

HISTORICAL INTERVIEW

OF ZELLA PRITCHARD

BY GAIL BALDWIN

APRIL 1-8, 1985

I am interviewing Mrs. Zella Pritchard, an eighty one year old resident of Evanston, Wyoming. Zella is five feet five inches tall, weighs 140 pounds. She has lovely white hair, she wears short framing, a beautiful wise face, sparkling brown eyes, a pleasant smile, and a hardy laugh. Zella is a self sufficient lady married once, to James Berton Pritchard, she has been a widow for thirty four years.

Zella has a pioneer fish and game license, and still hunts with her son James Duard Pritchard, and her daughter Gail Baldwin. Mrs. Zella Pritchard resides at 1617 Main Street, Evanston, Wyoming, she has lived in Uinta County for fifty seven years.

Zella Pearl Townsend was born at Lamar, Oklahoma on March 19, 1904. Oklahoma was not a state at this time, it was known as the Panhandle, or the Cherokee Strip, Oklahoma did not become a state until 1907. One of eight children of Alice Gorden and William Chalmer Townsend. Alice was a Registered Nurse, from Paris, Texas. William C. Townsend was from Kalamazoo, Michigan. They were married in 1900 at Enid, Oklahoma their first child Neva was born in a dugout in the side of a hill. Mr. Townsend and his dad, and brother rode in the homestead race for land on the Cherokee Strip, that is how they got their start. Mr. Townsend was a storekeeper, a teacher, farmer, and a musician. They had eight children all living at this time.

Zella at 18, and Neva at 23, moved and went to work at Fort Riley, Kansas at the post doing Civil Service work. They shared an apartment in Junction City, Kansas. They often double dated and went to dances, on one occasion they met a tall lanky man from Arkansas, James Berton Pritchard, and a short stocky man from Kansas Carl Stottlar. on the

first date Zella dated Carl, and Neva dated Berton. On the second date they switched partners, as Zella was taller than Neva, and Zella dated Berton, and Neva dated Carl. They went to a square dance at Fort Riley, at the Post. The mode of transportation was a spring wagon with a team of horses.

Zella Townsend married James Berton Pritchard at her apartment with her sister in attendance, Authur Craven of the first Christian Church in Junction City, Kansas performed the service. They were married on October 4, 1925. On November 24, 1925 Neva married Carl Stottler in the same apartment.

Berton and Zella moved to Los Angeles, California where Berton went to work at the Navel Ship Yards to learn overhead welding. He worked at Wilmington at the harbor for two years. They then had a son James Duard Pritchard born February 24, 1927. They were living in a ten room old estate home, utilizing two rooms, their furniture was a mattress, and springs, a dresser, a card table, two orange crates for chairs, and a kerosene stove. Duards first bed was a dresser drawer, with a pillow in it, Duard now is over six feet tall and weighs over 200 pounds.

They had fruit trees in the yard, and Olive trees, and when Berton compleated his training at welding, they wrote Bertons former employer the Union Pacific Railroad, at Evanston Wyoming and ask his former boss Mr. Casey if he could get employment there. Mr. Casey was delighted and told him they needed a welder and a baseball pitcher to come and go to work, in the reclamation plant at the roundhouse in Evanston, Wyoming.

They decided to take a vacation before settling down to work they

packed their belongings and set out in their 1923 model t Ford for a visit to Arkansas, and Oklahoma, to visit both sets of parents, and to leave Zella and Duard at Neva and Carl Stottlers untill Berton could get settled and find a place to live for his family.

Berton's parents lived on a farm at Berryville, Arkansas, they also had a sawmill. Berton's parents were the former Winifred Ball of Paris, Texas, and James Author Pritchard of Kentucky, a school teacher and a United States Marshall who had a family of ten children. James Berton and James Barton were the youngest, but Barton died as a ~~infant~~, they were born April 27, 1896.

Zella and Berton were short of money by this time and borrowed \$50. from Berton's folks to tide them over untill they were settled, so Zella and Duard stayed with the Stottlers for three months.

James Berton drove to Evanston and lived in the Young Mans Christian Association building. He loved Wyoming the fishing was wonderful and the hunting also. He loved baseball and was a south paw pitcher for the Union Pacific Railroad ball team, they played all over the U.P.R.R. system. He finally had enough time in to get a employee pass and send for his wife and son.

On arriving in Evanston, Wyoming he ask Zella how she liked Wyoming? Her reply was I dont its to crowded and barren and there is so few trees. He told her it would grow on her the longer she was here the better she would like it. Berton had an apartment at 24 first avenue upstairs and they settled in North Evanston then the main residential section of town.

Berton piched baseball winning three tropheys, one in Boise, Idaho one in Colorado, and one in Wyoming. J. Duard was the mascot for the team their pictures are still all over the system, in the offices and depot's, of the Union Pacific Railroad.

They were still driving the modle t Ford with the window sashes and no heater. The streets were dirt, few with gravel and the sidewalks were wood planks, and few stores had cement in front of them. They charged groceries at Blyth and Fargo untill they could pay back the money they had borrowed from his folks.

Many Chinese were in Evanston at this time working at the Almy and Kendle Mines. They exploded and cought fire they lost between 75 to 80 men in these fires, They were mainly oriential but some white were also traped and perished. These mines are still burning and are fenced off to this day. After the mine disaster many Chinese moved to Rock Springs to get work, in the mines.

At this time Old Bear Town was the place to go to hunt old bottles and relic's of the wild town. It is now a reservoy and fishing is very good and boating is popular they have a boat club there. The Sulfer reservoy covers a link to our past.

The local bussiness men flooded ground below the State Hospital, in the winter and cut blocks of ice and packed it in sawdust for summer distribution in a spring wagon , door to door for iceboxes. Produce was hard to get in the stores because everything had to be shipped in by truck or rail, so gardens were a must, to have a well balenced diet.

Zella and Berton then had a daughter thus completing their family. Their Dr. was out of town so there was a midwife to take care of her and her daughter. With their growing family they needed a larger place.

They bought a shell of a house at 182 first avenue and started to fix it up to make it livable. There was no plumbing in the house or electricity, and an outhouse in back, the water in the yard. They fixed this up to make a nice home modernizing it as they could. It was river bottom land and the gardens were excellent, they had brought Rubarb roots from the Ozarks and transplanted current bushes, and raspberry bushes, Zella canned at least 1,000 quarts of food a year they packed their wild meat in crocks with lard and a layer of meat and a layer of lard so they lived very well.

Dr Jacobey had a home hospital at that time and did minor surgery. The State Hospital was a snake pit and Dr. Whalen took it over and started to modernize this. The State Hospital at that time was self supporting they grew their own food, and had cattle and the patients worked and they were self supporting. They found Dr. Whalen and his wife shot to death in their home on the hospital grounds, They said a patient killed them but it was never proven.

Ellen Whittle ran the local home for midwife's most of the children in Evanston were born there until the hospital was built. She then turned this into a Nursing home, until the nursing home was built she now lives in the senior citizen apartments. Her home was at 29 first avenue a 4 bedroom home she used as her place of business, she then rented rooms to locals, to supplement her pension.

Fishing, hunting Arrowheads, and big game hunting was one of the major pastimes of people at that time. Square dancing was popular

they would cleanout a section house on a section at Wytta four miles out of Evanston, Mereal and Pauline Bullene lived there and he was the forman Pauline was Zella's sister. They would invite several couples and their children pack a lunch, and blankets the kids would wind up the phonograph and change records for them to dance until they got sleepy then grab a blanket and go to sleep. The adults would dance untill dawn. They made their own home brew, and Root Beer for the kids so everyone enjoyed themselves.

The Chinese had a Josh house in Evanston, it was used for worship, and fellowship. The interior was red velvet and very plush, it was decorated with gold and jade. China Mary and China Charlie were the caretakers, they lived in Evanston untill their death. They had a home built of railroad ties, between Bear River and the railroad tracks they grew a garden in the river bottom land and used their own excreations for fertilizer, They grew some of the best produce and Charley would put a yoke over his shoulder and a basket at each end of the yoke and deleiver the vegetables from door to door. Good produce was hard to get in Evanston at this time.

They had many cats and China Mary would pay a penny apiece for suckers for them. Duard as a boy would go down to the old sucker hole and catch a few, and hurry to China Marys and sell them. Then rush to Willibeys store and spend it on penny candy.

China Mary and China Charlie lived to be close to 115 as far as they could figure on age. They had their funeral and clothes selected when they died, and paid for. They used to wear black below the knee type knickers, and a vnecked loose black shirt with a sash around the waist, and thong type shoes.

Years later they celebrated a Chinese New Years, with a parade and people representing them in a rickshaw, with the Chinese Dragon and quite a celebration, with participation from several states.

The old flour Mill on the Bear River was in later years to be the Jolly Rodger owned by Joe Wheeler they had a museum upstairs and many local people had donated family treasures to be displayed there. Joe Wheeler sold this before his death.

There was an old Opera house on Main Street where vaudeville acts came to perform. When the movies and the Strand Theater opened up the opera house closed. They then made a dance house out of it naming it "the Bloody Bucket" the cowboys and shearherders spilled a lot of blood there in a few years time. They closed this when ballroom dancing lost some of the popularity, and made it into a skating rink, for the young-people.

The Palace Rooms was the house of prostitution on front street, Dr Holland checked the girls and kept them in line for years. When the house closed down many of the girls married prominent men' in Evanston.

Gambling was present in Evanston at this time the bars on front Street were busy, and on the Wyoming ,Utah border was a nightclub, the Stateline the bar in Wyoming the resterant in Utah. In Evanston the "Oak Tavern " was owned by Glen Mills and it was a beautiful club with inlayed wood and mirrors all over the building. Glen was known as Diamond Jim because of an enormous diamond stick pin he wore in his ties. He caught a dealer stealing while dealing 21, and ran the man down front street shooting at him all the time, fortunatly he did not hit him.

Beckers Brewery was a big place of employment in Evanston, you could drink and work at the same time and get paid for it. Many families in Evanston suffered when they moved the brewery to Utah.

Brocklawn Creamery was also a source of income for many in town, the ranchers would bring their milk to town by wagon in the old days. They finally progressed to a milk truck to pick up the milk at the ranches the economy finally dwindled until it moved to Utah also, thus more people were out of work.

The Union Pacific Shops and reclamation plant was moved to Green River and the old round house was closed so this was the final straw for the economy. People started to leave the area, the railroad bought their homes and transported them to other places to live. So for years the majority of people in Evanston were widows and widowers and retired people.

The State Hospital and the womens Prison was the major place for employment at that time. The local merchants looked forward to a boost in economy on Labor Day, with the rodeo as people flocked to town for a drunk and a good time for a few days. Most of the income came from neighboring states such as Utah.

Berton and Zella then bought a home at 1617 Main Street in Evanston in Anderson Heights. They had two lots and a much nicer home and bought a 1951 Chevrolet. Berton was in an accident a boiler top was dropped on his head in six weeks he died. Because he lived over thirty days Zella received no compensation he died January 19, 1951.

When the Oil Boom hit Evanston and the surrounding area in a way it was a blessing. Work and jobs were to be had to support the home and families, who had stayed without work. A large influx of people moved in so housing boomed, and the economy picked up. They had a man camp out by Almy, which housed over 1,000 men, for single men to live *There*.

The crime rate naturally went wild, and the growth was so fast, the town spread from Almy to Bear River Valley, and from Yellow Creek to Cromptons Reservoir. The population doubled in a few years time.

The industry poured into town they built a new Courthouse, and hired a larger Police force, and the business moved in. Whether they like it or not the trouble of a boom town they sure liked the money.

The housing industry has suffered because they can not sell many of the homes they built since things have slowed down, many new homes are boarded up and empty. But it looks like it will pick up again in the spring. They have built new schools and the town is alive now.

The impact on the town is settling down, but the impact on the wildlife, and fishing, and pollution is perhaps irreversible. They are killing our game wantonly, and destroying the environment for our wildlife and our streams. They are even killing cattle, and the ranchers are up in arms. But such is progress, it is the history of this country give a little and take a lot.

Easter Sunday on a outing with her family, Zella fell and broke her right hip. The following Friday they did major surgery for Cancer, she is now recuperating at her daughters in Rock Springs and is up on a walker doing fine.

Bertow Everette Miller

Patty

Chad
Miller

Kristie
Miller

Melody Mynette Miller

Saul
Zubatek

Levon
Marie
Zubatek

Tammy
Lynn
Zubatek

Dad - Port Washington
Discharge Vancouver Island

you Born Dad Born died
How much schooling -
Where married - family history
(What year) came to Wyo.
first home in Wyo (convenience)
How long in Wyo. - Transportation
~~your heritage~~ + Chinese¹⁰⁵ - Spanish
Heritage - Gordon + Debusend
size of family - each
occupation + a year hunt & fish
Bear town
Houses of ill repute - gambling,
happiest entertainment
finniest
saddest
christmas

Oil Boom -
~~boom~~

- 1 When & where were you born
- 2 Was a midwife in attendance
- 3 When did you come to R.S.
- 4 Where did you live in the neighborhood? —
- 5 Was you here when the Oil Boom hit?
- 6 Did you notice a difference if so what.
- 7 Was there much violence in town? shootings etc.
- 8 Was it nicer before the oil boom
- 9 What is your happiest memory of S.W. County
10. What is your saddest memory of S.W. County.
11. What would you like to leave on record for future generations

Born - Dates children born home.
clothes ^{married} family history yours + dad's
" heritage both sides

what first ^{Trans}
Home How long in Wyo How you come

What was happiest time in Wyo

" " saddest " " "

" " funnest " " "

Ethnic groups China Mex -

Discipline in childhood

NAME: Zella Pearl Pritchard

PRESENT ADDRESS: 1617 main St, Evanston Wyo

1. Present profession or occupation:

Retired

2. Occupations followed in the past (give dates): Nurse

3. Date of birth: 3/19/04 Place of birth: Lamar Oklahoma Territory

4. Date of moving to Wyoming: 1927

5. Full name of parents (give mother's maiden name)

Alice Gordon
William Townsend

6. Names of brothers and sisters (and to whom married): Laura
Neva Slottler, Olin Townsend - Clifford Townsend
Carl, Audrie Townsend John Pauline T. Bullene Merille

7. Schools attended (give dates):

Granfield Okla 7th grade Perry Oklahoma
Lawton High Okla Lawton Oklahoma Fredrick Oklahoma

8. Places of residence in Wyoming (give dates):

1927 1617 main Street Vinton County
Evanston, Wyoming

9. Military service (dates, awards, area served, rank, etc.):

10. Political offices held (give dates):

11. Political affiliation:

Dem.

12. Religious affiliation:

Baptist

13. Marriage (spouse's name, date and place of marriage):

James Berton Pritchard 1925 married
Zella Pearl Townsend

14. Children (names, dates of birth, grandchildren, etc.):

Edward Pritchard 2/24/27 Calif

Hail Pritchard Baldwin 6/11/31 Wyo

Berton Miller - Chad Miller Kristie Miller - Patty Chips
Melody Zubatch - Susan Marie Zubatch Tammy Zubatch
Paul Zubatch

15. List of clubs and societies of which you are a member:

B H & H Homemakers club
Rebecca Lodge
Neighbors of Woodcraft
Senior Citizens
Union Pacific Old timers Club #20
Volunteer State Hospital
Volunteer Memorial Hospital
Church work

Comanche
Cherokee

McTilligan
O'Brien

Maria
Charles
Willie
Maggie

Charles
Sparks
(a pleasure
reiner)

married Evidole
1900
William Townsend
(Michigan)

William
Townsend
(is married)

Felix
Carter

mother
European

Ball

Winifred 84
Ball (Davis Texas)

Otto
9 Barton
178
John
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

school teacher
(is married)
Kentucky
farmer
Guthrie 82
Pritchard

Pritchard

audria
Nancy
Hester
(1951)

Katharina
Bastiani
Pauline
Bulone
+ Ruth
Doris
opaki
DK

Zella

3ella Pearl Townsend
(3/19/1071)

(Oct 1925)
Functens
city Kansas

James
UP.R.R.
Bartlett
Pritchard
1894
Bartlett
Cork
4/27/1894
D read 11/15/181

Dward Pritchard
P.R. Road,

Floyd Miller

(Evansville)
Barton Everett
miller

Paul Vernalee Pritchard
Evansville to go
(mum)

(Evansville)
Melody
miller

Robert
1900
Alabama
City

Pauline Bullene
Merrill "

↓
Cindy
Betty - 1 child Cindy
Pauline - 5 children
Bud

Oliver Townsend

Ruth
↓
Lois
Harvey
Margriet
David
Jerry

Clifford Townsend

Carl Wayne
Ralph
Billy
Ralph

Audrie Carter

John Carter

Letha May

May Lee

Norma Jean

Marvin

Neva Stotler

Carl

↓

Harold 3 day
infant