

HISTORY OF CAPITOL & SNOWMASS CREEKS

by CHARLES D. HART

This area embraces the watershed of the area tributary to Snowmass Creek and includes the upper valley of East Sopris Creek, for the access to this locality was from the main Capitol Creek road: also the residents therein received mail from the Watson & Snowmass post offices and attended the schools in the Capitol Creek Districts 6 and later 15.

Capitol Creek is the last main tributary of Snowmass Creek entering the latter stream at a point approximately one mile south of Snowmass Store & Post Office and the confluence of Snowmass Creek and the Roaring Fork River. Snowmass is much the larger stream, but its valley is narrower and consequently contains less arable land. This stream begins high in the Elk Mountains, one fork flowing east out of Snowmass Lake and the second or south fork beginning in a great alpine park on the west side of Maroon Bells. Its course from the junction of these streams is about due north - Bear Creek flowing from the Paer ^{ser} Lakes Basin lying between Snowmass and Capitol Peak flows in from the west as do Copper Creek and West Branch. At the Snowmass Falls Ranch the stream flows east for a couple of miles and is joined by the East Branch where it ⁴ again turns north. West Branch flows east after its beginning in a second great park lying at the east base of Mt. Daly or the "Belted" ^{mtn}. Amagnificent view of this area is obtained from points on the road leading from Highway 82 to Snowmass-at-Aspen. Also from the divide between Owl Creek and Brush Creek on the county road to the same location. Another mile and a half north of the East Snowmass junction East Elk Creek flowing east comes out of Hunter Gulch and flows into the Main Stream on the old Edwin Powell ranch. Another mile and a half downstream Wild Cat Creek flows in from a large basin to the east which is rimmed by shale

mountains covered with scrub oak, pinion, service berry bushes and sage and rabbit brush approximately a mile down the confluence with Wild Cat the main stream flows west to the point where Capitol Creek enters it at about which point it again turns north to its mouth.

Capitol Creek arises in a huge spring flowing from the granite above timberline at a point approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of Capitol Lake, which lies in a huge rock-rimmed bowl below the sheer north fan of Capitol Peak. Its course is predominately north for the first three miles and is joined by several small spring fed streams entering from both east and west sides. Its first tributary of consequence flows east out of Charity, probably Cherokee, Basin and, a short distance downstream, at Willow Park, another small eastward flowing stream comes out of Maurin Basin. Just below Willow Park, the creek drops over Capitol Falls, a very pretty little cascade easily seen from the trail, which ascends the valley, and a short walk or ride from this trail brings one either to the foot of these falls or to a point directly above them. Downstream another mile, Jimmy Creek enters from the west flowing out of another high basin lying along the east face of a portion of those red mountains which are a part of the spur of Elk Mountains extending northwest from Capitol Peak and ending in Mt. Sopris. Shortly after juncture with Jimmy Creek, the main stream turns to flow east to the west base of the Flat Top, a huge shale mass featured by giant slides on its west and north sides. Nicholson Creek flowing north from its source beneath Haystack Mountain enters Capitol Creek around a half mile west of Flat Top. Lime Creek arising from a spring on east side of Flat Top, flows north thru the meadow of St. Benedicts Monastery and pretty much parallels the course of the main stream to the point where they join about three and a half miles from mouth of Capitol Creek whose northward course

turns east and again north east to its junction with Snowmass. Another small West Elk Creek flows northward paralleling Capitol Creek and then turns east thru the meadows where Elk Creek Village development is taking place. It enters Capitol Creek approximately a mile above the mouth of the latter. It is to be noted that there are two Elk Creeks mentioned - they are two entirely separate streams and were in all probability named by different individuals and at different times and are not to be confused as their sources and direction of flow are entirely different and some distance apart.

East Sopris Creek is not tributary at all to Snowmass Creek but it arises in William Lake in a high pine rimmed basin along the ridge of mountains south of Mt. Sopris. Its direction is generally north and it joins with West Sopris approximately a mile south of the Emma School House and dumps over a steep bank into the Roaring Fork quite near this post office; this mouth of the creek may also be seen from Highway 82 a mile or so west of Basalt and at about the west end of the curve along the shale bluff at this point.

A magnificent view of the panorama of much of the foregoing terrain can be obtained from the top of the Watson Divide. The road leading to this turns sharply Southwest off Highway 82 some 200 yards west of old Watson, later renamed Gerbazdale, and runs up the valley of a small stream for a distance of one and a half miles before sharply ascending to the pass over the divide. The panorama runs from Mt. Baldy above West Village of Snowmass-at-Aspen on the east, past East Snowmass Basin, a part of Snowmass and Capitol Peaks and on along the range ending in Mt. Sopris on the west. This is truly a magnificent view and this route is no doubt one of the main entries to the Snowmass - Capitol Valleys used by the early settlers of the region. A word of warning - do not attempt this drive when roads

are wet as both the east & west sides can be extremely slippery and this county road is not too well maintained and is used sparingly. The descent is to the west and across Snowmass Creek where it joins the main road up that valley.

It is a well established fact that Charles Jacobs followed a few days later by Henry Staats in 1880 located the first homesteads herein. Jacobs located on the present site of the Fred Light Ranch long known as the [L], Box L, and Henry Staats on the present site of St. Benedict's Monastery. These sites were chosen because they contained natural meadows where Slough Grass grew abundantly as a result of East Sopris and Lime Creek overflowing during the spring runoff of winter's snows. Hay harvested on these places and carried into Aspen in sacks or bales on burros, generally referred to as jacks, was vital to the survival of horses, mules, and other livestock brought in and used by the early prospectors and the merchants, who followed them, and the freighters, who brought in supplies from the east slopes of the Rockies. Other men soon followed Jacobs and Staats and picked out their own locations. Included were Fred Light, John White, Walter Boram, Hubert Harmon, Jack Hawthorne, Edwin Powell and Alexander McKenzie. Harmon, so the story goes, gave five dollars and a pair of rubber boots in payments to the original locator of the claim adjoining Staats location. He was later joined by his sisters Ella, who became Mrs. Staats, and Columbia who patented this same property. John R. (Jack) Williams bought up several individual homesteads beginning in 1883 and established what later became known as Williams Brothers Ranch; part of this property lays along both sides of Snowmass Creek and contains the old log ranch house and other improvements and is two miles up Snowmass Creek from the Post Office. The greater part of this ranch lies in a basin east of Capital Creek extending from its mouth south for a couple of miles. Adjoining this ranch on the west were the Boram and

White holdings later owned by W. W. Williams, the old log house on this property is still standing the much of the roof has caved in and doors and windows are gone. This old building was typical of many in the area and consisted of a string of rooms built on to the original one room cabin and covered by a dirt roof. Its location is a bit over three miles up Capitol Creek from Snowmass Post Office. Other ranch houses having the same type construction were the John S. Stewart, Charles Walters, and F. J. Jacobson places and the Hawthorne, Robilhand ranch at the base of the great slide on north face of Flat Top Mountain. These latter houses were later replaced by more modern homes except for the one long occupied by the Joseph Letey family on the one time Robichard homestead and now owned by Harold Pabst. This location is one and a half miles up Snowmass Creek southeast of the forks of the road. The Chisholm place is on this same road and a half mile downstream, this property has. Up stream are properties now owned by Pabst and Christeneen Bros. Alex and Ann McKenzie settled on land along the creek on or about November 1, 1886 and Edwin Powell a bit later. Phillip and Fred Robishand deeded the land later purchased by D. W. Whisholm to Charles D. Walters who received a Patent for it on February 23, 1895 and conveyed to D. W. Chisholm on March 12, 1901. Adjoining the Williams Bros. on the east also was the land lying at the lower end of the gulch which bears his name and was patented by John Bohan on February 23, 1895. Bohan was buried on this property and John M. Williams used to relate the story that the service was carried out by Bohan's son Jack who also said in preparing the grave that "it was damn hard digging". Any marker on this grave has long since disappeared. This property was owned for many years by John Jurick, Sr. who with brother Laurents purchased it and later with his wife and family made their home there. Phillip Robishand sold his holdings to Emmanuel and Joseph Letey (looks as though it could be spelled Letry - P.3.) on August 27, 1903 and Joseph Letey, his wife, and sons Ben and George

operated it for a great period of time. Upstream were the E. H. Reeves and Grover Holmes properties long owned and operated by B. C. Huff and Fred Gagnon. Further upstream was the Merrill H. McLachlin property and land homesteaded by James McKenzie and now owned by Zeigler. The Snowmass Falls Ranch some twelve miles upstream from the Snowmass store & Post Office was assembled by Catherine J. Lindvig beginning in 1898 when she acquired the claim patented on August 3, 1897 by J. M. Tandy. Earbir C. M. Pennells patented land downstream on January 13, 1896 and Miss Lindvig acquired this place from the Pennell heirs on March 1, 1915 and Public Trustees Sale June 2, 1914. She also patented two additional tracts, one on May 29, 1912 and a second on May 4, 1936 giving her a total of 640 acres. Dubbed "The Cattle Queen of Snowmass", Catherine Jensen Lindvig was a legend in her own time. Coming to the United States in 1889 at the age of twenty five from her native Denmark to marry a farmer in Nebraska she changed her mind on seeing him and sizing up the prospect of life on a prairie farm. She continued on west to Colorado Springs and later to Aspen. On arriving at the latter town she walked up Main street, picked out the finest looking home, inquired if the occupants needed a cook and was employed. Later she ran a Boarding Home for Miners, serving meals and preparing lunches for some two hundred men. A delinquent board bill led her to acquiring her original property. She operated her ranch and livestock holdings with the aid of three old men, Dave Adams, Bill Newton, and Billy Cantley who worked for little more than room, board, clothes & tobacco. On May 20, 1914 Mals and Sophia Christiansen and their six children arrived from Denmark & leased some of her land for four years. Mrs. Christiansen and Miss Lindvig were sisters. In the 1920's Kate as she was known began renting houses and the Pennell Cabin to fisherman going to Snowmass Lake some eight miles higher in the mountains. Later she leased her property and stock to Kenneth and

Mette Christiansen Watt, Mette being her niece, and she then made her home with Jens and Gladys Christiansen on the Glendale Stock Farm and moved to San Diego, Calif. in 1946 where she lived to the ripe old age of 92 passing on in 1957. She sold her ranch to D.R.C. Brown April 19, 1943.

J. E. Hunter filed a Declaration of Occupancy July 22, 1902 on land in a basin on Elk Creek some half mile upstream from the Edwin Powell location and several hundred feet higher in elevation. He and his wife Nora, and sons Carroll and Peer ranched there for many years. This land lies above the head of the huge slide which is easily seen as one ascends the road up Snowmass Creek - Peer died after contracting pneumonia while batching and caring for cattle during the winter of 1926. Buried March 5, 1926. Peer Lakes are named for him as he packed fish into that almost inaccessible basin lying between Snowmass and Capitol Peaks with the aid of his trusty mule. He also entered a den and captured two bear cubs after seeing "Mama Bear" leave and carried these cubs back to the ranch, where he placed them in an excavation intended for the basement of a new house which he and his father were constructing. "Mama" came that nite & retrieved one cub. The other cub became a problem and was donated to a zoo in, I believe, Colorado Springs. This place is now owned by Dr. Harold Harvey. Jeff Hunter for years devoted several days spring and fall to hunting and shooting porcupines which abounded in the area and frequently filled the noses of curious cattle with their quills thus causing the cattle much discomfort and rendering them unable to graze and caused the Hunters much work to rope and throw there cattle and remove the quills.

The Shield O Ranch lies along the divide between Snowmass Creek and Lime Creek in a series of basins and draws and a portion of it lay in the head of Bohan Gulch. The original homestead which became the

nucleus of this ranch was patented by Jasper F. Hatch March 12, 1903. He sold this land to N. E. Carr on December 24, 1906. Beginning in 1908 Carr, W. R. Foutz, L. H. Tompkins and Levin Seaman formed the Shield O Livestock Co. and later lands were patented by several of these people and land to the south patented by Wm. F. Raymond and adjoining the Hunter ranch were added to the original holdings and comprised a total of some 1400 acres. Clarence Reed bought the Seaman interest February 9, 1914. Later he acquired the remaining interest and on March 10, 1922 sold one half interest to George E. Rohrbough who later acquired title to all and after his death it was sold to Charles Redd and later to David and Perry Christensen. The main house and other ranch buildings were situated about a mile west of the main road reached by a steep grade which branched off just north of the Snowmass Creek near District 17 School House. This ranch was never a true success, it broke Clarence Reed and badly bent Rohrbough and his wife.

The first land patented in the Wildcat Basin was by John J. Teagan in November 1890. Teagan transferred this property to Sosthener Joseph Besancon March 2, 1891. Joe Besancon ranched there for many years and on April 1, 1913 Cecil Lowderback and William F. Yeager purchased it; on December 3, 1919 Lowderback bought out his partner and continued operating there until 1945. The remainder of the Wildcat area was later preempted by James and Walter McKenzie and Jennie McKenzie Popish and Katie McKenzie Carroll and her husband M. L. Carroll. The McKenzies were children of Alex and Ann McKenzie. Frank Solberg after selling his property on Capitol Creek moved to this area and located and patented another homestead. All of those properties with the exception of the Lowderback and Popish places were acquired by Charles Redd and served as lambing grounds for his

three bands of sheep, wintered in Utah, also he had a herd of registered Hereford Cattle and a dairy herd on this property which was managed and operated by Lloyd Burrough and later by Bert Kling and wife. David and Perry Christensen acquired these lands later. This area is reached via a road turning east from the main Snowmass Creek Road some four miles southeast of the Snowmass Store and Post Office. This area was slow in being developed due to lack of water which was later corrected by construction of a ditch from East Snowmass Creek; also a reservoir, recently enlarged, was built. This area probably served as an access to the Snowmass valley and also Capitol Creek for old roads exist leading from Brush Creek over a divide to Wildcat and thence down that area to the draw leading Southwest which contains the Popish homestead and over another divide and down to the original McKenzie and Powell places on Snowmass. Also a road, quite old, crosses the Shield O and traverses the South end of Bohan Gulch and thence down to the Staats place on Lime Creek near the present location of St. Benedicts Monastery.

The land at the mouth of Snowmass Creek on which the store and Post Office are situated and extending up the creek a half mile were patented by John H. Stewart known locally as John Henry to distinguish him from his father, John S. Stewart, who patented the land just south of John Henry's.

John Henry was the first Postmaster at Snowmass at its present location first opening this office February 19, 1901. This office was situated in a log cabin along the creek just up stream from its confluence with the Roaring Fork. The road at that time dropped into the creek bottom, passed under the Colorado Midland Trestle spanning the creek and crossed the Roaring Fork on a bridge a short distance downstream and at a much lower elevation than the existing structure. John Henry

transferred his holdings to Emma Bradshaw on January 11, 1917. He or his father carried on as Postmaster at intervals until the service was discontinued on January 31, 1914. Beginning on April 8, 1914 Erra Mizer was appointed to the post and was succeeded on June 19, 1916 by Emaro Bradshaw who carried on until about 1935 being succeeded by Bert Bagett. The present Postmistress is Martha Klimcke who received her appointment January 5, 1974. Velda Tucker held the job for ten years prior to this and Agnes Jurick McLaren occupied the position from 1949 to 1955.

Settlement and developement of the Capitol Creek area proceeded at a more rapid pace than did that on Snowmass: the earliest location was that by Henry Staats on Lime Creek in 1880. He was a veteran of the Union Forces in the Civil War who prospected over a ~~wide~~ wide area of central Colorado in the 1870's and 80s. His own personel story is told in "Aspen on The Roaring Fork": the original by Frank Wentworth and a later edition by Francis Rizzari. An error occurs in the latter book wherein its stated he died on his ranch in Pitkin County. He sold or contracted to sell that property in 1909 and moved to the Denver area. Later he and his wife Ella L. Harmon Staats homesteaded on Bijon Creek south of the town of Byers in Arapahoe County. She died at this farm on May 4, 1921 and he followed on March 11, 1924. Both are buried in Fairmount Cemetery in Denver.

Locations were made in 1883 by Herbert Harmon and B. Clark Wheeler on January 22 - on this date also Frederick Light filed a Declaration of Occupancy on East Sopris. The Wheeler entry was later transferred to Saul D. Gray and by him sold to John W. White who with his partner Walter Boram developed extensive holdings on Capitol Creek and the lower area of West Elk Creek including the area now known as Elk Creek Village: this area being some three and a fourth miles south

and west of Snowmass Postoffice. It was owned and operated for many years by W. W. Williams son of John R. and Celia Williams who are mentioned as pioneering and developing the ranch lands just east and north of the Boram & White holdings. Hubert Harman who was joined by his sisters Ella and Columbia in the mid 80s developed the ranch adjoining the original Staats Entry on the west and lying between Capitol Creek and Lime Creek. This land was patented by Columbia Harmon and transferred back to Herbert who on January 13, 1896 sold to Dennis Hughes who in turn sold to Charles J. Hart on January 25, 1897. The buildings erected on this property by Charles Hart are situated just east of Capitol Creek five and one half miles southwest of Snowmass P.O. They are a large brick house standing on a rise back from the road and a large red barn just to the left as the road crosses Capitol Creek. The original Harmon buildings were situated some half mile south and east of the Hart home. The original Staats home - a large log structure was some half mile east of the Harmons and about one fourth mile north and west of St. Benedicts Monastery.

It is unclear when Samuel Watson first entered the valley but his home ranch is situated approximately four miles southwest of the Store and Postoffice and is entered from the Capitol Creek road at the point where that road turns south from its westward course. This property is owned by George Maurin - his father Albert having acquired it from Watson on April 3, 1919. To the land acquired from Howard Luppen on July 5, 1892 Watson added lands patented by Abbie Horgan and Ellen Keley. These ladies had emigrated together from Ireland and entered the service of the Watson family in, I believe, Kentucky and came west to Colorado and Aspen with the family. Aunt Abbie Horgan was Housekeeper of a Sam Watson at the ranch until his marriage about 1913 and she continued on after the marriage and went to California with Mr. & Mrs. Watson after the sale of the ranch in 1919. Ellen

Keley became Mrs. N. J. Jacobson and was with her husband a long time resident of the area. Upstream from the Watson place ~~was~~ the Maurin home place first located by John Maurin, father of Albert on July 20, 1888. Just south of this was the M. J. (Joke) Jacobsen place patented on June 11, 1895. The ranch house and buildings were situated on a mesa running north and south parallel to Capitol Creek on its west side and were reached by a road leaving the main road at a point between the road to the Monastery and the entrance to the Hart property. This grade ascended the mesa and continued west thru the fields to the west edge of the mesa and an old grade descended into the West Elk Creek valley on the west.

Frank D. Solbug patented land lying along Capitol Creek and up Lime Creek on February 5, 1906. His house lay on the West bank of Capitol Creek about five miles from the Snowmass P.O. It was hidden from view of the road itself. Albert Maurin acquired this land from Salena B. Morris in 1913 after she had bought out Solbug in 1912. Solbug moved to the Wildcat area and later died mysteriously on the Rathbone Ranch along with Walter McKenzie. Continuing upstream from the Harmon - Hart place some three fourths mile is a place patented by H. F. George, later sold to Kemper Dunlap, and by him to C. C. Wieben. This land lies chiefly on the west side of the creek and on the mesa south of the Jacobson land. Amos Harmon patented lands lying east of this latter place and south of the Columbia Harman entry. The buildings on this Amos Harmon place are not visible from the road. Just south of this place is one first located by John Hawthorne who was more prospector and miner than a rancher. He roamed the country in search of wealth relating stories of his travels including a winter at Scofield in the head of the Crystal River and later on Porphry Mountain to the south of Thomasville on the Frying Pan. Relating his early life he told of leaving home in Illinois at about eight years of age - crossing

to the Missouri sides of the river and living the winter out with a colored man in a cave above the river. The next year he went on west to Abilene, Kansas where he tended the town herd of milk cows and later to Dodge City where he performed the same task. In Dodge he knew Wyatt Earp, Doc Holiday, Bat Masterson and others now much chronicated by t.v. and other media. His portrayal of these men was much less flattering than the usual one seen on our sets and in the movies and western story magazines. Holiday who died and is buried at Glenwood Springs he pictured as a cold blooded killer who backed Wyatt Earp up with a sawed off shot gun suspended from a cord around his neck and covered by a loose fitting raincoat. Earp a professional gambler was little better he said, Masterson being the best of the lot.

At the head of the Lime Creek basin is another place patented by one of the Hughes' sons and owned in later years at various times by August Mink, Fred Hart, Edward and John Maurin, L. R. Tucker, Ludvig, Schinhel, Cam Squires. Access to this area is part the Monastery who now own it.

Up Capitol Creek south and west of the Amos Harmon entry is a place now owned by the Robert Childs, patented by James Byrne January 19, 1905 transferred April 25, 1906 to Lida Ryan and she in turn sold to Gertrude Kay November 1, 1912. Up valley and to the east and south is land patented to Margaret Kinney and later transferred to Ludvig Kay.

The W. B. Nicholzen family moved to a high park on the creek bearing their name and a filing on forty acres was made by Billy Nicholzen on June 2, 1903. J. H. "Hud" Nicholzen patented this property and it was the family home for many years. From here Hud Nicholzen began his business of conducting tours of much of the high country embraced in the Maroon Snowmass Wilderness Area for groups of boys from the

Cleveland, Ohio area. This enterprise was conducted with an E. C. Offinger who signed the boys in their home region and escorted them to and from Snowmass by rail and accompanied the group through the inter. (not sure of this last word - P.G.) One summer this group journeyed by horseback thru the mountains to the north and attended Cheyenne Frontier Days. This enterprise can be considered the beginning of "Dude Ranching" in Pitkin County.

The Nicholson Boys used to construct an arbor of Aspen poles and branches and the entire community would celebrate with a picnic on July 4th. Each lady prepared a huge lunch featuring her own specialty and these were laid out and shared by all in the same manner as today's Pot lucks. The men would gather around a keg of beer cooled overnight in the rushing waters of the creek and after lunch an impromptu baseball game might be organized. One of the prized possessions of the Nicholson family was an old Victor Graphophone and a collection of cylinder records. There would be played for the ladies and children and the less athletically inclined men and some square dances were performed under the direction of John Herman who also set up his camera and photographed the entire group.

Land to the east and south of the original Nicholson entry was prompted by Clarence Nicholson and later by his brother John who patented it. The home built for Clarence and his bride Emma Schellenberg was later occupied by Hal and his bride Polena Gates and they lived there until January 1, 1929 when they moved with their children to Aspen, Hal having been chosen Sheriff of Pitkin County in the 1928 election.

Upstream on Capitol Creek a mile above the mouth of Nicholson Creek a filing was made about 1914 or 15 at a spot known locally as Sandy Ford by Jim Jones who relinquished his right to George Jenkinsen

and this land was later patented by Percy Jenkinson. The Jenkinson family occupied the log house with dirt roof for several summers and the younger sister Irene gave music lessons on piano and violin to some neighborhood youngsters. Roy and Gladys Hart were among these students and Roy took lessons on a violin carried over the mountains by Henry Staats. This instrument is still in the possession of Roy's daughter Sharon.*

Paul Kay later acquired the Jenkinson land and patented another 640 acres adjoining his holdings on the Byrne and Margart Kinney lands. Much of this last entry lay astride the divide between Capitol Creek and West Elk.

The road leading to the West Elk Valley leaves the main Capitol Creek road at a point some three and three quarters mile southwest of Snowmass P.O. Another road leading to upper Elk Creek Branches off some six and three fourths miles from Snowmass. This road in fact is the chief throughfare rather than the one continuing up Capitol Creek to the Nicholson Area.

The lower road to West Elk passes by the Sam Watson ranch and continues west and then south up West Elk to land patented December 9 -

*In the early days on Capitol, Lime, and West Elk Creeks the building of a new log cabin was an occasion of great community interest. First the cabin was raised with all hands assisting, then a house warming followed and at all these occasions Henry Staats and his violin were the chief source of entertainment for both singing and dancing. This violin went with him at all times.

1890 by Michael Marron who together with his brothers David and Pete were in the area. This land Marron sold to Margaret L. Kinney January 30, 1896 and she later sold to the Shuttleworth family and it was the nucleus of the land owned by Harry Shuttleworth and his wife Susan who in later years became Mrs. G. B. Brown and who is still living in Denver at the ripe age of 95. The road ends at this place and on its progress upstream passes the site of the present Mary K. Frank ranch. This place was for many years the home of Leo Light and his family. Between the Frank and Shuttleworth ranches is the site of the McCabe place, patented by James McCabe on January 15, 1902 and later the home of John McCabe, his wife Mary, and their six children who continued to live there after John McCabe Sr. passed on. Below this place and adjacent to the Frank Headquarters is land owned by Gideon Cookman and later Joe Montover bought this land. He was a trader and ran a sizable herd of cattle there and on Forest Lands above the Nicholsons. On a mesa west of the Franks and situated on the divide between West Elk and East Sopris Creeks is the land patented by Ellen Keley and transferred to Samuel Watson who in turn sold this parcel to T. Nakamura January 11, 1919 and he in turn sold to Leo Light on January 30, 1926. "T" was a Japanese who was one of a group brought to the area by Harry Shuttleworth to clear land and raise potatoes. Some of this group went later to the Wildcat area and were associated with James McKenzie for a time. "T" maintained a small herd of purebred Shorthorn Cattle along with his farming operation. He lived in a cabin on the McCabe place for a considerable time, while renting this land and raised a big garden and assisted Mrs. McCabe in running her place. Upon leaving this area he went to the Grand Junction region and bought a tract of land and engaged in truck gardening. John Jurick Jr. and later Art Roberts owned this Keley place. Going to the upper lands in the West Elk area by the second or upper road, the first place is owned by Chris Wieben and he and his wife Anne

have lived there since their marriage on January 27, 1925. This land was patented by Henry F. George who sold to Orville Eib December 26, 1900. Eib later married Katie Nicholson, daughter of the W. C. Nicholsons. Eib and Gideon Cookman were in the area in January 1898, both being natives of West Virginia they were the vanquard of a host of men from that state who came to & lived for a time in this area. Among these was Burnie M Butcher who patented the land west of the Byrne - Ryan - Kay property and south of Eibs ranch on April 26, 1916. The land adjoining Butcher on the south and extending for a mile west was located by James Ralston and patented by Joseph Mogan who transferred it to E. W. Jewett a prominent grocer and meat market operator in Aspen. Title remained with Jewett until transferred to Charles Hart in 1929 and by him to Fred Hart in 1936. This land was occupied by the Ed Morris family and later by Charles Gates and family. Gates built a new log house and barn on this property during his tenure and piped in water from a spring some two hundred yards or so south and upstream along West Elk.

To the north and west of this place lying along the east side and on top of the mesa separating the West Elk and East Sopris Watersheds is a place known a McCartney Mesa. This land was patented by Omar L. McCartney, a Glenwood Springs Dentist, who sold it to Isaac Campbell and Richard Holmes. Holmes was Campbell's father-in-law and they came from the Castle Rock or Franktown area of Douglas County bringing with them a fine herd of Registered Shorthorn cattle. These cattle were later acquired by W. W. Williams and sold by him to A. B. Dudley who brought the registrations up to date and thru the introduction of new blood built them up to their former degree of excellance and later sold them to Wald Brothers of Carbondale. Chris Wieber obtained the first of his breeding herd from Campbell and several cows were bought by Earl Squires, nephew of Burnie Butcher and shipped to Virginia when he and his family went there about 1924. These cattle were purchased from W. W. Williams.

South of the Mogan patent were eighty acres set aside as a ranger station for the U. S. Forest Service and south of that is the land patented by John Herman on February 6, 1923. Next on the south are eighty acres patented by George A. Hutchins January 13, 1920. Hutchins was a former Forest Ranger on the Sopris National Forest and his wife was Elizabeth a sister of John Herman. When they separated she resumed the name of Randall, her first husband. Hutchins had originally patented eighty acres lying along the Gunnison River south of Whitewater and he later located and patented four hundred and eighty acres lying atop and south of Flat Top Mountain and adjoining parts of the Shield O and J. E. Hunter Ranches. South of the Hutchins - Randall eighty but not adjoining it are a hundred and sixty acres first located by Fred Hutchins, a brother of George. This entry was relinquished to Jacob W. Hatch and a patent to him was granted July 16, 1926. This concludes the list of lands lying along or adjacent to West Elk Creek.

A road branching from the Capitol Creek Road comes two miles from Snowmass Post Office turns west crosses the creek and leads to the Box L L , or Light Ranch. This ranch contains the Charles Jacobs entry described as being the first location in the area: included are lands patented by Fred Light and other acquired by he and his wife Maggie over a period of time in the mid 1880's and early 1890s. These lands are still in the possession of members of the Light family. Ray or "Bub" is a son of Leo Light and grandson of Fred and Maggie Light. These lands lie along East Sopris Creek and north of the Frank Ranch. Upstream from the Box L and extending south for a mile or more is the place owned by Ray Light but formerly the property of William Finley. The original patent to this land was granted to Nellie McClimont, a sister of Maggie Light, on July 25, 1892. The first land acquired by Mr. Finley was a Public Trustees Deed dated June 20, 1901. He at one time owned lands along East Sopris Creek as far south as it was patented. Just south of the original

Finley property is forty acres deeded to Harry Shuttleworth by Orville Eib on December 24, 1900. Adjoining this and lying south and west is the land patented by William Daugherty on September 17, 1906. Up stream from here perhaps a mile are one hundred acres patented on December 26, 1912 by William H. Taft and soon acquired by Finley. Upstream from this land a half mile or more a basin or park opens in the East Sopris valley and here are lands located by Charles Lawrence and Patented by John Jurick JR, on June 12, 1925. A tract by miles and bounds located by Charles Jones and patented by B. J. Bruton August 25, 1925. East and south of the Bruton and Jurick lands were entries by George Hendricks and Solon Osgood. These were patented by Jennie Daugherty on June 4, 1926 and the Osgood entry at a later date by Theodore H. Karpen. Peter and Hulda Karpen parents of Theodore acquired the Bruton and Jurick properties and later sold them to William Finley. He also later acquired the Daugherty land. Some distance south and west of the Bruton entry are a hundred and sixty acres to which patent was granted to Alden Thomas Lewis, a former professional hobo known locally as "Shorty". This land was reached by an old logging road leading thru the Mogan - Jewett - Hart land. This Lewis entry lay within the National Forest Boundary and was transferred from Lewis to J. H. "Hod" Nicholson to Paul Kay to Fred Hart to Leo Light. Since it lay within the area of Leo's Forest Grazing Permit it was chiefly useful to him and his son. They also acquired and grazed these other lands along East Sopris Creek formerly owned by Finley. It seems worthy of note that only the Light land and a small portion of the Williams Bros. ranch and now owned by Helen Orden, daughter of W. W. Williams, are still held by descendants of the men and women who founded these ranches. "Bub" Light and his mother Mary Epperson, "Mamie" Light remain locally. George Maurin and family reside on the old Sam Watson place, but the original John Maurin homestead is part of the lands owned by St. Benedicts. Chris Wieber came with the family to the Capitol-Lime Creek valley on April 3, 1910 and is the only other true old timer

in the valley. He and Anne and their son Walter with his wife, Joyce, and four of their sons live on the Eib place. C. C. Wieber, Cris' father bought this land January 20, 1920 and Chris acquired title in 1929. This place along with the Child's property lying to the south, the Maurin holdings, Light and Frank properties and the lands owned by Harold Pabst are the only working ranches remaining in the whole of this magnificent territory.

There are lands lying along the Roaring Fork River both east and west of the Snowmass Post Office whose owners received mail at this office and may be classified as tributary to the Snowmass area. To the west in the land now named "Lazy Glen", a mobile home court situated along Highway 82 about three fourths of a mile west of the Snowmass P.O. A big log house and a barn just east of this court were built by Alex and Louisa Bionez who acquired their holdings March 31, 1917. These lands were patented by Etienne Arbaney on June 23, 1898, March 23, 1901, and March 22, 1906. Etienne Arbaney was the father of Emery and Alex Arbaney - Emery living for years and farming on lands east across the Frying Pan River from Basalt. Alex lived for many years on lands to be described later and moved to the Carbondale area after selling to Eli Cerise. Most of the arable land on the Bionaz ranch is on the north side of the Roaring Fork River and the original Arbaney buildings were situated in that location near the mouth of one of the draws opening out of the red hills to the north. A cloudburst in the mid 1920s destroyed these buildings and it was then that the Bionez family built anew along the Highway 82. The old road in this territory was along the base of these red hills and emerged from them to the Basalt School and cement bridge, still standing, where it entered the town itself.

East, upstream on the Roaring Fork and on its north side are the lands patented by John Wheatley on July 15, 1894 later transferred by him to

his son, William, on February 8, 1923 and by him to Laurent Arbarey on July 2, 1930. The railroad siding Bates and Stockyards and the old brick school building of District 2, known locally as the Wheatley School are located on this property. At the mouth of Wheatley Gulch on the west end of this land is the Wheatley Family Cemetary. Continuing east are the lands patented by Simon Wheatley, brother of John, on June 30, 1886, by Horace Gavin on May 22, 1899, Sobin Osgood on May 22, 1899, Osgood sold to Gavin on December 12, 1899 and Gavin in turn deeded this entry to J. N. Henry on April 14, 1900 and sold his own patented land to Henry on April 4, 1902. Charles Case patented 136 acres lying on both sides of the river also on May 22, 1899. Further east and back from the river at the mouth of Arbarey Gulch are lands deeded by William Dobsen to Alex Arbarey on January 12, 1909. Mr. Arbarey later patented additional lands and sold all of these to Eli Cerise on January 28, 1929. Newt Henry had sold his holdings to Eli Cerise and Alex Fougner sometime prior to 1913. Fougner died soon after and Eli Cerise acquired full title from Adrienne Fougner on February 24, 1917. Charles Case sold to Cerise on August 27, 1920. Mr. Case had a large patch of raspberries and when these where ripe housewives from Capitol Creek, Snowmass Creek & the Woody Creek area used to drive a team and light wagon often accompanied by their families to this farm and picked the fruit. Fortunately Mr. Case didn't weigh little boys & girls in and out on these occassions charging only for the berries in the various buckets and pans in which the ladies and their helpers (?) gathered them.

Upstream and astride of the Roaring Fork is the land owned by Con Phillips. This was patented by Joseph Diernoz on February 21, 1923 and acquired by Phillips from E. L. Paige of Aspen October 13, 1941. These lands are now occupied by the Phillips Cabins & mobile home court.

In more recent years John H. and Agnes Jurick McLaren acquired a tract of land from the Eli Cerise family along Highway 82 perhaps a mile east of the store and post office and built their home and lived there; Agnes was Postmistress at Snowmass from 1949 to 1955. This tract was acquired August 30, 1949.

The search for native hay meadows having been the primary incentive to settle the lands it was only natural that the early settlers heeded their operations to the supplying of feed, both hay and grain, principally oats for the horses and mules used by the freighters to supply the mining regions, both local and more distant such as Leadville with food, machinery powder and all of the other necessities of life. They also turned to the raising of horses for sale to freighters and loggers and to supply their own and neighbors needs for their operations. Meat being a prime requisite of life too they began to raise cattle. Early ranchers who engaged in these operations were Fred Light, John R. Williams, Eoram & White, Reese and L. R. Tucker, Henry Staats the Harmon Brothers, Herbert and Amos and later the people who followed adopted the same methods. Some also raised a few hogs, milked cows and churned butter and made weekly or biweekly trips to Aspen with butter, eggs in season, and both beef and pork. Some of these products were sold to grocers and markets, others sold directly to private customers. It was a long and arduous trip by spring wagon or light sleigh pulled by a team of horses and a distance of forty miles or more plus the route in Aspen was covered and if made in one day it entailed an early start and a late finish.

Much of the hay not consumed by the owners stock, also the bulk of the oats produced were sold. The hay baled and oats bagged were hauled to the Colorado Midland at Snowmass or the D. & R. G. at Rose situated north across the Roaring Fork from Snowmass and from these went to market. Some of these products were of course hauled into Aspen but the

biggest part of that market was filled from the Brush Creek valley and places nearer the town. Leadville with its great numbers of teams hauling ore from its mines to the smelters was one of the principal markets for those products.

Beginning about 1912 a demand for potatoes spurred the production of vast quantities of "spuds" in the entire Roaring Fork Valley and its tributaries. Potatoes raised in the Snowmass and Capitol Creek areas were good but not up to the quality of the tubers produced principally on the north sides of the Roaring Fork where the soil was more sandy and better drained. This was especially true of the spuds produced on the red soil running east from Basalt toward Woody Creek extending thru a part of the Alex Arbaney land. In later years these red soil spuds brought from 25¢ to 50 or 60¢ more per hundred than did those produced in other areas and this spread in price assured the few producers of the red soil variety a profit while the others were often lucky to break even on production costs. The big boom in this potato production continued during the years of World War I and up until about 1921. After that it was a hit and miss affair with a good price and demand occurring about every third year. Many of the smaller ranches began to fail about this time and the production of livestock became more and more vital to a continuing and successful ranching operation. Where the raising of one or two car loads of potatoes had assured a man and his family of a living this now was no longer true. Many turned to the milking of cows and sale of cream to creameries as far distant as Beatrice, Nebraska for their livelihood or a big supplement to other sources. Cream was shipped in five and ten gallon cans from Rose to outlets from Carbondale and Glenwood Springs to Nebraska. These cans were transported to the railroad by various modes of transportation ranging from a saddle horse or pack animal, a wagon or sled in winter to the automobile and the "Cream Checks" which arrived by mail were a great source of providing

the necessities of life many of which could not be produced in these high valleys.

The advent of the automobile and truck destroyed the market for baled hay and oats to a large degree and also sharply curtailed the demand for draft horses thus shutting off another source of revenue for many. Too the cattle market slumped badly about the same time the demand for potatoes declined and hard times for many ensued from this also. Sheep had not been produced in large numbers in these valleys and aside from a flock owned by Sid and "Jouce" Cookman which may have run as high as three hundred breeding ewes and later a flock of about the same size owned by Albert Maurin were the only herds in the area aside from a small farm flock owned by C. C. Wieber on Capitol Creek and another by Fred and Jennie Popish on Wildcat. For a number of years large flocks of sheep had been pastured on Forest Service Lands high in the Frying Pan watershed but it wasn't until the years following World War I that these flocks which wintered on the Public Domain in the extreme Western Colorado and the Eastern Utah Desert began operations in the upper Roaring Fork area and in the Snowmass Creek drainage. The LaSal Land and Livestock Company was owned by the Redd family and headquartered at LaSal, Utah; in earlier years the Simos Mr. Redd had grazed several herds of sheep in the Sellars - Iranhoe area high in the Frying Pan drainage; after the demise of the Colorado Midland Railroad this area was so remote that it was no longer easily reached and these sheep were sent to Forest Allotments in the Snowmass watershed. Following the older Mr. Redd's passing the overall management of these operations was handled by one of his sons, Charles Redd who became a well known figure in the Snowmass - Wildcat area, and later was President of National Woolgrowers and known equally well in Boston, the chief wool market and in Washington D. C. When Forest Service Regulations regarding the grazing of livestock on their lands were amended to require the ownership of "Commensurate Property" as a prerequisite

to securing a grazing permit Charles Redd purchased the property on Wild Cat owned by M. L. & Katie McKenzie Carroll and James McKenzie. These lands were used as lambing grounds and holding areas for the bands of ewes and lambs until the Forest Lands permitted entry usually about June 16 and later to June 20th or July 1st. After a summer of grazing in the high alpine areas of East & West Snowmass, Willow Creek, and the main Snowmass these bands were returned to Wild Cat, the lambs shipped east to market and the ewes after a short period were returned to the Desert. These sheep were unloaded in May at Bates Spur near the old Wheatley School and shipped out in late September or up until mid-October from the same stockyards. LaSal, the Redd Headquarters is located south of Moab, Utah. Extensive operations in both sheep and cattle were carried on from there as well as banking and mercantile enterprises, and an automobile agency. Charles Redd later acquired the Sheild O Lands as well as a tract or two on Snowmass Creek adjoining the Wild Cat lands.

The National Holding Company, a subsidiary of the First National Bank of Price, Utah were also active in the area - they acquired the old Henry Staats lands on Lime Creek, now the site of St. Benedict's Monastery and used this as a lambing ground with leases from nearby tracts for a band of sheep. They also owned the lands along Maroon Creek where the Highland Ski Area is headquartered and other properties on Hunter Creek northeast of Aspen: Three bands of sheep owned by this company and leased to the Cruetchet Brothers, Jack, Pete, and Marten were shipped to were shipped to either Pates or Aspen in May after shearing and lambing on these places, grazed in Lincoln Gulch and the Grizzly area on the upper Roaring Fork and returned to Cisco or Thompson Springs, Utah for wintering on the desert. Later National Holding Co. sold the Lime Creek and Maroon Creek ranches to D. B. Meham and Sons of Hanksville, Utah who had operated for years as "Tramp Sheepmen" grazing their herds on Public Land wherever available. They in turn sold the Lime Creek band to W. S. Lemoy and he to the Monastery.

About 1924 Charles Gavin was operating the land where Holiday Inn and the Buttermilk Ski Tow are situated - the ranch buildings were located on the north side of Highway 82 near the present Tennis Courts, Gavin a son of Horace Gavin pioneer rancher & horseman secured a permit for a band of sheep on Smuggler Mountain and from here expanded his operations eventually owning the Browster holdings on Snowmass Creek which included the Alex McKenzie, Edwin Powell, and McLachlan patents.

A. B. Dudley had come from the upper reaches of the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton in Virginia and leased the Shuttleworth land on West Elk, in 1924. He soon acquired a small herd of sheep which he grazed on these lands and later traded these animals to W. W. Williams for the pure-bred Shorthorns, the descendants of the herd brought from eastern Colorado by Isaac Campbell, Williams in turn relinquished his permit to graze cattle on Forest lands and in return received a permit to run a herd of one thousand sheep in the Williams Lake basin and in Jimmy Creek. Maurin and Cherokee, (Charity) Basins and the very head of Capitol Creek. In addition to his land along Capitol Creek and West Elk he purchased the Jacob Hatch patent and used this as a holding area before moving on to the Forest. His brothers John M. and Harry C. Williams followed his lead in exchanging their cattle permit for a sheep permit on West Snowmass and Copper Creeks. This was done a year or two after W. W. Williams set the precedent, probably in 1928. At this time also Fred Hart, Albert Maurin, and Paul Kay exchanged their cattle permits for allotments on Avalanche Creek. This beautiful stream has its origin in Avalanche Lake at the base of Capitol Peak on its northwest shoulder and flows north and a bit west to the base of Sopris Peak on the peaks west side where Avalanche flows into the Crystal River. Very little land was ever patented in this valley and no farming or allied operations were ever developed. These bands of sheep were crossed over the top of that spur of Elk Mountains running northwest from Capitol Peak and ending in Mt. Sopris. This valley was almost virgin

when opened for these sheep permits having been first visited by the Hayden Surveying Party in 1873-74 and only visited by a few prospectors and an occasional hunting party later. Land had been located at Dooley Park about midway between the mouth of the creek and Avalanche Lake but never patented tho the remains of an old cabin were there and traces of an old ditch could be found. A man named Clark Edward had a location south of Bulldog Creek and site of the present upper Forest Campground and other lands nearer the mouth of the creek were patented but never developed and later reacquired by the Forest Service. Ralph Leonhardy and Freeman James, young residents of the Carbondale area built a cabin at Dooley Park in October 1931 and later in company with Ewart Jacobs, a cowboy and one time rider for the Box L occupied this cabin during the winter of 1931-32 trapping marten and leaving in March when the danger of snow slides became serious. In the ensuing years Fred Hart and his sons and herders used it as a temporary base for a camp while in the area and to store salt.

Howard Shelhanser first leased and later bought the lands patented by Amos Harmon, Burnie Butcher, and O. L. McCartney and he too went into the raising of sheep and grazing of them on Forest Lands. Only Charles Gavin of the local ranchers wintered his sheep on the desert as did the Redd and National Holding Companys. The other ranchers wintered on their own lands or where they purchased additional hay and pasture to supplement their supplies.

Later the W. W. Williams on Capitol Creek and the Shuttleworth - Brown and John Wilson holdings on West Elk and East Sopris, and the S. C. Louderback ranch on Wildcat were acquired by J. Burton Tuttle, a Utah Sheepman and Grand Junction resident - the Williams Brothers land in the main by Harold Pabst, the Redd holdings and these of Gavin by David, Perry, and Jan Christansen. W. S. Lamoy and Sons acquired first the

Fred Hart properties and later acquired the old Staats lands, the C. C. Wieben place and the adjoining Amos Harmon and Hyrup ranches and sold all of these lands to St. Benedicts. The lands acquired by Shelhamer also were bought up and incorporated into the Monastery lands as were a half section patented by Jesse Staton which lied north of the Staats lands.

In retrospect it can only be imagined what hard unremitting toil went into the clearing of much of these lands and the laying out and construction of the ditches which conveyed the essential water. Where Sagebrush was the prevailing cover it could be killed by watering and the dead brush cleared by dragging but on the lands covered by Jackoah, Chokecherry, and Serviceberry bushes these had to be grubbed by hand with a grubbing hoe. Lands bearing Aspen were cleared by cutting the trees and pulling or grubbing the stumps. There were also areas covered with great quantities of rocks of all sized - the smaller stones were gathered on stoneboats or drags and thrown into piles; the big boulders had to be blasted and the pieces then hauled away with the smaller rocks. Roads and fences had to be constructed and this also was mainly achieved by manual labor. Durable fence posts were mainly of scrub cedar or pinion secured from the Light and Williams Hills and the Red Hills north of the Roaring Fork River. Where available some extra large Jackoak were used. Aspen were used but soon rolled out and were considered only for temporary use. Roads were laid out and linked the valleys together but were almost impassable in spring when the snow melted and frost came out of the ground. These roads were moved from time to time until the present ones were established and gradually improved. The County Commissioners appointed a local rancher as Road Overseer in a specified area and furnished a grader to smooth the spring ruts and clear ditches for drainage on the roadside. These graders were pulled by four horses and a two man crew was required - one as driver and the other to manipulate the larger gear which

raised and lowered the blade and the levers which adjusted the angle and setting of the blade. In the early and mid 1920s when automobiles were coming into more common use it was an established practice on Capiton Creek and the connecting areas for the men to set aside three or four days, usually before haying began, to upgrade and improve a certain section of road. Big rocks in the center or close beside the road were blasted, drainage was improved and in some cases curves were straightened and dips eliminated. W. W. Williams, Charles Hart, and later Charles Gates and Clarence Reed were Road Overseers, no doubt others preceded them.

Ranch houses, barns, and sheds and corrals were first constructed of logs and poles cut and hauled from the nearby mountains with their Spruce Forests. Very few of these original buildings now stand - exceptions are the old log house on the former Williams Eros. property along Snowmass Creek about two miles south and east of the Post office and the Finley home on East Sopris Creek some half mile upstream from the Box L ranch. New frame homes still standing were built by Fred Light on the Box L and Sam Watson on the property now owned by George Maurin and by S. C. Lowderback on Wild Cat. Charles Hart had a brick home constructed about 1907 and later a big red barn was built on the bank above Capitol Creek. These buildings are now used as a Guest House and a barn and shop by the Monastery. The brick home was used as the Monastery prior to the erection of its own new structure. Chris and Anne Wieben have a new home as does their son on their property and the Childs and Frank ranches have new homes on them. Many of the old original structures were destroyed by fire - the latest one being the old Edwin Powell place on Snowmass. About 1910 a modern home was built on the old Michael Barron patent by Susan and Sarry Shuttleworth and her father Dr. James A. Wilson a retired physician and a former native of Virginia and long time resident of Missouri. This beautiful frame structure

was destroyed by fire in the early 1930s and replaced by a small log structure occupied for several years by John Wilson a nephew of Mrs. Shuttleworth, later Mrs. G. B. Brown of Aspen.

Houses raised in these valleys were of several strains but preferences for draft stock went to the Percheron breed. These were spirited animals quick in their movements and well suited for general ranch work and could move right along when hitched to light wagons or sleds on trips to and from town. The prevailing color was black or dark brown tho occasional grey or bay animals resulted. These animals weighted from 1450 to 1700 pounds and were smaller and moved at a more rapid gait than the more ponderous Belgian breed introduced and bred by J. D. Brunton on his Glendale Stock Farm. Three outstanding stallions were Jericho, owned by Charles Hart, Pirate by a company of ranchers but stood at the W. W. Williams place, and Brilliant owned and used in stud by James Kelly of Aspen whose custom it was to travel to the various parts of this area driving this horse and a large pinto hitched to a light wagon. Kelly, sometimes referred to as "Horse Thief" frequently led other of his animals for he was a horse trader and at one time had quite a herd of horses of various sexes and age running free in the public domain areas of Wild Cat. He was not always a welcome guest in the homes and at the tables of the various ranches he visited on his travels for his person and clothes were often in need of generous applications of soap and water. He was an avid reader and could frequently be seen reading a book or periodical with the reins wrapped around a leg or the brake staff while his team moved along at a leisurely gait.

A principal source of riding stock was the animals raised by Fred Light and later his sons, Leo and Fred Jr, called Fritz, on the Box L and which ranged on their lands on Light Hill and adjoining public domain. These were horses weighing from 900 to 1200 pounds, agile, intelligent

and when trained excellent working cow horse. These broncos were of various breeds and in later years Morgan stallions were introduced and ranged with the brood mares.

Paul Kay and his wife Louisa bought an Arabian stallion and produced some fine riding stock on their place now the Child property in the 1930s! This was done along with their sheep operations. Louisa wasn't a typical house wife preferring to work outside and was an accomplished rider and handler of ranch work animals and absolutely without fear.

The first herds of range cattle were nondescript animals but after 1900 good Hereford Bulls began to be introduced and later many of the ranchers used Shorthorn sires from the Campbell herd and that of his successors. The Herefords commanded a slightly higher price per pound but the Shorthorns were larger so that both types brought about the same price per head. The Lights, Williams Bros., W. W. Williams and Lowderback ran the larger herds thru the years.

The range sheep were principally Rambouillet ewes or a cross of this and Columbia for a good production of wool. These ewes were bred to Hampshire or Suffolk rams, good meat producers but weak on wool, and the resulting lambs were of excellent meat quality. The lambs produced in the herds grazing on the high mountains of central Colorado from the Wyoming border south to New Mexico on Forest Lands were assured of top price in the markets in Denver, Omaha, and Kansas City for after sales in these markets they were shipped to the East Coast, principal demand was there, for slaughter and did not lose their "bloom" or quality enroute. There were a minimum of small or feeder lambs in these flocks which would require more time and concentrated feed for finishing. Lambs born in late April and thruout May came off the high pastures in early or mid - October weighing about 80 pounds average per head.

The people who resided in these areas had a record of stability and in most cases lived and ranched on their lands for a long continuous period. The oldest resident families were of course the Lights and Williams*. Next probably were the Kinneys, Maurins, and N.J. Jacobson. Charles Hart began his operations in 1897 and these continued in the family thru 1947. The McKenzies too remained in the Snowmass - Wild Cat area as did J. E. Hunter and Catherine Lindvig. After Henry and Ella Staats sold their lands a succession of renters, tenants of L. R. Tucker, came to the valley and two of these remained for considerable periods of time. First was C. C. Wieben, father of Chris, who with his family came in 1910, he purchased the ranch upstream from the Hart property from Kemper Dunlap and Charles Gates and family moved to the Staats - Tucker lands, they were followed by Ludwig Schinkel and family, and they in turn by J. C. Carpenter and his family, followed by George Tigler and his bride. Schinkel bought the property directly south of the Staats lands, Carpenter leased the John S. Stewart place upstream from Snowmass and then for years worked for Williams Bros. He later worked as a rider for the Castle Creek Pool living on their upper "Cow Camp" adjoining the Elk Mountain Ranch, later inherited a substantial fortune and returned to his native Kentucky and lived his remaining years there.

Gates was on the land patented by Mogan and farmed and milked a large herd of cows before the decline in the potato market and prices in general forced him out. Claus Wieben carried on his operations until ill health overcame him. Mrs. Wieben and a younger daughter and son attempted to carry on but it was too much and they too were forced to move. As mentioned previously Orvill Eib and Gideon Cookman were the vanguard of a number of young men who came to the area from West Virginia; prominent among them were Burnie Butcher, his nephew Earl Squires who rented from William Finley, Fred Hart, Albert Maurin, Harry Shuttleworth and finally Williams Bros. His chief crop was potatoes and about 1924

he left for Virginia and lands purchased there. His brother in law Cam Squires worked for several years for Fred Hart, leased the old Amos Harmon lands from W. E. Outcalt who with his family had farmed these for several years before declining prices forced them to move. Cam later bought the land directly south of the Staats lands, in 1929 he and Anna Kay - granddaughter of Gertrude Kay and niece of Paul and Ludwig Kay were married. Poor prices and insufficient livestock doomed this venture also. They later rented from William Finley and Fred Hart then moved to the Satank area near Carbondale and are now year round residents of "The Valley of the Sun" in Arizona. Another family resident off and on for several years were the W. D. Scotts. He first leased the Staats - Tucker lands then followed Earl Squires at Williams Bros. They went to the Rifle area for a time then returned to Capitol Creek after purchasing the C. C. Wieben place. After sales of theirs they returned to Rifle where for several years he and Mrs. Scott conducted a dairy and a restaurant - he also served as a County Commissioner in Garfield County and is now living in Glenwood Springs near a daughter and son, Mrs. Scott having passed on. He is Scotch by birth and she was English. His early life was in the U. S. was in Idaho and Montana where he worked for the Laidlow and Brochie Sheep Company.

On February 9, 1912 Marcus and Christine Kards who had been in the area for a number of years sold the ranch lying beneath the big slide on the north side of Flat Top Mountain to Oscar Schellenberg and Alfred Nitz. Schellenberg purchased Nitz interest on March 19, 1915. Previously he and Dora Karde were married and about 1924 they sold and moved to Denver where Schellenberg again engaged in Truck Farming in the Valverde area near the South Platte River. He had grown up in this type of farming these and falling potato prices and the need for schools above the grade level for a growing family prompted this move.

The Nicholson family left in the 1920s as the parents passed on the younger boys sought other employment.

Fred Hart and Ella Colby, niece of Ella Staats, Columbia, Herbert, and Amos Harmon were married in 1904. They ranched in the Capitol Creek valley from then until 1944 with the exception of the years 1911 and 1912 when he served as assessor of Pitkin County and they lived in Aspen. Failing health caused him to trade his band of sheep to Gerbaz Brothers of Gerbazdale, formerly Watson, for their cattle and to lease the ranches to a son William and Cam Squire. The Harts sold to W. S. Lamoy in 1947 and moved to Grand Junction residing there until 1968 when he passed on. Ella Hart, now ninety one, is presently living with her daughter and son in law, Gladyce and Jens Christiansen near Aspen. She along with Susan Brown, ninety five, in Denver, Clementine Arbaney, the former Clementine Valomi, widow of Alex Arbaney now ninety three and living in Carbondale and Katie Carroll also 91 and living near Silt with her daughter Mildred Roberts are the oldest surviving former residents of this area.

Others living for a long period in the Capitol Creek valley were Bertrude Kay and her sons Paul and Ludwig. Edwin Redmond came as a cowboy and bronc rider to the Fox L in the early 1920s. Later he and Margaret Wieben, daughter of the C. C. Wiebens and sister of Chris were married. They ranched at various times on the Outcalt place, Amos Harmon Patent, Bohan Siebeh formerly the home of John Jurick Sr. and family and for a number of years Ed. rode for the Capitol Creek cattle permittees on Forest Lands in that drainage area.

S. L. McKinley came to the McCartney Mesa in the mid 1920s with his two small daughters Helen and Vesta. They cleared and reclaimed the old log buildings and finally built a new log home where the girls, left motherless at a very early age, grew to be young ladies, married and left for other homes.

The family of John R. and Celia Williams consisted of sons John M. and William, daughter Mary, Mrs. Jack Loughran, and twins Harry and Emma, Mrs. E. C. Bradshaw, they being the first twins born in Aspen. Mary had one son William Loughran, now residing in Denver, Emma's one daughter Ruth, Mr. Bissell of Pueblo, Colo. and Will Williams a daughter Helen Ogden now in Oklahoma. Will's first wife died when Helen was quite small and he then married Florence Mellor, second daughter of the Joe Mellors of Aspen. Joe Mellor and his brother John being the founders and proprietors of the Foundry there. Later Harry Williams and Clara Mellors younger sister of Florence were married and lived on the Williams Bros. ranch until their passing. Emma Bradshaw was the long time Postmistress and proprietor of the general store at Snowmass having acquired this property from John Henry Stewart. Mary Loughran and her husband lived in Cripple Creek for many years. They purchased the John S. Stewart and Hugh Stewart lands coming there to live about the end of World War I. He passed on while still living on the ranch after which she sold and moved to Aspen when she lived until her passing. Emma also moved to the old Williams home in Aspen and lived her remaining years there. John, Will, and Harry all lived out their lives on the ranches.

George Dudley, a brother of A. B. Dudley, and his wife leased the store and ran it and the post office for a number of years in the late 1920s and early 30s. They were followed by a succession of people in this location after they sold the stock of merchandise and moved to Carbondale.

The D. W. Chisholm family consisting of D. W. his wife Annie, daughter of the John S. Stewarts and their family, sons Stuart, Harry, and twins Hugh and Hubert, and daughters Ethel, Katherine, Alma, and Agnes lived upstream from Williams Bros. Only Alma Beck and Hugh remain locally, in Aspen. Stuart and Harry have passed on, Ethel Mosher lives in California Katherine Carroll in Salem, Oregon, Agnes Higgins in Virginia and

Hubert divides his time between Aspen and Illinois.

Upstream from Chisholm were Joseph Letey his wife and sons Ben and George. George married Ernie Cerise, daughter of the Eli Cerises and they and Ben reside near Glenwood Springs. Further upstream were B. C. Huff and wife, son Roger and daughter Dorothy. The S. C. Lowderbacks were the first place on lower Wild Cat. He has passed away but Mrs. Lowderback and son Ed live in Lafayette, Colo. and Raymond at Woody Creek.

On East Sopris in addition to the Lights and William Finley other long time residents were William Daugherty and family. Among these were son Dormare and daughter Jane and her husband Spencer Lawrence and their family. Solon Osgood too was in the upper East Sopris Creek basin for many years. The Light family consisted of Fred Light and wife Maggie, daughters Effie, Edith, Helen, and Mildred or "Babe". Sons Leo, Ray, Fred Jr., "Fritz" and Howard. Only Edith and Mildred are still living. Ray was killed by lightning on the porch of the family home on the Box L. Effie became Mrs. Robert S. Killey, for many years County Treasurer, were married and resided in Denver where they ran a Pharmacy. Mildred became Mrs. Howe Thayer and both she and Edith now live in California. Leo's widow Mamie lives on in the old family home and Ray their son on the former William Finley place.

The John Jurick family consisted of Mr. Jurick, his wife Theresa, sons John Jr., Victor, and Tony and daughters Victoria, Mary, and Margaret. John Jr. and Victor are both dead; Tony and wife reside in Grand Junction, Victoria Sirola in California, Mary Phillipoff in Florida and Margaret Huntington in Denver.

The family of Fred and Ella Hart consisted of sons Charles D., William, Roy, Fred Jr. and daughter Gladys. Charles and wife Christine Ercksen

lived for years in Laramie, Wyo. and now reside ^{side} in Denver. William and Charles ⁻⁷ (Roberts) in Grand Junction; Roy and Marjorie (Roberts) in Seattle, Washington and Gladyce Christiansen and husband Jensen on the site of the Glendale Stock Farm west of Aspen. Fred Jr. baby of the family passed away in Salt Lake City in 1953 and is buried in Grand Junction, where he and his wife Wilma (Luster) resided following their marriage.

The C. C. Wieben family consisted of sons Chris, Walter, and Claude; daughters Margaret and Gertrude, twins, and Elsie. All are gone except Chris and Elsie Smith. He is still living with his wife of fifty years Anne (Devine) in the old Neighborhood and Elsie in California. The family of John and Mary McCabe were Joseph, Mary, James, John Jr., Alice, and Francis. Joe is living on the George Maurin place on Capitol Creek, Mary and Alice married brothers John, and I believe, Tom Flynn of the Rifle area. John Jr. and wife Nettie (Artaz) reside near Carbondale on the former Sweet Seed Farm where he is in charge of cattle operations, and Francis is a Dentist in Denver and prominent in Marathon racing circles.

This concludes the data except for school info. Hope to get this later and write further on that phase of the area.

(Extra notations on separate sheet of paper - P.G.)

William & Alice Nicholson were parents of a larger family consisting of J. H. (Hod), Fay, James, Katie, Clarence, George, John, and Clifford, Katie married Orville Eib and they moved from the place where Chris Wieben has lived for so many years to West Virginia, his native state. All of these people are dead.

Charles & Minnie Gates too had a large family consisting of daughters Elena, Luella, Mattie, Clarice and Doris and son Jrl. Jrl & Mattie

Jenkinson are deceased: Polena Nicholson, widow of "Hod" lives in Aspen, Luella Proctor, formerly Goodier in Denver, Clarice Reid in Phippsburg, Colo. and Doris Heuschkel on the Crystal River near Carbondale, Colo.

Others who resided for a number of years in the area were the Ludwig Schinkel and T. C. Carpenter families. In the Schinkel family was daughters Louisa, Olga, and Alma and son Karl. Louisa married first Ludwig Kay & later Pul Kay. The others long ago left the area and nothing is known of them. T. C. or "Bill" Carpenter had three sons, Ishmail, Mark, and Leonard. Nothing is known of these people except T. C. himself. For years he worked for Williams Bros., later rode in the summers for the Castle Creek Cattle Pool living at the Upper Camp below Ashcroft and returning to his native Kentucky in the winters. He became quite wealthy late in his life thru an inheritance from a brother who had migrated to Cincinnati, Ohio and thru a life of frugality and sticking to the job and living in a furnished room accumulated stocks which over the years grew in value into a very large estate. "Bill" as he was generally known lived out his last years in Kentucky.

Albert & Lily Maurin had three sons, George, Edward, and Albert Jr. "Pat". Mrs. Maurin is living in Grand Junction as is Edward "Ted" while George and his wife reside on the former Sam Watson property on Capitol Creek and "Pat" has been in California for many years. The original Maurin Family consisted of John Maurin, his wife and sons August, Henry, Albert, Edward, and John Jr. and daughters Bertha Gagnon and May Buffington. These are all deceased - Sylvia, Mrs. John ^{Jr.} and their son Kenneth live in Aspen.