Dear Mr. Bloom—

The Berliner family line really is a remarkable one: first the generosity to me from your grandmother, then your mother, and now you.

I'm doubly grateful to you. I hadn't been aware of the Wright Morris article in the Globe—I don't have a clipping service, and feckless apparently doesn't begin to describe my erstwhile college roommate who works at the Globe and didn't pass the article along—so was very pleased to receive it, both because I'm mentioned and because Morris is preaching my own gospel of region. My larger gratitude is for you prompting your grandmother into the phone call. I made some notes at the time, not as copious as I now realize I should have done, probably it's a comment on her vigor that it never occurred to me I was talking with someone who might not be around for a very long time yet. Anyway, the conversation was useful, as was some of the Miles City material she had sent me earlier. Eventually you may recognize a detail or two in a Montana novel I intend—probably to get into print about 1981.

Again, thanks, and I'm glad Marie Berliner's heritage lives on in you.

very best,

[Signature]

p.s. Will be in Montana much of May. If Maclean is in Missoula as he sometimes is in spring, I hope to see him. He is an astonishing gent.
Dear Ivan Doig:

I've bolted into that mid-life season when it is both customary and requisite that I start thinning the herds of correspondence, photographs, unread books and the like. And so, not too far into these purification rites, I came across your lovely letter to me of April 11, 1980. The subject matter was tangentially about the West you know and love and describe so well. The real focus was on my wonderful grandmother, Marie Berliner, who in many, many ways was my very best friend (see enclosed remarks I made after her death in 1979). There are very few weeks that go by when I don't think about her or remember some lovely interaction.

I'm hoping to do some research around my grandmother's life and Miles City in particular. An old friend of mine now lives in Pray, which isn't exactly down the next mile marker, but it will render me better-than-homeless during my future visits.

Recently read Work Song and liked it. If any other titles hue to the Big Sky setting and romance, please let me know. Right now, I'm working my way through all of Hardy—a long-postponed pleasure.

I trust you are well and thank you again, across a span of decades and words, for your treasured interactions with Marie.

Best,

David
davidwbloom@verizon.net
In leaving us, she has not left us

By DAVID BLOOD

Editor's note: Many paid tribute last Sunday at the Larchmont Public Library to Marie Berliner, whose service to and involvement with Larchmont and Mamaroneck spanned half a century. Among them was her grandson, David Bloom, who accepted our invitation to reproduce his remarks as a guest column.

We had this thing about libraries. We often spoke of collaborating on a guide to the world's great collections. We even had a working title: "Books and Mortar."

I was thinking of our project that evening in Southern California when I first learned that I had lost my best friend. Earlier that day I had taken a new sculpture from my home to the Morgan Library in Pasadena. I knew well that were I to return to the East Coast without having wandered the quiet orange groves and Japanese gardens, without having cast an appreciative eye on the Ellesmere Manuscript, I would invoke Nana's affectionate disappointment.

Two years ago I had been compelled to admit that I had never set foot inside the Morgan Library. It was as if I were to ever come to the confessional, and this episode of bibliographic tomfoolery were not taken lightly. These and other episodes of bibliographic tomfoolery were not taken lightly. These and other episodes of bibliographic tomfoolery were not taken lightly.

Telepathically she backed my rishest cushion shots in billiard parlors in remote Texas towns. In her own fashion she was with me as well when I begged my way on board a freight train in northern Maine one summer night last July. She helped stories become fables.

It does not strike me as odd that when I decided to part with a beard to which I had grown quite attached for seven years, I chose to do so across state lines in my grandmother's apartment. When I arrived she had transformed her dressing table into an elaborate barber shop - three-sided mirrors, new razors and blades, scissors of every dimension and portended use, hot towels, shaving cream, brushes, and Band-Aids (just in case). I never knew until I finished my shave how little she had liked my beard. She withheld love from no one, but some secrets she kept with herself.

Nana showed me my first cowboys. After Howard's (her son and David's uncle) death, I went with her to Miles City, Mont. I went to offer comfort, perhaps some strength, and found instead that she was the comforted and the stronger for our time there. I saw her life wholly then, stretching out and back in her grand parade of experience - born near a railroad in Iowa, raised in the hill country of Montana, dispatched by tragedy and wanderlust to the two oceans she loved so much. Geography was good to her and she to it.

A word about the messages she left. Often while traveling about the country, I would return to my hotel and find a message that my grandmother had called, "Just tell him that I am thinking of him." That was Nana letting me know she was there (1,500 miles away from tedious evenings in Houston or Canton), just checking in, assuring me of her long-distance love, helping me to feel part of a more sensitive universe than can be divided from the Holiday Inn galaxy.

My grandmother was my best friend. I say this because we had much in common, because she was always there for me, because she sparkled when she needed it, and left me to my own devices when I needed that. She understood well that private time is not secrecy: Time alone is not loneliness.

She took exception and made exception to the rules of age and aging. In rewriting the job description for grandmothers and women over 70, she drew my friends to her. They recognized her talent for living. I learned last week that Michael, with whom I shared a good part of my growing up, and his wife Ellen, have given Nana's name to their first child. There will only ever be one Marie Berliner, but it pleases me that we will be reminded of her through a life unfolding.

My grandmother was a convener of good times. She was attentive to detail, but she was not petty. I don't think she ever put me onto a book I didn't like. How many of us here today know that address on Charing Cross Road because my grandmother thought we should? I never came home to her apartment without finding a book, a clipping, a literary snippet perched beside the bed. She shared with me the fear of going to sleep without having the written word nearby, I loved her for that.

My own life has been both informed and enriched by my grandmother's presence, but we have all been the fortunate. She generously shared with us her warmth and wit, style and sensitivity, her wealth of personal history. I miss her very much. But I believe in a plausible way that we must still be close to the proffered books, the ocean-gazing down by the Rocks, the abiding concern for making things right, and we are comforted by her example. This is beyond memory, beyond memorials. In leaving us, she has not left us.

DAVID BLOOD has been director of admissions for A Better Chance Inc., of Boston, Mass., a national educational foundation for brilliant minority students. He has just accepted the position of director of admissions and financial affairs at the Wharton School of Business Administration at the University of Pennsylvania.

latest
Dear Ken--

I didn't really get a chance in the Bellingham bookstore the other day to talk with you about Ingomar, and to explain my interest in it. So here goes, and I'll appreciate anything you can add:

A fellow I know in Great Falls, Bradley Hamlett, spent some time somewhere around Ingomar when he was growing up in the 1930's, and Brad was the one who told me about the Scotch bachelor sheepmen who lived in the hotel, and every week would go out from there to tend camp and see how their herders and sheep were doing. I'm writing a novel about Montana during the Depression years, and while this Ingomar material would be only a small sideline, I am interested in finding out whatever I can, since sheep ranching from a hotel is a new one on me. Now, can you tell me--

--Does the story of those guys ranching from a hotel sound familiar to you? In fact, were you around there when any of them were doing it?

--Remember any names of the guys? For the sake of my book, I'm particularly interested in Scotchmen.

--What was the name of the hotel, and what did it look like—a sizable two-story place? Wood or brick? Did it have a cafe? A bar?

--Do you know anything about how the guys got along with each other: any particular famous friendships or feuds? Were they renowned for sitting around the lobby and telling stories, or poker playing, or anything? I'd simply be glad to have any tales or details you might recall.

--For that matter, I'd simply be glad to have anything you can tell me about Ingomar when you were there—how big it was, what kept the town going, what the main store was, what were the names of the bars. And somebody told me that for a time Ingomar's drinking water came from a railroad tank car pulled into a siding: know anything about that??

Glad you came by the store the other day, it's always pleasant to encounter other Montanans. Quite a bunch of us out here.

Happy holidays, and best wishes

[Signature]

1st, Dec. '32
From the desk of

TOM LEASE  10-24-87

Mr. Doig:

I mentioned the "Homeseekers' Special" train that we kids used to ride home for Christmas vacation many years ago—when I talked briefly to you after your talk at Paris Gibson Square a few days ago. Since you were interested in further information—I thought I'd send a copy of this letter to Hal, to you. I had known Hal back in the 50's when I used to travel thru Harlowtown handing goff course equipment.

If any further questions— we will be in our Sonoma, Calif. home as of about Nov. 4 for the next 6 months thereafter.  
20700 Meadow Drive, Sonoma, Calif.  
95476

Ph ,707-938-3069

Best regards

Tom Lease (one)

We much enjoyed your talk!
We had been in the
Ceram area a day or so
before your talk, when my
wife has 160 acres - home
stepped by her Dad when
They became available in
the early 1900's.
Mr. Hal Stearns
Helena, Mont.

Dear Hal:

It was fun and informative to have opportunity to visit with you good folks after all these years, again. We have to see that we have this get together more often hereafter!

You asked for more information of the "Homeseekers' Special" train fares that were in effect on the Great Northern RR in the late 20's. I was at Bozeman (Engr) MSC during the school years of 26-27, and 27-28. I went back to Ann Arbor U. of M., in the fall of '28, and finished there in the spring of '31.

This special fare was of course, designed to entice people to visit the West. It was effective from about Dec. 21 thru early Jan. of the following year, as I remember. It was cheaper than regular fares and thus a number of us who were in various universities east of Chicago, made special arrangements with our instructors as to exams and such, so that (in my case) I was able to leave school a day or two early, to make connections with this train schedule. Since it was strictly a round trip deal, it was ideal for us all to go home for Christmas and return for classes in Jan.

There were quite a few of us who took advantage of this special fare, so that by the time that we picked up students along the way from Chicago, and picked up those at various places in Minn., we had a whole pullman car all to ourselves.

I well remember one incident - a young lady from somewhere in the eastern area, was coming out to Big Sandy to visit her boyfriend whom she had met back there. She had no idea at all as to what Big Sandy was all about, as she was evidently used to the larger cities and their "nite life" back there. She asked us if there were any big dance halls, or other amusement places in Big Sandy, she was very anxious to meet her boy friend's family and to make a good impression.

We said as little as possible, knowing that she could well be very shocked and disappointed when she landed there. The train stopped at Big Sandy - as I remember - about 3 AM on its way from Havre to GF. Of course, it was a cold and snowy nite, and we all were quite concerned about what a shock she had coming! Two weeks later we all were anxious as we traveled back to Havre, to hear from her what had transpired.

To state it briefly - she had had a BALL - the whole town had welcomed her with characteristic "Western" hospitality. She had attended barn dances - and a lot of "special" things were done for
her. We were all quite relieved!

As I remember, this special train fare was in effect for at least my first year back there in Ann Arbor, and maybe for the last two years also.

Others here who might well remember about this "Special" who are still living—would be the former "Dude" Warden (OS Warden's daughter). She is now Mrs. G.A. Hansen, Dearborn Apts. here in GF. There are probably others, whom I don't remember. An article in the newspaper about all this, would doubtless evoke responses from others who participated along with me.

Since Mr. Doig told me that he was interested in knowing more about this "Homeseker's Special" train fare, I will see that he gets a copy of this letter, bad typing and all!

If there are further questions, please feel free to let me know. We plan to leave here to drive to Sonoma, Ca. in the next ten days or so.

My best regards to you both!

Sincerely

[Signature]
Introduction

It didn't just happen! The TRI-CITY REUNION on June 18, 19, and 20, 1976 was planned as a local event to enhance our nation’s Bicentennial celebration.

It was a success! Not because of the actions of a few people although a nucleus had to do preliminary planning and actual operation; but, because of the spirit and participation of the fifteen hundred persons who attended and by the support and in-put of the hundreds more who provided information and background on the history and development of the communities of Sumatra, Ingomar, and Vananda and the area they served.

The success of the effort reflects the same indomitable spirit exhibited by the rancher and the homesteader who settled and developed the country. A "never-say-die" spirit that caused some to stay in the face of cruel obstacles; drought, depression, grasshoppers, and disease ... and other to evaluate the odds and judiciously pull-up stakes and start a new life at some other point on the geography of the United States.

The idea for a reunion had surfaced in conversations several years before the event, but in early 1975 the first correspondence was mailed inviting a number of persons to a meeting for discussion of such an event. It was not productive but in the months following a number of people who had been invited to the initial meeting and didn't attend said they did have an interest. Result: on November 2, 1975 we had the first meeting of a group that resulted in the TRI-CITY REUNION committee.

Our first official meeting was held in the Oak Room at Forsyth and sixteen persons participated in the formation of the committee. Attending were Mrs. Gladys Bennett Moyer, Mrs. Betty Brain Babcock, Paul O'Dea, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hagen, Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Hecker, Otto Ben dewald, Virgil Satterthwait, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Owens, Mr. and Mrs. Erik Erickson, Mrs. Janet Myssel, and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hunnes.

This group selected Janet Myssel, Chairman; Patti Erickson, Vice-Chairman; and Fred Hunnes, Secretary-Treasurer. Community committee chairman selected were: Jerome Hecker and Paul O'Dea for Sumatra; Betty Babcock and Jane School for Ingomar; and Otto Bendewald and Myrtle Evinson for Vananda.

The TRI-CITY REUNION was on its way!

Subsequent meetings of the general committee and many interested persons were held in Miles City, Forsyth and Ingomar. Newspaper, radio, and television publicity was prepared, letters were written and direct-mail information was printed. Registrations began coming in and the Bicentennial celebration for the communities of Sumatra, Ingomar, and Vananda was ready to happen.

One of the facets of the reunion was the responsibility of publishing a book about the area and the people who shaped it. That wish is now complete with the printing of this volume.

This book is a compilation of bits and pieces, events and experiences recalled by hundreds of people. Each reminiscence was accepted at face value; it was impossible to research the accuracy of dates, places, and events. The title, THEY SAY "IT HAPPENED THAT WAY" was selected to alert the reader that material may contain conflicting information; not intentionally, but because the span of years tends to dim our memory. This book is the most complete aggregation of material about the people and the area available; the stories and pictures are "one-of-a-kind"... they are collectors items!

Our philosophy in preparing this book was most aptly stated by Scott: "I cannot tell how the truth may be; I say the tale as 'twas told to me."

The book cover features the reunion badge designed by Lois Henrickson Smith of Seattle; a blue circle with red and white triangles superimposed on it. The colors are the Bicentennial celebration and the American flag.

Finally, we hope this book will add a little to your knowledge of the "Sumatran area family" ... an album page preserved for future generations drawn together by the times and life of the people.

Perchance this book may help you to see the larger picture; a chance to partially understand how parents pulled up roots in foreign countries to return to the States to "own a piece of land in Montana". In this book are stories of families from the Tri-City area. This is a story for you. As you travel or vacation this summer, you are the source for you to extend a cheer or a "hello" to others in the Sumatra, Ingomar, Vananda localities.

There are errors in this book and we ask your toleration. Whether these may be errors of omission or commission we ask as you peruse the book to make marginal notes of the correct event or spelling so that others using your book may have the correct perspective.

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Like any good convention, the Tri-City Reunion had a key-note speaker and that person was Lyle Stewart. His address delivered on Sunday morning, June 20 highlighted the get together.

The plans had been to hold this portion of the combination religious-historical program at a natural amphitheater north of town but threatening skies and windy conditions precluded the out-door observance. The morning activities were held in the Ingomar gym.

Stewart dramatized the tenacity of the members of the committee that wrote the constitution in 1776 and who guided that document through the Continental Congress. He compared the events of 1776 with the parts the early-settlers in the Tri-City area played in the overall development of our nation. Although history will not record the accomplishments of the homesteaders and ranchers of the area, Stewart said, there is no doubt that each person who developed a home or a livelihood in this area had a generous portion of the same kind of resolve and initiative as did the authors of our country's constitution.

Lyle Stewart was an appropriate speaker! Although not born in the Tri-City area, he came to Ingomar with his parents as a child. He was schooled at Ingomar and at age 17 with one year of college he was teaching school at Hole-in-the-Rock school. Later he taught in the Ingomar school system.

A tribute to his ability was voiced by two students: Betty Brain Babcock was a pupil at Hole-in-the-Rock and she credited Lyle with being a strict disciplinarian. In addition, he boarded at the Brain home and Betty was happy that his presence meant more cakes and special baked goods for the teacher! Tom Owens was a pupil of Lyle's in Ingomar and he admired his ability to handle students and also his willingness to "pitch in" and do manual labor even though he was an educated man.

The three-day Tri-City Reunion program began on Friday, June 18 at high noon with registration at the Ingomar gym. There were many people on hand and eager to register when the doors opened; the population of Ingomar had mushroomed with mobile and trailer homes pulled into parking positions on streets and vacant lots.

The first formal entertainment of the reunion came on Friday evening when the Hamilton Players staged a show titled "Jennie." The play was written by Laverne Jewell of Melstone. She based the play on her memories of events and situations at Donaldson's General store in Melstone. The time was about the turn of the century. Actors were primarily from Hamilton but Robert Rudolph of Ingomar played Papa, a key character in the drama.

Scottish dancers Jodi Burnett and Ava Burnett Boshchie of Miles City entertained as did vocalist Bob Yarger. Yarger was born on the Musselshell and resides in Circle. The evening was completed with informal entertainment including old-time fiddle playing.

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Sunday morning's religious and Bicentennial program was followed by a picnic served indoors by the Billings "Magic City" catering service. Although every facet of the formal program was enjoyed, the real memory of the occasion was the opportunity to meet and talk to old friends and acquaintances from years before. Many were those who commented later, "I'd never have dreamt of talking and visiting again with so-and-so. It was fantastic!"

An educated guess at the total number of people attending the Tri-City reunion was 1,200 persons. The food catering service counted 1,000 at the Saturday night barbecue and 500 on Sunday; but, there were a lot of people who gathered with friends for their own informal picnic or were so busy visiting they didn't take time to make the reunion feeds. One newspaper account estimated 1,400 persons present at one time in Ingomar.
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Finally, we hope this book will provide hours of enjoyment for you. Perhaps it will serve as a kind of "family" album, not of one family, but an "area family" .... an album of people, neighbors, friends, and events drawn together by the times and life styles it covers.

Perchance this book may help to bridge the gap between the generations; a chance to partially understand why parents and grandparents pulled up roots in foreign countries and other parts of the United States to "own a piece of land in Montana."

The final pages of this book are a roster of names and addresses of families from the Tri-City area. This section can be an exciting directory for you. As you travel or vacation about the country, it can serve as a source for you to extend a cheery "hello" to someone with roots in the Sumatra, Ingomar, Vananda locale. Using it may make someone's day a little brighter or it may be a step in establishing new friends and acquaintances.

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An educated guess at the total number of people attending the Tri-City reunion was 1200 persons. The food catering service counted 1,000 at the Saturday night barbecue-picnic and 500 on Sunday; but, there were a lot of people who gathered with friends for their own informal picnic or were so busy visiting they didn’t take time to make the reunion feeds. One newspaper account estimated 1400 persons present at one time in Ingomar.

The Ingomar, Vananda, and Sumatra communities all owe their development to two basic happenings: the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad completed their building program and coal dock and water tower facilities were needed every few miles. This meant that railroad employees stationed at these points would be permanent residents. The area development meant shipping centers had to develop.

The Homestead Acts offered “free land” to anyone who’d file and perform specified improvements kindling a migration of people to the area. The fact that growing conditions made especially good crops in the early teens sparked more interest in farming the lands in Northern Rosebud county. Promoters and land agents added glowing accounts to entice laborers and salaried persons to come from the mid-west and east to become entrepreneurs in this land of opportunity.

The naming of communities was done by Milwaukee railroad officials, although some names may have been established by others.

Sumatra may have the earliest established history of the tri-cities. According to information in the book “Names on the Face of Montana” by Roberta Cheney, Sumatra was first called Summit; it is one of the highest elevations on the Milwaukee railroad between Miles City and Harlowton. Even before the railroad, Sumatra or Summit was on the old trail between Fort Musselshell and Fort Custer.

A community gained real permanence with the establishment of a school and a post office and Sumatra’s opened in 1910; Ingomar’s opened in 1910; and Vananda’s in 1912.

Area communities and post offices multiplied as the homesteaders took up the land. Some of the names of communities that you’ll find in the contents of this book include Absher, Acorn, Ahl, Alice, Amsberg, Antelope, Bascom, Bruce, Brunelda, Brusett, Davidell, Edwards, Elmer, Galbraith, Griselda, Heritage, Hibbard, Ivanell, Karch, Leta, Maidlin, Rahway, Rimrocks, Sagedale, Sand Springs, Seta, Snowbelt, Stellar, Thebes, Vanselst and more.

Ingomar’s fame is attributed to two main assets, with the advent of the railroad it was an important rail head for the thousands of acres to the North, in fact all the way to the Missouri river, and secondly, to its sheep shearing plant, one of the largest in the world. The following article by Sivert Mysse describes the sheep industry.

"INGOMAR — SHEARING CAPITAL"

By Sivert Mysse

Ingomar, Montana, claimed the title of “Sheep Shearing Capital of North America” for many years, from the completion of the Milwaukee Railroad through there, until the late Thirties. Duncan McDonald recalls that he brought a herd of 3600 wethers into the Ingomar corrals for Percy Williamson in 1911, and that they were sheared, branded, and ready to go by 3 p.m. after arriving at the corrals around 9:30 a.m.; this bunch of wethers had been herded and grazed from Big Timber in the Spring to Ingomar for shearing, and were destined to be grazed to Glendive for Fall shipment. He also recalls that he was told that 170,000 sheep were sheared at Ingomar in 1911, and another 50,000 — mostly ewes and lambs — were shorn at a competing plant 5 miles to the northwest, at the head of Froze-to-Death Creek. Mrs. E. W. Wayman recalls that the Ingomar Shearing Company was incorporated in late 1916 or early 1917 to take over the previous private shearing plant and to improve service to sheepmen, and that they employed at least 52 shearers at one time.

Shearing at Ingomar was convenient because it was on the route to free grass, and economical because the wool was loaded directly onto railroad cars and avoided the expense of hauling by wagon or trucks, and the risk of getting the woolbags wet.

The shearing shed is torn down now, but it was quite an impressive sight, which could hold about 4,000 sheep in the "sweat shed" area, enough to keep the crew working about a half-day in rainy weather; the relentless procession of tied-fleeces moving on the endless belt, over the catch-pens to the sacking area, was powered by the same large one-cylinder engine that powered the shaft that ran the clippers.

It was the free graz in the public domain that brought sheepmen into the vast area between the Yellowstone and the Missouri Rivers; some of the sheep were winterted at home ranches on the larger creeks in the nearby area, but many were wintered at ranches along the Yellowstone and came from a great distance. Wethers were run solely for their wool in herds as large as 4,000 head, until the fall of the year they were 4 years old and had reached maximum growth, when they were sold for mutton.

As Homesteaders fenced up the prairie, steadily reducing the free-grass area, and impeding movement of livestock by fences, herds of wethers became uneconomical, but ewe-lamb operations were still carried on on a large scale; with this first reduction in sheep numbers, the number of shearers was reduced and the season shortened, but the shearing business at Ingomar continued large until the late Thirties. At that time, portable shearing plants, better roads, and more powerful trucks made it practical to haul the wool to the railroad instead of trailing
the sheep so far, but the wool warehouse at Ingamor continued to handle a lot of wool, while shearing at Ingamor declined sharply.

In reminiscing Ingamor the Ingamor area was dominated by Norwegians, with Scotsmen a strong second, and hardy individuals of other nationalities also prominent in a thriving sheep industry. A partial list of sheeplemen active in the Ingamor area at one time or another is: John Bell; Tild and Tom Birkem; Ben and Tom Bjornested; Rockwood Brown; John Crossen; George Donaldson; Albert Dunlap; Andrew Erickson; Knut Gerina; O. C. Grimsdahl; Ben Grossfield; Sever Hagen; Andrew John, Mikkel and Tobias Hallanger; Carl, Gus and Ed Hellos; Alex Innes; Gunnar Lende; Alex and Ed MacDonald; Wm. Magelssen; Joe Marshall; John Merkel; Henry Melgren; S. O. Mysses; Dave Nelson; Ellen Nygaard; Ben Olson; Matt Rapstad; John Ringheim; Frank Robinson; Andrew Swela; Harry VanDuzen; E. W. Wayman; Percy Williamson.

World War II brought about a big switch from sheep to beef and cattle, and the Nuncio Executive Order banning 1060 Poison raised the coyote kill to an intolerable level for most small operators and large operators alike. By 1975, there were only a few small herds of sheep left in the Ingamor area, and one large operator: Cherry Creek Sheep Company which was formed in 1931 when S. O. Mysses incorporated his sheep business.

The town of Sumatra is hardly on the map anymore. Good roads and fast transportation have left small towns to wither away; but, many will remember the town's people, the school, and the commerce that once took place there.

Anna Whitney Dorothy of Sumatra witnessed a large part of the development and decline of the area. The following is her vivid and descriptive account of that transition.

"ANNA DOROTHY RECOUNTS THE EARLY DAYS OF SUMATRA"

After completion of the Milwaukee Railroad in 1908 the railroad and government put on an advertising program for settlers. It was extensive as people from many states and all walks of life became interested in homesteading. The Yellowstone River land had been settled beginning in about 1880. Some of the first to homestead were men that had worked as cowboys, freighters, surveyors and railroadmen. Also a few of the younger generation from Pease Bottom. These first homesteaders filed on the choice plots with springs. The water table at this time was probably from 10 to 15 feet above what it is now. The only dams were those on the gumbo formed by the railroad fills. Fred Herbolt put in the first dam just south of Sumatra in 1913. It was built by Charley Ball of Forsyth with horses. This dam was built for irrigation, mainly for alfalfa. Mr. Herbolt was a surveyor and saw the potential of water and alfalfa. He was injured while putting in the head gate of this dam and died from a liver access in 1914. His widow, Minnie Herbolt managed the ranch for a few years after his death.

There were no wells; boxes or barrels were put in the springs. The early years must have had ample moisture as desirable grasses were thick and tall. Wild flowers were abundant. Old lake beds had 2 to 3 feet of water in them all summer. Sheep, cattle and horses grazed on the open range for a few years until the water was shut off by fences. About the only early disputes were caused by fences and water. One of these ended in death for Mr. Masekowicki at the hand of Mr. John Zgoric.

Range north of Ingamor was more suitable for sheep. Gerno, Wayman, Holinger Brothers, Birkm Brothers, Hagen, Mysses, Bell, and others were well known sheepleemen. John Shoup ran horses and cattle.

1912 saw the coming of the true honyacker and the pace stepped up in 1913 and 14. These people came from everywhere and when they found they could not make a living on 320 acres or less many opened shops using their trades. Blacksmiths were in much demand; sharpening plow shares, shoeing horses, repairing wagons and machinery. There were many runaways in those days. A Mr. Crum blacksmithed at Ingamor and Jack Buchanan — known as Jack the blacksmith was at Sumatra for years. He was an excellentsmith and an expert wagon repairer.

The livery stable was an important place. They cared for local needs, dealt in feeds and hay, sold and traded horses and took care of the freighters from the north country. Mr. McClain and later Roy McCool had stables at Ingamor; Ike Carlston, George Schieder and others at Sumatra.

Different people ran hotels and restaurants. The Walkers and Cal Bryant were at Ingamor a long time. Mr. Bryant also ran the saloon there. Cotton Duff at Sumatra. The saloon was the main meeting place for men and it was run on a proper manner.

Every town had its newspaper. The Ingamor Independent was started by Jack McCausland and then run by a Mr. Skinner. Sumatra's paper the Sumatra Record was run for years by Henry Polk.

Stores were run at Ingamor by Abe Bookman and the Riecker Bros. Cole Costello had a meat market and he and his wife Mae Peterson Costello had a dairy. Mae Peterson was also an early school teacher at Ingamor and continued to teach at different locations for years. Henry Anger, Harry Jaffe and later Imhoff & Carlen, and Wilt Sweeney had stores at Sumatra. There were also lumber yards at both towns run by Midland Bow and Lumber Company and V. W. Nuth. They did a great volume of business. Coal was handled; a big business by itself.

Mail was taken from both Sumatra and Ingamor by Star route into Garfield County. Henry Kreider from Sumatra and Mr. Brain from Ingamor will long be remembered for their hard trips and kindness to those along their routes. Sumatra's first postmaster was Jess Hayes, the depot agent. The post office was a cubby hole in the small depot. Elsey Grey Sweeney had the post office in the Anger, then later Sweeney stores. Mr. Imhoff got it in his store and got George Bartlett in as postmaster. Mr. Bartlett was very crippled but was very well liked at his job. He also was clerk of the school board. Mr. J. R. Stewart was as well liked during his many years in the Ingamor Post Office.

Schools at Sumatra and Ingamor were first held in their town halls. Each district raised their funds by mill levy. Although only an 8th grade, then later a high school education was required for teaching, many of the early teachers did an excellent job. An examination was required, a 2 to 3 day test which eliminated many an aspiring teacher. Sumatra began its high school in 1916 their first graduating class was in 1920. N. H. Davis was the first principal, then Emil Peterson took over in 1919 and under his administration built the small high school. Ingamor had some high school work but their first graduating class was in 1924. Mr. Peterson went to Ingamor the fall of 1923 and helped organize a 4 year high school there. Sumatra's Gym and Dormitory was dedicated in October 1921. Before this meals had been provided in the school basement, and separate houses had housed the boys and girls. The school grew until the state law kept high school money within the county of the pupils. Ingamor's Gym was dedicated in the fall of 1922. Additions had been added to their school built in 1913 or '14. There was no transportation in early years. House rent was paid in hardship cases and there was some local help for a rig that brought in pupils with horses.

There was no welfare. Some groceries and fuel were allowed by the county to widows with children. These allowances were published in the commissioners proceedings.

Big plows with 10 or more bottoms pulled by steam tractors came through the country in 1914. They charged $2 to $4 dollars an acre. Everyone wanted to grow wheat. World War I made a demand for it. Crops were good until the first big drought of 1919. Many homesteaders left that summer. From that time on only the good managers could keep going. Most had secured loans after they proved up. At first 5 years was required and then this was reduced to 3 years. Many waited the five years as there was no land taxes until a patent was secured. Some left as soon as they got a land loan; others used their loans to buy stock mainly horses as the government had a horse buying station at Miles City. Many had wells drilled. Ben Hayward was kept busy drilling for 10 or more years. A lot of these wells were deep and contained sods and went dry in the drought years in the '30s.

Companies built grain elevators at both towns. Farmers at Sumatra formed a shipping association in the early 20's. They also built an elevator and shipped out cattle and hogs. This made a market for a wide area. James Chittick was the manager.

The Wiley Clark and Greening Banks were built in Melstone, Sumatra, Ingamor and Vananda beginning in 1913. This company also had a bank at Miles City. Charles Greening was at Melstone, Bob Ross at Sumatra, Bill Craig at Ingamor and Lou Jacobsen at Vananda. Mr. Ross took the bank from Sumatra to Forsyth in 1927 or 28. This was the beginning of the Forsyth State Bank.

People formed groups for Church and Sunday School. The Reverend Shaw, a Methodist minister, had homesteaded northeast of Sumatra. He held services in school houses. The Catholics built their present church at Sumatra in 1916. One was built in Ingomar. Some homestead ladies built and ran a Protestant Mission in Ingomar. This was on the corner north of the present post office. Bible lessons, games, and singing were conducted daily. It was here Linnie McCool Hedgco took her first piano lessons. Mrs. Carl Ask told me there was an enrollment of 80 pupils at one time in the Lutheran Sunday School at Vananda. Mae Schoessler had Sunday School classes at Ingomar for years. She was a trained midwife and her services were welcomed by several families.

They Say "It Happened That Way"
The railroad played an important part in early times. They had the shipping in and out; carried the mail. With a local train going east in the morning and back before midnight one could use it going to Forsyth for business, trading and doctoring. Many went on to Miles City to doctors as Forsyth had no hospital. Father Gregory would come from Forsyth on the midnight train, stay at the hotel, have early Mass the next morning then take the train back. Ingomar had Dr. Blakemore for a time and Sumatra Dr. J. E. Midgett who also ran the Drug Store. As one looks back Dr. Midgett was a good doctor for his time. He was very successful in doctoring flu patients in 1918. He felt there was a connection of the flu germs and the intestinal tract. He prescribed castor oil at once, aspirin, open window, liquids and bed rest.

Early roads were trails. As they were graded the gumbo rolled after a bit of rain and the sandy spots got deeper and deeper. When the Model T came along the drivers had to spread cancer or gunny sacks over the spots to get through.

Galbraith between Sumatra and Ingomar was the main shipping point. The first sheep shearing pens were located there on the Gunnar Lende homestead. Later they were at Ingomar. Cattle were shipped from Galbraith by trainload. Steers were kept until 3 or 4 years old so it took fewer of the smaller stock cars. Cattlemen from Pease Bottom ran their cattle north of the Yellowstone and shipped from Galbraith.

Hibbard, a few miles west of Sumatra thrived for a time and Bascom for somewhat longer. Few remember there was an agriculture experiment station west of Bascom, south of the railroad tracks. It was run by Mr. Sillaway. There was an active adult recreation club at Bascom. The Kielku brothers, Max and Eck, were members. There were absolutely no weeds for a few years. Weed seeds must have been introduced in seed grains and shipped in hay.

You homemakers will be interested how homesteaders lived. Contrary to beliefs there were few tar paper shacks. The tar, blue and pink building papers were put behind the studding. For years few of the houses were finished on the inside. Where there was timber some made log houses and a few were of wood. It was a good thing houses were small as fuel was scarce. The coal and wood range gave heat both winter and summer. All the ladies baked the bread for their families and the bachelor neighbors. Corn meal yeast cakes were used as starters and pieces of dough saved from one baking to another. Keeping these methods going wasn’t too much of a problem as big batches were baked every 2 or 3 days. There was no refrigeration but most families had outdoor caves. These kept vegetables, milk, canned goods and often drinking water. Many had to haul all water used in the home as well as for animals. No water was wasted. There were no floor coverings. Some used hot linseed oil on the wood floors and later hot parawax and kerosene was used.

Gardens did well, especially potatoes and root crops. The water bath canning was not introduced until about 1918. Home demonstration agents held all-day meetings at farm homes to demonstrate canning but clubs were not common. Probably the canning of meat was the most useful of all projects. Pork was cured or fried down and covered with lard or cooking grease.

No bread or baked goods were sold in stores. There were excellent crackers and cookies. These came in big 6 to 8 pound boxes. One bought the whole box of crackers but one could buy the cookies by the pound. Apples were the main fresh fruit. They were from Washington and hand wrapped. A lot of dried fruit was used.

Inside these early homesteads were many conveniences the homestead ladies were good homemakers. Most kept themselves and their homes tidy. Hospitality meant a meal, not just coffee. Tablecloths were commonly used and Sunday dinner was special.

All the family kept busy but there was recreation too. Evenings usually found the family around the dining tables with its kerosene lamp. There was reading and games. The mother often helped with the children’s schooling. Then families came unwound and spent the whole day. There were picnics. The 4th of July Celebration was probably the highlight of the year. Most everyone danced usually at school houses. There were plenty of local people to make dance music. A hat was passed around and a special money ticket was sold. One large couple or couples that could really dance the schottische or polka got on the floor the main group was polite enough to stay off. Many of these good dancers, both men and women taught we younger folks.

Nearly all the young people went everywhere on horseback. The girl rode her own horse unless her date wanted her to try out a special one.

For the dancing date she folded up her dress, over her divided riding skirt. fastened the dress with a big safety pin. Didn’t look unusual under her coat. On arriving she neatly slipped behind her horse — unfastened the pin then slipped off the skirt. A very neat trick. Showers for horses and babies were not common. However, if there was a real need people were generous. I never knew of either men or women charging for helping one another.

Poultry was raised and families had milk cows. There were no cream separators at first. Milk was set in pans, pails and whatever was available. The cream was skimmed off the top as needed or before it became too sour. Stores bought country butter. There were a few water cream separators. These were a retined upright tank on legs with a glass gauge in the lower front. Milk was put in the tank and nearly as much cold water added. In 12 hours the cream came to the top. The milk and water were drawn off from a bottom faucet. One could see through the glass gauge when to stop. The worst problem of this method was the watered milk to use or to feed the calves. About 1916 or ’17 the Benson Agency of Chicago imported the Melotte cream separator from Belgium. They sold these for about $100.00 at $7.50 down and $7.50 a month. This was the first installment buying I ever knew of. The mail order catalogues started credit buying a bit later. Many bought these separators. They were a good machine. With better cream, it could be shipped out — cream checks from then on kept many families going. Cream was shipped to the Roundup Creamery and later to Mandan, North Dakota.

The mail order catalogues were indeed the homemaker’s bible. The mail orders for the most part were opened by female members. There was an order for a family project. Freight was cheap and much faster than today. For a time Sears roebuck and M. W. Savage even paid the freight.

Bed bugs were common in all homes. They were in the lumber and gasoline and kerosene cut down their numbers. Finally “Sweat the Fly” came out. It was golden colored powder in a small bellows paper box with a removable tack in the small end. This powder faithfully used wiped out the pests. Have you ever wondered why there are few wooden bedsteads to match the old dresses? Most of these were burned trying to get rid of the bugs. Mattresses’ were also sent up in flames. Hotel rooms were also infested.

There were no local rodeos in early times. As corrals were built the young men soon got together to ride steers and broncs. Then the group enjoyed a good dinner at this place.

Homesteaders were green hens in so many things. With few fences and land marks many children and grown ups became lost. Hardly anyone knew how dangerous the sudden storm could be. A beautiful warm February day in 1913 Joe and John Zaharko, young boys, went rabbit hunting. Outside, before leaving they even removed their winter underwear. A mile or so north from home a sudden arctic blizzard began. They got in the cook house of the sheep shearing pens at Galbraith but their hands were too frozen to make a fire. John became drowsy and froze to death. Joe’s hands show the effect of severe frost bite. I still remember this day as Mr. Clair Whitney and my youngest brother Leon were caught in this storm on their way home with a long line. My father covered Leon with a coat and added the wagon, letting the horses lead the way. This was not their first trip from this place so they made it home. A very worried family became a very thankful one.

Each community had several interesting people. Two at Ingomar were Perry White and his wife Elizabeth. They had come from Illinois and Missouri to Montana at the turn of the century making their living freighting. They began freighting for the Milwaukee railroad in 1906 or ’07. When this job was finished Mr. White homesteaded southwest of Ingomar. Of all the places he had he wanted this to be his home.

The one who conducted a business for the longest time was Cora M. Bartlett. She and her husband Henry started the Sumatra Shop and Garage early in 1914. Early cars were sold here there was often a good mechanic and blacksmith and they sold International Machinery and parts. They also had rooms above their garage. Mr. Bartlett died from peritonitis in 1919 or ’20. Mrs. Bartlett continued running the business until about 1958. When another group gets together reminiscing many tell of the kind things she did not only as a business woman but as a person.

I am closing I want to pay tribute to all the homesteaders and town people of early times. Each in his way contributed much to the country and gave their best years in trying to do more. Few realized any financial gain. I have seen these years as well as the comeback of the range and livestock raising through water and soil conservation. I am glad I’ve been through it all.

They Say “It Happened That Way”
VANANDA

Early-day Vananda produced the most impressive school house of the Tri-Cities! The structure still is an imposing landmark to travellers along U.S. 12.

Visiting Vananda today it is difficult to rationalize that during the period from about 1912 through the 1920’s (with the big boom occurring in about 1915), there were three lumber yards at one time, the Yellowstone Lumber Company, Barthel Lumber Company and Midland Lumber Company, one of the largest general mercantile stores in the country built by Si Sigman, a livery stable built by “Old Man” Groff and later purchased by Jack Jessup, a store, cafe, postoffice, pool and dance hall operated by “Dutch Henry” Zeibig, an elevator and grain business originally started by Roundup Elevator Company and later operated by Carl Ask, McCue and Whiteblood’s general store and candy counter, the Vananda Hotel and Cafe operated by Marie Kenney and later by “Lefty” Roiston, a saloon on the east side of main street owned and operated by Amanuel Johnson, the Mastin Hotel and restaurant, the Vananda Blacksmith Shop owned by Earl Kinney; the Vananda Realty (Mr. Loerch, Prop.), the Vananda State Bank, a couple of newspapers, the Vananda Vedette (George H. Loerch, owner), and The Vananda Sun (Skinner & McCausland, owners, and Mrs. C. M. Carlsen, local manager), a show house run by Harry Ulsh, the Milwaukee Railroad depot and freight house, numbered among whose agents and operators were a Mr. Montgomery, Bob Notting, Guy Herro, Charlie Mastin, Ray Clevenger, Clarence Burke and others, a Plain and Fancy Sewing business owned by Mrs. M.F. Crossman, operated out of the McCue and Whiteblood store, a cafe in Lafferty’s building operated by Bertha Mastin and Pearl Ballard, Aglieri, restaurant in the Kenney Hotel managed by Rod LaFlam (carpenter), Milwaukee Railroad Maintenance Section and Coal Dock, with such foreman as Ole Evinson, Moms Lee and Chris Dobler, just to name a few.

The Milwaukee Railroad had a large lake south of town. They pumped water from it to the water tank by the tracks for the trains. The people went swimming in it, and there was also a boat used on it in the summer time. The young folks held skating parties on it in the winter. The railroad repaired the dike several times, but finally let it go and drilled wells for water for the trains. The lake dried up.

There was also a well drilled in the center of main street where the farmers and ranchers could water their teams and saddle horses when they came to town.

Along with business there also had to be some pleasure, and so it was that the Vananda orchestra was formed and played at “Dutch Henry’s” dance Hall. This group consisted of Mrs. Harding, pianist, Mr. Langbein, violin, and George Twelvetrees, drummer.

Vananda also had a baseball team — the Gold Team — which played during the period from 1914 to 1918 or 1919. Team members were Charlie Moran, Charlie Carlsen, Clair Ballard, Virgil Critchfield, Earl Kinney, Earl Marsh, Charlie Mastin, George Eby and Alvie Miller.

In 1920 the first Fair was held in the town of Vananda, sponsored by farmers and townspeople. The affair was well attended and acclaimed a success by people who remember being there.

The first teacher at the Vananda elementary school was Margaret Lafferty. Other early teachers included Mrs. Kaiser, Tom Lane, Mrs. Fisher and Harry Ulsh.

The first high school in Vananda was located in a wooden building down town, situated just across the street south of the bank. Mrs. Norby was the first high school teacher.

The brick school building, which still stands, and in relatively good condition, was built in 1920 to replace a small frame building which has previously served as the Vananda grade school. Dances were held in the frame building and midnight lunch was first served in the hotel down town, and later in the basement of the brick building.

Along with the good times there always had to be some sadness. One of the most tragic happenings in the Vananda area was the death of Mrs. Kari (Sadie) McConnell, a teacher at the Mud Springs school near Acorn Flat, and her three children, during a freak spring blizzard in February 1917. The Mud Springs school was about three or four miles from where the McConnells lived. Her husband could not come to get her and the children until 4:00 o’clock; however, it was a nice day and she decided they would walk home. In fact, it was so warm they stopped and left their coats at a farm house. A freak blizzard came up suddenly, dropping the temperature 60 degrees in a matter of twenty minutes. Mrs. McConnell and the children never made it home. They froze to death and were found three days later. Don Herndon’s father, Herbert Herndon, and Karl McConnell, homesteaders and neighbors, brought the bodies to Forsyth by wagon for burial in the local cemetery.

The same day this tragedy occurred, Lee Cartwright’s father had gone to Vananda in a spring wagon from his place on the Porcupine and the day was warm and sunny. On his way home he met his sons, Lee and Dick and Clarence Hawkins, who were riding into Vananda horseback to attend a dance. Lee’s father urged them to turn around and go home as he felt there was a bad storm coming, but being young upstarts, they couldn’t be convinced to turn around. They went to the dance but had to stay in Vananda over night because of the blizzard.

The first car which appeared in Vananda was a 1915 Ford owned by L. J. (Jack) Jessup (Zoe Ballard’s father). According to reports, he gave all the ladies in town a ride except Mrs. McCue, who apparently did not trust his driving.

“Dutch Henry” Zeibig was the first postmaster in Vananda, followed by Gladys (Ballard) Critchfield. There were others in between, but the person who had the distinction of being the last postmaster is Mrs. Frank Messer, who now lives in Forsyth.

A Catholic church was built in the early years, and other church groups were organized over the years. In the later years Tom Olson started the Lutheran Church in his home, probably to take advantage of the fine organ which the family brought with them from Minnesota. Mr. Olson and Nellie Haverfield were mainly responsible for organizing the Community Sunday School and keeping it going.
he became interested in raising alfalfa for seed and had several acres for ten or fifteen years until it was plowed under in favor of winter wheat.

Charley Ashley married Lucy Hanson, a Vananda teacher, in 1940. They continued living on the farm combining farming with teaching. Charley died in 1955. Lucy continued living there and renting the farming land. She retired in 1959 and now lives in Forsyth.

On Dec. 5, 1912 Lucy Brown, a teacher from Groton, South Dakota, filed on a homestead of 160 acres south of Vananda, Montana. The other three homesteaders in the same section on which she filed were the Dr. Thomas G. Burts from Groton, South Dakota, Miss Emma Lindersmith, also from Groton, South Dakota and the Fred Haywards from Ripon, Wisconsin. They all decided to build in the middle of the section so they would have close neighbors.

Mr. Hayward was only there occasionally as his business kept him in Wisconsin. Dr. Burt kept his practice in Groton but spent as much time as possible on the homestead. So the settlement became known as Brigham city and Dr. Burt was jokingly referred to as Brigham Young.

The first year after living the required seven months on the homestead Lucy went back to Groton and taught a winter term of school there. The next years she began teaching in Rosebud County. She taught in several rural schools and in Vananda, Howard, Sumatra and Rosebud.

During her forty-one years of teaching she was married twice. In 1916 she married Martin Hanson who died in 1933. Then in 1940 she married Charley Ashley who died in 1955.

CARL ASK FAMILY
By Carl Ask

I was born in Lanesboro, Minn. in 1880 to Mr. and Mrs. Martin Ask. I attended schools in that community and later worked on my father's farm.

The Northern Pacific Railroad advertised western tours that cost $15.00, so I came to Billings, Montana in the spring of 1905. I worked in the area about two years before Harry Howland and I purchased the Windsor Barn in Billings. Later I owned a partnership in the Stillwater Trading Company in Absarokee, Montana.

Jenny Aasland came to the U.S. in 1912 from Stavanger, Norway and went to Absarokee to visit a friend. On March 25, 1914 Jenny and I were married in the Lutheran Church in Billings.

In the spring of 1916 we sold our interest in the Stillwater Trading Co. and came to Vananda where we purchased a grain and coal business. We had a twenty thousand bushel elevator built joining the existing warehouse by a contractor from Lewistown. Mr. Sprague and Mr. Grossman built our new home in Vananda.

We operated the elevator for about three years before we sold the business to a group of farmers. They put Jessie Smith in as operator.

We had thought that we would not stay very long in this part of the country but had bought some railroad land four miles north of Vananda so decided to try farming. That "not very long time" stretched into fifty years.

THE BACKEN FAMILY

I'm George L. Backen and I started High School in Ingomar in 1925 and went until the spring of 1929. We lived 72 miles north of Ingomar and hauled all of our wheat to the market there. At that time Ingomar was quite a little town. It took three days to haul a load of grain to Ingomar with horses and two days for the return trip.

George remembers that G. A. Over and Abe Bookman ran the general stores; two grain elevators were run by J. W. Beatty and J. E. Hanson; Henry Harbicht had the dray line; and the two hotels were run by W. H. Winney who pleased guests with steam heat and electric lights, and by Mrs. Broom. George Schoenhals ran the Yellowstone Lumber company; Joe Chezik had the barrel shop, Darwin Harbicht had a hardware store; and there was the First State Bank, a big pool hall, a weekly newspaper and a theater. Old Man Burton ran a shoe shop north of the Milwaukee according to George Backen's recollection.
BASSETT FAMILY
By Fred Bassett

Thad Bowers Bassett, usually called TB, shipped into Sumatra in 1913 in an emigrant car. He started the first dray line in Sumatra and had the livery barn. The first winter, the family consisting of TB, wife Clara, and Fred, Lynn, and Naomi lived in a tent just East of the East lake at Sumatra.

The next year TB farmed the old Browning place north of Sumatra and in 1915 built the house in town and also established the first Conoco bulk station. Jim Chittick established the Litening bulk plant in later years.

Fred Bassett started school in the old school building; it was later moved from the North part of town to Main street where it became Dr. Midgegetts office and drug store. The first teacher was Helen Holmes and she may have been the first teacher in Sumatra.

Mrs. John Hurd taught grade school at Sumatra and also was the first teacher at Galbraith school when a school was established in the area Northeast of John Kluk's home.

BATSON FAMILY
Alice Batson graduated from Sumatra high school in 1924; her sister Florence was valedictorian of the class and Alice was salutatorian. Martin Swanston was third.

In 1926 Alice married Jake Bircher and lived near Miles City until 1936.

Florence Batson graduated from the University of Montana in Missoula in 1930 and taught high school in Jordan and Bridger. She later taught English at Montana State University at Bozeman for many years. She was married to Dr. Adrien L. Hess, professor of mathematics at the college.

THE JIM BEALL FAMILY
By Frankie Beall Williamson

Our family left Nash, Oklahoma in May, 1913, by train for Ingomar. With us were Grandpa Ben and Grandma Brunelda Vermont Beall, and Dad’s sister and husband, Della and Frank Bennett.

We lived in a tent in Ingomar for nearly a month while Dad and my uncle built our 14 by 16 one-room house on our homestead about 25 miles north of town. The description of the land was Sec. 4, Township 13, Rng. 35.

Uncle Frank and Aunt Dell homesteaded one mile south and one mile east of us. Grandpa and Grandma bought the railroad section adjoining theirs on the west. My uncle was postmaster of our community’s first post office, located in their home and they named it Brunelda after my grandmother. Mail was first brought out by anyone who happened to go to town, then Jim Miller was awarded the first mail contract to Brunelda. It was perhaps a year or two later that the post office was moved on the Lafe Rupe home, 2 miles north. Besides the post office, Rupe’s sold gasoline, coal oil and a few household necessities, and Mrs. Rupe gave piano lessons. Mr. Miller started the mail route with a team and wagon, but later bought a Model T, which he sold to Johnnie Brain when he took over the route early in 1920. My dad was substitute and ran an extended route by horse and wagon on east to the Van Duzen ranch. Art and I drove when Dad was too busy — we were 12 and 10.

We attended Indian Creek school until I was ready for high school, then moved back to Nash at the end of my sophomore year in Ingomar.

One winter on the homestead Mother had the flu and needed a doctor. Dad had Johnnie Brain call from Ingomar to Miles City for a doctor who came to Ingomar by train. Johnnie brought him out by horse and wagon the next day. Anyway, Mother survived, despite the delay.

After returning to Nash we all finished high school. I had 3 years at Oklahoma A&M and taught 17 years in Oklahoma, Idaho, and Colorado. Forest and Art graduated from the same school in 1931 with degrees in Agriculture.

Art was a meat specialist and taught in the college 3 or 4 years; had his own meat plant; then was involved in farming and ranching until his death in 1968 at Broken Arrow where his widow still lives. They had three sons and two daughters.

Forest was county agent in Oklahoma, ranch foreman in Colorado, was in the Navy 2 years, farmed in Oklahoma, and was assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. He was involved in political activities until his death in 1967. He and his wife had a son and a daughter and she still lives in Nash.

I was married in 1935 and have two sons, who live in Washington, D.C. and Bethel, Maine, and have given me six grandchildren. My marriage terminated in 1960, and later I married Wilbur Williamson, a retired farmer. We have traveled a great deal in the states, including Montana.

THE BEARD FAMILY
By Beatrice Beard Cooper

My father, C. C. Beard, bought a half section of land two miles north of Vananda in 1915 and built a small house on it. Harry Barnes bought the other half of the section. In March of 1916 the Barnes and Beard families moved from Oskaloosa, Iowa. The Beard family con-

A Vananda social gathering. (left to right) Mrs. McJunkin, Mrs. Beard, Nolan McJunkin, Burnice Beard, Wanda McJunkin, Blanch Beard, Pearl Barnes, and Calva McJunkin.
Tom and Mary Olson at their 50th Wedding Anniversary in 1951.

built by the banker, L. A. Jacobson, near the Vananda school.

The Olson family was very active in church and community affairs, offering their home to be used for church services, baptisms, Ladies Aid, Walther League and 4-H Clubs. They took part in the Community Sunday School until the Lutheran Church was organized and had its own Sunday School. Mr. Olson also farmed his land and the family raised a big garden on their plot of land south of the railroad.

Marvin Beckvall, orphaned nephew of Mrs. Olson, born in Minnesota, lived with an uncle, Peter Martenson, in Miles City from 1919 to 1926 when he joined the Tom Olson family. He also came to Vananda and attended High School. He and Myrtle both graduated in 1931. He worked on the railroad for a while before returning to St. Paul, Minn., where he became a barber and worked for Ted Scheuermann who had also barbered in Vananda and had married a Vananda girl, Beulah Erickson. Marvin married Edna Nelson from Beckville, Minn., and they had two children. He worked as a welder for a time, then they moved to Phoenix, Arizona, where he worked in the postal department until ill health forced him to retire. Marvin and his wife flew back for the Tri-City Reunion ‘76 and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Over the years other members of the Olson family came to Vananda to visit their parents, sometimes for a short visit and sometimes working in the area for a time.

In the summer of 1951 Tom and Mary Olson celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in Vananda and all but one of their nine children and their families came to help them celebrate and make it a happy and memorable occasion.

In 1955 Tom and Mary Olson moved to Forsyth because of failing health. Tom Olson fell and broke his hip in the spring of 1956 and passed away in the Miles City V.A. Hospital in August 1956.

Mary Olson continued to live in Forsyth with her brother, Andrew Beckwell, until he passed away in 1958. Then she lived alone until ill health forced her to move to her daughter’s home. She passed away March 29, 1966.

Myrtle Olson married Theodore Evinson on Dec. 8, 1937. Ted operated Ted’s Service Station in Vananda, worked in Billings, and then a short time at the Shipyards and Aircraft factory in Washington before returning to Vananda to help his brother-in-law, Fred Smith, on the ranch. Fred Smith was fatally injured in a tractor accident in April 1954. Ted continued working for the Smith family until ill health forced him to have lung surgery. Myrtle found employment in Forsyth, first with the City Water Office and then in the Rosebud County Assessor’s office where she is still employed as a State Department of Revenue employee and chief deputy assessor in the same office.

Arthur Olson worked on the railroad for a while after graduation from High School in 1933. Then he moved to California, joined the Merchant Marines and enjoyed seeing the world. He returned to California and married Doris Olds Lundeen and they had two children. He finally went into the Real Estate business at Chico, California. They were able to attend and enjoy the Tri-City Reunion at Ingomar in ‘76.

THE BENDER FAMILY

The Bender’s came to the Sumatra area in 1914 and settled 17 miles northwest of Sumatra on Breed Creek. Albert was four years old when the family came to Montana and he reports attending school in Sumatra and graduating in 1931. Children of the family in addition to Albert were George, Alma, and William.

Albert and Ethel Bender, Educators in Sumatra and Montana school systems.

Albert went on to college and received a Bachelor’s degree from Western Montana college; a Master’s from EMC in 1962 and did graduate study at MSU in Bozeman. He has been principal at the Lincoln Elementary school in Miles City.

Albert Bender reports he still visits the family homestead at Sumatra almost every summer and enjoys picnicking under the cottonwood trees.

William S. Bender graduated from high school in 1939 and became a training officer at the U.S. Marine Corp base at San Diego. He was 1941 state javelin champion in the seven college track and field meet at Helena. He was killed in action on Iwo Jima on February 27, 1945.

They Say “It Happened That Way”

BENDEWALD FAMILY HISTORY

Daniel Bendewald was born January 28, 1889, at Boridina, Bessarabia, Russia, to German parents. His parents brought him to the United States in 1901 and soon settled in North Dakota. Louise Schaeffer was born November 27, 1889, at Freeman, South Dakota. Her family moved to Ashley, North Dakota, to homestead in 1907. Her grandparents had also been Germans who had emigrated from Russia to this country.

Daniel Bendewald and Louise Schaeffer were married in Ashley, North Dakota, January, 1912. Dan Bendewald spoke English, as well as German, and acted as translator for many German immigrant farmers and ranchers, often traveling to Montana to help them establish homesteads. Dan and Louise’s first child died of convulsions when he was a few days old, but they went on to raise a family of ten children. Clara and then twins Walter and Theodore were born in Ashley.

Dan got his own homestead in May 1915 in Vanstel, Montana, 30-40 miles north of Vananda, Montana. Louise and her father, John N. Schaeffer, travelled with the three young children from N.D. to Vananda by train, then hiring the only car in Vananda, Jessup’s, to go out to the homestead. When Dan returned to N.D. to ship back the wagons, horses, and furniture, it was loaded on a boxcar of the Milwaukee Road. From Vananda, all was loaded onto wagons for the trip to Vanstel. It rained the whole two-day trip, ruining all of Louise’s furniture, which had been given as her dowry. The custom at that time in the German community was a dowry consisting of two cows and basic furniture for a house. Daughters Esther and Ruth were born in Vanstel. While living in Vanstel, the family had to drive 30-40 miles by wagon to do shopping and get the mail. They made the trip once a month. Dan later bought the first car in Vanstel - a model T Ford.

About 1921 the Bendewalds rented the Martin Schow Place three miles north of Vananda. Viola was born here. Up to this point, the only child to have any education was Clara, with one year at German school in Vanstel. Now Clara, Ted, Walter, and Esther all started first grade at Vananda together. Not one could speak a word of English. Amalia Dobler helped to translate for the four. The children were always encouraged by their father not to forget their language; they had to speak German at home, but nevertheless, the kids tried to speak as much English as possible.

Soon the family rented the Anderson place east of Vananda, and eventually bought this and the Schow place, which became the basis of the Bendewald Ranch. Sons Ervin and Otto were born while the family was living at the Anderson place. The first sign to mark the Bendewald Ranch was made about 1952 by Mervin when he studied art at Bozeman. Brands used were Bar D and Lazy B.

The last two children, Vera and Mervin, were born in the hospital at Forsyth after the Bendewalds had acquired the Schow place and made it their own. Louise had borne 11 children between the years 1912 and 1933. All ten Bendewald children went to school at Vananda, at least through 8th grade, Mervin being in the last high school class and the last to ride saddle horse to school. Ruth, Viola, Ervin, and Otto finished the last two years of high school at Ingomar. Vera and Mervin boarded in Forsyth for high school.

Many of the years north of Vananda were hard years. In the fall they would stock up for the winter, because they were often snowed in for months. Store-bought items included: 1000 lb. flour, 100 lb. dried beans, 100 lb. dried prunes, 5 gal. honey, 100 lb. sugar. The drought years, 1930, 1931, 1932 were some of the worst. The family remembers tremendous sandstorms. For at least 3 years, no grain sprouted. They also had to cope with armyworms and grasshoppers. One time when the family returned from church, the armyworms covered the house, just like a carpet. They could not get in the front door, so the family took gunny sacks, soaked them in oil, lit them and burned the worms off to be able to get into the house. They remember the railroad having to sand the tracks to provide traction so that train wheels wouldn’t slip on worms as they were crushed on track. Then there were grasshoppers who would pat fence posts. And there was hail, and freezing winters. One year Dan borrowed money for 30 head of yearlings which he had winter feed for. He was going to winter them, put them to pasture in the spring, and sell them for the weight gain, pay back the bank and pocket the profit. It was the worst winter he could remember; it was so cold that 14 head froze. However, he eventually managed to pay back the bank, with hard work and dogged determination.

One year, about 1930, Dan traded 7 or 8 horses for one used Essex and one Hupmobile. When the Essex stopped running, he took out the motor, cut out all the weight under the hood, put a wagon tongue on the front of the car, hitched up a team of horses, and this was used in the winter to take the kids to school. They remember sitting in plush velvet seats, warm and snug from the cold winter, nevertheless looking a bit unusual as they drove to the Vananda Schoolhouse. One sister in particular remembering being more than a bit embarrassed when out on a date and seeing her brothers and sisters coming down the road in the Essex pulled by the team of matched greys, Pete and Barney.

Another of Dan’s inventions was a sled with covered canvas stays, which resembled something like a covered wagon on runners. A wood stove mounted inside kept the vehicle warm. Its stovepipe sticking out through the canvas caused Tom Ask to comment more than once,
THE BLAKEMORES

Dr. Blakemore and I homesteaded 4 miles north of the John Shoup ranch. Dr. stayed in town and I stayed on the land. As I look back, there was so much wild game to see — I had a comfortable cabin. Dr. was quite busy and I want to say that Ingomar and surrounding country paid Dr. almost to the last full dollar. The flu struck in 1918 and he was sent to Plevna. I nursed. When I could come home the town had almost burned down. I was 90 Oct. 2, 1975.

THE JAY BLAZEK FAMILY

Jay Blazek was the Milwaukee agent at Ingomar for several years. His family includes son Donald, and daughters, Fay, Lucille, and Eleanor. After the Milwaukee railroad closed many of the smaller depots, Jay Blazek transferred to Forsyth where he retired from the railroad.

MR. AND MRS. ABE BOOKMAN

Mr. and Mrs. Abe Bookman were married in Ireland. They and her brother, Si Sigman, came to the United States about 1912. They first went to Melstone, but then came to Ingomar about 1913 and built their General Merchandise Store and a nice home. Si Sigman went on to Vanada in 1914 to build his store.

At first they had to freight their merchandise in. Mrs. May Wayman of Billings remembers hearing about the time the Milwaukee Railroad first reached Ingomar. Mr. Bookman had ordered a shipment of merchandise and was at the Railroad depot to meet the train. A number of settlers were also waiting for the train, and they bought all of Mr. Bookman’s groceries and clothing right there on the Railroad platform before he could carry any of it up town to his store.

One time Bookmans left Ingomar and went to Seattle where her family lived, but soon changed their minds and returned to Ingomar.

Mr. Bookman passed away in 1941. He is buried in Billings.

Mrs. Bookman stayed in Ingomar about two years after Mr. Bookman’s death. She sold her home to Sowards and lived in the store. Then she moved to Seattle where her relatives lived, and she passed away there. She is buried in Seattle.

THE BRAIN FAMILY

John O. Brain, born in Illinois, reared in Oklahoma, as a young lad rode in a cattle drive from Texas to Billings when it was still a very small town. At 17, he was fighting in the Spanish American War and the Philippine Insurrection where he won several medals for heroism and letters of high commendation. His was the distinction of being the first American soldier to receive discharge papers while in the middle of the ocean.

Matilda Bengtson, at the age of 18 emigrated from her native Sweden to the U.S. with a sister and brother to join another brother who landed on wheat and oil land in Oklahoma. She worked as a domestic in the home of a store owner until her English was good enough that she was employed in the store as hat designer and maker, and later went on buying trips.

Ten years after her arrival in the U.S., these folks were united in marriage. The next year while on a visit to Sweden their first child, Elizabeth, was born. Next came Pauline, in Oklahoma. The decision to homestead in Montana, and the trip are written up elsewhere in this tome. Ray and Olive were born in Rosebud County.

Nine years of hard labor, disappointments, privations and poverty convinced them it just couldn’t be done on a homestead. When Jim Miller gave up his mail route in 1920 our father took it, bought Mr. Miller’s Model T, and monthly pay checks started coming in. This, with a busy freight and passenger route, put our family on its feet again. But it wasn’t easy - young men hired to help with the driving and shoveling snow and gumbo can attest to that. Carl Clifton tells me our father had the first ton-and-a-half truck in the area. The truck was used for hauling wheat, cream and anything that the farmers could not afford to make the trip for. On “off” days grocery shopping was done for the farmers wives who had left their shopping list in the mail box, or hauling wheat.

This job he kept from 1920 until 1938 when the folks retired to Billings for the rest of their years. Their

BRAA FAMILY

Hildor L. Braa taught at Ingomar in the 1942-43 school year. He was impressed with the hospitality of the people but dreaded the condition of the road between Ingomar and Forsyth.

Hildor Braa writes he’s often reminded of Grandma Hendrickson, the Chezicks, the Cox cafe and the Carl Ask’s of Vananda. Students he mentions in his letter includes Eleanor and Helen Hendrickson, Dorothy Berdahl, Tom Ask, Sylvia Crossen, Marie Myssse and Ward Bennett the janitor.

Braas’s now live in California.
business was sold again and Mr. Byerly took the job as caretaker at the county fairgrounds and was there until Mrs. Byerly suffered a stroke which necessitated her spending the last 4 years of her life in a wheelchair. She passed away in July, 1954. Mr. Byerly passed away with a stroke in March 1963.

Mr. and Mrs. Byerly were fine gardeners. They took prizes on their vegetables and grains in Forsyth, Great Falls, Miles City, and Billings and were proud of their many blue ribbons. Bliss Triumph seed potatoes entered in the Spokane fair took 1st prize. Gardening was their life-long hobby, and they will be remembered for what they did for the Rosebud county fairs.

In Ingomar, Mr. Byerly served his community and school by serving a term on the school board.

Ray was mail carrier from Forsyth to Colstrip for 3 years and then worked in carpentry which he continued until retirement forced on him because of arthritis and a new knee joint. He and his wife, Ethel, live in Forsyth, and regret that because of illness Ray was unable to attend the reunion.

JAMES ELMER CAMERON FAMILY

James Cameron came to Montana in search of cheap land and bought 320 acres northeast of Vananda in late 1918 and returned to Macksburg, Iowa to prepare for the move.

By March 1917 he had booked and loaded two flat cars with a Case all steel 22" threshing machine, a Case 12-25 cross mounted tractor, plow, disc and various other farm tools. A box car held three black cows, household furnishings, and baled hay and grain. Hidden under the hay was a Model T Ford. Cars could not be shipped without a special permit and much expense — hence the cover-up.

Jim also came in the box car, and on arrival in Vananda the good citizens helped unload the box car. A couple of cow-poines and ropes whisked the Model T up town so it was never discovered by the Railroad inspectors.

Jim’s wife, Rosella, and young sons, Alvin, Paul and Delbert, arrived later to find they had no home to go to. A legal mixup or “shady deal” had left them homeless, so Jim rented 320 acres north of Vananda from Jim White. The neighbors were Ollie and Martin Schows and Frank Ballard family.

The beautiful 1917 wheat crop was saved from neighbors cattle but wiped out by a hail storm, so Jim pulled his threshing rig to the Russian settlement far to the north where crops were good and worked until driven home by snowfall. He drank whiskey while there because the water was so bad.

In 1918 a baby sister was born. She was named Margaret in honor of a good neighbor, Margaret Schow, who was attending nurse at her birth. The same year Margaret set Alvin’s broken shoulder after he and an empty barrel were thrown from a truck.

Crops were good in 1918 and Jim threshed late into the fall. The family also moved to the Martin Hanson farm south of Vananda that fall. When Jim was bringing his threshing machine home he had to cross the reservoir dike south of Vananda. It tipped over and provided some excitement getting it out of the snowbanks.

Alvin and Paul attended the rural school! South of Vananda in 1918-19 and made some new friends including Milletts and Crawlies. The flu claimed many lives that winter but the Cameron family managed to “pull through.”

Things were generally rough at the Hanson farm. Wood was hauled from the Pine Ridge several miles away. Water had to be hauled from the closest well three miles away, or, if that was dry because too many others got there first, the next well two miles farther. Water had to be dipped by pails and poured into the water tank.

By May 1919 everyone’s wheat crops were dried up. No work was available. Jim and many other men headed for Dakota to work in the harvest. The Cameron boys and Millet boys, with teams and tanks, went ten miles for water every-other day.

By August 1919 Rosella Cameron had had enough. She and her four children closed up the farm and joined her husband at Groton, South Dakota. From there the family went to Scranton, Iowa where Mr. Cameron passed away in 1934 at the age of forty-eight.

The Camerons still live in Iowa where the children married and raised their families.

LEE E. CARTWRIGHT

I was born March 3, 1902, in the Okla. Territory to Orley and Allie Cartwright. When I was three weeks old my parents started for Montana in a covered wagon. I had two older brothers at that time. They landed in Bozeman on Thanksgiving day and decided to stay for the winter.

My Dad worked on various jobs and finally was doing construction work where ever he could find the work. He helped build the Milwaukee Railroad near Rahway, Athes, and Thebes. We had a camp nearby. I remember seeing many fossils in the dirt they hauled out. One kind had especially stood out in my memory all these years, of big snails 12” to 20” across. Just a few years back I went to

They Say "It Happened That Way" 13
June. Later she married Wayne Johnson and they lived at
Colstrip for a number of years before moving to California
where they still live.

Hazel married Edward Lueck in 1934. They have one
son, Glen "Tony." They lived in Colstrip for a while but
have lived in Forsyth most of their married life.

Bill married Ellen Higginbotham. They had no children.
Later he married Mary Rice. They live in Laurel.

Mable has been married several times. She is now
married to John W. Daley and they live at Buffalo, Wyo.
She has no children.

Dell married Doris Beaulac, a nurse from New York, in
1942. They lived in Hammond Valley about eighteen
years before moving to Forsyth. They raised two
children, Owen and Dale. In 1975 Dell married Alice
Koch and now lives in Columbia Falls, Mont.

Andy married Helen Greenwood and they had one son,
Gerry. Later he married Muriel. They have five
children, Tim, Dana, Bruce, Lisa and William. They make
their home in Washington.

JOSEPH CHEZIK FAMILY

Joe Chezik came to Ingomar from Minnesota and
took over the Carey barber shop. In 1928 Joe Chezik
and Thelma Wirak were married.

They have two children; Marcella White living in
Kalispell and Marcia Hesse in Tulare, California.

Joe was appointed post master in Ingomar in 1936
and resigned in 1946 to go to Helena where he went into
business. He passed away in 1964. Mrs. Chezik now
lives in Tulare.

THE EUGENE CLARK FAMILY

Mary Clark Dawson recounts the experiences of
being a young girl and growing up in the country. Her
father and family the Eugene Clark's came to Ingomar on
an Immigrant train and then by horse and wagon to their
homestead near the Alice post office thirteen miles South
of Sand Springs.

The post office at Alice had no mail carrier, Mary
relates, and neighbors took turns making the trip to Sand
Springs to bring the mail. A short time later Alice was
linked to the outside world by a postal route from
Sumatra. It also served McTigigan.

Mary Clark remembers attending the Calf Creek
school where the children used prairie dog mounds as
"bases" for a variety of games they played. She also
attended the Clark school where school mates were
Lloyd and Leroy Wilson; Evelyn and Earl McWilliams;
Lyman, Leon, and LeRoy Smith, and Clara, Helena, and
Evelyn Smith. The Clark school was later moved to Alice
and used as a school.

Mary remembers high school at Sumatra where she
enjoyed dorm life and the friendship of so many students.
"These were the nicest years of school" she says.

Mary's father became ill and the family moved to
Laclede, Idaho. Mary met Lester Dawson there and they
were married in 1933.

CLARK FAMILY

By Ann Clark Gallagher

My father, Alfred M. Clark, homesteaded in the north
Ingomar country and ranched a few years. Then he was a
business man in Ingomar til about 1938. We then moved
to Forsyth where he remained the rest of his life. During
my early childhood he was married to Effie Heist.

CLIFTON FAMILY

From West Virginia in the year 1914, W. E. Clifton
headed west. His destination was Ingomar and that's
where he settled. A family was born to the Clifton's and
reared and educated in Ingomar and the Tri-City area.

Carl W. Clifton was born in Ingomar and graduated
from High School there in 1932. He worked on ranches
in the area and also for the railroad. He served in the
Navy during WWII and after discharge moved to Powell,
Wyoming.

Arbutis Clifton was schooled in Ingomar and she
writes that she managed a small store in Sumatra for a
period when the Picard's owned the store. She became
postmaster of the Ingomar postoffice in 1947. Earlier
she also lived in Vananda and her daughter Marjorie
Mellgren went to school in all three of the Tri-Cities. She
wonders if she may be the only person to attend school
in all three towns. Arbutis Clifton Stepper was postmaster
when the post office moved from Main street in Ingomar
to the former J. A. Over residence one block West of
Main.
CREECY FAMILY

The Creecy’s homesteaded about seven miles Northeast of Ingomar on West Blacktail creek. According to son Jim the year was about 1910. A near neighbor to the South was Ward Bennett whose place was on Sun Coulee.

Jim Creecy whose home is in Laurel narrates a youth that was filled with opportunity and travel. He was only fourteen years old when he went to work for Sever Hagen in Spring lambing and stayed on for the docking and then the trailing of the sheep to Ingomar for shearing.

There were 36 shearsers in the Ingomar plant and Jim worked as a wrangler and also as a sweeper.

He worked for Sever Hagen in lambing for several seasons and became familiar with the area around Hole In the Rock and Scott’s Springs.

Ward Bennett had a threshing rig in Edgely, South Dakota and James went with him and helped thresh. He stayed on to do Fall plowing with a three bottom plow powered by seven horses.

Jim Creecy said the school near his folk’s homestead was called the Fairview school and the first teacher was Charles Rye.

Jim Creecy’s sister was Mrs. Knute Rockne. Their ranch was on East Blacktail creek near its confluence with the Porcupine. Knute died of spotted fever in 1920 and Jim helped his sister run the ranch for one year.

Creecy’s vocation during his lifetime has included working for a foundry at Olympia, Washington; serving in the Army in World War I; working for Pacific Power and Light; and even sorting potatoes in Idaho for a brief period after the War.

CRICHLFIELD FAMILY

T. Virgil Crichfield and Earl Marsh came from Oklahoma in the spring of 1915 to Vananda to see what this new country was like. They liked what they saw and stayed. The Crichfield name was soon cut in half and he became known as “Chich” to all who knew him.

The men organized a baseball team in 1915 and traveled by train to Forsyth, Ingomar, Sumatra, and Melstone for games. Some of the players were Charles Mastin, Manager, Clyde Agler, Henry Holen, T. V. Crichfield, Earl Marsh, Claire Ballard, “Dutch” Schomberg, Earl Kenny and George Eby.

Marsh stayed a year and then went back to Oklahoma.

T. V. Crichfield married Gladys Ballard in Nov. 1917. Mr. Crichfield served in World War I and was discharged in Dec. 1918. After the War they returned to Vananda and Crich worked for John Johns in the oil fields north of Vananda.

T. V. and Gladys Crichfield raised two sons, Chester and Russell. The family moved to Ismay and then to Baker where Crich worked for the Oil Companies for many years and their sons attended school.

Russell Crichfield went to California in 1941 and became a pedestrian casualty.

Chester and his family have lived at Dillon, Montana for many years.

T. V. Crichfield passed away in May 1976. Gladys Crichfield moved to Dillon to be near their son and family.

THE JOHN CROSSEN FAMILY

Sheep ranching was the vocation of the John Crossens. They maintained a home in Ingomar and ran sheep on the Porcupine and Acorn Creeks. Part of their operation was in conjunction with Knute Germo.

Family members, in addition to Mr. and Mrs. John Crossen, were Rose Evelyn, George, and Sylvia.
CROSSMAN FAMILY

Maurice Crossman and Minnie Croes were married in Wessington, South Dakota, in 1902. Mr. Crossman was a carpenter and Mrs. Crossman was a seamstress. She made clothes to order and to sell at the store.

Four of their five children, Marion, Rosalyn, Irma and Myrtle were born in South Dakota before the family came to Montana in 1914 to homestead north-east of Vananda near Bill Johnson’s, Dick Hopwood and Charles Sievers. The family lived in Sievers house while Mr. Crossman built their home.

Mr. Crossman built all three lumber yards in Vananda as well as a number of homes, including Sigman’s, Olson’s, Whitelock’s, Ask’s and their own in Vananda.

Marion and Rosalyn attended the Miller rural school for a part of each year with the Bill Johnson boys and Sidney and Sylvia Miller. The balance of the term they attended school in Vananda where they also had a home. Beulah Lane was teacher at the Miller school and her brother, Tom Lane, taught in Vananda.

Evelyn Crossman was born in Vananda on Dec. 22, 1917, and Mr. Crossman passed away on March 10, 1918. After his funeral in South Dakota the family returned to prove up on the homestead, then returned to South Dakota.

Mrs. Crossman later married Jake Hain in South Dakota and the couple and the three youngest Crossman daughters returned to Vananda in 1926. Mrs. Hain operated the LaFlame Hotel and served meals and Mr. Hain worked for the Railroad until 1935 when Mr. and Mrs. Hain and Myrtle and Evelyn moved back to South Dakota again.

Marion married Manford Saylor in Dakota in 1922. They came to Montana in 1927 and lived in Thebes for two years. Manford worked for the Milwaukee Railroad for many years. They raised five children.

Rosalyn married Ahmed Etem in Vananda in the Whitelock house, and moved to South Dakota. They had two children.

Irma married Chris Dobler in Vananda in 1930. (History under Dobler family.)

Myrtle married William Miles of Spearfish, S. Dak. They raised two children.

Evelyn married Cap Halen and lives on a farm near Wessington, South Dakota. They had two children.

DAY FAMILY

The Day family came to Montana from Iowa in 1915 and settled on a homestead 35 miles north of Ingomar. Supplies had to be freighted from Ingomar and Sumatra and those two towns along with Sand Springs, Edwards, and Jordan provided most of the social life.

Alice and Dessie Day graduated from Sumatra high in 1924 and moved to Oregon. Charlie Day married school teacher Marie Coulits and lived in the area until 1930 when they moved to Oregon.

THE GEORGE DENIGER FAMILY

By IRENE DENIGER MARKS

The Deniger’s homesteaded near Edwards. The family, that is mother and sisters Lois and Delores and brother Bud and I moved to Ingomar each fall for school. Father Deniger believed the Model T shouldn’t have to carry any cargo unnecessary for survival on these annual pilgrimages, but mother was always able to hide houseplants in the family wash boiler. These brightened the home in Ingomar for the school year.

I remember a number of “firsts” for Ingomar: Seems like the Tom Owens family owned the first radio and the whole town moved into their living room to marvel at this new gadget; Byerly’s had the first Model “A” and we were frightened out of our wits when Roy gave us a ride and we attained a speed of thirty miles an hour. I remember Charles Lindberg’s flight across the Atlantic. All the girls from fifth grade up collected clippings and pictures and made scrapbooks and dreamed that he might fly over Ingomar and develop engine trouble. I still have my Lindy scrapbook.

Ingomar co-eds: Lydia Schoenhals, Devota Clifton, Mary Schoenhals and Irene Deniger. Picture from late 20’s.

I remember the dances at the Ernest McCollum ranch where Ernest fiddles and Bessie tickled the ivory.

I went to school at Jordan where I graduated in 1932; this was after completing my freshman and sophomore years at Ingomar. The reason for the change was because my father was elected Treasurer of Garfield county and we moved to Jordan.

In 1937 I married George Marks of Winnett. My last teaching job in the Tri-City area was at Brunelda in 1940 - 1941 where I taught the Harold Wagner children and the Ves Clifton children. Mary Olsen, Helen Karsenock’s daughter, stayed with me during the week and went to school.

I live at St. Ignatius now and will welcome visits from friends in the Tri-City area.

CHRISTIAN DOBLER FAMILY

Christian Dobler was born in Huffnufgstadt, Russia in 1892 and came to America in 1909. He first settled in North Dakota. He was married in Dakota where his first daughter, Amalia, was born in 1912.

The family came to the Vananda area and homesteaded about thirty miles north of Vananda. Saur, Schlact and Schwaderer were some of their neighbors.

Later Chris and his family moved to Vananda where
he worked on the Railroad and Amalia attended school. His wife passed away following surgery in 1922. Chris and Amalia continued living in their tiny home in Vananda until she drowned in Crawford's reservoir in 1929.

Christian Dobler married Irma Crossman in 1930. Mr. Dobler was Coal Dock foreman by then. They lived in a Railroad house. Chris and Irma had five children, all born while the family lived in Vananda. They are Amanda, Christian Duane, Marilyn, Myrna and Lionel. The children all attended the Vananda school and the three older ones also went to High School a while in Vananda.


THE DOROTHY FAMILY
By ED AND ANNA DOROTHY

"Ladies, first!"

I came to Montana from Michigan in November 1912 with my parents Clair and Edith Whitney and their family; family members included Edna, Paul, Carl, and Leon. My father, a farmer, had homesteaded ten miles south of Sumatra.

We were fortunate to find a log cabin and barn about two miles from our land. There was a spring and outdoor cave nearby. Bringing seven jersey cows seemed a mistake — but these cows kept the wolf from the door during homestead years. My mother made good butter and soon supplied the grocery stores at Ingomar and Sumatra.

We attended the Yates school on the George Snyder homestead. Helen Holmes was the teacher. Ed and I bought this land in 1927. Here we have made our home.

Ed Dorothy at Tri-City Reunion.

I attended many schools graduating from the eighth grade at Ingomar and from Sumatra High School.

Ed came to Montana with his parents Wright and Maude Dorothy and their family. Family members were Emmett, Ted, Grace, Nell, Helen, and Arby. The year was 1915. Mr. Dorothy had bought the Joe Shaffer homestead five miles south-west of Sumatra in 1914. Ruth and Gale were born there.

Wright Dorothy had been a prosperous corn farmer in Iowa and had fed cattle and hogs for the Chicago market. He thought growing wheat would be a much easier life. When yields and prices lowered he was forced to work away from home to provide for his big family. In 1927 he felt his mother needed him and he and Mrs. Dorothy, Arby, Ruth, and Gale returned to Iowa.

Ed Dorothy and Anna Whitney were married in Melstone in November 1922. We began ranching the following spring and rechanched through the good and bad years. In 1962 we went into semi-retirement continuing to live on the ranch.

Our son Edward is an engineer with the Montana Highway department stationed at Miles City. Their daughter Una, Mrs. Jack Belzer, lives in Bozeman.

An invitation from the Smithsonian Institution to participate in the Bicentennial Festival of American Folklore at Washington, D.C. is a climax to our long life together.

THE DUTTON FAMILY

The Dutton's lived in Garfield county, about 28 miles from Sumatra. Margaret Dutton Saylor says her sister Mary and brothers Bruce and William first went to school there in 1926. Teachers she remembers were Mrs. Loren Hurd, Mrs. Paul Porter, and Mrs. Jean Thompson. Mr. Filson was the principal of Sumatra high when Margaret graduated in 1934.

Children coming to Sumatra to school from rural places had to board out. Margaret remembers staying with the T.A. Browns; the Bruce Hayes family; and with Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith lived in the Midget home, the large square one on the hill overlooking the lake by the railroad tracks.

Margaret Dutton remembers coming to school in the fall and often not getting home until Thanksgiving or Christmas. "We often rode in with the mail man Harold Glazier or at other times our parents were able to take us to Sumatra to begin the School term."

JOHN B. EDWARD FAMILY

John B. Edward purchased the Wayne Shammel and Pete Stokke holdings located north of Sumatra in the fall of 1945.

John, his wife Donna and sons Barry, Brent and a daughter Annette moved from Ogden, Utah to Sumatra the summer of 1946.

An additional son Ross was born in 1953.

The Edward family lived in the Sumatra area until January 1961 when they sold their ranch holdings.

The family lived right in the town of Sumatra for three years until they established a ranch headquarters on Antelope Creek thirteen miles northwest of town in 1949.

The ranch headquarters consisted of a house moved from the Burkhardt place, a house moved from the Harris place and the house they had lived in in Sumatra. Other buildings were moved from locations on the ranch to the headquarters area to complete the job.

Initially, John purchased Mexican steers that were

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summered and either sold in the fall or wintered over, summered over a second summer and sold the following fall. As time went on, a conversion into a cow-calf operation was made and in the fall of 1955, the operation was diversified with the purchase of a band of sheep from Sonny Magellen.

The Edwards were one of several Mormon families that moved into the Sumatra area approximately the same time. This group started a Sunday School at the Edward home in Sumatra and shortly thereafter this activity was moved into the school facility where it continued until 1953 when a chapel was built in Melstone.

The two older Edward brothers participated in area rodeo riding events during the summer. Annette got to be a very proficient horsewoman and was named Queen of the Forsyth Horse Show in 1961.

The family purchased a J3 Piper Cub for ranch use in 1957. The use of this small plane either instilled or increased a desire to fly on Brent's part and he subsequently went into the U.S. Navy as a flier of Crusader Photo-Reconnaissance Aircraft.

Barry met, courted and married Darla Lee Hayes who was living on an adjoining ranch during the winter of 1953 and their first three children, Barry Jr., Shaunna and Mauriana were born while they were residents of the area.

They subsequently moved to Connecticut, back to Billings and are presently living at Hysham.

THE ANDREW ERICKSON FAMILY
By ERIC ERICKSON

My father Andrew M. Erickson arrived in the Vananda-Ingmar area in 1906 from Stavanger, Norway. He joined his brother Richard in raising sheep with their home base south of Vananda. In 1924 Andrew leased and later bought the Andrew Hollinger place and surrounding land and married Selma Gunderson of Risor, Norway. They continued in the sheep business until the 40's when herders were hard to come by and went into the cattle business.

I attended grade school in Ingmar and high school in Forsyth — graduating in 1951. In 1956 I married Patti Collins of Forsyth and we have 4 children: Mark, Collins, Alan and Marni. My mother, family and I still own and live on the home place 12 miles north and east of Ingomar.

CHARLIE ERICKSON FAMILY

Charlie F. Erickson was born in Stockholm, Sweden on September 10, 1880. At the age of three he came with his parents to Rawlins County, Kansas, near Chardon, where he now is a life member of the Sons and Daughters of the Soddlers.

As a young man he became a photographer, traveling in a covered wagon, which took him as far as Washington. At the age of 18 he was called home due to the death of his father. Since he was the eldest of eleven children, Charlie was now the head of the household.

In 1898 the family moved to the big Horn Basin in Wyoming. Along with homesteading he freighted from Cody to the Red Lodge area.


In 1906 they packed the covered wagon and moved to Montana and homesteaded in the Vananda area. It was here that Cornelia, Beulah, Grant and Omer were born and raised. To supplement the income Charlie worked for the Milwaukee Railroad. Carrie was the head cook for the crew.

The homestead grew to the present day ranch on the Big Porcupine Creek which is still operated by the two sons, Grant and Omer.

In the early years for Sunday entertainment Grant and Omer would bring in their colts to train.

There was open range until the early 40's and during that time the men would ride as far north and east which was over 25 miles away from home. In one of the roundups Grant and Omer rode through a stretch of land which had been taken over by gophers. In that place the rattlesnakes were denning up for the winter and over a three day period Grant and Omer killed 412 rattlesnakes. They used a barrel stave and their lariat.


Cornelia married Walter Mardis and they have one daughter, Betty Johnson. Both families ranch in the Forsyth area.

Beulah married Ted Scheuerman, who is now deceased. Beulah lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota. They have one daughter, Diane Taylor, living in Littleton, Colorado.

Grant married Nadine Larsen. They have one daughter, Janet Swanson of Belfry, Montana.

Omer married Wilma Baird who passed away in 1971.
GILFEATHER FAMILY

The Gilfeather's were from the Ross post office on the lower Musselshell and only had contacts in the Tri-City area when shipping cattle out of Sumatra or Galbraith.

The Gilfeather's were the postmasters at the Ross Post Office.

AGNES GRAHAM

The Milwaukee railroad was the large industrial employer of the Tri-City area and a number of people who left their mark on the communities were employees of that railroad.

Agnes Graham Burris was a relief telegrapher for the railroad at Sumatra and she also was stationed in Melstone.

"I'd never miss one of the good ol' dances in Sumatra in 1945-46." She especially remembers Lulu Metzell, Florence Zubonski and her brother Bob Frier and their sister who lives in Forsyth.

Agnes' husband is a career naval officer and is stationed on the USS New Orleans ... main recovery ship for the last astronauts.

GREBE FAMILY

Ed Grebe came to Sumatra in 1928. He had been working as a brakeman on the Milwaukee railroad between Sioux Falls and Sioux City. His wife Caroline joined him a bit later.

Among the possessions the Grebe's brought to their life in Sumatra were an almost new Ford coupe, household furniture and machinery, one pig, two dozen chickens, a milk cow, eight pigeons and three pair of Chinchilla rabbits.

In the summer of 1936 after weathering drought, grasshoppers, and dust storms the Grebe's sold their band of sheep and their cattle and moved to Billings to a spot near Shepherd. They lived about three miles west of Billings and went into the potato chip business. They tried this chip manufacturing business for about three months and realized it was not too profitable, so gave it up.

They went back into the sheep business and moved ten miles east of Billings to a spot near Shepherd. They wintered their 700 ewe lambs and in the spring Ed and Erman Bassett trailed the sheep back to the Sumatra ranch. It was a three-day trip.

The Grebe's have three children. Bonnie Jean is Mrs. Bus McCaffree of Custer; LaVonne is Mrs. Clyde Brewer of Melstone; and son Eddie.

GREEN FAMILY

The Green family, Sam and Elsaie and children, came to Ingoman in 1954 and in '55 moved to Sumatra. Linda Green Defrees finished her schooling at Sumatra; she started in the sixth grade and graduated in 1961 with William E. Timberman and Leonia L. Lentz.

Linda then joined the WAC, training at Ft. McClellan.

A birthday party at the Leo Hecker farm in '59. From left, Linda Green, Arthur Hecker, and Terry Kanta.


and Sam Houston. She was then stationed at Ft. Leavenworth. In 1965 she married Conrad C. Defrees of Saginaw, Michigan. They currently live in Harrison, Michigan.

ED GRIBBLE FAMILY

Ed Gribble, born 1886 in Wisconsin, and Leona Faust, born 1890 in Wisconsin, were married at Prairie Du Cheni, Wis., in Jan., 1906. They had three sons, Howard, Roy and Claude.

The family came to Montana and homesteaded near Ahles in 1916 where they spent the next five or six rough years. Mr. Gribble worked on the Railroad section at Ahles. Then they moved to Thebes where he worked on the section for two or three years.

They moved to Forsyth then where Roy and Claude attended school. Later they moved to Wisconsin and California.

Howard worked in the local area and married Phyllis Watson in 1933. They raised three children. He worked for over twenty-four years in Colstrip, and later in Billings before retiring in Forsyth.
Buckrake and over-shot hay stacking system on Hagen ranch in 1924. Sever Hagen was a progressive rancher of the Porcupine.

Three Hale families arrived in Vananda, Montana, from Morton, Minn., in Sept. 1915. They included the father and mother and two sons and families. The father, L. C. Hale and wife and daughter Martha were one family. One son, Jasper W. Hale and wife and two children, Gladys and Charles were another family. Another son, Harry M. Hale and wife and two sons, Leverett and Vern were the third family.

They came by automobile caravan in three cars, a Ford and two Maxwells, and camped out along the way. It took a week to drive the distance. Two cousins of Jasper and Harry, Harold and Claude Smith of Franklin, Minn., came along to drive two cars and then returned by train. Jasper came with the emigrant train bringing household goods and livestock which took nearly two weeks. The caravan group rented a house in Vananda to live in while waiting for the emigrant train to arrive.

L. C. Hale bought 160 acres north of the Porcupine Creek about nine miles north of Vananda with a house and buildings on it. The families all lived there while building houses on the sons' homesteads on Long Fork Creek.


Neighbors east of L. C. Hales were Wells, west were Jim Lanes, across the Porcupine Creek to the south were Cartwrights and many more.

Jasper Hale’s homestead on Long Fork Creek was fourteen or fifteen miles north of Vananda. Mrs. Jasper (Mae) Hale came a month later by train, after a shack had been built on the homestead, to join her husband and children, Gladys and Charles.

Harry M. Hale, wife and two sons, Leverett and Vern Hale, homesteaded on Long Fork Creek a mile east of Jasper Hales. Their neighbors were the John Northes, Gunther Potratz, Kings, Roy Griggs families and many more.

In the fall of 1916 the Long Fork Creek School opened. Some people called it the Sparks School since it was just across the road from Everett Sparks homestead, one mile south of Jasper Hales' homestead. Gladys and Charles Hale, Leverett and Vern Hale and two Sparks boys were the first pupils. Clarence Baker from Morton,
THE HENRIKSEN FAMILY

It was 1916 and James Henriksen was 16 years old when he made his first trip to Ingomar to visit his aunt and uncle Mr. and Mrs. Henry Schoessler. James' father Adolph Alga Henriksen had passed away that year in Chicago.

Jim's mother Annie Henriksen soon followed him to Ingomar and took up a homestead about three miles northwest of the town. She bought an additional section from Searle for six hundred dollars. Jim got a job working on the Milwaukee railroad as a section crewman.

As the years passed, Jim met and married Hazel Lois Leach and they lived on the ranch with his mother, but in 1923 Jim and his wife decided to go back to Chicago. Lois Ann was born to the Henriksen's on March 30, 1924. When she was a month and a day old they took their car, packed their belongings and headed for Ingomar.

Helen Vera Henriksen was born in September 1925 and she was joined by Eleanor Jane in 1927. Lois Ann describes the family as a "happy one" with lots of visitors and company.

In September 1930 tragedy struck the Henriksen home when Jim's wife died. Grandmother Annie Henriksen then 57 years old came to be both mother and grandmother to the children.

Lois Ann recalls the days on the ranch; the raising of Hereford cattle, fencing, haying, even the planting and harvesting of grain. In the summer time, the riding to look after the cattle occupied a good deal of time because there was considerable "open range" and livestock could roam for miles.

Ingomar was a booming town at certain times of the year. Lois recalls that shearing time, usually in June was a big time with lots of activity and a lot of people in the town. Another high point was the fall delivery time for cattle; a time when they were shipped to eastern markets.

But it wasn't all easy. There was the drought when water was short and forage for livestock was even less available. These were the times when it was necessary to trade meat, eggs, butter, cheese and other farm and ranch products for needed supplies from the grocery store of Art Over or Bookman's.

In 1935 Jim Henriksen bought a crawler tractor and a scraper. He then went into the contracting business building reservoirs for farmers and ranchers. He was in this business when he passed away in 1965.

In 1941 James Henriksen married Anna Josephine Mathern and they lived in Ingomar in the Rapstead house. Three girls were born to this union; Donna Josephine, LaVonne June, and Diana Jean.

After graduation from Ingomar High School in 1942 Lois Ann went to Eastern Montana Normal school in Billings. Graduating from there, she taught school in Washington. The ranch was sold to Sonny Magglesson in 1944 and Eleanor came to live with Lois in Washington where she finished school.

In 1948 Lois Ann married Bennett E. Smith a commercial fisherman. They've enjoyed the commercial fishing business since then with summers spent fishing in Alaskan waters and the winter months fishing the Puget Sound and waters in that area for cod, sole, perch, and other fish. Their current fishing boat is a 54 foot steel salmon purse seiner, the "Miss Sherri".

The Smith's have cared for a number of foster children over a period of years and look upon many of them as their own. Now, grand-children are assisting in the fishing operation. The family lives in Tacoma.

Helen Henriksen Reis lives in Washington and the youngest daughter, Eleanor lives in Chicago. She married George Smith in 1948 and they have three daughters, Beverly, Deborah, and Valerie.

Grandma Annie Henriksen celebrated her 103rd birthday at the Tri-City Reunion.

HERBERT HERNDON FAMILY
By Fern Herndon Eggers

We (Mr. and Mrs. Herbert H. Herndon and five children Walter, Fern, Frank, Don and Twyla) came* from Nebraska to Forsyth, Mont., by train in 1916. Karl and Sadie McConnell met us there and we went to the homestead, about thirty miles north of Vananda; in a horse-drawn wagon. A young fellow from Nebraska drove our car out.

We lived the first summer in three tents while Walker Herndon, dad's brother, Karl and several other men built us a sod house.

Sadie was Karl McConnell's wife and our school teacher. She is the one who started for home from school on the weekend and it was so warm they stopped and left their coats at a farm house. Before they had gone too far a blizzard came up and in twenty minutes the temperature had dropped sixty degrees. Three days later Karl found them. All were frozen, Sadie, Percy, Donna and Caroline. Dad and Karl took them to Forsyth where they were buried.

About four miles north of us was where Gustav Metke lived. He was twenty-one years old and became our teacher and minister. He was from Germany and had graduated from the University of Chicago.

Our school house was two miles east. Beyond that was a family named Feiper. Karl lived two miles south of us, and beyond him a couple miles was a family named Wengel. On the west was the badlands.

Crops were not good. We had no rain for the next
seven years, but we were not there that long. We had to go thirty miles for our groceries and six miles to a homestead owned by Fishers for our mail.

We killed three-hundred rattlesnakes the first summer. An old homesteader we called "Old John" taught us how to kill snakes. Don came in one day wearing a shirt and diapers and told me he had killed a rattlesnake. I went out to see and he had killed it with a hoe. On a ceiling beam we had a bottle of some kind of snake-poison antidote a deep purple color — and a sharp knife and bandages. We were fortunate we never had to use it.

There was a little hill in front of our house covered with broken Indian pots and arrow heads. Some were made of flint and some made of agate.

One time Mr. Metke's father was trying to get a big snake out of the well. I was standing on the other side watching. He was raising the snake with a pole. When he got to the top the pole slipped and the snake came through the air and hit me. He tried to catch me to apologize but I was so scared I could run faster then he could.

One time Walter got lost in the badlands during a blizzard. We put a light in the window and waited. Don said, "If Walt doesn't get back can I have his knife?" But Walt got back hours later. The horse, named Doll, brought him home.

The water was terrible—just like Pluto water. All the water holes had white alkali around them. There was just one tree to be seen from our house. It was a cottonwood between our house and the school house.

We stayed three years. That's how long it took to prove up on a homestead. Then we moved to Miles City.

BERNICE NIETT REED

I would like to say, however, that although my home was in Garfield County, northwest of Sand Springs that I attended Sumatra High School between 1925 and 1929 and lived there during that time. In my freshman year 1925-26 I worked for my board and room for Mrs. Minnie Herbold, at the Fleetwood Hotel. I remember it burned down a few years later.

My brother Glen Niett, now deceased, was Valedictorian of the Sumatra Class of 1926, and another brother, Kennedy, also deceased, made his home in and around Sumatra for several years in late 20's and early 30's.

I have not been in Sumatra since 1930, so I am looking forward to revisiting the "Old Stomping Grounds."

THE HJELVIK FAMILY

Math Hjelvik was born in Norway in 1886. He came to the United States and lived for awhile in North Dakota where he had several uncles and brothers, Carl and Erik. He served in the U.S. Army during World War I. Adela did the farming on his land southwest of Bascom during his absence. They were married April 6, 1921.

On Oct. 6, 1924, their first child, Elva, was born. She is married to Wally Christianson. They live in Ketchikan, Alaska and have 3 girls and 1 boy.

Elizabeth Carrie (Betty) was born Feb. 14, 1929.

She was married to Max Belzer and they had 2 girls and 1 boy. They were divorced and she now lives in Ketchikan also.

The twins, Jean and Joan were born Feb. 28, 1930. Joan was married to Chris Lang in June of 1949 and they live east of Melstone. They have 3 girls and 2 boys. Joan was married to Ed McCaffrey in Musselshell in 1951. They live southeast of Melstone. Ed is County Commissioner in Rosebud County. They have 3 girls and 1 boy.

Bud was born Nov. 17, 1931. He was married to Betty Lou Paulson at Lavina in Dec. 1955. He is a member of the Melstone school board and lives 5 miles east of there. They have 2 boys and 2 girls.

Iver John was born Sept. 7, 1934. He served 4 years in the U.S. Navy. He was married to Donna Moutt in 1958. They live at Nye, Mont., and have 3 girls and 1 boy.

Dorothy Ann was born on Feb. 8, 1936 during a blizzard. Matt was in the veteran's hospital at the time, and Roy Eaton was helping Adela take care of the place and livestock. Roy went to Bascom and helped his mother, Mrs. Grant Eaton to walk the 4 miles through deep snow drifts. Mrs. Eaton ushered Dorothy into the world. Dorothy was married to Leonard Smith in 1954. They live in Des Moines, Iowa and have 2 boys and 1 girl. Mary Annette was born Apr. 8, 1938. She was married to Rober Sherman in 1956. They have 3 girls and 3 boys and live in Choteau, Mont., where he is a teacher and coach in the high school.

Elva, Betty, Jean and Joan all graduated from high school in Sumatra. Bud, Iver, John, Dorothy and Mary graduated in Melstone.

Matt died Feb. 6, 1954 of a heart attack. He is buried in the Melstone cemetery. Adela lives in Melstone, in the house where Mr. and Mrs. Herron lived for many years. She enjoys traveling around the country, spending time with each of her children, and keeping track of the grandchildren.

GENEVA HIGHLAND (WITT)

I attended Sumatra High January 1924-May 1927 and was graduated there. School enrollment at Secondary level was 70-85. Mostly good teachers. Dorm would have as many as fifty kids.

Freighting north for ranches there was largely by horses. Clem Larson, now of Stevensville-Hamilton area freighted with a string team led by matched pair of buckskins. Waddington and Myers were sheeplemen of the area. I have a picture in my book "Big Dry Country" showing Clem's freight outfit with 10 of the 12 horses in his outfit.

ADOLPH HILLER HISTORY

By Eldon Hiller

Adolph Hiller, now 86 is living in Portland, Oregon and took out a homestead south of Sumatra around 1910. Here's a copy of a letter written by him in 1915 that may be of some interest.

This letter was written to his brother, Gus, in Portland.
Vernile and Zelma Hindman at school south of Vananda.

remember some of the early teachers, Miss Schoessler, Mrs. Bill Hunt, Roxy Carrington and Grace Earl. The family moved away about 1920.

Clarence and Rose Hindman had four sons, Clyde, Glenn, Carl and Harold. The family oved to Forsyth in the 1920's where the boys all graduated from High School and where most of them married. Clarence passed away in 1935.

Most of the Hindman family members now live in Washington and Oregon.

GLEN I. HINSVARK

Glen taught the Mission Valley one-room country school during the 1936-37 school year. He had nine students, six McJunkin children and three White children.

On weekends when the roads on the north side were closed with snow, he would drive to and across the frozen Yellowstone River to Highway 10 on the south side and then into Forsyth, his home.

At the end of the school year he went to Washington, D.C. where he worked for the government until he retired in 1972.

HOFMEISTERS

In 1906, John Hofmeister moved from Waverly and Maple Lake, Minnesota, to Kulm, North Dakota, where he met Martha Billigmeir. He worked as an apprentice to his brother, Joe, who was a carpenter there. He was thirty years of age when he married Martha on September 27, 1909. She was seventeen.

Joe had gone to Montana to homestead on land east of Ingomar. He then encouraged John to follow him. John and Martha left for Montana in May of 1914 with their two children, Raymond and Andrew, ages three and one. They homesteaded on land east of Ingomar (south half of section 24, township 9, range 35) in the area known as Grass Ridge. Here he dug a well, built a small house near his dug-out barn and tilled part of the land. To augment his income, he also worked as a carpenter for neighboring homesteaders and found employment on the Milwaukee Railroad as a section hand and as a "pumper" at Thebes.

In 1915, a daughter, Irene, was born on this homestead, and John performed the duties of mid-wife. This demonstrated not only his versatility, but also his resourcefulness and self-reliance.

In 1919, they moved to Roundup where John worked at the coal dock on the Milwaukee, and then they moved to Harlowton, where he worked full time as a carpenter.

They returned to Ingomar in the summer of 1921, but soon had to leave for North Dakota where they stayed until 1923. At that time they returned to the homestead where he used his 1918 Chevrolet to transport children to school.

1927 was a good year for them. The crops were good and this gave them encouragement to stay on the homestead. The prospects of petroleum in the area were also an incentive to stay. John purchased additional land from Darwin and Hazel Harbicht (east half section 26, township 9, range 35). With high hopes for a bright future, he rented more land to farm, along with the raising of cattle, hogs, and horses. But, because of extreme drought, he found the next years to be disastrous. He was forced to sell practically all of his livestock.

The Hofmeister family-1938. John and Martha and children Raymond, Andrew and Irene.

In 1932, he found employment at the Fort Peck Dam as a carpenter, where he continued to work until its completion.

In 1940, he and Martha moved to Forsyth. They tore down their ranch buildings, and with the salvaged material, they built their home in Forsyth where he continued to work as a carpenter, and also operated a trailer court.

John Hofmeister passed away in Forsyth in 1967, at the age of 86. His wife, Martha, died at her home there in 1974 at the age of 81 years, 11 months and 24 days. They rest side by side in the Forsyth cemetery.

Their children are: Raymond, who resides in Vallejo, California; Andrew, in Pullman, Washington; and Irene (Mrs. Amos Olson), Lindsay, Montana. There are eight grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

HARRY KOCH-MARGARET HOLMES HISTORY

My mother, Margaret Holmes Koch went to the Sumatra area in 1910, with her parents Rena and William Holmes and her two sisters, Mrs. Helen Holmes Messmer, and Mrs. George Holmes Gasaway. William Holmes was section foreman on the Milwaukee Railroad and later on took up a homestead 7 miles south of Sumatra. Rena Holmes operated the two hotels in Sumatra at different times.

My father, Harry E. Koch, had a homestead several
miles northeast of Sumatra. He went to Europe during World War I, while he was in the army. He went back to the Sumatra area after he was discharged from the army, and farmed. His brothers, Ray, Bernard, and Leland, and his sisters, Faye, Leona, and Frieda all visited or lived in that area for some time. Ray worked for Mrs. Bartlett in the Garage, and Faye married Francis Riddle. They lived about 6 miles north of Sumatra. Their children are Mary Alice Leithard, Louise Griff and Earl Riddle.

When I was two years old we moved to my grandparents' homestead, south of Sumatra on Muggins Creek. My brother, William G. Koch and I both went to Sumatra grade schools, leaving there in June of 1936; we moved to a ranch in the Wolfe Mountains southwest of Colstrip. Later moving to Armer Creek, south of Forsyth. We both graduated from the Forsyth High School.

My father and grandparents are dead. My mother and I live in Billings, where I work at the Billings City Fire Department, as a Steno. My brother, William has his doctorate and is a professor at the Northern Colorado State College in Greeley, Colorado. He married Jean Woltermann of Columbus. They have four children, Nicholas, Gregory, Stephen and Carol.

All who have lived in the Tri-City Area seem to have a lot in common. Perhaps it is the struggle they all had in feeding, clothing, and sheltering themselves. I think it taught us the value of working for the things we needed and wanted. And the desire to help one another. It was a good place to grow up, but parents must have known many hardships in raising their families. It will be good to see old acquaintance again, Rena Koch.

Helen Holmes married Fred Messmer. Their children are Louis and Fred Jr. Helen and Fred have nine grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. They all live in the West Coast area. Fred Messmer Sr., died in August of 1974.

Georgine Holmes Gasaway and Miles Gasaway lived in Forsyth. Their daughter Kathleen Deveny lives on a ranch out of Forsyth. Kathleen and Tom Deveny have a daughter, Doretta Jarvis, of Great Falls. George Miles Gasaway lives in Page, Arizona. Harry Gasaway has been missing in action since World War II.

MR. AND MRS. CHARLES HOPF

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hopf were married in 1926 and homesteaded north of Ingomar where they lived until they moved to the Davis place north of Sumatra. They moved to the Bill Gutman place six miles southwest of Sumatra where they have lived ever since. Mr. Hopf died in 1965. Mrs. Hopf is 88 years of age and still living in her own home.

They had one son, George who lives with his family on the ranch and farm south west of Sumatra.

TED W. AND FRANCES M. HORN

Was Superintendent of Sumatra School from 1957 until the school burned in December of 1964 and then finished the year as Superintendent of the Ingomar until June of 1965.

DIC K HOPWOOD

Dick Hopwood came west as a young man from Springfield, Illinois, and worked on a wagon train hauling people through Yellowstone Park before homesteading north-east of Vananda, east of the Porcupine Creek, in about 1914. His neighbors included Bill Johnsons and Harry Rabes.

Dick farmed and raised livestock until about 1950 when he sold his place to Pete Smith and moved to Forsyth.

He was married to a lady known as "Frenchie" for a short time.

Dick returned to Springfield, Illinois, about 1965 and lived next to his sister until he passed away in 1973.


THE HUNNES FAMILY

Burt Hunnes emigrated from Norway to the United States in the late 1800's and the lady who was to become his wife, Barbara Schemer came to this country from Germany in 1900. They met in Butte, Montana. Mr. Hunnes was a tailor and Mrs. Hunnes worked in a laundry and dry cleaning establishment.

The lure of a “farm of your own” ... the independence of having your own place brought them to the Porcupine, fourteen miles East of Ingomar.

The year was 1914 and the half section of land was described on the official plat as the West half of Section 32, Township 10 North, Range 37 East. It became their home until retirement in 1952. The land had been homesteaded by Torbjorn Ringheim and he in turn sold the "relinquishment" to them.

At the time they came to the "homestead" there were some "dugout" type shelters on the place and also a part of a log house. They added to the log structure to make a three-room house; two rooms on the ground floor and an attic bedroom area. Also, under the house was the protective, hopefully freeze-proof room called the cellar where potatoes, canned foodstuffs, apples, and other food were kept. Access to the cellar was by means of a trap-door in the floor of the kitchen; it was a marvelous room, protecting foods from freezing in the winter.

They Say "It Happened That Way" 39
and in the summer keeping them cool. In order that it might provide the necessary cold-weather protection, a regular autumn chore was "banking" the house with dirt to provide an extra barrier against the frigid temperatures.

A thrilling event, occurring almost every summer, was the trespass of a snake into the cellar area. Usually a bull snake; occasionally a rattler. But in the confines of the cellar there was not room for reptile and human ... and the first sign of a snake meant a concerted effort to dispose of it ... and not until the snake had been done-in was there any feeling of security on "having to go to the cellar" and for weeks after one cast an alert eye over the area ... and made sure to make plenty of noise to alert or scare any snake that might have been there.

In the winter, the cellar had a different trespasser. The field mice liked to take shelter in the warm and food-stuffed cellar. At that time a string of traps were put into play to decimate the rodents. Or the farm mouser, the calico cat was brought in from the barnyard to exterminate the pests.

When temperatures dropped well below zero ... and if the prevailing northwest wind picked up in fury, it was often necessary to provide additional supplemental heat to the warmth of the cellar. On those occasions two means were utilized: first, a quilt was thrown over such foodstuffs as sacks of potatoes ... or other garden produce ... and then, a kerosene lantern was lighted and placed on the dirt floor of the cellar. These efforts usually prevented any freezing.

There was some meadow-land on the homestead and one of the first projects was to construct a "crossing" of willows and stones in the Porcupine Creek to gain access to the meadows "on the other side" of the creek from the house. This crossing also served as the main crossing for wagons, visitors, and others before the road district was able to construct a bridge on the county road in the late 20's.

Burt Hunnes farmed the land, growing wheat, corn, oats, and grasses. On the meadows, alfalfa was planted and did exceptionally well until the drought of the 30's killed it. Again later, alfalfa returned to the meadows on a volunteer basis. In the interim, crest had been planted and it helped hold the soil against the washing when the floods hit in the Spring or from summer cloudbursts.

Burt and Barbara Hunnes had three children; the eldest John was born in 1915; Beulah in 1919; and Fred in 1925. All the children attended school at the Nelson school about a mile East, South-East of their home. The school closed in the mid-thirties and Fred then attended grade school in Vananda.

Social activities in the country included Sunday visiting and neighborhood with other farmers and ranchers. During the school term there were programs, especially the Christmas program. Frank Paulman played the role of Santa Claus and it was a time of merriment for the adults and children.

Mail service was on a once per week basis; occasionally it was twice a week from Vananda. When that service was discontinued because of lack of patrons a new route was established from Ingomar.

MRS. JOHN HURD

Mrs. John Hurd taught grade school at Sumatra and also was the first teacher at the Galbraith School when they moved a school house down there in what is now the northeast corner of John Kluk's. She rode horseback both to and from Sumatra each day regardless of the weather and had two of her own children in school with her, Ada and Loren.

THE HURST FAMILY
BY VALERIE AND HUGH HURST

Parents, Clifton N. and Alice Hurst homesteaded about 12 miles north of Ingomar (near Hagen ranch) 1914-1925; then moved to La Grange, Ill. suburb of Chicago. Daughter Valerie and son Hugh. Valerie attended school in Ingomar 1924-25; grammar and high school in La Grange; college and higher degrees from U. of Chicago, U. of Cal. and Univ. of London. Now a Microbiologist, Faculty of U. of Cal since 1940.

Hugh Hurst now resides in Amenia, New York 12501.

JENNINGS FAMILY

In 1910 Bill and Virgil Jennings came from Deer Lodge to Melstone and settled in three tents by the stockyards. They stayed there until they could inspect the homestead availabilities; Virgil filed on 320 acres about twelve miles southeast of Melstone. They bought a railroad section next to the homestead and built a large log house with the logs hewed with a broad axe.

Bill Jennings went back to Raymore, Missouri until 1912 when he with wife and family returned and bought a half section from Cecil Weeks. Had to hand dig a well fifty-two feet deep for water. Mrs. Jennings died in November leaving five children with the eldest 18.

Virgil and Ethel Jennings proved-up on their homestead and so Alvin still lives on the land.

The "Weeks School" was built about 1913 with the first teacher being Mrs. Fielding. When the winter weather was cold, students would sit around the large
September 24, 1914

Dr. Holmes of Forsyth intends to establish a complete drug store and has leased the James Dolson building on Main street for that purpose. Dr. Holmes has been a Northern Pacific railroad Doctor and has been in Forsyth. He will locate in Ingomar.

January 14, 1915

Changes have taken place in the lumber business in Ingomar. Both the J.W. Smith and Savage Lumber companies have sold out. Savage Lumber sold to J.A. North of Thermopolis, Wyoming. North will manage himself and will move to Ingomar. J.W. Smith and company, comprised of J.W. Smith, resident manager and J.W. Burt, formerly of Forsyth is the pioneer lumber company of the Ingomar territory. They established the present yard in 1910 and one in Vananda in 1912. It is surmised that later this lumber company will be transferred to the Midland line.

June 17, 1915

School trustees have re-engaged Miss Leta Edington and Miss Mae McGee. Miss Edington is presently on her claim in the north country where she will remain until school and Miss McGee is attending Normal School in Dillon.

August 6, 1915

Lumber for the new Ivanell postoffice has been delivered. Work to be done by neighboring ranchers. Postmaster Mrs. Buck will open in three weeks.

October 29, 1914

George Himmer, Delbert Morud, Gilbert Rud, and Gerhard Anderson from South Dakota moved on their claims 35 miles Northeast of Ingomar in area known as Acorn Flats.

March 1915

Thirty oil locations were filed recently at Forsyth by the Eastern Montana Oil and Gas Company of Miles City. The filings cover 4,800 acres in Townships 10 and 11 North, range 39 East; the area about 40 miles north of Forsyth on Stellar Creek. During the past year about 200 filings have been made in this territory.

June 10, 1915

The sheep shearing at Ingomar is bringing in quite a number of sheep herders, cow punchers and flockmasters of the district. California Bob, Texas Jack, and the Montana Kid and a whole lot more of the oldtimers not excepting Soda Water Jack and Wild Horse Pete. They're at present making Ingomar their home and they are all pretty good fellows, too.

Manager Blachley of the Ingomar Sheep Shearing Plant commenced operation at this well-known plant on Wednesday and Thursday with a full crew of 42 shearsers. These men all arrived the first part of the week and the first band of 4,000 sheep was put through the plant on Wednesday. New additions of sheepmen booking for shearing will bring the season total to about 100,000. This will mean with reasonably good weather a run of four or five weeks. The first band sheared this year was that of S.O. Myssie, 4,000 strong and the second band belonged to Tom Birkem, 3,000.

November 24, 1914

Moving Picture Show announcement. We wish to announce to the people of Ingomar and vicinity that we will show 5,000 feet of film each week at the Ingomar Hall if patronage will warrant it. R.A. Lockridge, proprietor. Children admission 15 cents; adults 25 cents.

December 2, 1915

Dedication of a new school building Saturday evening last occurred. This building began two years ago and the main building was built. This year the addition of two additional rooms was made and the full basement under the new part was completed. This gives the district one of the very best school buildings in the state at a cost of $9,000. A complete steam heating and ventilation plant has been installed. At the dedication of the new building about 150 patrons and friends of the school gathered and listened to a very acceptable program gotten up by the teachers and pupils of the school.

December 9, 1915

Al Weydert is contemplating the erection of a new combination hand and gasoline power shearing plant at a point about two miles south of Hole-in-the Rock, twenty-four miles north of Ingomar.

January 6, 1916

Joseph Wayciechouski, better known in the territory between Miles City and Melstone as Kid Driscoll, a wrestler and prize fighter, was arrested by Bob Goward, deputy sheriff, on a charge of forgery.

July 8, 1915

Big free dance at Reichler’s new store building on Thursday evening last was one of the most successful events of the kind ever held at Ingomar. The dancers gathered from all over, from Forsyth to Roundup. The dance floor was forty by one-hundred feet. The music was by the Criterion orchestra. It was the Grand Opening.

September 9, 1915

W.E. Clifton was the successful bidder for the transportation of pupils on the north of Ingomar route of School District No. 33. Mr. Clifton has just finished building a covered wagon for this purpose.

May 11, 1916

Ingomar is to have its third big general store this month. This store is to be operated by Ingomar Cash Store Company. It’s composed of Mr. J.W. Schumacher of New England, North Dakota; Joseph Pirkl of North Dakota; and Joseph Stransky, of Minnesota. Work has begun on the new building on the lower Main street, two blocks below the corner of Main and Second street.
May 25, 1916
The voters of school district No. 42 comprising the German settlement north of town have voted to build four school sites and also to bond the district for the sum of $4,000 in order to build the four school houses. The following sites were selected: one located in neighborhood of Carl Kundert's homestead, one near the Sauer place, one in Salzer neighborhood, and one at the east end of Mrs. Knapp's homestead.

December 21, 1916
The banking house of Wiley, Clark, and Greening was established July 21, 1914, starting in a temporary room 10 by 12. It's deposits at the end of the first year had increased from nothing to $91,312.82. During the first year a new brick bank building was erected at the corner of Main and Second street in Ingomar. At the end of the second year the deposits had grown to $185,548.47. Officials of the bank are H.B. Wiley, president; E.B. Clark, first vice president; C.W. Greening, second vice president; W.T. Craig, cashier; A.C. Jacobson and C.D. Pickard are assistant cashiers.

February 8, 1917
Mrs. Carl W. McConnell, of Elmer, a school teacher who has conducted the Elmer school, 30 miles north of Ingomar, was found dead lying beside the frozen bodies of her 3 children, aged 5, 7 and 9 years, Sunday by her husband. The bodies all frozen, were found in the traveled road, about 300 yards from the McConnell homestead shack which refuse they were undoubtedly trying to make at the time death overtook them. Mrs. McConnell closed her school, which is located about 4 miles from their home, on Friday evening and did not attempt to reach home until the snowstorm had abated on Saturday morning. Saturday morning all signs of severe weather had disappeared. After noon the temperature dropped from 60 above to 14 below zero within 30 minutes. The storm that prevailed after the fall in temperature was very severe. It is thought that Mrs. McConnell thinking the weather had fully cleared, started about noon with her children, to walk to her home, and was caught between the school building and her home, in the most severe part of the blizzard. Her husband, who remained at home with the idea that his family had not started from the school and was safe, began rounding up his cattle Sunday morning. It was while engaged at this task, he stumbled over the frozen bodies of his wife and 3 children.

April 12, 1917
A new post office to serve the people of the district six miles east of the present Elmer post office has been established. The name is to be Vansel and J. Bobitzke will be postmaster.

May 3, 1917
Charles A. McCain, USA retired, has been communicating with the War Department as to the advisability of organizing a militia company at Ingomar for the purpose of instructing our young men in the manual of arms.

July 26, 1917

October 4, 1917
J.E. Hanson has opened his mill doing custom grinding of Flavo Flour, Graham Flour, fine and coarse feed.

October 25, 1917
Al Weydert, assisted by Joe Orr, has just finished what is claimed to be the largest dam in the counties of Rosebud and Dawson. This dam has been constructed on the Weydert property 24 miles north of town. It was built in 12 days.

December 6, 1917
Beginning the first of the year, the Ingomar and Sumatra banks will reorganize changing their status from probate banks to state banks, operating under the state banking laws. Bank buildings will be greatly enlarged and improved.

February 28, 1918
L.D. Brooks, proprietor of the Rosebud Bottling Works at Forsyth, was run over by a through freight train Wednesday at Ingomar, and so badly injured he died on his way to Miles City. The accident occurred when the man was boarding the train.

March 8, 1924
Arthur Over is getting some wonderful results with his newly installed radio outfit. Last night three complete programs sent out from Chicago were enjoyed. Fine results were secured also from Calgary, Los Angeles and San Francisco broadcasting stations.

March 15, 1924
Jack Dempsey, world champion fighter, passed through Ingomar Thursday on Milwaukee train number 15 while on his way to California where he is to work in the movies. A number of local fight fans gathered in the station to see the champ and were greatly disappointed when he failed to show himself. All wanted to hear Mr. Dempsey tell his funny story about not being a speaker but willing to fight any man in the crowd.

April 5, 1924
Sumatra is advertising a track meet at Sumatra on May 3. Ingomar, Musselsheil, Melstone, and Vananda are invited to participate. It is pretty well understood that Ingomar will not bust a pucker string to send a team. Ingomar once upon a time took part in a field meet in Sumatra and won a pennant but up to the time of going to press Ingomar has never been given that pennant.
May 3, 1924

Ingomar schools for the third successive year won the Western Rosebud County field meet held in Sumatra. Devota Clifton, 1st in spelling; Eva Hagen, 1st in arithmetic; Loraine Owens won first in reading; Louis Riecher, 2nd in the declamatory contest; Tommy Owens 1st in the 50 yard dash; Mildred Miller, 3rd in the 50 yard dash.

May 24, 1924

Sunday afternoon five cars of local folks journeyed to Hole-in-the-Rock for a picnic. Mr. and Mrs. George Enterline; Mr. and Mrs. Les Cox; The Birger Aslals; Mr. and Mrs. Forest Travis; Misses Nellie French; Maybelle Sparrow; Margie Beatty; Irene Harbicht; Joe Chezik, Maxwell VanBuskirk, and Bill Splivens.

June 7, 1924

Peter J. Walters, better known as Wild Horse Pete died in Forsyth of spotted fever. He was one of the best known handlers of wild horses Montana has ever produced. He was an expert rider and bull dogger and for years a prominent contestant in many of the big western rodeos. At one time he assisted on the Tribune at Great Falls and contributed to western magazines.

June 14, 1924

US Marshall W.C. Packer of Helena arrived here Tuesday night on Number 16 and began the work of serving federal subpoenas on witnesses to appear in the federal court in Billings on June 19 at which time the case of William T. Craig, former President of the First National Bank of Ingomar, will be heard before Judge Charles Pray. Craig was indicted by the federal grand jury sitting at Butte on the charge of misapplying certain funds at the bank.

Those subpoenaed were: Henry D. Reicher, Sivert Mysse, Harry D. VanDuzen, E.E. Fleming, Irene Harbicht, John Bell, Charley Foster, Ben Grosfield, Albert Reper and Frank Kanta.

A good number of local folks are making plans to be present at the trial.

July 19, 1924

Several Ingomar members of the Ku Klux Klan attended the Rosebud meet, held Sunday afternoon north of Forsyth. Several candidates received the degree of knighthood. The grand Kleagle for the state of Montana was in charge of the ceremonies.

FIRES:

Fires were a terrible threat to communities such as Ingomar, Vananda, and Sumatra; lack of fire-fighting equipment and the fact that most structures were wood meant that many buildings were razed by racing flames.

Some might say that the economics of the times may also have been a factor in the number of fires. Following are some of the newspaper accounts of fires in Ingomar.

July 14, 1921

A $125,000 fire, in which the business section of Ingomar was practically destroyed, occurred Tuesday morning. The fire broke out in Cox's restaurant next door to Anderson's Hardware Store about 1 o'clock in the morning and in three hours all of the buildings in the business section were burned to the ground except the First National Bank building, which is fire proof, a general store on the other side of the bank, which was protected, the post office and the lumber yards.

The Anderson and company hardware, which was owned by G.C. Anderson and Dr. H.J. Huene of Forsyth was valued at $15,000 and insured at $12,000, according to Dr. Huene. They have not decided whether they will rebuild or not. If they do the building will be fireproof, Dr. Huene said. It is thought that most of the buildings were insured. The list of places burned out are as follows: Rupe and Company, grocers; Grand Hotel; Commercial Hotel; Lee's Harness Shop; Hayden Law Office; Neilsen Real Estate Office; Walker pool hall; Cal Bryant pool hall; Ingomar Independent; Cox Restaurant; Weydert Ice Company; Currie Barber Shop.

The Grand Hotel, which was considered one of the best small town hotels in this part of Montana was not insured. The insurance had just run out and the proprietor came to Forsyth Monday to see about insurance for the property but the agent was not in his office. The Ingomar Independent was pretty well covered, according to Paul Milam, the owner. This is the second time that this plant has burned out in the last three years, Mr. Milam states that he will not resume the paper there.

No one was injured by the fire. How it caught is a mystery. It blazed out on the Cox Restaurant and swept up the street then the wind changed and the buildings across the street caught fire and burned until the bank building was reached. The lumber yards caught but the wind changed and the fire fighters were able to put out the blaze. Ingomar has no fire department and the work of fighting it fell upon the individual citizens who fought it as best they could with buckets of water. Ingomar was the headquarters for many ranchers, who drive into town and took the train into Forsyth and other towns in this part of the state. The traveling men and others who visited the town will be greatly inconvenienced for want of a place to stay now that there are no hotels.

Dr. Huene and Mr. Anderson motored over to the fire as soon as they heard of it Tuesday. It is thought that all of the buildings that will be replaced will be of more substantial character than the ones that burned Tuesday morning. The Anderson Co. will handle the implements on hand until harvest is over, anyway.

August 4, 1921

Ingomar is coming back. Already brick buildings have begun to go up in place of the frame ones which were destroyed by fire. At least $75,000 in improvements are planned for the business section and when completed
this part of the town will be brick or tile and semifire proof.

The Grand Hotel, which was owned by Mrs. H.J. Broom will be the largest one of the new buildings and will cover three lots and be two stories high. Both floors will be used for hotel purposes but no meals will be served. Mrs. Broom has entered into a contract with L.L. Cox not to serve meals for five years if he opens his restaurant again. The Walker Pool Hall will be rebuilt. The building costing at least $4,000. The Weydert Ice Cream Company has built a galvanized building. All of Weydert's ice was saved so he did not have to buy a new stock. P.S. Carey has his barber shop in a shack at present.

Anderson and Co. has bought the hardware stock of Reicher's General Merchandise and is doing business there. They may rebuild in the spring. The Ingomar Independent will be in a brick building when it resumes according to Paul Millan, the proprietor, but will be located on other lots instead of at its former location.

Ingomar is in a position to come back as the town has a trade territory of 90 miles. The largest sheep shearing plant in Rosebud County is located there and about 200,000 sheep and cattle will be bought by the homesteaders as soon as the loan from the government for that purpose is available. The prospects for oil are good and Ingomaranans see no reason why they should not have a good town.

November 3, 1921

There was a number of Forsyth people who attended the bar-b-q given last Saturday afternoon by Cal Bryant to feature the opening of his brick pool hall. A large beef was prepared and begun to roast Friday night in an open pit back of the pool hall and was excellently prepared by the time it was served Saturday afternoon. The new building has just been built to replace the old one which was burned at Ingomar a couple of months ago. It is 25 feet by 65 feet and modern in every possible way.

People from Melstone and Sumatra also attended the bar-b-q.

The hotel which is being moved from Edwards in sections by Binny Winney is nearing completion as is Bookman's store. The latter building has a frontage of 50 feet and is 150 feet long. It is being built of brick.

Digging on the basement of the new brick restaurant which Leslie Cox is building was begun Wednesday.

Plans are also being made for the erection of a 30 room brick hotel at Ingomar in the spring.

August 24, 1922

Last Saturday afternoon, one week ago, the home of C.T. Plumb of Ingomar, was destroyed by a fire which for a time threatened the high school dormitory.

Mrs. Plumb was canning beets and cooking them on the oil stove. She had just gone to one of the near neighbors on a few minutes mission, leaving her older son, Hurley, and his baby brother, Jay Tyler, playing on the front porch.

Soon after his mother had gone Hurley, hearing a peculiar noise from the direction of the kitchen went to the back of the house to investigate. The flames, in the few minutes that ensued from the time he first heard the noise, had made such headway that he could not enter the kitchen. He picked up his brother and left the house for help. A large crowd gathered quickly and all the fire extinguishers available were brought to the scene as well as dozens of water buckets. The fire was quickly controlled but the building and its contents were a complete loss.

The high school dormitory which stands just across the street from the Plumb home seemed in imminent danger of catching fire on the roof from burning shingles that were carried through the air by a very high wind in that direction. Several men climbed onto the dormitory roof with fire extinguishers but fortunately no fire started there.

March 8, 1923

The residence of John Shoup, a pioneer stockman of the north country, was burned to the ground last Thursday night about 8 in Ingomar. The origin of the fire is unknown. Loss estimated at about $1500.

A man by the name of A.D. McLeod, living in the house who had been in town attending to some business matters discovered the roof all afire when he returned to go to bed.

Due to a very high wind the volunteer fire department had hard work saving the two buildings near the Shoup residence. These were saved only when the wind which had been blowing from the northwest suddenly changed to the southwest. The two houses in danger were occupied by Art Over and Matt Rapstad.

July 12, 1924

A Friday evening fire completely destroyed the William Hollingsworth residence in which Emil Peterson has been living the past year. The local bucket brigade did excellent work in saving the Bill Beatty and Jim Miller homes located on each side of the house that burned.

January 1, 1927

The home of Mrs. Mae Costello, which has been empty for several days burned to the ground and all contents lost. Gunnar Lende, who has the house rented, lost considerable property. The New Year's Eve dance was hitting on all 6 cylinders at 3:25 a.m. when the cry of "Fire" broke up the shindig in a hurry.

March 3, 1927 Forsyth Times Journal

Ingomar, March 2 (Special) — Monday morning at 6:30 o'clock the office of the Ingomar Independent was completely destroyed by fire of unknown origin. It is understood that the loss is partially covered by insurance.

The editor, Fred Armstrong, was sleeping in the rear of the building, and was suddenly awakened by the cracking of flames. The fire having made such headway that he was able to save only his clothes and a few personal effects. It was impossible to save any of the office or shop equipment.

The J.A. Bookman store and the Cox cafe, adjoining
buildings of brick were some damaged by the heat, but as there was no wind and the water tank was close, the workers were able to keep the fire from spreading.

December, 1964

The Sumatra School burned last Wednesday night. When the fire was discovered, the temperature was 30 below zero, and the phone was dead. No help was immediately available and the all-frame structure quickly burned to the ground, leaving only two chimneys and two fire escapes standing. Several trailer homes near by were undamaged. The cause of the fire is not known.

The 22 students, including 14 in high school, have been dismissed early for Christmas vacation. On January 4th school will resume at Ingomar, where grade school is in session, with one teacher. In the meantime, necessary repairs are being made on the building in Ingomar and an effort is being made to obtain books and equipment. Scheduled basketball games will be played in the Melstone gym.

The passing of this land mark stirs many fond memories in our hearts. The history of the Sumatra school is interesting and colorful. Back in the homestead days, the town was the center of a trade area extending north into the Missouri Breaks, and south to the Yellowstone River. Businesses included a drug store, elevator and feed store, two hotels, a restaurant, a couple of garages, a well-stocked grocery and dry goods store, a bank and newspaper and even a doctor.

The school system consisted of a large, square 2 story building, which housed the upper grades and high-school. Two small school houses took care of the primary and intermediate grades. The first class to graduate was in 1920 and the three graduates were Gladys Williams Krieder, Elizabeth Schlader Hecker, and Kent Midget.

The dormitory was finished and occupied during the fall of 1921. Carl Whitmore remembers that his mother cooked there during the winter of 1922 and '23. There were as many as 75 students housed there. Many from Melstone went to Sumatra to finish, there being only two years of high-school here at that time. In 1926, there were 22 graduates and the class included Lillian King Stensvad, Harold Schroeder, Ralph Guthridge, Phil Hoffman and Tony Price, who came from the Star mine.

As the years passed and changes occurred, the three school houses were torn down. The dormitory was remodeled to house the entire school. This happened in the early '40s. Lunch facilities were still in the basement, and the gym on the west side was improved with room for a stage being added. An entry and additional space was also built on the east side.

People in the Sumatra community have always been very sports-minded and some exceptional basketball teams have come from there. In 1953, with only seven players, they won second in the district, and placed 3rd in the divisional tournament. The players were Bill Kent, Eddie Grebe, Joe Kant, Brent Edward, Jerry hecker, Jim Hecker and David "Red" Savage. Their coach was Ray Dodds. It is with a great deal of sadness that we view the wreckage of the Sumatra school and the community has our sincere sympathy.

BANKING:

During the growth period of the Tri-Cities the financial institutions in the communities suffered reverses. The following news items from the Ingomar newspaper gives a thumbnail chronological sketch of the banking business. The reports, colored considerably by the newspaper editors attest to the emotions of the period.

December 21, 1916

The banking house of Wiley, Clark and Greening was established July 21, 1914 starting in a temporary room 10'x12'. Its deposits at the end of the first year had increased from nothing to $91,312.82. During the first year a new brick bank building was erected on the corner of Main and Second street in Ingomar. At the end of the second year, the deposits had grown to $185,548.47. Officials of the bank are H.B. Wiley, president; E.B. Clark, first vice president; C.W. Greening, 2nd vice president; W.T. Craig, cashier; and A.C. Jacobson and C.D. Pickard assistant cashiers.

December 6, 1917

Beginning the first of the year, the Ingomar and Sumatra banks will reorganize changing their status from probate banks to state banks, operating under the state banking laws. Bank buildings will be greatly enlarged and improved.

July 21, 1921

The First National Bank of Ingomar did not open its door.

October 13, 1923

E.E. Fleming as receiver of the defunct First National Bank of Ingomar on Wednesday had sheriff Cripin arrest the small safe in the office of Reicher Bros. The safe was handcuffed and a bunch of sealing wax poured over the combination, then Hank and George furnished a bunch of stickers to close the seams.

The same day Fleming attached the Buick Roadster owned by Mrs. Mae Costello.

Mrs. Costello informs us that the local shyster has started proceedings to grab off her salary as teacher in the Ingomar schools.

Up to the time of going to press no report has reached here of any attachments being served on H.B. Wiley or C.W. Greening both of whom owe the bank neat sums of money. Wiley's fine new car stood outside the bank the other day for some time. Was the car chained to the electric light pole nearby? We'll say it wasn't. Seems as if it makes considerable difference who owes the bank.

One doesn't hear a hell of a lot about what the bank owes the depositors. Seems to be a rather one-sided sort of a game.

October 29, 1923

Have you been told that your claim against the defunct First National Bank of Ingomar is a preferred claim and that you would get your money before other
**ECONOMICS - JUSTICE - LEGAL & ILLEGAL:**

It was Chicago, 1899 when Theodore Roosevelt said:

"Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory or defeat."

Many there were in the Tri-City area who "savored the sweet taste of victory ... or the agony of defeat."

**November 25, 1915**

A carload of Turkey Red winter wheat shipped to Chicago this week by T.A. Brooks of Ingomar topped the market that day for quality. It was sold on the Chicago market that day and brought $1.02/bu.

**April 27, 1916**

The new wagon road from Ingomar to the German settlement 25 miles northeast of town has now been laid out and fully decided upon. Two steel bridges will be built, one over the Porcupine and one over Blacktail. Following is the route of the proposed road. From Ingomar east to the Severson-Hofmeister corner, then north 1 mile to Ward Bennett corner, then east 1 mile to Simms's corner then north 1 mile to Hollingsworth's corner, then east 1 mile crossing Blacktail with a steel bridge at J.C. Crum's place then ½ mile east then 1 mile north to the corner of section 7-10-36 owned by J.W. Beatty then east 1 mile to Bedell's corner then north ½ mile to Palmer's corner then east 1 mile between Palmer's and Bedell to McFerran's corner then east to section 11 then north to J.C. Chamber's gate then running east to a proposed bridge over Porcupine on northwest corner of section 4 then northeast from the bridge quarter of a mile to Fred Zempel then east to the old Antelope Trail which brings the road into the German settlement and territory beyond.

A deal was closed this week whereby Lawrence Webley gets Roy McCool delivery, dry and feed business at Ingomar.

**December 7, 1916**

Ed Brown barber sold equipment and business to Elmer Weaks who is an experienced tonsorial artist working years at the trade in Iowa before moving here.

**March 15, 1917**

D. Van Baekman, J. Van Heisma and Hekma, the three leaders of the Holland colony, who have already purchased 5,000 acres of farming lands south of Ingomar, have arrived at Ingomar and are making arrangements to put two big Avery tractors to work tearing up the sod. The design is to break at least 1,000 acres for crop this year. Later Holland farmers from Grand Haven, Holland, Zeeland, and Grand Rapids, Michigan will be put on this land.

**April 15, 1917**

Harry J. Hokstra, who will act as superintendent of the big farm of the Montana Grain Ranch Co. in the Porcupine Valley, arrived the last of the week from Huntley, accompanied by Mrs. Hokstra.

**December 12, 1917**

F.G. Harmon is making arrangements to establish an up-to-date pool and billiard hall in his newly remodeled hotel building.

David Nelson lost 1400 head of sheep when water rose rapidly from the river and flooded the bedgrounds.

M.A. Martin sells blacksmith business to T. Buhite, formerly of Gauge.

J.R. Chambers of the Porcupine Valley who sold his farm to the Montana Grain Ranch Co., moved his family into town, and will reside here this summer.

S.O. Mysse trailed sheep from winter range on Pease Bottom south of Hysham, Myers and Custer and trailing overland to the summer feeding ground. Mysse came through Ingomar the latter part of the week to summer range on the Big Sandy. Tom Birkrem to Brunelda and Cohagen.

New post office to serve the people of the district 6 miles east of the present Elmer post office. Name to be Vanstel and J. Bobitzke postmaster.
The wooden business district of Ingomar as it looked before the fire; it was re-built with more permanent buildings.

June 21, 1917
Lt.-Gov. A.T. Krabbel of North Dakota purchased the Ingomar Cash Store from Schumacher and Stransky. Mr. Krabbel will place his brother and son in charge of the store.

W.B. Sandner of Caldwell, Kansas has been appointed agent at the Midland Coal and Lumber Co., Inc., branch and has assumed charge.

June 20, 1918
Wooster Ennis, Bob Seward and Jimmy Verdin killed wolves near the John Ringheim ranch near the mouth of east Blacktail last Tuesday evening, after a long exciting chase extending over an hour or so.

July 4, 1918
Ingomar wool growers donate select fleeces to be made into yarn for the Red Cross. Fleeces to be shipped east to Boston and scour. This will make into 250 lbs. of yarn (worth $5/lb.). Total donation of fleeces amounted to $1400.

December 22, 1921
Lem Rheimhard and Levi Haugen were arrested by Sheriff Cecil Thompson Monday evening at Ingomar charged with peddling "moonshine" whiskey in violation of the National Prohibition Act. They were brought to Forsyth Monday night for a preliminary hearing. They were released on $700.00 bond Tuesday afternoon for appearance in the District Court.

January 18, 1923
John Shoup, a pioneer stockman of the Hole-in-the-Rock country north of Ingomar, was arraigned in the District court Monday before Judge George A. Horkan on a charge of unlawful manufacture of intoxicating liquor. Shoup was arrested last July 24 by Sheriff Cecil Thompson and Undersheriff Harry Allen. He entered a plea of guilty and was fined $150 and sentenced to serve 30 days in the county jail. The jail sentence was to be suspended on payment of the fine, but if the fine were not paid he was to serve the same out at the rate of $2/day. Judge Horkan informed Shoup that he was giving him a comparatively moderate sentence because it was his first offense but should he ever be brought before the court on a similar charge he would be given the maximum sentence prescribed by law.

January 25, 1923
Steel for the new bridge which is to be constructed across the Big Porcupine Creek northeast of Ingomar and immediately below the mouth of McGinnis Creek was unloaded at Ingomar the first of this week. According to County Surveyor Charles B. Taber, the new bridge will consist of one 40 foot span. The erection of this bridge will open a large territory to Ingomar and facilitate trade at this point.

October 13, 1923
Wednesday Birger Aasland threw open to the public the city meat market he has leased from Al Weydert.

October 11, 1924
Sheepmen of the Ingomar country are urged to attend the 3rd annual meeting of the Rosebud Co. Woolgrowers Association to be held in Ingomar on Monday, October 27. Every sheepman in western Garfield and Rosebud Co. should make it a point to be present.

April 11, 1925
Ingomar Rancher Shot and Killed.
Anton Maslowski, age 50, well known rancher and sheepman, living 5 miles northwest of Ingomar was found dead on the prairie Wednesday night about 10 by his 15 year old son William. From all appearances the stockman had been shot from ambush, while herding his sheep. Charged with his murder was John Zagoric, who was arrested at his ranch at the head of Breed Creek.

June 25, 1925
Zagoric convicted of second degree murder.
That Zagoric visited Maslowski's sheep camp on April 7 before the killing took place the following day was brought out earlier in the trial. The defendant testified that on the morning of the seventh he engaged in a fight with Maslowski there being a long standing dispute between the two. On April 8th he being engaged in trapping started out to look at his traps, again, encountering Maslowski near his sheep camp, who set his dogs on him, whereupon he shot one of the dogs and Maslowski pulled a small revolver and snapped it at him but the gun

Main Street - Sumatra.

They Say "It Happened That Way"
April 24, 1926

Harry Corey and Tom Owens were on their way to the grading camp north of Ingomar and were running without lights, when they ran smack into another car coming into town in which was Ben and Bill Welborn, Leo Ayers and Charlie Maslowsk. No one was killed but limped around for a few days.

Yellowstone Elevator Co. at Sumatra, Ingomar, Forsyth and Hysham were purchased this week by the Eastern Montana Elevator Co. with headquarters in Glendale.

June 5, 1926

A wool pool of approximately half a million pounds of wool was formed in Ingomar by the Wayman and Lende, Grimstead and Brown, and Ivert Myssse sheep outfits. Within the next week it is expected that additional flockmasters will join which will increase the size of the pool to be around 750 thousand pounds which makes by far the largest wool pool formed in Montana this season. Lende chosen to look after the selling of the clip here, and Attorney Rockwood Brown at Billings.

August 14, 1926

Darwin Harbicht and Red Leach left Friday for the Flathead Country where they will be joined by Rolland Riddick and an Indian guide, for a 2 weeks hunt in the mountains for a lost gold mine. Before leaving Ingomar, Darwin made arrangements for the Milwaukee to furnish a special train to bring the gold back to Ingomar. Up to the time of going to press, the mine had not been found.

October 16, 1926

Les Cox has just installed in his restaurant building a general electric lighting system and in connection with the plant a Frigidaire cooling system for his large Hussmann Case.

October 30, 1926

Star Theater of Ingomar has changed management. Henry Harbicht now manages it.

November 6, 1926

During the past 3 months, the stockmen of these parts have shipped over the Milwaukee Railroad 377 carloads of livestock consisting of cattle, horses, sheep and hogs (65,000 head of stock).

June 2, 1927

Wool clips of E.W. Wayman, John Bell and Parkinson and Lee have been sold to Webb and Co. for 33 1/2 cents a pound through F.W. Foulkes and Co. of Billings.

The Myssse clip was sold a short time ago to W.J. Tobin. Most of the large clips have now been sold in the Ingomar territory at prices ranging from 32 to 34 1/2 cents.

Some lambs changed hands, with ewe lambs at 12 cents and wether lambs at 10 and 10 1/2 cents per pound for fall delivery.

June 16, 1927

Ben Frisbie, prominent Ingomar sheepman, was killed by lightning at the head of Porcupine Creek Wednesday afternoon. It is thought Mr. Frisbie was struck while trying to save some of his sheep which had been caught in heavy cloudburst and were being swept down the canyon. The body was found Friday afternoon by a searching party which was organized as soon as Mr. Frisbie was missed on Wednesday.

About 200 sheep were found by the searching party along the creek bed.

July 28, 1927

Mrs. Ves Clifton was rendered unconscious Tuesday evening when the Clifton home was struck by lightning, tearing a hole in the floor near where Mrs. Clifton was standing. Mr. Clifton and Ed Steie were also in the house at the time but were uninjured. Mrs. Clifton was quite ill for several days following the shock, but is now much better.

March 15, 1928

Stuck in the mud and not many miles from the scene of their crime, Harold Cook and Joe Smith were obligingly pulled out of the sticky gumbo by Art Over of Ingomar, one of the men whom they had just robbed. Coming on to Vananda the two robbers were met by Sheriff Patterson and relieved of their loot Monday morning about 10:30.

Stores belonging to J.A. Bookman and Art Over at Ingomar were entered between 10 and 11 Sunday night and valuable articles of merchandise were taken. Over's nephew William Jackson, was sleeping in a bed in the store at the time the robbery took place. The men stated that they flashed their flash light in his face on entering the store.

Cook and Smith, after completing the robbery, started east in a Studebaker coupe, when near Ashles, a small station on the Milwaukee Railroad, they stuck in a mud hole and worked there the remainder of the night trying to get out. In the meantime, residents of Ingomar became aware of the robbery and Art Over started for Forsyth for Sheriff Patterson. Coming upon the two men trying to get out of the mud he played the part of the good Samaritan by pulling them out. Although suspecting from the way the car was loaded that they were the parties who had looted the stores, he indicated in no way that he suspected them, but hurried on to Vananda ahead of them and wired for Sheriff Patterson. The sheriff left Forsyth on the morning train shortly after receiving the message reaching Vananda about 15 minutes before Smith and Cook, who had again been delayed, this time by a flat tire. Arriving in Vananda the two men stopped at Mastin's hotel to get their breakfast. Just as they were going into the building the Sheriff stepped up behind them and asked them to "stick them up." One of the men immediately obeyed the command, but the other had to be told a second time. The latter was found to be heavily armed.

March 29, 1928

Two men taken in Ingomar robbery escape jail.

April 12, 1928

Two involved in robbery in Ingomar picked up in Lenne and held in jail in Harlowton.

April 19, 1928

Sheriff Patterson returned Sunday night from Deer Lodge where he took the recaptured jail breaking burglars, Andy Cardwell and Jack Rodell, alias Frank.
Dear

I'm at work on a book about Montana during the homestead era, and I wonder if you'd be game to help me out by providing a few of your memories. My own memory doesn't go back far enough; it was my grandparents who homesteaded south of Helena, and the Depression had wiped out the place by the time I was born. As I've been casting around to find people who have first-hand homestead experience, a friend who grew up in your home area of Montana -- Ken Weydert, whose father once managed the sheep-shearing company in Ingomar -- loaned me a copy of the history written for the Ingomar-Sumatra-Vanada reunion in 1976. I hope you don't mind my getting in touch with you; the only way I can be accurate about what I write is to ask people who know.

You may have heard of my previous Montana book, This House of Sky, which is a memoir of my father and my grandmother and myself when we worked on ranches in the White Sulphur Springs Country, and later ran sheep on the Blackfeet Reservation out from Browning. The book I intend now will be fiction -- which means that names don't matter in any stories you might be willing to share with me -- but I want it to be truthful to homestead life. I'd particularly like to hear from you if you have any details on such topics as these:

-- Living arrangements in a homestead cabin: where everybody slept, what you ate, how you passed the evenings, what games you played with brothers and sisters or neighbor kids.

-- Chores: how old was a homestead child when, say, he or she got the responsibility of gathering the eggs? Filling the woodbox? Milking the cow? Did you help with the farming, and if so, at what age did you start?

-- School: I myself boarded out during most of my school years, but always with some other family -- not at a boarding facility as I read that Ingomar had. I'd like to hear any memories of what it was like to live there. Also, anything that particularly sticks in your mind about school days: a memorable teacher or fellow student, for instance.

-- Finally, I'd appreciate any information on how the homestead life ended for your family. For mine and a lot of others, it simply was done in by weather, lack of money, or the rigors of the work. Those things too are part of the story of where we came from.

Thanks for your time,

IVAN DOIG
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Nancy Snyder
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Gene Spilde
Lincoln, Montana 59639

Mrs. Wilbur Williamson
504 S. Market
Caldwell, Kansas 67022
# Tri-City Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address/Location</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aasland, Birger</td>
<td>Rosebud Community Nursing Home</td>
<td>Forsyth, Mont. 59327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aasland, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Bruce</td>
<td>1045 Front St.</td>
<td>Forsyth, Mont. 59327</td>
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<td>Abbott, Mrs. Rulen  c/o Clara Spek</td>
<td>Melstone, Mont.</td>
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<td>Agler, Garold</td>
<td>Shoreline Drive</td>
<td>Poison, Mont. 59860</td>
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<td>Aldinger, Ervin</td>
<td>Fallon, Mont. 59326</td>
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<td>Aldinger, Ida</td>
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<td>Aldinger, Melbert</td>
<td>191 N. 7th</td>
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<td>Aldinger, Richard</td>
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<td>Aldinger, Ted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allen, Dorothy</td>
<td>1616 S. Euclid No. 83</td>
<td>Anaheim, Calif. 93602</td>
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<td>Allsup, Sherri</td>
<td>Bozeman, Mont.</td>
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<td>Almond, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Carl</td>
<td>Hysham, Mont. 59038</td>
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<td>Amestoy, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Pierre</td>
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<td>Amo, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Kent</td>
<td>545 Main Street</td>
<td>Forsyth, Mont. 59327</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amundson, Betty</td>
<td>Ulm, Mont. 59485</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Francis</td>
<td>Rt. 1, Box 9A</td>
<td>Comfort, Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Laura</td>
<td>Dewey, Ariz. 86325</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Marvin</td>
<td>707 Bender Circle</td>
<td>Billings, Mont.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anderson, Maxine</td>
<td>2027 Iris Lane</td>
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<td>Anderson, Vernie</td>
<td>374 N. Wheeler, Apt. 2</td>
<td>St. Paul, Minn. 55104</td>
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<td>Anderson, Lila</td>
<td>706 N. Rodney St.</td>
<td>Helena, Mont. 59601</td>
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<td>Archer, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Ted</td>
<td>Roundup, Mont.</td>
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<td>Amburg, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Eugene</td>
<td>RR No. 1</td>
<td>Postville, Iowa 52162</td>
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<td>Myers, St. Route</td>
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<td>Ennis, Mont. 59729</td>
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<td>Ashley, Lucy</td>
<td>735 N. 5th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask, Anton</td>
<td>2701 Dahlia Lane</td>
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<td>Ask, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Carl</td>
<td>274 N. 11th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ask, June</td>
<td>3905 Blackford Place</td>
<td>Las Vegas, Nev. 89102</td>
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<td>Ask, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Tom</td>
<td>Roundup, Mont. 59072</td>
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<td>Atthouse, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Clayton</td>
<td>2609 N. S. 9th Ave.</td>
<td>Vancouver, Wash. 98660</td>
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<td>Axberg, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Roy</td>
<td>351 N. 3rd Ave.</td>
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<td>Ayers, Mrs. Lee</td>
<td>Sage Towers</td>
<td>Billings, Mont.</td>
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<td>Babcock, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Charles</td>
<td>Box 185</td>
<td>Mojave, Calif. 93501</td>
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<td>Babcock, Mr. Tenny</td>
<td>Rte. 1, Box 164</td>
<td>Miles City, Mont. 59301</td>
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<td>Bachanz, Rev. August</td>
<td>2632 Manderly Drive</td>
<td>Brentwood, Mo. 63144</td>
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<td>Backen, Mr. &amp; Mrs. George</td>
<td>Rt. 2, Box 434</td>
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<td>Bailey, Mona</td>
<td>435 22nd St.</td>
<td>Marion, Iowa</td>
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<td>Baird, Mary Jane</td>
<td>2-12 Casa Village</td>
<td>Billings, Mont. 59101</td>
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<td>Bake, Bertie</td>
<td>SSG BAH, Box 31</td>
<td>APO San Francisco, Calif. 93738</td>
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<td>Bake, John</td>
<td>4710 Schurg Hwy.</td>
<td>Fallon, Nev. 89406</td>
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<td>Baker, Steven</td>
<td>1045 N. Williams</td>
<td>Fallon, Nev. 89406</td>
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<td>Baker, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Dick</td>
<td>14411 E. Trent Road</td>
<td>Spokane, Wash. 99216</td>
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<td>Ballard, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Clair</td>
<td>Mackaburg, Iowa 50155</td>
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<td>Ballard, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Gale</td>
<td>242 S. 9th Ave.</td>
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<td>Ballard, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Gary</td>
<td>Sarpy Creek Route</td>
<td>Hysham, Mont. 59038</td>
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<td>Ballard, Mrs. Ethel</td>
<td>491 Main Street</td>
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<td>Sarpy Creek Route</td>
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<td>Bankey, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Mervin</td>
<td>119 N. Strevel</td>
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<td>Barnes, Mrs. Burnice</td>
<td>415 Seventh St.</td>
<td>Pine City, Minn. 55063</td>
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<td>Barnum, Frank</td>
<td>315 S. Center</td>
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<td>Barrier, Marvin</td>
<td>4506 N. Stevens</td>
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<td>Barthel, Mary Frances</td>
<td>c/o M.F. Jones, 833 Kalmia Ave.</td>
<td>Boulder, Colo. 80302</td>
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<td>Barthel, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Paul</td>
<td>3134 Montgomery Drive</td>
<td>Santa Rosa, Calif. 95405</td>
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<td>Bassett, Bob</td>
<td>108 Duncan Circle</td>
<td>Beaver, Pa.</td>
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<td>Bassett, Al</td>
<td>Melstone, Mont. 59054</td>
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<td>Sumatra, Mont. 59083</td>
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<td>Bassett, Dick Jr.</td>
<td>c/o Dick Bassett</td>
<td>Sumatra, Mont. 59083</td>
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<td>Bassett, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Edward</td>
<td>2170 Millman St.</td>
<td>Langley, Wash. 98260</td>
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<td>Bassett, Fred</td>
<td>Box 590</td>
<td>Harlowton, Mont. 59036</td>
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<td>Bassett, Mr. &amp; Mrs. Ray Erman</td>
<td>1006 Colyer Ave.</td>
<td>Longmont, Colo. 80501</td>
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<td>Bassett, Ronald L.</td>
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<td>1040 Liberty Ave.</td>
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<td>Baufauss, Clara</td>
<td>Crary, N.D. 58327</td>
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<td>Beals, Sammy</td>
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<td>Beatty, Francis</td>
<td>3029 Vivian St.</td>
<td>Lakewood, Colo. 80215</td>
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<td>Beatty, Paul</td>
<td>223 S. Main</td>
<td>Osceola, Iowa 59273</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beck, Sylvia</td>
<td>Brent Hart Inc., Grass Valley, Calif. 95945</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>c/o Frances S. Matonk</td>
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<tr>
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Stensvad, Lillian  
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Bozeman, Mont. 59749

Stensvad, Mrs. Vi  
Melstone, Mont. 59054

Stephehenson, Mr. and Mrs. James  
1510 Pleasant  
Miles City, Mont. 59031

Stepper, Mr. and Mrs. Carl  
709 Ave. F  
Billings, Mont. 59102

Stepper, Ada  
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Stopper, Max W.  
2928 Elka  
Spokane, Wash. 99208

Stevens, Mrs. Raymond  
313 4th Ave.  
Laurel, Mont. 59044

Stevenson, Mr. and Mrs. Vern  
Melstone, Mont. 59054

Stewart, Dr. and Mrs. Lyle  
7345 52nd N.E.  
Seattle, Wash. 98115

Stockland, Mr. and Mrs. Walt  
802 Cook Ave.  
Billings, Mont.

Stoich, Mr. and Mrs. Jim  
1600 Ave. F  
Billings, Mont. 59102

Stockes, Mr. and Mrs. A. D.  
308 S. Monroe  
Hugoton, Kan. 67951

Stocker, Henry  
Ingomar, Mont. 59039

Stonerock, Mrs. Paul  
c/o Barbara Shoup  
815 N. Seventh  
Miles City, Mont. 59301

Stonerock, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur  
711 Lewis  
Billings, Mont.

Strait, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest  
407 Burlington  
Billings, Mont. 59102

Straughan, Ruth  
Box 1024  
Red Lodge, Mont. 59066

Straw, Gertrude  
441 N. Second Ave.  
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Straw, Mr. and Mrs. William  
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Strobe, Elinore  
1513 Meadowlark Drive  
Great Falls, Mont. 59401

Stuart, Vera  
Ingomar, Mont. 59039

Suddith, Marion  
Box 22  
Hinsdale, Mont. 59241

Swanson, John  
Roundup, Mont. 59072

Swanson, Lawrence  
Calbertson, Mont. 59218

Swanson, Mae  
Jordan, Mont.

Sweeney, Audrey  
Park City, Mont. 59063

Tadsen, Mignon  
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Tait, Mr. and Mrs. Howard  
358 N. 7th Ave.  
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Cletus  
Hysham, Mont. 59038

Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde  
Hysham, Mont. 59038

Thacher, Rosalyn  
1991 Newport Ave. Space 36  
Costa Mesa, Calif. 92727

Thayer, Mr. and Mrs. Henry  
Box 194  
Marble, Minn. 55764

Thiester, Rev. H. A.  
1500 N. Douglas Drive  
Minneapolis, Minn. 55422

Thiesen, Robert  
Forsyth, Mont. 59327

Thomas, Alma  
2007 Canyon Drive  
Billings, Mont. 59102

Thomas, Bob  
Sumatra, Mont.

Thomas, Mrs. Irene  
6875 Pioneer Road  
Medford, Ore. 97501

Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. Ken  
920 W. Bellevue Ave.  
Porterville, Calif. 93257

Thomas, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph G.  
507 S. Euclid  
Santa Ana, Calif. 92704

Thomas, Veronica  
Hysham, Mont. 59038

Thompson, Earl  
Box 133  
Great Falls, Mont. 59403

Thompson, Helen  
716 W. Bellevue Dr., Apt. 1  
Anaheim, Calif. 92805

Thomson, Jean  
Lewiston, Mont.

Thorququist, Mr. and Mrs. H. T.  
7016 27th Ave. N.E.  
Seattle, Wash. 98115

Thrasher, Mr. and Mrs. Frank  
323 Chaplin Lane  
San Luis Obispo, Calif. 93401

Timberman, Mr. and Mrs. Bill  
Rt. 2, Mullen Road  
Missoula, Mont.

Timberman, Violet  
Miles City, Mont. 59031

Timberman, Shorty  
Roundup, Mont.

Todoroff, Clara  
P. O. Box  
Miles City, Mont. 59031

Tom, Mrs. Mary  
P. O. Box 517  
Miles City, Mont. 59031

Toombs, Mr. and Mrs. Bob  
3145 Poly Dr.  
Billings, Mont.

Toombs, Douglas  
415 Lauremac Lane  
Laurel, Mont.

Tormoehlen, Rev. and Mrs. Leo  
767 River St.  
Forsyth, Mont. 59037

Torske, Erma  
Wyola, Mont.

Townsend, Lynn  
Cosmos, Minn.

Tranmer, Harry  
2870 Monticello Road  
Napa, Calif. 94558

Trapp, Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Sr.  
Conde, S.D.
EPILOGUE

The last page is finished. Not complete, but ended!

The intent has been to acquaint you with a community, its people, and their experiences; to describe a life style that has faded from the scene.

Enjoy what you will — question what you wish — and interpret that which needs interpretation.

"All lovely things will have an ending,
All lovely things will fade and die,
And youth, that's now so bravely spending,
will beg a penny by and by."

Conrad Aiken
Dear Ivan,

Enclosed is a copy of the announcement of the reunion of the "Th Bookie" re-union at Eugene. I assumed you might not be on their mailing list—just might be interested in knowing about it!

We (Mary and I) hope to attend the

time in conjunction with a trip to

Levittown to visit my remaining Aunt. We did not get to go to the 'Th affair because of the high school graduation

of our younger son Alan in Culver City, Calif.

Hope all is well with you and Mrs. 

Doig. Do you have another book in

progress?

So far as we know the only reason we

might not make the Montana trip this

summer would be troubles down

by my urologist who pretty much

controls my activities since the removal

of prostates a couple 2 years

ago due to cancer. So far all tests

show that he successfully removed the

cancer with the surgery.

If I hear anything in Eugene which

might be of interest to you in the sheep

business I'll try to fill you in. Best regards,

Newt.
Dear Ken--

Thanks for passing along the Tri-City Reunion info; pretty amazing, that they manage to put such a gathering together. Doubtful that Carol and I will be anywhere in the area; I'm writing a Fort Peck Dam novel, and will be holed up at home most of the rest of the year to finish it.

Good to hear from you again, and I hope the medical side of things holds up okay so you can get to the reunion. And sure, I'm always glad to hear good stories or lore from the old country of Montana.

best wishes,
In 1976, approximately 2,000 Sumatra, Ingomar and Vananda residents, former residents and friends gathered at Ingomar to celebrate the settlement of the Tri-City area. The reunion was a huge success with many comments of "Let's do it again". Now, almost twenty years later, we are going to do it again.

July 28th through 30th, 1995, will again see Ingomar come alive with people from all over the country who have ties to the Tri-City area. "It won't be complete without you", our slogan in 1976, is as true now as it was then.

We have planned three days of visiting, food, entertainment and fun, and hope all of you will return and bring your friends, relatives and neighbors. The registration package includes tickets to the fiddlers and cowboy poets program, pitchfork fondue, dance and rodeo, but there are more activities you'll want to take part in. Come prepared for the jam session following the fiddlers program, have a bowl of those famous Jersey Lilly beans with Bill Seward or take a horse-drawn wagon ride around the area. There will be booths and demonstrations set up along the streets so you can sample the offerings of food or purchase a souvenir of the area. On Saturday and Sunday mornings, join your friends for breakfast at the Rosebud County Search and Rescue booth as they raise money for their work in the area.

Registration will be in the gym and we have plenty of room for any displays and photos you wish to bring. Meet your friends there as you sign in and pick up your packet of registration material. The Tri-City reunion committee has had the book "They Say It Happened That Way" reprinted so if you did not purchase the book in 1976, copies are available plus Bob Grebe's book on Sumatra.

The Ingomar Grade School will have been non-operational for three consecutive years in 1995. Montana law provides for annexation of such districts to an operating school district. The Tri-City Recreation Club has been organized as a non-profit corporation to buy and maintain the gym as a community center, if possible. We are raising money for this purpose by selling raffle tickets for an afghan crocheted and donated by Rose Dorothy. Souvenir T-shirts featuring the Tri-City schools plus old books from the Ingomar school library will also be for sale.

We plan to put together a cookbook of old and new family recipes with a bit of history of your family included. If you have recipes to contribute to the cookbook, please send them to us at the Tri-City Reunion, Box 315, Ingomar, MT 59039 before March 1st, 1995, so the cookbook can be ready for the reunion. We need at least 500 recipes or we cannot go ahead with the cookbook. Just a few lines of family history is all we will have room for; where your family lived and for how long or some other historical tidbit will do.

There will be ample parking for motor homes, campers and trailers but hookups are limited. When you check in, ask for information on where you can park. If you need a motel or hotel room, Forsyth is 40 miles away, Roundup is 60 miles.

"It won't be complete without you", so take time now to register to assure your place at Tri-City Reunion II. We have included your registration form plus a schedule of events. If you know of anyone else whose address we may not have, please let them know about Tri-City Reunion II.

Tri-City Reunion Committee
TRI-CITY REUNION II
Ingomar, Montana
July 28 - 30, 1995
Tentative Schedule of Events

Friday, July 28th:
4:00 p.m. Registration, Ingomar gym
           Volleyball and horseshoes available in park
           Visiting with friends and relatives
           Wagon rides around the town

Saturday, July 29th:
7:00-11:00 a.m. Breakfast, Search and Rescue Booth
8:00 a.m. Registration continues, Ingomar gym
           Booths and Demonstrations throughout the day
           Wagon rides
2:00-5:00 p.m. Fiddlers and cowboy Poets program at the gym
5:00-7:00 p.m. Pitchfork Fondue
9:00 p.m. Reunion Dance

Sunday, July 30th
7:00 a.m. Sunday Service, gym
7:00-11:00 a.m. Breakfast, Search and Rescue Booth
               Booths and Demonstrations throughout the day
               Rodeo

Accommodations:

Forsyth:
Sundowner Inn. .......................... 1-800-332-0921
Restwell Motel ................................ 1-800-548-3442
Rails Inn .................................... 1-800-621-3754
Hotel Howdy. ................................ 1-406-356-2241
Westwind Motor Inn ......................... 1-406-356-2038
Econolodge .................................. 1-406-356-7947
Pat's Motel. .................................. 1-406-356-2352
Wagon Wheel Campground has all hookups

Melstone:
Terri's Motel. .............................. 1-406-358-2302

Roundup:
Sage Motel .................................... 1-406-323-1000
Ideal Motel. .................................. 1-406-323-3371
Big Sky Motel. ................................ 1-406-323-2303
Registration Form
Tri-City Reunion II
Ingomar, Montana
July 28th, 29th, and 30th, 1995

Name____________________________________ Spouse's Name____________________________________

Address______________________________________________________________

City, State and Zip_____________________________________________________

☐ Single registration . . . $30.00
☐ Husband/wife registration $50.00

Registration package includes tickets to the fiddlers/cowboy-poets program, pitchfork fondue, reunion dance and rodeo.

Per person, per event tickets as follows:

Fiddlers/poets, dance or rodeo: Adults: $8.00
Ages 7-12: $5.00
Ages 6 and under: free

Pitchfork fondue; per plate charge: $12.00

If ordering "per event" tickets, please indicate number and event.

Additional per person, per event tickets will be available at the door as space permits.

Reservations due by July 1st. Make checks payable to: Tri-City Reunion and mail to Box 315, Ingomar, MT 59039. Pick up your tickets and reunion packet when you check in.

Recipes due by March 1, 1995, in order to complete the cookbook. Include short history, if desired. If we do not receive enough recipes by March 1st, we will be unable to publish the cookbook.

Please let us know if you are interested in booth space (for food, crafts, or other) and information will be sent when it becomes available.
Dear Linda--

Here's the letter for you to work your word-processing magic on. It's deliberately undated, and I'd like the salutation on each to be the person's full name--i.e., not Mr., Mrs. The addressees are blue-bracketed on the accompanying list of families; there are about 40.

I want to keep this to one page, so I've penciled in brackets to show a couple of optional cuts in the letter.

Does your gizmo do envelopes, too? If not, I will.

Bang away.

lув

5142-6658
Dear George Backen:

I'm at work on a book about Montana during the homestead era, and I wonder if you'd be game to help me out by providing a few memories. My own memory doesn't go back far enough; it was my grandparents who homesteaded south of Helena, and the Depression had wiped out the place by the time I was born. As I've been casting around to find people who have first-hand homestead experience, a friend who grew up in your home area of Montana--Ken Weydert, whose father once managed the sheep-shearing company in Ingomar--loaned me a copy of the history written for the Ingomar-Sumatra-Varanda reunion in 1976. Not only was it a very impressive set of reminiscences, it also offered a list of addresses so people could get in touch with one another. I hope you don't mind my getting in touch with you; the only way I can be accurate about what I write is to ask people who know.

You may have heard of my previous Montana book, This House of Sky, which is a memoir of my father and my grandmother and myself as when we worked on ranches in the White Sulphur Springs country, and later ran sheep on the Reservation out from Browning. The book I intend now will be fiction--which means that names don't matter in any stories you might be willing to share with me--but I want it to be truthful to homestead life. I'd particularly like to hear from you if you have any details of such topics as these:

--Living arrangements in a homestead cabin: where everybody slept, what you ate, how you passed the evenings, what games you played with brothers or sisters or neighbor kids.

--Chores: how old was a homestead child when, say, he or she got the responsibility of gathering the eggs? Filling the woodbox? Milking the cow? Did you help with the farming, and if so, at what age did you start?

--School: I myself boarded out during most of my school years, but always with some other family--not at a boarding facility as I read that Ingomar had. I'd like to hear any memories of what it was like to live there. Also, anything that particularly sticks in your mind about school days: a memorable teacher or fellow student, for instance.

Finally, I'd appreciate any information on how the homestead life ended for your family. For mine and a lot of others, it simply was done in by weather, lack of money, or the rigors of the work. Those things too are part of the story of where we came from.

Thanks for your time.

Ivan Dore
June 29, 1923

Dear Mr. King:

I'll try and answer your questions now, as we are going to be gone to Montana for a couple of weeks.

Pictures on the walls were framed pictures of both grandparents, great-grandfather, and an aunt. Also my parents' wedding certificate and an oil painting of my Uncle Paulie of their farm in North Dakota. Both Mother and Uncle family pictures too.

Our calendar hung in the living-dining room combined.

The clock was a mantel clock that belonged to my grandfather. It had a pendulum and struck the hour. At night one could count the ticks to know what time it was.

There were a picture of Lincoln and Washington on the school walls, several maps that wound up into a case and were pulled down when used, a great big heavy dictionary on a stand at each school. The schools were only one room. Classes recited one seat up from the teacher's desk. There was no wall clock where the children could see. Usually an alarm clock that sat on the teacher's desk. The school bell was only a little hand one that also sat on the teacher's desk.

I don't think, when we lived, the Armistice was celebrated only because the war was over so it was too far for people to gather in groups any longer. We were as anxious for my oldest brother to be discharged and to return home. He had indicated as soon as he was 21 in the air force, I think we heard the war was over probably from the papers or letter from some one near to a telegraph office.

We always had a Christmas tree. Dad brought a Christmas tree home from the woods when got his last load of wood in the fall. There were no trees in Miles of our home.

Gifts were pretty scarce and mostly new clothes etc. that was needed. Some of our relatives in Wisconsin used to send presents at Christmas some times. Mother had several aunts and a brother still living there. One time I was sent a sweater and when the package was opened my brother said, "Oh, good. It's a sweater." I was so sorry because I didn't
Some 4th of July's were held at a school house. There were races, sack races, a few fire works, and some ice cream. The ice cream was so good, we even put up there.

I remember one 4th at Sandepriego where there was lots more people came. Then there was races, sack races, and other games, and a dance in the evening for those that didn't need to return home to do chores. After the 4th was just a gathering of a few neighbor's, just looked dinner at one home or another.

During the war there was a Red Cross Club. I think every family belonged to it and held meetings at different homes at least once a month. Of course they came by team and wagon, just like dinner, and the ladies made bandages, knitted socks etc. Even we school kids had Red Cross. I've a picture of the school taken with a big red cross in the center of the picture. I'm pleased if I knew what we did through it. Some were coming I guess. Any way we got a Red Cross pen to wear. I believe the Red Cross or the government sent the material and yarn to be made up. I was about 10 and I knitted a pair of socks. It took me quite a while.

We always had rattlesnakes to catch and play with. One time we found a big hul'v them about 1 foot across all rolled together with the heads to the outside. Our dad shot into the belly of snakes with a shot gun and we killed quite a lot of them. There were usually quite a few to be found in the prairie dog towns. My youngest brother and I friends would go on a Sunday and fill what rattles they could find.

We lived in Garfield County about 13 miles south of Sandepriego and 25 miles north of Sumatna. Our mail came to Alice but there is no place like that now and Sumatna burned down even a trailer for a post office now.

Sincerely

Mary Dawson
26 July '83

Dear Mary Dawson--

Please excuse the haste and brevity, but I'm just back from a month in Montana and trying desperately to catch up on correspondence.

Your answers to my homestead questions were magnanimous. Very helpful. I think this information bought to hold me for awhile, at least until I get underway full-steam on the homesteader book sometime next year. I may be back in touch at that time, as I come across homestead matters I don't have knowledge on. But in any event, deep thanks for helping me as much as you already have.

best regards
Your letter brought back so many memories that I hadn't thought of in years. So many things to tell you I just didn't know what to write.
Dear Ivan Brag,

I certainly was surprised when I read the first sample of your letters to know that any one knew I had ever lived in Montana. As far as I read on that was explained. I home started several letters to you but each time I find I'll be writing a book if I put in any of our personal experiences. I'll just tell you how it was in the 13 years we were in Montana.

The first fields that were plowed we picked up the sage brush and piled it and burned it in the evenings. We didn't use sage brush for wood as it has a strong smell. We went about 13 miles to the woods for fuel. Took two wagons and four horses driving both teams to get the load out of the woods then taking the other one to the home farm after we were out of the steep hills in the woods. No one cut green trees we used only fallen dry ones.

We drank water about three miles in barrels on a wagon.

That wagon was always loaded with the barrels as we had to haul our drinking water always. We did have dams and used the water from them for washing, cleaning etc. That was hauled to the house in a barrel on a skid boat. We had a spring on our place that ran all the time but it was so full of salt, spices, salt, and other minerals that it was not good for anything.

We lived in gourds and lots of sage brush but about 1/2 mile north we had a prairie that ran east and west and even thing North. That was on the sand. Our stock did most of their grazing on the sand. It was open range only for fields that were fenced. There were ground horses that ran wild and were used. However they were branded but never used.

When it rained the gourds would stick to our feet as we could hardly lift them and the wheels on a wagon would get so big they would sink on the wagon box until a team couldn't pull it and the wheels would have to be cleaned so the wagon could be pulled a few feet further. Needless to say we didn't travel by wagon much in wet weather or it was a slow procedure.

The weather always seemed to be so violent. The wind blew sand, the rain came down in torrents. We had real lightning storms that killed stock, hurricanes and blizzards. After a winter storm we didn't dig out, we just cut steps in the snow drifts and
climbed out. The snow would be so hard we could walk on it. Sometimes in the winter the weather was so bad we could not take the stock to water and melted snow on the cook stone to water them. Horses were what we used for all work and travel.

Our first home was a 2-car steel house but that was added on to to be two bedroom, living room and kitchen. I had one end of one bedroom and my folks the other, my two brothers another room.

We raised a garden in the summer and stored what vegetable would keep so that was before hot water bath or pressure cooking for canning. When we butchered a pig, we smoked shoulder, hams and bacon with corn cobs to make the smoke. Some side meat and jibs were put down in a brine, salt, saltwater, sugar and water. Sausage was fried and canned in the syrup and placed in a cracker. We had chickens, eggs and at first rabbits at first but later they got a disease and we didn't raise them. Also some time we had antelope and young sage hens.

Ranches that lined twenty five or thirty miles north of us used to come with six horse teams and loaded wheat in the fall. Some always stopped and spent the night with us and then there was always card playing in the evening, mostly pitch or euchre. Other family games we played were Cram, checkers, dominos, jacks, straws, tiley bricks and pits.

On a stormy day and winter evenings mother read stories to us. We all liked to read and subscribed for magazines such as the Youth's Companion and later the Argosy. We exchanged books with neighbors.

Out doors we played tag, Anty Sone, base ball and other games kids play. At school we didn't play kids and sick as there was no place to hide only the school house and a out house. There were no trees, bushes, or fences around the schools.

Horses were tied to rings attached into the school house.

My brother and I rode double on a horse for about 5 miles. In later years, when I went alone as my brother was through school, I rode these miles and my horse would stay with me, so I could turn her loose until school was out, then saddle her and go home.

We always helped with chores. I don't know how old I was when I started milking but not probably as soon as I could get hold and take.
Our folks didn't make us work, we were always anxious to be busy at everything. There wasn't as many other things for entertainment as now days. So much of the time my brother and I played at our work, we had a wagon with hop and ride boards and a rock and as we traded things we were freight linemen etc. We cut corn with corn knives by hand we checked grain bundles and I loaded the wagons with hay as it was piled up by cream wagon.

Some summers my Dad went to Dakota to harvest and me and we kids took care of things at home. My older brother was away from home most of the time as he was much older and a mechanic. When I was just a boy my Dad wasn't very well so I would take the mower and team and go to mow hay in the flat creek edge. We used a thresher that held the hay for a while then you plowed up the back and the hay was left in a pile. If a storm was coming up we hurried and gathered up the hay as it wouldn't be worked away if it rained hard.

One winter the horses got sick with a kidney disease, we were told it was because they couldn't get water and had to eat so much corn, the last two horses one day and that winter the cowboys had a good living and the next spring skeletons of horses were found all over the prairie. As that was our only mode of travel that spring it was a race of walking after the mail after the cows at night and most every place as what horses we had left were working in the fields.

The last years we were there I used to ride my own horse after the cows and she would herd the cows along home after we found them. I dropped the reins over the saddle horn and I could read all the way home. When I could do that getting the cows at night was fun.

One reason we left Montana was because my Dad was ill. The doctor said he had ulcers and would have to have a change of water as the water was the cause. My oldest brother and his family had come home to help Dad and Mother as I was going to high school in Decorah then and stayed at the seminary. The girls had rooms upstairs, the boys down. A large dining room and kitchen. We were divided into groups and each group took their turn helping
in the kitchen. We set the tables, cleared table and washed dishes one day each week. Some that couldn’t go home once a week as they were chosen for the Saturday and Sunday time, two days as not as many were there. It was like a big family, so much fun. The gypsies came was part of the drum too and a piano. We played games, sang around the piano as well as practice basketball.

In the fall or spring, I rode a horse to Sumatra about 25 miles on a Sunday afternoon, then turned my horse loose to go home. The mail carrier would pick up my saddle and take it home.

I would go home with him on the afternoon for the week end but had to ride back as he didn’t go again until Tuesday.

The year we left it was so dry the corn hadn’t spread out, the potatoes barely came up, the pasture was short.

My dad and oldest brother came to Idaho, had stayed with friends and my brother went to work at the Ford garage in Sandpoint.

My younger brother came home, we loaded our farm machinery on the wagons and took them to Sumatra where we traded for a second hand Model T Ford touring car.

My brother drove it home while I rode one horse and led the other three home.

We gathered up our cattle about 35 head and drove them to town, we didn’t go all the way but led them down and slept on the ground. My horse stayed close by me.

The next morning we went on to town, the cattle hadn’t had water since noon the day before so was anxious for water but the Sumatra dam was so low there was deep mud.

My brother told me we must push them on to the stock yard as they would bog down and then we would be in trouble. I was almost in tears to leave our cattle so thirsty but the man that bought them would care for them.

On the 4th of July, friends and neighbors gathered to give us a fare well. We loaded the Model T, Mother, Millard and I, a yellow cat, and a half grown turkey started for Idaho. We left the car on the way but the rest of us made it.

Our horses we just left there on the range.

Hope this will help you. Sincerely, Mary Lawrence.
Dear Mary—

Your letter was wonderfully helpful. Thanks to you and about a half dozen others who've provided me good detailed memories, I've gained quite a lot of homestead lore.

I'm about to head for Montana for a summer of research and writing, and so am not perfectly organized at the moment. But before I go, I did want to be in touch with you, and to pass along another brief set of questions that have occurred to me as a result of your letter and the others. If you have any memories that pertain and you'd care to share them, I'd be doubly grateful.

--How were the walls of your homestead house decorated, if they were? Any pictures, family or otherwise, you can remember? Where did the calendar hang—in the kitchen, as it did in the ranch houses I remember? Did you have a family clock, and if so, what kind—a wall clock, alarm clock, etc.?

--What about the walls of the country schoolhouse? Any pictures—Washington, Lincoln? Was there a clock there, that you students could see?

--Do you remember anything about Armistice Day of World War One—Nov. 11, 1918? That was before radio and tv, and people were mostly out of reach of daily papers; I'm curious as to how the news spread, whether there was celebration, and so on.

--Holidays in those homestead years: was the family able to put up a Christmas tree? If not, was there a substitute? Do you remember any specific gifts that thrilled you—or were gifts pretty sparse? Was Thanksgiving observed? Did you go to town for 4th of July, and if so, were there any festivities—fireworks, speeches, rodeos?

I can't close without saying that your letter really was very evocative and eloquent of those times. Yours and the other responses convince me more than ever that I'd like to try capture something of those years in a novel.

best regards

Ivan Doig
Dear Ivan,
This is a long time getting to you.
We lived on my mother's homestead, south west of Sand Springs and maybe a bit south but mostly east of Mosby. Out 15 miles from each. When my mother homesteaded it was Dawson County & now Garfield. At first they got their mail at Sagedale.

When they first went out to prove up they lived in a tent and the neighbor's bull roared and pawed around the tent at night. Dad had neck yokes and such handy to scare him off. Later they moved into the dugout for a short time while they and a neighbor built two log rooms. They went to Melstone for the winter and my sister, Mary was born the last of September. They returned to the Homestead in April.
Water was hauled in a barrel on a stoneboat from ½ mile away from Breed Springs. In the summer of 1919 Dad had a well drilled. It was 150 feet deep and wonderful soft water as was Breed Springs.

By this time another room was added when a frame roomed was moved in and attached to the log rooms. This was the home that we all grew up in. Seven kids.

We rode 2½ miles to school everyday that the weather permitted. When there weren't enough children to warrant hiring a teacher we went to Melstone or Sumatra. Mom went with us twice in Melstone and once to Sumatra. Two different times we stayed with other families. Three of the boys were graduates of Melstone and stayed with Mom's brother and wife. I graduated from Sumatra and stayed with a family. Hazel graduated from Billings Senior High.

The three oldest boys bought the homestead, other land that Dad had bought and leased, from my folks while two of them were in the service.

When we started school there wasn't much time for anything except chores getting in and milking cows, gathering eggs, picking up chips and bringing in wood. It took alot of water which lots of times had to be pumped when the windmill didn't work.

We started milking cows as early as 8 and 9 years, gathered eggs and hunted for stolen nests at 4 and 5. We hoed potatoes and corn at 9 & 10. Our food was milk when we had a fresh cow, potatoes, lots of beans, bread, eggs when the hens were laying and some beef. After Dad got sheep we had mutton. In the early days during the summer we had cottontail and sagehen. When we were 12 or so we started raking hay with a team and driving the mowing machine.

We had one very gentle white horse named Barney which we all probably learned to ride on and sometimes as many as 3 of us rode him to school, and after the cows.

In the summer we had beds in two different rooms and in the winter closed one room off to conserve fuel and keep warmer.

Sumatra had a large dormitory and children came from farther north than we; south and east to stay there. In 1927 when I first went to school there in the 5th grade, the high school was very large. My favorite teacher was Jean Thompson, the Principal's wife, when I was in the 7th grade.

Our parents were Bruce & Margaret Herron Dutton. Dad was born near Syracuse, New York, Margaret Herron, Doneghadee, County Down Northern Ireland. Mary born south of Melstone; lives in Missoula
Margaret at Burgoyne; Billings
Bruce South of Melstone (at a friend's home) Cat Creek
William in Sumatra; Jorden
Joseph on the homestead; Sand Springs
Orson on the homestead; St Ignatius
Hazel in Sumatra; Florida
Our neighbors one mile to the north were the W. P. Youderian family. They moved away when I was in the 3rd grade, but our families kept in touch & I still write to Janice Youderian Stokes in McArthur, Ca.

The Atkins' (Charles) were a mile to the south east. The oldest was my brother Bruce's age and altho she lives in Washington we write to each other at Christmas time.

When I wrote the article for the Ingomer-Sumatra-Vananda reunion, I was under the impression that each of my family would write about themselves. It is disappointing to read about myself as tho I had no other family connections.

I want to read your book, This House of Sky, one of these days. I keep very busy with my home and organization meeting and making quilts. Seldom have time to read.

This doesn't seem like much to send you, but maybe I can be of help another time.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Margaret R. Taylor
Dear Margaret—

Your letter was very helpful. Thanks to you and about a half dozen others who've provided me good detailed memories, I've gained quite a lot of homestead lore.

I'm about to head for Montana for a summer of research and writing, and so am not perfectly organized at the moment. But before I go, I did want to be in touch with you, and to pass along another brief set of questions that have occurred to me as a result of your letter and the others. If you have any memories that pertain and you'd care to share them, I'd be doubly grateful.

--How were the walls of your homestead decorated, if they were? Any pictures, family or otherwise, you can remember? Scenes cut out of a magazine or newspaper? Where did the calendar hang—in the kitchen, as it did in the ranch houses I remember? Did you have a family clock, and if so, what kind—a wall clock, alarm clock, etc.?

--What about the walls of the country schoolhouse? Any pictures—Washington, Lincoln? Was there a clock there, that you students could see? Did the students share in any school chores, such as providing firewood for the stove?

--Do you remember anything about Armistice Day of World War One—Nov. 11, 1918? That was before radio and tv, and people were mostly out of reach of daily papers; I'm curious as to how the news spread about the end of the war, whether there was celebration, and so on.

--Holidays in those homestead years: was the family able to put up a Christmas tree? If not, was there a substitute? Do you remember any specific gifts that thrilled you—or were gifts pretty sparse? Was Thanksgiving observed? Did you go to town for 4th of July, and if so, were there any festivities—fireworks, speeches, rodeo?

I can't close without saying that your letter was really very evocative of those homestead times. Yours and the other responses convince me more than ever that I'd like to try capture something of those years in a novel.

best regards

Ivan Doig
Dear Sir:

The book, pictures, and your note arrived in good shape and were here waiting for us upon our return from an unexpected trip to St. Louis. I hoped they were of some help.

I hope you have a good trip to Montana in March and that the book manuscript goes well. I'll be delighted to share any other info I can.

Had not known of Joe Welch or his novel, but will now be interested in looking for it. Am enclosing a copy of an excerpt from a recent newsletter which I received which you may wish to pass along to him. By way of info - the Educational and Institutional Cooperative was formed in the mid-thirties as a non-profit organization by the purchasing agents of several universities and has now grown in membership to over 2000 colleges and hospitals. Its purpose is to provide at good prices contracted for a member institution. I recall my retirement from UC at 650 and the Board of Directors for several years and helped work out the contract with the Independent Writing Co.

But even - and hope to see you soon in Bham.

Kern
BLACKFEET INDIAN WRITING COMPANY WINS KEY AWARD.

For the past four years the National Minority Supplier Development Council, which comprises 43 local chapters, has selected a minority supplier of the year. The local Councils, made up of corporate America and large institutions, select a candidate, and their choice is sent to the national office in New York. A committee of representatives from the various councils votes on the winner. For 1982 that winner was The Blackfeet Indian Writing Company (Office No. 10).

In accepting this award in Chicago on November 10, 1982, at the 10th Annual meeting, Earl Old Person, Tribal Chairman, delivered an eloquent speech, which was followed by a 90-second standing ovation. His comments pertained to how the company is bringing career opportunities, pride and purpose to his Reservation. As the only manufacturer on the Reservation in Browning, Montana, Blackfeet employs over 120 native Americans, and ships their products into all 50 states.

Blackfeet is the only pencil company with a plant west of St. Louis, the only Montana company shipping a finished product into all 50 states. But the important story, in the last analysis, is the variety and quality of the Blackfeet line of writing instruments. You can judge for yourself by ordering samples, quality reports, testimonials, etc. by calling V.P. Marketing Bill Meyer toll-free at his Mamaroneck (N.Y.) office: 800/431/2614.

Chief Earl Old Person
Chairman, Blackfeet Indian Writing Co.

PERSONAL NOTES.

Jean Gray, Supervisor Billing Department, celebrated her 25th year with E&I on January 27 and Paul Churchman, Regional Manager Western Office, marked 15 years with the Co-op on New Year's Day.

On November 21, 1982, Harry W. Swink, retired Director of University Services and Auxiliary Enterprises, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, passed away. Harry served E&I ably as a Regional Advisor for many years, and was a staunch supporter of the Co-op and N.A.E.B. All of us mourn his passing.

Jean Gray
Paul Churchman
Dear Ivan:

Mary and I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet you and visit for a few minutes during your visit to Bellingham. Your interest in Ingomar came as such a surprise that I was at a loss to give you any good information at the time. Hopefully I can provide you with some background as well as to give you names and addresses of several who may be better able to supply information in the areas of your particular interest.

First of all, so you will be more aware of my viewpoint, I'll take the liberty of giving you some of my background and the time frame of my Ingomar experience. Grandparents on dad's side were immigrants from Germany and then they came from the Minneapolis area to Montana by covered wagon in the mid-eighteen sixties and settled in the area near Helena where dad was born before Montana statehood.

When he was just a child they moved to Judith Basin and took up a ranch on the edge of Lewistown. When he and his brother and sisters were still quite young grandfather was killed in a runaway team accident and Dad and his older brother had to pitch in and pick up more of the ranch work so neither of them completed much schooling. As they grew up and got their sisters through school they ran sheep together off and on in the Judith Basin country. Dad struck off on his own in about 1910 and took up a homestead north of Ingomar right near Hole in the Rock. At that time most homesteaders were clearing sagebrush and buffalo grass and planting wheat for there had been some good wet years and wheat farming seemed to be the way to go.

My mother's forebears were early settlers in the colonies from England and later on some had migrated to Missouri where she was born. She came to Lewistown with her parents and worked in the Golden Rule store for a while and then as a hand typesetter for the Lewistown paper. She was married and had one son before the marriage broke up and following the divorce she and Lyle went to Ingomar and filed on a Homestead just south of town and during the time of proving up somehow commuted back and forth to town and worked as a typesetter on the
Ingomar Index. She and my dad were married in 1914. The drought of 1919 was the beginning of the end for wheat farming in the area and I guess it was about then that my folks moved into town and dad started in the building business. He built a number of the business buildings in town as well as houses and the school and dormitory. During the winter he built sheep wagaons in his shop. Also managed the Ingomar Shearing Company during the shearing season and in the fall for lamb shipment.

I was born in 1917 and lived in Ingomar until the summer of 1933 when mother and I went to So. Calif. for her health. Dad stayed on in Ingomar to wind things up before coming to Calif.

Now to try and come up with information—

In the summer of 1976 a reunion of Ingomar, Vananda and Sumatra residents was organized and held at Ingomar. It resulted in the publishing of a book "They Say 'It Happened That Way'" which I am mailing you under separate cover because I think it will give you a great deal more info than I can. Also am enclosing some pictures — some of which may be of help and others just of general interest. We were unable to attend the reunion because our youngest son was graduating from high school in So. Calif. at the same time. Also, for some reason, I failed to submit information to the reunion committee so missed getting anything in the book, which I regret very much.

I believe there were two hotels in town up until 1921 when the entire business section of town was destroyed by fire. Somewhere I've heard there were three — but I cannot find any definite info. I do not remember either of them but they are in one of the photos I'm sending. They were replaced — one, built by my dad for Mrs. Broom, which I believe is still in use, or at least it was in 1976. A two story wood frame structure much like the one that burned. I think about twenty rooms. I'm not sure whether she served meals or not but I seem to recall a kitchen and dining room on the first floor and I think she did. The articles in the book indicate an agreement with Las Cox not to serve meals for five upon rebuilding — but I think by the early 30's she did. The new building was built on the same spot as the old one — I thought we had a
photo of it to send you, but cannot find it.

The replacement of the Commercial Nellis Hotel was moved in from Edwards (about 30 miles north) and situated about 1 1/2 blocks south of the old building on the same side of the street. It too was a two story wood frame building and was destroyed by fire - I think about 1926.

I do recall that sheepman lived at the Broom Hotel in the early thirties but I cannot place names on them. Names that come to mind who may have lived there are John Bell, Ted Birkram, Ole Grinstead, Ben Grossfield. Most of the sheepmen in and around Ingomar I believe were scandinavian - mostly Norwegian. John Bell is the only one I can think of who was Scotch I believe.

There was a Scotch family who ranched about 40 miles north of town and their kids attended school in town. Mrs. Crain would move into town in September and back to the ranch in the spring after school was out. I spent a couple of weeks one summer at their ranch with Bob, the youngest of their kids and my same age. His older sister and brother were Nellie and Alex - but for the life of me I cannot recall their parents given names.

As I'm sure you've guessed by now I'm batting zero on any recall of interesting bits of background on the hotel residents. I hope you will find something of what you want in the recollections in the reunion book.

Art Hagen, a contemporary of mine, still lives on the original Hagen ranch about 16 miles northeast of town and raises cattle. He is the son of Sever Hagen, one of the sheepmen in the 20's and 30's. Art might be helpful.

Also Sivert Mye, a little younger than Art or I, lives on the original Mye ranch right next to Hagen's. He still runs sheep and he and his wife produce yarn right there on the ranch from the wool of their own sheep which is sold for home knitting. He might also be of help. The address, in each case is Ingomar, zip code 59039.

It is also possible that Lyle Stewart who lives in Seattle (at least I think he still does) might have background knowledge. He is probably in his eighties now and may have left Ingomar too early to early to know about the items of your interest.
I believe he was a teacher in Seattle for years and wound up as an administrator, I think as superintendent of schools. According to the book he still lived in Seattle in 1976 - Dr. Lyle Stewart, 7345 52nd n.e.

A few things from the 30's which I do recall -

Two general stores - one, operated by G.A. Over and the other by J. A. Bookman. When about 12 I worked for "Abe" Bookman, sweeping up, sprouting potatoes, wiping mould off hams and bacon with vinegar and general flunkly. Abe had the only house in town with running water (just cold water). This was accomplished by means of a storage tank in the basement - about a 300 gal. metal tank which would be put under air pressure. The pressure was supplied by a hand operated air pump and one of my jobs was to go to the house about twice a week to pump up the tank.

One hardware store, one garage/service station, one lumberyard, a vacant Catholic Church, a Methodist Church, a restaurant, the one hotel, a grain elevator, a hall where dances were held, roller skating once a week and movies on Saturday night during school year and once in a while a touring vaudeville troupe. There were two bars - even during prohibition - one, the Bucket of Blood, was a small wood building on Main Street - I don't know where it got the name. I can't recall the name of the other one, although I seem to remember it being called the Bank Saloon because it was in the former bank building. It is still in existence and now called the Jersey Lilly, for what reason I don't know. It is run by Bill Seward who is a little younger than I and has stayed on in Ingomar and might also have helpful information.

You were correctly informed about the drinking water. About once a week the Milwaukee RR would bring in one or the other of two tank cars and put it on a siding. Both were of wooden construction - one a rectangular shaped box-tank the length of a freight car but about half as high; the other comprised of two round tanks about the height of a freight car and sitting on either end of a flat car - I mention the differences in the tanks because in the winter the box shaped one was easier to get water from.
You had the choice of having the drayman bring water to your home in his tank wagon drawn by horses, or go and get it yourself in your own container. One of my chores at home was to get our drinking water in two ten gallon milk cans on my coaster wagon. When there was snow on the ground it was necessary to use a sled and the tank valves would be frozen so had to climb on top of the tank and get water out by bucket through a trap door after breaking the ice. Needless to say, little water was wasted. Also, it is pretty apparent that the whole operation was not too hygienic - but I don't recall any epidemics caused by contaminated water.

Now that the Milwaukee has abandoned the stretch of road through that country I understand that those few remaining residents bring water in by tank truck from Forsyth or Musselshell.

Water for purposes other than drinking and cooking was obtained from a cistern filled by roof drainage from the house. Of course in winter we had melted snow water.

I guess one of the reasons establishment was that a section crew was stationed there for maintenance of RR roadbed. In view of the lack of water I've never figured out why it became the center of the ranching activity as well as the shearing center and stock shipping center, rather than one of the other section towns which may have had better water supplies. At one time a well was drilled for water, but the water it tapped was so alkaline it could not be used and so far as I know that was the only attempt.

During the early 30's I would estimate the population in town at about 100 and possibly another 100 outlying who used Ingomar as a post office. This is strictly a guess. Today, I suppose it is more like 25 - mostly the Seward family and I wouldn't know what to guess for the outlying area.

Your mention of the fact that your new book is to be about the Depression years leads me to recall something of that era which has really stuck in my mind.

Almost twice daily a freight train would be switched on a siding to allow a passenger or some other through train to pass. During those depression times each time a freight would be sided - no matter which direction it was headed - there would
be anywhere from 20 to 40 men who would fan out through town looking for a handout. Since our house was situated only about fifty yards from the track we almost always had one or two at the back door asking if there was some job to be done for a little food. We weren't too well off ourselves but my mother always tried to have at least a slice of bread and butter for each. These were not bums - they were on their way east or west desperately hoping they could find work at night either end of the journey.

Mention of the RR reminds me of something else - in a lighter vein. One of the high lights for us kids was to watch the silk trains go rocketing through town on occasion. They would be made up of about 10 or 12 baggage or mail cars, with armed guards in the doorways of each car. They were transporting silk which had come into Seattle from the orient and bound for the fabric mills back east. They must have had the highest priority since I recall even seeing passenger trains on siding or them. One of life's early ambitions for many of us kids was to grow up and be a guard on a silk train.

I'd better wind this up - or you will not be able to afford the time to wade through it. There is no need to hurry in returning the book and photos - but of course, would like to get them back some time. Possibly we could even stop by home time when we are in Seattle sight-seeing and pick them up. Please let me know if any of this stuff needs clarification.

Best wishes to you for the coming year, and above all, for a successful new novel.

Sincerely,

{signed}

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Boy!! my typing is terrible, but many say my handwriting is worse.

In case of your early experience with the Blackfalds situation, I'm sending you a few manufactured in a plant established a few years ago on the edge of town. Before I retired, I was involved in helping arrange for a contract whereby colleges and universities across the country could help place and fellows from the blackfoot. This was in cooperation with the effort to establish minority...
5 Jan. '83

Dear Ken—

Just a quick note to let you know the Ingmar book and the
picks arrived, and I'm working my way through them.
Extremely helpful; and even when the Ingmar material doesn't
directly pertain to my Depression novel, it's damned
interesting. I'll photocopy what I want, I hope within a
week or two, and get it all back to you.

And thanks hugely for your own letter. I hadn't intended
for you to go to so much trouble. But I'm grateful you
did.

Will be in touch. Happy '83.

Dear Ken—

2-12-63

Finally managed to get done the photocopying I wanted, from
the Ingmar history and your pics. Sorry it took so long. This
seems to be an over-busy winter, for reasons I'm not quite clear on.

I'm heading to Montana—Missoula, and maybe the Helena-White
Sulphur country—for a week or two in late March, then I'll resume
on this Montana novel manuscript. I may get back to you with some
questions, based on your letter of Ingmar reminiscence, at that time,
or maybe in the summer. But the letter already is a great help.
As were the reunion book and the pics—again, many thanks. See you
again when I'm in Bellingham, I hope.

Best regards

P.S. I'm going to take pleasure in presenting the Blackfeet pen
to my writing buddy, Jim Welch. Do you know his Reservation (Fort
Bellew, I guess) novel—Winter in the Blood?
June 24, 1983

Dear Ivan:

The walls of our homestead had a few photos of relatives, one photo of the famous trotting horse Dan Patch, a current calendar, usually a Norman Rockwell.

Yes, there was a picture of Washington, Lincoln. The teacher usually had the pupils compose their deeds, which benefited the country more. We had a school clock to bell to summon the pupils in after recess. The seats were arranged in rows, usually the higher grades were in the back of the room. Some teachers made fun of punishment had the offending pupil sit in a corner, or behind the school organ, where the culprit would amuse his schoolmates by sticking out his tongue and making faces.

Our dugout was a dirt cellar, yes we could go down out in it from the inside of the house.

No there was no stove down there, but the temperature rarely reached the freezing point, so it was better than the upstairs, because if one all became ill and were unable to get up and about, she would have frozen up stair.
No, we had no Christmas tree. We did string popcorn + cranberries for decorations, yes, we had Thanksgiving, usually a fat hen or a sage grouse, which was on hand.

Gifts were very sparse, typically a pr of mitten or socks, or a sheep.

Fest of July was a big event, usually a group of neighbors gathered for a picnic, had home made ice cream, games, some men put on horse pulling contests, one incident I recall the neighbors were one of the neighbors raised pigs + horses. He had so many horses that he bought billy + feed them to the pigs, this always upset me.

The ocmo flats were settled by wheat farmers. In the fall they would bring wagon loads of wheat to sell to the elevator. The trip took 1 day each way.

Good luck with your book.

Regards

Howard Tribble

Box 1033
Ft. Worth 58327
Bot 1033

J. W. McLean, Oct 5th 1933

Dear Mr. Doug:

We do hope your new book will be a success. My folks came from West in the year of 1916. They were told that Montana land required no effort to plow and plant, that the soil was good and most every manner of crop would grow well up here in Montana. My folks homesteaded on a 1/2 acre of land 8 miles out of Belgrade. They took the required amount of acres, planted corn & wheat, my folks built a one room house, a barn, an outhouse & waited for the crops to grow. The crops did not grow because we had settled on land that was grums & shale, also no water could be found there. We had to haul water at least one mile from a Milwaukee section house (my uncle Spos Leake) was section foreman there at a place named Al's. My father worked on the A.P. Section as a cook in 1918, when the bridge along the Yellowstone river at Joliet was being built.

We had a one room house, cook stove
table and a few chairs. The three boys slept in one bed, our folks in another. On cold winter nights we used every thing possible on the beds to keep warm. Summer we roasted.

During the flu epidemic, we put our beds in the dugout under the house, because my folks were concerned about keeping warm.

Howard did get the flu, so Dr. Haywood was called. Dr. Haywood came out on the local, walked the 1/2 mile to the house, left some pills & went back to Joseph. Homestead children started doing small chores at 9 yrs or younger. Usually they helped an older Bro or Sister. Rattlesnakes were quite numerous, so small kids had to be watched over.

School was a hit or miss affair. Some times schools were open for short periods - 3 or 4 months, so many kids missed out on school. Some of the older kids did stay at a dormitory. We left the homestead when I was 13 yrs. Bro. Roy, 9, Claude 7 yrs.

We had teamed out, I went to work for O Aty Bros, a construction outfit. Then worked for several ranchers in the area, also stayed with the Chifton's.
Here we broke horses for a man named Shoup. We broke 3 horses for Mr. Shoup had so many horses that he didn't know their exact no.

While on the homestead, we ate anything we could get. We ate, antelope, prairie chickens, rabbits & ducks. We were furnished shells to shoot ducks for the train men. Ducks were plentiful also geese.

I tended sheep for a rancher named Claude Johnston. I lived in a sheep wagon. Once a week the rancher brought supplies out & inspected the sheep, range conditions & so forth.

Gradually people learned to live in Montana, how to manage its resources & life was not so poor or hard. I hope this may help you.

P.S. Transportation was slow & hard, so beds & women rarely went into town. Home steader life was very hard on the women, they toiled from morning until nightfall, & were always tired and mostly discouraged.

Snow storms were bad, & it was a very cold period then.

Howard Gribble
Dear Howard—

Your letter was really very helpful. Thanks to you and several others who've provided me good detailed memories, I've gained quite a lot of homestead lore.

I'm about to head for Montana—the Choteau country—for a summer of research and writing, and so am not perfectly organized at the moment. But before I go, I did want to be in touch with you, and to pass along another brief set of questions that have occurred to me as a result of your letter and the others. If you have any memories that pertain and you'd care to share them, I'd be doubly grateful.

—How were the walls of your homestead house decorated, if they were? Any pictures, family or otherwise, you can remember? Where did the calendar hang—in the kitchen, as it did in the ranch houses I remember? Did you have a family clock, and if so, what kind—a wall clock, alarm clock, etc?

—What about the walls of the country schoolhouse? Any pictures—Washington, Lincoln? Was there a clock there, that you students could watch? Did you sit in side-by-side desks, or in row-desks one behind the other? Were you divided into classes, youngest nearest the teacher's desk, or what?

—You mention the flue paddock, and putting your beds "in the dugout under the house" for the sake of sleeping more warmly. Was that dugout a dirt cellar, the sort that ordinarily had shelves for canned goods and so on? Could you get into it from inside the house, through a trap door or stairwell, or did you have to go to an outside cellar door? And was there any stove down there, or was it simply warmer because of being underground?

—Holidays in those homestead years: was the family able to put up a Christmas tree? If not, was there any kind of a substitute—wreaths or some other decoration? Do you remember any specific gifts that thrilled you—or were gifts pretty sparse? Was Thanksgiving observed? Did you get to go to town for the 4th of July, and if so, were there any festivities—fireworks, speeches, rodeo?

I can't close without saying that your letter really was very eloquent of those times. Yours and the other responses convince me more than ever to try capture something of those years in a book.

best regards

Ivan Doig
26 July '83

Dear Mary Farrington--

Please excuse the postcard; I'm just back from a month in Montana and am desperately trying to catch up on correspondence. I greatly appreciate your mother's willingness to talk to me about homestead days. The earliest I have any chance to get to Olympia is sometime in the last two weeks of August. I'll get in touch with you before then to see if we can arrange a time. Meanwhile, my thanks to the various Farringtons—I'm about to write Eva in appreciation of her very helpful letter.

Best regards

20 Sept. '83

Dear Mary--

I apologize for dropping off the face of the earth. Family matters got in the way of my intention to come to Olympia; my wife's parents have moved out here to a retirement home and it took us a while to get them settled. Now I face an October of daily writing, and so will try to make it to Olympia by about mid-November, if that's okay with you. Will call you when I can see a date to try; sorry life has turned so hectic at this end, but it tends to do that.

Very best

[Signature]

Olympia 15 March '87
June 30, 1983

Dear Mr. Doig,

I have just returned from visiting my aunt, Eva Farrington, to whom you wrote asking for information about life on the homestead. She thinks that you would probably be able to get more information from my mother, Georgia Farrington, of the kind you seem to be looking for. She is 83, has an excellent memory for detail, went to the homestead when she was twelve or thirteen. I would be glad to bring her to be interviewed or she would be happy to receive you here in Olympia. I do not believe that she would be able to write down with as much detail as she could report orally. She is still tutoring young children and is generally quite active. We still feel like Montanans in spite of years of living in Olympia.

Sincerely,

Mary Farrington
August 3

Dear Mr. Doig,

Thank you for your card, and we will be happy to have you come here. I will be gone from Aug 21-26.

I can’t believe that I am helping with a camp for children, but that seems to be what’s on the calendar.

Most any other time will be fine.

Sincerely, Mary Farrington

Boynton 943-1746
Dear Eva Farrington—

This note of thanks is much belated, but all the more heartfelt. Your letter arrived here about the time I was holed up near Clancy (having house-swapped with Bill Lang, editor of the Montana Magazine of History), working the summer's research into my manuscript. I'll have this novel finished by the end of the year, and early in '83 will be starting on the homestead one. Your letter really was very helpful; many of the details of homestead and rural school life now are known only by those of you who went through that life. I may be back to you with further questions, next year.

I've been in touch with Mary Farrington about talking to Georgia. So far I haven't managed a free day to get to Olympia, but hope to in November. I also appreciate having the name and address of Mr. Sebulsky, whom I'll also get in touch with. I want to do justice to the story of the homesteaders, and need all the help I can get.

again, my appreciation
and best regards
Dear Mr. Doig:

I apologize for being so slow to answer your request for memories of the homestead era in Montana. I am very interested in your planned book, and flattered that you have asked for any help I could give. However, I feel that the Hagen family life was not exactly what I consider true homestead living. My father, Sever Hagen, was born in Lom, Norway in 1876. His father died shortly after that and when my father was 5 years old he and his mother came to America and they lived in Wisconsin. In 1899 my father came to Forsyth, Montana and worked for different ranchers in the area until 1903 when he returned to Wisconsin to be married to Margaret Lanphere. They returned to Montana shortly after that and my father acquired about a quarter of a section of land on the Big Porcupine Creek about 50 miles northwest of Forsyth. At that time he had only squatters rights but after the Homestead Act became law he filed for it as a homestead. As time went on he acquired more and more land around the original homestead until he eventually owned about nine sections. He raised sheep and cattle until 1933 when he sold the sheep and concentrated on cattle. My sister is 5 years older than I, and when she was 6 years old my parents had a house built in Ingomar, 16 miles from the Ranch, and from that time on we lived in Ingomar during the school year and on the ranch during the summers. Therefore we didn’t experience the rigors of homestead living. Our ranch house had 5 rooms, and the house in Ingomar had 4 rooms. There were always hired men at the Ranch so we children didn’t share too much in the chores or the ranch work. My father died in 1911 and my brother, Arthur, returned home and operated the ranch with my mother until she died in 1968. After that Arthur and his wife operated the ranch. They sold all the cattle in 1980 and now lease the land to a neighboring cattleman, but they continue to live there. The original log house still stands too; it has been remodeled and more has been added.

In recalling incidents of school I might mention an item I only heard about – –. There was a small country school about 7 miles from our Ranch and they had a dormitory there. The first winter one of the families made arrangements for their children to stay at the dorm after the bad winter weather set in. On the first Saturday nite that these children were there the dormitory matron announced that it was "bath night" for everyone. These children replied that their winter underwear was "sewed on" so they couldn't take it off until the weather was warmer. I never heard the outcome. There was no dormitory in Ingomar for many years so a number of the families "boarded and roomed" children from the surrounding homesteads. Our family had a boarder one winter named Sarah - and on the first Saturday my mother prepared to shampoo Sarah's, my sister's and my hair. Sarah remonstrated - said she never washed her hair in the winter cause she might catch a cold. However my mother insisted, Sarah worried a lot - but she didn’t catch a cold.

My school experience held one rather interesting fact. The first school built in Ingomar was a nice frame, one room built in 1915. I suppose the teacher taught as many of the 8 grades as were necessary. I started there in September 1916 and was still attending classes in that same room when I graduated from High School in 1928. Additions were built when enrollment required and a new brick building was built during those years but I was in that same room for the first 8 years because they moved the lower grades, 1 thru 6, into the brick part. Then when I started High School they moved
grades 7 and 8 out and used that room for High School classes - so I still attended at least one class each year in that room even then.

June was our month for company this year and a lot of our family visited us here. We all discussed your letter and your book "This House of Sky", which I purchased and read immediately after I got your letter. I find I have a sister-in-law who, I think, could give you some rather interesting facts about homesteading. She is Mrs. Clayton Farrington (Georgia) and lives in Olympia. She and her daughter visited us in June and they were both very interested. Georgia will be 83 years old the 30th of this month. She grew up on a homestead near Edwards, Montana - - about 25 miles from Jordan. There were 6 children in the family (Sam Hampton) and they really knew the "homestead life". Georgia says she will be glad to talk with you if you wish. She has some problem to write any great amount but her daughter says she would be most happy to drive her mother up to Seattle and meet you. The daughter, Miss Mary Farrington, has just retired from teaching in the Olympia High School. She knows of you as she recently attended a meeting where a lady gave a very glowing account of your writing. Mary's address is: Miss Mary Farrington, 403 N. Rogers, Olympia, WA 98502. Her phone number is 206-943-1746. I think it would be best to contact Mary for any meeting with Georgia if you are interested.

I am sorry that I am not able to recount any really good experiences for your new book. I'll be watching the bookstore for it after you publish it. If you are still looking for others to contact for experiences there is a man living in Seattle who was raised on a homestead close to our ranch. His name is: Mr. Dominic Sebulsky, 11629 Sixth Ave. S.W., Seattle WA 98146.

Sincerely,

Eva Farrington
Dear Fern--

I'm finally free of the Montana novel of the 1930s that I've been working on for the past few years; it'll be published this fall, called English Creek, and is set in the country south of Browning, down around Dupuyer. Now I'm moving on to the novel I intend about homesteaders, and I've been reviewing the information in your letters and a few others. Some wonderful lore of how life was lived then. One thing in particular of yours that I might want to try and adapt--the incident of you and your brother learning Morse code. There's no rush on this, but if you get the chance I wonder if you could help me with some further details on this:

--Since that would have been before electricity on your homestead (I guess?) what operated the "buzzer" your brother rigged up? Can you describe it to me as much as possible; did he rig up something that served as a telegraph key, did it actually transmit over a wire in the room; did you guys transmit back and forth, across the room to each other, or what? And I wonder where you got your copy of the Morse code from--a book, a visit to a railroad depot? I take it your folks encouraged, or at least tolerated, this--as there must have been a lot of Morse code clacking around in that house for awhile? Finally, do you remember the kinds of messages you would send; did you mostly make conversation in your code, or play dramatic games, such as ships sending SOS, or what?

All is well here. My wife and I are going to Edmonds today for lunch with a friend--we'll say hello to the town for you. I hope you're thriving.

best regards

[Signature]
Lakeside, Ca.
June 15-64

Dear Ivan:

Sorry I’m so slow getting this letter written. It is not from lack of interest in your work. It’s because I went to the hospital for the first time in my life. All is well - it was major surgery - but I’m lucky (no cancer) I get tired easily but aside from that I feel fine.

I wish I could tell you my brother and I did great things with our Morse code - but we really didn’t. He was only twelve and I was two years younger. There was no electricity. There never has been and there isn’t now. In fact there are no houses left as far as I can find out. We did go back and get our
Piano—But the next time we went back all furniture, tools and all had disappeared. I never suppose by some one who could use it. It was so difficult to get to either Bomanda or Injoman that money was of no use. For instance if you ran out of gas for your car, you could take the horse and find some one who would loan some gas but they never would accept money. They wanted it repaid in gas. There were no roads. You just had to find your way across country. So our riders and the key didn’t send messages except right in the room and I suppose it was on a battery. I never gave that part of it a thought at that time. We just sent small messages to each other and we were proud when they could be understood.

There was no plumbing either. We dug a well but it had water.
so full of alkali that we couldn't drink it. We hauled water in a wagon and barrels from a spring two miles away.

I forgot to say that the code we worked from came from a book which explained the Morse code as well as the Continental and the key and book were brought out to us one time when my father came out to the homestead from Miles City. By this time he was temporarily in town working on the Milwaukee Railroad. He would try to bring fresh meat. By the time he could get here it was always spoiled. So my brother and I got pretty good with our guns. We would go out and get cotton tails and sage hens. He had a 30-30 rifle. I had a 22.
It sounded so nice to me when you said you and your wife were going to Edmonds. That's a town I would like to live in and when it gets over a hundred degrees here, I often think of that area because it's so cool and the ocean is so close. This area (even here in S D) seems to be gearing up for the Olympics. Traffic seems to have doubled.

If these are any questions I could answer for you remember I'm very interested in your book. I hope this hasn't been too hard to read. My writing will get better as I get better.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Dear Fern--

Thanks for your letter; it helps me understand your childhood telegraph system. Sorry to hear you've been under the weather, but it sounds like you're coming out in good style.

All is well here. I'm about to go to Scotland for some travel and research on the homesteaders of my next book. I keep pinching myself, to remind me that departure time isn't far off and I have yet to pack. Anyway, this is just a quick line of appreciation for your last letter, and to wish you a pleasant summer.

all best,
June 25 - 1983

Dear Ivan:

I'm very glad you found my letter helpful.

It occurred to me that you might have dealt with some of my very dear friends in Browning. The first man (before my time) to be president of the little bank in Browning was Joseph Sherbourne. He had a son named Frank who took over the bank when his father died. His daughter who lives in Alhambra, Ca. is probably my closest friend. In fact, while she was getting her Master's I kept her little girl. She lived with my husband and I for five years instead of a boarding school. Frank S. also owned the Sherbourne McCutie in Browning and had many stories to tell about the Indians. He said it
2.

was almost impossible to get them
to do work for you. They would promise
to come and cut wood but never show
up. So he thought of a deal that
might work. He took his pen and
paper and wrote out a "contract"
That was important to them and
they would come and do the work
and do it well.

The real old Indians (pure
breeds) would often borrow money from
the bank. It never lost a nickel
as long as they were lending it to
a pure breed. But later, when
they were mixed with white blood
no more loans could be made.
No with out Trouble,

My first visit to Browning must
have been around 1950. It was the
Fourth of July and the Indians were
putting up colorful tippecans. That
night they had an Indian dance.
One big Indian was wearing a
full feather head dress, full
Indian costume. Around his
neck was long Cape completely covered with muff-skin. All the men and squaws were doing their Indian dances, but over at the edge of the circle were a couple (girl-boy) doing a jitter bug dance.

Now I'd better answer your questions. I'm interested in Indians and their culture. So much so that when I went back to Seattle I took a class in Indian reading at Edmonds Comm. College. I can do head work just as nice as they can I guess.

You asked how the walls of our house were decorated? The only thing on the walls besides my water color coloring efforts were the guns. A 22 rifle and a 30-30. We were so isolated - so far from town - no roads - that Dad couldn't send us any fresh meat. It was always spoiled by the time it reached the old home stead that
Some served as a post office. It was called Frecheur but there was no town there. We could get our mail in the summer but it was impossible in the winter.

Our house was made of frame, brought from either Canada or Ingomar. Then it was covered by sod squares & had tar paper roof I believe. There was only one long room. A set of curtains were pulled to make the bedroom at night. A large heating stove was halfway along one wall. The outside door exactly opposite the stove on the other side of the room. The dining room table was next and the calendar hung on the wall between the table and the heater. I guess we were able to keep the days, weeks and months straight. We always seemed to know when school started and ended and when Christmas was due - etc.
We had a clock and as I remember it looked like a little Ben and since there was no electricity it was the kind that ticked away all night. Our lights were kerosene lamps and in the evenings I would read to them all—since there was no radios or TV’s yet. My brother fixed up a buzzer and we taught ourselves the Morse code. The messages didn’t go any where but we did learn the code.

No pictures on the school house walls, I had a wrist watch and the teacher who was also our minister had a pocket watch. We sat at desks in a single row—one behind the other. This was after our first teacher was frozen. But from the very beginning we all helped pull & cut what we called grease wood. Then were no trees to burn. Just grease wood and buffalo chips.
Yes, the day my mother kept me home from school was the day our teacher, Sadie's children froze. She seemed pretty old to me, but in fact she was only twenty-seven when she died.

At the time of the Armistice a German woman took me to Miles City where her husband had a job. I don't remember how we got there, but after dark and after we were in bed I could hear whistles. There was dancing in the street and knew the war was over. I don't know how long it took the rest of the family on the homestead to find out since we couldn't get papers. I know though that there was no celebration there. No one to celebrate with except themselves and the coyotes.

We did celebrate Christmas though. My grandmother in Iowa always sent a barrel of toys, books and clothes from
Iowa. That was my maternal grandmother. We looked forward to our barrel every year. She must have worked on it all year long. She knew I liked books and she kept me well supplied with fairy tale, Bible stories, etc. We couldn’t have a tree since none were growing where we lived. So we found an enormous tumble weed and decorated it with silver tinsel and silver rain. Then the smaller kids hung up their stockings and they were filled from grandma’s barrel.

We also celebrated Thanksgiving. It varied from the ordinary days because we usually had a roast chicken instead of a cotton tail rabbit.

No, no celebration for the Fourth of July. I do know that they had a three day rodeo in Miles. They drank, helltred Powder River. Let her cork for three
days and nights, I rode in the old stage coach that is in the museum now I believe.

You must be getting tired of reading this hand-written letter, but I've rather enjoyed recalling all these old memories.

If there are any more questions you would like to ask about I will be happy to answer if I can.

Sincerely,

Fern Eggere

P.S. I am enjoying "This House of Sky". Very interesting.
Dear Fern—

I'm drastically late with this note of thanks, but your letter came here amid my summer of research in Montana. Thanks so much for the care you went to, in putting down details for me; it's exceedingly helpful.

Yes, I remember some of the Sherbournes in Browning; I think one of them still owned the Browning Merc when we were running sheep on the Reservation. If I have my stores straight, the husband of one of my high school classmates at Valier since has owned that Merc. And in one of the summers of the late 1950's I worked for an old Scottish farmer north of Browning, renowned for doing all his Xmas shopping in the Merc by walking one circuit of the store, pointing and saying "I'll take that....that....that...."

From now until the end of the year, I have to concentrate solely on finishing this novel of Montana during the Depression years. Once that's out of the way I'll launch into the homesteader one, and more than likely will have some more questions for you at that time. Meanwhile, I hope you're thriving. You truly have been a help in this attempt of mine to do justice to the story of the homesteaders.

all best wishes
Dear Ione Dvig:

Of course I do not mind your asking me about my homesteading experiences. I do have a very good memory. I might not remember all the dates exactly, but the rest will be accurate and true.

My dad got the idea of going to Montana when I was nine. He did not know farming, cattle, sheep or anything that goes with homesteading. He had been manager of Bell Telephone in Nebraska.

Some former friends from Nebraska was already there homesteading in the Vananda area. They came back to Nebraska to tell us how nice it was to live there and brought with them a very, very large pasture on a sample of what could be raised on the land. It resulted in our taking a home stead on the
section joining theirs. But we
never saw another potato like that
one as there was not a drop of rain
for the next seven years. So my
dad went to Miles City and got a job
on the Milwaukee rail road and we
stayed to prove up. We - means
my mother, my oldest brother 10 yrs.
then I was next 9 yrs, a brother boys
a brother 3 and a baby girl, had
sent two men to build us a house
to replace the three tent we started
with. It seemed pretty small after
the fifteen room house we had in
Nebi. These two men were just as new
to the Montana country as we were
and built our cabin in the
middle of a prairie dog field where
the rattlesnakes gang up for the
winter. One of these men was Dad's
friends from Nebi. Karl McConnell
was his name and his wife Sadie
became our school teacher. They
were our only neighbors for miles.
They had three children - a boy and two girls. All much younger than I. So I spent my time reading everything I could find to read and riding a pony around in the bad lands looking for old Indian graves which I never found. My oldest brother and I killed three hundred rattlesnakes going to and from school. We kept the rattles in a box and the oldest snake we killed was thirteen and a half years old. A snake can get pretty big by that time. One day my three year old brother told me he had killed a snake, I went to look for myself and sure enough - he had cut one in two with a hot iron.

We had a few chickens and four cows. My mother and brother did the milking. Who filled the wood box? There was no place to buy wood or coal. About two miles away there were a couple of
of cotton wood tree and we left them there. Our wood boy was filled with real buffalo chips and sage brush. There was plenty Peach. I do not know the exact year we went to Montana and there is no one for me to ask. But I remember a lot of talk about the war—which of course was W.W.I.

Then we had a particularly bad winter. One morning I got up to go to school and although my parents were in favor of all the education we could get my mother said I wasn’t going that day. It was a very nice day with a Chinook wind which was melting the snow. But I stayed home. I have often wondered what prompted her to keep me home and years later I asked her. She told me she couldn’t remember. It developed that Sadie and her three children had started to walk home and it was such lovely...
weather that they decided to leave
their coats—too warm to carry them.
Before they reached home a terrible
blizzard came across the prairie.
The thermometer fell to sixty
degrees in a half hour. Sadie and
children could not be found until
two days later. She was frozen and
so were her three children. This can
be verified by any old timers in
Forsyth. I checked on the graves
the last time I was in Forsyth.
They are buried in an old cemetery
there. The graves are marked with
small crosses. Sadie, Percy,
Donna and Caroline. Now we needed
a new school teacher and our young
unordained minister took the place of
Sadie. He was twenty one years old.
The last I heard of him he was teaching
at the U of Chicago. He had originally
come from Germany and his name
is Justine Wilke.
We didn't stay much longer. We moved to Miles City and dad continued to work on the railroad. I finished high school and went to Seattle hoping I could find a job and go to the U. of Washington. Seattle was in desperate circumstances. The street car operator couldn't cash their check without a big discount. But I do love Seattle and I was happy with the rain. Lake Washington - I eventually had my own boat. I like everything about Seattle.

Just before coming here I took a course in short story at Edmonds Comm. College just to find out if I could write. I found out I couldn't so went back to my childhood hobby of oil painting which I am much better.

I have not read your published book so I called our library. They do not have it in our little library but they do in San Diego.
and they have ordered it for me. 
If there are any questions you want to ask please feel free to write and ask me. I'm sorry I couldn't type this letter and make it easier to read.

Ah yes my folks sold the land to a big sheep owner but kept the mineral rights. The land is right in the middle of the oil map and is leased out, I haven't heard any thing about it so don't think any thing exciting is happening there.

Sincerely

Ferro Eggers
Dear Fern Eggers—

Your letter was wonderfully helpful. Thanks to you and several others who’ve provided me good detailed memories, I’ve gained a lot of homestead lore.

I’m about to head for Montana for a summer of research and writing, and so am not perfectly organized at the moment. But before I go, I did want to be in touch with you, and to pass along another brief set of questions that have occurred to me as a result of your letter and the others. If you have any memories that pertain and you’d care to share them, I’d be doubly grateful.

—How were the walls of your homestead house decorated, if they were? Any pictures, family or otherwise, you can remember? Scenes cut from magazines or newspapers? Where did the calendar hang—in the kitchen, as if did in the ranch houses I remember? Did you have a family clock, and if so, what kind—a wall clock, alarm clock, etc.?

—What about the walls of the country schoolhouse? Any pictures—Washington, Lincoln? Was there a clock there, that you students could see? Did you sit side by side in desks, or in long row-desks one behind the other? Did the students share in any school chores—firewood for the stove and so on? Your story of the teacher and her children freezing in the blizzard indeed is a famous one in the Forsyth country; was it that same day, that your mother kept you home, that the teacher and her family were caught by the weather?

—You mentioned hearing about World War One: any memories of Armistice Day, Nov. 11, 1918? That was before radio and TV, and people were mostly out of reach of daily papers; I’m curious as to how the news spread, whether there was celebration, and so on.

—Holidays in those homestead years: was the family able to put up a Christmas tree? If not, was there a substitute? Do you remember any specific gifts that thrilled you—or were gifts pretty sparse? Was Thanksgiving observed? Did you go to town for 4th of July, and if so, were there any festivities—fireworks, speeches, rodeos?

I can’t close without saying that your letter really was very evocative and eloquent of those times. Yours and the other responses convince me more than ever that I’d like to try capture something of those years in a novel.

best regards

Ivan Dodg
Ben Lomond, Calif.
May 17th, 1979

Dear Ivan Doig:

Our plan to be in Olympia by now just didn't jell, what with company from Montana and now this gasoline crunch, plus the fact that the Manheimers are rebuilding their bathroom until at least a couple of weeks more. So Caroline and I discussed it over the phone a couple of nights ago and decided that perhaps mid June would be a good time to come. She said you called and said you planned to be in Seattle for the summer, so when I get there I will give you a call. We are going to drive, my husband doesn't enjoy flying and I always need the car, seems like, so we are looking forward to seeing you by at least mid June. Caroline was pleased that you called.

Sincerely,

Dene Reber

Interviewed Mrs. Reber at her granddaughter's house (Caroline and Ron Manheimer) in Olympia -- 410 E. 17th, phone 352-7104 -- on 29 June, '79. Useful details for novel. Two she told me after I turned off the tape: --Rose Gordon, when asked at a picnic whether she'd like anything further, would reply: "Oh no thank you, I have had an elegant sufficiency."
--Dene, when she was a child on Stillwater homestead, would get on a horse -- she was only 4-5 yrs old -- by watching until horse would put its head down to graze, then straddle its neck, be lifted up and scramble down into place on the horse's back.
Ben Lomond, Calif.
March 15th, 1979

Dear Ivan:

I will plan then, to see you sometime in mid May and will telephone from Olympia. Where ever you go I hope you have a pleasant trip and nice weather. The whole world must be sick of winter this year. It still rains here. I will be looking forward to may.

Sincerely,

Dene Leber

Called Caroline Hauheimer May 15,
she said Mrs. R now intends to visit in mid-July. Also said she of her husband, who teaches among von citizens, have 2-3 hrs of taped interview with Mrs. R of she's excellent on details.
Dear Ivan Doig:

I was so pleased and flattered to get your letter and to hear that you plan to write again about Montana. Our daughter and the grandchildren have been after me to record some of the events of my own life as well as my parents, so we did make a few tapes. I never considered myself much of a storyteller until a couple of people said 'tell it again Dene.' So many things have happened over this long life, some funny or sad and some just plain ridiculous. Anyway it would be something to do and think about.

Our granddaughter, Caroline Manheimer and her husband Ronald live in Olympia. He teaches at Evergreen and has to do with a group of old people. Caroline is in the City Library, says she hunts books for everybody and is thankful that her good education is paying off now. They invited us to come for a visit this spring when all the trees and the rhododendrons are in bloom, maybe in May, so if it was convenient for you perhaps we could meet and talk about Montana. I would be happy to share any memories I have with you.

A letter from Absarokee friends yesterday said they have had such a terrible winter, one storm on top of another until the drifts are still there. It sounds like they had nary a Chinook to warm them and melt the snow. Our winter here hasn't been very pleasant either, so much rain, if it don't let up before long we will all have web feet.

We plan to drive to Olympia, Mr. Reber hates to fly, so one of the grandsons will come with us. So if we are still here and the sky don't fall we hope to see you later.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
March 9, 1979

Dear Mrs. Reber—

Yes, I'd like it very much if we can manage to get together during your May trip to Olympia. One problem is that I'm going to be out of the country until probably May 11. If your trip is before then, we'll simply have to try another time. But if our schedules fit, perhaps you could drop me a postcard, or a collect call, to say when we might get together at your granddaughter's.

Best wishes,

[Signature]

Cotton Content
Feb. 23, '79

Dear Dene Bell Reber—

Thanks so much for thinking to send the Hutchinson review of my book. And I'm pleased to hear that you enjoyed the book, too. I've heard from quite a number of White Sulphur people, and an astounding number who used to live in Ringling; so far all the response has been favorable, I'm glad to say.

I was interested in your comment that your father "hauled freight, rode for Penwell, put up hay and did all the necessary things to make a living." When I finish my Pacific Northwest book at the end of this year, I may think about writing a novel of Montana, roughly from the years 1890 until the great winter of 1919-20. I'd like very much to tell more of the homesteaders' story than I could in This House of Sky, and a novel might be the way to do it. If you have any incidents, out of your parents' lives or your own, from that period, and would care to pass them along to me, I'd be happy to have them. For instance, somehow I'm going to have to find out what people remember of the first time they ever saw a car; how and where they heard of World War One beginning; even what the daily routine of ranch life was like—how they got up first to build a fire, what chores a girl or boy did, how frequently a family would get to town.

I'll certainly understand if you don't want to bother. But if you are interested, I'd be very pleased to have any background material. In either case, all best wishes to you, and thanks again for troubling to write.

sincerely,

[Signature]
Dear Ivan Doig:

I read This House of Sky and I want to thank you for writing it and giving us all a description of that beautiful country. I was born in White Sulphur, April 10th, 1894, to Walter and Matilda Sellers Bell. My mother came up from Missouri with Woodson's and Papa helped build the railroads west from Minnesota. He hauled freight rode for Penwell, put up hay and did all the necessary thing to make a living. My grandma Sellers was ther also, she had a restaurant and on different occasions a bakery on Main Street. She and Sarah Sherman were the best of friends.

I remember the Spring so well, and the gazebo, it ran so freely and was clear water. They said it was comparable to the waters of the one in Baden Baden, Germany where so many people went for their health.

Seeking a milder climate we moved to the Stillwater Valley when I was about 5; established a sheep ranch about 7 miles west of Absarokee and that is where I grew up. It was a milder climate, the frost didn't hit the gardens so early.

Enclosed is W. H. Hutchinson's tribute to you, you likely have it, but just in case you missed it here it is.

I am looking forward to reading your book on the Pacific Northwest and anything else you write, so good luck and thanks again.

Sincerely,

Dene Bell Reber

9250 Highway Nine,
Ben Lomond, Calif. 95005.
To Ivan Doig
17277 15th NW
Seattle WA 98177
Dear Juan,

Here is Ken's address:

Dr. Ken Steffensen DDS
3024 Radcliffe
Billings MT 59102-0729

Ken practiced in Glasgow until he volunteered for service in the Korean War. He then moved his practice to Billings. We have been long time friends. Ken & Eleanor were guests in our Fort Peck home on Sunday, Dec 7, 1941 when we heard about the Pearl Harbor Attack.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
4 May '31

Dear Irene Olson--

I'm finally free of the Montana novel of the 1930s that I've been working on for the past few years, and can move on now to the one about homesteaders. I've been reviewing the information in your letters and a few others; some wonderful lore of how life was lived then. A couple of your details in particular I may want to use, in describing homestead households in my novel; there's no rush on this, but when you get a chance I wonder if you could help me make sure I have these things right:

--The folding bed your folks slept on in the kitchen intrigues me. You say it was "like an oversized bureau." I suppose they got it through a catalogue or at a furniture store—that is, it wouldn't have been homemade, would it? Did it work on the same principle as a convertible couch does today—folding out in 2 or 3 sections? And would it have been about as wide as a convertible couch—wide enough to serve as a double bed anyway, hmm? Did it look pretty much like a bureau or chest of drawers when it was closed up—about that height? Any decorations on it you can remember, when it was closed up? And where did it stand, in a corner of the kitchen? Deliberately close to the stove for warmth, or not?

--Your Tom Keene Cigar clock sounds wonderful. I wonder, though, if it's too recent in vintage for my book. My book will take place mostly 1900-1920; do you suppose that clock arrived into your family that early, or not?

--Finally, the house on sled runners your dad built to transport you kids to school in winter. About how big was that? Tall enough for him to stand up, for instance? Did it have seats like a buckboard? Was it painted up in any way? And could it be taken off the sled runners when they were needed for something else, the way hay racks could be?

All is well here. I'm looking forward to a quick trip to Montana in June—MSU is giving me an honorary doctorate, which startles me and makes me feel about 20 years older than I am—and then maybe a more leisurely one around Labor Day. I hope you've wintered okay. My thanks again, for pitching in on my try at doing the homesteaders some literary justice.

best regards

[Signature]
Dear Irene Olson—

You had a hectic summer, and I'm having a hectic Indian summer. The past month or so, I've been so swamped with writing and with family matters (my wife's parents have moved out here and a retirement home had to be found for them) that all mail has gone unanswered. But I do thank you for your reply to my homestead questions. The details are greatly helpful, especially such things as the wall plaque prayers and the Tom Keene Cigars clock.

Things are going well enough here, despite (or because of?) the heavy schedule. I'll be finished with this novel about the Depression years in Montana by the end of this year, and early in '61, will get underway on the homesteader one. You may hear from me at that time, if other questions come to mind. But you've already been an enormous help.

best regards
Aug. 24, 1983
301 Castle 59330
Glendive, Mont.

Dear Mr. Peig -

This has been a too short, hot, company filled summer so a reply to your letter of June 17 has been badly neglected. I hope my small bit will still be useful. Your letter & questions have made a delightful conversation piece among friends.

Our home in Harlowton had a little cardboard plaque on the wall that I never forgot - I was 4-5 yrs old.

"Christ is the head of this house. The unseen guest at every meal. A silent listener to every conversation."

"Old friends are the best friends. Theirs welcome rings out true. Then others pass you onward. You'll find they'll stick by you."

Sincerely,
It was about this same time I recall a newspaper article of placing a man on the moon—it was illustrated with drawings. I seemed such an impossibility. How I wish that newspaper had been saved—what a treasure it would be today.

Our clock hung on the wall I required winding every night which was done always at retiring by either Mom or Dad. It was a large replica of a pocket watch bearing the inscription on its face “Smoke Tom Kiene Cigars.” It still runs if wound but is unused in our China cupboard as a special treasured keepsake!

Large pictures of Washington & Lincoln always adorned school rooms as I recall. That was used as a subject for school debate many times as to who
was the greater of the two men.

There was also a set of world maps enclosed in a wooden case placed above the blackboards. Maps were used as a teaching tool or as a "cover" over tests written on the board I raised when the time came to reveal the test.

I think we always had a Christmas tree. A friend tells of decorating a Russian thistle. He used real wax candles but what a fire hazard. It's surprising there weren't more school & home fires during those years. Thanksgiving was always observed - pot-luck meals after church. The 4th of July was a big event! It always meant a new dress that Mom would sew (material prices ranged from 3¢ to 44¢ a yard (cotton) & some 7¢ to 14¢) the latter much too costly for us.
Our mom would renovate old things into new for me. She kept me well dressed and I was proud to wear anything she fitted for me. She was truly an artist with her needle and thread. The 4th always drew politicians who made speeches (but we kids were bored with that so failed to hear) there'd be a parade in town. We usually attend rural gatherings which meant pop, watermelon or chocolate pie eating contests, races and games - evening dancing in an empty granary with accordion or fiddle music. There was quite often an element of rowdiness by drinking for those who celebrated too freely. This often led to fights.
I do wish you success in your new novel. I hope you’ve had lots of response to your letters. It is really a joy to help but my hit seems so small. I trust your summer has been a rewarding one. Good luck.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Irene Olsen
Dear Mr. Dlaig,

A few years ago I was browsing in a book store and for some unknown reason I purchased a copy of "The House of Shy" by Dean Dlaig. I thoroughly enjoyed the story - perhaps because it was so like my childhood days of Ingmar! It related so well to my parents who had homesteaded there in 1914. Needless to say I was delighted to receive a letter from you this past week. I would be most happy to share a bit for your new novel. The book you have from Kenneth Heyderk has much to offer you - I shall attend on a few facts from that resume of my family. My family was always poor in my childhood innocence. I never really realized or felt the cruelty of it. We were so rich in having a close family who shared everything — my parents encouraged us to rise above the level. They helped us with an education...
by depriving & sacrificing in so many ways. My father's purse was fine to share—sometimes it held a mere penny.

My folks were here one year when I was born. My dad delivered me as he couldn't get help quickly enough. He lived in a little 2 room house built by my father. A dirt cellar below with an outdoor stairway to an attic which was used for storage. My folks slept on a folding bed in the kitchen which was real neat by day (it folded into a wooden cabinet by day like an oversized bureau). The kitchen was the center of all life; everything was done in the Kitchen from washing clothes, cooking & baking, bathing in the round wash tub, school work; it was hospital for little chilled animals & fowl or a bedding place for baby prigs who had a broken leg due to careless mothers. It was a butcher shop to cut up beef, pork, chicken, sausage making it
at butchering time for home

canning. Mom mended the curtains
for the old touring car I sometimes
replaced the "flying glass" windows.
She sewed all of my clothes, many
were hand-me-downs from relatives
in town. She certainly had a gift
at combing pieces from 1913
garments so I was "well" dressed
during my high school days.
The kitchen was the preparing place for
good staple cooking, of course also
the dining room. Many times the
the table wouldn't accommodate all guests
so kids or men ate wherever they could,
perhaps outdoors weather permitting.
No stranger ever passed our door
without being fed and may even take
a lunch along for good measure.
Evenings were spent around the
kerosene lamp by visiting or playing
cards, checkers, etc. I eating popcown.

I remember when the first radio
came to our neighborhood. All gathered
to hear it! How exciting! The hits go
Late - too dark & too cold to all stayed outside sleeping just everywhere until people could return home. Dad drove us in a bob sled (perhaps 5 families were present - 5 miles from our place).

Our one room school was centrally located about 2 miles from our home. Dad had built a little house on runners - it even had a little stove for heating. Dad could drive his trusted team of horses thru a little sliding window. He'd pick up other kids on the way.

In the summer this became my private little play house - how I loved it! I grew up without girl friends as only boys were in our area so perhaps I was a Tom boy at times. Once my brothers had an argument which became quite serious & they started chasing each other but Raymond ran into the house. As Andy picked around the corner Raymond shot off his beebee
gun which broke a tooth in Andy's mouth! He were horrid with fear & the 3 of us went to the field to tell Dad. He just took the little gun I broke it over his knee & threw it into a furrow. Year later these pieces of weathered gun were found floating us with childish memories - one that could have been so tragic.

My grandmother was gravely ill so Mom had returned to her home in Oklah. That Christmas Dad had each y as choose a gift from the catalogue - each choose a fountain pen. Raymonds was brick orange - Andy's a mottled red & black while mine was a dainty ladies pen on a green grass grain ribbon! It cost 1.29 I think! There was a debut social dance at the school house (Mom was away yet) so Raymond was told to buy my box since it was poor fare! But Ray didn't buy it! It was packed with soggy syrup
Sandwiches (that's all I remember). The man that did for my tol was so polite I think while I died of embarrassment eating with a stranger. Maybe they were tasty to a bachelor!

I needed Mom's garden once but couldn't tell weeds from real plants so removed the wrong things while she was resting! I felt so bad at what I'd done but only wanted to do something nice for my Mom. She really forgave me!

Three the years my folks left this country for short times but they always returned to try again. Not too long before Dad passed away he told me: "God didn't put anything on top of this land so it must be underneath." He still own this land.

Later years we'd drive the folks about the country as this was their favorite outing. Only
once did had step one in a coulee which was dressed in God's glory - sagebrush, cactus, wild flowers, grass & Dad said, "Diane, this is the way it looked the first time I saw it!" One seldom saw it so beautiful. Their roots were so deep in this God forsaken land but I could forgive them that day for staying & falling in love with it. It had grown on us kids too & held a wealth of childhood memories. We had been hailed out, dried out, army worm - grasshopper invasions, wind storms & dirt that cut the plants so often that it was no wonder place after place became abandoned but for some unknown reason my folks hung on until 1938 they moved to Forsyth.

School problems forced us to attend Ingomar school by my 6th grade. We rented a little house & us 3 kids "batched" together. Raymond quit
School to earn money. Later, I graduated in '31. I was alone so couldn't catch. The dormitory was too expensive (?) so I worked for my board & room at Forsyth & graduated in '33.

(Ann B) Eventually Ann finished Normal School in '35 & began teaching — I worked out some event to Normal school also. Then I'd help him go on. I finally saw all become free of this I live became better.

My father had come from Minn. to D'Hack. He was 30 & my mom was 17 when they met there in '09. He was a carpenter by trade but could actually do anything — a workman in Minn. became a farmer, a mechanic, a pumper for the Milwaukee Road. He played a fiddle for dances, was a feller had a perfect eye for hunting wild game, he worked at Ft Peck when the dam was constructed, he baptized his nephew
who was very ill, he could fit my dolls with new arms & legs that had become worn out, he could dance with the best of them & enjoyed life to the fullest. Then they tore down their 2nd home at Joey's farm. He rebuilt a comfortable home at Joey's. His health finally gave way & he died at age 88 in 1967. (Joey 1938-1967) Mom lived alone there I passed away in 1974 just short of age 82 by 5 days.

I hope this bit has saved a spot for you that you might like to use. If anything, your request has really awakened that long silent but fun enjoyed doing it – its fun to revive old memories to someone who is kind enough to listen!

Good luck on your new venture. You can be sure I'll be watching for it!

Sincerely

[Signature]
(Hofmeister)
The cellar stored home canned goods - vegetables - meat - fruit which was purchased from people who had garden produce for sale at Meyers along the Yellowstone River. Our gardens never produced enough for winter. The meat was raised - beef - pork - chicken - turkey - goose.

The folks tried raising turkeys for income. Coyotes got a few! In the fall Dad would "bleed" them - then the feathers were stripped by hand carefully so no tear in the skin. (Heads were not removed) The money received for this even helped with college for Andy.
Dear Irene Olson--

Your letter was wonderfully helpful. Thanks to you and several others who've provided me good detailed memories, I've gained quite a lot of homestead lore.

I'm about to head for Montana--the Choteau country--for a summer of research and writing, and so am not perfectly organized at the moment. But before I go, I did want to be in touch with you, and to pass along another brief set of questions that have occurred to me as a result of your letter and the others. If you have any memories that pertain and you'd care to share them, I'd be doubly grateful.

--The memories you have of the family kitchen are superb. Now, can you tell me anything about how the walls of your homestead house were decorated, if they were? Any pictures, family or otherwise, you can remember? Scenes cut from a magazine or newspaper? And where did the calendar hang--in the kitchen, as it did in the ranch houses I remember? Did you have a family clock, and if so, what kind--a wall clock, alarm clock, etc.?

--What about the interior of the country schoolhouse? Any pictures on those walls--Washington, Lincoln? Was there a clock there, that you students could watch? Did you sit side by side in desks, or in row desks one behind the other? I suppose classes sat together--youngest nearest the front? Did the students share in any school chores--firewood for the stove and so on?

--I think you're too young to remember this, but I wonder if you recall anything your folks or others said about it: Armistice Day of World War One, Nov. 11, 1918. That was before radio and tv, and people were mostly out of reach of dailies, I'm curious as to how the news spread, whether there was celebration, etc.

--I liked your story of the fountain pen Christmas gifts. Was your family able to have a Christmas tree--if not, any substitute? How about other holidays--was Thanksgiving observed? Did you get to go to town for 4th of July, and if so, were there festivities--fireworks, speeches, rodeo?

I can't close without saying, Irene, that your letter really was very evocative and eloquent of those times. Yours and the other responses convince me more than ever that I'd like to try capture something of those years in a novel.

best regards

Ivan Doig
July 10, 1985

Dr. Ivan Doig
17021 10th Avenue North West
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Ivan:

Enclosed is the item on homesteading I mentioned at dinner. This was abstracted from the larger project—what can be learned from reminiscence literature?—as a paper I read at a meeting in Boise several years ago. I must apologize because I could not find a clean copy and our photocopy machine is not performing well today. But, then, I'm sure you've read bad copy before.

Did you get a copy of the IR story about your's and Carol's sunrise vigil? I hope so, I meant to save mine but absent-mindedly put it out with the garbage.

What fun it was to have dinner with you and Carol. Isn't it wonderfully stimulating when highly verbal people get together? I wish we could have gone on for several more hours. Well, let's hope there will be other times.

Best personal regards to you and Carol,

Richard B. Roeder
Administrative Assistant
Dear Rich---

Your homestead article arrived, and I ate right into it. It's a nifty job of research, sounder than a dollar, and you're to be congratulated for taking on the topic. I shall use your points with care (and due credit, even!); my hunch is they'll serve as reminders and reinforcements to me--such as putting the Montana homestead peak at 1911-18 instead of 1910-14, as I automatically do, just because '10-'14 was when the Valier homestead crest occurred.

A thought or two. Can Milner be any help to you in extending the research? He is going to be looking at a helluva lot of homestead stuff, and as I savvy his project (though I'm not sure I do) he's after different significances than you are. Also, I don't know if this will ever be helpful, but I have maybe 15-25 letters of reminiscence by people who grew up (or at least were children for a while) on homesteads, mostly around Ingomar, Vananda and Sumatra. By and large they're responding to specific questions of mine, such as where they tethered their horse when they rode him to school, but occasionally they expand. Similarly, I have 4 or 5 taped interviews of such folks. It strikes me that these people, none of whom has written a book of reminiscences, sound much like your book writers in general appraisal of the homestead experience.

Carol and I had a grand time at supper that night, too. Dorothy Bradley doesn't know what she missed. We'll have to do it again, and maybe again and again. The two of us are happy for you in your new Helena situation. May you thrive even further.

thanks, and best

p.s. I did get a copy of the I-R piece about our dawn doings. That feature writer, Tom Palmer, is an enterprising one; new to Helena, drawn by Montana's writing reputation. If you ever want a project given some ink, you might keep him in mind.
March 12, 1983

Dear Mr. Doig,

Yes, I heard from Jeanett, but you need not introducing around here. I enjoyed "This House of Troy," and it added to my enjoyment of the drive to Great Falls, following the Smith River. Moreover, we are anticipating your visit to Bozeman. My daughter-in-law (Martha Edzell) is head office girl in Mike Malone's office, and she already heard of your coming about your questions.

In 1915, what is now Garfield County was part of Dawson County later split into 5 counties. Our County Superintendent was located in Glendive, and we never saw or heard from her. I reported to the clerk, a knowledgeable school district "clerk," a knowledgeable man who lived in Jordan. He one directive to me was, "You don't let the kids run the school," and make another remark, "I didn't make another remark. My school was 25 miles from Jordan, so I never saw any supervisor then, or ever in the 7 years I taught out there.
The children usually carried a long rope, and staked out their horses on the open prairie. Some hitched the horses or tied them to a sage brush.

I taught all subjects at all levels of grade school. At that time the state gave an exam to eighth graders to grant them assurance of admission to a high school. As I remember it, I had pupils in 5 different grades. The oldest was a great 15 yr old who is now a rancher near Whitchell.

I don't remember reading about a school, but probably did as it became my custom. It would more likely be "The Last of the Mohicans", or a Zane Grey book.

Our school texts were sent out from Jordan, often inadequate, but certainly better than none.

Excuse me for not being more specific, but like my grandfather told me when I asked about his boyhood in Ireland, "You're asking me things that happened 70 yrs ago, and I can't bring it all back."

Jordan is 100 miles (fence) from the railroad - there is now a good road, but in those days most traffic was by horse, not car.

We look forward to your coming with much pleasure.

Sincerely,

 Vooraa. E. Edsall
Dear Mrs. Edsall--

Thanks very much for your letter answering my questions. It's one of my great regrets that I never spent time in a one-room school, but your details help immensely in imagining what it might have been like.

I should have tumbled to your connection with Martha Edsall, from her name in Mike Malone's acknowledgments in his Rutte book. Probably I have talked with her on the phone, one time or another.

I'll let you know when I hope to get to Bozeman. In the meantime, I hope spring is as advanced in the Gallatin as it is here—yesterday I began watering the rhododendrons.

all best wishes
The year was 1915. The season was spring. Before me lay (or so I thought) the high adventure of living in Montana, after graduating from high school in Bismarck (N.D.). My mother and brother met me in Miles City. Our conveyance was a hayrack, loaded with groceries and stock feed, pulled by a gentle old team. Before us lay three or four days of travel, camping at night, waiting for the horses to feed, building camp fires for cooking, sleeping on mats under the wagon (Who had heard of sleeping bags?). All went well the first few days. But on our last day out, old Dan developed a sickly shoulder and could go no farther. So we unhitched the horses and sent my brother home on the sound horse. Dad returned with a good team, and we reached home safe and sound.

"Home" was a house built of sawmill lumber from trees cut in the breaks along the Missouri River. The family had preceded me by two years, so much had been done. Sometimes in the summer, I went to Jordan, and under the supervision of the #clerk of the school district, took examinations sent by the state, passed, and was granted a teaching certificate.

In November, I was assigned as teacher of a school which would operate for three months. The building was an unused claim shack, 10 foot by 12 foot with two windows, one too low to look out of, and one too high. One thickness of boards, covered on the outside with tar paper (black, of course), and on the inside with building paper (fortunately blue) formed the walls. A blackboard, 2x3 feet, was nailed on the studdings. A rude hole under the building held some fuel -- cottonwood for kindling, and slacked lignite coal for heat. The open hole to the north was later covered with a horse blanket, held down at the edges by piles of snow. The stove had been rescued from some garbage dump -- an upright, with a door in front, and a lid in the flat top.

The arrangement was for me to live in the building. And my younger brother -- ten years old -- was to live with me and go to school. My father drove us down in a wagon, still very few cars in that country, and stayed to make us as comfortable as possible. My bed was hinged to the wall, and in daytime hooked up under a pretty flowered curtain. My brother's bed was a cot which would be put out on the porch in school hours. We were to cook on a kerosene stove, which would also have to go outside when school was in session. Our vegetables were stored in the cellar of a neighbor, a quarter of a mile away. Drinking water was carried from the neighbors, and a common dipper was used in an open pail.

A dozen children came, walking or riding horseback, distances as far as five miles. Books, furnished by the district, were scarce and inadequate. One child was a beginner, and I had no training for teaching reading! How much they learned, I cannot say. But they were good children, and recesses, at least, were lots of fun.

Communications with home were nil, although the distance was only 35 miles. We would walk three miles to a neighbor's, who received mail from Jordan via Miles City. From Miles, the mail went by rail to Ingomar, and then out to the home ranch by any resident from that area, to be delivered as convenient. So arrangements for going home for Christmas or at the end of school in late January were made fast ahead of time and were irreversible. We managed very well during November and December. But January, 1916, was really something! There was only one day that month when the thermometer rose above zero. Night after night the temperature dropped way below zero, twice reaching 60 degrees below. The cold north wind lifted our horse-blanket rug into little heaps. The vegetables in the neighbor's cellar froze solid. The kerosene stove froze, too, and could no longer be used. We cooked in a 5-quart lard pail, inserted into the hole in the top of the heating stove. As soon as one meal was removed, frozen vegetables for the next meal would be set to cook in cold water.

The beds were improved by inserting newspaper under the mattresses. But lignite coal, slacked, and cottonwood kindling, do not a fire make. We were so afraid of the fire going out, that night after night one of us would stay up and tend it till 2 a.m., and then the other till morning. Our ability to teach or study the next day was no doubt greatly hampered, but there seemed no alternative.
And there were snowstorms. Sometimes no child at all came. I think at least three days in January this happened. But state law did not require the teacher to make up lost time if she were present. When my dad came for us, we packed up and went home, to a warm house and gingerbread dessert!

That was my first experience with teaching in Montana. There were other events in the following six years that are equally memorable: the trapper's dugout, where the windows drifted over with snow until we could not read; the claim shack built in the vicinity of a famous rattlesnake den, and where in October we killed nearly 200 snakes; one long ride home, when the roads were blocked, and I took a short cut, resulting in my horse falling through the crusted snow, and I digging her out with my hands as tools; the arguments with parents about whether or not I was required to grub sagebrush for fuel; in one school district, the monthly tour to get three signatures to my warrant, so I could cash my check; trying to talk children out of eating wild garlic, so I would not be asphyxiated by the fumes; crossing swollen creeks on a log, and then coaxing my horse across the stream with a long rope.

I could wish I had kept a diary. But in those days it was all part of the day's work, not history in the making. By the end of seven years, Garfield County had been carved out of old Dawson County. Jordan was the new county seat. My salary had increased from $55.00 per month to $135.00. I could afford a beautiful woolen dress and kid shoes! And my mind was set on other things. I left Garfield County, went to college, spent years in Illinois, Washington, Alaska. After retirement, I married a former Garfield County rancher, and am ending a long and happy life back in Montana.
March 8, 1983

Dear Mrs. Edsall—

A mutual friend of ours, Jeannette Carstensen, has told me about you and the memoir of your Montana teaching days that accompanied your Christmas cards. I think Jeannette was going to write to you to introduce me, but in case she didn't: I'm a writer, originally from the White Sulphur Springs and Ringling area, and probably best known in Montana for a memoir of my family and their ranching days, This House of Sky.

The reason that I'm writing to you, though, is that I intend to begin work on a novel about Montana homesteaders—roughly the period 1889 to the winter of 1919. And, one of the characters I intend will be a teacher in a one-room school; a man teacher, but nonetheless a counterpart to you when you were starting out on the Big Dry. I'll be through Bozeman sometime this summer and very much would like to talk to you about details of school teaching back then. But in the meantime, I wonder if you could help me with a few specific details of a school day in those years. I emphasize that I'm interested only in details; I'm writing fiction, actual names of people don't matter to me:

--In your school session at Big Dry, were you ever visited—that is, supervised or inspected—by the county superintendent or some other official? Or were you strictly on your own, nobody ever looked over your shoulder?

--When the kids rode horseback to school, what became of their horses during the day? There wasn't a barn, was there? Was there a hitching rail? A pasture?

--Do you remember the subjects you taught at Big Dry? Jeannette tells me you had to teach reading to a beginner, but what else—arithmetic, geography, civics? And did you ever read books to the whole school, as teachers sometimes did when I was in grade school in White Sulphur; things such as Little Women or Treasure Island? If you did, do you remember which books those would have been?

I'm sorry to trouble you with questions of this sort. But I do want to be accurate in anything I write, and I've found that the only way to do so is to ask somebody who knows. very best regards

[Signature]
Dear Mr. Doug,

I was interested in your article in Montana History—especially in the continuing questioning. Of course you've seen that Daughters of History Association book “Furder” More very personal accounts of homesteading are in “By the Year Gone By” put together by the Callendered Home Demonstration Club as a Centennial Project in 1964. All accounts were written by women, most of whom had lived to live on a homestead in the early twentieth century. Most of these are very matter-of-fact accounts of unrecognized hardship and modest success. I was especially interested because I was there (Callendered) teaching my first school in 1925 and knew some of the people who wrote these stories. One of my pupils, Just Springer, loaned me the book. And what did you do with your farm? There was a barn.
I course, and my little first grader, Elizabeth, drove her horse 2 1/2 to 3 miles over the hilly prairie—how did her parents know whether she arrived safely?—no telephone. What a good old horse to come to school. Of course he would go home. My little girl always asked permission: "May I haul the sled and harness my horse?" Dad was always glad to imagine my little girl being retirement age.

Sincerely,

Melba F. Nichols

Simpson and Cottonwood are north of Havre.

17 July '35

Dear Melba Nichols—

Your thoughtful letter reached me from the Montana Historical Society. I was there doing research last month, and you might be interested to know that a historian from Utah St. was also working on homestead topics and we both were drawing on the expertise of Richard Roeder, former MSU history prof. Among us, we may get some of the homestead era told.

best wishes
Young girl, I love you. I know that you love me, too. I hope it will be convenient for you to come to see us for a family get-together. I am going to Montana as much as I can. I am taking time to enjoy it. I hope you enjoyed the flowers. I send this with my regards.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Issaquah, Wn.
May 10, 85
P. H. 892-2415-6

Van Doig
Seattle, Wn.

Dear Sir:

I am now enjoying your third book. As we were children in the same area in Montana, I am taking the liberty of writing you.

My father brought me as a family of 6 to Valier in 1910—the year of the bad forest fires in the mountains.

We rode the Yalloping Goose from Conrad to Valier at the end of our trip from Milton, Wis.

As I am older than you I may have some memories of Valier & Lake Francis that you haven't experienced.
also have an old newspaper that's very interesting. If you wish I would enjoy sharing them with you.

Sincerely,

Cecilia J. Waltman

CECILIA WALTMAN
885 2 AVE. NW.
ISSAQUAH, WASH.
98027

P.S. I live at the Issaquah Gardens - 885-2nd Ave N.W. my unit is marked Mgr.

Dear Cecilia Waltman--

June '85

I appreciate your letter, and I very much do want to talk to you about your family's arrival into the Valier country. I'm about to leave for Montana, so I'll be in touch with you mid-July or soon after, to arrange a time when I can come see you in Issaquah, okay?

in the meantime, best regards
Dear Jack Jennings, PO Box 335
Helena MT 59074

I'm at work on a book about Montana during the homestead era, and I wonder if you'd be game to help me out by providing a few of your memories. My own memory doesn't go back far enough; it was my grandparents who homesteaded south of Helena, and the Depression had wiped out the place by the time I was born. As I've been casting around to find people who have first-hand homestead experience, a friend who grew up in your home area of Montana -- Ken Weydart, whose father once managed the sheep-shearing company in Ingomar -- loaned me a copy of the history written for the Ingomar-Sumatra-Vanada reuion in 1976. I hope you don't mind my getting in touch with you; the only way I can be accurate about what I write is to ask people who know.

You may have heard of my previous Montana book, This House of Sky, which is a memoir of my father and my grandmother and myself when we worked on ranches in the White Sulphur Springs country, and later ran sheep on the Blackfeet Reservation out from Browning. The book I intend now will be fiction -- which means that names don't matter in any stories you might be willing to share with me -- but I want it to be truthful to homestead life. I'd particularly like to hear from you if you have any details on such topics as these:

-- Living arrangements in a homestead cabin: where everybody slept, what you ate, how you passed the evenings, what games you played with brothers and sisters or neighbor kids.

-- Chores: how old was a homestead child when, say, he or she got the responsibility of gathering the eggs? Filling the woodbox? Milking the cow? Did you help with the farming, and if so, at what age did you start?

-- School: I myself boarded out during most of my school years, but always with some other family -- not at a boarding facility as I read that Ingomar had. I'd like to hear any memories of what it was like to live there. Also, anything that particularly sticks in your mind about school days: a memorable teacher or fellow student, for instance.

-- Finally, I'd appreciate any information on how the homestead life ended for your family. For mine and a lot of others, it simply was done in by weather, lack of money, or the rigors of the work. Those things too are part of the story of where we came from.

Thank you.

Ivan Doig

Thanks for your time,
Dear Mr. Jennings--

Thanks very much for your response to my letter seeking some details of homestead life. I've spent the summer researching and writing a book about Montana during the Depression years, and just now am digging out from under the accumulated mail.

I appreciate hearing of your mother's diary, and sometime would like to see it. I think, though, you shouldn't take the risk of lending or mailing it, and it would be best if I get in touch with you sometime when I'm in your area. I should be underway on this homesteader book fairly soon in '31, so I'll watch my chance to get to Melstone whenever I get to Montana next year. Meanwhile, my appreciation for hearing from you. I need all the help I can get to do justice to the story of the homesteaders.

best wishes
April 11, 1985

Mr. Ivan Doig  
17021 10th Avenue N.W.  
Seattle, Washington 98177  

Dear Mr. Doig:

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to talk with me on Wednesday morning about Mrs. Fern Gregg.

As a reminder, she will be staying with her daughter, Mrs. Lois Peterson, residing at 1218 8th Avenue South, Edmonds, WA 98020 for approximately two weeks; Mrs. Peterson's phone number is 775-2197.

I am sure she would be a wealth of information with respect to the early homesteading days.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Dear Bill—

Just a line to let you know I did manage to talk with Fern Gregg, last Friday afternoon, and to thank you for your major part in bringing it about. I'm sure some of her lore will show up in my book.

gratefully, and with best wishes
17 June '83

Dear Mrs. Backen--

Many thanks for responding to my letter. I'm sorry to hear about your husband; as I had to rely on a 1976 list of names, I had no way of knowing. I appreciate the names you provided me; later this summer, I'll get in touch with those people.

all best wishes
Dear Mr. Frank Ding,

My husband died 38 years ago. He told me of many things he did but it would all be second hand. But you could write to Mr. Richardson of Brunette Mt. He was a little post office & store. I was born in that country.

Alice Carpenter of Little Mt. was born in the Missionic Beals & her father homesteaded there, also Mr. Sayton of Jordan. Mr. Stanton of Brunette. These are a few names I can supply you. I was born in the northern part of Montana. My father homesteaded at Chester Mt. but the hail ruined his homesteading. So do not much in the knowledge of homesteading. Hope the names supplied will help.

I remain,

Mrs. George D. Baker.
Dear George Backen,

I'm at work on a book about Montana during the homestead era, and I wonder if you'd be game to help me out by providing a few of your memories. My own memory doesn't go back far enough; it was my grandparents who homesteaded south of Helena, and the Depression had wiped out the place by the time I was born. As I've been casting around to find people who have first-hand homestead experience, a friend who grew up in your home area of Montana -- Ken Weydert, whose father once managed the sheep-shearing company in Ingomar -- loaned me a copy of the history written for the Ingomar-Sumatra-Vanada reunion in 1976. I hope you don't mind my getting in touch with you; the only way I can be accurate about what I write is to ask people who know.

You may have heard of my previous Montana book, *This House of Sky*, which is a memoir of my father and my grandmother and myself when we worked on ranches in the White Sulphur Springs country, and later ran sheep on the Blackfeet Reservation out from Browning. The book I intend now will be fiction -- which means that names don't matter in any stories you might be willing to share with me -- but I want it to be truthful to homestead life. I'd particularly like to hear from you if you have any details on such topics as these:

--- Living arrangements in a homestead cabin: where everybody slept, what you ate, how you passed the evenings, what games you played with brothers and sisters or neighbors.

--- Chores: how old was a homestead child when, say, he or she got the responsibility of gathering the eggs? Filling the woodbox? Milking the cow? Did you help with the farming, and if so, at what age did you start?

--- School: I myself boarded out during most of my school years, but always with some other family -- not at a boarding facility as I read that Ingomar had. I'd like to hear any memories of what it was like to live there. Also, anything that particularly sticks in your mind about school days: a memorable teacher or fellow student, for instance.

--- Finally, I'd appreciate any information on how the homestead life ended for your family. For mine and a lot of others, it simply was done in by weather, lack of money, or the rigors of the work. Those things too are part of the story of where we came from.

Thanks for your time,

[Signature]

IVAN DOIG
May 30, 1983

Dear Mr. Doig,

Larry received your letter of inquiry and wanted to let you know that he is not old enough to be of help to you in your quest for information on homesteading in Montana.

Larry was bprn in 1933 and lived in Mission Valley and Forsyth, Mt. until 1950. He could tell you about the hardships of rural life in an isolated area. Larry started with chores at five years of age and by the age of eight he was working fulltime in the fields all summer. By the age of ten he was driving tractor and stacker, handling full bales of hay, etc. Between the age of six and eight he and his sister herded a band of sheep. He boarded out with an aunt during his high school years.

Larry's memories of life on the type of farm his parents had are not all good or bad. Certainly there were fun times, hunting, swimming, and farm gatherings, but basically he remembers that life as full of hardships, poverty and terribly hard work. He feels that children of that era were robbed of their childhood.

Larry's mother, an aunt, and an uncle would be able to give you much more information. You should have their names from the Tri-City reunion book. /Ruth Straughn, Box 1024, Red Lodge, Mt. 59068: Gladys Castle, 1914 Ave.C, Billings, Mt. 59102: Earl White, Forsyth, Mt. /

Sincerely,

Janice Hale
3015 McBride St.
Billings, 59102
June 17, '83

Many thanks to you, Janice, for typing up the reply to my letter, and to you, Larry, for providing the information. I'm about to head for Montana—the Choteau area—for some weeks, and when I get back I'll get in touch with the names you provided me.

all best wishes

p.s. I've heard from about 15 people, as a result of the batch of letters I sent out. Good response, and some excellent homestead lore.
While Andrew L. Hofmeister was a student at Eastern Montana Normal School, he won his first prize for an art work.

Now, Hofmeister, a highly-respected painter of the Northwest who will be honored at Eastern's Fine Arts Festival April 19-24, will present six of his paintings to Eastern Montana College.

Since retiring as professor or art at Washington State University in Pullman, he has painted what he considers some of his best work—works that still reflect the youthful influences of eastern Montana’s sandstone, fossils, and vast distances.

"Today, I am realizing where I am coming from and I am feeling that I know what I have to say and how I can say it," he says. "There seems to be no strain nor great effort required to achieve my goals in painting.

Through his life, he says, he has felt a "separateness" illustrated by "my relationship with most people, where I have chosen to live, my attitude toward groups and not being part of organizations, my avoidance of crowds and my willingness to . . . separate myself from the group to be able to observe from my single vantage point. Recognition for my work in exhibitions was gratifying and encouragement for pursuing this personal and solitary route."

This separateness may have grown from his rearing. In 1914, a year after he was born in Kulm, North Dakota, his parents homesteaded in Rosebud County, Montana, near a sandstone rimrock which divided sandy soil from gumbo.

"The sandstone rimrocks were fascinating. I climbed over them and scratched my initials along with others in hundreds of places and I climbed to the highest promontory on the ridge, The Monument, from where I could see for miles and miles—to the Big Horns to the southwest and to the coal-filled hills of Colstrip far to the southeast; to Castle Rock just this side of Forsyth fifty miles away, and to distant buttes to the north, and northwest to Ingomar. I could see Cedar Ridge, called 'The Timbers,' south of the little town which was Vanandra . . .

I learned the names of the creeks and could survey the drainage system of each—Froze-to-Death, Starved-to-

Death, Muggins creek, East Fork, the Geyser (which weren't geysers at all but alkali springs, but we liked the name). To the northeast, far north of Vananda, lay Acorn Flats, an isolated farming region, and between the flats and Vananda, I saw the broken horizon of another rim and its scrubby juniper; thousands and thousands of acres of wide open space, where bands of sheep picked off salt sage and buffalo grass. I could see the white sheep camp wagons on distant carefully-selected hills occupied regularly summer after summer. Numberless untamed horses roamed in small bunches along with cattle and antelope; and coyotes wandered. The only fences enclosed the Sand Ridge area of the homesteads—our neighbors—perhaps fifteen families."

Fossilized rocks—in tans and grays—thrust from the gumbo, he recalls. The land carried the arrowheads and other traces of Indians that he collected.

School was at Ingomar, where he was graduated from high school in 1931. He worked as a railroad section hand, as a wool tier, and as a table waiter during building of Fort Peck dam to earn money to attend Eastern. The Normal School housed in downtown buildings brought him his first formal art instruction from Hermine Roberts and Keith Manion. He was encouraged, too, by a junior high art instructor, Helena Maddox, under whose supervision he student taught. "She told me that 'art will never make you rich, but it will always keep you happy.' I've never forgotten that."

Miss Roberts encouraged him to enter into a student competition a horse he'd carved from two bars of ivory soap. When he visited the exhibition, his horse was "mounted on a piece of black velvet. It had been awarded first prize."

Graduated from Eastern in 1935, he taught a year at a rural school west of Forsyth so he could enter the University of Montana at Missoula, from which he was graduated in 1938. He taught in high schools at Malta (where he married Jane Hadedank in 1940), at Havre (where daughter Andree was born in 1942), Miles City (where son Jon was born in 1943 and Andree started painting in water colors), Dillon (where he was encouraged by George Nightingale, art instructor, painter, and friend), and Great Falls.

In 1944 he won a prize at his first juried exhibition, the Northwest Watercolor Annual at the Seattle Art Museum. During the next 24 years that his works appeared in that show, he received 17 awards. In 1944, too, he began studying with Philip Guston at the University of Iowa, working toward a Master of Fine Arts. In 1946, he accepted a fellowship in art at Washington State and, when he completed the degree in 1947, joined the art faculty, where he remained until he retired in 1978.

He has been honored by the University of Montana, accepted as a member of the American Watercolor Society, sold in Europe, built a cabin-retreat near Wallowa Lake, and bought a retirement home on Flathead Lake. Since 1975 he has had several one-person shows, including one circulated by the State Capitol Museum of Olympia. His works have been purchased for the permanent collections of the Fleming Museum, Burlington, Vermont; The Seattle Art Museum, and the Tacoma Art Museum. He donated 10 paintings to the Yellowstone Art Center during a show there in 1975. He still paints mostly in a windowless studio in Pullman. He retains his childhood images of the land he has inherited and to which he has often returned.

"Now all those I know are gone," he says, "practically all have died, but most of them moved away and died. There is no little more evidence that the homesteaders were there and there is evidence that the Indians were there. . . . The passing of man and his return to the earth 'to grow from the grass he loved' is profoundly felt when I return to that area from which I came. I believe that this passing or changing, is felt more in the empty, vast openness of Montana than it is in an urban area where the busyness of the living conceals and distracts from this quiet, unceasing taking away that is so apparent here—punctuated by the absence of people. There is sadness to this quietness which invites—yes, insists on—one's meditating, and this emptiness, this loneliness, becomes fulfilling. There is exquisite beauty here. Even the sounds of the birds—the larks, the prairie buntings, the killdeer, the sage hens, mourning doves and curlews—fit this quiet beauty. There is a mystery, but also an implied sermon that persists in being heard and felt. It is this implicit theme that I cannot ignore which has become my almost constant theme in my work."
Bear Encounters

Several area residents recently had the unusual experience of encountering a black bear near Colstrip. The last time anyone can remember seeing a bear in this part of Rosebud County was in 1937. Patty Kluever relates the experience in the following story:

The Bear Facts

by Patty Kluever

His dogs were barking a barrage when Henry Sprague arrived home from work, the evening of June 1, 1983. They didn’t come to meet him, but continued clinging to bushes of rosebushes and cottonwood, across Greenleaf Road, next to Rosebud Road.

After watching and listening to his pets for a time, Bob drove down to learn what their excitement was. He thought they probably had a raccoon at bay.

Walking around the rosebushes, under the big trees, Bob could see nothing, but noticed his dogs stopped barking every now and then beneath a big cottonwood tree to the road. Standing next to the tree, he peered high in the branches to see two yellow eyes returning his gaze.

There was a brief moment of eye contact before Bob’s shoes took him to a more distant point of view. Incredible, he stopped to look again before jumping into his car to alert his nearest neighbors.

The Wells brothers, quiet, conservative men, were working at their corral when their neighbor arrived. His message was brief. “You won’t believe me, but there is a bear in that big tree between the two ridges.”

Bob was right! His neighbors didn’t believe him, so they got in their pickup to look for themselves.

Bob was right, again! There was a bear in the tree, with bright yellow eyes, and nice historian, there hadn’t been a bear sighted in the region since 1937, and he was seen on Tongue River.

When the law enforcement arrive, they were accompanied by two brand inspectors. Wondering if they might be going to clip the bear for a brand, a spectator asked, “What are you going to do with him?”

“The Fish and Game boys told us to leave him alone,” was the response of the deputy. The entire crown thought that was an excellent idea. If the bear would leave them alone, they would fade quietly back to their homesteads, but most folks slept lightly that night.

Came the morning of June 2nd, when Francis Wetherald arrived on the job. He handled the County water truck for the road crew working on Cow Creek. Lining the tank up with the stationary water pump, placed between the two bridges, Frannie began unwinding the hose. A vague uneasiness swept over him. He glanced behind him, to see the bear watching from just across the road.

Hand grips weren’t necessary as Frannie made his way to the top of the water tank. It took a little longer for the bear to claw his way to his favorite fork in the big cottonwood.

With the bear high in the tree, Frannie crawled back to the ground, to continue his appointed chore. Then, he drove to Cow Creek, to relate his strange experience. No one believed him, either, so some of the crew went down to check out this “yarn.” They returned true believers!

The gallant Fish and Game Boys arrived on the scene during the morning of June 2nd. Armed with a tranquilizer gun loaded with darts, they aimed at the bear behind. A few minutes later, the bear fell, in a deep sleep, at their feet. It wasn’t quite at their feet, because they approached him cautiously from some distance away. He had probably been a little short on shut-eye since arriving in the neighborhood, anyway, but the Fish and Game men sure didn’t want to disturb his slumber.

With much grunting and heavy breathing on the part of both men and beast, the black bear, weighing about 200 lbs., was loaded into a conveyance which would include surroundings. It
Dear Mr. Long

My niece in Billings has sent a letter to me that you had addressed to her father, my brother Raymond, since he is confined to a nursing home and is unable to write, because of a stroke. I should be happy, as a substitute, to discuss the subject of homesteading with you since I share that interest deeply. Your book, This House of Sky, as well as Winter Brothers and Sea Runners are part of my library. I appreciate you as a writer.

I am enclosing a recent article that appeared in a publication of Eastern Montana College. That will explain my background and further emphasize my interest. My wife, Jane, and I just returned from Montana where we visited almost in your part of the state as well as ours.

For me, talking person-to-person would be better than writing. I be-
lieve that you and I have much to share and it is my hope that we can get together to talk. If you are interested in pursuing the idea, let me know, and we'll make arrangements. I would not suggest this if I felt that I had little to offer.

I shall be glad to give any information to assist you. I will be sharing with a friend. I'm sure we have mutual acquaintances. I remember Kenneth Weyde very well. He is a few years younger than I; however, I tried wool in his father's shearing plant in Ogden for a short while.

Hoping to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Andrew H. Hepworth

N.E. 1070 B. St.
Pullman, WA. 99163

Tel. 372-1460
Dear Andrew Hofmeister---

I'm still unpacking from a Montana research trip, but I want to tell you how much I appreciated your letter, and your offer to talk. I think you're right, we'd do well to meet sometime. I'm at work on another Montana novel (not about homesteaders) which will occupy me until the end of the year; chances are I'll be through Pullman after that, and we can try to get together. I hope you had a good trip through Montana; ours as usual overflowed with land and weather.

best regards
Dear Ivan,

Greetings to you and your charming wife.

In recent conversation with Frances Inman, she made me aware of your inquiries of the role of the farm wife in the homesteading days. Review your letter to her under date of May 27, 1983 and her response to you under date of June 2, 1983.

Pursuing the theme of motherly oversight while accomplishing field work, it has been noted that Frances left son John in the truck playing with toys and she would stop and check on him every round.

In the enclosed news clipping, "... Lillian (Campbell) remembered plowing 20 acres with a team of oxen 'and holding my little girl on my lap the entire time'...".

While the George Campbell family is unknown to me, the local phone book lists their address as 507 9th Ave., No., Havre, Mt. (59501) in the event that you wish to contact them for further recollections.

#################################

Unrelated to the Inman's and the Campbell's, it is interesting to note the changing social mores over time -- today such "mothering" might well be considered child neglect, abuse, or endangerment.

Too, the recession of '73 and the present state of depression has given rise to an increase in couples "shacking-up" or living together as a method of coping or adapting to reduced economic circumstances.

Personally, find a parallel in the homestead days, the depression of 1922, and the Great Depression of the 30's -- all periods of "bonding" of couples through necessity rather than "romantic love". These were periods of so-called "mail-order brides" through such vehicles as "lonely-hearts" or "pen pal" clubs; or, other "marriages of convenience" or "pooling-of-interests" of neighbor marrying neighbor to consolidate interests and efforts in common. Many well-established families had such origins, but an unwritten socio-psychological stigma remains attached to such relationships. An interesting phenomenon which cannot be adequately researched; but, nevertheless, a fact of life.

Raise the point because during times when the struggle for survival becomes paramount, adversity may well become the cause of "bonding".

Enjoyed your "This House of Sky" although we were opposites: I was fatherless, cattle-based background initially with dry-land grain farming following until the war years.

Yours,

Charlie
14 Oct. '83

Charlie—

Great thanks for passing along the clipping and the Campbell's address. And I appreciated your comments about the ways people find to bond together. I wish there were about six of me, so I could try write on it all.

I'm finishing up the Depression novel—much work between now and Dec. 30, but barring catastrophe it will be finished—and while I'm not dead sure yet, it's looking as if the grasshopper-poisoning saga will have to wait into another book. Painful decision, since I've already written quite a lot of the 'hopper material, but I think I simply lack room in this book for it. As my wife keeps telling me, nothing is ever wasted; if the 'hoppers don't munch their way onto my pages this time, they will some other time.

I hope all is well with you, and again, my appreciation.

14 Oct. '83

Dear Frances—

Just a quick note, prompted by Charlie Brill recently passing along a clipping about homesteading days. I have been at work on the Depression novel I'm writing, but at this point the specific grasshopper-poisoning incidents I've talked with you and Charlie and others about likely isn't going to be in this book; I can't find a way to work it into the under-the-Rockies setting and storyline. But if information you've provided doesn't show up in this book, it likely will in the next one, or even the one after that. So, I just wanted to tell you how things are going, and to express the hope that you're still writing down your history. It's valuable stuff.

All best wishes
State deaths

Geraldine - Hicks, Harold, 79, died Tuesday at a Fort Benton nursing home after a long illness. Services will be 2 p.m. Saturday at Geraldine Community United Methodist Church. The Benton Funeral Home is handling arrangements. He was born in Kimball, Ind., and the family moved to Montana in 1909. They homesteaded on the Squaw Butte ranch. He attended schools in Fort Benton and graduated from Geraldine High School. He delivered mail on the Squaw Butte route for a number of years and farmed in the Geraldine area until his retirement. He married Mrs. Mary (Yost) Hicks in 1925. She survives, along with three sons, John of Geraldine, Donald and Bob, all of Geraldine; two daughters, Joyce Blackmore of Fort Benton and Bernice Stuzin of Great Falls; and Mrs. Norma Moommen of Great Falls; two sisters, Mrs. Harm (Lillian) Floyd of Fort Benton and Mrs. Ruth Sullivan of Geraldine, 15 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son, Robert. 

Faulkner - O'Day, William, 74, died Friday evening at his home in Great Falls. Services will be 11 a.m. Monday at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Interment will follow. Mr. O'Day was born in Ireland and came to the United States as a young man. He served in World War II and worked as a laborer for many years. He was a member of the Church of the Nazarene in Great Falls. He is survived by his wife, Mary, and his children, William, Mary, and Anna. 

Today

Fires

Fires are being reported in the Hillcrest neighborhood.

Weather

Great Falls - Mostly sunny and warm today with Friday cold and afternoon of evening and thunderstorms. High today 90, low tonight 60, high Friday 90. Chances of precipitation 50 percent today and 30 percent tonight and Friday.

State death notices

Margaret Harris

Margaret Ruth Harris, 80, 214th Ave. N., died Wednesday in Northside Hospital. Services will be 11 a.m. Saturday in the Northside Chapel. Interment will follow. Mrs. Harris was born in 1921 in Great Falls. She was married in 1939 to her husband, Robert. They raised their five children in Great Falls. She is survived by her husband, Robert, their five children, and seven grandchildren. Services will be under the direction of the Albertson Funeral Home.

Billings - Christiansen, Robert Henry, 60, died Friday in Billings. Services will be 11 a.m. Tuesday at the Billings Memorial Church. Interment will follow. Mr. Christiansen was born in Billings in 1929. He is survived by his wife, Betty, and their children, John, Jane, and David.

Burlington - Fortenbaker, Robert J., 68, a farmer from Great Falls, died early Friday morning. Services will be at 1 p.m. Saturday at the St. John's Catholic Church in Great Falls. Interment will follow. Mr. Fortenbaker was born in Great Falls in 1931. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and their children, John, Jane, and David.

Deaths/funerals

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William O'Day

William J. O'Day, 74, of Power died Wednesday in a Great Falls hospital. He was born in 1925 in Great Falls. He attended the University of Montana and later served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He married Madge Foley in 1948 in Hamilton. They had five children. He was a member of the American Legion and served as a volunteer at the St. Vincent's Hospital in Great Falls. He is survived by his wife, Madge, and their children, John, Jane, and David.

Randall McClung

Randall L. McClung, 38, 218th Ave. S., died early Friday morning. Services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at the St. John's Catholic Church in Great Falls. Interment will follow. Mr. McClung was born in Great Falls in 1931. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy, and their children, John, Jane, and David.
Commissioners cut county planning staff from three to one

By RICHARD ECKE
Tribune Staff Writer

Cascade County’s planning staff will be cut back from three persons to one and move to the county surveyor’s office, Commission Chairman Jack Whitaker said Wednesday.

Whitaker said the action by the commissioners comes largely from a declining tax base here. Commissioners can levy a maximum of about $49,000 for planning annually, and $28,000 of that goes to the City County Planning Board, Whitaker said.

The county still owes a $14,250 payment to the city-county board for the fiscal year that ended June 30, Whitaker said.

“We’re just getting further behind every year,” Whitaker said.

In a related development, city-county planning director John Mooney will appear before county commissioners at 10 a.m. today with his own budget. And County Planning Board Chairman Tom Loring of Eden Route said a representative of his board will appear to ask whether Mooney’s budget requires the entire amount.

Loring said the county board wants to make sure that the rural residents who are contributing $28,000 a year to the city-county staff are not subsidizing planning work being done inside the city. The city-county board has authority within 4.5 miles of the city.

Under the announced cutbacks, two county planning staff members will be laid off, including secretary Helen Richards, Whitaker said. But he said Richards will be offered another job.

One of two planners, director John Montgomery or Roger Sanders, will also be laid off, he said. The County Planning Board, which will continue to function, meets at 8 p.m. Monday to discuss who will be retained, Montgomery said.

Commissioners ordered the county cutbacks Friday at a preliminary budget session.

Whitaker called the layoffs “unfortunate,” but said moving the planner and planning records to the surveyor’s office makes sense.

“That’ll only enhance the operation,” he said.

Five surveyors and one engineer are already in the surveyor’s office, located on Third Street Northwest across from the fairgrounds, he said.

As an addition to the surveyor’s office being built by a county carpenter is already 80 percent complete, he said.

Whitaker said the planning office at the CasCo Building, 1001 2nd Ave. N., is “pretty nice” and can probably be rented easily.

The planning board was low on cash, but the cutback from three persons to one was a surprise, Montgomery said.

He said the biggest job facing the planning staff this year is the county’s rural addressing system, which will give rural Cascade County residents specific addresses.

The county’s weed and mosquito sprayers recently began a key part of the program by mounting new address plaques on posts and mailboxes in the county on their way to other chores, Montgomery said.

The planning office also assists in preparing grant applications and reviews proposed new subdivisions in the county, he said.

Few large subdivisions have been proposed in the county in recent years, he reported.

But Montgomery said he’s not sure if a one-man staff could do the job “if there is any new sport of growth.”

The cutback will also end an agreement with the County in which Sanders provided planning work to that county for $7,500 a year.

Ironically, Montgomery said a dispute between the Montana Power Co. and state of Montana over a proposed coal-fired generating plant in Cascade County further hurt the planning staff.

In May, two state agencies refused to accept the power company’s application for the Salem Project east of Great Falls, delaying an accompanying local planning review as well. The agencies said the power company’s application was incomplete.

Montgomery said the county planning staff still has $32,000 left from a state Coal Board grant to help review the project, but the process is now on hold. Sanders had been expected to spend his time on the Teton County work and the Salem review this year.

“I think it definitely would have saved one contractor with no spots. As it looks now, the rural address system probably will be completed by the time the Salem review comes up again, he said.

Then the single county planner will have to work on the Salem Project, Montgomery said.

Whitaker said the cutbacks are no reflection on the abilities of the planning staff, which he termed “excellent.”

City, workers settle

A labor union “crafts council” representing some 100 city employees agreed to a two-year pact Tuesday that raises wages .39 cents an hour.

City Manager Al Johnson said the increase, amounts to about 3.75 percent a year, or about 7.5 percent over two years.

Johnson said the city “simply could not afford” to offer any more, since city revenues have not risen quickly enough to keep pace.

“We’re basically in a hole until the 1975 Legislature,” he said.

Jerry Pottraz, president of the local crafts council, said the city offer was approved despite some opposition. He declined to release an exact vote.

In voting for the pact, many members recognized that “times are hard” and inflation is down, Pottraz said.

City workers said the pact was a fair offer and that wages have been below the increase.

Local workers have yet to be reasured and a plumbers’ contract is set to expire next month.

Locals get their shots at the movie limelight

By LINDA CARACABURU
Tribune Staff Writer

Several Great Falls people were immortalized on film Wednesday as they performed small roles for the million-dollar movie “Stone Boy” being filmed near Cascade.

Wednesday was one of two days the group was scheduled to be before the cameras.

The movie, which will be released next winter by 20th Century Fox, is being filmed primarily on the Hillman ranch east of Cascade. It is about a 12-year-old boy who kills his brother in a hunting accident and the painful effect on his family.

The Great Falls people involved in Wednesday’s shooting played area ranchers who were paying respects to the dead boy’s family. Later, they will be filmed in a funeral sequence.

Local people included in the filming were former Cascade County Treasurer Buck O’Connell, his wife Betty O’Connell and Vista Vista, Buck’s younger sister; Roger Cusker, 14-year-old Mark Melander and 13-year-old Keith Harrision. Susan Watson of Helena also had a role in the scenes.

Buck O’Connell, Harrison and Watson had speaking parts. The others were in what are called “bit” roles.

The O’Connells are among several of the local people in the movie who have acting experience. Buck O’Connell said he and his wife had parts in at least three previous productions. And he said they had read radio scripts in the days before television.

The backdrop we have is quite camera. All morning was spent working on one particularly dramatic scene. It was shot in the ranch house, and 12-year-old Arnold, played by Jason Presson, tells his family the brother is dead.

The scene was shot time and again, with changes being made in camera angles and close-ups of the different characters.

During one shooting of the scene, as the camera was focusing on Robert Duvall, who plays Arnold’s father, the action was abruptly stopped when a Great Falls TV-station cameraman began filming through the picture window directly behind Duvall and in the movie camera’s line.

As the scene was being set up again after the incident, Duvall joked, “The next time that guy comes by with that camera, we’ll all moon him!”

Other local people who have bits in the film are Gary Dyer, who plays a waiter; Cody Harvey and Buck Bear as saloons in a cafe; and three youngsters, yet to be named, who will be in a carnival scene.

Carole Cassie, who worked with the Electric City Theater in casting the local parts, said several other people will be “extras” — roles of unnamed characters with no spoken lines. Those people include Cassie, Steve and Penny Roberts, Renee Hayes and Doug Hagen, all of Great Falls; Jack Sanderson, Diane Torren...
Dear Cornelia Mardis,

I'm at work on a book about Montana during the homestead era, and I wonder if you'd be game to help me out by providing a few of your memories. My own memory doesn't go back far enough; it was my grandparents who homesteaded south of Helena, and the Depression had wiped out the place by the time I was born. As I've been casting around to find people who have first-hand homestead experience, a friend who grew up in your home area of Montana -- Ken Weydert, whose father once managed the sheep-shearing company in Ingomar -- loaned me a copy of the history written for the Ingomar-Sumatra-Vanada reunion in 1976. I hope you don't mind my getting in touch with you; the only way I can be accurate about what I write is to ask people who know.

You may have heard of my previous Montana book, This House of Sky, which is a memoir of my father and my grandmother and myself when we worked on ranches in the White Sulphur Springs country, and later ran sheep on the Blackfeet Reservation out of Browning. The book I intend now will be fiction -- which means that names don't matter in any stories you might be willing to share with me -- but I want it to be truthful to homestead life. I'd particularly like to hear from you if you have any details on such topics as these:

-- Living arrangements in a homestead cabin: where everybody slept, what you ate, how you passed the evenings, what games you played with brothers and sisters or neighbor kids.

-- Chores: how old was a homestead child when, say, he or she got the responsibility of gathering the eggs? Filling the woodbox? Milking the cow? Did you help with the farming, and if so, at what age did you start?

-- School: I myself boarded out during most of my school years, but always with some other family -- not at a boarding facility as I read that Ingomar had. I'd like to hear any memories of what it was like to live there. Also, anything that particularly sticks in your mind about school days: a memorable teacher or fellow student, for instance.

-- Finally, I'd appreciate any information on how the homestead life ended for your family. For mine and a lot of others, it simply was done in by weather, lack of money, or the rigors of the work. Those things too are part of the story of where we came from.

Thanks for your time,

[Signature]

IVAN DOIG

[Signature]

Cornelia Mardis

Am not interested
Please send this letter to-
Bonnie Lien
1205 Custer Ave.
Billings, Montana
59102
She is his daughter
Dear Bonnie Iden—

I sent the enclosed letter to your father, c/o an address listed in the book compiled for the Sumatra-Vananda-Ingomar reunion in 1976, and received it back with an unsigned note saying to send the letter to you. So I'm not clear whether your father is living with you, or is deceased; but as you'll see, I'm simply seeking details of homestead life for a book I'm writing. Your father's name was one of those or so I chose from the reunion book; if you can suggest anyone else I might contact, I'd be glad for the suggestion.

thank you.
Mr. Dog,

I have your letter asking for history of homestead days. I came here in 1912. My father bought land and didn't farm until 1915.

I have been advised not to write about these last years. I went to school at Agnesville with Kenneth Myers. His half brother, Lyle, married a shapedman, E. M. Trigeman. She was about 65 and still lives in Pullman. I may do some feature writing. Es and I were parapets to the 125th annual meeting of the Western Heritage Festival in Pullman June 11-13. Quite an honor for us folks.

I think one really must have lived those homestead days to do justice to writing about them.

I wish you well. You said nothing of giving credits for any help. Believe you me, there wasn't much my family did not go through.

Sincerely,

Anna Darby.
Dear Mrs. Dorothy--

Thanks for your forthright reply to my letter inquiring about details of homestead life. You're perfectly right in not providing personal material if you're going to write about it yourself. I'm glad to hear of your intention; so many people don't manage to get their stories written and they're then lost to future generations. I would urge you to get details down on paper, or talk into a tape recorder, if only to pass along to someone in your family or at a local history society; better yet, of course, if you can get the stories into print.

You wondered about the matter of giving credit in a project such as mine. I hope you understood that I'm only in search of factual details—so that if I write that a kid rode to school and picketed his horse to a sagebrush, somebody can't immediately say "No, no, they don't have any sagebrush in that country!" The customary method of "giving credit" is to mention anyone who helped with a book in the acknowledgments, and I'll gladly include you now for referring me to your former teacher. If the acknowledgments' crowd on this book is similar to those of my last couple of books, though, it'll run to a hundred or more persons.

You're right, it is a real honor for you and Mr. Dorothy to be invited to the Billings festival. I wish you all good luck there, and in your own writing.

best regards

Ivan Doig
Barron, Wis.
May 23-93

Mr. J. Doug:

Read your letter. Can't see why you picked me - we didn't live near Helena and my parents did not homestead.

We were to the reunion in Montana to us was dry yrs and half storms and hard times. Go架t to say...

S. Cooper