

Wheatland
Platte County 1812-1981
Trenholm et al

1. Platte County Historical Background

[PlatteCH 1981,5] The Bicentennial Commission chose a medal, which could well be applied to Platte County. It was designed in the form of a wheel, with mountains suggesting the Rocky Mountain Region; a covered wagon, the period of migration and settlement; a cowboy, the cattle period; and an engine, the railroad. In the center is a flame, emblematic of the courageous spirit of the pioneer.

The medal is lacking in one important respect. There is nothing to signify that the white man did not find virgin soil that there were prior inhabitants and the land was theirs by preemption. As sure as the mountains, so also were the Indians. Yet there is not even a feather in the design to indicate the first families of Wyoming.

The earliest known tribes in the state frequented our area. The true pioneers were the Shoshones — “Mountain Comanches,” as Cheyennes called them. They stayed in the high country, while their fellow tribesmen, the Comanches, branched out on the Plains. They were as one when they occupied this region, and they were strengthened by their numbers.

It is doubtful that the French-Canadian Verendryes in 1743, set foot on Wyoming soil. We do know that they came as near as Pierre, S.D. because of a metal plate found in recent years. But before they could reach the Rockies, they were frightened away by evidence of an abandoned camp of the Gens des Serpent who had destroyed 17 villages of their enemies. The guides, whose people had been numbered among the victims, refused to go farther. The Gens des Serpent were the Snake or Shoshone Indians.

They had the run of the whole area, except for the Staitans, the forerunners of the Cheyennes who later absorbed them. Little is known of them besides the fact that they were a small but vicious tribe, always on the move causing them to be called Kite Indians. They could very well have been called the Sun Dance Indians, for they probably introduced the sacred ceremonial dance which was later perfected by the Arapahoes.

In the early 1700's, the Comanches were replaced by the Kiowas in the southeastern part of Wyoming. The Arapahoes, coming from the Canadian Plains about 1795, crossed the Missouri and settled, at least temporarily, in the Black Hills, which according to early maps, reached as far west as the Laramie Range. The Cheyennes, next to arrive, invited a few Sioux stragglers from Minnesota to join them. They were so well pleased with the land that they spread the word and more and more followed.

The Crows, coming into this region about 1800, once claimed the land north of the Platte, but they were pushed northwestward and out of the Powder River country by the Sioux, who laid claim to their hunting grounds. Later, the Shoshones chased them northward from the Big Horn Valley into Montana, where they are found today. Though the Arapahoes were the first arrivals among the three so-called Platte River tribes, (the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe), the Sioux were the most powerful and best known historically because of their aggressive spirit and overwhelming numbers.

The Platte River Indians united in pushing the Shoshones westward and in keeping them on the other side of the mountains. The Arapahoes believed that "Man Above", or the Great Spirit, placed the Rockies there as a barrier between themselves and their enemies, the Shoshones of Wyoming and the Utes of Colorado. The Denver area later became their heartland.

The Indians did not consider this land of ours “Wild”. According to the Sioux Chief, Standing Bear, it was the white man who made the “wild west” wild. He once said: “We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, the winding streams with tangled growth as wild. Only to the white man was nature a wilderness, and only to him was the land infested with wild animals and savage people. To us it was tame. Earth was bountiful, and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery.

“Not until the hairy man from the east came, and with his brutal frenzy, heaped injustices upon us and the families we loved, was it wild to us. When the very animals of the forest began fleeing from his approach; then it was that for us, the ‘wild west’ began.”

Although the land was claimed and occupied by the tribes mentioned above, the whites, with utter disregard for tribal rights, began to trespass in ever increasing numbers. The very first to arrive in this locality was Robert Stuart, who, coming eastward from Astoria, Oregon in 1812, discovered the natural roadway along the Platte. This was later to become the Oregon Trail.

Stuart and his small party of Astorians built the first building in Wyoming, their “Chateau of Indolence,” from which they were frightened by the Arapahoes during the dead of winter. They came through here, probably on the ice, for the Platte was then frozen over. They camped across from the mouth of Bear Creek, before entering Platte River Canyon, where they saw mountain sheep and deer.

Their next stop was at the mouth of Bitter Cottonwood (Wendover). Stuart was pleased to make note of an ash tree, for the narrow-leaved cottonwood provided “bitter” feed for his packhorse. Cottonwood Creek is shown as “Bitter Cottonwood” on early maps. The Astorians had managed to obtain a scrawny old nag from the Shoshones after the Crows had stolen their horses. Their next stop after Wendover was at the

mouth of the Laramie River, where Fort William, (later Fort Laramie), was to be built in 1834.

[PlatteCH 1981,6] We know that there were independent, unlisted trappers who worked this area, while the better known ravished the richer beaver streams in the western part of the state. There was one among the independents about whom we know little, and yet more place-names perpetuate his memory than that of any other man in the history of the state. It was Jacques La Ramie, whose name has become symbolic in southeastern Wyoming. Though his history is vague, his name has added romance to a fort, two rivers, a county, a city and various places of business and recreation.

A fantastic story was perpetrated a few years ago to the effect that his grave had been discovered on the Laramie River. Letters came from all over the country. Was it actually La Ramie, whose grave was marked by an over-zealous citizen? It was more likely “the unknown soldier”, for settlers along the river thought that an enlisted man from Fort Laramie was buried in the unmarked grave.

The story of the trapper is so indefinite that we are not even sure where, when, how, or by whom he was killed. The Arapahoes admittedly found a body under a beaver dam. Knowing the Arapahoes as we do, we are sure that if they did, they did not bury it. They were not friendly enough to the whites to administer last rites to an unwelcome intruder.

During the Fur Trade Period (1822-1840) there was a saying that “all trails led to the Siskadee” (Prairie Hen)—that is, the Green River. Some of those trails came through Southeastern Wyoming, though no rendezvous was ever held east of the Rockies. There were sixteen in all, eight—or half—of them on Green River, three on Wind, one on Sweetwater, the others in Utah and Idaho, all in the peaceful Shoshone country.

Little penetration was made in the area controlled by the Platte River Indians, except for the main trail which followed the Platte. This was the artery or lifeline between Green River and St. Louis, and it was traveled by the big name traders and trappers who at one time or another came through.

In Ashley's expeditions there were such prominent men as Provo, Bridger, Fitzpatrick, Sublette, and Jedediah Smith. Hiram Scott, one of Ashley's employees, is of special interest to us. He was taken ill when he and his companions were going down the Platte on a raft. They were so sure that he was past recovery that they deserted him and left him to die. The next year they returned and found his bones at Scottsbluff, 60 miles from where they had left him. They were convinced that he had crawled the entire distance.

There was a shift from the rendezvous system to the established trading post in the mid '30's, with the founding of Fort William at the mouth of the Laramie River on the Platte. Bent's Fort, its rival on the Arkansas, was built about the same time, and the two forts are credited with causing a division in both the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, the northern bands preferring Fort William, and the southern preferring Bent's Fort.

After the American Fur Company had built Fort William, it had organized and expanded the fur trade - mostly buffalo robes - in this sector. Then it had sent Gilpin and Sybille to the Black Hills to induce the Sioux to come to the fort to trade. Bull Bear had responded, 100 lodges strong. The country was soon overrun by the Sioux, and they began showing signs of hostility toward the whites.

In the mid '30's, we find the first missionaries, coming westward with the fur company employees. There were Jason and Daniel Lee, who established missions in Oregon; and Marcus Whitman with Samuel Parker, who preached the first sermon in Wyoming. Then a year later, Whitman and H. H. Spalding brought their brides over the trail. Narcissa

Whitman and Eliza Spalding were the first white women to enter Wyoming. In 1840, Pierre de Smet came through on his way to Green River to conduct the first mass.

Two years later John Charles Fremont, the “Pathfinder,” arrived at Fort Laramie. Instead of being called the Pathfinder, he should, more accurately, have been called the Pathmarker, for he charted the course for the emigrants who followed. The path—along the natural roadway on the Platte—had already been found by the Indians and traveled by trappers and traders. But Fremont performed a unique service by indicating the campsites, the distances between them and the vegetation to be found along the way.

At Fort Laramie, he was warned by Jim Bridger as well as by James Bordeaux who was then in charge, that the Sioux were on the warpath and that they had threatened to kill any whites they encountered on the trail west of the fort. The Indians were so impressed by Fremont’s impassioned speech, they allowed him to pass.

Fremont, who came to Warm Springs (near Guernsey), July 21, 1842, says, “We entered the sandy bed of a creek, a kind of defile, shaded by precipitous rocks, down which we wound our way for several hundred yards to a place where a large stream gushes with considerable noise and force out of the limestone rock. It is called ‘the Warm Springs’ (later the Emigrants’ Washtub) and furnishes to the hitherto dry bed of the creek a considerable rivulet.” The following day, he visited the Sunrise area, where he pronounced the scenery, with the sun shining on the red rocks, the most beautiful he had ever seen. After a march of 27 miles, he reached the Fer-u Cheval (Horseshoe Creek), where he found good grass “with a great quantity of prele”, which furnished ample forage for his horses.

In 1845, General Stephen W. Kearny, with five companies of Dragoons, made an impressive show of might at Fort Laramie for the benefit of the

Platte River Indians, especially the Arapahoes who had committed several murders before his arrival. He warned them, [PlatteCH 1981,7] fired his howitzer, and then sent rockets into the night. The sight and sound terrified the Indians, who ran screaming into the hills.

Francis Parkman, who came the following year, commented that one of the Arapahoes killed two white men, to the consternation of the whole tribe. A large deputation came to Fort Laramie to present horses in atonement, but Bordeaux refused them. When the Indians offered to deliver up the murderer, he still refused, which to the Indians' way of thinking was a sign of weakness. As weeks passed and no Dragoons appeared, terror changed to insolence, and the situation became "perilous in the extreme." Parkman tells how matters might have been handled." Had a military officer, with suitable power, been stationed at Fort Laramie; had he accepted the offer of the Arapahoes to deliver up the murderer, and ordered him to be led out and shot, in the presence of his tribe, they would have been awed into tranquility and much danger averted."

While Parkman titled his study of the Sioux "The Oregon Trail", he did not follow it farther than Southeastern Wyoming. After exploring the region dominated by the Sioux, he turned southward toward the South Platte and on down to the Arkansas before returning to the East. His route could scarcely be called "the Oregon Trail", though his book is a classic. He was well treated by the Indians in whose camps he visited, but he sensed trouble ahead.

He said that the "dangerous spirit on the part of the Sioux" had mounted. They were openly threatening the emigrants, and they had actually fired upon one or two parties of them. He stated, "A military force and military law are urgently called for in the perilous region; and unless troops are speedily stationed at Fort Laramie, or elsewhere in the neighborhood, both emigrants and other travelers will be exposed to most imminent risks."

Parkman and his party ascended a high hill, his horses “treading upon pebbles of flint, agate, and rough jasper.” Gaining the top, they looked down on the wide bottoms of Laramie Creek, as he called it, which far below “wound like a writhing snake from side to side of the narrow interval, amid a growth of scattered cottonwood and ash trees.”

The following day, he saw wild roses, “with their sweet perfume fraught with recollections of home;” a rattlesnake, “as large as a man’s arm and more than four feet long;” a gray hare, “twice as large as those in New England;” a curlew that “flew screaming overhead;” prairie dogs that went “yelping from the mouths of their burrows;” an antelope, jumping from the wild-sage bushes; and a white wolf, “as large as a calf,” giving a sharp yelp, then leaping into the stream and swimming across. The most amazing sight was yet to come, for “emerging from among the trees, a herd of some two hundred elk came out upon the meadow,

their antlers clattering as they walked forward in a dense throng. Seeing the white men, they broke into a run, rushing across the opening and disappearing among the trees and scattered groves.”

In his wanderings from his base at Fort Laramie, Parkman went westward as far as the Medicine Bow Mountains, the favorite campground of the Northern Arapahoes, then on to La Bonte’s camp where he had hoped to have a chance to witness a large-scale war between the Sioux and the Shoshones. He was disappointed when the anticipated encounter failed to materialize. The Indians dispersed, after a free-for-all brought on by the white man’s liquor. Parkman does not name the white trader responsible, but it could have been either Sybille or John Richard (“Reshaw”) as both were liquor peddlers. It was said that Reshaw’s path could be followed by dead Sioux, killed in drunken brawls.

When hunting became the urgent business of the moment, a Sioux chief caught a squirming cricket and asked it to point toward the direction

they should go. The way in which it headed was the one selected for the Indians to follow on their buffalo hunt.

Parkman had an opportunity to know Bull Bear, who controlled the hunting grounds west of Fort Laramie, and Old Smoke, who claimed those at the Forks of the Platte. It behooved the Arapahoes and Cheyennes to get along with these despots, who were at odds even with each other.

Besides leaving excellent word pictures of the Indians and their way of life. Parkman tells of rubbing elbows with some of the well-known characters, whose names have been perpetuated in our landmarks. Chief among them were Sybille, Reshaw and Bordeaux, who figured prominently in our local history.

Parkman did not share the high opinion Fremont seemed to have of Bordeaux, who was in charge at Fort Laramie. Instead of his receiving him with “great hospitality and an efficient kindness.” as he did Fremont, he was suspicious, blustery, and lacking in valor. No amount of haranguing on the part of the Indians could spur him to accept the challenge of a French-Canadian, who dared him to come out and fight.

A year after Parkman’s visit, Brigham Young came through with his party on their way to the Promised Land—Salt Lake. Bridger is said to have made a rash statement that he would give a thousand dollars to anyone who could raise a bushel of wheat, (or was it an ear of corn?) in the Salt Lake area. He reckoned that it was too high and the season too short. He should have known the country better than that, for he came to the West, as he used to say, “when Laramie Peak war nothin’ but a hole in the ground.”

The Mormons may not have made the desert bloom as soon as they anticipated, but they farmed diligently and successfully. Meanwhile, they got the mail contract [PlatteCH 1981,8] between Fort Laramie and

Salt Lake City and established a series of mail stations which also served as emigrant trading posts. The first west of the fort was at Horseshoe Creek. We are not quite sure where the building stood, but judging from a blueprint in the Church Historian's office in Salt Lake City, they planned to have pickets around 160 acres of land, in which a sizeable settlement was proposed. Before their plans could materialize, Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston in 1857, was sent against the Saints in the so-called Mormon War. Retreating westward, they burned their stations behind them.

The blueprint further suggests that Horseshoe Creek might have changed its course at the highway bridge and followed a ditch the Saints used in irrigating their gardens. The original course, forming a perfect horseshoe, is now a ditch used to irrigate ranches on lower Horseshoe Creek.

In 1849, without the knowledge or consent of the Indians, Fort Laramie became a military post. As the 49ers streamed through, after the discovery of gold in California, hundreds paused long enough to inscribe their names on Register Cliff, near Guernsey.

Several years ago the State Landmark Commission appointed a chairman in each county to select a committee to study and evaluate local landmarks. I, chairman for Platte County, represented the north end of the county; Russell Staats, the south; Joe Whitmore, the center and west; and Chet Frederick, the east — that is, the Guernsey area. After we had presented our arguments for the historic sites in our particular areas, we voted to see where the first marker in Platte County should be placed. We decided unanimously that it should be at Guernsey, and it was subsequently placed in the park. Horseshoe Crossing (at Sibley Peak) was to have been the second, but no sign could be placed because the highway had not been completed at that point. By the time it had, funds were no longer available.

When the Highway Department resumed its work, which had stopped at Sibley Peak, I discovered a red flag on top of the peak one morning as I was going to Glendo. It meant only one thing — that the department planned to eliminate the landmark. I phoned L. C. Bishop, then State Engineer, and urged him to use his influence to prevent it. He did, in a measure, but he could not prevent its being shaved off on one side, thus spoiling the image of a Sibley — a flat-topped tent designed by an officer named Sibley during the Civil War. A Sibley stove stood in the center, and the soldiers slept like spokes in a wheel, with their feet toward the fire.

Sibley Peak, which resembled the tent in shape, was not only a well known landmark along the trail, but it was also a lookout post for the old Overland Stage and Telegraph Station at Horseshoe Creek. It was there in 1868, that the white men discovered a coup stick, indicating the presence of hostiles.

This marked the beginning of the three-day Battle of Horseshoe Creek, in which Crazy Horse and his 60 Minneconjou warriors succeeded in destroying the old station and causing the white men at Mouseau's road ranch at Twin Springs to fire their own place to keep it from falling into the hands of the Indians. Their valuables were cached beneath, and the burning debris covered them.

The migrations to California were still at their peak when the Great Treaty Council was held, in 1851. It was in September, and the forage had been depleted by the emigrants. Another site, at the mouth of Horse Creek (Nebraska), was selected before the council began. The Horse Creek Council, as it was called to distinguish it from later councils held at Fort Laramie, is of special interest to us because it was recognized by treaty that the land, now including Platte County, belonged to the Platte River Indians — the Sioux in the northeastern corner, on the other side of the river, and the Arapahoes and Cheyennes, the rest of the county.

The Arapahoe and Cheyenne reservation was roughly “between the rivers” —the Platte and the Arkansas— which was too good to be true for the Indians. In the 1850’s there were only about 6,500 Sioux, 1,600 Arapahoes, and 1,400 Cheyennes. This is an estimate, not a head count. All early statistics were rough guesses because the chiefs, who accepted annuities for their people, did not permit a head count.

After the Mormon Station was destroyed at Horseshoe, the Overland Stage Company, previously mentioned, was established at Horseshoe Crossing, on the present Lancaster place. Russell, Majors, and Waddell improved communications, but there was a need for speedier service to the West Coast. In 1860, the Pony Express was launched. It found that it could connect St. Joseph, Missouri with the West Coast in ten and a half days by traveling in relays, day and night. It lasted 18 months, long enough for the Overland Telegraph Line to be completed. Mr. Bishop marked a stub of an Overland Telegraph post on our ranch near Glendo, and from time to time we would pick up fragments of the old line—the “singing wires,” as the Indians called them.

The Fort Wise (Fort Lyon, Colorado) Treaty of 1861 was designed first to abrogate the Treaty of 1851 and force the relinquishment of the area “between the rivers.” Second, it tried to force the Arapahoes and Cheyennes to occupy a reservation at Sand Creek, Colorado. There wasn’t a buffalo within a hundred miles of the place, and the Indians had neither the knowledge or equipment to farm.

Prior to this the Arapahoes and Cheyennes had been recognized as having two geographical divisions: the Northern, under the direction of the Platte River Agency, and the Southern, under the jurisdiction of the Upper Arkansas Agency. Now the plan was to herd the [PlatteCH 1981,9] two tribal divisions, Northern and Southern, onto a barren reservation, where they were supposed to subsist.

The Cheyennes never recognized the treaty, though six of their number and four Arapahoes finally signed, with little idea what was meant. When the Northern Arapahoes, in a starving condition, came for annuities, they were given nothing until they signed. The Fort Wise Treaty is also referred to as the “Boone Treaty” as it was engineered by one of Daniel Boone’s grandsons.

The hostility of the Sioux necessitated the abandonment, in 1862, of the Overland Trail and Telegraph line through here. It then swooped down into Colorado to follow an Old Cherokee Trail through Virginia Dale and up to the Laramie Plains. The trail, then known as the Overland Stage Route, avoided the Sioux, but it did not reckon with the Northern Arapahoes through whose territory it passed.

Following the Sand Creek Massacre, which was a massacre even if perpetrated by the whites, the Platte River Indians had reason to go on the warpath. The survivors fled north, where they smoked the war pipe with the Sioux and the Northern Arapahoes, The Indians say that the term “massacre” is used by the white man to refer to a battle fought successfully by the Indians. If the tables are turned and the white man is the aggressor, it is a “battle”.

During the summer of 1865. the year following the Sand Creek Massacre, when the Indians were effectively driven out of Colorado, 75 people were killed by Indians in the radius of Rock Creek Station (Arlington, Wyo.). Medicine Bow was favored by the Northern Arapahoes, who trailed back and forth to Fort Laramie across the Wheatland Flats. There are still fragments of two of their trails—one in Halleck Canyon, turning left midway up, and the other is on Upper Cottonwood. The former is marked with piles of rock, like shepherd’s monuments, and the latter is still cleared and narrow, the width necessary for a travois.

Gold became the curse of the Indian. First there was the California Gold Rush, then the Montana, the Colorado, and lastly the Black Hills, which indirectly contributed toward the Indian wars of 1876. In Colorado, the Arapahoes found their own use for gold. They discovered that the shiny substance made excellent bullets. But the avarice of the white man spelled the destruction of the Indian and his way of life. There was no stopping the white man once he heard the cry, "Gold!"

While the Overland Stage Station at Horseshoe was being operated, its manager was the "notorious" Alt Slade, also known as Jack. The adjective was so appropriate it stuck. According to Mark Twain, he had killed more than 20 people besides carrying the ears of Jules Reni around in his pocket. Twain, on his visit to Horseshoe, stood in awe of him. So did Slade's wife, for whom he named Virginia Dale, Colorado. But when he was away, she encouraged the Overland employees to burn out E. W. Whitcomb, who also had a store on Horseshoe Creek. They succeeded in her design, but they were so carried away that they would also have burned the station had she not grabbed a gun and threatened to shoot the first to make a move. Slade was later hanged by vigilantes in Montana.

[PlatteCH 1981,10] When gold was discovered in Montana, the white man needed a shortcut to the goldfields. Bridger and Bozeman had a contest to see whose trail was the more practical. Bozeman won, though it was not taken into consideration that his trail went through the dangerous Powder River Country, the hunting grounds of the mighty Sioux. It branched from the old Oregon Trail at Horseshoe Creek.

Three forts were built on the trail to protect the travelers: Phil Kearny and Reno, both in Wyoming, and C. F. Smith, in Montana. Two years later, the Sioux forced the closing of the road and the abandonment of the forts, which they gleefully burned. Fort Fetterman, a supply depot for the forts on the Bozeman Trail, was spared to become an unofficial

sub-agency for the Arapahoes and later a supply center for the settlers in the vicinity.

The Arapahoes, who had proposed a reservation on Cache la Poudre (Colorado), on Upper Cottonwood Creek, at Fetterman, near Fort Caspar, and on the Sweetwater, were, in 1878, forced under military escort to go on the Shoshones' Wind River Reservation. As the agent said, Chief Washakie "had too great a heart to say no," but he understood that it was to be on a temporary basis. No settlement was made in his lifetime, but the courts settled the Shoshone suit against the government in their favor in 1938, and the Shoshones were finally paid for the land occupied by the Arapahoes for 60 years. Since that time the two tribes have had joint occupancy.

According to John Hunton, the last sutler at Fort Laramie and an early-day historian in Platte County, there were fewer than ten inhabitants in Platte County prior to 1867. These were along the old Oregon Trail, in the Platte River Valley, east of Guernsey, on Little Bitter Cottonwood, at Twin Springs, and on Horseshoe Creek. The government opened a road and erected a telegraph line between Fort Laramie and Fort D. A. Russell in 1867.

During that summer, James Bordeaux built a road ranch on Chugwater Creek at the place later known as Bordeaux. It was also at the junction of a road branching northward to Horseshoe and on to Fort Fetterman, an ideal location for trade and for military protection which was provided from Fort Laramie.

After the Cottonwood and Horseshoe Creek stations were burned, all ranches in the area were abandoned for about five years. This did not include Bordeaux, or Hunton's as it was later called, which eventually became a part of John Hunton's LD ranch holdings. Though the buildings were never molested, James Hunton, the youngest of the three Hunton brothers, was killed by Indians in 1876.

Two years before Wyoming became a territory, it had two unofficial counties—Carter (the west half) and Laramie (the east). When the territory was created in 1869, there were then five counties extending the full length from north to south. They were Uinta, Sweetwater, Carbon, Albany, and Laramie. Wyoming became a state in 1890. There is one other date of special interest to us—1911—when Goshen and Platte were carved from the northern part of what was then Laramie County.

Chugwater was an important stop on the Deadwood Trail (1876-87). Hi Kelly, who operated the Chugwater Station, later built a ranch house to the north a few miles. There in a family cemetery lie the remains of relatives of his Sioux wife.

The next important stops on the Fetterman Trail were Billy Bacon's (the Ralston place), Uva; Tobe Miller's (the Coleman place), Cottonwood; then the St. Dennis Road Ranch (the Christianson place), on upper Horseshoe Creek. Bob Walker, the first settler on Horseshoe, was burned out by Indians at his original site, the Dave Gordon ranch, so he moved to lower Horseshoe, where he built on a clearing so the Indians could not surprise him. His house, T-shaped, served as our bunkhouse, then as a granary after we bought his ranch in 1935. The old Bellewood School House was butted against it to form the T. The school house had been moved from the Bellewood Stage Stop, where a station was operated by Bridget McDermott at Horseshoe, prior to the arrival of the railroad. The great cattle industry of Wyoming, which reached its peak in the 1880's, got its start on Chugwater and Big Laramie native meadows. The Swan Land and Cattle Company empire centered at Chugwater. Sheep coming into Wyoming from Oregon and California were raised extensively in the western and northern part of the state before they reached industry proportions in our area. Cattle men who resisted sheep most bitterly gradually discovered that they were profitable. Some of the larger companies, such as the Swan, actually turned to sheep raising, causing Wyoming to be second only to Texas in wool production.

In an arid climate such as ours, where water is so important, the early settlements were along the creeks. Each stream is a story, which should be compiled while records and pictures are still available. Time takes its toll.

The Mormons are credited with some of the earliest irrigation attempts in Wyoming. But the dream of irrigating a vast area, such as the Wheatland Flats, became a reality only through the efforts of the Wyoming Development Company, which is a story in itself. It was the most ambitious irrigation project ever tried in the state. With it, Wheatland, the county seat of Platte County, came into being.

—by Virginia Cole Trenholm (1972)

2. Towns and Communities

Chugwater

[PlatteCH 1981,15] Much of the early history of Chugwater is tied to the Swan Land and Cattle Company and much has been written about the ranch. However, a village of Chugwater developed apart from the Swan Company and survived after the ranch company passed its peak.

Aside from the Swan Company headquarters, store, boarding house and buildings, Chugwater was also the home of an assortment of other buildings and residences. Two of the earliest were the Masonic Hall built in 1904 and the red school house built in 1908.

The Chugwater Trading Company, owned by L. E. Hunt, carried lumber and general merchandise. The Grant Hotel was established in 1912 and was soon joined by the Fox Hotel and Restaurant.

By 1910, homesteaders were arriving daily by train and Jack Porter met the trains and with his team and spring wagon took the newcomers to locate their homesteads. Some 500 homesteaders settled around Chugwater.

Drouth, hail and grasshoppers played havoc with the homesteaders' dreams and more than half of the settlers were soon gone. Enough remained, however, to insure the future of the town of Chugwater for many years.

For more information about Chugwater see the Russell Staats story, the A.L. Blow story, and the Swan Land and Cattle Company story.

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Swan Land and Cattle Company

[PlatteCH 1981,477] The City of Chugwater owes a big debt to the Swan Land and Cattle Company, which once covered two-thirds of a million acres across southern Wyoming and was headquartered in Chugwater. If it weren't for the success of the great ranch, whose cattle originally ranged from Ogallala, Neb., to Rawlins, Wyo., there might not be a Chugwater.

The 67-year story of the Swan Land and Cattle Co., Ltd. began when Alexander Hamilton Swan, an area homesteader, had an idea.

“It was Swan's brainstorm,” says Russell Staats, cashier for the Swan from 1927-1950, and Chugwater mayor for 46 years. “Swan sold his layout to a bunch of British and Scottish investors, and they started buying land in 1883.”

Swan, his brother Thomas, and a group of their associates created a cattle empire by gathering under their control some of the best land in the territory, then venturing abroad for more capital with which to buy even more land. Alexander Swan represented three original ranch companies in Carbon, Albany and Laramie counties when he traveled to Edinburgh, Scotland, to gain financial support. The investors, in turn, made Swan manager.

Among the ranches the Swan Co. bought first were the Clay Reymeyer. Hi Kelly. Colonel Whitcomb and Muleshoe ranches. The possession of the range was determined in those days by possession of the waterfronts. The Swan now held titles to lands controlling the Chugwater, Richeau, and Sybille creeks, and it gave them full control of the range.

“The main office was moved to Chugwater because it was the central location for the land the Swan Co. owned then,” says Staats, caretaker of the old remaining Swan office building.”Later there was a small office 9 miles north of Lookout (Wyo.) too.” The Swan headquarters and the stage line coming to Chugwater resulted in the town’s incorporation in 1919.

In its first years of operation, the Swan claimed to have about 100,000 cattle. It used the Two Bar as well as many other brands, but the Swan was commonly known as the Two Bar. The estimate of 100,000 cattle was reached by “book count” and the cattle were rounded up only once a year, so even Swan cowboys never really knew exactly how many cattle they had.

The disastrous winter of 1886-87 hit the Swan cattle especially hard because they ranged over such a huge area and no hay was fed. Alexander Swan wasn’t blamed for the terrible winter, but he was blamed for almost everything else that went wrong — shortages in the original number of Swan cattle and mismanagement of the ranch. Swan, whose contributions to the company included introducing high-grade,

purebred Hereford bulls and proper seasonal breeding, left the company after five years of management. Swan never left the cattle industry however, and all his business enterprises were related to it.

It was at about this time that a bunch of Swan Co. or Two Bar cowboys put on the impromptu rodeo in Cheyenne which is said to be the forerunner of the famous Cheyenne Frontier Days. The bucking horse on the Wyoming license plate is believed to be a replica of Old Steamboat, a Two Bar horse too wild for the cowboys to ride, which became a famed bucking bronc at rodeos at the turn of the century.

Working conditions, wages and opportunities were among the best to be found for Swan cowboys in those days. The company usually hired boys about 19 years of age at \$20 a month, and they received a \$5 or \$10 raise annually. Each rider was expected to furnish his own equipment and the company provided him with a string of nine horses.

When John Clay, a Chicago investor and later chairman of the board of the Swan Co., took over as manager in 1888, the company wasn't showing a profit, and he planned to economize. To prepare for rough winters Clay wrote, "As we raised hay and improved our pastures, we began weaning calves and feeding the cows and heifers, while away on the plains in Bates' Hole . . . our steers took their chances." Clay was dismissed as manager in 1896, though no one was sure why, as the Swan had been financially stable under his guidance.

After three other men (Al Bowie, William Dawson and M. R. Johnson) took brief stints at managing the Swan, Curtis Templin took over in 1916 and remained as manager until the Swan dispersed its holdings in 1951.

The coming of the dry farmer brought an end to the open range, and the Swan found it easier to run sheep instead of cattle. By 1910, the Swan operated with 6,000 head of breeding ewes and few cattle.

Templin, 31 years old when he became manager, was competent and energetic, and by 1917 the Swan was in as good shape as it ever had been or ever would be, and the next eight years were the most profitable for the Swan's shareholders and investors.

From 1917 until the Swan's liquidation in the early [PlatteCH 1981,478] 1950s, Magnus Larson served as the Swan's farm superintendent- The Templins and Larsons lived in houses built by Hi Kelly in 1876-77 on Chugwater Creek. The Templins residence or "white house" was very large and earlier served as a hotel for the Cheyenne-Deadwood stage route.

By 1925, the complete affairs of the Swan were in the hands of three American men, John Clay, James T. Craig and Curtis Templin. When liquidation began in the 1940s, Swan land included 400,000 deeded acres, and 260,000 leased acres. During the war years, Templin began selling Swan land, and by Dec. 20, 1951, the company was dissolved. Templin made his home at the Chugwater ranch until his death on Dec. 28, 1968.

— By Ellen Stafford

Storms I Remember

[PlatteCH 1981,478] The first storm I can remember was in the spring of 1886 or 1887 when we still lived on Chug Creek. After the storm my folks and us kids came up to the CMD (the Colin McDougall Ranch) and I can remember seeing lots of dead cattle along Richeau Creek.

The next bad snow storm was in 1894. It started the last day of March and did not clear up until the third of April. I think there must have been about five feet of snow. It was so fierce you could not see more than 10 to 15 feet because it was so thick. Many cattle were lost in this storm.

The Two Bar had a lot of cattle in the meadows along Chug Creek. They drifted into the creek and into fence corners, but their heaviest loss was in Goshen Hole.

They had built a new drift fence from Fox Creek to the Nebraska line to keep their cattle from going south out to Bear Creek. They had turned out a lot of cattle off the meadows at the Rock Ranch and the TH. Both of these ranches were on the Platte River.

All these cattle drifted south until they came to this fence and then went east along it to a big washout about 15 feet deep with straight banks. There were around 10,000 head of cattle in this bunch, so they just pushed the leaders off into the washout until they filled it and made a bridge for the rest to cross. They figured there were around 1200 or 1400 left in the washout.

We did not lose many in this storm as we had a good many in the sheds.

The next bad snow storm was in the spring of 1920. There were more cattle and sheep lost in this storm than any previous storm.

It started on April 15th and lasted three days and three nights. There was around five feet of snow with a 30 or 40 mile-an-hour wind blowing. It was the time of the year that most cattle were turned out of the meadows and they had to find shelter in draws and behind banks where they became drifted over and smothered.

I lost over 200 head of cows and all of their calves. That spring I should have branded over 200 head of calves and all I branded was 30 head.

Every rancher lost a good many cattle, some lost over half of their herd. McDonalds had 100 head of cows and calves in the meadow and lost all of them out in the open. Ryffs lost about half their cattle. The Two Bar was running sheep then and their loss was quite heavy. At the M Bar they had 40 acres covered with hides drying after the storm.

Another bad storm and hard winter was in 1899. This was just a hard storm and the others were real [PlatteCH 1981,479] blizzards. This storm started before Christmas and kept storming until Feb. 1st. There were six or seven trains off the track between Chugwater and Horse Creek. When I rode up to Chugwater on horseback for the mail there were two big engines with snow plows that had come from the North Western Line. They said they would be in Cheyenne for supper, but they only got to Iron Mountain when both engines went off the track.

-- By Duncan Paul Grant

Glendo

[PlatteCH 1981,19] The friendly little town of Glendo (284 estimated 1977 population), located in northern Platte County, is 33 miles north of Wheatland on Interstate 25 and the Burlington-Northern Railroad.

Glendo is relatively young, as towns go, but its roots are set in western soil, its past rich in folklore and legends of early emigrants, the Pony Express, Texas cattle drives, Indian skirmishes, outlaws, home-steaders, hunters, trappers, prospectors, wagon trains and many other elements of adventure which make American history interesting reading for today's generation.

Although the land in this vicinity was rapidly being settled and developed, the town of Glendo grew slowly and at times seemed as if it might fade away entirely. But about 1916 it began to experience a healthy permanent growth.

In early 1916, Fred McDermott bought part of Jim Gore's homestead, and with the help of a small boy, a tape measure and a yardstick, Fred laid out and marked the lots in the original Glendo townsite. He later hired an engineer, Albert Bartlett, to resurvey it with modern equipment.

Bartlett was amazed to find the original survey by McDermott to be nearly perfect.

The first lot sold was where Glendo's first bank was built. Ed Foy traded a cow for this lot. Later Fred sold a large number of lots at public auction. Many who purchased the lots immediately built and opened businesses on them. Fred also donated several lots, one for the Congregational Church (now Episcopal Church), and several for the first school and playground (White School House). When Mrs. McNamara had her land surveyed for lots a short time later, Fred named each street and drew a map of the town on wallboard. This map hung in the bank for a long time.

The main street through town ran parallel to the railroad at that time. When Fred decided to move it a block to the east, it caused a great uproar among the merchants who felt the change would cause a trade loss. One merchant was so disgruntled he threatened to stop the road building with a gun, but Fred continued grading the new street with a rifle across his knees. Jim Gore started a building for a poolhall in the middle of the old street. He was arrested and taken to jail in Wheatland. Fred bailed him out, and together they built the new street as it now runs through town (Yellowstone Highway).

On May 9, 1922, Glendo became an incorporated town; the petition for incorporation bore 183 names, the total population of the town at that time. The original townsite contained 240 acres. In 1956 the city limits were extended to include an additional 90 acres, making a total of 330 acres within the present town limits.

The first ledger entry at the Glendo Town Hall, dated August 1922, lists George Snyder as mayor. A roster [PlatteCH 1981,20] of subsequent elected and appointed mayors follows: A.T. Howard, W. H. Collins, Brice Williams, J. S. Woodrow, E. A. McClure, Lena McClure, A. T. Arrington, R. E. McClure, Harry L. Miller, J. E. Webb, Ernest Adams, J.

W. Vaudrey, Ray Cundall, James A. Gamble, W. G. McComb, Roy Amick, Donald Ray Cundall, George Langston, Glen Cundall, James Pulver, Louis Blankenship, Betty Amick, Les Parker, C. A. (Fat) Thomas and the present mayor, Forrest Johnson. Some served more than one term and some only a few months to fill out the terms of those who died in office or resigned. All served without pay.

Many town improvements have been made through the years, such as graveling the streets and installing the first municipal water system. WPA crews dug the trenches by hand and laid the mains and feeder lines. The town water supply was from two wells located just east of the baseball diamond. The water system was completed under the foremanship of Ernest Adams in 1934, and Glendo began to modernize, but still had to depend on cesspools and septic tanks for sewage disposal until 1957. when the Bureau of Reclamation installed a sewer system and disposal plant for the town. Prior to these improvements, Glendo either had private wells or carried water from their neighbors; all had “outdoor privies”. Electric power came to Glendo in 1928. Shortly after the Guernsey power plant was completed in 1927 the town was hooked up to Mountain States Power Co. lines. Natural gas lines were not brought to Glendo until 1959.

During the years of the “Great Depression” Glendo lost ground, but managed to survive. Although some merchants were forced to close their doors and everyone had to tighten his belt a few notches, we find no record of any Glendoite jumping out of a 12th story window to escape the pressure, possibly because the tallest building in town was only two stories high.

Over the years Glendo’s economy has been up and down, like a yo-yo. After the Glendo Dam was built in the fifties, the economy appeared to be attached to a bobber in the lake. When the fish were biting, business was good in town, and when fishing success was spotty, so was business. For many years the city, county, state and federal government has been

the largest single employer. At present there are no less than 65 families deriving all or a large part of their income from this source. Since the energy boom began in 1977, more and more Glendoites are commuting to work at the Wheatland Power plant and energy related jobs in the Douglas area.

The town water lines were all replaced in 1972, and since that time three new water tanks have been installed and hooked to an artesian well near Horseshoe Creek. Engineers estimate the water system would now supply a population of 500 or more.

Plans for a new sewage collection and disposal system have been on the burner for many years and the chances of taking care of this project in the very near future appear to be favorable at this time.

The town is presently engaged in an extensive street [PlatteCH 1981,21] and storm drainage project. An improvement district has been formed and the project which began in the fall of 1979 is scheduled for completion in the fall of 1980.

We in Glendo hear no loud fanfare nor roar of great commerce. We hear only the quiet heartbeat of the typical small town. Neighbor helping neighbor, the young being taught by the old and the old learning much from the young. Together, Glendo has buried its dead in common sorrow and welcomed each new life with a common joy. This small town togetherness has brought its people undaunted through the many devastating wars, blizzards and depression of the past century. Glendo has not been isolated from life, but many have found it a sanctuary from the seamy side. The unpleasant conflict caused by overcrowding and overcompeting has been avoided here.

Glendo looks at its past with a sense of considerable accomplishment and looks to its future with high hope and great expectations, yet with no

sense of urgency to outstrip the competition nor to make a big splash in its next hundred years of history.

—by Ed Stone

(Editor's note: though we acknowledge the interest and importance of the many different businesses which have involved a great number of people and have made Glendo the successful little town it is, space here does not allow a complete resume of each one. Many of them are included elsewhere in this book, and we are sorry if any are omitted.)

Guernsey

[PlatteCH 1981,23] Guernsey, known as the “Hub of the Oregon Trail”, was incorporated in 1902. The first mayor was J. W. McDeyitt. The town derived its name from C. A. Guernsey, a rancher and developer of the area. Points of interest in the area that figured prominently in the history of the west were the Oregon trail, The Mormon Trail, and Register Cliff.

The Guernsey Dam was built in the early twenties. The Civilian Conservation Corp. working in close cooperation with the technical staff of the national park service improved the park. The Guernsey State Park ranks high in beauty among parks, with its many beautiful native stone structures and buildings.

Additional information about Guernsey can be obtained from Wyoming Cowboy Days by C. A. Guernsey (Putman, 1936).—by Dorothy, Berry, and Harriet Rizor.

Hartville

[PlatteCH 1981,24] Hartville is located in extreme east central Platte County, 30 miles east of Wheatland and four miles north of Guernsey. It is in the southern portion of the region known as Hartville Uplift. The Hartville Uplift is a geological formation, a scenic, rolling upland of low hills forested with pine, juniper and cedar bushes, and is dissected by numerous canyons.

The elevation of Hartville is just over 4,300 feet. It is at the head of Eureka Canyon. The location of the town was probably determined by an excellent spring of good quality water which formerly issued forth at the head of the canyon. In frontier times the Indians of both mountain and plain knew of this spring and often camped adjacent to it while on their hunting expeditions. Because of its popularity with the Indians, many artifacts were, and still are, found in the area.

The area is one of great historical interest, since the Oregon Trail and the Cheyenne-Deadwood Stage road passed close to it and the Mormon Trail went through the canyon.

Hartville is Wyoming's oldest incorporated town still in existence. The town dates from 1884, two years prior to Wyoming becoming a U. S. territory, and six years before statehood. It was incorporated in 1900.

The town is named after Col. Virling K. Hart, an officer stationed at Ft. Laramie during the 1880's. He once owned a copper mine in the area. Prior to the founding of the town, this was an important hunting and camping area.

In 1881 H. T. Miller discovered copper deposits in the immediate vicinity of the town and in the surrounding canyons. The Wyoming Copper Co. was formed and for several years mined the small but high-grade copper deposits. A copper smelter was built at a location called Fairbanks, four miles southwest of the town site and on the Platte River. It operated for approximately three years.

The first residents were mostly Italian and Greek miners who thronged to the town from the Black Hills gold fields. From 1881 to approximately 1884, Hartville was a typical western mining town, having several saloons, many homes, stores and even an opera house. Hartville was a cultural center, with a Dante Alighieri Society; operas were sung, and Italian food enjoyed. During this time the town had a population of around [PlatteCH 1981,25] 400 people. At the turn of the century the population was close to 750.

By 1887 the copper deposits were mined out and one of the largest, purest iron deposits in the nation was discovered at Sunrise, one mile east of the townsite. This iron was first used by Indians for ceremonial and war paints. In 1899 the iron ore claims were purchased by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Corporation, and they developed the first open pit iron mine which grew into the largest of its kind in the world. The “Glory Hole”, or Chicago Mine, 650 feet deep, produced a million tons in 1942 but has declined since, though it has operated continuously until 1980. In 1941 some underground mining was started.

Hartville has its own boothill cemetery, and some long-time residents still recall the last gunfight on Main Street on Labor Day in 1912. The town is still famous for its frontier architecture and the false fronts on stores which were constructed between 1900 and 1907.

There are 200 acres within the corporate city limits of Hartville, and of these, approximately 40 acres are suitable for residential or business use. The balance of 160 acres consists of steep, rocky slopes or high hills, and therefore cannot be used for any purpose other than scenery or livestock grazing.

Information taken from “Hartville Comprehensive Plan” - Harriet Rizor and “Wyoming Place Names” -Mae Urbanek.

Iowa Flats

[PlatteCH 1981,25] Iowa Flats, known, too, as Iowa Center, is a farming community in the southeast corner of Platte County, made up of thousands of acres of grain producing fields worked with the most modern farming machinery available. At the turn of the century, it was horse pasture for the Hi Kelly ranch, headquartered on Chug Creek near the small village of Chugwater

Between these two very different eras, homesteads ranging in size from 160 to 320 acres, dotted the area. As a result of a government mandate, issued in 1908, ordering the army to cut the illegal fences surrounding thousands of acres of government land, many areas were opened up to homesteading, and Iowa Flats was one of them. Through the media, word was spread of the availability of free land, and many would-be landowners, especially in the midwest, and particularly in Iowa (hence the name, Iowa Flats), came with high hopes to settle on land just east of the small settlement of Chugwater.

Mr. Corbridge and Mr. Foote were the first recorded men settlers here, and Miss Mary Admire, the first woman settler. By the end of 1908, a substantial number had settled here, among them Robert A. Kletzing, who is credited with having recorded much of the history of the Flats at that time.

By 1910, Iowa Flats was home to 500 homesteaders within a five mile radius. Most of the settlers were of modest means and made do with the barest necessities - a small tar-paper shack, sparsely furnished with whatever was at hand, a milk cow, a few chickens, a garden spot, a minimum of farm equipment with a team to pull it, for planting and harvesting crops of corn, wheat, and oats. Water was hauled from Chugwater until wells could be drilled, and wood was plentiful in nearby canyons. Buffalo chips were plentiful, too, and made excellent fuel.

In the early days of settlement, the community felt the need for a place of worship, and in 1910, after Robert Kletzing had donated a plot of land for a church and cemetery, the Iowa Flats Methodist Church was built at a cost of \$1600. Elmer J. Cook was the builder, and Winfield Schupback finished the interior. Help was forthcoming from many other communities, too -Chugwater, Wheatland, Cheyenne, Laramie, Greeley, Denver, Boulder, and Methodist churches in Des Moines, and Burwick, Iowa. The state's congressmen were also generous in their support.

Lester Fagan was the first minister. The church became the center of community activity, not only religious, but educational and social in the form of a literary society, debates, Ladies Aid meetings, political rallies, box socials, etc. since the church was the only building of a size large enough to accommodate such activities.

The cemetery gave sanctuary to its first occupants in 1911, when Minnie Warren and her daughter, Opal, who perished in a blizzard, were buried there. Since that time, more than 200 have found permanent rest in this spot, called by one writer, "The Silent City of the Plains". The church is virtually silent now, too, except on each Memorial Day, when it is once more alive with music, speeches, recitations of the Gettysburg Address, and other activity appropriate to a Memorial Service. After the church service, there is always a parade to the cemetery where graves are decorated, usually with wildflowers gathered in the neighborhood.

Those settlers who remain in the Iowa Flats area, now worship in Chugwater, where a new Methodist Church was built in the 1960's. For several years prior to that time worship was held in the gymnasium of the local school.

In 1911, a post office was established in the Earl Arnold home in this vicinity a few miles east of the village of Chugwater. Mail was brought daily from Chugwater, and distributed to the residents. This arrangement continued until 1916 when rural delivery from Chugwater was

established. Some of the earliest mail carriers on the route were: E. M. Hedges, Cliff Stafford, Fred Corbridge.

—by Rowena Coleman

Wheatland

[PlatteCH 1981,31] Johnny Gordon looking at the desolate, dusty, sagebrush and cactus covered flatland, saw verdant productive acres, resulting from the application of water from the nearby snow-laden mountains. Judge Carey recognized the possibilities. He utilized his business, political and organizational skills to make Johnny Gordon's vision a reality.

In 1881, G. E. Bailey, civil engineer, mapped the "Lands of the Sybille Colony", but the colony did not get off the paper. Actual survey for the Wheatland Project was made in 1882 and in the spring of 1883 work started on the tunnel from Laramie to Bluegrass Creek, the Intake Canal and Canals 1 and 2 from Sybille Creek to the flats.

By the terms of the Wyoming Development Company Certificate of Incorporation, August-September 1883, the objects of the Company were to develop an irrigation system and also to "lay out a town and supply it with water, together with any railways, tramways, mills or factories that might be necessary." In 1885 a townsite to be called Wheatfield was staked out by the Company near Rock Lake, following the Colorado and Southern Railroad survey. When the railroad moved their survey eastward, another town site was suggested south of the present Wheatland. In 1887 the Company designated the present site and named it Wheatland. Business which had located in the area of the "Ditch Camp" (now Lewis Park) was encouraged to move to the designated site by free lots offered by the Company.

On the townsite, the Company erected a small one-room frame building to house carpenters (McCallum and Robinson) and serve as temporary Company quarters. A two-story building as a permanent headquarters for the Company rose at the corner of Gilchrist and 9th (present location of Sears Store). The Company building was moved across the alley to the west, when Dr. Huffman built his “Pioneer Pharmacy” in 1931. (The Company building is now occupied by Button’s Realty offices.) The first small frame house served as location for Company Superintendent Bill Rowley until 1916. Since then it has sheltered a real estate office, candy shop, tailor shop, cream station, town hall, paint shop, beauty shop. Ben Franklin store is now on the site of the little building.

Dugouts were built by Jeff Reed for himself and the family of his sister, Harry Dearing’s mother. Jeff was a foreman for canal construction, and later was hired by the Company to assist in the establishment of the town site. In 1895, Reed replaced the dugouts with small frame houses, one of which is now part of the Henry Yeadon residence at 603 14th Street.

Reports indicate that the Wheatland School in “1895 had 13 pupils enrolled and was taught by Dr. C. C. Clark’s wife”. The location of the first public school on which there is agreement, places it in a frame structure [PlatteCH 1981,32] on the alley, Gilchrist and 12th. An early school was a brick building on 10th and High Street, and a two-story brick building in 1903 occupied the block which now houses the school bus office and garage for Platte County School District No. 1.

The Company had ditches plowed down each street in the surveyed town site. Water was turned into these ditches from Canal 2, to irrigate gardens and lawn and to furnish water for livestock and people. For the latter purpose, the water was run through subsurface filter boxes, filled with gravel and charcoal. From filters, the water ran into cisterns, provided by the property owner on his land, then from storage in the cisterns into the homes and businesses by manual pumps. A town water

system of two drilled wells, storage tank (erected above the firehall) thence into the homes, seems to have been functioning early in 1900.

Construction of both business buildings and homes in Wheatland was boosted in 1894, when Charley Goodrich established a brickyard on about five acres of land in the vicinity of what is now 15th and Water Streets. His firm supplied 400,000 bricks in 1894 and 750,000 bricks in 1895 for building projects in the community.

The Wheatland World (newspaper), Oct. 19, 1894, Vol. 1, Issue 1 carries advertisements for the following businesses: McCallum & Grain Lumberyard; Renfro Barbershop; D. B. Rigdon, Physician and Surgeon; Belcher, Blacksmithing; Jesse, Blacksmithing; Good-rich, Brick Maker and Contractor; D. McCallum, Contractor and Builder; Niner & Son, Hardware, Groceries, Boots and Feed; Tisch & Sons Pharmacy; all on the front page. I. W. Gray, Wheatland Mercantile, was credited with “a big stock of general merchandise”.

I.O. Middaugh, Publisher and Proprietor, declares his faith in the future of the town, and further states.” We have found Wheatland people generous, intelligent, progressive and with-all charitable.” Publisher Middaugh declared his paper “unequivocally Republican” . . . but it will be more of a local paper than a political one, “and its guiding star on all occasions will be to further the best interests of Wheatland and the people of the community surrounding it.”

The new two-story brick hotel (the Globe Hotel recently razed to make a town parking lot) was under construction, and Miss Ada Spear of Ohio was teaching the first term of school in the new brick school house.

The Wheatland World, Laramie County, Feb. 26, 1897 carries advertisements for the following: D. B. Rigdon, Physician and Surgeon (teeth extracted without pain); John Jesse, Pioneer Blacksmith Shop; D. D. Wallace, Proprietor, Globe Hotel; Chas. W. Goodrich, Brick Maker

and Contractor; A.Y. Jones, Artesian Wells Drilled; Alex Jagdman, Watchmaker, Jeweler, Engraver; John Griffin, Proprietor, Metropolitan Hotel; C. A. Stevens, City Barber Shop; Carroll [PlatteCH 1981,33] Bros., Dealers in the Finest Brands of Imported and Domestic Liquors, Wines, Brandies and Ales, Milwaukee Beer on Draught, Cigars; I.O. Middaugh, Insurance Agent; James Daily, Plasterer and Contractor; C. Calvin Clark, M. D., Graduate Rush Medical College; E. W. Mann, Attorney (Cheyenne); McCallum & Grain. Building Materials; William Arnold, Gem 4- Restaurant and Bakery; E. P. Hill. Meat Market; Warren Mercantile Co. (Cheyenne), We sell everything . . . Pianos and organs . . .; Undertakers and Embalmers; Wheatland Mercantile Co., Greatest Line of Dry Goods; The Golden Rule, New Goods (Dry Goods); Belcher & Warren, Blacksmithing; GOOD LAND, CHEAP HOMES, EASY TERMS, Wyoming Development Company; “Get a bright light from your lamp by burning Head Light oil”, 25 cents per gallon at the drug store; our Barbed Wire Liniment is guaranteed to cure,” H. Tisch & Sons; “An endless variety of builder’s hardware” at J. H. Diefenderfer’s; For Sale: Good work teams, well broke. Address J. J. Underwood, Iron Mountain; Pure thoroughbred Barred Plymouth eggs, 75 cents per 13, apply to W. A. Vaugh, Chugwater.

In this publication, the following seem quotable: “Spring is coming and everyone should take something for the blood. Dr. Wilke’s Blood Purifier and Invigorator. put up by the local druggists is the best. Try a bottle.” In a THIS AND THAT column: “An electric corset has been recently invented for a novelty. It is constructed in such a manner that when a fellow slips his arm around his girl’s waist he presses a button, this loosens a spring in the corset, throws sawdust in his eyes and kicks him out of doors, where an India rubber bulldog stands ready to scare him into fits.”

A petition for the incorporation of the town of Wheatland was notarized Jan. 13, 1904, by S. G. Hopkins. The petition was signed by 124 residents and qualified electors, so sworn by I.O. Middaugh, S. Doty,

and Edw. T. David. A census taken on Jan. 14, 1904, signed by D. D. Wallace and notarized by Hopkins swears that the total resident population of the territory designated as Wheatland was 475+, including “Chinaman Charlie, Rev. DeLaBarre, A. Rosseau,—Cockerham, Miss Pogue, Harry Headberg” as well as most of the names familiar to early days in the Wheatland area.

[PlatteCH 1981,34] According to town records, the first Wheatland Council meeting was Jan. 16, 1906, and the first Wheatland election was held in May 1906. Thereafter, Wheatland growth was stable and steady, including churches, schools, policing, library, a water and, eventually, a sewage system, diversified businesses and industry suitable to the center of an agricultural community, such as a flour mill, an alfalfa mill, as well as a creamery. The Company continued to promote the development of agriculture, and the settlement of the lands surrounding the town. Transportation facilities, business, professional services, and social activities and schools offered in Wheatland drew people from a large trade area in all directions including parts of what is now Albany, Laramie, Converse and Goshen Counties.

Wheatland was designated the county seat of Platte County by a special election, April 25, 1911, and the Windsor Hotel on Gilchrist was used as the first Platte County Courthouse. With the District Court also convening in Wheatland, the town became the place to go for official and legal affairs. The Platte County Record (newspaper) of June 18, 1931, indicates that the first marriage license issued in Platte County, as a county, was to Louis Loughmiller and EffJe M. Hudson, in January of 1913.

Through the years, Wheatland has been directly and indirectly dependent on people working with the land and water resources to provide stability and prosperity. Industries which have located in Wheatland are a broom factory, supported by broom corn raised in the area, a sugar factory (later converted to marble processing), livestock auctions, samples of the inter-

relationship of the land, water resources to Wheatland economy. Any industrial development over the country and the trade area was also directly reflected in prosperity or depression in Wheatland.

The latest industrial project, the Laramie River Power Plant was made possible by taking prime agricultural lands out of food production, and utilizing water which in some part, at least, had been used for agricultural production. At this time, it seems likely that Wheatland's recovery from post-impact recession will be based on the availability of land, water and people.

Excellent treatment of Wheatland history may be found in issues of local newspapers; Carnes, WYOMING DEVELOPMENT COMPANY; Dearing's, WONDERFUL WYOMING; Ferguson, WHEATLAND'S PAST; INVENTORY OF THE ARCHIVES OF WYOMING COUNTIES (PLATTE) all available at the Platte County Public Library.

—by Ruby Preuit

PCH Churches

3. Churches

Assembly of God

[PlatteCH 1981,38] The Wheatland Assembly of God Church was begun July 5, 1931, at a tent meeting by Rev. O. F. Barnes and family and Miss Edith Bray Holden. Meetings were held in the tent until the church was built about Sept. 1, with Rev. O.F. Barnes as pastor. During that time, revival meetings were held by Revs. Eferan Hokanson, Melvin Hodges, C. L. Waker, Lloyd Woodworth, Guy Heith and others. Sunday School average for most of the year was 43. The church was established June 30, 1932, with 40 members.

During 1932-33, there was a succession of ministers: O.F. Barnes, Melvin Hodges, Wallace Ross, Roy Barnes, then Archie Nickle. The church split in 1933, some members breaking away to attend services in a house in the northwest part of Wheatland with Bro. W. J. Lasher. At this time, Rev. Ralph Ewing came to the pulpit, (8-1-1933). There were only about 10 or 12 members left in the church, but under his guidance there was an increase in membership again to 45. Evangelists during this time were Bros. Wallace Ross, Paul Hokanson, Omar Johnson, A. E. Hokanson, and others.

Rev. Omar Johnson served the pulpit after Ewing until Oct. 1, 1937. Evangelists were Bros. Smith and Roger team, Davis and Udd team, Leiand Faith, and Sis. Miller and Thelma Dotta, and others. Sunday school increased to 85 members.

The Nazarene Church began about this time which drew some from the church.

Bro. John Duncan (10-1-1937 to 9-30-1938). Evangelists under Duncan were Revs. Paul Boye and Leiand Faith.

Rev. Clarence Redding (9-30-1938 to Jan. 1939). Evangelist under Redding was Bro. Leiand Faith. The church was lined inside during this time, and the parsonage was remodeled during January and February, 1939.

Robert McCalaster was pastor next (2-12-39 to 7-1-42). Revivals were held with Bros. Harry Jackson, Silas Rexrote, Crews, Joe Neely, Samuel Antes, Leonard Palmer, and Sis. Ruby Borrow.

Bro. Harold I. Mailey (7-1-42 to June 1946).

Sis. Wilma Miller (June 1943 to 7-15-44). Evangelist Gene Smith,

Rev. Leiand Chaffen (7-15-44 to 8-18-46). Revival meetings by Bros. Bennie Harris, Charles Kite and H. R. Parish.

Bro. Alvin Kite (8-18-46 to 10-10-48). Evangelists were Bros. Chatman and Renick.

Rev. Clarence Brotzman (10-17-48 to 2-3-52). Revival meetings by Bros. Robert Pruitt, Harry Walker, Kershman, Kay, Wright and Myers team, Herman and others.

Rev. Frost (2-3-52 to 5-31-53). Evangelists were Bros Inlow, Gunner Olson, and Sis. Berley Spencer.

Bro. Earl Height (6-1-53 to 7-10-54). Evangelists were Bros. Swick, Kinchy, and Harry Walker.

The church was turned over to the Wyoming Distrid for two years. During that time the pastor was Bro, Elmo Meloy. The church was then returned to the Wheatland people, and Bro. Meloy was elected pastor. Evangelists under him were Bros. Woodrow Oxner, E. D. Beard, Kay, Gary Thomas and others. Meloy left about Oct. 15, 1957.

Rev. Robert Johnson (Nov. 1957 to June 1967). Evangelists were Bros. W. M. Roll, Cloud, Bohyer, Glaze and Doyle Thompson.

Bro. C. W. Livers (7-1-67 to 10-23-80). Sunday school averages about 42 as of this writing, December 1972.

—by N. E. Locke

[PlatteCH 1981,38] First Baptist - Chugwater

In Autumn 1916, about a dozen Baptists in and around Chugwater decided that, since there was no organized religious work of any kind in Chugwater, it was time for some definite efforts toward the establishment of a permanent church. After much consultation, it was arranged to have regular services in the Chugwater school.

Sunday School was also organized and held during spring and summer months. Dr. J. T. Hanna, Wyoming pastor at large, organized the First Baptist Church in July 1917. Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Board, Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Beard, Mrs. A. R. Bastian, Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Cook and Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Haney. Also in July 1917, the chapel car, "Glad Tidings", with Rev. W. M. Kennedy in charge, came to aid and give new momentum to the struggling little church.

In August 1917, messengers from Dwyer, Cheyenne, Douglas, Casper, Fisher, Little Horse Creek, Laramie, Hulett, Rock Springs, Durham and Lusk met in the chapel car to form the Southeastern Association. Moderator of the Association was Dr. J. T. Hanna, clerk - H. C. Cook, and treasurer - F. A. Beard.

Arrangements were completed in 1918 to obtain the lots where the church now stands. Blocks and other building materials were gathered, and the building was completed at least to the extent that dedication services were held on a cold, disagreeable Sunday in November 1919. Dr. Bruce Kinney of Denver preached the dedicatory sermon. Dr. J. T. Hanna had led in raising about \$2100, which was enough to pay all outstanding obligations to that date. During the dedication services, the church called its first pastor, Rev. W. H. Hughes of Dwyer. Soon the Sunday School [PlatteCH 1981,39] had grown so large the auditorium would no longer serve, so the Primary Department was moved to the basement.

Homecoming Day was held April 12, 1931. There were three services held, with Dr. Vaughn of Colorado Women's College and Dr. Ripley of

Denver as speakers. There was special music at all three services. At roll call, responses were given by a Bible verse or by reading a letter from absent members.

A special meeting was held Aug. 25, 1931, with Dr. Bell representing the Board of Missions to discuss the possibility of combining the Chugwater and Wheatland churches, with services held at each place on alternate Sundays. This was refused by a unanimous vote.

The Methodist and Baptist churches held a series of joint pre-Easter services in 1932 in the Baptist building. The two pastors preached sermons on alternate nights, March 28 - April 1.

A second Homecoming Day was held Oct. 16, 1932, with Rev. Hooper giving morning and evening sermons, and Mr. Harry B. Henderson, Jr., speaking on "America's Present Day Youth" in the afternoon.

Chugwater hosted the Southeastern Baptist Convention in May 1933. Twenty-five delegates and 12 visitors from various towns attended the two day meeting.

The church became self-supporting in January 1934, but later asked for and received help from the Mission Board in 1935-36. A parsonage was purchased in January 1938, and since that time the church has made improvements on both parsonage and church building.

The Cowboy Evangelist, Leonard Eilers, held a revival in September 1939, and the church gained over 30 converts. The young people were greatly influenced during the pastorate of the Frank Schweissings. After he resigned, Rev. Charles Scott was minister for three years until he entered foreign mission service in India; Rev. Gerald Jones then served the church briefly.

During the latter years of World War II the Baptists and local Methodists united their Sunday services as neither group was able to obtain a pastor.

During this time, Rev. J. B. Milstead preached morning services, and Rev. W. W. Maxwell, the Methodist pastor of Wheatland, preached in the evenings.

Rev. John Weidenaar became resident pastor of the Baptist Church in the spring, 1948. During his ministry the church left the American Baptist Convention and affiliated with the Conservative Baptist Fellowship. A steady spiritual growth was experienced, and the economic prosperity allowed the basement to be remodeled, a new heating system installed, and an addition was built, making three new classrooms. After the resignation of Rev. Weidenaar in 1951, Rev. Lyie Rich served until 1954. He was succeeded by Rev. LeRoy Gross who served until 1956.

Other pastors who have served through the years are: R. L. Carpenter; J. H. Docum; Rev. Stratton; C. B. Cloonan; Rev. Mrs. Murphy; W. J. Lasher; J. T. Hanna; Reindeer; Crane; P. H. Evans and Clifton McGlothlan. Rev. Charles Clough started commuting from Aurora, Colo., during November 1956 through part of January 1957, when he moved his family to Chugwater, and at this writing (August 1980), he continues to serve as pastor.

An addition was built in 1958 which provided three classrooms and an additional meeting room in the basement; a classroom, restroom and pastor's study on the main floor. The present parsonage, which formerly belonged to Chugwater postmaster, Ed Greff, was purchased in 1960. A number of the members took out personal loans to pay for it and they were reimbursed as money was donated to the building fund.

In May 1964, the church began broadcasting "Five Minute Meditations from the Bible", over Station KYCN in Wheatland. The taped program was aired Monday through Friday at 11:55 a.m. for nearly five years.

A 1974 addition provided a beautiful new sanctuary, a large basement room for Boys' Brigade activities, two additional classrooms, a new

baptistry and two dressing rooms. Much of the work was done by members, with the exception of excavating and concrete work and support beams for the main floor. The church is completely debt-free, self-supporting and self-governing. It contributes regularly to 22 foreign and home missionaries or other missionary projects, as well as occasional contributions to other missionary needs.

The kitchen and dining room is used five days a week to provide noon meals for senior citizens of the community under the Title Seven program.

Memorial Baptist

[PlatteCH 1981,39] Seven Christians met at the ranch home of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Johnson, Jr. on March 4, 1952 for the purpose of perfecting a New Testament Southern Baptist Church.

Southern Baptist Temple became the church's name, J. B. Milstead was the first pastor, Mrs. Mattie Johnson the first treasurer and Mrs. Edwina Johnson was the first clerk. Buildings were purchased at 1008 10th Street in Wheatland. People were reached with the gospel and the work grew.

March 9, 1958, dedication services were held in the beautiful new building at 101 South 14th. Special gifts to the church at this time were: Mrs. Frank Wickam—an electronic organ; Mrs. Mattie Johnson-spinet piano; W. H. Atkinson from Oklahoma City—pews; David Locke—beautiful pulpit and offering plates plus much labor and advice; Mr. and Mrs. George Shockley—hymnals; J. B. Milstead—baptistry picture painted by Harry Dearing and sheet rock; and Wheatland Lumber Company, Tom Tugmon, Dorothy Atkinson and Joe Johnson for many other necessary materials.

During the fall of 1964 a parsonage was built, located just west of the church building.

[PlatteCH 1981,40] Oct. 26, 1969, the name of the church was changed to Memorial Baptist Church. It still is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

An attempt was made during the spring of 1972 to make the church non-denominational, but the church remained a Southern Baptist affiliate and its primary function still is winning people to Christ.

Presently an educational building is under consideration with completion scheduled for the fall of 1980. This building will house children's classes and Children's Church.

Memorial gifts for Howard Stumbough and Bill Yost provided a large Bible and folding tables for the church. The Taylor Johnson Memorial was used to buy a large Baldwin organ and pew pads were given by Bill and Bob Beasley of Dallas and Waco, Texas. Heat this past summer prompted Bert Bray to provide an air conditioner for everyone's comfort.

Pastors who have served the church and their tenure of service are: J. B. Milstead—1952 to 1959 and 1966; Ross Warren—6 months in 1956; Forrest A. Upchurch—1960-1963; Joe P. Moore—1963; Lynn Hawkins—1964-65; Dan Rushing—1966-68; Bill Hamrick—1969 to 1972; W. G. Muter—1972-73; Claude Fox—1974-75; Bill Webb—1975-76; Robert H. Moon—1976 to the present time.

—by Clara Lou Johnson

Chugwater Catholic Mission

[PlatteCH 1981,40] Mass was held for Chugwater area residents in the Chugwater Hotel, the home where Boyd Ash now lives, the school house which is no longer used and various other places before a Franciscan Mission was established in Chugwater in 1926.

A building which had served as a school house in the Little Bear area was purchased for \$125 in 1926 and moved to Chugwater to serve as a chapel for the community. After remodeling, it was dedicated to the Little Flower. Mass was held in the mission until 1975 when it was closed.

“A priest used to travel around on horseback,” says Francis Gard of Chugwater. “He’d make it to Chugwater about once every six months. As I recall from 1915 on until sometime about 1944, when Father Ferdinand Gruss took up permanent residence in Wheatland, Mass was only once a month and then on Saturday and Sunday in Wheatland.”

According to Mrs. John (Laura) Kennedy, a member of the Chugwater mission, there were five or six families who attended the church when it was established in 1926, and as many as 10 families in later years.

—Members at Chugwater

Glendo Catholic

[PlatteCH 1981,40] Mary McNamara (McDermott) received the patent on her homestead on which part of the town of Glendo sits in 1900. In 1901 she deeded about six acres to Rt. Rev. Thomas Lenihan to be used for the purpose of a Catholic church and cemetery. The church was built for \$800 and volunteer labor. It was quite small about 22’ x 35’. Patsy Frawney had donated a generous portion so was asked by the Bishop to lay the cornerstone, his reply was, “Sure it is honored I am but ‘tis best this lad, me nephew, be so honored for its from Ireland he’s come and

will live to enjoy the same. I am soon to be returnin' to the Emerald Isle.” (Nephew, Ed Foy Sr.)

In 1935 the Wyoming Highway Department wished to build an overpass over the railroad and the church was sitting where the north ramp is now. The Department purchased two lots from Harry McNamara (son of Mary) and paid to have the church moved to the present location.

Rev. Fr. Charles Zengl, OFMConv, let the designing and building contract to Lloyd Lantz, a local builder, and a new frame building with stucco exterior was built adjoining the tiny little church which was then used as a hall. The church was dedicated in 1953 as Our Lady of Lourdes. The old one had been called St. John's but a generous donor from the East requested that the church be named after the Mother of Jesus. There being other St. Mary's in the state another of her honorary titles was selected.

The old church was razed and replaced with a nice hall which was dedicated in 1958. Rev. Fr. Bartholomew Svete pastor of St. Anthony's church in Guernsey was in charge. The hall is presently being used for five days a week noon-day meals for Senior Citizens under a government program.

The Glendo church, always a mission, first of Douglas then of Guernsey, for many years only had church services once a month, then in the 40's was able to have services twice a month and after the new church was built, every Sunday. There were about 45 active families in the mid 1950's. We are now reverting, being under Douglas once again and having services twice a month since Fr. Phillip Colibraro has such a load in Douglas with the influx of people due to the energy boom nearby and the replacing of the 70 year old church with a \$500,000 complex.

—by Mildred Twiford, 1980

St. Patrick's Catholic

[PlatteCH 1981,40] St. Patrick's Church in Wheatland began in 1885 with the first celebration of Mass at the home of Patrick Mullin on the Laramie River. Rev. Francis Nugent rode to the ranch on horseback carrying an altar stone and other necessary items. No one knew when the priest would arrive. When he was seen on the horizon, one [PlatteCH 1981,41] of the men rode to inform the rest of the people and members would come by horseback and in buggies.

In the late 1890's the settlers decided a church was needed. Charles Goodrich was awarded the contract to build the church. The bricks were kilned in Wheatland. The brick laying was done by McCallum and Crane, who also did the carpentry. Much of the lumber was hauled 25 miles from the saw mill located in the hills west of Wheatland by the four Mullin brothers.

The construction was begun in 1891. To build a church of large size it was necessary to have extremely long beams. Two wagons with reaches extended were used to haul the beams.

While the church was under construction, services were held in the brick school house located south of the fire hall and above the big ditch.

The parishioners didn't want to go into debt for building material so the church was not completed until 1898. The main altar was from the Cathedral in Cheyenne. It was necessary that the altar be cut down in order to bring it into the church. The top of the altar was taken off after many years because it was top heavy.

The Rev. James Keating came as the first priest in 1898. The congregation in 1900 consisted of Rouses, Klasserts, Pat O'Connors, John Morriseys, Mullins, John Bradleys, John Wilkinson and Pat Daly.

In 1904 Mayme Cronin (later Mrs. Mick Mullin) set about raising money for a church organ. Three months later the organ was in the church. It was second hand and cost \$45. Funds were raised by solicitation and when members were just a little short of their goal, someone went to Tom Carroll's saloon and there the rest of the money was obtained.

On Aug. 12, 1905, the church was incorporated with Casper Rouse and John Mullin as lay trustees.

The Rev. Patrick Long was resident priest from February 1907 until July 1910. Then Father Ignatius Berna, a Franciscan, took Wheatland as a mission parish on Dec. 15, 1910. The mission was confirmed during his stay on Jan. 11, 1911. The Franciscans, missionary priests, had charge of the Wheatland church for about 30 years. They lived in Douglas and came by train to Wheatland.

In 1913 Father James Hermes held Mass once a month on a week day in Wheatland. Father Hermes bought 12 pews from Sears, Roebuck to add to the eight homemade pews. A large heating stove was near the altar. The members sitting next to the stove usually roasted while the others froze.

In the summer of 1913, Father Hermes organized the Altar and Rosary Society at St. Patrick's. Mrs. James Carroll was elected the first president. It was the duty of the members to take care of the altar and clean the church.

The priests who came from Douglas stayed in a furnished bedroom at the back of the church. A stove was in the room with coal and kindling nearby, but the priests rarely lit the fire as it took so long for the stove to heat up. Once the Society bought an electric heating pad and left it in the room, together with instructions for its use, but it always remained in its place in the drawer.

Over the years the priests and congregation have made improvements in the building and grounds. Father Ignatius Hanely drew two pictures for the vestibule in the church. One of the pictures was chosen and built. Father Martin beautified the grounds with a lawn and flowers. The exterior of the church was stuccoed. A new vestibule was added. The two back rooms of the original church, the sacristy and the priest's room, were taken out and the church expanded. A new sacristy and hall were added to the back of the church. The sanctuary was redecorated and a choir loft added. The church has been painted and carpeted.

[PlatteCH 1981,42] The church acquired additional property to use as a rectory and a classroom building.

In 1962, the Altar and Rosary Society celebrated its 50th anniversary with two charter members present, Veronica Ferguson and Lena (Mullin) McClure. The group is now called the Council of Catholic Women.

Twenty-eight Franciscans served the church over the years. Since 1940 the church has had a resident priest.

Since June 1975, Monsignor John J. Corrigan has served St. Patrick's. And so the church continues to grow from that very small beginning with its small congregation and faithful parishioners.

—by Patricia Erickson

First Christian

[PlatteCH 1981,42] The inception of the building of a Christian Church began in about 1904. Wheatland, then boasting a population of 500, had two churches, the First Congregational and the Methodist Episcopal. When the thought of another church being built was noised abroad, it was declared there were more churches than could be supported.

To read the minutes of meetings of the pioneers resulting in the erection of the First Christian Church of Wheatland, there is little of the struggle, courage and loving work that made that result sure.

There were fairs, sales, dinners, breakfasts and suppers served sometimes in tents, sometimes in the Carey building. The fruits of farms, money and labor of the townspeople were freely given.

Chicken pie was served at a dinner when William Jennings Bryan, campaigning for president, spoke in Wheatland. Ptomaine poisoning resulted. Later, some wondered what happened to “poor William”.

The organization meeting was held in the First Methodist Episcopal Church with the following 32 charter members:

Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Banta, Jessie Banta, Ruth Banta, Mr. and Mrs. William Baker, Mr. and Mrs. M. V. Bush, Anna Bush, Ruth Blackford, Mrs. I. W. Gray, Mrs. C. D. Griffin, Mrs. Morell Gray, Mrs. Mary M. Headrick, Ella M. Holmes, Mr. and Mrs. U. S. Harrison, Mrs. Mary Howell, Mrs. Ab Howell, Margarite Johnson, William L. Lawson, William H. Morrison, Mrs. J. R. McElhaney, Mrs. Martha Mitchell, Belle M. Pierce, I. N. Pense, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Payne, Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Stull, Mrs. Wagner, Mrs. Mary E. Yocum.

J. A. Banta and his family had come to the aid in the work. The following news item taken from THE WHEATLAND WORLD, Oct. 12, 1906:

“Rev. J. A. Banta, of the Christian denomination will hold service Sunday morning at 11 o’clock and also at night at Waitman Hall.” Preaching services were also held in the Carey Building and a pool hall.

The building of the church was truly a labor of love, and, like the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem, the people were minded to work, give, and sacrifice. Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Baker had purchased a cement

mixer and blocking machine to build the home on their farm. They volunteered the use of these and services of themselves and family to make cement blocks for erection of the building. Others gave teams and labor on the excavation of a partial basement, work progressing rapidly.

The corner stone was laid in June of 1908. The church was dedicated June 14, 1908.

Death has taken the charter members, but we can boast of a five-generation family actively participating as church members, all descendants of charter member, Mrs. C. D. Griffin. They are Phil Rietz, son of Charles and Minnie Griffin Rietz and grandson of Mrs. Griffin, Clayton Rietz, son of Phil Rietz and Clayton's children.

THROUGH THE YEARS—Some brief items taken from the minutes.

1908 - Pews purchased from the E. H. Stodard Mfg. Co. of Chicago.

1908 - Bell given by C. D. Griffin in honor of his wife.

1908 - Voted to use individual communion sets-

1916 - Decided to have monthly social in place of midweek prayer meeting.

1919 - Property to be purchased for a parsonage and rented to the pastor at \$20.00 a month.

1921 - Sidewalks put in, being replaced twice, last time in 1977.

1924 - Wood and coal furnace installed.

1930 - 1931 - Matter of digging basement discussed. W. H. Preuit volunteered three teams of mules to be driven by Bart Bellis, Godfrey Kuehner and C. A. Bateman. Clarence Weigart threw out the first shovel

of dirt. Services were held on Sunday mornings in the Iris Theatre, managed by Carl Judge, while the basement was dug under the church building.

1932 - Arthur Rietz was given the old hitching rack with understanding that he bring kindling for church in the fall.

1933 - Gas installed for heat, replaced by a new gas system in 1973.

1933 - Depression years - Minister was paid \$15.00 per week and Janitor \$6.00 per month. Some weeks this amount could not be raised.

1935 - No minister was hired due to the depression. 1942 - Church bell used as an air raid warning. 1952 - Modern parsonage was built on the lot adjoining the church.

1955 - 1956 - A 30 X 40 foot educational annex was built to house the overflow of Sunday School classes and to make an office for the minister. The basement under this became a Fellowship Hall.

1957 - An electric organ was purchased for the sanctuary.

1957 - 1958 - Street oiled by the church. 1963 - 1964 - New entry way added putting the [PlatteCH 1981,43] outside steps under a roof, and a cry room with basement.

1964 - Mr. and Mrs. S. R. Mills presented the church with a painting by Harry Dearing to be put behind the baptistry, in observance of the Mills' 50th wedding anniversary.

1964 - first speaker system installed, replaced in 1978 by a newer system.

1965 - Podium carpeted.

1966 - 1967 - Paneling put in the front of the church, ceiling lowered with tile, indirect lighting installed. Air conditioning installed.

1974 - Entrance and sanctuary completely carpeted.

1976 - Last mortgage burned. All indebtedness has been kept current to the present time.

1976 - New piano for the sanctuary purchased with memorial funds.

1978 - Kitchen remodeled, paneling and carpeting started in basement rooms, with more being added in 1980.

1975 - 1979 - New roof put on parsonage, church re-shingled; both sand blasted and repainted, with a new sign being added to the front of the church.

1980 - The last of the original stained glass windows have had to be replaced with modern double glass windows, a necessary energy conservation measure, something all were reluctant to do, but time takes its toll on church buildings, the same as church members.

—by Glyda May

Glendo Community Church

[PlatteCH 1981,43] The Glendo Community Church was constituted in March 1955, with 40 charter members. Seventeen denominations were represented in the congregation.

Church was held in the American Legion Building until the summer of 1956 when the old Douglas Methodist Church building was moved to

Glendo. The building, built in 1891, was repaired and improved and still houses the church.

Several things make the church unique. One is that ministers from Wheatland and Douglas take turns filling the pulpit, thereby exposing the congregation to several different Protestant philosophies.

The choir also makes the church special. During the 25-year church history, the choir has performed special music every Sunday except two.

Sunday School and Vacation Bible School have been offered to the young people since the church began. The church women's group has always been active and annually hosts dinners following Christmas and Thanksgiving services. Following the Easter Sunrise Service a breakfast is held.

Many out-of-state and out-of-town friends joined the congregation on Aug. 10, 1980, as the church held special 25th anniversary services.

—by Nancy Curtis

Glendo Episcopal

[PlatteCH 1981,43] The brick church that is now St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Glendo had its beginning early in the town's history. Mabel J. McDermott of Laramie relates that her husband, Fred, in 1916 "bought some acreage from Jim Gore and with the help of a small boy, a tape measure and a yardstick he surveyed and marked the lots of the original town of Glendo."

She goes on to say that "Fred held a public sale and sold a number of lots, and also donated several lots, one for a community church, several for the first school building and playground."

A ranch widow, Mrs. Hagge, was instrumental in spearheading efforts to build a community church for Glendo. Frank Heister assisted in the planning of the building.

The bricks used in its construction were locally produced from a brick kiln on Whiskey Gulch, owned and operated by Carl Sorenson. This kiln was in operation at Glendo from about 1917 up into the twenties.

A letter dated March 30, 1959, from the Rev. William A. Freeman of Frankfort, Ohio, to then Glendo mayor Roy Amick, tells of Freeman's ministry at Glendo. Mr. Freeman writes, "I was, during the years 1918 to 1920, minister and pastor of the First Congregational Church, both at Keeline and Glendo, and directed the building of the brick Congregational Church of Glendo. Chief members in Glendo were a Mrs. Hagge, Mrs. Collins, Mr. Heister (garage man), a Mr. Collins (hotel operator), and others."

Freeman tells of staying in Glendo at the hotel of Elizabeth Collins and her son. "I used to come over two Sundays per month, on Saturday nights, and find lodging and board in the Collins' Hotel, where a tall and active son of Mrs. Collins, doubtless helped to keep me straight, while on the premises, though I do not ever remember being intoxicated or unruly!"

Freeman notes that a booklet of his, entitled "The Type of Evangelism Needed," was placed in the corner stone of the Glendo church. He mentions a teacher in the Glendo school, Mable Tilton, from Iowa, as being faithful in the church services and the music.

Mrs. J. R. Wilson was an early president of the Ladies Circle, which was organized in support of the church.

The First Episcopal priest that Virginia (Mrs. Ben) Collins remembers coming to Glendo was Father Tulle, rector of the Episcopal Church at Torrington. When Father Tulle requested use of the Congregational

Church, he was refused. Instead, he held services in the dining room of the Cotlins Hotel.

The Episcopal Church at Glendo was officially established in 1940 by Winfred H. Ziegler, then bishop of Wyoming's Episcopal Missionary District.

An energetic and dynamic person, Ziegler traveled about the state and directed the setting up of missions [PlatteCH 1981,44] in rural communities. Ziegler's legacy includes a number of small churches, several of them built of logs and located in rustic surroundings. An example is the tiny Chapel of the Ascension at Esterbrook.

While on a business trip to New York City, he approached the national offices of the Congregational organization, with an offer to purchase the church at Glendo for the Wyoming Episcopal Missionary District. The Congregational Church officers were pleased to accept his offer.

The brick church thereupon became known as St. John the Baptist Church, named to honor the day it was consecrated by the Bishop.

Records indicate that after establishment of the new church Bishop Ziegler returned often to Glendo, conducting services, holding baptisms and confirmations.

Glendo's small congregation has been unable to support a resident priest, so the church has shared ministries with other Episcopal churches in the neighboring towns of Torrington, Wheatland, Douglas, and Hartville. At this writing, and for a number of years, the local church has been served by the rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Douglas.

Among the priests who have ministered to the Glendo mission through the years since 1940 are the following: William I. Lockwood, Philip B. Hawley, Walter W. McNeil, Jr., Henry Heaton, Sidney A. Hoadley, Kale F. King, John W. Day, Jr., E. Marshall Bevins, P. O. Miller, Joseph B.

Batten, James E. More, Stuart C. Cowles, Stanley Ver Straten, and James E. Wolfkiel, Jr.

After the transition of ownership, a program to restore and remodel the brick church was undertaken, a process that has continued through the past forty years. Changes were made in the interior, to conform to the traditional Episcopal worship service. Bishop Ziegler brought several furnishings with him from other places, including the two Bishop's Chairs, the Deacon's Bench, and the kneeling bench.

Memorial money and donations were used to purchase pews and other furnishings, and a cedar credence cabinet was designed and built by Harrison Payton. The three oil paintings in the sanctuary, above and at each side of the altar, were commissioned by Bishop Ziegler to be painted by J. R. Wilson.

An important improvement was made in the facility during the mid-fifties, when the Bishop's Committee of the church decided to build an addition to the north side of the church. This extended the basement to provide two restrooms, a large entry stairway and a room above the basement to be used either as a study or a Sunday School room.

A new kitchen was designed and installed where the old coal storage bin had previously been. About this time, locally milled pine paneling was attached to the undercroft walls. In recent years, attractive carpeting has been added to the meeting rooms.

The women's guild of St. John the Baptist Church played an important part in the church's history. The women have been active in raising funds for special needs within the church, by such special events as the annual Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, bake sales, serving receptions, and other efforts.

The church undercroft has served as a meeting place for the Glendo Community Benefit Club for many years, and for other organizations as

well. Its rooms have been made available several times for school classes.

The exterior of St. John the Baptist Church has undergone changes. The building has been painted white. Trees were planted some years ago, a lawn established, and a sprinkling system installed.

This writer was impressed, in perusing old church records, to note the large number of individuals who have helped to keep this church an enduring part of the Glendo community. In a sense, the very existence of St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Glendo is a tribute to them all.

—by Betty Amick

Wheatland Episcopal

[PlatteCH 1981,44] The Episcopal Church Diocese was the first church organized in Wyoming. When Rev. Robert Vaux came to Ft. Laramie in 1843, he held services in Ft. Laramie and the officers' summer cabin area, now Hartville.

Worship services in Wheatland were first held in the Kelly McDougall home in 1909 whenever Rev. Williams came through; the first baptisms took place in August 1909.

The initial Confirmation service was held in February 1910 in the Globe Hotel dining room, the Rt. Rev. N. S. Thomas in attendance.

Rev. A. de F. Snively came in 1910, conducted [PlatteCH 1981,45] services in the Goodrich Odd Fellows' Hall, (now the Landmark Bar), and in the home of Mr. Chipp, lay reader, later an ordained minister.

The present All Saints Church building, one of only three of Tudor Gothic design in the U.S., built at a total cost of \$1,500 in 1912, was formally consecrated on Nov. 3, 1912, in rites conducted by Rt. Rev. Nathaniel Thomas, Bishop of Wyoming.

Since then the following clergymen have served, some lived in Torrington and served both fields: Reverends Williams, 1909-10; Snively, 1910-13; Turner, 1913-16; James, 1916; Talbot, 1916-17; Tull, 1919-22; 1924-27; Scriven, 1922-24; Ward, 1930-35; Shay, 1935-38; Lockwood, 1938-43; Hawley, 1943-45; McNeil, 1946; Hoadley, 1946-47; Heaton, 1949; King, 1954-57; Goeger, 1958; Day, 1958-61; Shacklett, 1961-64; Baker, 1964-65; Foster, 1965-67; More, 1968-70; Biller, 1971-72; Hoadley, 1973 to the present time.

Rev. Theodore Foster, a former Benedictine Monk, walked with a large group of orphans in China about 1200 miles fleeing ahead of the Communists. His health was so affected by this that he was never well again.

Rev. Sidney A. Hoadley first came to Wheatland as an altar boy when he accompanied Rev. Ward on his weekly visits from Guernsey in the early '30's. He became Wheatland's first resident priest.

When Rev. Ethelbert Talbot, a former chaplain to Queen Victoria, became Bishop of Wyoming, he began constructing St. Matthew's Cathedral in Laramie. The Queen gave him festal altar hangings containing fine drawn gold in the design. These were later brought to the Wheatland Episcopal Church, and are now in the process of being restored.

The beautiful altar came from a church in Philadelphia. Many memorial gifts of altar hangings, brasses and chancel furnishings have been donated. In 1950 a Connsonata organ was added. In 1978, all new

stained glass windows, designed by Rev. Hoadley, were installed in the church. So lovely.

The Rectory, built in 1947 burned in 1977. The new Parish Hall was completed in June 1980. Rev. Hoadley was Rector during both building projects, and also at the time the first one burned.

Information furnished by Rev. Hoadley - 1980.

—by Violet Blodgett

Fairview Chapel

[PlatteCH 1981,45] The Fairview Sunday school and preaching services were organized by the American Sunday School Union missionary, Rev. Irvin C. Noyce, Mar. 22, 1925, at the Muir School House. Mrs. L. E. Cook was superintendent and for several years, the school was under the name of “Muir Union Sunday School.”

It was moved to Fairview School, (one mile west and two miles north of Wheatland), Mar. 3, 1932. Rev. W. F. Coy of Denver held revival services. It was reorganized Mar. 31, with Mrs. Fred Ross superintendent. The building was purchased by members and friends from the school board in September 1945, refurnished and decorated.

Three missionaries, Rev. Irvin C. Noyce, Rev. Paul Eiselstein and Rev. Vernon M. Kruse, have officiated there, as well as several other ministers and speakers. Rev. W. J. Lasher was minister for several years.

Daily Vacation Bible Schools have been held during summers, and many young people have been sent to camp. The school is interdenominational and all are welcome.

—Rev. Noyce

Trinity Lutheran

[PlatteCH 1981,45] The earliest record of work by the Lutheran Church in the Wheatland area dates back to 1903. In March of that year Missionary Rev. A. Guelker looked up the people of German and Swedish descent and invited them to services. The following Sunday only three persons were present. He nevertheless expressed the sentiment, "Since a sugar factory is to be built here, there is hope that other Lutherans will move into the territory." Pastor Guelker also served Scottsbluff, Wyncote, Badger, Mitchell and Casper.

The old Congregational Church was acquired in 1912, and moved to its present location, with the help of a loan of \$1418 from the Nebraska District. At this time the congregation was being served by the Rev. P. L. Dannenfeldt.

On Sept. 28, 1913, Trinity congregation was organized with nine charter members: F. Drube, P. Schlund, F. Weinmeister, J. Gross, P. Frihauf, George Simon, H. Notke, E. Hemphing, and Pastor P. L. Dannenfeldt. Services were conducted in the English language once a month, all others being in German.

In December of 1915, Pastor Dannenfeldt accepted a call to Humboldt, Neb., and candidate M. T. Schabaker was ordained and installed in June of 1916. In 1922, he accepted a call to Arapahoe, Neb. In September 1922 candidate E. F. Guenther was installed.

There were many hardships for a young minister in those days as it was necessary for them to serve in surrounding towns also. One instance was when Pastor Guenther had held services at Ft. Laramie. Upon his return the drive shaft on his Ford gave out eight miles northeast of town,

making him walk home and ford Chugwater Creek, 10 feet wide. Rocks placed in the 12 inch deep water helped bridge the stream. He also held services in Chugwater once a month. Upon returning from one of these meetings he was caught in a blizzard. Barbed wire fences on both sides made it possible for him to find his way back to a home he had just left 10 minutes before.

[PlatteCH 1981,46] Pastor Guenther was with us until 1924 when he received a call elsewhere and T. H. Rehwaldt, succeeded him. Due to the bad health of his wife, he accepted a call to Yankton, S. D. in November of 1925. From 1925 to 1927 the congregation was served by Rev. Hugo Hoyer.

Before long we had organized our Walther League for the young people and Ladies Aid for the women. As a special treat for our ladies Mrs. Sophia Henke, who lived on a ranch about 20 miles out on the Laramie Highway, would invite the ladies out to her home for one of the summer meetings. Early in the morning she would go out and catch a supply of mountain trout which she fried for their dinner, then the meeting and on home in time for chores.

From 1928 to 1929 Student Beckman served the congregation.

Rev. Gustav Karkau from Buffalo, N. Y. was the next pastor. By 1930 four English services and one German service were held each month.

To help out with his own living expenses Pastor Karkau took a job working on the railroad while Fred Carlson was section foreman. He and Mrs. Karkau were always interested in summer outdoor services — "anywhere that we could find a grassy spot and trees, along with a baseball game." Later when they moved to Torrington in 1935 the two congregations would meet half way and have our usual service, picnic and games. He continued serving Wheatland twice a month along with

regular English services in Torrington. In 1939 he accepted a call to Buffalo, N.Y.

William H. Bornemann from Scottsbluff was installed in 1939 in Torrington and continued serving Trinity twice a month along with Torrington. However, by 1943 it was deemed advisable to have services every Sunday. Eventually we managed to pay off the balance of the old debt and on Pentecost Sunday, May 20, 1945, special thanksgiving services were held to commemorate the cancellation of our debt.

In 1947 Pastor Bornemann accepted the call to serve the newly organized congregation at Morrill, Neb. in connection with his charge at Torrington, and Wheatland was again without a pastor. It was resolved to call a resident man and at that time we purchased a parsonage at 13th and Maple. With the help of a \$4,000 loan from the Church Extension Fund, the property valued at \$5,000 was purchased. Our next pastor, Carl N. Last of Milwaukee, Wis., served us until 1949. Pastor A. C. Oberheu from Canistota, S. D. served us until 1953.

Pastor Oscar Marquardt of Dodge Center, Minn. was installed on July 20, 1952. In the spring of 1954 all debts on the parsonage being liquidated, the mortgage was publicly burned and plans for the present remodeled and enlarged church were made. With the help of a \$10,000 loan from the Church Extension Fund, work was begun in September of 1956. It was a happy day when the church building was rolled to the west, a foundation made, basement dug and some parts added on. Volunteer crews helped with the building and the women served lunch. Jim Windom, Alee Fertig and Harold Steeley were the carpenters. At this time Jim Windom also helped us build 20 church pews and we were able to get rid of the old time opera seats.

The remodeled church was dedicated on April 26, 1957. Pastor Marquardt accepted a call to Hope Lutheran Church in South Sioux City, Neb. and left on May 5, 1957. Candidate John P. Kuntz was ordained

and installed as Pastor Aug. 18, 1957. With the aid of a \$15,000 loan from the Church Extension Fund, a new parsonage was completed on west South Street May 3, 1960.

Wheatland is very proud of the fact that one of our own young ladies, Lucille (Jessen) Luhring, after graduating from high school, went on to our Seward College in Nebraska and studied to be a parochial school teacher. She has taught in Marshfield and Stevens Point, Wis. and later in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

In the Fall of 1961 Pastor Kuntz accepted a call to begin a new mission in Phoenix, Ariz., and left Wheatland on Christmas Day, 1961. Rev. Bornemann of Torrington again served as vacancy pastor. On July 7, 1963 Pastor Reuscher was installed and on Sept. 28, 1963 Trinity celebrated its 50th anniversary with special services of thanksgiving. At this time we felt and decided that we could become self-supporting. Pastor Reuscher then received a call to Sanford, Fla.

Pastor Carlos Hernandez was installed in 1969. While he was here our high school band director, Sam Christensen, felt the calling to go in to the ministry and spent the next four years at the Springfield, Ill. Seminary. His wish was to be ordained in his home church. He is now serving the church at Beulah, N. D.

Pastor Hernandez accepted a call to Watsonville Calif, after which Pastor Marvin Sackschewsky served one year here. Both Pastor Hernandez and Pastor Sackschewsky held services in Guernsey twice a month.

In April of 1976 Pastor Emmett Rogness of Lexington, Ky. accepted our call to serve Wheatland and was installed May 9, 1976.

Pastor and Mrs. Rogness celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary Oct. 5, 1977 and were honored by having all of their children present. A

special dinner was served along with a decorated wedding cake and a cash gift.

On May 27, 1979 Pastor Rogness was honored at a special service and dinner commemorating his 25th anniversary in the ministry, and he was presented with an oil painting.

At present we have a total of 180 communicant and 247 baptized souls.

For the past 35 years we have always looked forward to our night of singing Christmas Carols for the older members of our church, including the rest homes and hospital. Some of the old timers dear to our hearts were [PlatteCH 1981,47] the George Bachs, Fred Carlsons, William Eichlers, Martin Jessens, Jim Jessens, Lambert Johnson, Henry Lofings, Dave Lockmans, Jack Hobbs, Henry Steeleys, and many others.

After singing several carols we were always invited to partake of coffee and all kinds of Christmas goodies. It was around 11 o'clock one night when we stopped at the home of Henry Lofings. Mary was out of town but that didn't keep Henry from getting up and frying some good old German sausage for us.

It wasn't a matter of there being snow on the ground. In one instance several of us were riding in Harold Steeley's car when it became stuck in a three foot drift. We all helped to push him out, but when we got in the car one person was missing. We found her in the deep tracks where she had landed when the car moved on—no injuries.

Many times it was past midnight when we returned home, tired and stuffed but we always had the pleasant feeling that we had brightened the day for many.

This information was compiled from our church records, letters from former pastors and church members.

—by Edla Geringer

Chugwater Methodist

[PlatteCH 1981,47] The first Methodist church of the Chugwater area was erected in the Iowa Flats region in the year 1910 at the cost of \$1,600, Elmer J. Cook, builder. This was known as the First Methodist Episcopal Church. This church is still being used every year for Memorial Day services and an occasional funeral.

The Chugwater, Iowa Center and Lone Tree churches had a long history of ministers, hardships, and good times. The Chugwater minister also served the Bear Creek Community Church, which had a relationship with the Chugwater parish since the early years. Services were held there twice a month for many years.

The Lone Tree area and Iowa Center area were separate communities and once had separate churches. Lone Tree held its services in a little school house. In 1933 these two communities were consolidated and they worshipped together. The little school house was moved west several miles from its original site and the congregation continued to worship there until its building began to deteriorate. At this time a permanent church was established in the Iowa Center school house and was used until the congregation joined the Chugwater church.

The Chugwater Methodists had problems finding a building. They used school buildings, an old post office, and even an outdoor area for a number of years. In 1927, four people put their letters in the Methodist Church. By 1931, they had started plans to build a new church. Most of the donations given were materials to be used instead of cash, as few people had much cash in those days. Extensive remodeling was done on the church in 1950.

The Iowa Center congregation Joined the Chugwater people in 1961. The present building became too small for Sunday school classes and social activities. In 1965, ground-breaking ceremonies for the new church were held and the first services were held on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1966. Bishop R. Marvin Stuart conducted consecration services on May 15, 1966. Many items for the church interior were donated. Some were purchased with memorial funds. On April 15, 1973, the congregation gathered to burn the mortgage and dedicate the church.

—by Vi Voight

Wheatland Methodist

[PlatteCH 1981,48] During the last week in March 1894, James A. Johnson, Pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Cheyenne, asked permission of N. A. Chamberlain, Superintendent of Wyoming Missions, to organize a Methodist Society at Wheatland. He immediately came to Wheatland to organize a church and incorporated a Board of Trustees, consisting of M. R. Johnston, I. W. Gray, D. McCallum, H. E. Grain, F. L. Niner, T. B. Shepard, and James A. Johnson.

Wyoming Missions met in Cheyenne in June 1894, at which time Bishop Merrill appointed Rev. James A. Johnson as pastor in Cheyenne. Rev. E. J. Randall was appointed assistant pastor and put in charge at Wheatland. Services were held regularly on the third Sunday of each month.

Two lots were secured, one donated by the Wyoming Development Company, the other purchased for \$75.00. Rev. Johnson, Cheyenne pastor, conceived the idea of building a church in Wheatland as a memorial to his departed mother, and donated \$250. The Church Extension Society donated \$250 and loaned \$500, making a total of

\$1,000. The church is legally incorporated as the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Wheatland, and in the office of the Church Extension Society at Philadelphia, it is known as Martha B. Johnson Memorial Church because of Rev. Johnson's gift.

In June 1895, Bishop C. D. Foss appointed Henry Carlyon to pastor the Wheatland Church. He was the first resident minister, and on July 21, 1895, he organized the Junior Epworth League with 30 members. Mrs. Carrie J. Geeding was president, and Miss Ella Mead, assistant.

The cornerstone was laid Aug. 19, 1895, and on Nov 10 that year the Methodist Episcopal Sunday School was organized.

The church was completed at a cost of \$2800 and dedicated Dec. 1, 1895, by Bishop Henry Warren.

Henry Carlyon resigned from the church and Lincoir Steers finished the year. On Sept. 1, 1897, he was appointed to Douglas and Stacey A. Smith came to Wheatland. Smith was succeeded by E. H. Taylor.

In September 1899, T. Stevenson was appointed to Wheatland, and E. H. Taylor was moved to Sheridan. In October 1899, the pastor moved into the new parsonage, which had been built largely through the efforts of E. H. Taylor.

On April 1, 1901, J. W. Gillespie was appointed to Wheatland. He left in November and J. W. Taylor replaced him. During his short pastorate many improvements were made on the parsonage property. Twenty-one members had come into the church by letter and five on probation.

J. W. Taylor stayed in Wheatland until the middle of the next August when Charles L. De La Barre was appointed pastor. De La Barre was returned in August 1903, and again in 1904 for a third year. The pastor's salary was raised and \$105.00 was paid to the Mission. The people showed their gratitude by building two new porches on the parsonage,

and voting to pay him with the missionary allowance of \$240.00, a salary of \$1000, and the parsonage. Charles De La Barre was returned to Wheatland in 1905 for the fourth time. He resigned in 1906, and Wheatland was without a pastor for several months.

[PlatteCH 1981,49] E. L. Butler was appointed to the Wheatland Church in August 1906. During his pastorate, the Sunday school outgrew the church and Mrs. Butler, who was primary teacher, took her class into her kitchen for study period. When Mrs. Butler left, Mrs. P. A. Shope took over the primary class and taught it for 40 years.

Rev. J. H. Hicks was appointed to Wheatland in 1909, Wm. L. Wade in 1914, and J. A. McClellan in 1917.

During the pastorate of Rev. McClellan, it was definitely decided to build a new building on the site of the old church. Leon Goodrich, grandson of Chauncey Goodrich, builder of the old church, drew the plans for the new building. Charles Goodrich, assisted by his son, Arlo, built the new church.

Summer services were held in a temporary tabernacle erected across the street. By cold weather the building was so nearly completed that services could be held in the basement, and the first was held around Thanksgiving. Dedication services were planned for Easter Sunday, April 20, 1920, with Dr. W. T. Dumm, of Cheyenne, District Superintendent, and James A. Beebe, president of Illiff School of Theology, Denver, officiating, but because of a severe blizzard that weekend, the dedication services were not held until September. At that time, the Wyoming State Conference was meeting in Wheatland, and Dr. Dumm and Bishop Charles L. Moad officiated at the dedication.

Rev. E. L. Butler was appointed to the Wheatland church in 1921, W. W. Speer in 1924, H. E. Shephard in 1926, Orman C. King in 1926, Dwight M. Kitch in 1932, J. L. Williams in 1935, Wilbur P. Good in 1937, and

C. B. Doughty in 1939. Other ministers down to 1976 were W. W. Maxwell, 1943; Robert Kline, 1946; Howard Rice, 1949; S. J. Stevenson, 1954; B. B. Byus, 1955; Robert French, 1959; Clifford Poulson, 1962; Henry Hartberg, 1965; and Elliot Graves, 1972.

On Nov. 25, 1941, the Methodists celebrated Victory Day in paying off their debt on the church, built 21 years before. Bishop Wilber E. Hammaker came from Denver to deliver the address, which was followed by a basket dinner, a birthday cake, and reminiscences from long-standing members. The mortgage was burned in an impressive ceremony in December 1941.

On March 20, 1955, the Methodist church celebrated its 61st anniversary. Following the morning service, the congregation joined in a fellowship dinner featuring a large white birthday cake. And on May 23, 1976, marked its 82nd year with "Heritage Sunday". Nearly 100 members, most of them dressed in the fashions of the 1890's, saw their minister, Elliot Graves, wearing a black swallow-tail coat and carrying a black Bible, ride up to the church on a horse, even as the circuit riders had nearly 100 years before. The service that day was marked by a sermon given first in 1741 by John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church, and by many of the old favorite hymns. After the service, the congregation gathered for a carry-in dinner that featured recipes of 100 years ago. Six members who had been present at the dedication of the church in 1920 were present, and Mrs. Catherine Martin was honored for being its oldest member.

Rev. Virgil Lamm has been pastor of the church since 1978. His immediate predecessor was Rev. William Jacoby, 1977-78.

The Ladies' Aid was organized about 1894. The first available record of president of the organization was 1903 when Mrs. M. R. Johnston held the office. The aim of the society, aside from its social activities, was to

assist in the church program by calling on newcomers, helping needy families, and to aid with the upkeep of the church.

On Oct. 1, 1940, the society was reorganized under the name, Women's Society of Christian Service, with 75 charter members, and Mrs. James Clark, its first president. The WSCS is a member of the United Council of Church Women. It assists other churches in serving the annual Mothers and Daughters Banquet, participates in the Week of Prayer and Self-Denial, and World Day of Prayer meetings, and is active in other projects to raise funds for the church needs.

The church has had a choir most of the time. At first it sang to the accompaniment of a pump organ, then to a piano, and finally to a beautiful Hammond electric organ, which was installed in 1947 during the pastorage of Rev. Howard Rice. It was the first electric organ in any church in Wheatland and purchased through the efforts of the Sunday school, which sponsored a project, "Pennies for an Electric Organ", and other church groups that solicited funds. Mrs. Howard Rice was the first organist. After she left, Mary K. Bohmont took over the duties of organist and served many years. She also served as music chairman for a number of years, as did Mrs. Ben Cossman, who was also choir director for a number of years. Recently Laurence Swallow has served in that capacity, and Joan Branscom, Kevin Utter, Bonnie Patton, Joyce Nolan, Koreen Jones, Marie Rosentreter, and Esther Luck are among those who have served as musicians from time to time.

Based on information supplied by Mae Klaseen, the Platte County Record-Times, Wheatland Times, and Mary K. Bohmont.

Union Congregational

[PlatteCH 1981,49] On March 3, 1895, a group of devout Christians entered into covenant with the Union Congregational Church. This was

the first church in the new and promising community of Wheatland. Charter members were: Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell Morrison, Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Hurdle, Lula King, Fanny Kerns, Mr. and Mrs. F. L. Niner and daughter Jennetta, (Jennie). Mr. Hurdle was elected deacon and Mr. Niner, clerk and treasurer, to serve until the first annual meeting.

[PlatteCH 1981,50] Jennetta Miner was kept very busy being church organist, choir-chairman of the music committee, and serving as Sunday school secretary and treasurer.

Rev. J. M. Brown (3-10-1895 to 11-24-1897), was the first minister for this church at a salary of \$700 annually. Rev. Brown had to leave Wheatland due to ill health and on Sept. 22, 1905, passed away at Butte. Neb.

More officers were elected to serve until the first annual meeting. They were: deaconesses, Mrs. D. McCallum and Mrs. J. M. Brown; Sunday school superintendent, Mr. Hurdle; vice-superintendent, Mrs. J. M. Brown; for the Sunday school: treasurer, John McCallum; secretary, Miss Jennie Niner; and organist, Miss Dotty Jesse.

On July 7, 1895, the new Union Congregational Church building was dedicated.

The next minister was Rev. F. L. Sanborn, who occupied the pulpit from Oct. 1, 1897 to April 1, 1898.

Rev. J. M. Blanks served from June 2, 1898 to June 1, 1899.

Rev. D. L. Thomas (6-1-1899 to 1-22-1901), was well thought of by everyone. He helped repair the church building and contributed financially as well.

The next minister was Rev. George W. Crater, (5-2-1901 to 5-1-1903). While living in Wheatland, his son, Ernest, and Dr. and Mrs. Rigdon's

son, John, drowned in Festo Lake. Ernest was attending the University at Laramie. Rev. Crater accepted a call to the state of Washington.

Rev. J. W. Moore was the next pastor (7-12-1903 to 3-1-1907) at a salary of \$800 per year. Upon leaving Wheatland, he moved to Douglas and later was accidentally killed by a train.

Rev. James E. Butler was next called and served from April 7, 1907 to March 28, 1909. Rev. Moore and Rev. Butler had been friends since childhood.

Mrs. W. B. D. Gray (4-4-1909 to 8-30-1909) was accepted as temporary pastor, "with all the privileges and salary of a regular pastor until such time as a suitable pastor may be found." He was Rev. C. H. Gilmore (10-1-1909 to 12-3-1910) who was called at an increase in salary to \$1,000. On Oct. 3, he preached his first sermon as regular pastor. Rev. Gilmore tendered his resignation and moved away.

Again Mrs. Gray was asked to serve, but declined, due to a previous arrangement to go east.

Rev. R. F. Paxton next served (5-1-1911 to 12-31-1915) and during this time, it was voted to build a new church. Rev. Paxton resigned though he was recalled to serve again in 1923.

Rev. Arthur T. Evans (3-15-1916 to 1-1-1920) was next, receiving a salary of \$1,200 and parsonage. After serving, he moved to Lander where his wife later died.

Rev. Charles A. Nash (5-9-1920 to 10-1-1922) was the first minister to be hired sight unseen- He proved to be tall, good looking and shy. The Nashes had no children. He was very popular and added to his popularity in February of 1922 by offering to take a cut of \$200 in salary. At this time, the church had fallen into financial difficulties. This

was solved by hiring a substitute preacher and renting out the parsonage for a year.

Rev. D. Powell (12-1-1926 to 6-1-1928) had been a pastor at Jireh Church of Jireh College.

Although Rev. Powell received \$1500 per year, the next minister, Rev. Robert Hoffman (9-1-1928 to 9-27-1929) was offered the pastorate at a salary of \$2,000, which indicated times might be improving. Rev. and Mrs. Hoffman had seven children, the largest family ever to occupy the parsonage. Rev. Hoffman is said to have left the ministry to become a prison chaplain.

Rev. Riley E. Morgan (12-1-1929 to 4-1-1936) was next called at a salary of \$1800. Rev. Morgan served more than six years at substantial cuts in salary. The drouth of the early '30's was very telling on church finances.

The salary offered Rev. L. W. Flenner (6-1-1936 to 9-1-1942) still indicates hard times. He was offered \$1,200 and \$100 for moving expenses. From Wheatland the Flenners moved to Oregon.

Rev. Clifford S. Higby's (11-15-1942 to 4-19-1945) mother was responsible for getting five libraries for the state of Wyoming. Wheatland was first on the list. In January 1945, Rev. Higby had a serious operation at Mayo's. He tells how good it was to have Mr. and Mrs. "Wick" Hopkins walk into his hospital room in Rochester, and later they sent a spray of American Beauty roses. Due to a long convalescence, Rev. Higby resigned.

Rev. W. J. Hoare (9-24-1945 to 3-1-1952) was hired next at a salary of \$1800. At the annual meeting in '47, his salary was raised to \$2100. Rev. Hoare will long be remembered for his elaborate pageants which he wrote and directed, the stage settings and scenery he painted, and the

many costumes he furnished for the characters who performed. He died of a heart attack at Alliance, Neb., Feb. 9, 1957.

Rev. Alan Inglis (7-1-1952 to 1-1-1957) officiated a John K. Phifer's funeral, a difficult assignment. It was the fifth accidental death in the Phifer family, as Mr Phifer's parents, Dr. and Mrs. F. W. Phifer, and their son Wood and his wife lost their lives in a highway accident during a flood in 1935. The death of the Phifers was an irreparable loss to the church and community.

In 1956 the Union Congregational Church merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, which built its building in 1931. The name of the merged churches was United Church of Christ. Interim ministers were: Ed. Forssell, Frederick Stigemeir and Daniel Winger. Don Mills came to the church in 1962-63. Clare Olney served 1964-69.

[PlatteCH 1981,51] In 1964 classrooms were added to the church and the parsonage was remodeled. The money came from the sale of the E. & R. church and parsonage plus a mortgage. The mortgage was paid off in 1978.

Roger Steirs served the church 1970-72, Gordon Tritchler 1973-77, Gordon Grant 1978-79 and Kenneth Saunder is serving at present.

—by Virginia Trenholm and John Allen

Lone Tree Bible Ranch

[PlatteCH 1981,51] Wes Walton left his hometown of Buffalo, Minn. in August 1973 for "Word of Life Bible Institute" in the Adirondack Mountains of upper New York State. After graduating in May 1974, he worked that summer at the Word of Life Ranch giving horseback rides

and putting on rodeos for summer Bible camps. It was there he saw the effect that one week of Bible camp had on youth.

On Aug. 17, 1974, Wes Walton and Karen Gatto, another student of Word of Life, were married and shared the dream of their own Bible camp. In August 1975 they located what is now the Lone Tree Bible Ranch. This place had been homesteaded by Dick Weaklin in 1902. He built a large two story house from rock that he quarried and cut. It was later sold to Edwin Cundall, later to Myrtle Cundall, then to Glen Cundall, who sold it. At last, the Waltons bought the house and 40 acres around it.

The house had been unused for about 20 years. It took six people working all fall, winter, and spring to prepare for summer when they would host two weekend camps and ten fulltime kids from Minnesota, New Jersey and New York.

The granary and other out buildings have been turned into a girls' dorm and a bunk house for the wranglers. The old house is now used for the Chapel and provides a warm cozy place for winter retreats as well as summer campers.

In addition to volleyball, soccer, softball, archery, and horseback riding for the campers there are chuck wagon cookouts, and outings to the nearby mountains and lakes. They feel confident they will have some 70 kids a week all summer.

—Condensed from “Christian News and Views”