

Chester was down in the well still hanging on to the lid!

Mr. Kruger was planting corn in a nearby field, and was quickly summoned. He seized a pole and shinnied down it to where he could grab Chester, who was already blue with cold. The little boy was still clinging to the lid which kept him from sinking into about ten feet of water.

The rescue was completed and all concerned were overwhelmed with joy! Chester suffered no ill effects.

Only after all that did anyone realize that Mr. Kruger, in thinking only of his son, and being in an awkward position as he talked to the boy, had lost control of his dentures. They were at the bottom of the well and the well had to be bailed out to retrieve them.

KRUGER, Lawrence Lawrence was the son of William Kruger. He had returned with his parents to Minnesota as a young man after living in the Blakeslee area. He married Eleanor Westerlund, who made a monumental transition from the city of St. Paul to the wind-swept Montana prairie.

Undaunted by hardship, she and Lawrence held their own and raised Yvonne, Gary, Curtis and Kraig. The children all attended the Blakeslee School. Curtis met an untimely death by drowning at age 16 in 1956.

After raising their children, the Krugers retired to the town of Grassrange where they lived until death. Lawrence died in 1987, Eleanor in 1988. They and Curtis were buried in the Grassrange Cemetery.

Son Kraig and his wife, Recie, with daughters Nicole, Erin and Sarah, next lived on the Lawrence Kruger place atop the Bench.



Curtis Kruger, Gary Kruger, and Yvonne Kruger; Kraig Kruger

KRUGER, Warner Warner, like his brother, Lawrence, also returned in later life to the area where he had lived as a boy. He farmed the former William Kruger place. He was an environmentalist and believed strongly in supporting the preservation of land and wildlife. He planted many trees.

He was the father of three daughters — Jeanne, JoAnn and Karen. His only son, Kurt, a fine singer, died in mid life. Warner died in 1984. His ashes, as well as those of his son, were spread to the wind in the surrounding area.

Warner did a lot of writing in the Winnett Times through the years. The following are excerpts from an article he wrote in May of 1972 which concerned early school days and teachers in the Blakeslee area.

"When **Bert Greenfield** came to teach, everyone wanted to go to school. He being only a year or two older than some of the children, everyone had a ball.

"Mr. Greenfield dressed quite well, even wore a carat diamond ring. He would hold up his hands to look at his nails. I believe he even buffed them from time to time.

"When Mr. Greenfield was not looking, we boys would hold up our hands and take a look, probably only to see Montana prairie soil under the nails, as if to imitate Mr. Greenfield. Sometimes we would get caught, then write 'Hands' a thousand times. We didn't repeat the comedy.

"Mr. Greenfield was likeable, to some of the girls close to his age especially.

"The reader will wonder why there were so many children at almost young manhood or womanhood. These same children had missed quite a lot of school while their parents were migrating into the country, they grew, as do all children. J. P. McBroom was over six feet tall. Julius Neumann was six feet or so.

"Therefore, a school full of children, from first graders almost to men, made quite a group. The teacher had to set the little ones up front, when it should have been the tall ones, as they were the ones to be watched. I say this because the older ones were always pulling jokes on the girls. One fat boy brought a big frog to school. The frog got loose in the aisle and jumped all the way to the teacher's desk before it stopped. Of course the school was a riot, but it was easy for the teacher to find out who had brought the frog, as the same boy brought a small garter snake to school before and put it in the ink well of a big freckle-faced girl. The snake got out of the ink well and wiggled ink all over her desk. His name, Marvin Thomas, deceased. Thus we ran the gamut of going to school with Mr. Greenfield.

"There is much to write about this next teacher, a one-legged man, **Mr. Jerry Joslyn** (Records indicate he may have been Harold Joslyn.) Anyone that was to become a student under him could count themselves very lucky. As an added chore for the teacher he or she had to build the fire on chilly days — kindling, pitch knots, etc. We would bring our lunch pails in behind the stove to thaw, as it sometimes froze out in the cloak room. The Union Leader tobacco bucket made a good lunch pail, once the smell

got washed away. It had two handles; also a gallon syrup pail was used by some.

"Pretty slim lunches those days, everyone was poor, but no one seemed to mind. Mr. Joslyn had taken a homestead close to Black Butte. He drove a pair of paints this distance every morning, the weather permitting. At that time the prairies had very few fences so when Mr. Joslyn got hitched to sort of a 4-wheel rig, he'd stretch those paints down this big long flat towards school. His harness had no breeching and he used to say, 'I don't want to stop, so I have no use for the breeching.'

"When he swung his outfit into the schoolyard, generally on two wheels, he would throw the lines on the ground; the two paints having been saddle horses, had previous training to stand with reins on the ground, stopped dead still and stood on the one spot, when Mr. Joslyn would unhitch them at recess.

"He was a dedicated teacher; if a child was willing to learn, Mr. Joslyn took extra care to teach one, and some that didn't.

"This teacher was a jewel among the teaching profession. He, himself, had been schooled thoroughly, due to his handicap. He seemed to put everything into whatever subject he was teaching. A strong believer in discipline, he had a small piece of harness lying on his desk, and he didn't hesitate to use it. None of us ever felt the tug, we just knew Mr. Joslyn would use it if he had occasion.

"With a school of 36 children, all the grades, it was miraculous how he arranged his curriculum. The smaller grades were taught first thing in the morning. I might add we always sang at 9 a.m. We would sing our State song "Montana" as loud as we could. I'm sure we outdid the coyotes we usually heard at night. How sweet the sounds of the prairie, both by day and night.

"**Mrs. Nate Allen**, a small person, soft voice, the warmest brown eyes, they twinkled, very jolly and again her teaching method, always gentle. It was the time of year when we would all get in our wagons and go berry picking for chokecherries, wild currants, gooseberries, some June berries. Of course this turned into a picnic.

"During Mrs. Allen's period of teaching, people began to think of Sunday school and some religious training. We had no regular ministers. I remember a colored minister rode into the school one Sunday with a guitar across his back. He was quite tall, in fact so tall that when he rode his burro, his feet almost touched the ground on each side. How he would preach and sing! When he preached, Daddy McBroom would say, 'Amen,' all through the sermon; when the minister sang, great tears would roll down his ebony cheeks. He would take the meagre earnings for his sermon and ride on to the next community.

"During Mrs. Allen's term debates were held, as this had become one of the community's meetings of interest, current events and such. Some homesteaders were well read, a Mr. Charles Ludwig Nelson was one. He could talk hours on Europe. Mr. Nelson had worked in the coal mines for many years. His underground life made him

hairless, he never had to shave or have haircuts. He was spotlessly clean. Slept on a pole bed and read into the night lying on such.

"This was about the time everyone played Whist, great get-togetherness, to play cards.

"**Miss Laura Hottenstein**, married to the late Willis Walker, had taught a year somewhere between Miss Rowland's and Mr. Joslyn's terms. To our good fortune, another gentle teacher. Just a slip of a girl, extremely pretty, wore a great deal of perfumery. Naturally the girls were kept guessing as to the cologne she wore any morning.

"Mrs. Walker was quite thorough in her methods, so thorough we often got only half way through a subject and would therefore have to take up the subject the following day.

"**The Music.** I want to touch on the music. One homesteader, Mr. Lew Melius, was the fiddler. My father played the organ. Wirzfeld the slide. It was sweet waltzes, quadrilles, square dances. The caller, a Mr. William Shanks, was good at waltz quadrilles. John Rodekuhr, the squares. Shanks was the fashionplate of the community. He would wear a swallow-tailed coat, black string tie, ruffled shirt, black hat. He looked like a Mississippi River boat gambler. He would sing the entire waltz changes to be made during the dance. He was a tyrant in sheep's clothing with all his gallantry. He could curtsy and bow almost to the floor when he asked a lady for a dance. Truly as smooth as silk. I forgot to mention his handlebar mustache that he always stroked when he appeared before a lady.

"**Some Children.** I add a few observations here of some of the children at the time. Ruth Afflerbach always wore high laced boots for fear of rattlesnakes. Alice Welch rode a buckskin horse, quite tall, but the horse had a growth on his left front knee that Alice used to use as the stirrup to get on. She rode from the then-called Wilkie place, some five miles, and rode bareback.

"Everett Hollenbeck, dressed as a character out of Charlie Russell's books. He acted the part, and also had a pretty sister that yours truly would ride with, and then walk three miles to my own home."

KRUGER, William William Kruger did not have the taste for farming that his brother, Herman, did. Bill made his way with livestock, and as a fur trader, he circulated throughout northern Montana and much of western Canada.

Hilda and Bill had eight children: Warner, Lawrence, Melvin, Alice, Eula, Ione, Myrel, and Helen. After little more than a decade, these Krugers left the Bench to return to Minnesota.

In the early 1930s, Lawrence (and later Warner) returned to Montana, this time to stay.

Eula Kruger Barnett died in June of 1989.



Warner Kruger, Lawrence Kruger, Alice Kruger Beman, Melvin Kruger, Ione Kruger Mertes, Eula Kruger Barnett, Myrel Kruger Burwick, and Helen Kruger Buerkle

LEARN, Frantz The Learns came from the deep South or from somewhere in a southeastern state. The whole family came and homesteaded, as their children were all grown. Mr. Learn was supposed to have been quite wealthy but invested his money in oil and lost it all. Bill Learn settled at Grassrange, Jay at Lewistown, and the others in the Welter community. These were Ella, Frantz and Arthur. Ella married Frank Marshall; Arthur (Sec 23-17-25) married Katy Welter; Frantz never married.

What became of the parents is not known. All of the Learns were honest, hard-working people who were well liked by their neighbors. Ella lived out her life in Winnett.

Both she and Frantz are buried at Winnett. Katy and Arthur moved to Oregon. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth)

LEDBETTER, James (Sec 9-16-25) James Ledbetter's land was just south of Wild Horse Lake. An enjoyable spot in the community was the Ledbetter Hall.

LESLIE, Forbes (Sec 1-16-26) Helen Leslie Bryson submitted the following: "Forbes Leslie, my great uncle, came to Montana from Scotland in about 1900. He settled near Straw, Montana, and raised sheep. When he decided to look for a different ranch, he became interested in land on Box Elder Creek near Winnett. He decided on that location, as there was a fresh-water spring on the creek close to the house. Forbes felt that the spring could supply an excellent source of drinking water for people and animals. He always said he bought the ranch, not because of the land, but because of the spring.

"He settled there about 1907. At that time the place was known as Edgewater, because there was a post office there by that name. The post office closed in 1908. Forbes ranched at that location until selling the ranch to Ed Skibby in 1943. I believe Richard Delaney now owns the ranch.

"When Forbes and his wife, Helen, moved to the ranch, there was a two-room log house, which served as their home as well as the post office. In 1913 Fords Creek overflowed its banks, and the house was badly flooded. Rather than try to clean up and repair all the damage, a new house was built farther from the creek. That house still stands. George McDonald of Lewistown built the house.

"Forbes was an excellent sheep rancher and always seemed to do the right thing. He survived pretty well during the dry years of the 1930s. Sheep would graze on land that cattle did not, and most of his hay land was right on Box Elder Creek. In 1931 he sent his sheep to



Forbes Leslie Ranch



George and Elizabeth Mutch, Annie and Scottie Leslie; Bill Mutch (in back), a ranch cook, Mrs. Forbes Leslie Sr.; Mary and Helen Leslie

Lemmon, South Dakota, as apparently pasture and hay were more plentiful there. One spring, on the spur of the moment, he decided to sell all his sheep, as it turned out, it was the driest year of the period.

"He bought sheep again in the fall and was back in business. Another summer he decided to let the alfalfa crop go to seed rather than cutting it for hay. Everything went right and he had an excellent crop and prices for alfalfa seed were excellent at the time. Once again his foresight was correct. People often asked him why he raised sheep rather than cattle, and his answer was 'You always get two crops from sheep — lambs and wool.'

"It seemed, at times, that Forbes was always planning ahead and thinking of the future. In a time when most of our neighbors were using kerosene lanterns and lamps for light, he had electric lights, even in the barns. Forbes had installed an electric generating plant, so most of the time there were electric lights. When wind chargers came on the market, he installed one. Of course, then it seemed the wind never blew, but he kept the generating plant for backup.

"In 1936 he built a dam on Box Elder Creek and was able to irrigate nearly all of his hay fields. His hired men did nearly all of the work of building the dam and irrigation ditches. He was always very proud of the job they did.

"Forbes did not homestead. However, his wife homesteaded on land about two miles west of the present ranch buildings. That land then became part of the Leslie pasture land.

"Forbes and Helen did not have any children, but they were always interested in the children in the area and were strong supporters of the Welter School, which was three miles from the ranch. Forbes saw to it that the students at Welter got a bag of candy and nuts at Christmas time. Forbes was concerned about people and often gave a helping hand, but always did it very quietly as he did not want any publicity.

"Helen passed away in December of 1938 of pneumonia.

"After Forbes sold the ranch, he retired to a small acreage about three miles east of Lewistown. In 1947 he married Ella Millsap. Forbes passed away in 1951 at age 82." (See also MILLSAP — Winnett)

LESLIE, Forbes "Scotty" (Sec 11-16-25) Helen Leslie Bryson contributed her family history: "My Dad, Forbes 'Scotty' Leslie came to the Winnett area from Scotland in 1914. He worked for his uncle, Forbes Leslie, on the Leslie Ranch, and then for Olaf Eike near Staff. He later homesteaded on land just east of the Leslie Ranch. I don't think he ever raised a crop on it, as the land was so rocky that grass would hardly grow on it. He eventually sold the homestead to his uncle, and it became part of the Leslie Ranch.

"In the fall of 1922, Scotty returned to Scotland for a visit. During that visit he met my mother, Annie, and they became engaged before my Dad returned to Montana in the spring of 1923.

"Scotty again worked on various ranches until 1925, when he and my uncle Alex Leslie formed a partnership and raised sheep on a ranch on Yellow Water near Grassrange.

"Annie had been unable to get into the United States because of the quota system. Scotty did some research and found that if she were married to a United States citizen, she could enter the states. Arrangements were



Scottie and Annie Leslie

made for my mother to come to Toronto, Canada, as she had a sister living there.

"In November 1925, my dad traveled to Toronto and they were married. A few days after the wedding, they traveled by train across Canada, down through Sweetgrass and Shelby and arrived in Lewistown, where they were greeted by several of Dad's friends. It is hard to think what my mother's thoughts must have been when she arrived in this 'primitive' area.

"My folks and my aunt and uncle lived on Yellow Water until the partnership was dissolved in 1927. Scotty then worked for a short time there and near Lewistown for M. I. Burke. In 1928 my uncle Forbes asked Dad to come back to work for him. My folks moved to the ranch at that time and lived there until moving to Billings in 1943.

"In the summer of 1931 Forbes decided to send the sheep to South Dakota. Apparently he felt feed and pasture were more plentiful there. My folks moved, too, as my Dad was in charge of the South Dakota operation. I can remember the very cold weather, blizzards, and deep snow.

"My dad had to ride horseback three miles every morning to help the herders feed the sheep. He would not arrive back home until late in the afternoon. I was four years old and my sister, one. My mother said there was a time of six weeks when she was never away from the farm and did not see another woman in that time. We did not have chickens, so my folks bought eggs from the neighbor. Eggs were five cents per dozen then. My folks paid the neighbor ten cents, since he delivered them!

The sheep and our family returned to Montana in August of 1932, and I entered Welter School that fall. As I recall, the enrollment was 10. My sister entered first grade in 1936 with Mrs. Genevieve Brady as her teacher. Gen taught me in 4th and 5th grade. We rode horseback the three miles to school, except in the very cold weather.

"When I was a first grader, I stayed with the Mutch family during bad weather, as they lived just a short distance from the school. Other years my sister and I



Annie and Scottie Leslie and girls, Mary Alice and Helen

stayed with the teacher during the week, going home on weekends. When I was a seventh grader, my sister and I were the only two students left in the area. The teacherage was moved to the ranch and we attended school there for two years.

"In 1940 I started high school in Winnett and my sister attended grade school. My dad served many years on the Welter school board; and I can remember the board pondering many problems — nearly the same problems as school boards have now.

"My folks moved to Billings in 1943, and Dad worked for the Northern Pacific Railroad in the freight division. He retired in 1963 at the age of 70.

"My dad passed away in November 1979 at age 86. My mother passed away in 1983 at age 85. My sister, Mary Alice, is a widow and lives in Ohio, where she is a loan officer for a bank. I retired in 1988 after 30 years with Hall-Perry Machinery Co. I have been a widow since 1984.

"I have many fond memories of my days in the Winnett area and always enjoyed hearing my dad tell about the homestead days."

LEWIS, David and William (Sec 20-16-24) **William**

W. Lewis was born on December 22, 1916, in the Lavina area. He was the eldest of seven children. William (Bill) married Dorothy Miller, a New Yorker, in 1946. They have two daughters. Linda was born in 1947. She married Don Eckland and teaches in Harlowton, Montana. They ranch in the Shawmut area. Bonnie, born in 1951, is married to Howard Tuss. They ranch near Grassrange and have two sons, Dustin and Jarrett.

David W. Lewis was born on July 6, 1924, the fifth child. He married Arclista Skurdal in 1949. They have three children. Mark, born in 1950, married Terry Pierce. She teaches in Winnett. Mark bought the A. H. Fuhs place near the Staff area. They have a daughter, Sasha, and a son, Zackery. Leslie, born in 1952, married Carol Roe. They have a son, Wiley, and a daughter, Megan. Russell, born in 1954, married Julie Whitener. He has two sons, Brandon and Barton, and they have a daughter, Emily. Julie teaches in Grassrange. Russ leases the Graber place from his father.

In 1952, Dave and Bill bought the Delbert Buckler place in the Blakeslee area. They operated under the name of Lewis Brothers. Dave's family lived in a house that he had moved from the Lavina ranch, while Bill and his family lived in the Buckler house.

Bill and Dave did extensive dirt work on the Buckler place, building dams, leveling bottoms, and building dikes for flood irrigating.

In the spring of 1967, the Lewises bought a ranch west of the Buckler place, in Fergus County, from Bill Graber. Dave and his family moved to this ranch while Bill remained on the original ranch. Dave and Arclista were divorced and Dave married Gunda Sikveland Shaw.



Evelyn Lewis Brown, Marvin Lewis, Floyd Lewis, Lucy Lewis; Lester Lewis, Robert Lewis, Shirley Lewis Cather (1975)

LEWIS, Marvin (Sec 28-17-26) Marvin Lewis was born September 22, 1893 in Moline, Illinois. Lucy E. Kelley was born November 21, 1901, in North Bend, Washington. The two were married on November 25, 1921. Marvin came to a homestead northwest of Winnett in 1914. Marvin and Lucy had two daughters — Evelyn (Brown), who lives in Choteau, Montana; and Shirley (Cather), who lives in Moab, Utah. They had four sons — Marvin and Lester of Fairfield; Floyd of Summerland, British Columbia, Canada; and Bob of Antioch, California.

Lewis lived on the Paul Johnson place and on the Welter place, better known as the Welter Post Office. Lucy and Marvin carried the mail for four years out of Winnett to Fergus County Sheep Co.

The Lewises left there in 1938 to move to Fairfield, Montana. Lucy and Marvin were school bus drivers there for 12 years and farmed till Marvin passed away on September 14, 1975, at the age of 82. Marvin is buried at Fairfield. Lucy is still able to travel. She lives with Evelyn in Choteau, Montana. Evelyn's husband, Lester, (born in Linville, Iowa), died September 6, 1969. (Submitted by Evelyn Brown)



Lucy and Marvin Lewis



William and Mary Lias

LIAS, William (Sec 31-17-26) William Smith Lias was born November 19, 1857, in Iowa. Mary Hannah Stinton was born June 21, 1866, in Iowa. The two were married on February 11, 1885. The Lias family came to the Welter community from Idaho in May of 1914 and homesteaded 17 miles northwest of Winnett. They brought three grown children with them — Viola Vesta, born May 16, 1889 in Iowa; Eldia Jane, born December 3, 1899; and Clair R., born February 15, 1902, in Steele, North Dakota.

Mrs. Lias boarded school teachers and Mr. Lias graded roads to add to their income. The family went to Grassrange for groceries and supplies until the railroad came to Winnett. Homesteading days were hard on the Lias family due to their age. They stuck it out, however, until they celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

Viola married a Mr. Harris. She died and was buried in Buckley, Washington. Eldia married Harry McCollum of Grassrange, and Clair married Goldie Mae Potter of Valentine. Clair and Goldie had two children — Mae Louise, born 5-21-26 in Spokane, Washington; and Doris Marie, born 9-27-27 in Lewistown, Montana. When the other homesteaders left, the Lias family moved to Corvallis, Montana. Mr. Lias died November 13, 1939. Mrs. Lias died February 23, 1953. They were both buried at Corvallis. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth)

LOITE, Pete (Sec 30-17-25) Pete and his brother homesteaded north of Wild Horse Lake mesa. Pete herded sheep for the Beedies. He left in the late 1930s or early 1940s.

LONG, LeRoy LeRoy Long was born December 7, 1915, in Lewistown. He married Gladys D. Wicklund who was born November 4, 1914, in Minot, North Dakota. They have three children: Michael, born March 18, 1941; Pat, born a year later; and Robert, born July 18, 1952.

In 1950 Gladys moved to Winnett, renting a house from Mrs. Smith, while Roy stayed on at the King Ranch where they had been working since 1942. (See also KING — Teigen) Mike and Pat attended school in Winnett and Gladys worked at Eager Mercantile until spring. At that time, the Longs leased the Fuhs Ranch, moving out there in the spring of 1951.

They bought Fuhs' machinery and proceeded to raise wheat and run cattle. At first they ran cows on shares for Toby Machler and Ed Skibby. The next year they ran cattle for Toby, Ted Hill and Art Meserve. The following year Rolly Kaufman's cows were on the place, running for half the calf crop. This was quite a chore as each calf had to be earmarked as soon as it was born.

The winter of 1951-1952 was so severe that Gladys took Pat and Mike to Winnett for school where she rented a hotel room for the winter — a little crowded with two youngsters. Roy would make his way through the snowdrifts bearing milk, cream and eggs (sometimes scrambled). The family came home on weekends. They usually delivered supplies and mail to Chris and Nell Weingart, where they often stayed long enough to sample a bowl of Nell's chili!

When Rolly and Kari Kaufman came to work for Ed Skibby in 1952, the two families took turns hauling children to the Blakeslee School.

There were some good and some bad times for the Longs on this ranch. In 1961 the summer was so dry that Roy and Pat hauled water to the cattle for seven months. This wore out a truck, but saved the cattle. Then, in 1962, the rains came, flooding everything. Haystacks floated away and bridges were washed out, but a good hay crop resulted.

Pat and Mike went to the Blakeslee School, graduating from the eighth grade there. Mike graduated from Winnett High School in 1959 and Pat in 1960. Bob went to school at the Long School which was halfway between Longs and the Skibby Ranch. It was taught by Mrs. Zelenka one year and Bill Brown, the next. Children attending were the Jerry Weingart children, Munsks from the Skibby Ranch, and Bob Long. Bob went to school from the eighth grade through high school in Winnett, graduating in 1970.

After 23 years on the Fuhs Ranch, Longs bought a ranch at Toston, Montana. They sold out after four years, and now live near Lewistown above the Fish Hatchery on Spring Creek.

Mike married Peggy Hill. They have one daughter, Lisha, and live in Virginia. Pat married Linda Nagel, and they have a son, Curt, and a daughter, Michele. Pat and Linda live in Idaho. Bob lives in Lewistown, where he and his wife, the former Tracy Tuss, have two sons, Shane and

Spencer, and a daughter, Stacie. Bob is on the Lewistown police force.

LONG, S. M. S. M. Long was a 1917 trustee of the Neumann School.

LUCAS, Thomas (Sec 22-16-24) Thomas Lucas homesteaded on the hill south of Earl Bassett's creek bottom. He had 200 acres. One of his children was buried there. Frank Bassett helped bury her.

MACHLER, Dominic Dominic "Toby" Machler homesteaded on the Missouri River (See also MACHLER — Musselshell River). He later bought a ranch above Lewistown, Montana, on Beaver Creek. Toby and his two brothers, Fred and Mike, leased the Fergus County Sheep Ranch for several years and operated it as a sheep business.

In about 1939, Toby and Clifford Belcher bought the property from a Helena bank. Cliff was a Lewistown businessman who owned a grain farm near Moore, Montana, and also owned and operated the Midway Bar in Lewistown.

Toby and his wife, Rose, lived on the Fergus County Sheep Ranch for a few years until they sold to Douglas and Richard Delaney in 1946. The Delaneys bought out Belcher's interest in 1955. Today (1989) the property is owned by Dick Delaney.

MacJANNETT, John (Sec 7-17-24) See DEVINE, Wilson

MARSHALL, Frank (Sec 34-18-26) Frank Marshall homesteaded in the Valentine-Dovetail area. It was rumored that he came from Canada. Young female homesteaders were easy prey for the opposite sex, so it wasn't long until Frank found his way over to the Welter community. He married Ella Learn November 14, 1920. They had five children — Donna, Evelyn, Billie, Laura, and Burney. Little is known what Frank did for a living besides farming Ella's homestead and carrying mail from Staff to Winnett.

The Marshalls were living in the Baker house when it burned down. After this fire, they moved a house near the Welter School so the children were close to school. They lived there several years. After Frank died in 1937, Ella moved to Winnett with the family, where she worked as a cook in Winnett restaurants. The three youngest Marshall children died young. In 1959 Ella moved to Roundup, where she passed away March 15, 1963. Donna is the only one who lives today. The Marshalls are all buried in Winnett. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth)

MAXEY, Albert and Joseph (Sec 24-17-25) Albert and Nellie Maxey and Joe and Linnett Maxey came to their homesteads from Oklahoma. Albert and Nellie only stayed a short time. They probably proved up on their homestead and sold out to a neighbor, which was customary.

Joe and Linnett left the homestead twice — once they moved to Grassrange, and once to Winnett, but they



Albert and Joe Maxey

always returned to the farm. Joe was a good farmer. He took an interest in the community and always helped with entertainment at the Welter School. Joe was elected Petroleum County Commissioner in 1926. He worked as a carpenter and worked in a hardware while in Winnett. When the majority of the homesteaders left, Maxeys moved to Cody, Wyoming, where they acquired an irrigated farm. Linnett had a sister near Cody. The Maxeys both eventually died in Cody. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth)

McBROOM, Charles (Sec 9-16-24) Charles and Sarah McBroom came from the Fowler, Colorado, area in 1910-1912. The train landed them in Judith Gap, Montana. They stayed several months in Lewistown before starting for their homestead on Hoosier Bench, together with the Bill McCliman family.

Charles was a carpenter and built many homestead cabins and schoolhouses. He played the violin along with his son John on the banjo, his son Monte on the french horn and harmonica, and Allie Thomas on bass viol. The homesteaders had lots of fun in spite of bad times.

Charles and Sarah had four children: John, Gladys, Mae and Monte. John passed away in Washington in 1987. Monte passed away in Michigan. Gladys married Jake Fleharty and is living in Roundup, Montana. Mae is living in Michigan with her husband Ralph Allen.

Charles and Sarah moved from their homestead in 1924 to Washington and eventually to Arizona for Sarah's health. They spent their last years in Michigan with their daughter, Mae.

McCLIMANS, William (Sec 17-16-24) William and Abella McClimans both took out homesteads south of the old Floyd Harris house. The McClimans had two daughters, Goldie and Thelma. Earl Bassett recalls Thelma was in the same grade with him in 1925-1926. Earl boarded with the McClimans while he went to the Neumann School.

W. O. McClimans was one of the first trustees of the Neumann School. The McClimans moved to Denver, Colorado, in 1927 or 1928.

McELWAIN, James and Jacob (Sec 35-16-24) The McElwain homestead was east of the Luebke place.

Dale Bassett recalls seeing a child's grave, with a fence around it, being on the place.

James McElwain was a locator.

McENEANEY, William P. (Sec 6-17-25) William P. McEneaney was born May 18, 1882, in Springfield, Wisconsin. Jane Harper was born August 9, 1884, in County Donegal, Ireland. The two were married on June 19, 1907. The McEneaneys were both Irish. They lived in Washington before settling in the Staff community, 30 miles north of Winnett. The McEneaneys had five children — Philip, born 1909 in Wisconsin; Edith, born 1910 in Wisconsin; Margaret, born 1913 in Wisconsin; Alice, born 1921 in Montana; and James, born 1916 in Spokane, Washington.

Besides farming, Bill McEneaney in later years carried the mail between Staff and Winnett. The McEneaneys always enjoyed a party and often entertained at their home. The family went to Grassrange, Winnett, or Teigen to get groceries and supplies. Grocery lists were sometimes sent in with the mail carrier.

The parents were aggressive and wanted their children to get a good education. Jim McEneaney attended the Staff School for 7½ years. He spent one-half of his sixth grade year at the Grassrange School. When the children were old enough to go to high school, Mrs. McEneaney moved to Lewistown with Peggy (Margaret), Jim, and Alice, so the children could attend Fergus County High School. Edith had one year of school in Spokane. After Peggy and Jim finished high school, Mrs. McEneaney moved to Winnett where Alice graduated from high school.

Jim enlisted in the Navy and made that his career. Philip died in 1921 and is buried in Lewistown. Peggy and Alice married and lived in the middle West. Peggy became Peggy Thies. Alice became Alice Musgrave. Edith married Howard Strausburg from Roy, Montana. They later moved to Billings, where she died in 1970. Jim's wife, Helen (born March 12, 1919, in Washington, D. C.) died August 12, 1978.

The McEneaneys left the Staff community and moved to Flatwillow in 1938. Bill bought and continued to farm on the old Tom Berkin Ranch (owned by Hughes in 1985). Bill carried mail from Flatwillow to Winnett. When they retired, they moved to Roundup. Bill died February 14, 1956; and Jane, August 24, 1956. They both were buried in Menomonee, Wisconsin. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth) (See also McENEANEY — Flatwillow)

McFARLAND, Otis (Mac) At one time Otis owned the Buckler place. He married Beulah Dengel. They had five children: Jack, Mable, Blanche, Junior and another boy.

Otis left the farm and was a janitor at the Grassrange School for many years. He later moved to Washington and worked in a shipyard.

McLEAN, Jay (Sec 34-16-24) Jay McLean, known as "one-armed Jay," moved here in the early 1920s and lived west of the Luebke place and south of Frank Bassett. He was married to Genevieve and had a daughter, Effie, and a son, Otho.

Earl Bassett recalls how Genevieve got lost in a snowstorm one night on her way home from the Luebke's. Jay set a big straw pile on fire in hopes his wife would see it, but she didn't. It cleared up around midnight, and the neighbors were asked to help look for her. She was found and was all right.

In the early 1920s, Jay moved to Lewistown and operated a coal business. He adopted a son, Stanley Seaver, who worked in the oil fields at Cat Creek. His daughter, Effie Wilson, still owns oil rights on her parents' homestead in Petroleum County. She lives in Billings, Montana.



Mr. and Mrs. Jay McLean and children

MEAD, George (Sec 17-17-26) George and Ida Mead came from Kansas and homesteaded on Dry Blood Creek. They had four grown children — Mary Gladys, Della, Imo and Bill. After a short time on the homestead, George and Ida Mead moved to Cat Creek where he worked in the oil fields. They later moved to Roy where he ran a creamery until he retired and they moved to Lewistown.

Gladys also homesteaded near her parents. She married Bert Thorsheim. (See also THORSHEIM — Blakeslee)

Della married William Trimble. They both homesteaded closer to the Valentine community. (See also TRIMBLE — Dovetail) Bill was the youngest of the Mead family. He went to work in Cat Creek in the oil fields. (See also MEAD — Cat Creek)

Imo married Ray Bowyer. They came from Kansas and homesteaded, but did not stay long and returned to Kansas City, Missouri. They had two sons, Irwin and Bruce. (Submitted by Roberta Eike)



Gladys Mead Thorsheim, Bill Mead, George Mead, Della Mead Trimble

MELIUS, Louis (Sec 4-16-24) Lou and Annie Melius lived south of Nurse Osterberg.

He was a special violin player, and played for many dances. He also had a team of gray horses he was very fond of. They turned up missing. When they came home on their own they had "Lou Melius" branded on the full length of their bodies.

Lou died of tick fever in 1931. Mrs. Melius moved to Winnett and later to Lewistown, Montana, where she lived to be over 100 years old. Their place is now part of the Earl Bassett Ranch.

MORSS, Anne (Sec 22.23-17-26) "Annie" Morss owned land about six miles east of Welter. The following news item was taken from the Winnett Times of June 27, 1930: "The younger son of Mrs. Anne Morss arrived here Tuesday from Seattle to spend the summer with his mother."

MOULTON, Charles (Sec 9-16-25) Charles was born in Unity, Maine, on September 15, 1858. Lucy Watkins was born on December 15, 1850, at Athens, Ohio. Charles came to Montana in 1879. He and Lucy were united in marriage in 1903.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Moulton homesteaded west of Forbes Leslie on Fords Creek. Little is remembered of the Moultons, except that they raised big gardens.

Mr. and Mrs. Moulton moved to Winnett when they left the Welter area. Mr. Moulton died there on October 13, 1931. Mrs. Moulton went to West Virginia for a time to be with her son, but she returned to Winnett. After Mr. Moulton died in 1931, Mrs. Moulton used to come back and visit the Mutches. She died in Winnett in 1939. Mr. and Mrs. Moulton are buried in Winnett. (Submitted by Agnes Lindseth)

MUNSKI, George George Munski worked for Ed Skibby in the late 1950s. He and his wife, Caroline, had three children — Jack, Linda and Connie. The children were excellent young musicians and they entertained many local groups with their talents. Linda played the accordion and sang. Jack played the guitar, and Connie sang.

MUTCH, George (Sec 30-17-26) Agnes Mutch Lindseth presented her family history: "George Mutch came from Scotland in about 1906. He worked around the Judith Basin and south of Lewistown for many years until he raised enough money to go back to Scotland to get his bride, Elizabeth Robertson. They were married in Scotland on February 23, 1912. Two months later they landed in Lewistown, Montana. It was the same week the Titanic went down.

"Elizabeth stayed in Lewistown (or near there) with some friends while George went to the homestead to build a dugout. In June he took his bride to the dugout where they lived while George built the log cabin in which they lived until 1918.

"George Mutch had picked out his homestead before he left for Scotland. It was very good land as it was fertile and level and had a spring on it. The water level was

about 20 feet below the surface of the ground.

"Up until the 'dirty thirties' there were some productive years, but there were as many that were unproductive. On a good year many people raised good gardens — melons and lots of rhubarb, which sufficed for our vitamins of today. George Mutch had a hundred hills of rhubarb which he cultivated every spring with a one-horse cultivator. He gave away a lot of it to neighbors.

"George carried the mail for four years from 1918 to 1922 from Welter, Staff and Blakeslee to Grassrange. He went twice a week, staying overnight in Grassrange. Elizabeth held down the homestead, doing chores and taking care of the children. Later Frantz Learn underbid him and carried the mail for the next four years.

"George tried raising sheep, but in those days he couldn't raise enough hay to feed the sheep all winter. The endeavor was short-lived. The Mutches always milked at least five to eight cows. They also raised chickens and turkeys. They sold cream and butter and eggs in Winnett. Income from these products didn't buy very much, but groceries and dry goods were cheap then. George and Elizabeth were 'Scotch' and lived up to their Scotch reputation. There was always something in the larder.

"The Mutches built a new house in 1918. It was a two-story house with only two bedrooms; but it was a palace compared to the little log house.

"Elizabeth Mutch took an active part in all of the social life at Welter. She was superintendent of the Sunday school and president of the Busy Bee Sewing Club at one time. Elizabeth liked to cook and was a good cook. She often had her neighbors in for Sunday dinner.

"The Mutches had three children — Elma, William, and Agnes. Elma was born in Grassrange; William and Agnes, on the homestead with a midwife. They all went to the Welter (or Mountain View) School, when school was held there. One year Elma went to the Staff School, as did Margaret Welter. Another year they went to the Box Elder School as the two schools were in the same district. Some years the community could only afford to run one school.

"Elma Mutch went to high school in Winnett for three years. She completed her high school education in Lewistown where she graduated. Bill never got to go to high school as that was in the middle of the depression. Agnes went two years in Winnett, but later finished with a correspondence course from the International Correspondence School in Scranton, Pennsylvania.

"Elma married Glen Spoon from Winnett. Agnes married Albert Lindseth at Choteau, Montana. Bill married Alice Kubernick in California. Elma has five children — Agnes, four; and Bill, two. One of Agnes' children is deceased.

"The Mutches lived a well-rounded life until the wells dried up, the springs went dry, and the creeks just disappeared. George Mutch lost a barn-granary-garage combination with fire shortly before they moved away. They



George and Elizabeth Mutch



Elizabeth and George Mutch; Children: Elma (4), Bill (2), Agnes (6 weeks)