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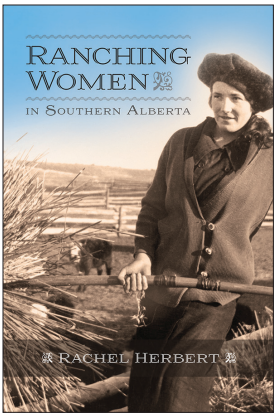

RANCHING WOMEN IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA
by Rachel Herbert

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Conclusion: At Home on the Range

This book has demonstrated the vital role of women in establishing enduring family ranches. From the earliest days of the cattle industry in southern Alberta, women played a fundamental role in managing cattle herds, maintaining homes, and rearing the next generation of ranchers. Many women were empowered by the hard work that was required of them and became engaged with primary production in addition to subsistence and domestic work. These women's status within their families and within society at large improved as they resourcefully met the challenges of frontier existence. Most ranch women proved that they were indeed as capable and confident on the frontier as were ranch men. However, not all women had the advantage of a true and equal partner. Some bore the bulk of the burden that surviving on a working ranch entails and endured the limitations of a patriarchal system of agriculture that enabled men to abuse their position of power within the family economy. The ranching lifestyle that promoted women's emancipation was the same one that could prove proscriptive. The physical and psychological demands of a life built in the foothills and on the prairies were transformative to individuals and helped to shape the society that emerged in ranching communities.

Men, as often as women, were confronted by the dismantling of their own gendered identities as preconceived expectations met pioneering reality. Whether as a liminal space or as a physical borderland between

civilization and a landscape laden with untapped resources, the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century conception of the frontier was intertwined with the construct of masculinity. Colonialism and the literature and public policy that promoted pioneer agriculture in the West relied on the notion that the frontier was a place where virility and strength were rewarded – and expected. Pioneer men brought with them to the West the anticipation of adventure and the promise of advancement. When those aims were challenged by the hardships and rough realties of ranching in an unknown environment, not only was a man's livelihood threatened, but his masculinity as well. The gendered expectation that a man ought to be the sole provider and protector of his family evolved as women became more than "helpmates" and instead became partners on family ranches.

While the constructs of masculinity and femininity were continually undermined by the realities of frontier existence, some men and women sought to uphold traditional gender distinctions as a way to maintain stability and normalcy in a life where daily existence was often fraught with challenges and uncertainty. Not all women were comfortable performing work that stretched beyond the boundaries of the domestic sphere. When there was essential work to be done, every member of the family was expected to contribute, but that did not necessarily mean preconceptions of a gendered division of labour were dismantled. Sometimes the desire to maintain separate spheres came from women themselves. These pioneer women recognized they were required to perform "men's work" but didn't thrive on it. When Sarah Roberts was expected to brand calves on her family's operation, for instance, she performed out of duty, not because she relished the chance to break out of her traditional gender role as so many others did. She wrote, "I stayed with my job until it was done, and I am glad that I never had to do it again. I think that it is not a woman's work except that it is everyone's work to do the thing he [or she] needs to do."[1] As this book has illustrated, while women's lifestyles on the ranching frontier were similar, their responses, reactions, and interpretations of their experiences were diverse. Despite this complexity, as scholar Jeanne Kay concludes, "most women were committed to survival, improvement of their lot as possible, sustaining family and friends, and their own sense of self in relation to a new and sometimes overpowering landscape."[2] Examining how women engaged with the natural environment brings a

fitting conclusion to an analysis of a livelihood and lifestyle that was rooted in the land.

While pioneering men were more likely to use their work and their relationship to the economic order to understand their role in the ranching West, women seemed to understand themselves not only in relation to their labour, but in connection to the land itself. Reflections on the landscape emerged as a resoundingly common theme in ranch women's writings and reminiscences. An intimate relationship with nature empowered women physically and spiritually in the ranchers' West. An appreciation of their solitude and surroundings enabled ranch women not only to survive but to thrive in the rugged and isolated atmosphere of the ranching frontier. Much has been made of the loneliness suffered by pioneering women, and certainly, many of their memoirs attest to the trials of living without the companionship of other women or the security of established communities. However, my research confirms what anthropologist John W. Bennett noted in his study of agrarian societies on the northern plains: that "on the whole, the pioneers who came out West to ranch either valued isolation or were not particularly frightened by it."[3] According to their own words and as demonstrated by their actions, women readily adapted to the ranching frontier and embraced the lifestyle with little complaint. This book has discussed reasons for this, including a family economy that fostered an individual's independence and an egalitarian family environment, and the ready access to horses, which enabled mobility and a sense of personal freedom. It was a combination of these advantages that inured women to their remote ranching lifestyle. However, perhaps even more fundamentally and at an intrinsic level, it was their relationship to nature that most captivated women's imaginations and connected them to a sense of place and home in the West.

An attachment to their home range fortified women against the burdens of ranch life, such as isolation, uncomfortable living conditions, and the demands of domestic and physical labour, and this attachment increased their commitment to the success of their ranching enterprise. For some, this connection to place was immediate, while others grew accustomed to the landscape over time. Many women who came to know the northern ranges as adults definitively illustrate how their love of the land enabled them to overlook the challenging aspects of their pioneer experiences. Mabel Newbolt, who had agreed to marry her rancher husband

on the condition that they remain on the ranch for only five years, soon became so attached to the place that, as her husband wrote, "before the five year period expired, Mabel was more in love with Bowchase [their ranch] and its beautiful surroundings than she seemed to be with her bally husband."[4] Agnes Skrine's writing contradicts an assumption that a ranch woman was "an object of pity" and considered "a household drudge." From her own experience on the Bar S Ranch west of Nanton in the 1890s, she argued that despite the obligatory housework and the presumed "want of congenial society," the opportunities for freedom and adventure afforded by the lifestyle enabled women to find fulfilment on the range.[5] The landscape dominated the content of Skrine's argument (which she published using the pseudonym Moira O'Neil). She described the joys of riding out across the hills, the impressive winds, the multitude of flowers, and the general grandeur of the vistas. The "out-of-door life here," she asserted, was what brought joy and satisfaction to the ranching community:

> I like the simplicity, the informality of the life, the long hours in the open air. I like the endless riding over the endless prairie, the winds sweeping the grass, the great silent sunshine, the vast skies, and the splendid line of the Rockies, guarding the west. I like the herds of cattle feeding among the foothills, moving slowly from water to water; and the bands of horses travelling their own way, free of the prairie. . . . I like the summer and the winter, the monotony and the change. Besides, I like a flannel shirt and liberty.[6]

The landscape and lifestyle of cattle country in southern Alberta, and their accompanying aesthetic and athletic pleasures, captivated women and encouraged their attachment to their own particular place on the prairie.

A sense of adventure combined with an appreciation for nature fostered in women a deep and enduring connection to their ranches. As Evelyn Springett wrote of her home on the New Oxley Ranch, "the air was so fine and clear . . . one felt a deep joy in just being alive and alone."[7] Like Springett, other women expressed a specific affinity for their home range. When Agnes Morley Cleaveland first glimpsed the panorama of her mother's newly acquired ranch in the wilderness of New Mexico, she was instantly awed by and attached to the landscape. She wrote, "I had no words

at all. I was taking that scene into my heart and soul as *my country* for so long as I should live."[8] Exploring the landscape and learning the names of the local flora and fauna helped make women feel at home in their environment. These women, often with the company of their children, spent hours simply getting to know the lay of the land and becoming familiar with landmarks that oriented them on their ranches and in the region. Upon her arrival to their spread west of Stavely in 1919, Mary Streeter used the free time she had while her house was being built to become acquainted with her surroundings; she and her sons "roamed the hills and along the creeks, soon really loving the ranch."[9] The strangeness of the prairie and foothills were overcome by women who proactively sought to understand their new environments. After emigrating to the West from Nova Scotia, Catherine Bond's mother actively set out to identify unfamiliar plant species:

> One of the very worthwhile things that Mother did when we were all new to the West was to collect specimens of wild flowers – flower, leaf, seed, and root. These she would send to the Experimental Farm to be classified and the correct plant name would be sent to her. In that way we children were given an awareness of the plant life around us and the correct names of so many of our Alberta flowers.[10]

The sense of adventure that inspired women's explorations had multiple benefits. Their familiarity with local geography and native vegetation had practical applications for agriculture, while their understanding of the surroundings facilitated women's sense of place and belonging in the West.

Naming their ranches, or significant geographic points, also gave women a sense of connection to their immediate surroundings. Some, like Bob Newbolt's mother, who lived on her son's Alberta ranch from 1885 to 1891, embraced both the familiarity and the newness of the landscape. The name she gave the ranch reflected the integration of her cultural heritage with the specific resonance of her adopted home.

> She was happy and contented and took great interest in the ranch operations. She was especially fond of the tree covered

> flat below the ranch house along the river. It reminded her of similar scenes in England often referred to as a Chase. She added the name of the river, "Bow" to the former, making one word "Bowchase" and from that time on my ranch was known as "Bowchase Ranch."[11]

Encouraged by her mother, whose "wonder and delight in nature and the beauty of the hills was a celebration of life," my own grandmother Constance Ings Loree recalled a childhood rich with interactions that connected the family to their home:

> The sound accompaniment of those years is hoof beats. It was bliss to have all that beautiful country for our playground. We explored every corner of Sunset [Ranch], giving our own names to significant spots. We each had a mountain: two little hills, side by side. Mary Ings Mountain was steeper, but Conna Ings Mountain was bigger.[12]

Just as exploring and naming the land contributed to women's sense of belonging, active involvement in ranch work encouraged their attachment to place and solidified their role on the range alongside their male counterparts. This book has detailed women's various roles on family ranches and the multiple ways in which physical, productive efforts transformed gender roles within the family. Women and men baked bread, tended gardens, milked cows, broke horses, and worked cattle on the open range. This work that extended outside of the home and yard transformed how women perceived the physical environment. At a hearing concerning the proposal of Grasslands National Park – which now adjoins her family's ranch in southern Saskatchewan – Marjorie Linthicum expressed a commitment to the natural environment that had developed over a lifetime of ranching: "I have a special feeling for this land. . . . I appreciate and respect – first flowers in spring, the wide starlit sky and the night winds whistling, . . . the vastness of the prairie under a blanket of snow, the threat of an approaching snow storm and the shelter of a brush coulee. . . . I am as much a part of this land as the coyotes and the gophers."[13] Linthicum continued to explain that the depth of her familiarity with the landscape had been

fostered by years of working on and with the land as part of a productive family unit. She expressed a sentiment found in most ranch women's writings: the significance of belonging to and working in a beloved place.

> I know what it's like to ride all day and never encounter another person, to have a faithful horse bring me home through a blinding storm, to drive cattle home in the fall and have them strung out for two or three miles heading for winter pastures, . . . to drive cows and calves to summer pastures and then sit and watch them mother up, to dream as a young girl of riding south to the Badlands and driving cattle with my dad and then having this dream come true.[14]

The egalitarian nature of ranch work, combined with the obligation to be out in the elements and engaged with the environment, fostered in many women not only a sense of commitment to their land and animals but a confidence in their own physical abilities and a transcendent sense of self.

Work and the physicality of ranching were not the only factors that shaped women's responses to their environment or defined their lives in the West. Their connection to the land enabled a spirituality that brought comfort, inspiration, and faith despite the paucity of churches on the frontier. American writer and rancher Gretel Ehrlich believes that, for many, the expansive geography of the grasslands possessed a healing power; "space has a spiritual equivalent and can heal what is divided and burdensome within us."[15] Many ranchers were educated women from the East, schooled in the classical Romantic tradition of art and literature that associated an experience of sublime beauty in nature with the power of a divine being. Thus, some women's response to their physical environment incorporated a mixture of aesthetics and spiritualism. Evelyn Springett described how the geography and weather of the foothills of the eastern slopes challenged her endurance but ultimately brought her peace:

> I wish I could give some adequate idea of the vast loneliness of my life on the prairie. All around us there was the never-ending roll of the hills, like huge sea waves, some of them mountains high. . . . Always and ever the feel of these Everlasting Hills was with us, and to them we looked for any change in the weather.

> Many and many a time, after a long spell of bitter cold, have I stepped out on to the freezing prairie to "lift up mine eyes unto the hills" from whence seemed to come our help, and under my frozen breath I have murmured the words, "Our help cometh from the Lord."[16]

Many ranch women developed such an essential connection to their environment that nature formed the basis of their spiritual beliefs.

Mary Inderwick, too, described a spiritual reaction when reflecting on the solace provided by the views on her ranch. In her isolation, she personified the mountains as companions, giving them more regard than "the bothersome humans" she occasionally encountered: "I have any number of troubles, in fact too numerous to mention, but I forget them all in this joyous air with the grand protecting mountains always standing round the western horizon. They seem the very spirit of the old hymn 'Abide with me – Oh Thou that changest not' – and they are the dearest most constant of friends."[17] The hills, the mountains, and the wind were the environmental features most frequently depicted in women's writing. Skrine described the effects of the infamous chinook winds and lyrically depicted the vista of hills and mountains from her ranch home in divine terms: "You may see to the west a whole range of the Rockies, magnificent, exultant – based on earth and piled against the sky like mountain altars, the snow-smoke rising from their dazzling slopes and melting away in the blue, as if the reek of some mighty sacrifice purer than human were ascending on high."[18] She, like so many other ranch women, found that engaging with the environment elevated her connection to the land. The ranchlands provided more than a means of making a living; they were solace from isolation, a source of spirituality, and ultimately a home.

This book has established that women have been at the core of the ranching industry for generations; from the earliest days to the present, they were essential to sustaining viable ranches and homes on the range. Ehrlich affirms that, for ranchers,

> being "at home on the range" is a matter of vigor, self-reliance, and common sense. A person's life is not a series of dramatic events for which he or she is applauded or exiled but a slow accumulation of days, seasons, years, fleshed out by the generational

> weight of one's family and anchored by a land-bound sense of place.[19]

I feel this "weight" myself, but there is no other burden I would want to carry. My hope is that in the routine of my days, which I spend preoccupied with the same concerns as those of my grandmother and great-grandmother – family and cattle – I can instill in my own children a sense of the responsibility that is entangled with our commitment to this land that we have called our own for a mere five generations. For the first women who took on the tasks of raising cattle and families in the West, work offered previously unknown opportunities. As their resourcefulness, status, and independence increased, so did their sense of belonging in the western grasslands. It is this belonging that is perhaps their greatest gift to their descendants. The second and subsequent generations have inherited a deep love of the natural environment and the ranching lifestyle. Today, women are increasingly taking over the management of ranches that have been in their families for years. Vernice Wearmouth, of the Wineglass Ranch near Cochrane, asserts that it is the connection to nature that motivates her daughter Edith, the current operator of the ranch, and her granddaughter to continue their family's legacy: "I think there's been four generations of women, and I wouldn't be surprised if she's the fifth to own this ranch and work on it. I think it's just the love of the outdoors and being able to get out with nature and the outdoor freedom."[20] Although modernization has changed some of the practices of ranching, it remains an industry to which women's contributions are as vital as men's. This analysis of frontier ranch women illustrates that ranching is, at its heart, a way of life largely sustained by families who are committed to working with the land – and with one another.

By initiating this project, I accepted Sarah Carter's scholarly challenge: that "in the Canadian West, serious and sustained study of women and the cattle industry remains to be done."[21] In these pages I have done my best to illuminate worthy lives, give voice to the stories waiting on browned and weathered pages, and illustrate the varied roles of women on the cattle frontier. However, the discussion of pioneer ranching women is far from complete. Indeed, I believe the conversation has just begun to get interesting. In Alberta, cattle culture has wide-reaching social and economic implications as well as deep roots that are intertwined with family history

and personal memory. This particular assessment of ranching families is sure to stimulate reflections and incite further challenges. I hope this book acts as a catalyst for further study and that subsequent scholars will pick over the ideas presented here to tease out further complexities and re-evaluate and deepen my examination of our pioneers, all the while continuing to explore the connections of women to industry, family, and place in the cattle country of the Canadian West.

Appendix: "My Sunset Childhood" by Constance Ings Loree[1]

In 1919, some years after buying the Midway, our farm near Nanton, Dad acquired three thousand acres of grazing land in the Sunset District. One parcel was the Granville Heare land, later known as Trail's End. North and west was the Lake Section, so named because of its fair sized lake; the other parcel was the Sunset Ranch, where we had a summer home, and began our lifelong love affair with the foothills. The happiest times our family ever spent together were at Sunset. The memory of the years we spent there is so vivid that I feel if I could step back through the looking glass it would be just as it was, with the four of us together again.

There was an enchantment about our life there which we all felt. When I asked Mary recently "What can I write about Sunset? What was there about it?" she replied "It was because Mother made each day seem like a fairy tale." Her wonder and delight in nature and the beauty of the hills was a celebration of life. The miracle of the first crocus in spring, and the profusion of wild flowers that followed as the season advanced, the evening light of the crows against the sunset, storms, rainbows, first star and new moon all received her homage. Each day brought a new prospect of surprise and adventure.

The house, where I was born, stood in a valley just a quarter mile north of Sunset School. It was a plain little house covered with cedar shingles in a beautiful pattern, with a small porch front and back where we watched

A.1 Sunset Ranch west of Nanton, Alberta, was the Ings family's summer home (c.1920). Courtesy of Loree family.

sunrises and sunsets. It had a beautiful view of the mountains. Inside there was an entry-pantry, large kitchen with traditional cabinet and wood range, a small unplumbed washroom, three bedrooms, and a sitting room with wood heater. It was sunny and cozy and very welcoming. What a refuge it seemed at night, when the coal oil lamps kept the darkness at bay and our parents [were] there to ward off ghosts and goblins. Sometimes the dog would growl and bristle when coyotes howled, or an owl hooted outside the window, but we knew we were safe. The fragrance of willow burning, Mother's crocks of wine ripening, gooseberry jam simmering on the stove, rose petals drying for sachet, Dad's pipe, and the honest smell of horse and leather combined to give our house its special aroma. It was then that we appreciated the good books supplied by our grandparents in London, Ontario. Mother's hands were usually busy with a bit of sewing, or picking over the day's berries. Dad quite often would sit quietly, deep in his thoughts, and then he'd give a chuckle and say "Missus, did I ever tell you about the time . . ." And we knew we were going to hear one of his marvellous "yarns" from his rich store of memory.

Sometimes fierce storms would beat against the house, pounding rain and awesome flashes of lightening. With the first thunderclap I would be in Dad's lap. His chair was a wicker lounge, and he had attached telephone insulators to all six legs to make it lightening proof. Mother and Mary quite enjoyed storms and might go to the door to enjoy the show, saying "Oh, come and watch. It's beautiful!" But Dad and I would ride out the storm in his magic chair, for he was nearly as afraid of thunderstorms as I was. He'd had his share of being out on the range behind a herd of cattle with no shelter. During one particularly awful thunderstorm when I was limp with fear he said, "Never mind. It's too bad to last." It seemed like cold comfort.

Dad's frontier days had left habits he found hard to break. By the time Mary and I came along, Mother had persuaded him not to sleep with his six shooter under the pillow; it now hung in the cartridge belt on the bed post, or on the back of the chair. But it was always at hand. It bothered him to sit in a room that was lit up at night unless the blinds were down, and he would go out of his way to avoid walking between a lamp and the window. He didn't lack courage, but he didn't believe in making himself a target.

He was a lenient father, putting up with our "tom-foolery" as he called it, but in matters of horsemanship the rules were strict and his word was law. Any infraction such as bringing a horse home winded and sweating, and his blue eyes could turn awfully cold, and you'd better have a good excuse. He had learned in a harsh school that survival could depend on not making a mistake, particularly in regard to the horse you were riding. If anything happened to it you were afoot and helpless. We were taught to ride safely and well, to ensure our welfare and the horse's. Riding was more than just sticking on and going fast. It was learning about the vulnerable parts of a horse: withers, back, stifle joint, mouth, and hooves, and how to prevent colic, founder, cinch gall, rope burn, and wire cuts.

Mother had two good little verses about horsemanship:

Your head and your heart keep bravely up,

Your heels and your hands keep down,

Your knees keep close to the horse's side

And your elbows close to your own.

And,

Up hill hurry me not,

Downhill worry me not,

On the level let me trot

But do not water me when I'm hot.

There could never be anything slipshod about our gear and the way it was put on the horse. Bridles, saddles, and blankets had to be correct and carefully checked. When we were small we had to have tapidoros (taps) on our stirrups so our feet couldn't slip through. Getting hung up or dragged is a cowboy's nightmare. Likewise we were taught the proper knots to use when we tied up a horse – a slip knot was a dirty word – and how not to get into trouble with a lariat. Even the right way to tie your coat on behind, so it would not come loose and scare the horse. Another of his wise teachings was how to read the weather, the way the wind acts when there's going to be a change, and the look of the clouds before a hail storm. In spite of all his precautions we had wrecks; saddles turned, coats were lost, we got caught in storms, and sometimes we bit the dirt. The toughest lesson of all was when you go off you get up and climb on again.

We lived in close proximity with our beloved horses. They kept the grass mowed in the house yard. Dad's Pilot had been taught to shake hands and often ripped the window screens with his great hoof in his effort to greet us. Mary and I spent hours in the rickety little stable, currying the horses, polishing hooves, braiding their manes and tails, sometimes making wild flower wreaths to go around their necks. They were probably better groomed than we were. On hot days we lugged pails of water up the ladder to the loft and gave them shower baths through the wide spaces between the floorboards. Once Mary tried to give the Shetland an enema with a wine bottle. Her vocation for nursing was always strong.

Next to the stable was the feed and tack room and attached to it was the chicken house where a few gallant hens battled it out with all manner of predators. Skunks, weasels, badgers, or coyotes were always tunneling under the hen house. Loud squawks and Dad would run for the 22. The root cellar was dug into the bank, a dark spooky cave with cobwebs and

a musty smell. The inner chamber held vegetables, and in the outer one Mother kept her preserves and bottles of wine and the perishable food in a screened cupboard.

Dad put up a sturdy swing beside the house, which everyone enjoyed. Mary and I liked to twist the rope tighter and tighter and then unwind with a horrible seasick sensation, but Mother had a more daring stunt. She could "skin the cat," pumping herself higher and higher and sailing over the top. It was scary to watch. Dad's special preserve was the woodpile where he did his morning calisthenics using the axe for an Indian club, swinging it around his head in great arcs. He was a mighty man with an axe and could make the chips fly. There was always a pile of willow fence posts to be sharpened. The kids' job was to hold the post upright while he swung the axe. It was almost as awful as when he wielded the post maul. The woodshed had a flat roof piled high with Dad's useful "junk" rolls of wire, rake teeth, and mower parts. Mary and I used it for our office and bolt hole when company came.

The pumps and the well near the back door supplied our water. One of Dad's quirks was his passion for a cold drink of water. It was his idea of a great treat, the nicest social gesture to a visitor, and a cure-all for everything from headache to cheering up a child. A milk cow brought up from Midway for the summer lived "the life of Riley" in the hayfield. The only demands made on her were that she stay away from stinkweed, and show up at milking time. Mother had learned to milk as Dad was so often away. She usually had a good relationship with Bossy, who would stand to be milked wherever Mother found her, but sometimes she drew one whose idea of fun was a game of hide and seek in the brush.

One of the first jobs in the spring when we came up from Midway was ploughing our little garden patch. Dad believed in making the most of kid power and devised a system where light shafts on the walking plough were attached to the saddle horses' necks by a collar. Mary could ride and steer, while Dad guided the plough. We grew vegetables to last the summer, and masses of flowers. We liked to visit the garden before breakfast, to see what had come out overnight. It smelled so lovely in the early morning. Dad's favourites were the big red poppies.

Beside the garden was "the Grove" a pretty little stand of willow, which was used for an outdoor living room. We often had our meals here. Mother and Dad liked to eat outside, and thought it was worth the extra

work of toting food back and forth. Mary and I used it for a playhouse, where we kept our stable of stick horses. We got quite skilful at making rooms by lacing branches in and out to form walls. When we got bored with the house plan we took it apart and started again. The hammock hung between two trees for afternoon siestas. Mother and Dad entertained visitors with picnics and corn roasts. Many of our Sunset photos have the grove as a background, groups of people sitting on rugs on the grass, and Mary and I had our birthday parties there. There were many visitors in the summer; friends and relatives from the east sometimes came to stay for several weeks. Dad's old cronies would drop in to see him. That was the only time liquor appeared. Dad kept a bottle on hand to treat his special friends. Apart from that it was homemade wine, and raspberry vinegar for the children.

The wild berries were lush and plentiful in those days and Mother would invite her friends to come and pick. The best patches within walking distance were saved for her friends who didn't ride. Mary and I got very bored picking berries except for saskatoons, which often grew on such high bushes that we could stand on our saddles and strip the berries off in handfuls. We always gorged ourselves with dire results. When we were scattered out in the brush picking raspberries we would call back and forth, "my bottom's covered" or "is your bottom covered?" meaning the pail. People who weren't used to us thought it rather funny. Poor Mother always wore her English riding boots, which had slippery soles. So often she would just get her pail filled, and she'd slip and fall. All that work for nothing! It wasn't easy carrying two pails of berries home on horseback. We usually sat in a handful of them and the saddles were stained purple. A lot of work went into a winter's supply of jam and preserves.

Even the drive from Nanton to the ranch was an adventure with those early cars that overheated on steep grades. The road was graded as far as William's Coulee. After that it was little more than a broad trail which angled off to the left past the old buffalo jump and up through the hills, with wire gates to open. It was impassable in wet weather. The trail past our house was used as a shortcut to the main road by local traffic. Some of those picturesque travellers were right out of the old west, buggies, buckboards and wagons, hard bitten cowboys, hunters with hounds and pack horses, all passed our door. A steep knoll hid our immediate view of the trail from the west, so people would be upon us before we knew it. This is

A.2 Constance Ings picking berries with her pony Daffy (c.1924). Courtesy of Loree family.

how the visiting Indians would descend on us. One day Mother was busy in the kitchen when she heard a sound at the back door. Thinking it was the dog she called out, "no use hanging around with a hungry look on your face. I'm not going to feed you!" An embarrassed cowboy meekly said "Please, Ma'am, I just wanted a word with Mr. Ings."

On warm nights we hauled our bedding to the top of the knoll and slept out. No foamies or sleeping bags in those days. We lay on ticks stuffed with timothy hay, and had lots of sweaters and blankets, for it got cold towards morning. Mother would tell stories, and show us the constellations, and tell us the names of the stars. It was perfect when Dad would come too, for we didn't worry as much about the coyotes that used to come awfully close.

The knoll made a dandy sliding hill when it snowed in the late fall. There was a little pond at the bottom, and we could scoot down the hill and right across it. It was on the knoll that we first saw skis used. A Norwegian family worked on the ranch, and the older boys made themselves skis, steaming the wood to curve the tips. They worked fine, too. Mother loved to snowshoe, having done so much in Ontario as a girl. On one side

of the knoll Mary and I had our dolls' cemetery. She and I rode back there years later and we could still find the little headstones.

Sunset was an ideal ranch in many ways: good streams, open land for grazing, some cultivated land where we grew oats, and a sheltered hay flat a mile long between two ranges of hills where cattle could be wintered. A mile down the trail and over the hill from our house was "Headquarters" where the main work of the ranch was done. Here there was a good spring, a set of corrals with cattle-working facilities, a house for the stockman, a bunkhouse for the riders, a stable and outbuildings. The haying equipment, wagons, and implements were kept here. The cattle were driven up from Midway in the spring after calving. The cattle drive could take twelve hours, a long tiresome day's ride with no trucks or horse trailers to make it easier. Sometimes a wagon would go along to pick up the exhausted calves. Usually something funny or interesting would happen to break the monotony of the trip. A flock of bluebirds perched on the telephone wire like a blue ribbon might lift our spirits and a sudden squall of rain with a biting wind would certainly dampen them. A fond memory is of coming home in the evening after a ride, and being met with the marvellous smell of supper cooking – partridges roasting, baked beans and homemade bread, and always the fragrance of willow smoke.

The branding was done at Headquarters later in the summer. Dad roped well and heeling was his long suit. Just as we do it today, one or two ropers on horseback rope the calf by the hind feet and drag it over to the branding crews. The roper has to be fast and accurate so as not to keep the crews waiting. The cattle were pastured on all the hill land, the Lake, the Heare place, as well as Sunset, so we were always riding, looking for strays, cutting out beef, checking fences, moving cattle from one field to another. It was an honour for a kid to be allowed to go along, let alone take a minor part in the cattle work. Dad was kind about letting me ride behind his saddle on Pilot, if it was just a routine ride, and Mary had to put up with me bouncing along behind her, before I graduated to the Shetland. At first I had to have someone hold the lead line, until it was thought safe to let me solo. Daffy was a pretty, nice-gaited little pony but full of devilish tricks. He ran away with us, he rolled in rivers, he reared and bucked, and ran in and bit other horses' stomachs without missing a step. Mary and I loved him dearly, and rode him for years.

A.3 Matriarch Edith Ings, an avid horsewoman (c.1940). Courtesy of Loree family.

The sound accompaniment of those years is hoof beats. It was bliss to have all that beautiful country for our playground. We explored every corner of Sunset, giving our own names to significant spots. We each had a mountain: two little hills, side by side. Mary Ings Mountain was steeper, but Conna Ings Mountain was bigger, and it was a tradition that we rolled down them on Halloween. Mother had an effective way of keeping us away from known hazards. The caved-in well had a bad fairy in it, and the boggy slough was where a wicked witch lived, and you couldn't have paid us to go near them.

Dad's riding had slowed down to Pilot's fast running walk. He rode because he had to, and he couldn't take a full day in the saddle. For Mother there could never be enough riding. Even if she was tired after a day's housework, a ride would restore her like nothing else. Bad weather didn't deter her; she loved riding in the wind and rain and could stand cold better than anyone. She was the ringleader in our adventures, and sometimes

we found her a bit daunting. Mary and I might be asleep in our beds and be jolted awake by Mother's "Girls! Girls! Get up! It's a perfect night for a ride." How did we ever find our horses, let alone see to saddle them – it wasn't always a full moon. Riding in the dark didn't bother us. The horses knew the way, and it was cool and invigorating after a hot day. The nocturnal adventures, like a porcupine crossing our path, or a cow jumping out of the bushes, or meeting another night traveller, gave us something to laugh about and remember.

Her horse was usually fast and frisky, and we had a time to keep up to her. She wasn't the type of mother who said "Now children, be careful." It was more like "here's a flat place. Let's gallop!" Many of our rides were from Sunset to Midway or Nanton. It took two hours each way. Some were planned ahead but often they were impromptu. We might be bored at Midway and decide it would be fun to go to Sunset, and often the impulse hit us at an inconvenient time. Mary and I carried some strange burdens on those rides. Once it was the bread dough, which wasn't quite ready for the oven, another time a kettle of citron marmalade carried between us on a broom handle. One late fall exodus from the ranch involved two very large cats, each stuffed in a flour sack, squalling and spitting. How the horses hated that! We decided that there was one advantage to riding a wild horse – you didn't have to carry as much. On one night ride down from the ranch, Mary fell asleep and fell off "kerplunk" in the road. Mother had a pet saying which applied to our doings, "it's great to be crazy!"

This was the pattern of our time at Sunset, going up in the spring for brief stays, then moving up permanently when the weather turned nice. I vaguely remember the excitement and upheaval of those moves, loading up the democrat with our worldly goods, and the parents arguing about what was going and what was staying, and some things forgotten and others falling out. Dad had to spend more time at Midway than Mother, who would only come down to look after the house and garden, returning gladly to the hills, where it was always greener and cooler. When she was expecting me to be born, she drove down in the buggy to see the doctor, knowing her time was close. He advised her to either stay down, or return to the ranch immediately, which she did. I was born at sunset that same day, before the doctor arrived. Each fall the moving process would be reversed and it was seldom without drama: securing the cat at the last minute, and transporting the homemade wine, created a bit of excitement. No

A.4 Mary Ings on Daffy (far left) and local children riding to Sunset School (no date). Courtesy of Loree family.

matter how carefully it was packed, you could count on a bottle blowing its cork before it reached Midway.

Mary went off to the grandparents in London for the school year, which made all of us sad. Some years Mother couldn't bear to have her leave when September came and we stayed on through the glorious fall until nearly Christmas, before real winter weather drove us out. So it happened that both Mary and I began our education at Sunset school, and attended from time to time over the years. Every child should have the experience of going to a one-room country school. It was the only part of my school days that I thoroughly enjoyed. Sunset school still stands on the hill beside the road going north and south, a landmark visible for miles, commanding a wonderful view of the mountains and foothills and the prairies to the east. From there, on a clear night, you could see the lights of seven towns, and the red glow from the Turner Valley oilfields in the northwest. It is a neglected derelict now, but was once the centre of the community. In our time it was smart and trim with white paint and shining windows. A low red stable stood behind for the school ponies, for everyone came on horseback. There would be rousing games in the schoolyard at noon and recess – French and English, and Ante-I-Over. The shouts and shrieks of laughter drowned out the teacher's school bell. Outside on one wall was a large grill over the furnace vent, which made a perfect sound conductor.

We lined up to listen to the teacher bawling out someone kept in at recess, or counting the blows if she was wielding the strap. It was too bad for us if we were caught eavesdropping.

The schoolroom was sunny and cheerful, and very typical of its time: the teacher's desk up at the front under the flag and the pictures of "Their Majesties" and the pull-down maps, a piano, a glass-fronted bookcase, a bench with water pail and dipper. The big black furnace had a jacket, which swung out against the wall to make the girls' dressing room, where we could change out of our riding clothes. Coats and mitts were hung over the jacket to dry on wet days, and the smell of wet clothes and scorched wool was pretty strong. Frozen lunch pails and bottles of ink were put on top to thaw out, and the ceiling was decorated with blue splatters. The long blackboard had a trimming of stencil design, changed with the seasons, done with coloured chalk. Sometimes one of the "big kids" were allowed to do this, and I remember watching with pride as Mary did the "Sunbonnet Sues" and thinking the family had never before had such an honour. There were rows of desks of various sizes to fit the pupils who also came in various sizes, ages six to sixteen, grades one to eight. It tested the mettle of a teacher to keep everyone working at their own level. It was rather like a very large family, everybody paying a great deal of attention to what everybody else was doing. We had no secrets from one another, and the poor teacher wasn't allowed to have many either. Everyone in the district was interested in her public and private life.

She usually struck the right note with these free and uninhibited children, enough discipline to keep order, without disparaging, or squelching high spirits. Apart from the usual teasing and pushing and shoving the children were kind to one another. The older ones looked out for the little ones and showed the natural courtesy which was a trait of hill people. All ages had fun together in spelling bees, sing songs, marching drills, practicing for the Christmas concert, and making Halloween decorations.

The Halloween parties were memorable – popcorn balls, bobbing for apples, spooky games, and costumes. I remember Mary and I going home at noon to get ready. She was a ghost, with eye holes cut in a white sheet, and Mother dressed me as a black cat, with a stuffed black silk stocking for a tail. The horse wanted no part of us, but Mother helped us get on, me riding behind Mary. The sheet flapped, and the cat's tail thumped the horse's

rump and it bucked all the way up the hill to the school, with us laughing so hard we could hardly hang on.

It was at Sunset school that we had our first look at royalty. The teacher got word that the Prince of Wales would be driving past on his way to the EP Ranche. We lined up to watch him pass. He smiled and waved but didn't stop.

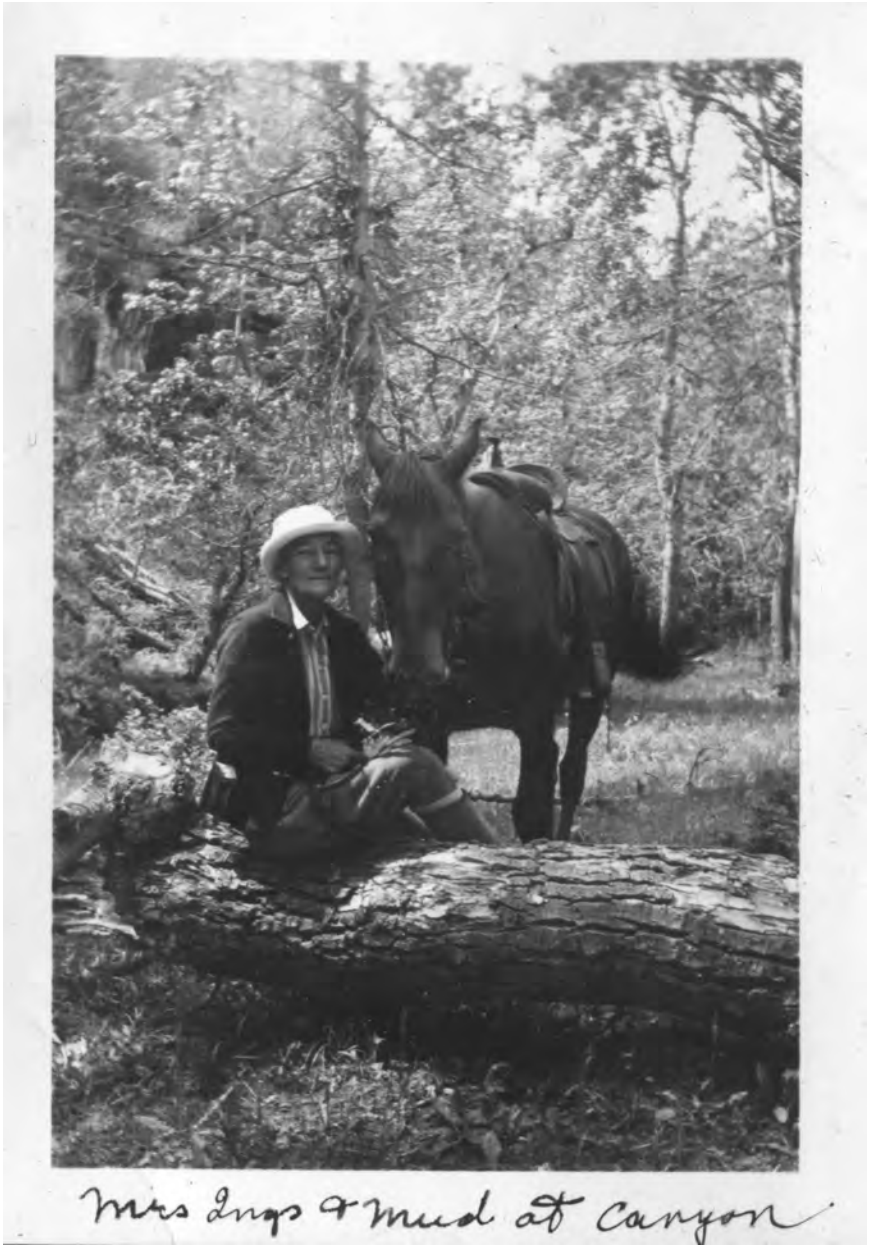
Everybody turned out when there was a dance at Sunset, local families, farmers from the flats, and cowboys from the back ranches. The schoolyard was crowded with buggies, buckboards, and wagons, and a line of saddle horses was tied to the fence. The school would be lit up like a Christmas tree. The desks were stowed in the shed, and long benches put along the walls, one side for males, one side for females. The floor was sprinkled with corn meal to make it slippery as glass. The men would hang around outside on the porch until the music started up, while the women were busy in the teacherage laying out the lunch they had brought: husky sandwiches, pickles, and cake. The coffee was made in a copper boiler on the teacher's stove. The ladies' coats were piled on her bed and the babies laid out on top. When the older children got sleepy, they were laid out on the benches or under them. Hill children learned to dance very young, since they had been coming to these affairs since babyhood. The floor manager was the master of ceremonies and called the square dances. Local musicians provided beautiful music. Sunset had some excellent fiddlers, and as well, there would be piano, accordion, banjo or guitar. The dance would begin sedately enough, spirits and music would heat up as the night went on, until the building seemed to jump up and down on its foundation with the stomping feet and the beat and throb of the music. At midnight the floor manager would call, "get your partner for the supper waltz." The lunch was set out on the teacher's desk and everyone would fall to. Usually at this point some local talent would be talked into singing a cowboy song or doing a step dance. Then, everyone having got their second wind, the dance would go on till daylight, when people could see to go home. Sunset School has seen some high old times.

The depression didn't come suddenly. Times had never been that good and they kept getting worse and worse. Finally, there was a buyer for Sunset and Dad sold it. It was the bitterest pill we ever had to swallow, and so ended that chapter of our lives. The little house burned down a few years later.

Thank goodness we still had the Heare place. We made the house habitable, after a series of tenants or squatters; moved in, and set about to discover and explore all over again. Up till then we weren't too familiar with the place except as a day to the Canyon, a favourite picnic spot. When we had learned the trails and discovered all the beauties of the ranch we came to love it very much. Sunset was gentle country. This was more rugged, higher hills and faster streams. Trail's End, as Mother named it, saved our sanity during the drought and dust storm years. The prairies were very depressing: black walls of dust that blotted out the sun, howling, pitiless winds blowing our fields away. The trees were smothered, Mother's flowerbed killed out. The house was often so filled with dust, that you couldn't discern the pattern of the wallpaper. You would wake up in the morning to find your blanket was black with it. Nothing would keep it out. Childlike, I thought it was great fun to play in the sand dunes and ride my pony over the stone wall on the drifts. Mother battled that dust for all she was worth, but she couldn't win. There was always more. The least little wind would bring it sifting in again.

She fought a gallant battle against the depression too, cutting up her dresses and remaking clothes for me to wear to school, concocting good meals out of very little. Some of her hard time recipes became family favourites for years to come. Her egg-less, butter-less, milk-less cake was simply delicious. We didn't mind being poor, we had always lived frugally, but the terrible anxiety and the shame of being in debt, plus being short of feed for the cattle, and them not worth anything, was very, very hard. What brought the depression home to me was seeing Mother in a cheap, hideous brown dress that she had ordered from the catalogue. It just looked awful, scratchy and shapeless and ugly. That hurt me so much. Writing Dad's memoirs was good therapy for them both, and the articles were well received.

When Dad died in 1936, and then her parents too, Mother didn't lose any time in putting her life together again. She had a ranch to run, and a burden of debt to pay off. She started off by sprucing up the house, as best she could, with fresh paints and new curtains, which better expressed her personality. The house in the hills was re-designed with many improvements done at minimal cost, but very effective, and Trail's End was opened as a dude ranch. It started out on a very small scale, but the word spread through advertising, and satisfied customers who came back year after



A.5 Edith Ings at the Canyon, the favourite picnic spot on Trail's End Ranch (c.1950). Courtesy of Loree family.

year, and soon she was very well filled. During the war, airmen stationed at Vulcan and Claresholm and High River loved to come for their forty-eight hour leaves. It was her war effort, to give these boys a wonderful weekend.

Sometimes she was a one-man band. She would meet the buses, cook the meals and wash dishes, make beds, tend the vegetable garden, pick berries for pies and cobblers, saddle the horses, take the dudes riding, and still have enough energy at night to dress up like a lady and play cards with them and tell them stories. When finally the debts were paid off, instead of resting on her laurels, she borrowed money to buy two adjoining pieces of hill land to bring the ranch up to what it had been before Sunset was sold. Mother, you were a brave woman. I salute you.

Notes

Introduction

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Chapter 1

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25 "Austin Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 4–7.

26 "Lane Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 90.

27 *Rocking P Gazette*, March 1924.

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30 "Bateman Family," in Foothills Historical Society (hereafter, Foothills), *Chaps and Chinooks: A History West of Calgary* (Calgary: Foothills Historical Society, 1976), 257.

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32 Ibid., 261–62.

33 "Porter Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 338.

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47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

50 Strong-Boag, "Pulling in Double Harness," 401–23.

51 O'Neil, "A Lady's Life on a Ranche," 508.

52 Garceau, "Single Women Homesteaders," 6.

53 Ibid., 12.

54 Randall, *A Lady's Ranch Life*, 117–18.

55 Completed in 1908, the house at the Midway Ranch was one of four homes built of sandstone from a quarry in the Nanton area. Only two, including the Midway, remain today. Lane, "A Brief Sketch."

56 Susan Margaret McKinnon St. Maur, *Impressions of a Tenderfoot* (London: John Murray, 1890), 47.

57 Randall, *A Lady's Ranch Life*, 62.

58 Thomas, *Ranchers' Legacy*, 14.

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61 George Zarn, *Above the Forks* (High River, AB: published by author, 1978).

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66 Macleay and Macleay, *Rocking P Gazette*, January 1924.

67 All editions of the *Rocking P Gazette* list Dorothy and Maxine Macleay's activities; many are riding related, but a number of adventures also took place in the barnyard.

68 Klassen, "A Century of Ranching," 112, 113.

69 See chapter 6, "The Significance of Horses to Women's Emancipation," for a closer examination of women's work on horseback during the 1880s and 1890s.

70 After the turn of the century, virtually any family history contained in a local history book from a ranch district suggests that women did mounted cattle work. See, for example, "Mrs. Margery Lunn," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 103–4.

71 The term "feminine cowboys" appears in the October 1924 issue of the *Rocking P Gazette*.

72 Doris A. Burton, *Babe's Sunshine: I Made My Own* (Lethbridge: Robins Southern Printing, 1990), 52.

73 "Pioneer Days," 39, M4116, Mrs. Catherine Neil fonds, Glenbow (hereafter, Neil fonds).

74 Ibid., 46.

75 Nellie Hutchison-Taylor quoted in Foothills, *Chaps and Chinooks*, 239.

76 Ibid., 238.

77 Ibid., 239.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid., 241.

80 Ibid.

81 Simon Evans, *Prince Charming Goes West: The Story of the E.P. Ranch* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1993), 53.

82 "Gardner Family," in Nanton, *Mosquito Creek Roundup*, 57.

83 Zarn, *Above the Forks*. Zarn is comparing the typical family ranch to the A7 Ranche, backed by the legacy and funds of its founder, A. E. Cross, and his Calgary Brewing and Malting Company.

84 Elsie Lane Gordon quoted in Stavely, *The Butte Stands Guard*, 233.

85 Ibid.; Jennifer Barr, interview by Rachel Herbert, 25 March 2010, Oxley Ranch, AB.

86 Gordon quoted in *The Butte Stands Guard*, 233.

87 Demonstrating admirable foresight, and as a testament to the enduring legacy of her family, Jennifer Barr has preserved the Oxley ranch in perpetuity with the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Shawn Logan, "Nature Conservancy of Canada Acquires Historic 1882 Ranch near Stavely," *Calgary Herald*, March 29, 2017, http://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/nature-conservancy-of-canada-acquires-historic-1882-ranch-near-stavely.

88 Ings family documents, Loree family. For an examination of the egalitarian nature of dude ranches and the freedom and adventure they offered women, see Riley, *Women and Nature*.

89 Kelly, *The Range Men*, 12.

90 Evelyn Cameron, "The 'Cowgirl' in Montana," in Poirier, *Cowgirls*, 65; St. Maur, *Impressions of a Tenderfoot*, 46.

Chapter 3

1 Thomas, *Ranchers' Legacy*, 15.

2 Linda Loree, interview by Rachel Herbert, 19 March 2010, Nanton, AB.

3 Elizabeth Maret, *Women of the Range: Women's Roles in the Texas Beef Cattle Industry* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1993), 21.

4 Jeanne Kay, "Landscapes of Women and Men: Rethinking the Regional Historical Geography of United States and Canada," *Journal of Historical Geography* 17, no. 4 (1991): 443.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Maret, *Women of the Range*, 14–15.

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9 Ibid., 74.

10 Ibid., 74–75.

11 Randall, *A Lady's Ranch Life*, 82.

12 Ibid., 83.

13 "Lou Forsaith," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 255.

14 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 25.

15 Aritha van Herk, "Washtub Westerns," in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History*, ed. Sarah Carter et al. (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 260.

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17 Kay, "Landscapes of Women and Men," 445.

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19 Strong-Boag, "Pulling in Double Harness," 401–23.

20 Kinnear, "Women's Work on the Farm," 137–53.

21 Garceau, "Single Women Homesteaders," 16.

22 West, *Growing Up with the Country*, 139.

23 Susan Newcomb quoted in ibid., 140.

24 "Carley Cooper," in Poirer et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 283.

25 Cavanaugh, "Limitations of the Pioneering Partnership," 207.

26 Burton, *Babe's Sunshine*, 55.

27 Cavanaugh, "Limitations of the Pioneering Partnership," 221.

28 Ibid., 52.

29 Ibid.

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31 Ibid.

32 Rhoda Sivell, interview by Mae Laidlaw, Historical Society of Medicine Hat and District Fonds, Esplanade Archives, accessed 5 March 2010, http://archives.esplanade.ca.

33 Ibid.

34 Sivell, *Voices from the Range*, 46–47.

35 Neth, *Preserving the Family Farm,* 33.

36 Elliott West, "Families in the West," *OAH Magazine of History* 9, no. 1 (1994), 19.

37 "Joan Lawrence," in Poirier et al., *Voice of Her Own,* 160.

38 "Doris Fenton," in Poirier et al., *Voice of Her Own*, 433.

39 Vivian Bruneau Ellis quoted in Sherm Ewing, *The Range* (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1990), 65.

40 White, interview.

41 Lane, "A Brief Sketch," 22.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 "Lenore Maclean," in Poirier, *Cowgirls*, 236.

45 See account ledger in Ings family documents, Loree family.

46 Brado, *Cattle Kingdom*, 80.

47 Springett, *For My Children's Children*; Elsie Lane Gordon quoted in Stavely, *The Butte Stands Guard*; White, interview.

48 West, "Families in the West," 19.

49 Cynthia Culver Prescott, "'Why She Didn't Marry Him': Love, Power, and Marital Choice on the Far Western Frontier," *Western Historical Quarterly* 38, no. 1 (2007): 26.

50 Barbara Handy-Marchello, *Women of the Northern Plains: Gender and Settlement on the Frontier Homestead, 1870–1930* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2005), 50.

51 Prescott, "Love, Power, and Marital Choice," 26.

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59 Macleay and Macleay, *Rocking P Gazette*, January 1924.

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67 Ibid.

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Chapter 4

1 Local Alberta history books, such as *Chaps and Chinooks* by the Foothills Historical Society (Calgary, 1976), contain women's recollections of childbirth experiences. Also, a number of unusually forthright memoirs exist, such as those found in the Neil fonds, Glenbow.

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3 Ibid., 159, 171.

4 Nadine I. Kozak, "Advice Ideals and Rural Prairie Realities: National and Prairie Scientific Motherhood Advice, 1920–29," in *Unsettled Pasts: Reconceiving the West through Women's History*, ed. Sarah Carter et al. (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 179–204.

5 "Edith Wearmouth," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 14.

6 "Pioneer Days," 8, Neil fonds.

7 Langford, "Childbirth on the Canadian Prairies," 149.

8 Barbara Gardiner to Aunt Nellie, 23 November 1907, M7283-72, Glenbow.

9 Pioneer women speak candidly about reproductive issues and the veil of secrecy that surrounded them in Eliane Leslau Silverman, *The Last Best West: Women on the Alberta Frontier, 1880–1930* (Calgary: Fifth House, 1998) 79–95.

10 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 50.

11 "Doris Burton," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 137.

12 Burton, *Babe's Sunshine*, 79.

13 West, *Growing Up with the Country*, 156.

14 Springett, *For My Children's Children*, 98.

15 LaGrandeur, "Memoirs of a Cowboy's Wife."

16 "Doris Fenton," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 432.

17 Ibid.

18 "Pioneer Days," 27, Neil fonds.

19 Ibid., 58.

20 Ibid., 58–60.

21 Ibid., 26.

22 Ibid., 31.

23 "Augusta Hoffman," in Poirier, *Cowgirls*, 98.

24 Springett, *For My Children's Children*, 132.

25 Ibid., 98.

26 Ibid., 99.

27 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 50.

28 Ibid., 50.

29 Ibid., 51.

30 "Pioneer Days," 45, Neil fonds.

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32 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 50.

33 Langford, "Childbirth on the Canadian Prairies," 164.

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35 May Ings to Fred Ings, 4 February 1898, Loree family.

36 Ibid.

37 Constance Loree, "My Sunset Childhood" (unpublished memoir, c.1970s), Loree family.

38 Neth, *Preserving the Family Farm*, 64.

39 "Manuscript of Memoirs," 3, M8193, Frank Lynch-Staunton fonds, box 2, file 23, Glenbow.

40 "James Young Family," in Foothills, *Chaps and Chinooks*, 223.

41 "McCarthy Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 784.

42 Ibid., 783–85.

43 "Pansy White-Brekhus," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 196.

44 "Pioneer Days," 21, Neil fonds.

45 Kinnear, "Women's Work on the Farm," 138.

46 Philip Sheridan Long (as told by T. B. Long), *Seventy Years a Cowboy* (Saskatoon: Freeman, 1965), 38, 41.

Chapter 5

1 "Women Ranchers," *Calgary Herald*, 21 October 1902.

2 See photo of Edith Ings on the back cover of Fredrick W. Ings, *Before the Fences*: *Tales from the Midway Ranch* (Calgary: McAra, 1980).

3 *Okotoks Review*, 22 December 1911.

4 Springett, *For My Children's Children*, 120.

5 Ibid., 120.

6 "Kemmis Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 710.

7 Linda Loree, interview by Rachel Herbert, Nanton, AB, 19 March 2010.

8 Evelyn Cameron, "The 'Cowgirl' in Montana," 65–66.

9 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 18.

10 Ibid., 145.

11 Ibid., 145.

12 Ibid., 146.

13 Cameron, "Cowgirl," 66.

14 "Gage Family," in Stavely, *The Butte Stands Guard*, 227.

15 Cleaveland, *No Life for a Lady*, 242.

16 Teresa Jordan, *Cowgirls: Women of the American West*, 2nd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 93.

17 Catherine B. Dick, "The Bond Family of Tongue Creek," in Tales and Trials, *Tales and Trials*, 46.

18 "Chappell Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 504.

19 "John Sexsmith and Family," in High River, *Leaves from the Medicine Tree*, 42.

20 White, interview.

21 Thomson, *Crocus and Meadowlark Country*, 179.

22 Thanks to Glenbow Museum senior curator Lorain Lounsberry for pointing out the significance of material artefacts and for a tour of the museum's saddles, crops, riding habits, and other related items (4 April 2007).

23 Cameron, "Cowgirl," 65

24 Ibid., 65.

25 Burton, *Babe's Sunshine*, 55.

26 See photograph of Anna Hanson (1905) in Elizabeth Clair Flood and William Manns, *Cowgirls: Women of the Wild West* (Santa Fe: Zon International, 2003).

27 Examples of these saddles are found in Lenore McLean's private tack collection in Longview, Alberta.

28 A brass horn saddle and a "mother and child saddle" were kept in our private tack collection in Nanton. The barn housing them burned down on February 13, 2015. Eleven saddles, including four family heirlooms, were lost. No animals were harmed in the fire.

29 R. T. Frazier Saddlery, catalogue no. 15 (Pueblo, CO, 1914), facsimile of original published by Old West Trading Company, 1995.

30 Maxine Macleay and Dorothy Macleay, *The Rocking P Gazette*, April 1925, property of Clay Chattaway, Nanton, AB.

31 Ibid.

32 See photograph in Jordan, *Cowgirls*, 211.

33 Tad Lucas quoted in Jordan, *Cowgirls*, 203. Rodeo women made the bulk of their own costumes, spending free time on the road designing and sewing and trying to make the garments fashionable and durable.

Chapter 6

1 Cleaveland, *No Life for a Lady*, 103.

2 For an examination of how ranching was pushed into more marginal and sparsely populated ecological zones, see Foran, *Trails and Trials*.

3 Ella Inderwick, letter of 13 May 1884, M559, Ella Inderwick fonds, Glenbow.

4 LaGrandeur, "Memoirs of a Cowboy's Wife."

5 Springett, *For My Children's Children*, 86.

6 Young, "Reins in Their Hands," 4.

7 Randall, *A Lady's Ranch Life*, 136.

8 Dorothy Blades, interview by Frank Jacobs for Stockmen's Memorial Foundation "Heritage Voices" project, c.1980s, Bert Sheppard Library and Archives, Cochrane, AB (hereafter, Sheppard Archives).

9 "Clark and Ethel Schlosser Family," in Stavely, *The Butte Stands Guard*, 367.

10 Ibid.

11 Cleaveland, *No Life for a Lady*, 65.

12 Elizabeth Lane, "Unpublished Reflections," 15, Lane fonds.

13 Ibid., 17.

14 "Carley Cooper," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 284.

15 Edna Copithorne, interview by Jack Hawkwood for Stockmen's Memorial Foundation "Heritage Voices" project, c.1980s, Sheppard Archives.

16 Loree, "My Sunset Childhood."

17 "Louis Napolean Blache Family," in Foothills, *Chaps and Chinooks*, 214.

18 Loree, "My Sunset Childhood."

19 Ibid.

20 Evelyn Cochrane to Arthur Cochrane, 15 November 1900, M6552-2, Billy and Evelyn Cochrane fonds, Glenbow.

21 West, *Growing Up with the Country*, 88–89, 75.

22 Claude Gardiner, *Letters from an English Rancher*, ed. Hugh Dempsey (Calgary: Glenbow Alberta Institute, 1988), 53.

23 Ibid.

24 Nettie Smith, "Hillier Family," in Pincher Creek, *Prairie Grass to Mountain Pass*, 769.

25 "Gibson Family," in Foothills, *Chaps and Chinooks*, 271.

26 Cleaveland, *No Life for a Lady*, 127.

27 "Bessie Park MacEwan," in Foothills, *Chaps and Chinooks*, 313.

28 Augusta Hoffman, "Lost Child Creek," in Poirier, *Cowgirls*, 97.

29 Ibid.

30 Lorain Lounsberry, "Wild West Shows and the Canadian West," in *Cowboys, Ranchers and the Cattle Business: Cross Border Perspectives on Ranching History*, ed. Sarah Carter, Simon Evans, and Bill Yeo (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1997), 141.

31 "Lenore Maclean," in Poirier, *Cowgirls*, 234.

32 Jeanne Rhodes, "Fannie Sperry," in Poirier, *Cowgirls*, 237–38.

33 Jordan, *Cowgirls*, 191.

34 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 44.

35 Ibid., 4.

36 Ibid., 5.

37 Cleaveland, *No Life for a Lady*, 156.

38 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 17.

39 Inderwick, letter of 13 May 1884, Glenbow.

40 Springett, *For My Children's Children*, 170.

41 Blades, interview.

42 Evelyn Cochrane to Arthur Cochrane, 15 November 1900, M6552, Billy and Evelyn Cochrane fonds, Glenbow.

43 Ibid.

44 Gladys Baptie to Heritage park, 1972, M2551, Thomas and Gladys Baptie fonds, Glenbow.

45 "Hester Jane Robinson," in Foothills, *Chaps and Chinooks*, 284.

46 LaGrandeur, "Memoirs of a Cowboy's Wife," 5.

47 Lucy Seymour, interview by Orrin Hart for Stockmen's Memorial Foundation "Heritage Voices" project, c.1980s, Sheppard Archives.

48 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 135.

49 Catherine Bond Dick, "The Dick Ranch," in Nanton, *Mosquito Creek Roundup*, 100.

50 "Bob Newbolt, Pioneer 1884," Newbolt fonds.

51 Loree, "My Sunset Childhood."

52 Ibid.

53 "Trail's End Visitors Book and Log," summer 1931, Ings family documents, Loree family.

54 Hopkins, *Letters from a Lady Rancher*, 59.

55 Thomas, *Ranchers' Legacy*, 30.

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58 Ibid, 60.

59 West, *Growing Up with the Country*, 106.

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61 Randall, *A Lady's Ranch Life*, 121.

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70 Thomas, *Ranchers' Legacy*, 88.

Conclusion

1 Sarah Ellen Roberts quoted in Fairbanks and Sundberg, "Farm Women on the Canadian Prairie Frontier," 82.

2 Kay, "Landscapes of Women and Men," 448.

3 John W. Bennett, *Northern Plainsmen: Adaptive Strategy and Agrarian Life* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 179.

4 "Bob Newbolt, Pioneer 1884," Newbolt fonds.

5 O'Neil, "Lady's Life on a Ranche," 502, 503.

6 Ibid., 505.

7 Springett, *For My Children's Children*, 103.

8 Cleaveland, *No Life for a Lady*, 32

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10 Catherine B. Dick, "Bond Family of Tongue Creek," in Tales and Trials, *Tales and Trials*, 47.

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19 Ehrlich, *Solace of Open Spaces*, 5.

20 "Vernice Wearmouth," in Poirier et al., *A Voice of Her Own*, 9.

21 Carter, "Diversifying Ranching History," 156.

Appendix

1 Constance Loree, "My Sunset Childhood" (unpublished memoir, c.1970s), property of Loree family, Nanton, AB.

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Once dominated by large cattle operations covering thousands of acres, Alberta in the 1880s-1930s saw a shift as small, family-owned ranches began to dot the province's southern plains. While this era of agriculture might conjure images of cowboys riding through the foothills or ranch hands tilling the prairie fields, women, too, played an integral part in this rapidly changing industry. *Ranching Women in Southern Alberta* explores the world of these women, and their efforts to ensure the economic viability of their family ranches and the social harmony of their families and communities. Rachel Herbert examines what life was like for ranching women, who faced a myriad of challenges while at the same time enjoying more personal freedom than their urban and European contemporaries. This book pays homage to the brave and talented women who rode the range, carving out a role for themselves during the dawn of the family ranching era.

Rachel Herbert was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. The great-granddaughter of pioneer ranchers, she returned to her roots and the family ranch near Nanton, Alberta. At historic Trail's End Ranch she raises and markets old-fashioned grassfed beef and chases her two free-range kids. When she's not feeding cows, or kids, she can be found reading, riding, or getting her hands dirty in the garden or on the ranch.

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