

WOMEN'S HISTORY

CHRIS PLANT, INSTRUCTOR

ORAL INTERVIEW OF PEARL LANE

FEBRUARY 12, 1983

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PEARL LANE

A small ranch between Burnt Fork, Wyoming, and Manila, Utah, was the setting for the birth of Delva Pearl Wade. She was born November 29, 1900. A midwife was in attendance at this birth, but one sister and one brother were born without a midwife's assistance. Pearl was fortunate enough to be born in a new house, all the other children were born in a log cabin. She was the youngest of ten children.

Once in the Spring and once in the Fall, the folks would take a wagon to Evanston for supplies. This would take several days, so they would camp out at night. They would buy flour, sugar, supplies and seeds for planting. Beef, pork, eggs, and garden vegetables were raised on the farm.

Sometimes, when school would start in the Fall, the children didn't even have shoes to wear to school. When their folks would go to Evanston for the winter supplies they'd get shoes for everyone.

There was a small post office at Burnt Fork and mail was brought in every day by horseback.

As a little child, Pearl remembers that when there was a party or a dance, everyone would go to the little one-room schoolhouse. They were taken in a wagon which had hay in the bottom. They had quilts with which to keep warm. These occasions were usually all night affairs so the parents would put the children on the benches to sleep.

The first time Pearl ever knew about doctors was when her brother, Earnest, got his thumb pulled off while roping a horse. They took him to Evanston and it took a couple of days to get there. The doctor amputated the thumb at the first joint.

John Baxter Wade, Pearl's father, had a colorful life. He was born at Springfield, Illinois on January 7, 1842. He was four years old when his parents came west to Evansville which later became Evanston, Wyoming.

When he was eight years old, he was taken by the Ute Indians who kept him for two years. One day he got on his pony, dressed like an Indian, and escaped. He saw a stream that was familiar to him and followed it. The stream took him right to the front of his father's cabin. His mother was frightened, thinking he was an Indian. It took some time to convince her that he was her son.

John grew up in Evansville. He rode for the Pony Express and it was quite an asset for him to be able to speak with and understand the Indians.

He was seventeen or eighteen years old when he rode the Pony Express route. He rode from Fort Laramie to Salt Lake City, all the routes between them. Fort Bridger was his station. Pearl remembers, as a small child, her father showing her the stables where they kept their horses and the stall where he tied his horse. She enjoys being able to still go there and see those places he pointed out to her.

Pearl's mother was Caroline Augusta Adams Wade. Caroline, or Carrie, as she was called, was born in Evansville and met John and married him there.

Mr. Wade sold the cattle ranch near Burnt Fork when Pearl was not quite six years old. The sheep were coming into that area and crowding the grazing land. He could see then that it was not going to be a very successful cattle ranch. He bought three farms between Mountain View and Lyman, Wyoming. Two of these farms were located near Urie, Wyoming.

There was a little store about half a mile from their ranch. They used to go there with eggs to trade for whatever they needed. Their mother would send the girls to gather the eggs and if there weren't enough they would take the eggs from the setting hens. They got caught selling rotten eggs and were punished for it. Needless to say, they didn't do that again!

Their mother, Carrie, treated the family with home remedies to cure and also to prevent illnesses. Pearl can remember her mother rubbing something on her chest. When she asked what it was her mother said it was goose grease. In the spring of the year she'd put something in a silk bag and tie it around the children's necks. This was called asfetida and was used to ward off chicken pox, measles and other illnesses. They smelled so awful the children wouldn't go to school wearing them. The children all seemed to be quite healthy. If someone got a cut, they would take the skin from the inside of an egg shell and put it over the cut which acted just like a band-aid. Pearl knows of people that still use this method today. Her mother also made a cough syrup out of honey and vinegar which seemed to work quite well.

When Pearl was eleven years old, her parents separated and her mother sold her farm. There were just the three youngest children still living at home. The mother and the children went to Carter and took the train to Green River.

After living on a ranch, Green River seemed very exciting. Seeing the trains and all the people seemed so different and also there were more children in school.

Mrs. Wade bought a house and ran the Big Horn Hotel for two years. The girls were a big help. One of Pearl's chores was cleaning the lamps which were in every room. The laundry was done with an old washing machine in a room off the kitchen. Mostly railroad people stayed at the hotel.

At this time, there was not a building South of the river with the exception of Bill Hutton's log cabin. That area is now called Hutton Heights.

Most of the hotels and stores were between the railroad and the river in the area that we now call the South Side. They've all been torn down and the railroad tracks are there now. The South Side is further East than it used to be. There was one hotel on the North Side which was called the Green River Hotel. It was demolished and torn down just a couple of years ago. It was located on Railroad Avenue.

There was only one grocery store which was on the South side of the tracks. There was a meat market on the North side that was originally run by Spinner and later by Viox. There was also one shoe store. There were several houses on the North side of town and some of them are still standing. The first buildings on the South side of the river were put in by Mountain Fuel. These houses are still standing and there are people still living in them.

Pearl had never seen a doctor before moving to Green River. Dr. Gilligan was the first doctor she knew. Later on Dr. Charlotte Hawk and her husband, Dr. Jacob Hawk, both practiced in Green River.

Castle Rock used to have a shaky old ladder on the back side of it. Pearl climbed up this ladder when she was fourteen and also when she was eighteen. When Union Pacific Days were celebrated, a big sign with Green River, Wyoming and the Union Pacific Shield was put up on top of Castle Rock for all the town to see. The ladder has since been removed so no one can get up there.

Later on, the Union Pacific built the Social Hall. As the girls grew older, they attended dances there. Anyone could rent the hall. There was a one-way bridge for the crossing of the Green River. If you started across, the other people had to back up and wait for you. This bridge was built in 1892 and was the first vehicular bridge across the Green River. It was an iron structure with a wooden deck. You can still see the pilings for the bridge sticking up in the river. It was about three blocks west of the present location of the big bridge.

Pearl went to school in the building that is now known as the Masonic Temple. It was originally a school and later on was purchased by the Masons. First grade through high school were all in this same building. Pearl attended this school from the fifth grade through the eighth grade but did not graduate.

Pearl started working as a night telephone operator when she was only thirteen. She had to "story a little" about her age, but she got the job and kept it. She went to school in the daytime and worked at night. There was a night bell and a cot to sleep on. Sometimes there wouldn't be over three or four calls a night.

When Pearl was about fifteen she witnessed a hanging. A colored man came to town. There was a big eating house in the depot. The colored man insulted the waitress working there so one of the railroad

men ordered him out there and told him never to insult a girl again. The colored man went out and came back with a gun and shot the switchman and killed him. The sheriff took him right to jail. Pearl watched the whole thing. She remembers there was just a little snow on the ground. There was a rumor the colored man was being smuggled from the jail to the boiler room. The railroad men got up in arms over the shooting. There was quite a mob of twenty or more. They broke down the door and put a rope around his neck and dragged him clear to the depot. They hung him on the telegraph pole which was about fifty yards west of the depot. He hung there four or five hours until just before the afternoon passenger train came into town. Everyone felt he got just what he had coming to him.

George S. Cottle and Delva Pearl Wade were united in marriage January 31, 1916. They took the train to Rock Springs and were married at his sister's home. Pearl worn an ankle length dress of white lace. George then worked on the railroad and was a machinist apprentice. After they were married, he had to spend a year in Cheyenne to finish his training. Pearl stayed in Green River and continued working as a telephone operator. George learned to build railroad engines from the wheels on up. The children from this union were Dorothy Pearl Cottle, born July 9, 1918; Lillian Cottle, born May 10, 1920; and George Samuel Cottle Jr., born September 3, 1922.

Two of Pearl's brothers were not drafted for World War I. They enlisted and rode the water pipe line which ran from Green River to Rock Springs. They guarded it because there was a danger it would be blown up. The day the Armistice was signed they stopped at Pearl's house in Green River. They both had dinner and talked of the flu which was

raging at the time. They both remarked if they got it, they wouldn't last long. They went home and both of them came down with the flu. One passed away November 22, 1918, before midnight. The other brother passed away shortly after midnight on the 23rd. There was a double funeral for them at the Fort Bridger cemetery.

The flu in Green River was very bad and many lives were lost. The doctors were so busy they couldn't come to the houses.

Pearl also came down with the flu. Her sister and husband took care of her. She didn't remember much because the doctors told her husband that every time Pearl woke up he was to give her a shot of whiskey. Between that and the onion poultice that Pearl's sister made and put on her brought her through the flu. The sister also made an onion syrup to give her.

George didn't have to go into the service during World War I because he was important to the railroad at the time. They saved War Bonds and after the Armistice they bought their first car. It was a Chevrolet and they paid \$500.00 cash for it. Several people in Green River had cars by that time. That very day they got the car her husband put her behind the wheel. He said "you're driving" and showed her how. Pearl has always driven and has never been without a car since that time. She is 82 years old and still drives her car wherever she wants to go. She drives over to Rock Springs about once a week.

George was a beautiful skater. He was teaching the children how to skate on the Green River when he hit some rough spots on the ice and fell and hurt his tailbone. From that incident he had cancer of the nerves. He went to Omaha, Nebraska for this. They even flew in a doctor from the Mayo Clinic to see him as it was a very unusual case.



He suffered with this problem for a year then passed away on January 9, 1942 at the age of 48.

Pearl married William Lane July 20, 1942. He was a train dispatcher in Green River at the time. In 1956 they moved to San Bernadino, California, for his health. He passed away on July 15, 1957 and was taken back to Green River for burial. Pearl moved back to Green River. She was too young to get a pension. A dear friend, Dr. Stapleton, wanted her to be his dental assistant. Even though she didn't know anything about being an assistant he trained her.

The office was located in the old First National Bank building. She worked there three and one-half years until the long stairways became too much for her.

She then became a desk clerk at the Tomahawk Hotel and remained at this job for ten years. Due to some very bad experiences, she quit.

Pearl was elected director of the Senior Citizens when they first became organized. She held this position for three years. At the age of seventy-five she retired.

She is now on the Advisory Board of the Senior Housing Complex where she lives. There are nine on the Board - three from each floor of the complex.

Pearl never thought she would see Green River as it is now. She looks out her big window at night and it looks to her like she's in a real city. When she first came here, there probably weren't 500 people in the whole town and now there are about 12,800.

I have enjoyed meeting Pearl Lane and working with her. She is a gracious, lovely person.

WYOMING STATE ARCHIVES, MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT  
BIOGRAPHICAL FORM

NAME: Pearl Lane

PRESENT ADDRESS: 320 Mansface Terrace - Apt. 204, Green River, WY

1. Present profession or occupation: Retired
2. Dental receptionist, 1958-1962 Telephone operator *UNSURE of DATES 1913-?*  
Clerk - Tomahawk Motel, 1961-1972, Director, Senior Citizens Center  
1971-1972.
3. Date of birth: November 29, 1900 Place of birth: Burnt Fork, WY
4. Date moved to Wyoming: born in Wyoming
5. Full name of parents (give mother's maiden name): Caroline Augusta Adams, John Baxter Wade.
6. Names of brothers and sisters (and to whom married):  
William Dugdale (half-brother)  
Oliver J. Wade  
Grace Wade - married Hyrum Higgs  
Edward J. Wade - married Becky Johnson  
Sarah May Wade - married Walter Hickey - Hector Stool  
Grover Cleveland Wade - married Evelyn Davis  
Earnest Wade - married Olive Noonan  
Lucy Wade - married Earl King  
Ruth Wade - married Loob Reid
7. Schools attended (give dates): Urie, Wyoming - 1906 to 1911  
Green River, Wyoming - 1911 to 1914
8. Places of residence in Wyoming (give dates): Burnt Fork - 1900 to 1906, Urie - 1906 to 1911, Green River - 1911 to present.
9. -----
10. -----
11. Political affiliation: Republican
12. Religious affiliation: Episcopal
13. Marriage: George Samuel Cottle, January 31, 1916, Rock Springs, WY  
William Lane, July 20, 1942, Green River, WY
14. Children: Dorothy Pearl Cottle, July 9, 1918  
Lillian Cottle, May 10, 1920  
George Samuel Cottle, Jr., September 3, 1922  
Grandchildren: George Allen Twitchell, November 13, 1942  
Wadeen Twitchell Whittaker, March 29, 1946  
Sharon Rosette, June 2, 1942  
Douglas Rosette, November 6, 1944  
Janet Kay Rosette, July 1, 1951  
Karen Jeanne Cottle, December 3, 1950  
Sheryl Cottle, November 3, 1953
15. Rebecca Lodge since April, 1919. Awarded the highest honor -  
Decoration of Chivalry for outstanding work in the community  
and lodge. She is the only person in Green River who holds this  
honor.

Past president of Union Pacific Oldtimers.

Outstanding Senior Woman of 1977 for her contributions to Wyoming Senior Citizens.

Past Director - Senior Citizens

Bridge Clubs

Duplicate Bridge

RECOGNIZABLE