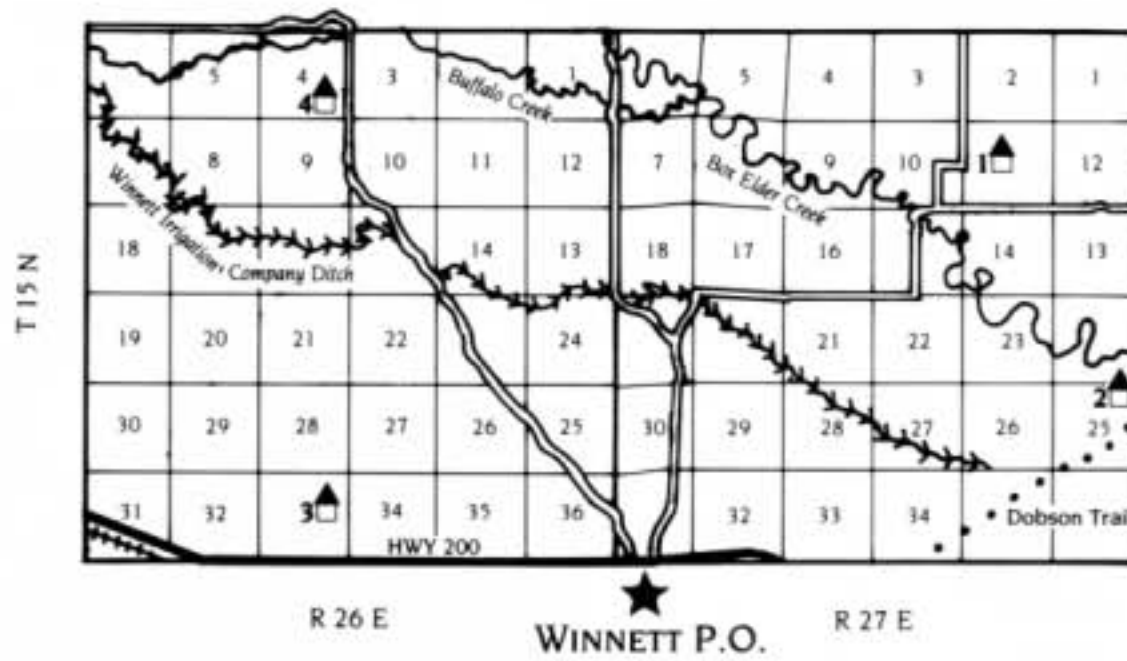
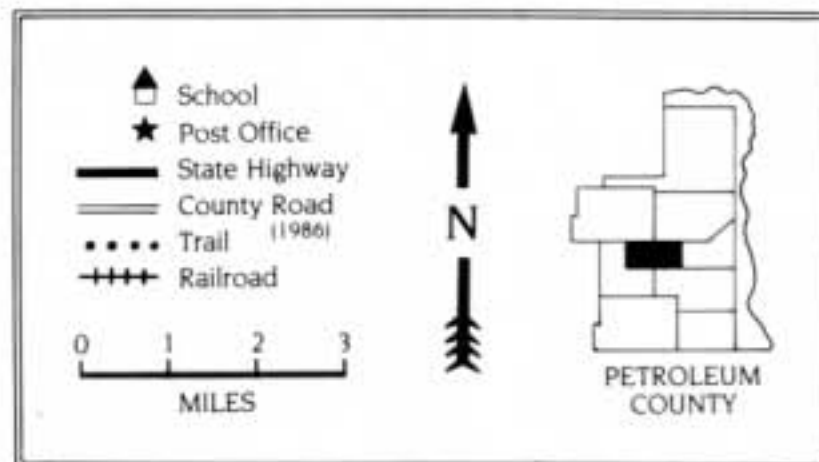


# Brush Creek Rural North Winnett



- SCHOOLS**
1. Brush Creek (Lincoln)
  2. Morningstar (Stage)
  3. Shellenberger (Carr)
  4. Wilson





House built by Evan Holmboe. Ninnemans, Sandmans, and Stewarts were later occupants. (Picture taken in 1985)



Snow on road in 1969



Rimrock on the Eager homestead. B. C. Stewart in his garden



Bobcats of the community caught by government trapper and B. C. Stewart



(L. to R.) Helen Johnson, Pearl Stewart, Bessie Kent, Clara Henton, Minnie Sandman, Veronica Bauer holding Jean, Inez Vogel, Mrs. Beckstrom, Ramona Stewart holding Mary, Ruth Owings and two girls, Else Baitis (?) holding Dick Vogel (?); Front David Vogel (?) George Stewart and dog, Scottie. (Picture taken in 1950)

# Brush Creek and Rural North Winnett

This is an area completely contained in Township 15, Ranges 26 and 27. Township 15, Range 26 is bordered on the north with the Buffalo Creek drainage. The Winnett Irrigation Company ditch also cuts through the center. Box Elder Creek winds diagonally through T15-Range 27, the township most thought of as the Brush Creek country. Brush Creek itself is only about five miles long, and is a drainage from the Ohio well pasture in Sec 26-16-27 into Box Elder Creek.

A post office was never established in this section of the country, but eventually a delivery route was set up between Winnett and Cat Creek which went through the area. In 1927 a route from the Golden Rule Ranch to the Plutschack Ranch, then east to Ashley was started, with a return route over the steel bridge across Box Elder Creek.

This particular region was probably best known for its potential as an irrigated farmland. On January 27th and 28th 1911, ten gentlemen gathered in Lewistown for the purpose of organizing the Winnett Irrigation Company. They were Walter J. Winnett, William H. Tobin, Rudolph Von Tobel, George J. Wiedeman, C. E. Traweck, I. W. Hobensack, Ned Hardy, F. F. Attix, Abraham Hogeland, and David Hilger. This would have a very positive affect on the agriculture in the Brush Creek area and land east of War House Lake.

In an article in a 1921 Winnett Times, a history of the project is told with much credit given to the first president Walter J. Winnett. It said "Walter J. Winnett, foreseeing the possibility that existed in the Buffalo Creek Valley for the construction of a successful irrigation project several years ago, began to move in the direction of giving concrete form to the idea. He sought the advice and services of Mr. Abraham Hogeland, an official of the U.S. Land Office of Lewistown, Montana.

"Cooperation between these gentlemen and Mr. Winnett's vision, faith and genius for organization, resulted in the eventual completion of the irrigation pro-

ject. The project is prepared to irrigate about 11,000 acres of land. It is proposed to ultimately water at least 15,000 acres. Most of the lands lie north and west of the town of Winnett." Ditches were constructed from the project and all landowners along the way, would benefit. (See also WINNETT IRRIGATION PROJECT — Blakeslee)

According to several articles in the Winnett Times, the Brush Creek area was also very attractive to many of the oil companies during the 1920 "boom days." The Brush Creek dome was considered a very likely structure to explore. In 1922 one Times headline read "MANY REPORTS ON OIL SHOWINGS." There were many conflicting reports of oil from the 1600 foot level reached by the Republic well. Many were willing to issue affidavits to the effect that they saw oil running off the bit when it was pulled from the well. The Republic well was located in the northern part of the Brush Creek community, in the southwest quarter of section 28-16-28.

Another article in the July 7, 1922, Winnett Times tells of an oil company filing bankruptcy because of all the troubles it had while drilling, but the log states that there was a showing of oil. The company had spent \$31,000 with the well at only 280 feet. Poor management was sighted for the cause of bankruptcy.

"BRUSH CREEK IS ATTRACTIVE" is another headline in the 1922 Winnett Times. It states, "Brush Creek is listed as one of the most perfect oil structures in Montana, a structure so evident that the novice can outline it with the naked eye." In the next few years, more deep tests were done in the area, but a productive well was never found. Pearl Henton Stewart remembers her father, Joe Henton, watching as they "brought in" a well. "He swore there was oil there," she recalled, "but they capped it anyway." There is still a free flowing artesian well about nine miles north of Winnett, known as the Ohio well, as a result of the oil drilling.



Brush Creek Dome — Ohio Well Crew: Mr. Zoolick, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Harris, Mr. S. Kyles, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Morgan, Mr. Rush; Mr. Jennings, Mr. Wilson, Joseph Henton; two children, Kenneth and Harold (last names unknown)

## Schools

The two townships of this district were first under the jurisdiction of School District #26 (Flatwillow), but in February of 1916, Winnett School District #159 was created from part of the Flatwillow district. The first trustees of this new district were Samuel C. Pribble, Hammond B. Greene and George H. Deethardt. This was a large district, and included the Wilson, Schellenberger, Stage and Brush Creek schools. The first Brush Creek school had been held in 1914 in Henry Miss's cabin with Harry Tripp of the Flatwillow country as teacher. Clara Shroder and Louisa Wilson taught in 1915, and in 1916 the new Brush Creek schoolhouse was built, with Mrs. Frank Jones as teacher. Louisa Wilson was also one of the first teachers of the Schellenberger School in 1914. Others known to have taught in this area were O. W. Lasater, Miss Van Tassell, Irene Quickenden, Mildred Henton, Anna Kleiman, and Blanche Good.

On April 17, 1931, the following item was in the Winnett Times: "Last Saturday Mr. and Mrs. Good of the Brush Creek School took the seven pupils, namely Gerald, Leona, and Irene Quigley, Evelyn Elde, Monrad Elde, Leroy Bailey, and Laura McCrery, to Lewistown to spend the day. Most of the pupils had never been in any town or city except Winnett or other very small places.

"The mountains and scenery proved exceptionally interesting to the students. They discovered many sights they had never seen before. At noon hour they drove to the Moccasin mountains for a wiener roast, and most of the crowd climbed a high butte, which took one hour to do.

"The afternoon was spent in Lewistown in various ways. The 'dime store' (F. W. Woolworth Co.) drew the children's attention most of the time. They were taken for a ride on the elevator in Power's store, and had so much fun that they wanted to ride all afternoon. One amusing remark among dozens of others just after a little girl noticed the street light bulbs was, 'What are all those balloons on the street for?'

"Other sights they noticed were the different windows filled with beautiful things, a telephone, water fountains, some trout, the courthouse, and so many other things it would be impossible to mention them. The crowd stayed to see the city with all its lights. They departed for home declaring they had a wonderful time, a day never to be forgotten by pupils or teacher."

Names of other teachers of this area will be found in the Winnett District #159 listing.

Church services were sometimes held in the schools. Reverend Aiton would often come out from Winnett and preach at the Brush Creek School.

Sunday picnics were frequent, and would be attended by neighbors from all around, just the location would change from time to time. Dances were held often, usually in one of the community schoolhouses, or even in the homes. The music was provided by Tom Henton, Everett Cotton, and Mildred Henton. The children would gather

and ride horses across the open hills, forming lasting friendships. Times were hard during the homestead era, but there seemed to be a genuine sense of community spirit and unity.



*Brush Creek School (1917) Lyle Smith, Wynn Parker, Millie Henton, Mr. Lasater, Bessie Stewart, Ted Herman, Vera Smith; Pearl Henton, Herbert Lasater, Lucille Lasater, Elnor Stage, Josephine Danielson, Earl Canonica, Agnes Canonica*



*Schellenberger School: Hillius and Schellenberger children, Louisa Wilson, Sam Pribble*

**AKINS, Fred** (Sec 10-15-26) Frederick W. Akins was born June 26, 1884, at Humansville, Missouri. He was trained as a civil engineer. In 1913 he homesteaded 4½ miles north of Winnett.

Elizabeth Crighton was born October 24, 1891, at Walnut Grove, Missouri. She became a school teacher in Missouri. She and Fred were married during the summer of 1914.

Fred was hired by a group of Lewistown businessmen as the fourth engineer of the War House Lake (or Winnett Irrigation Co.) project. Under his management the project was completed in 1916.

With the water thus available, the Akins built up a fine irrigated ranch, and acquired many dry land acres for the production of cattle and sheep. The brick house which was built in Sec 13-10-25 — on property belonging to Jefferson and Louise Akins — became the home of Fred and Bess and family. It serves as a residence today for Earl Brady, who now owns the property.

The Akins family moved to Helena, Montana, in 1936. Fred was employed by the State Water Conservation Board. Two children had become a part of their family while they lived on what was sometimes known as the Golden Rule Ranch.

Elizabeth (1915) and John (1919) attended Winnett Elementary School, and both graduated from Winnett High School — Elizabeth in 1932, and John in 1936.

Elizabeth attended Montana State College two years, Iowa State University two years, and the University of Iowa one year. Her specialty was dietetics. Before her marriage to George Downing, she served as a dietitian in the University of Iowa hospital.

She and George were the parents of four children — George (1940), Mary Elizabeth (1946), John Frederick (1950) and Peter Redfield (1952). Son John was killed in Vietnam April 16, 1970, at 19 years of age. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

John attended Iowa State University, graduating in 1940 with a degree in civil engineering. He worked for four years at his chosen vocation in Chicago, Illinois; four years at Helena; and from 1948 to 1985 in the State of Washington. He married Mary C. Immel, and five children joined the family — Barbara (1946), John (1947), Fred (1949), Marian (1950) and Ronald (1960).

The Winnett Times wrote proudly of John and Winnett High School in June 1940: "John C. Akins, son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Akins, accepted a position in the engineering design department of Standard Oil in Chicago. He graduated on June 10 from Iowa State College at Ames with the highest standing in the civil engineering department, and the second highest in the senior class of 700 students. John is a graduate of Winnett High School, class of 1936."

Mrs. Akins died in 1945, and Mr. Akins, in 1951. Both were buried in Helena.

**AKINS, Halbert Jefferson** Jefferson Akins was born September 16, 1867, in Cedar County, Missouri, the seventh of ten children. He and Louise Cresap were married in 1894 and in 1900 moved to Deer Lodge, Montana, then to Lewistown, Montana, in 1901. They built the large brick house on Lewistown's Main Street hill, which had the distinction, for many years, of having a kitchen sink in the exact center of the State of Montana!

The Golden Rule Store of Lewistown was managed by Jefferson Akins. So it was that when Jefferson located in the Brush Creek area, the ranch which was built up on his and Louise's land holdings was also named the Golden Rule Ranch.

Jefferson was very prominent in the affairs of the Winnett Irrigation Company. He succeeded Walter J. Winnett as president and served in that capacity for many years.

Louise and Jefferson became the parents of five children — Bohnda, Jerre, Marion, Willard and Bruce.

Bohnda (1898) married Ray Dockery, prominent Lewistown attorney. (See also CRESAP)

**AMOS, Charles** (Sec 13-15-26) Charles "Tom" and Sarah Amos of Harrisonville, Missouri, arrived here in February of 1946 to operate the Akins Ranch. Sarah contributed the following memories (excerpts from her history return):

"Receiving the history questionnaire brought up a lot of happy memories of three of the most important and memorable years of our lives. Even the air was wonderful and different! Thank you for that and for the special stamp and postmark!

"Fred Akins lived in Helena and was an engineer for the state. He used to come to the place once in a while and get his old tractor out of the shed. When it started, it often 'exploded' and scared all the chickens and animals to death.

"There were lots of antelope and deer. We bought Angus cattle from the N Bar Ranch at Grassrange and trailed them home. We had several horses to ride. It was



Tom and Sarah Amos (1947)

our first glimpse of ranches and real cowboys! There was a little two-room bunkhouse on the ranch. We brought a couple with us to work on the ranch. After they left, Jimmy Johnson came and lived with us.

"We didn't have electricity. The mail man came Tuesdays and Fridays. Lots of times our mail bag would be full if we had not gone to town between mail days.

"We became real good friends with lots of people — the Vogels, Mr. Bennett, Betty and Bob Bennett, the Beckstroms, Stewarts, Johnsons, the Roy Manuels, the Bauers, and Sylvia and Harvey Ward.

"With the help of Betty Bennett and Myron and Irene Hegge, Ruth (my sister) and Leland Owings, we started a real good Sunday school, which was held in the high school. The Pangburns conducted our Bible study, and Wilbur, son of the Armagosts, gave chalk talks.

"We remember the Kenckes — the nice people in the drug store which had a form of 'slot machine,' the first one I'd ever seen or used. There was the grocery store which had received the first plastic glasses. The lady in the store said that she and her daughter had so much fun just throwing them at the sink! The other daughter of the store people was away at college. Tom carried a rattlesnake in a sack in the trunk of our car to give to her for a college class.

"The men stacked hay with a hay stacker and brought the hay up with a 'bull rake' made out of old cars. We irrigated the fields from the irrigation system from water in the mountains which came through a flume. All the men on the ditches would go up in the spring and clean and tar the flume. Sometimes there would be hot words and bad feelings between some of the neighbors, if they thought that they weren't getting enough water.

"I still get lonesome for Montana. I can hardly believe we were there only three years!"

After leaving here in the fall of 1948, the Amoses became the parents of Donald (1950) and Kathy (1953). They now live at Amsterdam, Missouri.



Tom Amos burning weeds (1946)

**ATTIX, Ruth** Ruth Cresap married Fred Attix, prominent Lewistown physician and surgeon on March 24, 1903. They had two daughters, Zelda (1904) and Julia "Patsy" (1906).

Dr. Attix was one of the Lewistown promoters of the Winnett Irrigation Company. This interest no doubt led to Ruth Attix's land acquisition in Brush Creek. The family did not live in the area, however.

Ruth died in 1939 and was buried in the Lewistown City Cemetery. Dr. Attix married a second time to Ruth Serruys. He died in 1948, she in 1959. (See also CRESAP — Brush Creek)

**BADGER, John M.** (Sec 26-15-26) John Badger was born in Putnam County, Missouri, September 5, 1864. He came to Winnett in 1912 and engaged in farming about three miles northwest of Winnett. He had three sons — James, Ray and Oscar; and two daughters — Audrey and Bernice.

He moved to Kevin, Montana, in 1930, where he made his home with his son, Oscar. He died there April 13, 1940, as the result of a heart attack following influenza. (See also BADGER — Winnett)

**BADGER, Oscar** (Sec 25-15-26) Oscar, son of John Badger, proved up on his homestead. In company with Walter Winnett, he opened the first general store in Winnett. (See also BADGER — Winnett)

**BASTIAN, Edwin** (Sec 21-15-26) Ed Bastian came into the country to work on W. J. Winnett's Ranch. Both he and his wife, Edith, homesteaded in the Brush Creek area.

Mirth Winnett recalled that both Ed and his brother, Frank, were excellent baseball players as well as top hands on the Winnett Ranch.

Ed was killed in some kind of a machine-related accident in the latter part of 1920. Edith was named administratrix of his estate.

**BASTIAN, Frank** (Sec 22-15-26) Frank Bastian, son of Louis and Carrie Bastian, was born in Bristol, Minnesota, in 1892. He was educated in Bristol, and in 1912 or 1913 homesteaded about 3½ miles northwest of Winnett. He also worked for W. J. Winnett. In 1918 he enlisted in the Army and became the bugler for Company C, 56th Machine Gun Battalion. After his discharge, he served for several years as bugler for the local American Legion Post. In 1924 he married Pearl Shay and moved to Cat Creek, Montana. (See also BASTIAN — Cat Creek and Winnett)

**BAUER, Elmer** (Sec 31-15-27) Elmer and Veronika Bauer and four girls — Delores, Lorraine, Bernice and Sylvia — came to the Winnett community in 1929. A son, Kenneth Elmer, had died in infancy, apparently due to the RH Syndrome. They had previously lived in Minnesota, North Dakota and Oregon.

Leaving Oregon, they planned to return to North Dakota, but stopped in Winnett to visit friends, Mae and Ted Hegna. While here they found that the homestead of

Ira Pierson, one mile north of town (then owned by Amanda Swift and run by her brother, Walter) was for sale. They decided to buy it and soon were furnishing milk to residents of the town of Winnett.

Their dairy was a family enterprise. Everyone milked cows and helped with the delivery of the milk. There were no machines to help with the milking operation. Their car was a van and served as a delivery wagon. A sled or wagon was used when necessary.

After a few years in this community, the Bauer family was blessed with a baby boy. Vernon was delivered at their ranch home by Dr. Hazel Freed of Grassrange.

The Bauers operated their dairy for 18 years. Like everyone else they survived the drought, grasshoppers, blizzards, Depression, and the war years. Their house was even struck by lightning at one time in the late 40's. The family were congregated in their house and were just visiting. As a family member stated, "We were just yaking and sometimes making fun of people when someone said 'yes, you do that and lightning may strike you!!' " Just about that time B-O-O-M!!

As Lorraine and Sylvia exchanged babies, smoke came off Sylvia's fingers, and the bobby pins in her hair burned into her scalp. The floor came up and door jambs came out. Plaster exploded off the west wall and stuck to the east wall. Vernon was sitting on a metal trunk. He was so completely paralyzed that they took him to the doctor in Lewistown. However, by the time they got there, he was almost completely recovered. The family felt very fortunate in that they were not all killed.

After disposing of the dairy, Elmer farmed, ran range cattle and did some trucking. He was an avid conservationist and a Republican. He loved wildlife and the great outdoors. He completely disliked all facets of "The New Deal" and other Democrat programs. Taylor Grazing got under his hide; and one particular hatred of his was the "contouring" of the land, which he felt only formed a good bed for weeds. He was a kind and thoughtful neighbor. He died May 27, 1963, and was buried in the Winnett Cemetery.

Veronika, besides helping with the dairy, caring for her family and making all their clothes, was very generous with her time for her community. She was an ardent Republican and a self-taught pianist. She played the piano for community dances, as well as for the American Legion Auxiliary, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Rebekahs, Theta Rho, Winnett Senior Citizens and the Methodist Church. She also delighted a church youth group by playing "Oh, Johnny, Oh!" and other tunes for their circle dances.

Veronika died in June of 1985 and was buried next to Elmer in the Winnett Cemetery. Friends of Elmer and Veronika can picture them now in heaven with their daughter Bernice, son Kenneth, and grandson Kenny. They may see Veronika busy planning an angel potluck dinner or helping the Republican angels with an ice cream social. And they may see Elmer helping some angel farmer get a load of hay for a herd of phantom cows.

Delores graduated from Winnett High School in 1937. She worked in "Ma" Stewart's Restaurant that summer for 50 cents a day. She then attended Montana State College. In summers she worked in Yellowstone Park for the Park Service. She later transferred to Chicago with the Park Service and there met and married Nickolas Osnik. Nickolas was office manager for Alexander Smith Rug Co. Later he was transferred to Dallas, Texas. Nickolas died in 1970. Delores still lives in Dallas.

Lorraine graduated from Winnett High School in 1939. She then worked for her board and room and attended Billings Business College. She worked part time for the Farm Security Administration and then went to Malta, Glasgow and Miles City for the same agency. She next went to work for Velma Merten in the Clerk and Recorder office and also served under Elden Freed, who was Petroleum County Superintendent of Schools



*Elmer and Veronika Bauer Wedding*



*Lorraine, Delores, Bernice, Veronika, Elmer, and Sylvia beside the Bauer Dairy delivery wagon*



*Lorraine, Delores, Vernon, Sylvia, Bernice Bauer*

She was school district clerk and also deputy county treasurer under Merlin Gershmel. Upon Mr. Gershmel's death, Lorraine assumed his responsibilities as Petroleum County Manager. Reportedly she was the only female county manager in the United States. She left that job in 1980 to be near her mother in Lewistown. During the time she was in Winnett, Lorraine was Theta Rho adviser for 20 years and also helped with Methodist Sunday school and youth group.

Bernice graduated from Winnett High School in 1940 and attended Montana State College for one year. She married Fay Story, a high school friend. She died of cancer in 1972. Sylvia graduated from Winnett High School in 1943. She married Harvey Ward, class of 1944. They were divorced. Sylvia lives now in Oregon. Kenneth Elmer died in infancy.

Vernon married Joan Pangburn, class of 1950. They were divorced and Vernon married Janet Phillips. Vernon has been engaged in ranching, trucking, running a hardware store, and running a bar and restaurant.

These children presented the Bauers with fourteen grandchildren: Susan Anne Osnik Ward, Jane Phyllis Osnik, Jean Lorraine Bauer Reppe, Larry Eugene Story, Jerry Lee Story, Alan Ray Story, Peggy Jean Ward Marlotte, Lois Sue Ward Roberts, Linda Rae Ward Marks,

David Winston Ward, Terrijo Sylvia Ward Myers, Esther Darlene Bauer Werner, Barry Vernon Bauer, and Kenny Eugene Bauer (deceased).

There are also the following great grandchildren: Ryan Reppe, Regan Reppe, Jenifer Story, Kent Story, Greg Story, James Story, Michael Hehr, Brent Roberts, Chris Roberts, Forrest Priest, Caitlin Marks, Fawn Ward, Melissa Myers, David Swing, Michael Swing, and Melody Myers.

**BAYER, Theodore** (Sec 11-15-25) See BAYER — Winnett

**BECKSTROM, Adolph** (Sec 10, 3-15-26) Adolph Beckstrom was born in Sweden on October 3, 1878. He came to the United States and settled in Michigan in 1897. He moved to Lewistown, Montana, in 1900. Edith Longmaid was born July 11, 1889, at Cottonwood, Montana. She attended school in Lewistown and at the Canyon Creek School near Helena, Montana.

Adolph and Edith were married June 19, 1912, at Canyon Creek, Montana, and ranched near there until 1921. In that year they moved to land northwest of Winnett where they established a fine ranch just below the War House Lake.

Beckstroms were parents of three children — Gladys, Frances, and Charles. They also raised Mr. Beckstrom's sister's three children — Helen, John and James Hopkins, whose parents were both killed in an accident.

Helen graduated from Winnett High School in 1927. She married Wilbur Robinson and they had two children — Wilbur Jr. and Donna Mae. Donna Mae died in 1958. Helen is also deceased.

John was connected with a gold mining operation in the Philippine Islands before World War II. He still hopes, in 1989, to go back and do some more mining.

Gladys Beckstrom graduated from Winnett High School in 1932. She and Seraph Greseth were married in February 1934. They were the parents of three children — Charles, Sonja and Sandra. Gladys lives in Portland, Oregon.



*Beckstroms' 50th Anniversary celebration*



James Hopkins and Charles Beckstrom both graduated from Winnett High School in 1933. James attended Inter-mountain Union College for two quarters. He married Gerd Olsen. They were the parents of twin sons — Jim and Jerry, who were known as the Twinn Connexion, a singing duo; and a daughter Patti, who was a Playboy Bunny and who also skated in the Ice Capades.

Charles graduated from the School of Mines in Butte, Montana. He became an engineer in geology and a full commander in the Navy. He married Margaret McGuire, and they had four children — Lynn, Patti, Steve and Hal. Charles died in April 1967.

Frances graduated from Winnett High School in 1937. She married Arnold Olsen. (See also OLSEN — Dovetail and Flatwillow) Frances was appointed clerk of School District #159 in February of 1951. She and Arnold later moved to Silesia, Montana, and ranched until August 1968 when they moved to Tucumcari, New Mexico. They purchased the Leatherwood Manor in Tucumcari. They were the parents of three sons and one daughter.

**BEDZYK, Anton** (Sec 31-15-26) Anton Bedzyk, after his return from the war in 1918, decided to go west and homestead. His land was just south of the Mitchall Jozovich holdings. While proving up, he worked in a post office in Montana. He became discouraged and moved back to Chicago, Illinois. It is believed that he became a policeman there. On retirement he moved to Florida.

He and his wife are both deceased and his property is held by his son.

**BEETSHA, Jacob** (Sec 9-15-27) Jacob Beetsha was one of many young bachelors who filed on a homestead claim north of Winnett. Jake and Dave Henton, another young, single homesteader, became close friends and even entered the armed services together. Upon returning, Jake was here only a few years before he gave up his claim. He later married and had one son, Raymond, who lives in Walworth, Wisconsin, with his family.



*Dave Henton and Jacob Beetsha*

**BERG, Edwin** (Sec 35-15-27)

**BOHN, Louise** (Sec 24-15-27) See BOHN — Petrolia

**BRADY, Earl** Earl Brady, the son of Evert and Myrtle Brady, was born February 13, 1924. He grew up in the middle of a family of 11 children on his father's homestead 17 miles north of Winnett. Earl finished high school in Fairfield, Montana, where his family had moved in 1938. After a tour in the Navy during World War II, Earl returned to the Winnett area and bought land near his father's old homestead. It was during this time that he met Virginia Hanson who was to become his wife.

Virginia was the daughter of Elmer and Doris Hanson who homesteaded near Valentine. She was born September 14, 1930. Earl and Virginia were married October 21, 1948. (See also HANSON — Dovetail)

The old Catlin house was their first home on Earl's new land. It featured so many mice and rats that they kept a



*Earl and Virginia Brady*



*Earl and Virginia Brady's children (1958): Jean, Doreen, Evert, Jim, Gary, Jerry*

.22 rifle by their bed to eliminate the problem with bedside convenience.

Earl and Virginia had six children — Doreen, Jean, Jim, Evert, and twins Jerry and Gary — all born within five and one-half years. The Brady children have fond memories of growing up together so close in age, a camaraderie that has carried on in their adult lives. Virginia once said that her favorite years were those when they had six teenagers at once. When she wasn't nurturing children, Virginia was nurturing trees, flowers, and a big garden.

Virginia died in 1984. Earl continues to live on their ranch four miles north of Winnett. Throughout the years Earl has been an active member of the school board, FHA committees, ASCS county committee, and several local service organizations. (See also BRADY — Ashley)

**BRADY, James** Jim Brady, the son of Earl and Virginia Brady, grew up in the Winnett area. He graduated from Winnett High School in 1970 and attended the Forestry School in Missoula before joining the Army. Jim assumed he would be joining the Viet Nam Conflict, but was diverted to Okinawa, where he spent 18 months. While in Okinawa, Jim was involved in motorcycle competition. Much to the amusement of Corky Ziesmer (who was then postmaster in Winnett), Jim sent home a motorcycle piece by piece through the mail.

After three more years of college at the University of Montana and Montana State University, Jim met and married Diana Milburn from Lewistown. They bought some land and cattle from Earl and settled into ranching on Box Elder Creek, six miles north of Winnett. Diana taught school at the Ayers Hutterite Colony for a year. Since then she has been teaching kindergarten and then art at the Winnett schools.

Jim and Diana have three daughters — Brenda, Laura and Carrie. (See also BRADY — Ashley)



*Jim and Diana Brady and their children — Laura, Carrie, Brenda*

**BRANCH, Claude M.** (Sec 21-15-27) Claude M. Branch was born October 6, 1869, at Kent, Ohio, and came to Winnett in 1917. He filed on a homestead four miles north and east of town. Before coming to Winnett he had been engaged in the photography business in Iowa and Lewistown.

While Mr. Branch lived in Petroleum County, he was active in the development of the Winnett Irrigation Company and served as secretary. In April 1930, Mr. Branch leased his land to Peter Kjersem, then moved into the town of Winnett. He later sold his land to B. C. and Pearl Stewart. (See also BRANCH — Winnett)

**BRANDEN, Rudolph** (Sec 29-15-26) (W. T. 5-3-29) "Rudolph Branden of Teigen, Montana, and Emma Palmer of Winnett, were united in marriage in Roundup, Montana, by Justice of the Peace O. R. McVay. They visited briefly in Roundup before departing for their home in Teigen."

**BRINKMAN, Irene Quickenden** Irene Quickenden was a teacher in the Brush Creek School and wrote this article: "I taught Brush Creek School, District #159, which was eight miles north and east of Winnett, for two years (1921-22 and 1922-23). B. F. Tanner was superintendent of the Winnett schools.

"I lived and boarded in the Martin Gavel home. There were 14 pupils in all grades. Grace Gavel was one of my first graders. Other students were the Henton children — Pearl, Earl, and Elsie; the Quigley children — Leo, Tom, Lewis and Gerald; and the Kramer children." (See also QUICKENDEN — Winnett)

**BUSBY, William** (Sec 10-15-27) In October of 1926, according to the Winnett Times, W. J. Busby of the Valentine country, leased the Eager Ranch on Box Elder Creek. "He is now moving his household goods and farm implements thereon," the article reads. "The Eager Ranch is considered one of the best farm properties north of Winnett."

(W. T. 10-10-30) "Mrs. W. J. Busby, who has been living on the Eager farm for the past few years, is selling out at auction, Wednesday, October 15, 1930. Mrs. Busby plans to leave soon for Washington where she will make her home." The auction was a success and the family planned to leave for their old home near Seattle. (See also BUSBY — Dovetail and Winnett)

**CAMPBELL, A.** Mr. Campbell farmed the Bryan Hardy land in Sec 32-16-26 in 1921. The land was under the Winnett Irrigation Company ditch. Fifteen acres of alfalfa netted him 1400 pounds of seed, which had an approximate value of \$1500. Besides, this same 15 acres produced enough feed for five cows.

**CARR, Sam** (Sec 21-15-27) Sam and Jessie Carr came to the Winnett area in the 1920s. They rented land from Harry Eldridge. The Carrs had previously homesteaded north of Sand Springs. They had five boys — Tom, Don, Roy, Harold and Ivan. Sam farmed a little and had some livestock. They first lived in a small house near an irriga-

tion ditch, but later a larger house was built up on the hill.

"They had a dance there, after it was built," Pearl Stewart recalls, "a big housewarming, and all the neighbors came and had a good time. Nine of us got in B.C.'s old Buick and went to it, and John Marty would dance around playing the mouth harp."

In June of 1929 a Winnett Times article tells about a twenty-fifth anniversary celebration held at their home: "The home of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Carr, residing north of Winnett, was the scene of a delightful occasion last Sunday, June 16th, when 82 of their friends and neighbors gathered at their home to celebrate their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. The guests brought well-filled baskets and served the lunch at noon. A box of silverware was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Carr to commemorate the occasion, and the guests then departed wishing them another twenty-five years of happy wedded life."

"Sam's arthritis started to bother him," Pearl remembers, "so they had a sale and moved to a different climate, Sugargrove, Pennsylvania, then later into New York State. Sam and my mother were first cousins." Pearl continued: "My sister, Millie, and I went to Sand Springs with Don and Tom Carr in his Ford car. There wasn't a good road yet, so it seemed like it took a long time to get there, and only to find there wasn't any dance at all. We stayed overnight with a relative and next day visited friends, killed a couple of chickens, and had a big dinner!"

**CHRISTOPHER, Alvin** (Sec 26-15-27) "I remember the Christophers homesteading here," Pearl Stewart recalls. "They had a daughter, Rozella, who went to high school when I did."

A 1921 issue of the Winnett Times tells about the large produce Mr. Christopher raised in his garden: "A squash weighing 33 pounds is on exhibition in the offices of the Winnett Land Company. This huge vegetable is the product of A. F. Christopher's garden located six miles northeast of Winnett."

"Mr. Christopher also had a watermelon weighing 38 pounds and a big variety of other garden stuff of equal size. Mr. Christopher makes a specialty of truck gardening and has for this purpose a tract of land under the ditch on the Winnett Irrigation project. He finds that this kind of agricultural produce can be raised with ease and is also very profitable."

The story reads on: "A visit to this farm will increase faith in the country. It proves conclusively that at Winnett's door lies an undeveloped asset far greater in wealth than the tremendous pools of oil which surround the city. Without expensive fertilization and without difficulties, Mr. Christopher raised a truck garden that cannot be equaled on any high priced lands in eastern states. There are 30,000 acres of this same land now under water and 30,000 more acres that can easily be placed under water."

"It does not take a dreamer to look ahead and see the garden spot which this territory is certain to develop into within a few years. The oil is here in tremendous quan-

ties and has only been touched. Estimating the miles of undeveloped territory, it will be years before the last well will have been spudded in.

"But of far greater and more lasting value, is the great agricultural wealth which will fill a country with modern homes, big barns, churches, schoolhouses, paved highways, and a city teeming with people, factories, and a thousand industries."

In 1930 Rozella Christopher married Fred Horner of Lewistown. She was a 1923 graduate of Fergus High School and had been employed by the Eager Mercantile in Winnett. In November 1930 Mr. and Mrs. Christopher had an auction and left the Winnett area for a fruit farm located near Seattle, Washington. "Both are advancing in age," the Winnett Times reads, "and the milder climate of Washington holds out an appeal to them that they could not resist."

**COLVER, George H.** George "Harry" Colver, the third of 13 children of George L. and Ida Colver, was born December 17, 1887, in Missouri Valley, Iowa. In 1908 he was married to Minnie Weatherly and they moved to Montana in 1916, settling in the area east of Roy, Montana.

In 1928 the family rented the Wilson Brothers Ranch in the Brush Creek country. Harry became a bus contractor for the Winnett public schools using his own touring car as a bus. Transportees were his own two sons, Edwin and Harold; the Fred Akins children, Elizabeth and John; and Elton Hansen.

When construction began on the Fort Peck Dam, Colvers went to work there until returning to Missouri Valley to work at carpentry and other construction in 1942. In July of 1948 they came back to Montana to live in Lewistown. Harry died there in October of 1948. Edwin died in May of 1950.

**COTTON, Erwin J.** (Sec 28-15-27) Erwin Jerome Cotton was born February 28, 1862, at Joliet, Illinois. Mr. Cotton was united in marriage September 21, 1885, to Miss Alfaretta Whitney of Belle Plaine, Iowa. To this union five children were born — Everett, Richard, Florence, Helen, and Katherine.

Mr. and Mrs. Cotton came to Montana in 1912. Mr. Cotton was well known throughout the county and was highly respected by those who knew him. He was a blacksmith by trade, working in this line in Winnett for many years. (See also COTTON — Winnett)

**COX, Reeves** (Sec 24-15-26) Reeves and Phoebe Cox were married on January 1, 1910. After their marriage they left Sparta, North Carolina, and homesteaded in Montana north of Winnett. They had one son, Carl, who attended Winnett High School. Carl married Rena Brady, daughter of Evert Brady.

A 1928 newspaper had this account of a near disaster the Coxes experienced: "What might have proved a serious accident occurred at the Charles Hill in east Cat Creek Sunday night. Mr. and Mrs. Reeves Cox were

returning from Winnett. In arriving at the bottom of the hill in their car, they missed the bridge and the car went over a high bank. Both Mr. and Mrs. Cox escaped with minor injuries, but the car was utterly demolished.

"Viewing the wreck, one wonders how they could come through it alive. A passing car took them into Winnett, where their bruises were dressed by Dr. Alexander. Although regretting the loss of their car, they are thankful to have escaped so fortunately from the wreck.

"The Charles Hill has long been known as one of the longest and steepest in the country and always caused autoists and truckers more or less worry. During the Cat Creek boom days, teams were always kept handy to aid in pulling cars and trucks up the hill."

The Coxes moved to the upper Flatwillow Creek area in 1940 and ranched there until Reeves passed away in 1950. Phoebe then moved to Grassrange where she made her home until 1973, when she moved to Lewistown, Montana. Phoebe died in 1980.

**CRESAP, Beulah** (Sec 7-15-27) Beulah was Mrs. Will Cresap. Will was one of six children who were born to William P. Cresap and Julia Porter Cresap in Missouri. The other children were: Louise, who married Jefferson Akins; Min (Mrs. Robert Gentle); Ruth, who was the first wife of Dr. Fred Attix (married in 1902); Kate (Mrs. Jane McCracken); and Bob, who was involved in construction work and built the Akins house in Lewistown.

Because Bob was a builder of fine homes, and also because of his relationship to Louise (Mrs. Jefferson Akins), one can assume that he was probably the builder of the brick house in which the Fred Akins family lived while residing in Petroleum County. (See also AKINS)

**DALSMON, Ludvig** (Sec 30,31-15-26) Ludvig and Pauline Dalsmon are recorded as early owners of the described land. A Clara Dalsmon married Mitchall Jozovich.

**DALSMON, Peter** Peter and Helga were married in Minnesota in 1904. They moved to Montana in 1909 and settled on their homestead. They were the parents of nine children — Hazel, Florence, Eleanor, Norman, Walter, Clarence, Arnold, Percy, and Arthur. Three news items of the Winnett Times reveal some family history:

(W. T. 12-26-1919) "Considerable excitement prevailed in town Saturday when the rumor spread that gold in paying quantities had been found on the Pete Dalsmon farm about eight miles northwest of Winnett. The truth of the rumor is that a considerable body of rock close to the surface has been found to bear gold, one sample having assayed \$2.30 per ton. It is probable that prospecting will be carried on to see of what extent the body may be and other assays made."

(W.T. 2-24-28) "Elsie (Ed. Eleanor) Dalsmon, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter D. Dalsmon, died at Ft. Maginnis Sunday, February 19th at the age of 8 years and 13 days. Funeral services were held at the Austin Saylor home. Rev. Harmon, of Grassrange, Montana, officiating. Inter-

ment was made in the Winnett Cemetery. Deceased leaves a mother and father, two sisters and five brothers to mourn her loss."

The Dalsmon children attended the Schellenberger and Teigen elementary schools and Grassrange High School. The Dalsmons moved into the town of Grassrange in 1934.

(W. T. 6-22-44) Arthur married Lorraine Roane in 1938. He died in June of 1944, leaving the wife and a small daughter, Dorothy May.

Walter Dalsmon (sometimes spelled Dolsman) worked in a sawmill after the war and lost part of his foot at the mill. He worked at the Montana Lumber and Hardware Co. of Lewistown, Montana, until retirement. He is a cabinet maker. He and his wife, Jean, still reside in Lewistown.

Percy worked in maintenance for government agencies and now lives in Spokane, Washington. Arnold was a brakeman for the Union Pacific Railway in Utah and Nevada. Norman drove cab in both Billings and Butte. Florence, Hazel, Arnold and Norman are all deceased.

Helga died in Lewistown in 1955 and was buried in the Lewistown Cemetery. Peter is also deceased.

Hans Dalsmon, brother of Peter, worked at the Teigen Ranch for a time.

**DEERE, Jean or DIERE, Jean** (Sec 28-15-26) See McDANIEL and THIEL — Winnett

**DEETHARDT, Benjamin** (Sec 35-15-26) The Deethardt family, including daughter Johanna and son George Henry, homesteaded a whole section of land two miles west of the town of Winnett. Known children of Benjamin and Anna Deethardt were Johanna, George Henry, Gertrude (1897), Dena (1900) and Theodore (1903).

Johanna married Harry Knapp of the Jitney community. (See also KNAPP — Cat Creek) Gertrude married George Pullin who had also homesteaded in the Jitney area, and who later owned a store in Winnett. (See also PULLIN — Cat Creek and Winnett) Dena and Theodore were both students of Winnett High School in 1918-1919.

Some items of interest from the 1918-1919 Winnett High School Annual follow: "Dena Deethardt was the Good Fairy, who came to the aid of two lovers, and with her troop of little fairies helped create a very beautiful scene."

Among the Nonsense pages of the 1919 annual: "Theodore Deethardt (alias Ted) A cunning villain; very smooth with pencil and ink. Has a very bad record among police courts of several Montana towns. Is tall, slim, chalky-faced individual. Arrest at once if found over the county line. One of his favorite masks is that of Santa Claus; Dena Deethardt (alias Nancy Hanks) Fond of all fruits — especially dates. Has been accused of flirting but never convicted. ..."

In 1919 the Deethardt family, with the exception of the two married daughters, Johanna and Gertrude, moved to South Dakota.