

ORAL HISTORY BIOGRAPHY

HISTORY OF WYOMING

NOVEMBER, 1983

by
Patricia Cywinski

A short biography of John B. Wade

John Wade rode the Pony Express Trail in 1861, from Ft. Laramie to Salt Lake City. The Pony Express hired boys of 18 yrs. of age and very slight built men who weighed 125 to 135 lbs. The Pony Express was in existence for 18 months.

When John was 8 yrs. old he was captured by the Ute Indians and raised as an Indian. The Utes treated him good and seemed to like him as they taught him their customs. After 2 years, he got on a pony and followed a stream which look familiar to him and returned to his parents cabin. When he first rode up his mother was scared but after a short time she realized this Indian boy was her son.

John Wade married Caroline Adams and they had a 320 acre cattle ranch at Henry Fork near Burnt Fork. John and Carrie had 9 children and Pearl Lane was the last born in 1900. John was 59 yrs. old when Pearl was born.

More information maybe obtained in the book, Progressive Men of Wyoming into the life of John Wade.

Pearl Lane

This oral history biography is about Pearl Lane. Pearl was raised on the ranch until 1907. She remembers going to the Stewart ranch to visit with Elinor Stewart and a neighbor Mrs. Welch. Her recollection of Mrs. Stewart is a very warm and loving person, not anywhere near the movie version of Elinor, who seemed to be rather a "cold" woman. One thing that stuck in her mind about the visit was that there was chickens running all around the inside

of the home. Elinor did not have any children (except Jerrine) at the time of this visit.

Life in Green River - 1907

Pearl moved to Green River in 1907, with her Mother and Pearls 2 sisters. Mrs. Wade worked at the Big Horn Hotel, which was located on the south side of the railroad track just up from the river. While Mrs. Wade worked at the hotel they also lived there and the 2 older girls also worked at the hotel. Eventually, Mrs. Wade bought a small 4 room house, near the underpass and it was about 3 homes from the river. The house consisted of a living room, kitchen and 2 bedrooms. The first recollections Pearl has of Green River, is that there was not too much here. She remembers there were 3 hotels, 2 grocery stores and a butcher shop. There was one picture show. There were some nice homes on the north side near Castle Rock.

School years

While Pearl was still on the ranch, she attended school in a one room red school house on the Stover Ranch, which was one mile from her home. She vividly remembers her first teacher as he went crazy in school and had to be removed from school. The next year she attended school in Lone Tree. She had a married sister living there and she helped with her children while living with her family. After moving to Green River she went to school where the Masonic Temple is now located up until the first year of High School. At about that time she got a job for the phone company and worked the night shift. She had a cot and slept in

between the 3 or 4 calls per night, she received \$1.00 per shift. She gave some ^{money} to her mother and spent some on new clothes. She worked for the phone company for about 3 years. Pearl feels quite strongly about the fact that there is a difference in the way she was taught as compared to the way girls are taught now a days. She feels girls today are much too forward. Pearl was taught to act like a lady and children were made to behave.

Birthdays, Christmas and picnics

Pearl had her first birthday party when she was 10 yrs. old, her Mother told her today is your birthday.

There was no special times made to celebrate Christmas. Her Mother and Father made 2 trips per year to Evanston to get supplies. On the Fall trip, they would come back with rock candy, which is sugar candy on a string - this is what the children got for Christmas. It was very hard to get out in the winter and find the fir trees, as sometimes the snowdrifts were 8 to 10 feet high. She doesn't recall no get togethers, no gift exchanges, and no tree.

On the 4th of ~~July~~ there was usually a town picnic and there were games and races for the children. People got together and everyone shared the others food on these occasions. She doesn't ever remember a vacation, there was too much work and too little time.

Lynching in Green River

When Pearl was 16 she witnessed a lynching down in front of the railroad depot. Seems a colored man insulted a waitress and

a railroad man took it up. The black man came back with a gun and shot the railroad man, but did not kill him. The authorities came and got the black man and hung him from a telephone pole and there he hung for 4 hours. No one wanted to cut him down. Finally someone did and the body was taken away.

The Indians used to pass through Green River about twice a year, recalls Pearl. She says they came down from the reservation near Lander, and they were here to get supplies. There were about 15 or 20 and they would stay overnite, they dressed in their native dress.

An epidemic, illnesses and their cures

There was a terrible epidemic in Green River in 1918, right after World War I. Pearl was nursing her sister-in-law through the flu, when she got it. She was already married and had a baby. Her husband called the Doctor and he said to give her a shot of straight whiskey every 2 or 3 hours. Her sister made poultices out of onions for her chest. Pearl thinks about 50 people died here in Green River. Pearl's 2 brothers and 2 sisters-in-law died during the epidemic, which was like pneumonia.

When Pearl would get a cold her mother would rub her chest with goose grease and if she got the croup she was given kerosine with a bit of sugar on a teaspoon to drink. For cuts, the skin which is one the inside of an egg was put over the cut and pressed to the skin and it became like tape.

The town cemetery used to be where the new library is now. There wasn't too much ceremony to funerals, a wagon came for the body, which was put into a coffin, the Bible was read and the coffin was lowered into the ground.

Entertainment

Pearl confesses to being somewhat of a tomboy. She liked to have a stick horse and run and play Run Sheep Run, which is similar to present day Hide and Seek. She started liking dolls after she got her first china doll. While still living on the ranch at Henry's Fork, a hired man showed her how to play cribbage. She was 7 years old.

Pearl's first date was to a dance. There was a movie show here in Green River called the Rex Theatre. The show was downstairs and the dance hall was upstairs. The dance hall was located on Railroad Street next to what today is the Green Gander Bar.

Early married years

Pearl met her husband on the train going from Green River to Rock Springs. They were going with other school kids to the circus. She was married at 16 years of age. They were married at Mr. Lane's sisters home, which was in the West Flat area of Rock Springs. She had a traditional white dress and veil. Just the immediate families were present. Pearl had 3 children, one in 1918, 1920 and 1922. There was a doctor in attendance for the birth of all 3 children. There was no pre-natal care, the first time Pearl went to the Doctors she was 8 months pregnant and the reason she went was to make arrangements for the baby's birth. When it was time for her first baby to be born, she woke up at midnite, the doctor was called and the baby was born at 2 and everyone was back to sleep at 4.

At first when Pearl was married she lived with her mom and after about 10 years of marriage they built a home across from

Lincoln Jr. High School.

There wasn't much social life then, but once Lawrence Welk and his band came to what is now Expedition Island. Pearl says everyone in Green River went down to the old pavillon to hear him. Pearl and her husband did belong to a social club called the Merry Socials - they would meet about every month or so for a dance. This was always something to look forward to and once in awhile she would buy a new dress.

In 1918, they bought their first car. They got in Rock Springs and paid \$500.00 for it. They had saved war bonds and she stil remembers how much they enjoyed that first ride. There was one gas station in town, which was where the present senior citizen center is located.