and the doors were locked on the Blakeslee schoolhouse, ending an era of closeness and struggle.

The ranches are larger now and more modern. Farm programs help the farmers and ranchers through times of drought and low prices. The hunting remains good. The people haven't changed much either. There is still a closeness and strength of character that is the trademark of people whose kin homesteaded on the Minnesota Bench.

Staff

In September 1915 the Staff Post Office was established at the Fergus Company Ranch. It was named after Matt Staff who was helpful in getting the post office. Olaf Eike was the first postmaster. He was followed by George Hoyem and Al Fuhs, who were also managers of the ranch. George Mutch was the first mail carrier from Grassrange to Staff from 1918 to 1922. Frank Learn was the carrier from 1922 to 1926. They hauled the mail with horses and stayed overnight in Grassrange, coming back the next day. Frank Learn got an Overland car at the last of his term; and getting mail delivered by car was something!

From 1926-1930 Bill McEneaney took the route from Staff to Winnett three times a week. Everyone put up mailboxes and at one time there were around 27 mail sacks. In August 1933 the post office was abandoned. The mail was delivered in sacks to the mailboxes along the route. Frank Marshall, Marvin Lewis, and Olaf Eike were other mail carriers.

Some of the people who had mail boxes on the Winnett-Staff route were: Akins, Hanson, Bennett, Vogel, Colver, McDonald, Long, Hubert, Brady, Annie Morss, Crowley, Bushik, Ware, Burr, Kratochvil, Leslie, Lias, Thorsheim, Learn, Mutch, Maxey, Lewis, Brooks, Opitz, McEneaney, DeSilva, Eike, and Fuhs.

Mr. Staff, for whom the post office was named, is buried near the buildings on the Fergus County Sheep Company; and Olaf and Hannah Eike have a baby buried beside Mr. Staff. There are some other babies buried here and there on private property.

There never was a church of any denomination at either Welter or Staff. Rev. Cottom of the American Sunday School Union in Lewistown got a Sunday school started in the Welter School. It met for several summers, but soon died out as people found interests farther from home. The Brady Sunday school often joined Staff and Welter for picnics and socials. A minister once came to Taylors and baptized the Mutch, Heller, and Taylor children.



*Staff — Fergus County Sheep Co.
Post Office — White log building at left*



Bobsledding teacher and Eike children to school from Fergus County Sheep Co. Ranch

These baptisms were never recorded and certificates were never received. Agnes (Mutch) Lindseth quipped "Maybe we are little urchins wandering in Limbo."

The Busy Bee Sewing Club was organized with the purpose of bringing some social life to the Staff and Welter communities. There were very few ladies that didn't



A group of Staff Community Children: Agnes Mutch, Jim McEaney, Bill Mutch, Newman Heller; Evelyn Lewis, Marvin Lewis Jr., Harold Colver, Bob Eike, Alice McEaney, Floyd Lewis; Harold McCollum, Lester Lewis, George Eike

belong to it. The ladies met once a month in their homes. They made quilts and useable garments, such as lingerie and items to use in the home. About once a year they would have a dance at the Welter School where they

raffled off the quilts and sold the garments. It was a non-profit organization, and the money was used to buy flowers for the sick or help families in need. Once they had an oyster supper at the Welter School. A lot of good social life came out of the Busy Bee Sewing Club.

For dances in the community, there were several different orchestras. Harold Gillespie from Grassrange had an orchestra and played at Welter. He played a saxophone. Bill Briggs and his daughters from Teigen played at Welter also. After that it was the Thorsheims — Bert, Margaret and Roberta. They played at Welter, Valentine, Brady, and Dovetail.

Once at a picnic on Box Elder Creek, south of Burrs, a daring lady brought her bathing suit along. After dinner the lady went behind some bushes and put on her bathing suit. There were some deep holes and the lady languished in the cool water for quite awhile. When she got out of the water to put her clothes on, they were gone!!! That caused quite a commotion among parents and children. Finally one irate parent cracked down on his own son. There were really four boys involved. The poor lady and her family had already left for home. The boys finally did retrieve the clothes — but how to get them to the lady? In time, one neighbor after another passed them on, but it was about three weeks before the clothes found their rightful home.

Welter

A post office was established on the Welter homestead August 9, 1915, with Nicholas Welter as postmaster. The Welters also kept a small stock of staple supplies for the convenience of their homestead neighbors. The Welters operated the small store and post office until Mr. Welter died in 1926. The post office closed December 15, 1926.

The Welter schoolhouse, which was built in 1918, was designed for a combination school and community hall. It was made large for that purpose. A partition was installed so that in winter the smaller portion, alone, could be heated for school purposes.

Many Christmas parties, Fourth of July celebrations, as well as Sunday school and just general get-togethers were held in that building.



Welter School: Marvin, Evelyn, Floyd, and Lester Lewis; Donna, Bill, Burney, and Laura Marshall; Helen, Mary Alice Leslie; Teacher: Genevieve Brady (1936)

Edgewater

There are many unanswered questions about the few short years the Edgewater post office existed. It was one of the very first post offices established in what was to become Petroleum County. It opened March 16, 1900. Flatwillow had a post office in 1883 (as did Grassrange), Weede in 1901 and Valentine in 1903. Winnett's post office did not open until 1910, however.

Susie E. McMahan was the first postmaster. Nothing is

known about her. Forbes Leslie settled at Edgewater on Box Elder Creek in about 1907. According to Mr. Leslie's great niece, there was a two-room log house on the property when the Leslies moved there. The building served as their home as well as the post office. The post office closed on March 29, 1908, and the building itself was heavily damaged in a flood in 1913. (See also LESLIE — Blakeslee)

Schools

More than a dozen school districts governed the many halls of learning of this area. In the Blakeslee area the first school was held in a tar paper shack which Pete Wirzfeld contributed. Alice Greenfield was the teacher. Then in 1916, Wick Junkin granted a lifetime easement on some of his land and the Blakeslee school building, which still sits on the original site, was built.

Warner Kruger wrote concerning the construction of the school. (W. T. 5-4-72) "I might add of the community pride these early settlers had. They all agreed to take teams to Lewistown, buy the lumber, haul it, and build the school. Going to Lewistown in those days, in itself, was quite an undertaking. The road into this lower country was 50 miles, via Giltedge, over the mountains. Teams were doubled to eight head to pull one wagon up the steep grade. The whole trip took about five or six days — camping out at night both ways, going and returning.

"The day the lumber arrived everyone in the community dropped what they were doing, and all assembled on the present spot to put the school together. It cost \$500.00.

"Putting the building up took just five days. The wives made a big picnic out of the affair, so stacks of food were brought for everyone, and what a gay time!"

A Mr. Rankin was the first teacher in this new location, and as many as 40 pupils attended — exceeding the number of available desks at times.

To the east, near the Neumann place, a second school was built in 1915 by Charles McBroom and Alfred "Allie" Thomas. This was in sight of the "Three Buttes," a familiar landmark of the area, and was known as the Neumann or Three Buttes School.

Indicative of the process used to decrease the size of some school districts while adding new small districts, Fergus County courthouse records reveal the following circumstance:



Blakeslee School (1957) George Dengel, Teacher; Mark Lewis, Jack Munski, Linda Munski, Linda Lewis, Twila Bassett; Vicki Bassett, Bonnie Tuss, Linda Delaney



Blakeslee School (1960) Linda Delaney, Linda Lewis, Alta Dengel, (teacher), Mark Lewis, Twila Bassett; Vicki Bassett, Bonnie Lewis, Joy Bassett, Les Lewis; Mike Delaney, Russ Lewis, Janie Delaney, Shari Delaney



Welter School: Teacher, Mary Fleharty; Roberta Thorsheim, Blanch Alexander, Margaret Thorsheim, Dorothy Burr; Harold McCollum, Billy Marshall, Evelyn Lewis, Floyd Lewis, Marvin Lewis, Donna Marshall (1931)

In 1917 a very small district comprised of only 15 sections of land was created. Children listed as pupils of the Bear Creek School of this new District #175 were Albert, Forrest, Ray, Harold and Earl Fleharty; Pearl, Grant, Rhea, Walter and Opal Heald; George, Leo and Robert Vogl; and Raymond Strait. School was held there in only 1917 and 1918. In 1921 this district was abandoned and

the land was attached to nearby Districts #130, #174 and #176.

There may have been home schools and other community schools which are not mentioned here, but the following list of districts, dates of creation, and names of schools (at the same or nearby sites) was gathered from official records and memories of former residents:

District No.	Date Created	School Names
4	9-24-1918	Remley, Bengston, Wilson, Shale Ridge
55	4-10-1919	Hailstone
130	6-2-1914	Christenson, Devine
153	11-15-1915	Box Elder, Burr, Leslie, Welter, Mountain View
155	2-29-1916	Reed, Lakeview, Davis, Peckham
174	2-10-1917	Minnesota Bench, Blakeslee, Wild Horse Lake
175	2-10-1917	Bear Creek
176	2-10-1917	Neumann, Three Buttes, Plainview
192	3-22-1918	Sunnyside, Spike, Staff (at two locations)
195	1919	Plainview



Blakeslee School about 1922: Clayton Kruger, Allen boy, Bill Hedman, Gwendolyn Allen; Waltz girl, Edla Freburg, Ella DeSilva, Jeannette Hedman, Mrs. Allen; Ernest Freburg, Emil Freburg, Chester Kruger, ? , Henry Hedman, Christine Hedman, ? , Myrtle Freburg



Welter or Mountain View schoolhouse. Built large for use as community hall, also.



Blakeslee School (1928 or 1929) Teacher: Mary Botch (later Mrs. Earl Fleharty), Emil Freburg; Earl Bassett, Evelyn Strait, Dale Bassett, Chester Kruger



Staff School

War House Lake Irrigation Projects

The Winnett Irrigation Company was incorporated on February 1, 1911. The purpose of the organization was to construct an irrigation project which would water the lands on both the north and south sides of the Buffalo Creek valley and some of the Box Elder Creek valley. Though the majority of lands to be irrigated lay outside the Blakeslee — Staff — Welter — Edgewater area, the construction of the dam and its canals was within the bounds of the district.

Mr. Abraham Hogeland, an official of the United States land office in Lewistown, Montana, was the original engineer. He was succeeded first by John P. Algie, then J. Edwin Miller, and finally Fred W. Akins completed the project.

The first president of the association was Walter J. Winnett, succeeded by Jefferson H. Akins. The treasurer was George J. Wiedeman, vice-presidents were Mr. Hobensack, retired Lewistown capitalist; John E. Ford, Ned C. Hardy, C. M. Branch and J. W. Vogel. Secretaries were Rudolph von Tobel, J. Rudolph Miller and E. H. Holmboe. Thirty-two stockholder-entrymen held ownership in the association. Many of them filed land claims under the desert act and many of the lands were held by absentee owners — largely Lewistown businessmen and women. Because of the number of married women's names found on the original deeds, one can not help but speculate that these businessmen had already used their homestead rights elsewhere and wanting to participate in this investment venture, had their wives file on the land. (See also BRUSH CREEK — Introduction)

One share of stock was issued for each acre filed; 10,500 shares in all. Fees were assessed on the shares to finance the project. There was no government aid. The cost was originally estimated at \$7.50 per acre though the total cost eventually reached \$18.00 per acre.

The proposal called for the diversion of water from Fords Creek and Buffalo Creek into War House Butte Lake. War House Lake is a natural lake bed which had drawn the attention of many through the years because of its potential for water storage. According to a letter written by Bill Vogel, "Some of the landmarks in Petroleum County were named by Walter J. Winnett. He lived with Indians for some time, and the dome-shaped butte by the lake resembled a big tepee where the Indians planned their raids on other tribes. He named the butte War House Butte, and the lake War House Lake. He also named Wild Horse Lake and Buffalo Creek. Little Bear Lake was named after Chief Little Bear, a friend of Walter Winnett."

Construction began in 1912 and in 1916 a celebration marked the completion of the project. Water was channeled from a dam on Fords Creek to War House Lake via an intake canal approximately six miles long with a bottom width of 30 feet. It was necessary to cross Fords Creek with this canal, and a modern metal flume of the largest cross section of any flume in the state was built for

the purpose. The flume was 850 feet long, carried on a wooden trestle.

Water from War House Lake was then ditched into Little Bear Lake, two miles to the east. A ditch from Little Bear Lake watered the north side of the Buffalo Creek valley, and the main south ditch from War House Lake wound its way for almost twenty miles to the south and east. The total length of the company's ditches was about 55 miles.

From 1917 to about 1924 the project flourished. Quoting from an article Mr. Vogel wrote for the Winnett Times in 1942, "Now followed the golden age of the projects. Beginning with the heavy storage in 1917 up to 1924, there was never less than 10 feet of water at the conduit opening, and often as much as 14 feet. The lake became a vast hatchery for fish, which in the spring were taken by wagon loads when they ran up the intake canals. The ranches under the project were dotted with big stacks of alfalfa and stocked with high grade milch and beef cattle and some sheep. There were hundreds of fat hogs grunting in feed lots."

Gradually, however, an accumulation of problems and circumstances led to the decline of the entire project. Ditches did not have proper upkeep, wasted water produced alkaline seeps, dwindling rainfall lowered water levels, and noxious weeds began to thrive. In 1926 the lake was drained. The outside money which had supported the project dried up as well. Tenants began to leave and the nation-wide depression took an additional toll.

In 1935 application was made to the State Water Conservation Board for approval of a proposal to repair and renovate the intake ditches and the dam. The application was approved. The Civilian Conservation Corps provided the work force under the direction of the State Soil Conservation Service. The State Water Conservation Board furnished the heavy equipment. A large supply canal 40 feet wide at the bottom and 10 feet deep, three and one-half miles long was constructed. A flume was no longer necessary. A massive reinforced concrete headgate structure with the latest improved steel radial gates was installed. The project was completed in July 1937.

Although some lands have been irrigated through the years, the anticipated irrigation potential did not materialize.



CCC Boys on War House Butte

AFFLERBACH, John F. (Sec 6-16-25) John F. Afflerbach homesteaded on the ridge north and west of the Beedie place. He was a deputy U. S. marshal. It was reported that he went to the Missouri breaks in the Crooked Creek area, and never came back. His buggy was later found in Lewistown. A Ruth Afflerbach attended the Blakeslee School. (See also AFFLERBACH — Winnett)

ALLEN, Nathan (Sec 12-17-24) Allens were early homesteaders. Two children are remembered — a daughter, Gwendolyn, and a son. Mrs. Allen was a popular teacher of the Blakeslee School in the early 1920s. (See also KRUGER, Warner)

ANDERSON (Sec 1,9,21-17-24) The Anderson family — Julia (Sec 9), Ernest (Sec 21), Andrew (Sec 1), and John (Sec 21), lived north of the Lawrence Kruger place. Their land is now owned by Krugers. The Anderson house was moved to the Henry Freburg place and made a part of the present Don and Myrtle Fleharty home.

BABA, Jim (Sec 7-17-27) The following bit of history was taken from the Winnett Times of 3-8-29:

"Mr. and Mrs. Jim Baba have arrived back in Petroleum County and will take up their residence on the Baba ranch north of here. Mr. Baba homesteaded in 1917 and left in 1922. After visiting and working in various sections of the country, he and his family have returned, convinced that Petroleum County is the one best bet of all. Old friends of Mr. Baba are glad to welcome him back."

BAKER, Hiram (Sec 25-17-25) Hiram and Mary Baker came from away down South, from which state is not known. They were middle-aged folks. They had two grown children — Enos and Ada, who both homesteaded. Enos was married. His wife's name was Larena.

The Bakers built a large house which was different from most of the homestead shacks. They must have seen the handwriting on the wall, because they left early. It is not known how many years they stayed, but Ada did teach the Welter School one or two terms. It's possible they stayed ten years.

Enos Baker was a photographer. Many of the pictures of this area were taken by him. Where the Bakers went after they left is not known, but Enos and Larena later



The Baker house that burned

corresponded from Florida with the Mutches and other neighbors.

Several different tenants farmed the Bakers' land, including Bill Welter and Bert Thorsheim. When Thorsheims moved over on Box Elder Creek, the Frank Marshall family moved into the first floor of the Baker house; Earl and Mary Fleharty and baby, Marilyn, moved into the second floor. They had only lived there a very short time when the house burned. The fire started in Fleharty's apartment in storage spaces under the eaves. It was presumed it started by spontaneous combustion. Mary was teaching the Welter School.

Bert Thorsheim later bought the Baker land. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth)



Elizabeth and George Mutch, Joe and Linnett Maxey, Mary Baker, Lorena Baker, Enos Baker, Hiram Baker, Agnes, Bill and Elma Mutch

BASSETT, Dale Dale Bassett, a son of Frank and Elda Bassett, was born in 1920. He, along with his brother Earl, boarded out during the school year. (See Earl Bassett story) Dale went to the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936 and sent home one dollar a day. In 1938 he returned from the CCC to help with the growing number of sheep. In 1942 Dale was drafted. He returned home from the Army in 1946 and went into partnership with Earl until 1948. After he sold his share of the ranch to Earl, he moved to the river north of Winifred and then on to Oregon, California, and Lewistown, Montana. He now lives in Billings, Montana.

Dale and Bessie Roy were married in 1944. They have three sons. David (1944) lives in Mount Plsbi, Illinois, and has three children; Bob (1947) lives in Sacramento, California, and has one son; Harley (1949) lives in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and has three sons.

BASSETT, Earl (Sec 27-16-24) Earl Bassett, son of Frank and Elda Bassett, was born in July 1917. There were no schools nearby, so Earl and Dale always boarded at relatives or neighbors. In 1924-1925, Earl went to