

Big Sky Roundup



MSGs Web Site:
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~mtmsg>

2011-2012 Officers

October 2011

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Newsletter Editor – Shawna Valentine

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1930 Federal Census Index for Montana Project is Complete

With 8 months to spare before the 1940 Census is released, I was delighted to announce at the September Conference that the indexing project of the 1930 Federal Census for Montana is complete!!

This project began at the 2002 conference in Billings, before online census indexes were readily available. It was felt that having people from the actual community transcribe the records would give a much better index than someone from who knows where guessing at the wonderful penmanship that so often appears. The complete index is available by county on our website.

This was truly a statewide endeavor and required the aid of so many volunteers. I'd like to thank each and every one of you that helped in this project, and would especially like to thank Al Stoner for her help in gathering completed counties and coordinating volunteers.

And NO, we are not planning on indexing the 1940 Census.

Possibility of 2 New Local Societies

Exciting news!!! There was great interest in forming new societies at the Kalispell Conference.

We have 23 people interested in getting a society started again in the Kalispell area. Plans are underway to get these people together to work towards that goal.

There was also interest of organizing a Gallatin County Society. We are working with them as well.

If any of you know of an area that might be interested in starting a society OR if you would be interested in participating in either the Kalispell area or Gallatin County Society, please contact Verba Valentine, blgsmarket@aol.com

Shawna Valentine, President



President Shawna Valentine called the September 22, 2011 MSGS Board meeting to order at 3:30 PM at the Hilton Garden Inn in Kalispell, Montana with 12 members present. Roll taken by Secretary Marilyn Lewis. The minutes of the last board meeting were read. There was one correction that the officers up for election all agreed to serve another term. Treasurer Carol Woodley reported we have \$5556.16 in checking and \$4468.97 in savings. She has filed the IRS and the State Reports.

Verba Valentine, 1st Vice President reported that we now have 72 full registrations, 7 Friday only & 2 Saturday only. Meal count is low but the reception should bring the food cost to \$4000 so we won't have to pay for the meeting rooms. We booked more rooms than anticipated. Eleanor Benz from Kalispell has done a great job, especially advertising the conference. Kitty Pedersen from Polson has done the decorations. Verba thanked everyone for their help. 2012 conference will be in Billings with Josh Taylor selected for our main speaker. Shirley Rogers, 2nd Vice President has the following raffle items: 1 year Deluxe World membership from Ancestry.com, 1 week stay for 2 at the Carlton Hotel in Salt Lake City, 1 year membership to Fold 3 (formerly Footnote), 2 red memberships to Godfrey Library, a Family Search bag of goodies and a basket of Made in Montana goodies. The state table will be selling pins, raffle tickets and FFM books. Shirley reminded us to wear our pins. It was decided to sell a set of pins for \$8.00.

Mary Pitch, Registrar, reported we have 17 societies with 656 members. Lincoln County has now rejoined. FGS Delegate Shirley Rogers thanked the board for letting her be the delegate to the FGS Conference held in Springfield IL and also to the societies that sent her flyers. Most of them were picked up. There were about 2000 attendees from 48 states and 5 countries. She also met with Elaine Haseleton from Family Search Wiki. They want us to edit and update our information on their site. Shawna asked if anyone wants to be delegate next year, let her know as they will be chosen at the next board meeting. It will be in Birmingham AL Aug 29-Sept 1, 2012.

Karen Huck, Librarian, reported the 1900-2002 State Death Index has been converted to 2007 Excel .xlsx format and the disks are ready to sell. It was decided that we charge \$20 each with a conference special of \$18. A disk has been created for the 1930 Montana Census. Each society will get a free copy. The charge will be \$10.00 for this disk. A flyer is being made for the First Families-Early Settlers certificates to be sent with query answers. June Hartzel is learning to repair books for our library. We have now ordered supplies. Karen & Mary Pitch will attend the Montana Shared Catalog meeting October 6-7, 2011 in Bozeman.

Past President Betty Marshall presented the following slate of officers for election at the annual meeting: 2nd Vice President, Shirley Rogers, Secretary, Marilyn Lewis; and Registrar, Mary Pitch.

Fern Kauffman has 25 new applications for First Families and Early Settlers, but we need to do more promoting. Alene Stoner is hoping that societies will send flyers with answers to queries. There are no certificates to be handed out.

Shawna Valentine has looked further on changing our website address. She found the cost for a private domain registration would be about \$23.00/year plus \$3.00/month server charge for 36 months. This would give us 10 gigabytes plus 100 e-mail accounts.

Mary Pitch wants us to recognize past award winners at the banquet. It was moved and passed to return Eleanor Benz's registration for all the help she gave us.

The next Board meeting will be in the Helena Library Oct. 15, 2011 at 10 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Marilyn Lewis, Secretary

Year to Date Treasurer's Summary – 1/1/2011 through 10/13/2011

Submitted by Carol Woodley-Treasurer

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| CONFERENCE-REG | 7,651.00 | | EXPENSES |
| Early Bird Prize | -50.00 | | MSGS Share MT Sh.Cat.461.78 |
| C-Mailing, handouts | -453.11 | MSGS INCOME | MSGS Expenses 25.29 |
| Coffee Donations | 100.00 | Club & Ind. Dues | Bank Charges 22.50 |
| Hilton Garden Inn | -4,326.59 | DEATH INDEX (net) | Equipment 299.00 |
| Memorial Service | -18.50 | FFM and ES (net) | FGS Delegate 471.57 |
| Speakers | -2,000.19 | Interest Income | Montana State Library 600.00 |
| STATE TABLE Net Total | 1,025.00 | | Newsletter 387.00 |
| Book Frolic | 744.00 | | MSGS Share OCLC 141.75 |
| Raffle & etc | 418.00 | | Annual Tax Report 15.00 |
| Census CDs | 40.00 | | Website 117.80 |
| Club Pins (net) | -143.00 | | OVER ALL TOTAL 2,541.69 |
| T-Shirts (net) | -34.00 | | CURRENT BALANCE \$14,985.33 |



1st Vice President's Report

We had a great conference in Kalispell with exactly 100 attending!

A reception and a society roundtable were new additions this year and both were very well attended and MSGS was asked to continue both next year. Dr. Jones was very knowledgeable and gave everyone many ideas for research. Thanks to all of you who helped with all the work. We appreciate each and everyone.

Plans are well underway for the 2012 conference with the national speaker being Joshua Taylor. More to come! It will be held on September 20, 21, 22 at the Big Horn Resort on the West End of Billings.

Verba Valentine, 1st Vice President, MSGS

Scenes from Kalispell



Dr. Thomas Jones



Photos Available on Snapfish

Photos have been put into Snapfish Room for MSGS. In this room is all the pictures I can get for each conference we have had in the last few years. It is for MSGS folks only, but one has to be invited. If anyone would like an invite, email me at 7patld@itstriangle.com and I will send invite. Several people are already in it. Another advantage is anyone who come into the room can add their photos from these conferences and in the end we can all share them and I can use more of the better photos for our new digital scrapbook for 2011. And I do need more good ones as mine were not all as good as I had hoped. This concept is really growing and makes for wonderful books that we could even use at our state table. It is free unless you order something and is a great way to share. I have 14 rooms and all are active. Some more, some less.

Pat Ludwig, Historian.

Al Huntsman Award Presented to Park County Historian Jerry Brekke.

This award is given to an individual, business or facility that does not belong to a genealogy society but contributes with aid to genealogists to accomplish their projects.

MSGS first got acquainted with Jerry Brekke when he was working for the Livingston Enterprise newspaper as their historian and advertising agent. MSGS needed help advertising for more applications and sales for the Volume I of First Families and Early Settlers and it was with Jerry's help that MSGS was able to promote this project by putting it into *Montana Best of Times*, a monthly magazine published by the Livingston Enterprise, which covered a great part of Montana and surrounding areas. He helped the Park County Genealogy Society design the plaques for the Park County Poor Farm monument, while working a full time job at the Enterprise. Jerry has since retired from the newspaper but has continued to work as an independent editor for other authors. He was appointed Park County Historian and County Archivist in 2007. It has been his job to oversee most of the archive work done to preserve the original records creating Park County. He continues to work as the historian for the county and it was with his efforts that the Park County Genealogy Society applied for funding to restore and preserve the Chico/Emigrant cemeteries in Park County. As historian he over sees these two projects and was instrumental in helping establish two separate non-profit organizations that will oversee the restoration and preservation of these cemeteries for future generations.



Anna Mae Hanson Award Recipients

This year, MSGS presented the Anna Mae Hanson Award to two individuals in acknowledgment for their dedicated service in the genealogical community.



Karen Huck

*Member of the
Lewis & Clark County Society
and MSGS Librarian*

Shawna Valentine

*Member of the
Yellowstone Genealogy Forum
and MSGS President*



Conference Drawing Winners

In addition to the great educational and social experiences of a MSGS Conference, each Conference brings the opportunity to win valuable and useful prizes. This year's prizes and their winners were:

Winner of the Wearing of the Kalispell Pin Drawing for a Free Pin Next Year – Ann Ross

Early Bird Drawing (Received a Refund of her Registration Fee) – Bonnie Schuster

Raffle Prizes and Winners:

1 Year Deluxe World Membership from Ancestry.com – Al Stoner

1 week stay for 2 at the Carlton Hotel in Salt Lake City – Kathy Patrick

1 year Membership to Fold 3 (formerly Footnote.com) – Lou Ann Skattum

2 Red Memberships to Godfrey Library – Terry Atwood & Ann Ross

Bag of Goodies from Family Search – Shari Larimer

Basket of Made in Montana Goodies – Audrey Hinman

Basket of Goodies donated by Irene Nelson – Karen Huck

Thanks to everyone who participated and to those who donated prizes. In addition, many won door prizes and we would like everyone who donated them as well.

School Records May Be In Danger

It has come to our attention that several Montana counties are in the process of throwing out historical school records. These are very valuable resources for family history and need to be saved.

Please check with your Local Counties to be sure your records are being preserved.



WE WOULD LOVE TO BE ABLE TO PUBLISH
YOUR SOCIETY'S NEWS.

Please submit items to Shawna at
smv2222@bresnan.net

Beaver Head Hunters – Dillon

On Saturday, October 8th, the Beaver Head Hunters had a one day workshop open to the public. There were 16 people in attendance. We had wished for more, but were glad with the turn-out as Oktoberfest was also going on in downtown Dillon at the same time. There was a Beginning Genealogy class where the three who attended learned how to fill out a pedigree chart and family group records. At the same time, Pat Darling talked about Breaking Through Brick Walls to the others. She gave lots of examples of ways to work around our brick walls so we can continue on with our research. This was followed by a class on FamilySearch.org taught by Carla Andrus. She showed different ways to hunt for ancestors using that website. After lunch Pat gave ideas on how to get the info we have accumulated organized into something more than just a stack of papers. The final class was about a few other free internet genealogy websites that are useful in research. Even though it was work to get organized and advertised, it was a very good day and well worth the time. Workshops are a great way to get motivated to take out the books, dust them off, and settle in for a long season of genealogy hunting. Happy hunting!

Submitted by Carla Andrus, BHH Liaison

Central Montana Genealogy Society – Lewistown

The Central Montana Genealogy Society in Lewistown has scheduled Nikki Steele from the Photo Express to do a presentation at their October meeting on "How to Care for Your Photographs". We will have our Christmas Luncheon in December. Our obit cards are now complete through 2010 and we are working on cards for 2011.

Submitted by Marilyn Lewis, President CMGS

Great Falls Genealogy Society – Great Falls

The Great Falls Genealogy Society has the following quarterly publications available for free:

New England Historical and Genealogical Society Register: 2002-2008, 30 issues

National Genealogical Society Quarterly: 2003-2010, 35 issues

National Genealogical Society News Magazine: 2003-2009, 30 issues

Interested parties can contact the Society by email: gfgenealogy.org or by phone: 406-727-3922

Submitted by Alice Heisel, GFGS Liaison

Lewis & Clark County Genealogical Society – Helena

The Lewis & Clark County Genealogical Society-(Helena) has had 3 meetings since we last reported. In August we shared stories of finding information in the strangest places i.e. a great, great grandfather's 1900 death certificate at the cemetery office in California. (California did not require the counties to issue death certificate until 1907, the same year Montana started issuing death certificates.) In September a member demonstrated how to use Find-a-Grave and our October meeting was entitled, "Let's get organized". Several members talked about how they file/keep track of the information that they have gathered either paper copies or in a software program. Several members brought examples of their filing systems.

Submitted by Mary Pitch, L&CCGS President

Park County Genealogy Society – Livingston

The Park County Genealogy Society had a busy year. Our projects included working with the oldest cemeteries in Park County. Carol Woodley helped the organizers of the Old Chico Cemetery Association and the Friends of the Emigrant Cemetery to get the information they need to get special funds for improvements at both. Money used for restoration work at these two cemeteries will be overseen by the County Historian, Jerry Brekke.

For our end-of-year event in June the Genealogy Society members met at the Emigrant Cemetery and were given a tour by Sharron Munroe, one of our members. Sharron has collected the obituaries of the people buried in the cemetery at Emigrant and has organized them into several notebooks. The tour was followed by a potluck supper at Sharron's beautiful home in the mountains west of Emigrant. In July Carol Woodley led a tour of the Old Chico Cemetery for the members of the Chico Cemetery Association and other interested persons. She has gathered almost all of the obituaries of people who are buried in this cemetery and knows where their graves are located.

Park County Genealogy Society – Livingston, Continued

After about 10 years of work, Cara Perry & other members completed our project to put all burials (over 10,000) of Livingston's Mountain View Cemetery into their computer. As burials occur, the list will be updated. The computer is at the Livingston Public Library and is available to the public for research.

Work on organizing old county records kept in the basement vault at the court house continues. Carol Woodley and Connie Standish have been putting records into the county computer files and eventually these will be on line. The citizenship records have been completed and they are working on coroner inquests and poor farm records.

Our programs throughout the year included a tour of the old court house records vault during which Carol Woodley explained how it has been organized; Audrey Dodge, our local Society's webmaster, gave us a demonstration of the site she has put together; John Swenumson, the reference librarian at our Public Library, did a program on the genealogy resources that are available at the library; and Tom and Judy Davis from Franzen - Davis Funeral Home gave a talk on the history of mortuaries in Livingston.

Other activities our members have been involved with include the 3rd annual cemetery walk which we did in partnership with the Park County Historical Society on the second Saturday in August; RAOGK volunteer work; Mardi Whitmore led a beginning genealogy workshop at the Public Library as part of their summer youth program; and Carol Woodley attended a headstone preservation workshop in Butte.

We donated \$200 to the Public Library to assist in their purchase of a digital microfilm reader and we purchased a projector to use for power point presentations for our own Society.

At our next meeting on Tuesday, October 25, we will proudly present our friend, Jerry Brekke, with the Al Huntsman Award certificate he received in absentia at the MSGS State Conference in Kalispell.

Submitted by Mardi Whitmore, PCGS President

Yellowstone Genealogy Forum – Billings

Grave dowsing – locating relatives underground, using two metal rods. It sounds fantastic but it does work. Robert Larson of Fort Collins, CO was the guest speaker in July. He explained Grave Dowsing at our program meeting then put it in practice the following evening at Riverside Cemetery. I was a non-believer but it worked for me. Robert will speak at MSGS conference in September 2012 in Billings.

Land records provide a wealth of information to genealogists. At the August program I spoke on Land Records Research & Map Reading. This was followed two days later by a tour at the Public Room at the Bureau of Land Management. The office in Billings covers Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota and has records dating back to the late 1800's.

On August 27th, the Forum participated in a "Genealogy Fair". Other groups involved were Daughters of the American Revolution, Personal Ancestral File club, Germans from Russia, Parmly Billings Library, and LDS church women showing scrapbooking, journaling, family meals and conversations. Each group had a table or two to display information. The Family History Center was open. Mini- workshops were given on a variety of topics. During the four hours of the Fair, attendance was estimated at 200.

Forum member and MSGS president, Shawna Valentine, was one of the winners of the Anna Mae Hanson award this year at MSGS conference. She is very deserving of the award for all she does for the Forum and for State.

Residents of Billings will be voting on whether or not to build a new library building. Bill Cochran, director of the Parmly Billings Library, presented information on the new building then fielded questions. Kathy Robins, Systems Administrator of the library, showed how to use Heritage Quest. Because her talk was cut short, Kathy will return in January to do a full program on Heritage Quest.

The program in October will be about Mountview Cemetery by its director. Mountview is a city cemetery and one of the older and larger cemeteries in Billings.

Projects:

Beth Aaron Cemetery – only a few obituaries are missing. Once this project is completed, the information will be posted on Findagrave and a book containing all the information given to Beth Aaron Temple.

Yellowstone County school records – School District 2 records are being scanned then will be abstracted.

Settergren- Carey funeral home records – are being scanned.

Riverside Cemetery – graves with no names, only numbers – we are hoping to help identify some of these persons by abstracting the Settergren-Carey records.

Obituary Index – members sign up for a month at a time to index all obituaries printed in the Billings Gazette. This project started several years ago when the Forum ran out of room in the Genealogy Room for cards with the actual obituaries glued on them. The index is available on the computer in the Gen Room. The corresponding microfilm of the Gazette is in the Montana Room in the public library.

Submitted by P. J. Smith, YGF President



The Roundup accepts submissions of historical and genealogical interest that have a Montana connection. Examples include, but are not limited to, brief family or town histories, Church or Court Records, Cemetery transcriptions, Newspaper abstracts, Bible Records, Letters, descriptions of holdings and hours of Research Facilities within the state, and instate attractions of historical interest.

Photos may also be accepted if some type of written description of the photo's content accompanies them.

All submitted materials must include a cover letter from the submitter giving Montana State Genealogical Society permission to publish. Questions, proposed articles and photos may be sent electronically to Shawna Valentine. The editor reserves the right to accept or reject any submitted material, as well as the right to edit copy.



The Diaries of Daisy Dewey Stephens

By Barbara I. McCallum

The very old handmade wooden box sat ignored on my desk for years waiting for me to sift through mementos, pictures, letters and newspaper articles, even old greeting cards placed in there. Two small diaries were tucked into the box. There Daisy Helen Dewey Stephens chronicled her daily life from January 1, 1921, until the last entry in the second book of August 16, 1936.¹

Carefully saved and unnoticed, the entries inside these books provided a wonderful and lively insight to her life during those years. Their leather covers softened nicely from the years of use. This account focuses on the time just prior to her marriage until the family left Montana as recorded in her first diary.

Daisy Dewey entered into this world on October 25, 1893, in Ft. Madison, Lee County, Iowa. Her grandparents had established a homestead claim there in the 1838, when Iowa was still a territory. As a privileged young woman, she attended a private school, the Denmark Academy. Her formal education included a degree in Elementary Education at State Teacher's College in Cedar Falls, Iowa in 1915.² After one year of teaching school she decided to attend Ft. Madison Business College.³ Young Miss Dewey travelled widely; she loved adventure.

A postcard in the box explained that in December of 1917 she left Lee County, Iowa for the small community of Saco, in Phillips County, Montana on the Canadian border. The High Line, part of the Great Northern Railway, serviced the Saco stop in the fertile Milk River valley. She worked for Harry Vagg, owner of the General Store "in the office until the spring of 1919," as the bookkeeper and stenographer.⁴ She belonged to the Epworth League, a young adult's organization with the Methodist Episcopal Church and travelled to Livingston, Montana in 1918 for a Convention as a delegate.⁵ After that convention she went to Yellowstone National Park and left a scrapbook of her trip which is in possession of the family.

In Saco, she was introduced to her future husband, Ralph W. Stephens, a sheep rancher. Ralph, at age 22, had entered a homestead claim on December 1, 1913 for 320 acres of land, rolling plains with "no timber", which was finalized in 1917.⁶ He and partner, Gayton Armstrong, eventually combined their ranches and resources and established their business venture, *Armstrong & Stephens, Whitewater Creek Ranches*. Ralph's homestead claim was in Valley County and that section became Phillips County in 1915. December 20, 1920, in a letter to her mother, Daisy wrote, "... do not be surprised when you see me coming home wearing a diamond, for such is the case."⁷ First diary entry: January 1, 1921: "Home at Ft. Madison, Iowa for Xmas vacation. Warm and springlike. Mother not well so I was chief cook." She left the following day for State College, Front County, Pennsylvania, where she was a secretary for the dean at the School of Mines.⁸ She wrote about seeing various plays and movies. And who knew that she skied? January 15th: "tried out new skis this afternoon." And she rode on a motorcycle!

Soon, the wedding plans began. September 2, 1921: "Went to see Miss Dodd about the wedding dress." She returned to the dressmaker several times before picking it up the day before her wedding. Fiancé, Ralph arrived on October 10th and on the 20th they were married at eight p.m. in her mother's Ft. Madison home. On the 21st, she wrote that they were in Chicago and went to the Tivoli Theater and Terrace Gardens. The next day, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Stephens left Chicago for their new home in Montana. October 31, 1921: "This month of October was precious to me as it contained my wedding day." This was a lovely and poignant reflection, differing from most of her entries which were her daily experiences.



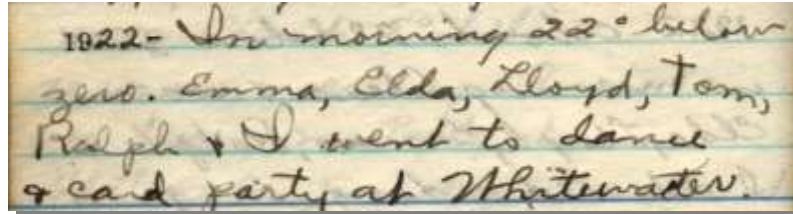
They would make their home on a vast expanse of prairie about 25 miles north of Malta, Montana. Ralph Stephens and his partner Gayton Armstrong owned and managed the Armstrong-Stephens Ranch, quite successfully for a time, and the ranch reportedly grew to 3000 acres. Daisy wrote about the Upper Ranch and the Lower Ranch; there were homes, barns and bunkhouses on each section. Ralph and Daisy lived on the Upper Ranch.

Ranch life in Montana was very different from Ft. Madison, Iowa and State College, Pennsylvania for Daisy Stephens. She often churned many pounds of butter a day, canned peaches and made rhubarb syrup. She made cakes, pies, cookies, dumplings,

candy, bread and sausage among other nice things. And whoops, November 17, 1921, she reported that she gained six pounds since she married. She weighed 121 on November 25th, but she had her “sweater and shoes on.”

Finally she ordered and received a Remington typewriter so she could type regular letters back home. Later she ordered herself a “new Damascus sewing machine” and still later they managed to purchase a radio. In Iowa, the weather was often rainy, but Montana was dry and windy and apparently if the weather was above freezing, it was a great day. For Daisy though, every day was wonderful, she never once complained about anything in her diary. Wash day was once a week on Mondays. When the temperature was 10 degrees below zero, they washed and hung the clothes in the house. When summer arrived, woolens were packed away in trunks “with red peppers.”

Those years in Montana came alive. Ranch life was isolated, but not nearly as isolated as one would imagine. Cowboys lived on the ranch; shearers came, oilmen came and many others. Ralph and Daisy visited friends and neighbors and invited them over regularly for dinner. These neighborly visits were often overnights as the distances between homes were great. There were movies in town and dances in the towns of Saco and Whitewater. There were New Year’s Eve dances, Halloween Dances, Election Day Dances among many others. She voted in the national election of 1924, when Coolidge won. Daisy attended social events such as Rebeckah, Eastern Star and Women’s League.



Tuesday, February 20, 1922:

Entry of August 7, 1922: Dorothy Mae born at 11:30 a.m. Weight 8 lbs. Lots of black hair. Dr. Minnick and Irene Pelkhe [Pehlke] here.



When baby, Dorothy Mae, arrived Daisy wrote about all of the things that mothers talk about today. She carefully recorded her health, when her teeth came in and her inoculations. Also she observed when the baby slept through the night, started walking and cute things, for instance, Dorothy’s attempt to pant and bark like the dog.

Howard Dewey Stephens arrived May 24, 1924. Hospitalization for childbirth was very different then. The first day Howard could stay with her was on June 1st. The women and neighbors were close-knit and celebrated for one another: June 5, 1924: “Mrs. Mellons and Aamot called. Mrs. Bell brot [sic] me roses, carnations and gladiolas. Eastern Star sent carnations. Mrs. Harry Vagg ... bouquet of honey suckles.”

On June 8th she was able to take baby Howard home to the ranch. He was 15 days old. With two babies she was very busy, nevertheless she wrote every day. When Daisy and Ralph went into town for activities, the ranch cowboys were usually the babysitters for Dorothy and Howard.⁹

Meanwhile, the men, Ralph, his partner Gayton and the ranch hands or cowboys, cut and baled hay, sheared sheep, cut sheep out for market, butchered cows, hogs, chickens and turkeys. In a 1923 letter to her mother, Daisy said that they had 5300 sheep to shear.¹⁰ Oct 24, 1922: “our 1233 lambs averaged 61 ½ pounds.” The sheep were driven to Saco and shipped by rail to the Minnesota Stock Market in Minnesota in October of each year. The sheep dropped the lambs quickly: May 14, 1923, “We have 1080 lambs now.” On May 16th “We have 1250 lambs now.” And there were more on the way. However, trouble brewed. Montana had a great homestead rush in the early 1900s, but by the end of WWI many had given up and returned home or sought their fortunes elsewhere.¹¹ Ralph’s health, high tariffs, low prices and finally hoof and mouth disease took its toll on their dreams in Montana.¹²

The entries became even more perfunctory: the weather, when the men were out shearing, baby weights and so on.

July 10, 1924, “sheared 1028 sheep today.” July 11, 1924, “sheared 1074 sheep today.”

October 19, 1924: “Ralph rode for lambs and got 48, others killed by coyotes.”



This picture was taken on the Armstrong-Stephens Ranch ca. 1923. The sheep are being driven in for shearing or market. The bunk house for the cowboys is in front of the large barn. The photographer was Alfred Weber, the ranch sheepherder. Alfred’s wagon is in the midst of the flock.

[The information is inscribed on the back of the photograph in possession of author’s family]

The shepherd, Albert Weber, started rounding up the sheep mid-October, driving them to Saco where they were loaded on the train bound for market in Minnesota. Ralph became ill.

October 23, 1924: *"Clear and warm. 68° above zero at 4 p.m. Ralph started for Minn. on stock train."*

October 31, 1924: *"Clear and cool. Ralph was operated on for two ulcers of stomach at 9 a.m. at Rochester, Minnesota."¹³*

November 2, 1924: *"Tex took Mrs. Burgess and Vick to Lower place [Lower Ranch]. Both of them stopped working for us."*

November 21, 1924: *"Ralph got to Saco last night. Out with Jack Johnson and Leonard – took team up and got Ralph."*

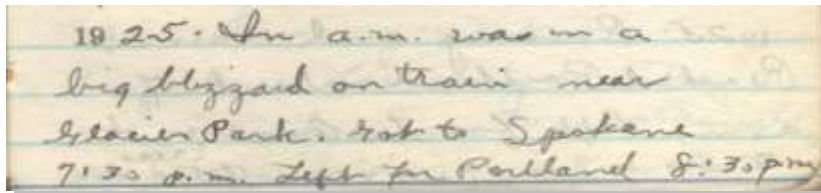
December 27, 1924: *"Clear part of day. 30° below zero in morning. ... We didn't go to Rabbit Drive. Both sides got over 1400 jack rabbits."* Rabbit Drives were common in the early prairie days and originated from Native American traditions.¹⁴

The Drives became a social event for the area and apparently from her comment, also a competition.

Daisy's mother, Flora Sawyer Dewey, had died on December 22, 1923, and they began receiving some income from the Iowa farm. As conditions on the ranch deteriorated, Daisy's brothers encouraged them to seek their fortune near them in California. They prepared to leave Montana. Some of the hands were paid their wages in sheep. Daisy and Ralph turned the ranch, remaining livestock and obligations over to Ralph's partner, Gayton Armstrong, and left it all behind.

January 11, 1925: *"Clear and about zero weather. Tex took load of furniture into Saco."* January 12, 1925: *"6° below zero in a.m. About 30 of Whitewater neighbors came in for farewell surprise party. Gave me a chest of silver. Ralph cuff links and children seven dollars."* January 14: *"25 below zero ... finished packing Ralph's trunk."* January 20, 1925: *"Clear and warm. Busy getting freight off to California and tickets. Left Saco, Montana about 10:30 pm."*

January 21, 1925:



January 24, 1925: *"Reached Los Angeles at 8 am."*

A new adventure - Califor

©Barbara I. McCallum, JD; San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Ms. McCallum is a member of the San Luis Obispo County Genealogical Society and the Education Chair of the SLOGCS.

¹ Daisy (Dewey) Stephens Diary owned in 2011 by her grandson, Leo V. McCallum, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. A *Line A Day*, leather bound, gilt edges, copyrighted 1892 by Samuel Ward Company, Boston, Mass. ; unpaginated. [Every entry is in her handwriting. There are two identical books which provide for entries for five years, only the earliest one is cited in this article. Entries are shown in italics.]

² Leather bound 1915 graduation exercises for State Teacher's College in possession of the author's family.

³ Oral conversations of Daisy Dewey Stephens with various family members including the author.

⁴ Postcard with Daisy Dewey's writing in the possession of the author's family. Undated.

⁵ Photograph of the convention participants in possession of the author's family, with Daisy Dewey's identifying notes on the reverse.

⁶ *Post 1908 General Land Entry Files, Serial Patent Number: 603028, Box 21451, Document number 024243, BLM Serial Nr: MTGLS0024243, Addnl BLO Serial 030839*; US National Archives and Records Administration, Washington: National Archives; Ralph Stephens, Hd. entry W ½ Sec. 21, T.34N., R.32 E., M.M.

⁷ Letter in possession of the author's family addressed to Mrs. F. S. Dewey, dated December 16, 1920.

⁸ Envelopes with letters from State College, Pennsylvania, return address read "College of Mines," in the possession of author's family.

Dean of School of Mines in 1921 was Elwood S. Moore, 1921 *La Vie*, page 48. *La Vie* is the college yearbook available online, fully digitized (<http://collection1.libraries.psu.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=%2Flavie&CISOPTR=30270&REC=2&CISOBX=mines> ; accessed 2-3-2011)

⁹ Interview, Dorothy (Stephens) Van Buren, 20 February 2011.

¹⁰ Letter dated July 10, 1923 to Mrs. F. S. Dewey [Flora (Sawyer) Dewey], her mother, from Daisy Stephens in possession of author's family.

¹¹ State of Montana, official State Website, mt.gov, "Brief History of Montana" online; (http://mt.gov/discover/brief_history.asp; accessed 30 January 2011)

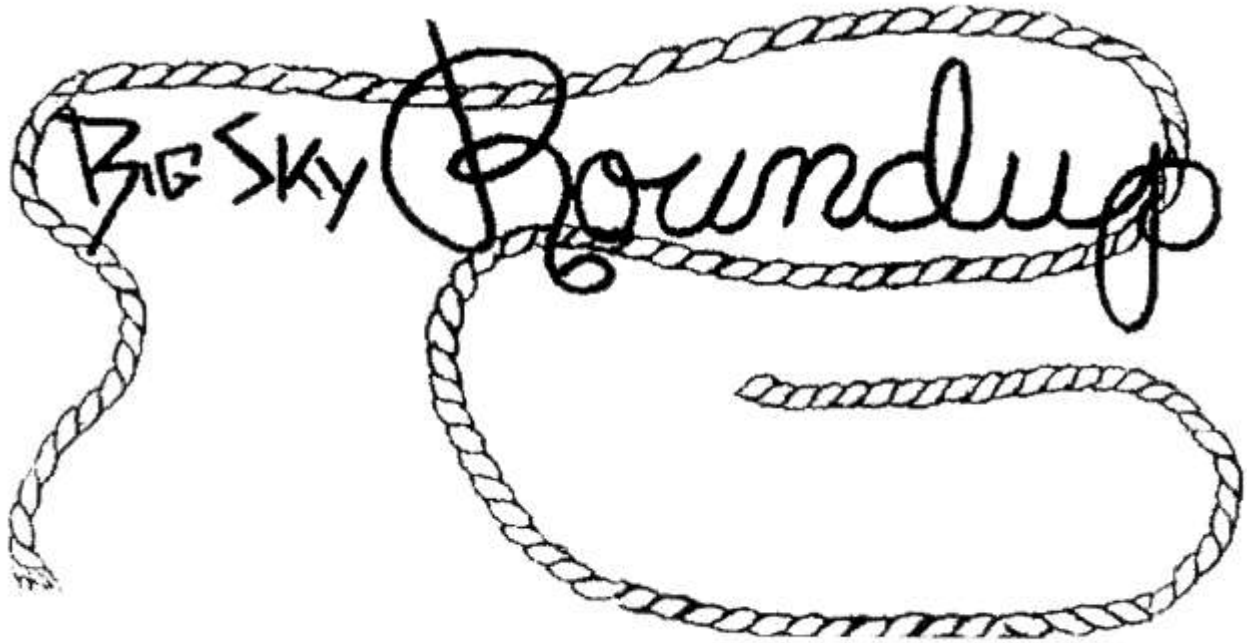
¹² Oral recounts of Ralph and Daisy Stephens to family members.

¹³ Interview with Dorothy Mae (Stephens) Van Buren, by Barbara I. McCallum, 20 February 2011: "My father was treated at the famous Mayo Clinic." The Mayo Medical School was founded in Rochester, MN in 1917. Wikipedia, Mayo Clinic. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayo_Clinic; accessed 2-1-2011)

¹⁴ Rabbit Drives were also held during the fall Jackrabbits were fat and plentiful from a summer of eating grasses. Their fur was also at its best. The rabbit boss would organize the drive. He was in charge and would lead the drive. During the rabbit drives the Paiutes set up nets of twisted sage and hemp fibers. These nets were three feet high by one hundred feet long. http://celebratingnevadaindians.info/files/CNI_13_N._Paiute_Student_booklet.pdf, accessed 1-21-2011



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More details to follow.