

the nickname on him. He and JC continued their questionable occupations until the repeal of prohibition put them out of business.

"Today one can sit on a high point and look out over the truly wild section of Montana. The rich bottom lands, the groves of cottonwoods and willows are gone forever along a hundred and thirty miles of river. Now you see the desolate shores of Fort Peck Lake, devoid of trees, reach to the gumbo hills. The beauty of the river bottoms is gone with man's quest for progress, electrical power and flood control. Was it really for the better? There are many people around the four counties who would answer resoundingly, 'No, it would have been better to have left it alone.'

"Fleet died in 1958, and Gladys died in 1961 of cancer. They are both buried in the Malta Cemetery. (Fuller Laugeman)

LARSON, G. (Sec 3-12-30) Larsons moved to Weede in 1924 and took over the operation of the post office there. (W. T. 12-1-24) "Emil Hansen and family were visiting with Mrs. Hansen's mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. Larson, of the Weede community."

LONG X RANCH HISTORY (W. T. 7-14-60) "The old Long X Ranch, at one time one of the largest cattle outfits north of the Missouri River, has changed hands again. The new owner is Martin Matovich of Malta, who has taken possession from Clair Salsbery.

"The ranch originally was established in 1902 by the three Reynolds brothers of Texas. Forced by a drought out of Texas, the first trail herd of 6000 head of cattle was taken across the Missouri that year. For a number of years thereafter herds were pointed north to the Long X. In addition to as many as 10,000 cattle, about 1500 horses were run on the range.

"Headquarters for the cattle spread was a 160-acre homestead filed on by Norval Wallace, Long X foreman, and a 160-acre tract purchased from Lally Doney.

"The hard winter of 1906-07 was disastrous for the Long X. About 40 percent of the cattle were lost in that long and bitterly cold winter. Losses also were tallied when the cattle crossed the Missouri in the spring and drowned in the swollen stream.

"An average of ten men were employed at the ranch. Charlie Stuart, son of Granville Stuart, and a character known as Snakehead Gilbert cooked for the crew during a number of years when it was a womanless ranch.

"The Reynolds Cattle Co. closed out their holdings in northern Montana in 1915. Joe Reynolds remained to operate the ranch. Following Reynolds' death, his wife, Molly Reynolds, continued the ranching business. Ted Wilson, who had gone to work for Reynolds in 1929 bought the ranch in 1932. He added to the land holdings, and when he disposed of it in 1955, it consisted of 2400 acres of deeded land, leased acreage and 232 cattle.

"Salsbery, who sold the ranch to Matovich, has operated it for several years.

"Matovich was born in Petroleum County near the mouth of the Musselshell River and since 1949 has been associated with his brother, John, in the old Proudly Ranch which is joined on the east by the Long X."

Martin Matovich is a son of George and Mary Matovich of the Mecaha area.

LOOKE, Walter Mr. and Mrs. Walter Looke were some of the first settlers to settle on the lower Musselshell. They settled on the east side of the Musselshell about four miles above its confluence with the Missouri River, not far from the old Fort that was built during Liver-eatin' Johnson's day.

Looke came out of the Rosebud country in 1897. He established the Vincent Post Office in 1898. He stayed there a couple of winters and summers, then moved in 1900 to the Brusett country, then called the Seven Blackfoot country. The Vincent Post Office was closed on October 31, 1899.

LOVELESS, James (Sec 8-15-30) James and Lucinda Loveless were the parents of Jay (1900), Lorene (1903) and Virginia (1916). This information is taken from the school census of District #107 in the year of 1920. The first listing for the family was in the 1916 census.

According to the Winnett Times in 1926, Mrs. Loveless was bitten by a rattlesnake while walking through a field of alfalfa. She was bitten on the leg, below the knee. Intelligent first aid and medical attention, provided by Dr. Alexander, assured recovery.

LUGO, John (Sec 19-16-30) (W. T. 11-20-25) "John Lugo, who had of late years resided in what is now Petroleum County, died in this city Saturday evening. Thus ended the career of a man who had figured conspicuously in one of the most sensational murder cases ever tried here and who led an eventful career in this section. Lugo was a Mexican, coming to Montana from California. In February 1908, the log home of a widow, Mrs. Schleuter, on the Musselshell River, burned down in the night and the widow and her children perished in the flames.

"Suspicious of foul play were aroused and John Lugo was largely responsible for directing them toward Ole Nordahl, a rancher residing a considerable distance from the Schleuter place. Nordahl was arrested, and at the trial Lugo was the most important witness against him. The evidence was wholly circumstantial and Nordahl was given a life sentence. After serving twelve years or so, he was paroled, went to another part of the state where at last accounts he was prospering.

"It was always the belief of Nordahl's attorney, Judge J. C. Huntoon, that there never was any murder in connection with this case, but that the tragedy resulted from a fire starting in the dead of night in intensely cold weather. At all of these very remote ranch houses, a considerable supply of coal oil was kept, as visits to the trading points were very infrequent. The Judge's theory was that the fire caught this kerosene, caused an explosion, and the in-

mates of the wooden structure perished.

"Lugo was intensely interested in securing a conviction and after Nordahl had been sent to the penitentiary, he took over Nordahl's place, which he had been holding on a squatter's right. Lugo had a good-looking American wife and one day she was found with her neck broken. Another wife of the Mexican passed away ahead of him.

"John was pursued in later years by misfortune. He was stung in the hand by the spine of a catfish and the wound not being attended to, blood poisoning developed and he lost part of his arm by amputation. He was arrested for cattle stealing, but managed to get out of that trouble and then had more difficulty through taking certain hides into Melstone. Later still, both his feet were frozen and he lost portions of them by amputation. He was over sixty years of age and had no relatives in Montana, but there are supposed to be some in California."

LUTE, Marion (Sec 8-12-30) Marion and Hattie Lute homesteaded near Willow Creek. 1920 is the last year they had children listed in the District #164 school census. The children were: Ernest (1907), Archie (1908), and Harvey (1911). They sold their land to Arthur Ovrum.

MACHLER BROTHERS Dominic "Toby" Machler, the son of Alois and Katie (Gerhig) Machler, was born in 1882 at Vorderthal, Switzerland. Toby came to the United States in 1905 and to Lewistown in 1911. He married Rosa C. Yaeger (1892) in 1911.

Toby settled near the Big Bend of the Missouri River and owned land in Sec 14,15,22,23-21-29. He was instrumental in bringing his three brothers — Joseph Siegfried (Fred) (1878-1944); Franz (Frank) (1883); and Michael (1885-1975) — over from Switzerland. They all took up land in the Chain Buttes area south of the Missouri River. The two Tresch brothers, Edward and Andrew, also came at the same time. (See also TRESCH)

Toby and Rose had six children — George (1914), Frank (1916), William John (1919), Rosa Katherine (1921), John David (1923) and Catherine Lorraine (1929). They moved to Beaver Creek about 1920, and later Toby and Cliff Belcher were co-owners of the Fergus County Sheep Ranch. (See also MACHLER — Blakeslee)

Fred and Mike did not marry. They made their home on the Missouri River ranch. Fred was killed in an automobile accident in 1944. Mike retired from ranching and moved to Roy, Montana, where he and John Mayberry owned and operated the Roy Bar for a number of years. Mike died in 1975.

MARKS, Peter Dugal (Sec 13-18-29) The following story was submitted by Inda Marks Mosby. "Peter Dugal Marks, known as 'Dugal,' came to homestead on the Musselshell River in 1910, about 38 miles north of where the Mosby Post Office is now. He homesteaded on the west side of the river.

"Dugal was born in Minnesota. He came to Belt, Montana, with his parents as a small child and lived his childhood years there. His mother died when he was



Dugal and Mary Marks (wedding picture)

about 14 years old, and later he and his dad came to the Musselshell River to homestead. Dugal's dad lived with him until his death in 1914 or 1915. We are told that George, Dugal's dad, was a humorous old character, who always owned trail hounds. George was buried down on the river place.

"Dugal married Mary McDermott on July 8, 1911, at Belt, where Mary had grown up. Her dad and mother were on their way to the United States from Ireland when she was born on July 15, 1893, in Vancouver, B. C., Canada. Her dad wanted to work in the coal mines somewhere and finally chose Belt.

"After Mary and Dugal were married, they returned to his homestead on the Musselshell. They lived in a one-room log house with a dirt roof for awhile, then moved it to higher ground on a knoll, adding two more rooms made out of logs. Some years later they put on a tin roof.

"In the early days our dad would make a trip with the team and wagon in the fall to Roy. He would bring back enough flour, sugar, coffee, tea, and such to last until the next fall. He said he cut a lot of hair in those days, especially Saturdays before a dance. He said he used to lend his good shoes out to some of the guys to wear to the dance; that is, if he wasn't taking in the dance. He got his mail at the Ross Post Office, south of his place about six or eight miles. Our dad's brother, Gary Kern Marks, lived in the neighborhood. He was in World War I, serving in the capacity as a cook and bugler on a Naval ship.

"We got our first radio in the early 1920s. We also saw our first airplane flying over our place. What a thrilling and amazing sight it was then, equally as exciting as seeing Neil Armstrong on T. V., landing on the moon in 1969.

"We got a gas light with a mantle, a great improvement over the kerosene light. This gas light flooded the room with light, humming as it fulfilled its duty. Another bright spot in our lives was our little, long-eared donkey, which

we enjoyed very much. Not to be forgotten are the 'funny' papers of the roaring 20s — Amos 'n Andy, Blondie and Dagwood, Maggie and Jiggs, and Out Our Way, to name a few. It seemed the grownups enjoyed these comics every bit as much as the children.

"Our mother did a lot of sewing when I was young, with most of it being done in the evening and often into the late hours of the night.

"Liz was four years older than I, but we learned to cook at the same time. I thought I was eleven when I began cooking, but Ma said I was only nine; I do know my bread wasn't very good until I got a little more height. We baked ten loaves of bread every day. Liz would bake ten loaves one day and I would do the honors the next day. In recipes, we had to do a lot of substituting. There were many mouths to feed, we had the Kastner kids living with us quite a bit. Their mother, Inda, who was our dad's sister, died in 1925.

"Our dad lost money when the Roy bank went broke, as did a lot of people around who had money in that bank.

"I remember the 1930s as hot, dry and dusty, with the thistles rolling everywhere and the prairie dogs yipping all over the range. Cattle prices dropped so low they hardly paid their freight. Our dad depended on the cows and alfalfa seed for income. It was pretty rough going through those years for our family. When the Chain Butte Grazing District was organized, our dad became a member. He served on the board and was, at one time, its president. I remember him saying it was important for him to be a member, as his place, without cattle rights, wouldn't be worth much.

"Ma always raised huge gardens through the years, doing most of the work herself. One summer during the 1930s, the migrating grasshoppers came upon our land. About 10 o'clock one morning they darkened the sky in the east like an eclipse over the sun. They landed, ate the garden and all other vegetation in just one short hour, and flew on, leaving a path of destruction behind.

"Although we worked hard, we also had a lot of fun in the 1930s. Our dad and mother just loved to talk. They were both good conversationalists; and when we had company, whether the company was six years old or 60, they took over. We didn't seem to have a chance to get a word in edgewise."

Dugal and Mary had twelve children. George (1912) married Irene Deniger in 1937. George ran the mail route from Mecaha to the Town Ranch for awhile. George and Irene have three children — David, Marilyn, and Pat — and now live at St. Ignatius, Montana. Elizabeth (1914) married Sam Kittel. Liz died in 1958. They have three children — Ronald, Richard and Walter. Peter (1915) served with the Marines in the South Pacific. He married Erna Vogel, who died in 1981. They have one son, Hans Scott, who works with his dad on the ranch. (See also MARKS — Brush Creek)

Inda (1918) married Everett Mosby. Inda ran the Mecaha Post Office from 1938 until it closed in 1941.



Marks family: (Back row, L to R) George, Liz, Kern, Pete, Dugal, Ed, Bob; (Front row, L to R) Agnes, Dad, Mom, Jack (bundle in arms), Albert and Dorothy

They have three children — Marvin, Arlene, and Donna. Everett and Inda live in Lewistown. P. Kern (1920) enlisted in the Marines during World War II. He married Evelyn Nordahl in 1946, and they have two children, Mary Louise and Edward. Dugal (1922) married Anna Rukavina in 1947. They live in Bridger and have no children. Edward (1924) served with the Army during World War II in the New Guinea area. He was killed in action in 1944. Robert (1926) served in the Korean War. He lives on the Marks Ranch near Mecaha. He was never married. Agnes (1927) married Edwin Burle in 1952. They have three children — Beverly, Connie and Stella. Agnes died in 1986.

Albert (1931) served in the Korean War. He and his wife, Mary, live in California. They have three children — Jack, Ty and Kimberly. Dorothy (1933) married Gerald Weingart in 1951. They have three children — Gerald, Judy and David. They live in British Columbia, Canada. Jack (1935) served in the Korean War. He married Janet Pumphrey in 1956. They have one son, Scott. Janet died in 1988, and Jack lives in Missoula.

Mary Marks died in 1960. Dugal continued to live on the ranch until around 1965. He spent his last three years living in Winnett. Dugal died in 1968. They are both buried at the Winnett Cemetery.

MASER, Michael (Sec 31-15-30) From a March 22, 1940 obituary, we learn that Mrs. Susie Barna was born in Hungary in 1868. She immigrated to the United States in 1895, and in 1900 married Michael Maser.

In 1902 they moved to Kendall, Montana, where he was engaged in mining and real estate. Later they moved to the Musselshell River and took up a homestead, where they remained until 1920, when they moved to Winnett.

In Winnett they opened a masseur parlor, and stayed until 1934, when they moved their business to Lewistown, Montana. They were also in the oil business during their stay in Winnett. They had no children.

Their place on the river was known for its good water well, which is still known as the Maser well. They sold the homestead to Bob Moss.

(W. T. 4-30-26) "Mr. and Mrs. Michael Maser returned from the coast where they spent the winter. They were quite surprised to find that during their absence, vandals had entered their home, through a basement window. They had eaten the fruit cake and preserves, sawed a hole through the kitchen door with a keyhole saw, and attempted to saw off the lock on a trunk in the basement. It is presumed that the forced entry and damage can be charged to some of the youngsters from the city."

Mrs. Susie Maser died at Lewistown in 1940. (See also MASER — Winnett)

MATOVICH, Dan Dan Matovich, brother of George, came to the Musselshell River country in 1914. Later he moved to Canada where in Hanley, Saskatchewan, he married Matilda Sarich. Matilda, daughter of Dewey and Amanda Sarich, was born in Lika, Yugoslavia. They lived in Canada for a time, but Dan didn't care for Canada, so they moved back to the Musselshell River area. In 1935 they moved to Piper where they lived until they retired and moved to Lewistown, Montana.

Dan and Matilda had four children — two sons, Dewey and David of Grassrange, Montana; and two daughters, Mary Moseman of Christina, Montana, and Eva Birdwell of Lewistown, Montana. Dan died in 1980, and Matilda died in 1983. They are buried in Calvary Cemetery in Lewistown. (Marcus Matovich)

MATOVICH, George E. (Sec 13-18-29) George E. Matovich, son of Mr. and Mrs. Marko Matovich, was born at Lovinac, Croatia. Mary Tomlenovich (1884) was born at Lovinac. George and Mary were married in 1907.

George left Austria in 1908 and came to the Musselshell River country. He claimed 80 acres by squatter's rights, then later bought another 80 acres from a neighbor, thus beginning the history of the Matovich Ranch.

He went to Red Lodge and worked in the mines to make enough money to keep himself going and to be able to send for his wife, Mary. Finally he was able to send her money for her ticket, and she came over in 1911.

George and Mary had ten children, all born at Mecaha. Their children were — Marcus (1912), Anna (1913), Agnes (1914), John (1916), Phillip (1918), Martin (1919), David (1921), Paul (1922), Mary (1924) and George (1925).

In 1937 the original home and surrounding area was taken by the government for the construction of Fort Peck Dam. George and Mary, with the children still at home, moved to Columbus, Montana. Their oldest son, Marcus, and wife, Ruby, took over the remaining ranch and lived there for many years, adding more land as it became available.

George died in 1953, and Mary died in 1963. They are both buried at Columbus.

In 1956 Mary Matovich wrote "Unique Christmas Greeting," and sent it to each of her children for Christmas. The story was printed in the *Lewistown News Argus* (12-22-76):

"Since this will be my 72nd Christmas, I thought you children might like to know something about what took



Children of George and Mary Matovich: (Top row, L to R) Martin, Marcus, John, George and Phillip; (Bottom row, L to R) Dave, Mary, Agnes, Anna, and Paul

place in all those years.

"I was born on March 19, 1884, in Lika, Lovinac, Austria. My family was poor, and everyone had to work, from daybreak until dark. We had no schools, but when you were old enough to work, you got your diploma from the school of hard knocks. Once you learned, you never forgot.

"Your dad and I were married on November 18, 1907. We were chosen for each other by our folks. God must have guided them in choosing your father. Your dad left for America February 17, 1908. I had \$100.00, and he borrowed more from Uncle John, who was already in America.

"I stayed with his dad and stepmother for three and one-half years, then he sent me \$100 for my ticket. At that time, he was working at Red Lodge. On June 12, 1922, Grandpa Matovich barbecued a lamb and invited all my friends and relatives to a farewell dinner for me. The next day, June 13, I left my family, my home, my friends, my all, for a strange country.

"Believe me, it wasn't easy. My ticket came to \$40, and I had the rest of the money for further expenses. I went to Trieste. The ship I booked passage on was damaged, so I had to wait for the return trip of the ship, *Martha Washington*, and take it. I waited three weeks for that ship. The first rest of any kind that I ever had. The callouses on my hands were so thick you could cut them with a knife. While waiting there, the money that I was guarding so carefully was 'snatched,' not by a stranger (you could trust them), but by one of my own group. I saw who had it, so I got it back again.

"I was on the water 17 days and arrived in New York the last part of July. I started at once for Red Lodge, Montana. I stayed overnight at DeKalb, Illinois, with Papa's brother, Steven. Then I came straight to Red Lodge, getting there the 1st of August.



Mary Matovich

"Your dad was not there to meet me, but was down on the Musselshell, building a little house for us and squatting on the land for our little ranch. I stayed with Uncle Phillip Matovich until October 18, when Papa came back from the ranch. We stayed that first winter and until the 15th of April in Red Lodge, where Papa had a job in the coal mine.

"Then we went to Lewistown on the train. Our place was 100 miles from Lewistown and we wondered how we would get there, as neither of us could speak English. Papa said for me to wait, and he would go down to the river, get the neighbor's team, and come for me. I started to cry at the thought of his leaving again, and told him I could go wherever he went, however he went.

"So leaving our trunk in Lewistown, we started out on foot in the afternoon and made it to Giltedge that night. We had \$300 on us, our winter's wages, so we bought a little food to take along. The next day, we started towards Black Butte and passed by there when it started to get dark and rain. We met a surveyor who told us about a shack where we could stay. It rained all night, and we waited until noon the next day for the rain to stop, then started toward Valentine.

"That night we stayed in Valentine with some people by the name of Bean. The next day we still had 30 miles of our long journey ahead of us so we started out early in the morning. Uncle Martin's horse happened to be there, so we took turns riding him. We also took turns riding on the stage with the mail carrier. About 10 o'clock that

night we arrived at our home. The floor was dirt, so was the roof, but it was home — our home!

"The next morning I asked Papa where the water was, and he pointed to the Musselshell River. I didn't know what a bog hole was, started right across the thing, and did I fall in! I had a terrible time getting out of that place, and I was a mess.

"Papa made that long trip five times on foot. Two times finding it, and then three times later, when he went back and forth to Red Lodge to spend winters working in the mine.

"On the 17th of July, 1912, our baby boy, Marcus, was born, just three months after we made that long trip on foot. We didn't have a thing to eat in the house except some flour. Thank goodness, there were many prairie chickens and wild game. Whenever we killed a wild chicken, I always saved the feathers for pillows.

"That summer Papa went seven miles away, on foot, to help put up hay. He came home every week after midnight on Saturday and would leave Sunday right after noon. He worked there for two months for \$2 a day. With \$300 we had with us, we bought three mares and two colts. The year before, Papa bought five head of cattle. A wolf killed one, another broke its leg, so three head of cattle and five horses were all we had.

"On September 8, 1912, Papa left for Red Lodge again and stayed until April, around the 25th, when spring opened up. When he left for Red Lodge, Marcus was asleep in the house, and I went out and sat in the front of the house, praying as I always did. It was almost dark. A man came along, dragging a halter. I was scared; I figured if I ran, he would think I was crazy and if I stayed, he might hurt me. I just waited to see what he would say. He was a trapper, named Del Bunn. I couldn't understand what he wanted, so the next day he came back with Joe Bush and wanted to know if I had seen his horse. I told him where I had seen him, and after that, he always sent me meat when he killed a deer.

"That winter Mr. Leedy made a raft and floated it full of groceries from Ft. Benton, down the Missouri River to Fort Musselshell. He gave Mrs. Rukavina and me a winter's supply of food on trust. Why he trusted us, we will never know, but God love him, he did.

"Papa went back to Red Lodge that fall and borrowed the money to pay Mr. Leedy for the food. In those days, people were all in the same boat, and we had to trust one another, not like it is in these days, when the lawyers make the laws and we try to live and abide by them.

"We had a team of mares, so we could plow. Papa held the plow, and I held the lines. He used to bless me out, too. Especially when he told me to put the harness on Rosie, and I got the collar turned around.

"In the last part of March, in 1913, we had a terrible flood when the ice went out. The water and ice ran in and out of our house. I had fled to the hills, forgetting to shut the door. Old man Bush took care of the baby, and got six head of cattle out of the corral. With the rushing water,

ice, and floating logs. I thought I would never make it. I spent that night with Mrs. Rukavina. She was home alone with her three kids, as her husband, Mike, was also in Red Lodge.

"The next day the river went down and I went home. There was a big chunk of ice on my bed. It was a terrible sight! Mr. Fox had nine dead cows scattered from Uncle Martin's to Joe Bush's, where the river just came so fast and took them. That Musselshell River came with a lot of force when it went out. You kids remember that. There were 70 bridge planks washed up on the banks of the river. Where they came from, we'll never know.

"One good thing, we did get our sweet clover seed from that flood. We don't know where that came from either, but we were glad to have it. Little by little we got the things we needed. The first pieces of machinery we had were a walking plow and an old mowing machine we bought from Mr. Bean. I believe that mowing machine is still around some place.

"In 1917 Uncle Martin drowned in the Missouri River. He was crossing the ferry when the cable broke and a pulley hit him on the head. That was a terrible shock to us all. By 1919 we had six children — Marcus, Anna, Agnes, John, Phillip, and Martin, and were \$9000 in debt. We owed that money to Carmichael and Uncle Phillip. That year we lost 60 head of cattle out of 200 from cold and starvation. The same year we bought the Paul Herman place, put \$1500 down on it, and lost it! Some of you think you have it rough, what would you do if you had been in my shoes — couldn't speak English, read, or write?

"The next three years turned out pretty good and we paid off our debts. I was so sick from all the hard work I couldn't lift a 10-pound pail of potatoes, but the dear Lord gave me back my health without a doctor or anything. In 1921, when David was born, Grandpa Matovich came to make his home with us. He came to America before with Uncle Martin and thought it would be like it was in the old country — that boys would make the money and give it to him, but it didn't work that way.

"Uncle Martin kept his money, and in Grandpa's final attempt to get some of that money, he challenged Martin to a poker game. Uncle Martin cleaned him; he got disgusted and went back to Europe. Then he came back to America and stayed with us until 1929, when he went to Canada with Uncle Dan. Later he came back and lived with us from 1934 until 1936, when he died of a stroke.

"Paul was born in 1922, Mary in 1924, and George in 1925. I had ten children in 13 years without help of any kind. The dear Lord had his arms around me all the time, otherwise, I would never have made it.

"During the years I was raising my family, I never was over two miles away from home. You will never know how many pails of water I carried from that river. The day before I was to wash, I would carry 14 buckets of water. I always had heavy work to do and never missed putting up hay.

"Anna raised all the children, with Agnes helping her

along. God love them, they were so young and had to work so hard. Remember the good bread they baked and how much of it you hungry kids could eat? Agnes did most of our sewing, as she still does mine today. In 1929 we bought our first automobile, a 'Chevy' truck. You all remember that? What a thrill!

"In 1931 we drilled our artesian well, thinking we would build a house. Papa cut 30 trees a day. Then we sawed them in pieces and a four-horse team hauled them away. I piled all the branches and burned them, just as I had 20 years before, when we were clearing land. We sawed the lumber and even had the cement, but when the Fort Peck Dam was to be built, we decided it wouldn't be the practical thing to do, so we took the cement back to Winnett. I guess the rocks are still in the very place we piled them.

"We got our first car in 1935. I had walked, ridden a boat, a train, a truck, and then finally, a car. And now, thanks to Clete Huff, I have even taken two trips on an airplane and enjoyed that, too.

"It was hard to lose your dad. He lived just like he died. Thank God, I had him as long as I did, and he was not permitted to suffer too much. Having you wonderful children has helped a lot. And now, on my 72nd Christmas, may God bless you one and all, and I pray that the dear Lord grants you a prosperous New Year and happy living —

Your Mother, Mary Matovich"

MATOVICH, Marcus (Sec 13-18-29) Marcus Matovich is the oldest son of George and Mary Matovich. He was born at the Matovich homestead in 1912, three months after his mother and dad made the long walk to the homestead. (See also MATOVICH, George)

Marcus and his brothers and sisters went to school at Fort Musselshell until that school closed, then attended other schools in the area. Marcus lived at the home place until after the Corps of Engineers bought the homestead for Fort Peck Lake in 1937.

Marcus married Ruby Barkdoll in 1936. Ruby was the daughter of Ruben and Emma Barkdoll, who lived on a homestead five or six miles north of Mosby. (See also BARKDOLL). They lived at the homestead until the spring of 1945, when the Fort Peck Lake filled up and the water was coming up onto the homestead. They bought the Dennis Adams place near Mecaha and set up their headquarters there. They added homesteads (as they became available) to their ranch on both sides of the river. Some were purchased from the owners, and others were picked up on tax deeds. They built up a sizeable spread on the Musselshell during their fifty-plus years on the ranch.

Marcus and Ruby have one daughter, Floy (better known as Tiny), who was born in 1937. Ruby says, "When Tiny was six years old, we had no school. We put in eight years, first one school and then another. She was away from home all the time and very unhappy. When high school time came for her, I moved to Winnett with her for the next four years."

Marcus says, "We raised cattle, hay and alfalfa seed to keep the wolf from the door for sixty years. We lost cattle

to bad winters, wolves and other predators. We finally got rid of the wolves and black bear, and now the government is trying to bring the wolves back onto us. This can only destroy everything we have worked for, for so long."

In about 1984 or 1985, Marcus and Ruby retired and moved to Lewistown. They celebrated their 50th anniversary in Lewistown in 1986. Bill Brindley, one of Marcus and Ruby's grandsons, is now managing the Matovich Ranch on the Musselshell. (See also BRINDLEY, Bill) (Marcus and Ruby Matovich)



Ruby and Marcus Matovich — 50th Wedding Anniversary

Tiny reminisces: "I was born in 1937 to Ruby and Marcus Matovich, five miles north of Mosby. I was born at Emma Barkdoll's (my grandmother's) place. When the time came for me to arrive, Nell Petersen came to help. Dave and Nell Petersen were close neighbors of my grandmother, so Dave took his Model T and went to Jordan after Dr. B. C. Farrand.

"The doctor had a newer car, but since he didn't know the way to Grandmother's place, Dave left his car in Jordan and rode with the doctor. The doctor drove much faster than Dave. Poor Dave was really scared and told everyone they flew on the ground. After the doctor had finished his job and checked me to be sure I was all right, they headed back to Jordan. Dave got his car and thought his trip home was much better and not so fast. I was named Floy Claudine, but my grandmother called me 'Tiny' because I was so small. Most people still know me as Tiny.

"Until I was six years old, I spent my life on the Musselshell River on the place my grandparents, the George Matoviches, had homesteaded. We lived there

until the water in the Fort Peck Lake came up close to the house. Most of the other Matoviches moved to Columbus at this time. Not my dad! He wasn't about to leave the river, so we moved up river out of reach of the lake. He bought the Adams place and we moved in. That place is the headquarters of the Matovich land today.

"My mother was the hired hand and she did a lot of riding and working outside. When she expected to be gone for a long period of time, she would take me to a close neighbor, Dagmar Keith, to stay. I always called her Mama Keith.

"Our only way of getting around was horseback or a team and two-wheeled cart. Our mail came by horse and buggy or horseback. In the winter we stayed home for months at a time.

"Life was pretty simple until I turned six. The folks had to find a school for me and a place for me to stay, as there were no schools running near home. The first year they took me twenty miles up river to the Bowen School, and I was to stay at Harry Nordahls. I didn't last long because I got so lonesome and homesick. The teacher thought it would be best to let me go home and start when I was seven.

"I went back to the same school the next year, and after a lot of tears and struggle, I stuck out the whole term. Mom would come every couple of months and stay overnight with me before going home the next day. The school had a teacherage for the teacher, so the school was warm when we got there. It was a mile and a half from Nordahls' to school. That winter was very cold with lots of snow.

"The next few years there was a school a mile and a half from home, but across the river. If the river was dry or frozen, I could go right across and get to school. If the river was high or the ice was going out, I either had to miss school, or the folks had to take me across in a boat or by horseback. That old river can be a monster at times, and I missed a lot of school. Part of this log school building is still standing at the fork of the 79 Trail.

"One year I went to the Benzien School about 32 miles from home toward Sand Springs. They had school in the spring and summer because so many kids had so far to walk. The winters were so cold and the snow so deep they didn't want their kids out in the winter. This school finished just before Christmas.

"When that term ended, the Gibson kids and I were moved to the Gibson place, where they had fixed up their bunkhouse for school. It was a small log building with a sod roof, and was really warm and cozy. The teacher and I lived in this room, besides holding school there. When summer came they built a bigger two-room building for school, and then the teacher and I lived in one room and school was held in the other room. I was still twenty miles from home, so when winter set in, I never did get home for weekends. For the longer vacations of three or more days, Dad would come horseback, leading a horse for me to ride home for a few days. I finally did finish the eighth grade.

"In 1950 I was ready to start high school, so the folks bought a house in Winnett, and Mom and I moved to town. Sometimes Mom would have to go back and help on the ranch, and I stayed with Mrs. Belva Saylor or with the Kenny Thomases. I graduated in 1955." (Tiny Matovich Brindley) (See also BRINDLEY, Carl — Winnett)

MATOVICH, Martin In 1908 Martin Matovich, brother of George, came to work for Walter Fletcher in the saloon and store at Fort Musselshell. He transported supplies down the Missouri. In 1916 he married Rose Beaubien.

He was drowned at the Fort in 1917 when a cable on the ferry struck him on the head and knocked him into the river. His body was never recovered. Later a skull was found and identified as his.

His widow, Rose, married John Milesnick in 1918. (Marcus Matovich)

MATOVICH, Phillip (Sec 13-18-29) Phillip Matovich, son of George and Mary Matovich, was raised and went to school in the Mecaaha area. He was a champion boxer at Winnett High School, where he graduated in 1937. In 1943 he married Bette Sult, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Sult, at Columbus, Montana.

They lived at his parents' original homestead until the early spring of 1944, when they bought the Nordquist place across the river from the present Marcus Matovich place. They stayed on this place until 1947, then moved to their present ranch on Calf Creek. They formed a partnership with H. R. Sult and Sons (Bette's family). They later bought the H. R. Sult shares and now own the entire ranch.

Phillip and Bette have three children — Harold (1944), Linda (Gershmel) (1945) and Carey (1952).

Harold was born with a love of music. By the time he was eight years old, he was finding a way to worm his way onto the bandstand to watch the musicians at dances — and to perform with them if given a chance! He learned to play practically every stringed instrument and he has provided thousands of hours of enjoyment to others playing at dances and all sorts of programs. Harold is a mail pilot and lives near Billings. He has two daughters — Charlotte and Joey.

When Carey was only 14 years old, she won third place in an essay contest sponsored by the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers with an article on Fort Musselshell. The essay was published in the November 3, 1966, *Lewistown Daily News*. Carey graduated with a degree in journalism from the University of Montana. Several years later she returned to school and received a law degree from U of M. She lives near Billings, where she has a law practice.

Linda married Gary Gershmel. (See also GERSHMEL — Petrolia and Winnett)

MATTHEWS, Roland (Sec 17-21-30) Much of the following information was taken from an article in the *Lewistown News Argus* in 1982 and based in part on an oral

interview by Laurie Mercier of the Montana Historical Society for the Montanans at Work Oral History project. Marcus Matovich also contributed to the information.

Roland Matthews was born in 1886 in a two-room cabin at Waverly, Kentucky, the state where "the corn is full of kernels and the colonels are full of corn." He was one of ten children.

Roland came to Montana in early 1907. He worked for awhile for Bill Spencer, a sheep rancher in the Larb Hills, about fifty miles south of Malta. Then he worked for the Long X Ranch south of Malta. This ranch ran cattle and horses. Roland recalled, "I'd bring the horses in for work. They called me the Kentucky Kid."

He says, "We would work on a cattle ranch through the spring and summer, then sometimes we'd get a winter job and sometimes we wouldn't. If we didn't get a job, a bunch of us would throw together, rent a cabin, buy oats for our horses and ride the grub line. The grub line was a name for the system of feeding the cowboys who traveled the line of ranches looking for work. We'd usually stay at each ranch for a day or two, and then move on our way."

Roland homesteaded in Garfield County in 1917. He later sold this homestead and bought a small ranch on the Missouri River near the mouth of the Musselshell.

He remembers riding in rodeos (or roundups as they were called then) in Miles City in 1917. He sold horses all



Roland and Beatrice Matthews, shortly after their marriage

summer in Miles City. During World War I, he sold horses to the cavalry. He says, "I bought 120 head of horses for sixty dollars each. I took them to Miles City and sold them for \$135.00 as cavalry horses. The broke horses sold for \$165.00" Roundup time in the early days was different from the roundup of today. Roundup usually began in April with the branding of the calves and lasted until the last herd was loaded for market.

The cattle were scattered all over the countryside, since there weren't any fences to keep them in. Ten or twelve cowboys were hired for the roundup. Each was given eight to ten horses. They'd start in the early morning hours, round up all the cattle they found, and bring them back to the round-up wagon. In the afternoon, they'd brand the calves.

The last round-up wagon would pull into the ranch about the end of June, and the cowboys would start to get ready for the Fourth of July. They'd all brag about what they'd be going to do on the Fourth, but about all they did was get drunk.

The beef roundup would start in August. They would round up all the steers but didn't ship anything under four years old. When the roundup was over, the cowboys who didn't get a winter job would go riding the grubline.

In those days, very few cowboys carried a gun; or even when they did carry one, they seldom used it. Roland says, "Me, I never had much use for a gun. I did carry one. However, I used it more for pounding the snow out of my horse's shoes than for shooting."

One of the highlights in the lives of the cowboys was the weekly dances held in the communities. Roland remembers traveling up to eighty miles (round trip) to go to dances. Roland says, "I danced in purt'near every schoolhouse in that county (Phillips). I didn't own a Model T, so I usually just rode my horse."

Roland met Beatrice Lapham at one of the dances, and they were married in 1919. Beatrice, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Lapham, was born in 1898 at Battle Creek Michigan. She moved to Lewistown in 1917 and then homesteaded on the Missouri River.

During the 1920s, the Matthews raised cattle. Roland recalls, "The cattle business was all right, but some years prices went down. During the Panic, things got worse. Dust storms drove the homesteaders out. The cattle business is the best business in the world, 'cause you always got something to sell, if you don't lose the cattle. Farming, you might get a crop one year and nothing the next, but if you got cattle, you always got something."

Roland and Beatrice Matthews had four children — William, now of Victoria, Canada; Dave, Vern, and Betty (all of Lewistown).

The children all rode horseback to school until they got into high school. Then Beatrice and the kids moved into Lewistown for the school year. Roland would come in about once a month from the ranch. He says, "That's the way you get along in married life."

Roland and family lived on the ranch from 1918 to 1934, when the government bought his land to build the

Fort Peck Dam. Roland was not thrilled when the government approached him with the offer to buy the ranch. Roland explained, "To tell the truth, they just took my home, the only home I ever had in my life, the first one and the most prosperous, and they just took it away from me. I didn't like it, but I couldn't do anything about it."

The government paid him \$9800.00 for his land. With that money, he bought a place near Sheridan, Montana. After Roland sold his ranch in 1936, he went to work as a mail carrier on the Roy to Valentine route. He made the mail runs every other day. He made a little extra money hauling passengers and freight. He remembers how he hauled a fella and his wife on their honeymoon one time.

When asked what Roland thought attracted men to living the life of a cowboy, he answered, "I don't know, but I wouldn't trade my experiences for all the money in the world. I've got that to think about for the rest of my life. This is the most joyful life in the world. To be free . . . I thought at times that I had a tough time, but come to think about it . . . I had a lot of fun, even though I made little money, I wouldn't trade those times for the world."

So at the age of 96, Roland Matthews was still going strong. When asked why, he answered, "Hell is full of old-time cowboys, and there's no saddle horses in Heaven. So there's nothing for me to do but just keep on livin'."

Roland celebrated his 100th birthday, September 4, 1986. He died in December of 1986. Beatrice died in 1979. They are buried in Malta, Montana.

MAXWELL, James James and Mary Maxwell bought land in the southeastern corner of Petroleum County in 1954, from Elmer, John and Leo Collier. They run sheep. Their home place is near Melstone, but they live in Petroleum County during lambing and shearing. They have four children — Olive, Lawrence, Mike and Tom.

Their place includes the following homesteads: Ed Lisle, Harold Campbell, Louis Gegner, Bessie Griffin, John Hensley, Robert Wombles, John Collier, Bernard Smith, Lily Hanson, Gilbert Semington, L. Landsmark, George and Etta Mills, and Harry Barrick.

MAYS, R. G. and Homer (Sec 9-14-30) Mr. and Mrs. R. G. Mays and Mr. and Mrs. Homer Mays bought the James Parkinson place in 1944 and stocked the land with sheep. In the spring of 1945, they sold the sheep to J. E. Merritt of Ogden, Utah. They trailed the two bands to Winnett to be shipped to Utah. The first band numbered 2200, and the second band numbered 2100.

(W. T. 8-2-45) "Mr. and Mrs. Homer Mays and family left for Bozeman in 1945, but the R. G. Mays plan to restock their extensive range holdings this fall, if the moisture conditions improve. Shortage of range water is becoming acute in a number of sections of the country."

Mrs. Homer Mays applied to teach the Weede School and was hired to teach for the school year of 1945-46. Lack of grass and hay, however, forced them to sell their livestock in the fall of 1945. They then sold the land to G. A. Ostler and moved to Bozeman. Mrs. Mays continued

teaching, until a substitute could be found to finish the year for her. (See also MAYS — Winnett)

McDANIEL, Robert Robert McDaniel, son of Clarence and Frances McDaniel, attended Petroleum County elementary schools and Winnett High School. He married Audrey Wilkinson of the Musselshell River area. They had two sons — David and Allan, both of Melstone, Montana.

Robert and Audrey were later divorced and Robert married Arlene Wilkinson. They moved to Wolf Creek, Montana. (See also McDANIEL — Winnett)

McGIBONEY, Horace and Lawrence (Sec 28-14-30) and (Sec 33-14-29) The year 1913 saw three young bachelors come into the Weede area. They were Horace (Mack), Lawrence (Red), and James F. (Jim) McGiboney. These brothers had come from Missouri to Roundup, Montana, where they worked in the Klein coal mines for awhile.

Horace McGiboney filed on a homestead north of Roundup but relinquished it to go to the Musselshell River. In 1915 he married Florence Parkinson, daughter of Silas and Florence Parkinson, and they moved onto her homestead (Sec 28-14-30) in the Weede area. (See also PARKINSON) They had three children, two of whom died, leaving Marvel (1922). H. E. had many enterprises, in addition to stock raising, one of which was a Whitte log saw that he and James Parkinson purchased. They planned to harvest some of their timber and turn it into cash. In 1925 they purchased the Angelo Watterson holdings and planned to make that the home ranch. Marvel got her schooling in California, where she stayed with her mother's sister. Florence died in 1933, and H. E. married Madge Westby in 1936. They continued to live on the ranch until 1945, when they sold to Parley Rowton and moved to California. Horace passed away in 1964 at the age of 76.

Lawrence McGiboney filed on Sec 33-14-29. However, after a few years he and his family moved to Roundup, where they operated a cafe. He later moved back to Springfield, Missouri.

McGIBONEY, James F. (Sec 25-14-29) James F. McGiboney filed on a homestead and started a ranch. In the 1920s he purchased the K. E. Park place. He married Leona Flint (who was working for Mrs. Sather) in 1924. They had four children — Lois (1925), James (1931), Donald (1934) and Hanley (1936). They raised huge gardens, selling potatoes, tomatoes, and corn to the stores and to people who came to pick. Jim earned extra money by working in the oil fields. After the children were raised, Jim turned the place over to the family, and he took off to enjoy life traveling, hunting, fishing, and visiting. He presently lives in Eagles Manor in Lewistown, Montana, and is 97 years old.

During World War I, James and his brother, Dave, served with the Army and were overseas. On September 28, 1918, Dave was hit by a shell and lost his leg. On

September 19, 1918, James was severely injured in battle. The brothers had not seen each other for many years but were united in the hospital.

None of Jim's children favored ranching as a way of life, so they wanted to sell and go their own ways. But because Leona wanted to spend her remaining days on the ranch, Hanley and his wife, Jane, ran the place until Leona's death in 1984. They then put the place on the market and sold it to Steve Hale in 1987.

In 1964 Hanley located a snake den and dynamited it. He killed 35-40 rattlesnakes, one bullsnake, and what appeared to be a coral snake. The snake had orange, blue, and green stripes around the body and a small head. The coral snake is supposed to be common only in the South.

Lois married Jadie Berg in 1954. They have two children, Jodey (1956) and Darlene (1958). James had a ruptured appendix when he was 14 years old, and died of complications. Donald married Jana Nelson. They live at Great Falls, Montana, where he is a beer distributor. They have four children — Debbie, Doug, Shela, and Donny. Hanley married Jane Bevis, daughter of Nedra and John Bevis, in 1968. They have two sons, Glen Raymond (1971) and Monty Gene (1973). After selling the ranch, they purchased a home near Lewistown and opened a repair service that they call Auto Service

McVEY, Arza R. (Sec 26-12-30) Arza and Laura McVey were homesteaders in the Willow Creek area. They had two children listed in the school census of District #164. The children were Ralph (1908) and Doris (1911). The last time they were listed was in the 1920 census.

MESERVE, Henry Henry Meserve came to Montana from Canada in the late 1800s and eventually made his way to Illinois, where he married Jennie Ranney in 1899. Henry returned to Montana to establish a home. Jennie and two small children, Wilbur and Beulah, came from Quincy, Illinois, to Ft. Benton on a steamboat in 1903. They then took the stage to Windham, Montana. Henry had started a livery barn and freight outfit there. It included six wagons and sixteen two-horse hitches. He freighted from Great Falls to Lewistown and from Billings to Lewistown. It was about this time that Henry and Jennie also established their original homestead at the very spot where Lewistown still gets its famous water supply. They later traded that homestead for property on the Missouri River.

Eventually leaving Windham and the freighting business, Henry, Jennie, and family moved to the river homestead, where Jennie and children spent most of their time. It was during these years that Myrtle, Ethel, Cosby, and Art were born. Henry freighted around Lewistown off and on, in order to supplement their income. The family later moved to Lewistown where Henry was working. Henry died in 1918.

After Henry passed away, Jennie and children moved back to a place near what is called the "Welter Divide."