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"Ranchers Don't Sell, They Acquire": The Life and Legends of Bartley Marie Scott

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"RANCHERS DON'T SELL, THEY ACQUIRE":

THE LIFE AND LEGENDS OF

BARTLEY MARIE SCOTT

by

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Julie Hartley-Moore

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Major Professor: Dr. F. Ross Peterson
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This thesis examines the family history and life story of Colorado ranch woman Bartley Marie Scott. In addition to biographical information, it includes an examination of the folklore surrounding Scott's life, her role in the regional culture, and the theoretical implications of using folklore in biography.

(181 pages)

CHAPTER 1

LIVES AND LEGENDS

The ranch house living room is cool and comfortable, protected from the afternoon heat by a line of old cottonwood trees which rustle gently in the mountain breeze. Late summer sun trickles through the cottonwood canopy, falling in patches on the thick carpets and leaving a hand-carved cedar lamp with its picture-postcard shade unnecessary and forgotten at the side of the window. On the nearby hearth slouches a pair of cracked leather boots, caked with dust, the heels slightly worn. Books on ranching and Western culture litter the tables flanking the wood-frame sofa.

One of the books is opened to show a black and white photograph of knotted, twisted hands, the skin as cracked as the yellow boots at the fireplace. They are Marie Scott's hands, and they tell a story of long and difficult work outdoors.

The room's inhabitants, a mother and son who have spent most of their lives ranching in the Manti-La Sal mountains of southeastern Utah, talk quietly about their friend. Marie Scott has been dead for almost twenty years, but she comes to life in the stories she left behind.

"Yeah, now this story may be apocryphal," Hardy Redd begins, "but never let the truth of a good story interfere! And I can't remember who I heard this from. Marie came to

buy some bulls. In the early days we sold the bulls privately, negotiating every sale." Today, the Redds hold an annual auction, drawing potential buyers from around the region. Marie and Charlie Redd, Hardy's father, were contemporaries, friends, and rivals.

"And she dealt with my dad in Old La Sal and they drove pretty hard," Hardy continues, understating Charlie and Marie's competitive friendship. Both were legendary traders, Charlie in eastern Utah, Marie in western Colorado. Both always wanted to get the better of the other in a deal.

The red-headed, heavily rouged, five-foot-one, bowlegged Marie Scott came to each trade prepared to get what she wanted. She knew the price she could pay and refused to pay a cent more. Of course, Charlie knew what his bulls were worth and would not accept a cent less. This time, though, Marie finally talked him down to the price she wanted.

"And she bought ten bulls, or more than one anyway. And she said, 'Of course now, Charlie, after we make this deal and we settle on a price, of course you'll deliver them for that.'" Hardy chuckles softly.

"And he didn't want to, but he knew he had to make a sale. And finally he agreed that for that price they'd deliver the bulls." Not only had Charlie Redd come down lower in price than he expected, he had also just agreed to

provide free transportation.

"She could see that he didn't want to transport them," Hardy continues, rocking slowly in his chair. "But she said, 'Now, uh, now what would you take off the price if you didn't have to deliver them?'" Annaley Redd laughs, nodding her head, amused at the story of her shrewd husband getting the raw end of a business deal.

Hardy laughs too, and presses on with his tale. "And he did some quick calculations and it was ten to twenty dollars a head. She said, 'Alright, I'll take the bulls.' Then she says, 'You haven't got a horse I could borrow, have you?'"

After the laughter dies down Hardy interjects, "And, uh, I think the part of the story that's really apocryphal is, uh, somebody who's there said, 'I've got some horses, but I'm not, you know, they're kind of wild, they're drones.'"

"And she said, verbatim, 'I think I can ride anything Charlie Redd's got!'"

"Uh, anyway she borrowed the horse, and I think she probably borrowed a saddle. And, uh there'd been a lot of snow that winter, I think the snow was piled up the sides of the roads. And so she took those bulls and headed off."

"All by herself?" Annaley interrupts.

"All by herself," Hardy emphasizes. "In the

wintertime. And took those bulls and headed for Paradox."

While Moab, only about an hour away from the Redd's La Sal ranch, is one of southern Utah's hot-spots and winter playgrounds, the road from La Sal to Paradox can be slippery and treacherous even in the light summer rain. In the winter, the road would be lined with snowbanks as it twisted and turned its way back and forth across the face of the mountains before dropping down into the red-walled Paradox Valley over the Colorado border. It is a narrow road, big enough for only two cars at a time, a road that would become even smaller when edged in snow.

"And, uh, she spent the night in Paradox probably. But still stayed with those bulls and made arrangements to stop for the night someplace and buy a little hay, put them in a corral and feed them some hay. And probably took them to Naturita or Norwood herself and then maybe got somebody to come and help her the rest of the way or had one of her men take over." Naturita and Norwood are a good two hours from La Sal in a car or truck. For one woman on horseback trailing several bulls it would take six or seven days. Still, with the snow lining the roads, the bulls couldn't wander far, and Marie could count on generous neighbors to put her and her herds up for the night.

"But the reason I like the story," Hardy says, "it shows that Marie was a hard trader, she was fair and honest

with what she made a deal on. But if she could figure out a way to get what she wanted, she did. And it was the wintertime and there's not a lot to do," he continues, "and she was tough enough to figure she could do anything that any man could do--certainly any man. And you know, just whatever it took to get the job done and get them as cheap as she could she would do it.

"She had kind of an inner resolve and a will and she knew what she wanted," he explains. "She always told herself what she wanted and then went after it. Always paid cash. She was an honest person."

After some reflection, Hardy adds, "Things that didn't have to do with land or her business transactions, I got the feeling that she didn't have much use for them. Her mind was working all the time and calculating ways to either buy land or to make it more efficient."[1]

Bartley Marie Scott bought a lot of land. She was one of the principal landholders in southwestern Colorado throughout most of the twentieth century. Her influence in the region, her longevity, and her gender make her ranching and personal history unique. She was part of the first white generation born on the Dallas Divide after Native

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[1]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

Americans were driven from the area. Both of her grandfathers were ministers and her parents each owned property outside what became Ridgway, Colorado. Her childhood encompasses the early development of the area--families began to establish homes, towns grew more stable following early mining booms, and the railroad eased what had previously been a difficult journey.

Marie made her first property purchase as an adolescent. During her adult life the region and the nation underwent important historical changes: the introduction of the automobile, World Wars I and II, a severe agricultural depression, diverse patterns of land use, and changing attitudes about women. During times of economic hardship and intense agricultural difficulty, Marie managed to prosper. Following her divorce settlement in the 1930s, when she bought her former husband's mountain ranch for $10,000, Marie increased her land holdings until they almost stretched to the Utah border. As one of the most prosperous ranchers of the area she influenced local politics, banking (as a board member of the Federal Land Bank), and economics.

Marie's importance to the economic development of the region and the cattle industry is marked by her prominence in local folklore. Fifteen years after her death, even newcomers who never met Marie can tell stories about her life. The stories indicate not only Marie's personality but

what the people around her wanted her to be and what her persona meant to the region.

Following her death and the sale of several holdings to pay estate taxes, twelve of her friends inherited and divided the beautifully located ranches. These and subsequent estate sales have changed the pattern of land use and introduced outsiders to the area on a scale not seen since Marie's early childhood.

Today, wealthy outsiders chop up larger land holdings into smaller vacation plots, causing shifts in the residents' interactions with one another and with the environment. Many of the people who knew and worked with Marie Scott have passed on, and their way of life may soon follow them. The necessity of preserving Marie's history and that of the ranching industry in the region is imperative.

This thesis examines Marie Scott's influence on central western Colorado in two ways. First, it delineates the chronology of her life, her family, and her property. Second, it explores and explains the folklore about Marie within the region.

For the purposes of this study, the "region" consists of the area of Marie's primary influence: the Ridgway, Dallas Divide, and Lone Cone areas of Ouray and San Miguel counties, with the towns of Ouray, Telluride, and Norwood

forming its fringe. Further removed from the core of the region, but still containing similar cultural elements, are towns along the Utah/Colorado border near Paradox and La Sal and the closest city and commercial center, Montrose, Colorado. Still further removed is the city of Grand Junction, Colorado. See Figure 1.

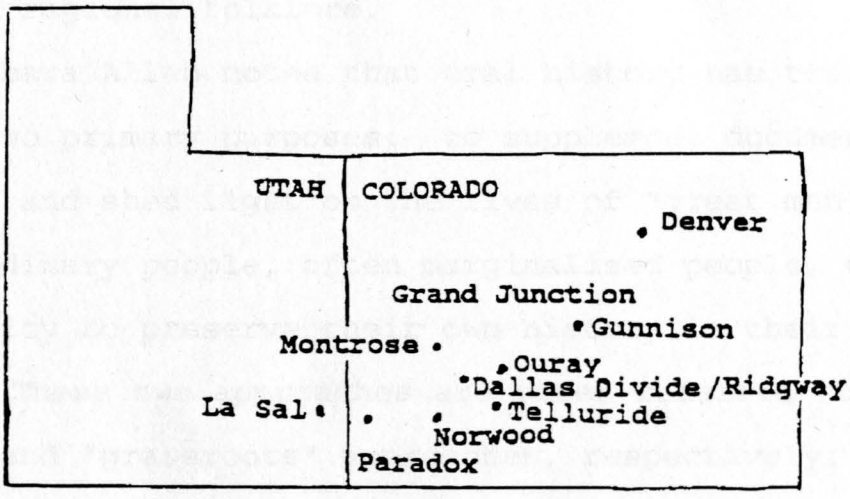

Fig. 1. Towns in the region of Marie Scott's influence.

The information for this thesis is based on the traditional documentary evidence of most biographies: economic records, government documents, legal papers, census records, and property deeds along with some secondary histories. It is also gleaned from over fifty-two oral interviews with people who knew Marie personally and from anecdotes collected from persons who knew of Marie.[2] Because the oral histories about Marie are second-hand accounts of her life, this thesis is neither a traditional biography nor a traditional oral history. Rather, it is a study in regional folklore.

Barbara Allen notes that oral history has traditionally served two primary purposes: to supplement documentary evidence and shed light on the lives of "great men"; and to allow ordinary people, often marginalized people, the opportunity to preserve their own history in their own words.[3] These two approaches are often referred to as "elite" and "grassroots" approaches, respectively.

This study attempts to go a step beyond both of the traditional approaches to oral history. In a sense, Marie

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[2]Tapes and transcripts of some of these interviews, conducted by the author, Ted Moore, or Chase Peterson, are available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[3]Barbara Allen, "Talking about the Past: A Folkloristic Study of Orally Communicated History" (Ph. D diss., University of California Los Angeles, 1980), 5-6.

Scott was a "great man"; that is, she was very wealthy, very powerful, and very well known within her community. Too, her power stemmed from traditionally masculine arenas: agricultural prosperity, land ownership, business and legal savvy, and banking influence. Thus the oral sources flesh out documentary information about her business transactions, legal dealings, and the mundane statistics found in census reports.

On the other hand, Marie Scott's history is in many ways a grassroots history. She comes from traditionally overlooked segments of American society as a woman (a divorced woman at that) and an agricultural worker from the less productive Rocky Mountain area. She was never visibly involved in politics and was little known outside her small region.

However, this project differs from traditional and grassroots oral history projects in one very significant aspect: while Marie Scott is the subject of all the oral histories, she was not the narrator. Initially, these interviews served as a springboard to information which could be verified later in written records. It soon became obvious, however, that the interviews were not only more interesting than the documentary evidence, they were also more significant. It is through the oral histories--the anecdotes about Marie Scott--that she comes to life. The

personality that made her a local legend does not show in charts measuring quarters and sections she owned in the townships of three counties. But her personality does shine through in local character legends.[4]

But even more important than the glimpses into Marie Scott's personality provided by the interviews are the revelations they give into the local culture. When examined as local character legends, not necessarily as the facts of an actual person's life, these stories indicate regional norms, expectations, and conflicts. Thus Marie Scott's life (and to some extent anyone's life) is more than just one woman's experience; it is a reflection of her folk culture and a contributing element of that culture. Thus stories about Marie Scott are an important type of folklore for this region of Colorado.

The anthropologist William Bascom notes that it is through examining the "variants of the same tale within a given folklore tradition" that one can hope to "learn the degree and kind of freedom permitted to the narrator or expected of him in various forms of folklore."[5] When

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[4]The term "local character legend" here refers to any story related as an actual occurrence in the life of a real person, especially a person well-known within her local community.

[5]William R. Bascom, "Folklore and Anthropology," in The Study of Folkore, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 32.

appropriate, then, several versions of Marie Scott legends appear together. The similarities and contrasts between the stories help indicate the elements of her life and personality that are most important to the regional culture.

Similarly, Ruth Benedict "demonstrates how the interests and experiences of the narrators are reflected in the tales they tell."[6] Thus this thesis examines several versions of different stories by analyzing the variations for their information about cultural norms.

Bascom further stresses that "the place of folklore in the daily round of life, in its social settings, and in the attitudes of native peoples toward their own folklore"[7] is crucial, as is the function of the folkore--"what it does for the people who tell it."[8] One of these functions in folklore generally, and Marie Scott legends specifically, may be to shock the listener by recounting activities that "normal" people would not do.[9]

In fact, Richard Dorson has identified this "shocking" element of a character's behavior as one of the traits of the local character legend sub-genre: "First and foremost the character is eccentric and h[er] legend is built upon

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[6]Quoted in Ibid.

[7]Bascom, 32.

[8]Ibid., 33.

[9]Ibid.

h[er] deviations from normal and accepted conduct."[10] Drawing on Dorson's ideas, Patrick Mullen notes (much like Benedict) that stories about deviation reveal more about the community than about the deviant person.[11]

However, just because local character legends may highlight someone's deviant behavior does not necessarily mean that that person is a cultural outsider. Mullen studies two brothers living in a Texas Gulf Coast fishing community who exhibit behavior much further removed from their social norms than Marie Scott's was from her culture; yet the two brothers are still "insiders." At times they are heroes, at times tricksters doing for the community what it cannot do for itself. At times they are clowns whose behavior allows the storyteller to feel superior or at least better about himself. Mullen labels this function "in-group deviance" and notes that the character legends about it

> serve some of the same functions as traditional fictional narratives--Märchen, jokes, numbskull stories, trickster tales, and so forth--even though they are based on personal experiences of actual incidents involving real people. . . . The anecdotes about real deviants become the property of the entire group, and as such they can function more effectively

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[10]Richard M. Dorson, "Legends and Tall Tales," in Our Living Traditions, ed. Tristram Potter Coffin (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 158; quoted in Patrick Mullen, I Heard the Old Fishermen Say: Folklore of the Texas Gulf Coast (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1988), 116.

[11]Patrick Mullen, I Heard the Old Fishermen Say: Folklore of the Texas Gulf Coast (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1988), 116.

> than traditional tales as symbolic expressions of that particular community's values and norms.[12]

This is true for legends about Marie Scott as well. However, while the deviant behavior that forms the basis of most local character legends in folklore studies to date tends to be negative or somehow anti-social, Marie Scott's deviant behavior tends instead to be positive or supersocial. Her deviance comes primarily from doing things better than others but within social constraints. It is her insistence on perfection that makes her deviant and the focus of local stories.

Finally, while Marie Scott is the subject of many local character legends, she is not entirely unusual for the region. She operated within acceptable folk norms, and although many 1990s informants saw her work as outside of the traditional female sphere, she came from a long line of ranching women who did similar work. Her grandmother, Martha Deeren Scott, her mother, Ida Josephine Culver Scott, and her sister, Josie Loraine Scott Harney were all active in buying, managing, and improving land. Marie's story is as much theirs as it is hers.

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[12]Ibid., 129.

CHAPTER 2

THE MINISTER'S WIFE

In her late seventies, Marie Scott sat atop one of her mountain pastures, enjoying a working picnic of fried chicken and oatmeal cookies. Her co-worker for the day, Bureau of Land Management officer Brent Jensen, was surprised when she turned to him and quipped, "You know, my grandfather was a Methodist minister. But all I inherited was the chicken-eating part."[13] In reality, both of Marie's grandfathers were ministers. And while she did not inherit their religious convictions, she certainly received her grandparents James and Martha Scott's love for the ranch land of Colorado.

When Marie's grandmother Martha A. Deeren married in 1868, she did so in her childhood home, the place where she had lived her entire twenty-five years.[14] Martha was born in 1841 in Guernsey County, near Pleasant City, Ohio and spent her childhood and young adulthood there.[15] Her

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[13]Brent Jensen, interview by Charles S. Peterson, tape recording, St. George, Utah, 27 October 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[14]"Pneumonia is Cause of Two Deaths at Ridgway," Ouray Herald (Ouray, Colorado), 6 January 1906. On microfilm in Walsh Libray, Ouray, Colorado.

[15]Ibid.

husband, the Methodist Reverend James H. Scott, was also born in Ohio, as was his mother. His father was a Scottish immigrant.[16]

Like many other women of her era, Martha was anything but sedentary after she married in 1866. In 1868, she had her first son, Everly M., in Novelty, Knox County, Missouri. The birth of her second child, Bartley Trube, followed two years later in Scotland County's Sand Hill.[17] Shortly after the Civil War, when the boys were seven and five years old, Martha, James and their small family fled Missouri, reaching Colorado in 1875.[18]

They were not the only ones to leave. In the aftermath of the Civil War, Missouri faced Reconstruction and a statewide internal war of sorts. The state militia tried to impose order, but robbery and murder occurred regularly. Gangs of former Union and Confederate guerrillas plundered the countryside, trying to settle wartime grievances. Even those who had fought on the same side in the Civil War turned against each other in the post war disorder.[19]

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[16]Department of the Census, "Ouray County, Colorado," United States' Census, 1900, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), #2 #84 #12.

[17]Ibid.

[18]"Pneumonia is Cause of Two Deaths."

[19]Richard White, "Outlaw Gangs and Social Bandits," in Major Problems in the History of the American West, ed. Clyde A. Milner II, Major Problems in American History

For Southerners trying to relocate, Colorado's rich mining camps and newly available homestead lands were logical destinations. In fact, in 1864 more than 20,000 Missourians migrated to Colorado, some of them draft-dodgers or would-be gold miners, but more than half of them "seeking to escape the threat of retribution for their real or suspected ties to secessionist guerrillas."[20] People flocked to the mountains, despite the harsh climate and the difficulty of the overland journey. Frances Talbert's great-grandparents, for example, were among Martha's Colorado contemporaries. "My grandmother remembered parts of [the journey], but she was just four on that trip. So you know it was a hard one."[21]

The journey certainly was hard. "On the far side of plains, the land tilted suddenly upward into the Rocky Mountains. In the next fifty miles the land rose more than three times what it had in the previous five hundred."[22]

Series, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1989), 378.

[20]Alvin M. Josephy, The Civil War in the American West, (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1991), 303.

[21]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August, 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[22]Elliot West, Growing Up with the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier, Histories of the American Frontier Series, ed. Ray Allen Billington (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 3.

When the enclosing mountains completely dominated the horizon, many travellers felt trapped. One young boy, making the trek with his family, "cried every day, saying he wanted 'to see out.'"[23] In the 1870s, though, the journey, while difficult, was easier than it had been just thirty years earlier. When Martha and James left for Colorado, the trail was clearly marked with regular trading posts, stage stations, farms, and perhaps most important, bridges and ferries.[24]

How did Martha feel about leaving her home for the mountains of the West? Born and raised in Ohio, she came from pioneering stock, a family who had escaped Ireland to find a better situation in the "western" section of the United States.[25] Martha had already resettled at least twice herself. She and James had not been afraid of beginning their life together in war-ravaged Missouri during the chaotic years of Reconstruction. As Northerners, they could expect to face insults from gangs of Southern guerrillas. Although Confederate paramilitary splinter groups had occasional spurts in Territorial Colorado, they

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[23]Ibid.

[24]John D. Unruh, Jr., "The Traveling Community of the Overlanders," in Major Problems in the History of the American West, ed. Clyde A. Milner II, Major Problems in American History Series, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1989), 276-285.

[25]Department of the Census, "Ouray County, Colorado."

had always been treated as criminals and quickly suppressed by the 70% pro-Union populace.[26]

Still, the trek to Colorado entailed more difficulties than a move to Missouri. While men would be seeking new opportunities in Colorado's mountainous settings, women still had to carry out their usual childrearing and housekeeping responsibilities far from friends and family, in more primitive conditions, and often after completing extra tasks brought about by the move. If Martha's experience was like that of other women travelling west, she had a lot of work to ensure that her family was well supplied for the entire trip.[27]

When Kitturah Belknap started overland from Iowa in 1848, for example, she had to "work and plan to make everything with an eye to starting out on a six month's trip. . . . The first thing [wa]s to make a piece of linen for a wagon cover and some sacks." Making cloth entailed spinning and weaving the fabric as well as spinning the thread and doing the sewing by hand. In addition, women made the mattresses for their family's beds, produced its clothing, dipped enough candles to last through the winter,

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[26]Josephy, 294.

[27]John Mack Faragher, "Men's and Women's Work on the Overland Trail," in Major Problems in the History of the American West, ed. Clyde A. Milner II, Major Problems in American History Series, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1989) 285-297.

and did all the regular washing, cooking, and chasing after small children.[28] Typically, women with small children like Martha's were most vocal in opposing their husbands' decisions to move west.[29]

Other women, however, were even more anxious than their men to move on.[30] And Martha, as a clergyman's wife, could certainly expect to follow her husband as he answered the call to carry his ministry wherever there might be a congregation in need.

Around September of 1882, James took the pulpit of the Methodist-Episcopal church in the town of Ouray, Colorado (while living with his family on the nearby Dallas Divide). Here he conducted "Regular services every Sabbath at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday School at 10 a.m. Prayer meeting Wednesday evenings at 7 o'clock."[31] The church also held socials "fortnightly. . . on Thursdays".[32] By October the pastor

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[28]Clyde A. Milner II, Major Problems in the History of the American West, Major Problems in American History Series, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1989), 262-263.

[29]West, 11.

[30]Ibid.

[31]"Church Directory," Solid Muldoon (Ouray, Colorado), 29 September 1882. On microfilm in the Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

[32]Ibid., October 24, 1882.

was "endeavoring to inaugurate a Sunday School concert."[33]

As with most western mining towns, early Ouray courted the "civilizing influence" that ministers and their families could provide. Settled almost overnight by those seeking instant riches, Ouray's mining population was comprised mostly of single men. The town itself grew out of a support system designed to meet miners' more decadent needs. In fact, Ouray's "first building was a saloon, where whiskey glasses were used faster than they could be washed. Shortly thereafter, when Ouray became a county seat, the saloon was turned into a courthouse."[34]

Saloons were often the first buildings erected in Colorado towns, and they usually served as the central public buildings until the population stabilized. Saloons provided shelter not just for drinking and cavorting, but for economic, political, and sometimes religious activities as well. In Denver, for example, saloons became community centers, the seats for provisional city and territorial governments, and the sites of the first church services and theatrical performances. They often served as banks too, since saloons often had an abundance of the hard currency

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[33]Ibid., October 17, 1882.

[34]Perry Eberhart, Guide to the Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps (Denver: Sage Books, 1959), 360.

everyone else lacked.[35] James was fortunate to hold services in a rented hall instead of the saloon.

Ouray's saloon patrons and town residents came from diverse backgrounds. "Every language was spoken, you know, and there was every nationality. It was hard to converse with anybody. Lot of loneliness."[36] The few families living in the region had just faced the upheaval and social chaos of relocation, and the area's population was changing quickly. Mining towns, like Ouray, were particularly unstable; 95 percent of their population would change every ten years. But the surrounding farming regions also changed residents "at a rapid, sometimes dizzying pace."[37]

The chaotic social setting thus provided a perfect call to men of the cloth. In fact, moral purpose became one of the most common reasons (lagging behind better economic opportunities, of course) for coming west. A pioneering woman who felt the call to settle in Oregon explained that, "This country needs much Christian exertion."[38] The same could be said of Ouray.

As one of the community's spiritual and social leaders,

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[35]Thomas J. Noel, The City and the Saloon: Denver, 1858-1916 (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 12.

[36]Talbert.

[37]West, 14.

[38]Ibid., 7.

Reverend Scott's activities and travels appeared on an almost weekly basis in the Solid Muldoon, Ouray's newspaper. Telluride's and other towns' papers also highlighted his visits to their areas to perform marriages, preach, or preside over funerals.

> [Monday, October 30, 1882.] Rev. J. H. Scott started this a.m. for Telluride to assist in the obsequies of A.F. Kibbe who died there this morning at 3 o'clock.
>
> [Saturday, November 4, 1882.] Rev. J.H. Scott returned from Telluride yesterday after having deposited the last remains of A.F. Kibbe away to await the resurrection morn.[39]

Ministerial trips kept James away from his family for days at a time.

James and Martha had settled with their boys on the Dallas Divide, a midway spot high in the San Juan mountains, in 1882.[40] The town of Dallas was almost as new to the area as were the Scotts. The U.S. government had recently forced the Ute Indians, including Chief Ouray, out of Colorado and onto what would become their reservation in Utah's Uinta mountains.[41]

Some whites in the region claimed that the Utes, along with the Shoshoni and Comanche, were more hostile than the notorious Sioux and Cheyenne who had distracted Union troops

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[39]"Church Directory," 30 October and 4 November 1882.

[40]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records, vol. A4 (County Courthouse, Ouray, Colorado), 348.

[41]Josephy, 307.

on the eastern side of the Rockies. The army had brutally suppressed the Plains tribes. In September of 1864, the Cheyenne and Arapaho sought peace with Territorial officials. However, John Evans, the ex-officio Superintendent of Indian Affairs, vowed to conquer all the Indians by force in the "winter, when the Indians are unable to subsist except in the buffalo range."[42] Two months later, the Colorado 3rd Cavalry, led by Colonel John M. Chivington (himself a former Methodist preacher[43]), brutally massacred 550 Cheyenne and Arapaho men, women, and children while they slept at Sand Creek.[44]

But it was not until miners found silver in the mountains that the Utes were forced to leave. With Native Americans gone and prime agricultural land disappearing fast, the San Juans beckoned to white argonauts and pioneers.[45] Then in 1879 miners discovered placer gold in Dallas's Uniweep Valley.

> [W]ithin days hundreds of fortune seekers poured in, all but deserting the established cities of Silverton and Ouray. Hundreds of tents and huts were thrown up. The makeshift community was named Gold City.
>
> But almost as quickly as the excitement had

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[42]Ibid.

[43]Ibid., 298.

[44]Ibid., 309.

[45]Cynthia Hansen-Zehm, "Lady in Red," Telluride Magazine, Summer 1990 (Telluride, Colorado), 22.

> erupted, disappointment set in, and the site was all but deserted a few weeks later.
>
> A more organized stampede began the following year and a permanent town was platted. It was named for George V. Dallas, then vice-president of the United States.
>
> Although gold was the reason for the city, it soon became a major stage and wagon train station on the road to Telluride and Ouray. It remained so during the 80's as the population wavered between 100 and 200.[46]

The Divide was a nice central location for James's work in the Ridgway, Ouray, Telluride triangle. On December 27, 1882, he and Martha purchased 160 acres from Charles and Julia Trenchard for $800.[47] That same day the Scotts mortgaged the property with the Trenchards for two promissory notes of $1200 and $600 at 1 1/2 percent interest per month. Three months later, they obtained a mortgage on additional 160 acres from the Trenchards for two notes of $632.50 and $564.50 at 2 percent interest per month.[48] Their new home was situated near good timber, in sight of the towering, jagged Sneffles range to the east, with purple, red, and sage colored mesas stretching to the west.

Most important of all, their land had good water rights. Ditches in the region are so important they have names: the Scotts would at one time or another have access to the Trenchard ditch, the Doc Wade ditch, and the

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[46]Eberhart, 365-6.

[47]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records, vol. A4, page 348.

[48]Ibid.

Montgomery, Lone Pine, Woodhouse, and other ditches.[49] Occasionally ditches would transport water from small reservoirs ranchers created on their properties; usually they carried the run-off of snow packs from the high mountain peaks.

The mountain towns like Dallas faced long stretches of isolation broken by mule teams bringing in supplies or trucking out minerals. The primary mode of travel was over stage lines. Dallas served as a crossroads of sorts between stage routes to Norwood, Telluride, Ouray, and Montrose. Only a few remnants of the old station are still there today. Frances Talbert notes, "[T]here's nothing left now but a rock wall and a rock enclosure that was a spin house. It was a stage station, so people would stop there at the stage station. And uh then the road came down through this valley. . . ."[50] Roads, carved into mountainsides, curved and wound their ways over rocky crossings. Travellers often paid heavy tolls for their passage.

Winters magnified the isolation, making the mountain roads more treacherous, and often trapping people in their homes. Mrs. Talbert continues, "They were back in the days when they had the scoop shovel, [snow] shovels in the cabin

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[49]Ibid.

[50]Talbert.

so they could get out in the morning."[51] Extreme weather and winter illnesses killed "scores" of people, according to one historian, who claimed that "the area around Ouray, and further south, . . . is perhaps the worst area in the world for snowslides."[52]

There were social hazards as well. While James and Martha Scott may have hoped to leave the Civil War behind them when they left Missouri in the 1870s, the war marked their new home in many ways. Not only did miners and families of refugees seek a better life in Colorado, even former war bandits made their way to the region, some continuing their outlaw ways. Jim Clark, allegedly a follower of the Quantrill Gang during the Civil War (along with Frank and Jesse James), served as the sheriff of Telluride in the early 1890s.[53]

The Quantrill Gang, a band of Civil War guerrillas, had been the most notorious of the military groups that spontaneously formed in reaction to local conditions. William Quantrill's gang was part of the Southern resistance to Union-Kansas attacks on Missouri's western border. Their attacks were "ghastly," a "dirty, tricky total warfare. . .

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[51]Ibid.

[52]Eberhart, 361.

[53]'Doc' Cyrus Wells Shores, Memoirs of a Lawman, ed. Wilson Rockwell (Denver: Sage Books, 1962), 102.

in which no quarter was asked or given, and in which every person was forced to take some side."[54] In addition to skirmishes with Kansas Jayhawkers, they also ambushed and killed witnesses before trials and burned and looted Union sympathizers' property.[55]

The sheriff's post in Telluride had certain advantages for a former guerilla:

> [W]hile Clark rigorously kept the peace in Telluride and wouldn't stand for any disorderliness whatsoever, he continued his life of lawlessness outside of the city limits by disguising himself and participating in various holdups. It was also rumored that he often tipped off his outlaw cohorts when big gold or silver shipments were going out on the stage from Telluride to the nearest railhead at Dallas. . . and Clark would receive his cuts from the holdups. [56]

Clark was ambushed and killed August 7, 1895, following a struggle with civil authorities who wanted to replace him as city marshall.[57]

But despite the man-made dangers, the biggest challenge the Scotts would face was eking out a decent living high in "the Switzerland of the United States." The usual government issue homestead of 160 acres wasn't quite sufficient for Dallas's shorter growing season at close to

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[54]Richard S. Brownlee, Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy: Guerilla Warfare in the West, 1861-1865 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1958), 59-60.

[55]Ibid., 61.

[56]Shores.

[57]Ibid.

8,000 feet. And the area's economy would waiver between boom and bust as the prices for silver and gold fluctuated. County land records show the Scotts buying scattered pieces of property throughout the Dallas township. All but two patches, a combined total of close to 160 acres out of about 1000, avoided repeated mortgages.[58]

In addition, the family often had to mortgage their livestock or the upcoming harvest. In 1886 James mortgaged livestock including thirty-seven cows, three steers, and six yearling heifers and steers for $1,400.[59] The next year he mortgaged "1 bay mare nine years, 1100 lbs with Colt; 1 sorrel mare 10 yrs., 900 lbs., bay mare 3 yrs., 800 lbs." for $1,800.[60] And he mortgaged livestock twice in 1889, for a total of $4,410. By that year, however, the number of animals he had available to mortgage had increased dramatically: at least thirty-six horses and seventy-one head of cattle.[61] The Scotts mortgaged livestock again in 1890, 1892, 1893, and 1894.[62]

During those years and the following two years, the

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[58]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records.

[59]Ouray County Recorder's Office, Chattel Mortgages, vol. 20 (Ouray County Court House, Ouray, Colorado), 130.

[60]Ibid., 219.

[61]Ibid., 310 and vol. 42, 564.

[62]Ibid.

family also mortgaged their expected harvests. These included "crops, now cut, growing and to be cut and harvested upon and at" the Scott ranches--about 200 acres of alfalfa hay, 25 acres of oats, and their entire crop of wheat (10 acres), depending on the year.[63] Occasionally the mortgages allowed the Scotts to reserve a few tons of hay for their livestock. Apparently, they were always able to meet the repayment deadlines in time to keep their crops, probably by selling the mortgaged harvest for cash in town before the debt was due.

When James and Martha's sons, Everly and Bartley, were old enough, they ran the Scott Brothers' Slaughter House "3 1/2 miles north from the center of the city of Ouray." According to mortgage records, the brothers had at least

> 26 hogs - rent of slaughter house paid in cash. . . amounting to $40. 1 sausage room and all fixtures and improvements thereunto belonging and in connection therewith. 1 dry beef cutter, 1 large pair of scales, 1 small pair of scales, 1 counter, meat packer, 2 meat blocks, 2 meat cleavers, 3 meat saws, 2 steels, 4 dozen meat hooks, 1 ? drawer, 1 ? safe, 1 writing desk, 2 stoves and pipe, 2 wagons and single harness, 1 sleigh privilege, 1 vegetable trough, 1 fish trough, 1 awning?, window blinds, screen doors, 1 horse, 1 ? flue, 1 office chair, 1 grind stone, all of the above described property being owned, held, and verified, and used in the slaughter business.[64]

With James occupied by his ecclesiastical duties, Martha, Everly, and Trube likely shared the ranch work.

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[63]Ibid., vol. 20, 516.

[64]Ibid., vol. 56, 45.

This included digging ditches, building fences, putting up hay and alfalfa, and tending the livestock. Maintaining existing improvements could be just as time-consuming as making them in the first place.

In addition, Martha faced added responsibilities inside the home. Ranch women of this era typically rose at four o'clock in the morning to milk the family cow before preparing breakfast for relatives and hired hands. Without plumbing, someone had to haul the household water. Cast iron stoves required constant feeding, beds had to be made, and clothes needed sewing and mending. "Blue Monday" meant a full day of washing clothes and linens in fire-heated cauldrons with harsh lye soap.[65] Yet if there was more than one woman, Martha could divide the household responsibilities. As her sons aged, she probably welcomed the prospect of a daughter-in-law to share the work and provide conversation.

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[65]Faragher.

CHAPTER 3

CLAIMING THE DALLAS DIVIDE

Martha finally got a daughter-in-law eleven years after she, James, and the boys had moved to the Dallas Divide. In 1893, Bartley Trube, the youngest of the Scott brothers and Marie Scott's future father, married Ida J. Culver. Ida was the local schoolteacher and the daughter of a rival Methodist preacher.[66] Her parents, like James and Martha, were from Ohio, but Ida J. was born in Macon County, Illinois on February 18, 1866. Later she moved with her family to Edgar, Nebraska, where she "first taught school" before settling and teaching on the upper Dallas.[67]

Both Colorado and Nebraska desperately needed teachers, most of whom were women, as young as thirteen, who were lured away from domestic duties by the prospects of increased independence and income.[68] Ida was in her late

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[66]Cynthia Hansen-Zehm, "Lady in Red," Telluride Magazine, Summer 1990 (Telluride, Colorado), 22.

[67]"Obituaries: Ida J. Scott," The Ouray (Colorado) Herald, 30 October 1936, 1. On microfilm in Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

[68]Elliott West, Growing Up with the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier, Histories of the American Frontier, ed. Ray Allen Billington (Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 198.

teens and early twenties when a flood of new farmers spilled onto the Nebraska plains following "the wet years of the late 1870s." In one year alone the number of school-age children there grew from 92,161 to 104,030, an increase of 13 percent; only six new teachers stepped in to meet their needs.[69] By 1880 Nebraska had 3,286 schools, one for every forty-one children.[70]

At the same time, Colorado had only six hundred public schools, or one school for every fifty-nine children.[71] And Colorado's teaching year of 6.4 months was about thirty-nine days longer than Nebraska's. Attendance was higher in Colorado too: 80 percent of school-age children attended classes compared to Nebraska's rate of 75 percent.[72] Fortunately, the average teacher's salary was correspondingly higher in the Rockies: the average monthly wage of $61.91 was the fifth highest in the western half of the contiguous United States and was almost double Nebraska's average of $31.38. The state's expenditure per public school ($982) was almost three times higher than Nebraska's ($329).[73]

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[69]Ibid., 188.

[70]Ibid., 189.

[71]Ibid., 190.

[72]Ibid., 191.

[73]Ibid., 194.

Whether Ida actually received $61.91 a month is another question. Schools and teachers' wages took many forms in the nineteenth century. Some teachers devoted their energies entirely to a family of children in exchange for room and board. "Subscription teachers," hired on an individual basis by groups of desperate parents, usually had a one-room school house and a daily or monthly wage in cash or goods. Other teachers received some money from parents and a small wage from the county. But public school teachers' wages came from sales of a township's sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections, at least in theory.[74] In reality, Colorado had to rely heavily on district property taxes to fund three-fourths of the cost of public education; the other fourth came from state and county contributions.[75]

Ida's school house was probably a one-room cabin with "a decrepit stove that drove children outdoors when snow clogged its chimney," as happened regularly in Cripple Creek.[76] School furnishings typically consisted of a teacher's table or desk, a painted chalk board, a water bucket and dipper, and perhaps a recitation bench at the front of the room or a low-level writing shelf rimming its sides. Children often brought their own desks and chairs or

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[74]Ibid., 192.

[75]Ibid., 206.

[76]Ibid., 199.

sat on communal benches.[77]

Western students' ages ranged from six to twenty-one (older students might have to pay tuition);[78] their skills and learning levels were equally diversified. Boys and young men commonly suffered education by "broken doses," staying on the ranch during labor-intensive seasons and returning to school when their agricultural work lightened. Girls attended school while young, if at all, before assuming heavy domestic duties as teenagers. Ida J. would have to keep her students occupied with a plurality of tasks while rotating her evaluation, teaching, and study time within the various levels.[79]

As an unmarried woman in 1893, Ida had more legal independence than she would see following her wedding, despite the fact that Colorado gave women the vote that year.[80] At the time, single women could file their own homestead claims, but married women could not.[81] Until the

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[77]Ibid., 200.

[78]Ibid., 199.

[79]Ibid., 201.

[80]Mary W. M. Hargreaves, "Women Homseteaders on the Northern Plains," in Major Problems in the History of the American West, ed. Clyde A. Milner II, Major Problems in American History Series, ed. Thomas G. Paterson (Lexington, Massachusetts: D. C. Heath, 1989), 425.

[81]Ibid., 429. See also Norma Basch, "The Emerging Legal History of Women in the United States: Property, Divorce, and the Constitution," Signs 12 (Autumn 1986): 97-

twentieth century women were legally their husbands' property. At marriage women became femes coverts--they forfeited most legal rights as individuals, including the right to retain their own property or to form legal contracts.[82] So, two months before her June wedding, twenty-seven-year-old Ida filed on eighty acres adjacent to some of the Scott property and bought the big white house[83] that would later be her home. Trube, who was twenty-three, served as Ida's witness.[84]

Trube had already purchased about 320 acres of his own from his father for $7,500.[85] Here the newlyweds ran a modest cattle ranch. Ida never taught school after starting her family. She concentrated on ranching instead.

While Martha's name appears only in conjunction with James's in the county land records, Ida's name shows up by

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117; Nelson Manfred Blake, The Road to Reno: A History of Divorce in the United States (New York: Macmillan Company, 1962); Mary Ann Glendon, Abortion and Divorce in Western Law: American Failures, European Challenges (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987); and Glenda Riley, Divorce: An American Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[82]Glenda Riley, Divorce: An American Tradition.

[83]"The Scott Sisters," Ridgway Recipes and Remembrances, 2nd ed. (n.p.: Ridgway Community Pride, 1985), 158.

[84]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records (County Court House, Ouray, Colorado), #45247.

[85]Ibid., 5 July 1892 and 11 June 1898.

itself repeatedly, either as Ida J. Scott or Mrs. B. T. Scott. Trube was most prolific in acquiring land and wrestling money from it through a multitude of mortgages, but Ida was also involved in the ranch's land transactions, as seen in the following examples of three parcels of their land.

On May 4, 1899, for $2,300, Trube bought a new patch of land and rebought one of the 320 acre sections James had sold him before his wedding.[86] In the same transaction, he mortgaged the parcel (here called parcel A), totalling about 160 acres, to W. D. Lee, "an agent."[87] It was not until three years and twenty-three days after taking the mortgage that "B.T. Scott and Mrs. B.T. Scott paid and fully satisfied one promissory note to W. D. Lee together with all interest and charges."[88]

The same day, May 27, 1902, George M. Seeger released a quit claim on another 160 acres and water rights that Trube had previously transferred to Ida in 1900.[89] Trube had acquired this property, parcel B, from A. E. Walther in 1898.[90] Trube and his father sold it back to Walther on

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[86]Ibid., #44311 and #44312..

[87]Ibid., #48404.

[88]Ibid.

[89]Ibid., #45247 and #48404.

[90]Ibid., #43063.

June 11, 1898, "for the purpose of confirming the conveyance heretofore made by the said Bartley T. Scott dated 7-5-92."[91] Then, in January of 1900, Trube sold the parcel to Ida for $2,300 ("free from heirs save and except a deed of trust to W. D. Lee to secure payment of a $1,200 note of 5-4-1899").[92]

In 1899, Ida also mortgaged her original 80 acres (parcel C) for $800 at 10 percent interest to D. G. Griffith.[93] (She had previously mortgaged these same 80 acres for $760[94] the day she bought them for $1,250. She paid off the original mortgage in 1898, five years after her purchase.[95]) Two days later, she and Trube mortgaged parcel A to W. D. Lee again, for $1,200 at 11 percent interest for three years.[96]

Despite Trube and Ida Scott's repeatedly mortgaging, selling, and rebuying the same parcels of property, they appear to have held on to at least two patches without mortgages. They were also well-enough established to have a

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[91]Ibid., #43258.

[92]Ibid., #45247.

[93]Ibid., #44296.

[94]Ibid., #37683.

[95]Ibid., #37683.

[96]Ibid., #44313.

farm laborer, Earl Hull, boarding with them in 1900.[97] As ranchers, Trube and Ida were more fortunate than many of their miner neighbors; the year they married the price of silver plummeted,[98] devastating the region's mine economy and forcing higher interest rates on farm mortgages.

The year 1893 was one of financial panic and depression following the crash of silver prices, which had been dropping steadily for almost a decade. In February of 1894, the Commission on Mines and Mining, led by Nevada silver tycoons, claimed that "the cost of producing silver was higher than its market value, then hovering around eighty-seven cents an ounce."[99] Later that year the price plummetted to sixty-two cents per ounce. The Colorado Daily State Mining Journal of Denver complained that "for every dollar taken out of the ground $100 have been put in."[100] Closer to the Scotts' home, William Weston declaimed from the San Juans that most miners "put more silver into the mine than they ever get out of it."[101]

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[97]Department of the Census, "Ouray County, Colorado," United States' Census, 1900, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), #2 #84 #12.

[98]Hansen-Zehm, 22.

[99]Joseph E. King, A Mine to Make a Mine: Financing the Colorado Mining Industry, 1859-1902 (College Station, Texas; Texas A&M University, 1977), 174.

[100]Ibid., 175.

[101]Ibid., 176.

Some historians argue that reckless and greedy mine owners brought the decline on themselves:

> With careless disregard for the natural resource and the long-term health of their own pocketbooks, mining companies stripped away the richest ore to pay huge and immediate returns to stockholders, while they let the mines slip into appallingly poor shape, foregoing steadier earnings for a splendid moment of wealth.[102]

To compensate for financial losses, owners tried to lengthen their employees' work days without raising pay. When the miners' unions in Cripple Creek opposed them, the state militia had to put an end to a skirmish between union men and an owner-influenced sheriff's posse. In response, many owners halted production and laid off workers en masse.[103]

The railroad made it easier for mine owners to get by without as many laborers. By the 1880s, railroad lines had extended from Montrose to Ouray and Ridgway, lessening the mountain towns' isolation. "Each new entry into Ouray by the railroad was sufficient cause for a wild celebration."[104] But the railroad's presence was not cause for as jubilant a celebration in struggling Dallas.

> Much to the disappointment of Dallasites, the railroad made a spot two and a half miles south of their town the main junction, although a spur was run

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[102]Ibid., 178.

[103]Ibid., 185.

[104]Perry Eberhart, Guide to the Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps (Denver: Sage Books, 1959), 361.

> to Dallas. Dallas, also called Dallas Station, then faded proportionately with the rise of Ridgway to the south. Dallas was all but dead by 1900.[105]

While others were abandoning the town, however, the Scott family stayed on its land, but only for one more generation. Everly never married; Trube and Ida eventually had two children, Loraine and Marie, who carried on the family ranching tradition. The Scott sisters, though, would be the last of their line.

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[105]Ibid., 365-6.

CHAPTER 4

WOMEN'S WORK

Martha Scott and her daughter-in-law Ida J. both made the Dallas Divide their home after migrating to the region with their families--Martha with her husband and children; Ida with her parents. The next generation of Scotts, Marie's generation, would be born, raised, and buried on the mountain pass. While Marie and her sister, Loraine, would follow Martha's and Ida's examples, the social concepts of women's roles were changing. The youngest generation of Scott women would be seen as somehow exceptional for doing what their mother and grandmother had done before them.

It was almost two years after Trube and Ida Scott's wedding before the birth of their first child, a girl. They named her Josie Loraine,[106] probably after her mother--Josie representing Ida's rarely used middle name, Josephine. Two years later, Loraine had a baby sister, Bartley Marie, born March 28, 1896.[107] Marie, too, received one of her parent's little used names, sharing her father's first name, Bartley.

Both Scott sisters and Marie in particular would later become the subjects of local character legends, oral and

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[106]Paulinel Lydal, Ouray County Cemeteries, (n.p., 1984), 174.

[107]Ibid.

written. According to a community history of Ridgway, Loraine

> was nearly always overshadowed by her larger-than-life little sister in later years, but as young girls their roles were quite different. Loraine was said to have been the cowboy, spending all of her time outdoors with the cattle; and Bartley Marie was the homebody, specializing in fast meals for the family and ranch hands.[108]

However, another account claims that it was Marie who

> took an interest at an early age in the workings of the ranch. She loved her father and followed him everywhere. She attended the small, one-room schoolhouse in the valley, but as soon as she got home she was out in the fields, running across the meadows to find her father.[109]

Still another story claims that Marie had rheumatic fever as a child, so she couldn't go to school. Instead, she went out with her father on the ranch and grew to love the out-of-doors.[110]

What appears consistently in accounts of Marie's childhood is an early capacity for hard work under her parents' tutelage, whether working the land, tending the livestock, or feeding the hired hands. Most storytellers

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[108]"The Scott Sisters," Ridgway Recipes and Remembrances, 2nd ed. (Ridgway, Colorado: Ridgway Community Pride, 1985), 158.

[109]Cynthia Hansen-Zehm, "Lady in Red," Telluride (Colorado) Magazine, Summer 1990, 22.

[110]Doris Roof (who attributed the information to her grandmother), Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

and the authors of the brief biographical sketches that appeared after Marie's death credit her father with inspiring her drive and ambition, just as they later credit her husband for her financial success. But more likely Ida Scott provided the example of shrewd land exchange and ranching that Marie would later follow.

Trube died in 1904 when Marie was eight years old.[111] Ida continued to run the cattle ranch after his death, until, according to her contemporaries, "she ha[d] developed it and she became one of the leading cattle raisers in the district."[112] Ida was a good rancher. "Known as a steady and hard worker," she tenaciously held on to the house and lands "through years of tax sales."[113]

Keeping the ranches was no easy task. Trube died owing $67.69 in delinquent taxes and penalties.[114] At the time of his death, at least 320 acres were mortgaged to A. E. Walther. It took six years before Trube's estate was settled and then Ida J. was given only half of his

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[111]Lydal, 174.

[112]"Obituaries: Ida J. Scott," The Ouray Herald, Friday, 30 October 1946, (Ouray, Colorado), 1. On microfilm in the Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

[113]"The Scott Sisters," 158.

[114]Plaindealer, Friday, 21 October 1904 (Ouray, Colorado), 3. On microfilm in Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

property, with Marie and Loraine dividing the remainder.[115] This pattern of estate settlement is fairly typical for the era. Under laws regulating "dower rights," a married woman was only entitled to half of her husband's estate. Children automatically received the rest of their father's property, despite the fact that it may actually have belonged to their mother before her marriage.[116]

It appears that Trube Scott may have known he was going to die. Land records indicate that he "sold" parcels of his property to Ida, selling others to Loraine and Marie four years before his death. This may have been an attempt to indicate which members of his family should receive certain parcels of land after he passed on. It may also have been a way of keeping land in the family despite heavy mortgages.

There is no way of knowing if the monetary amounts indicated in the court records were merely formalities, or if cash actually changed hands within the family. Marie's father was actually following a pattern her grandfather, James, had set earlier by trading land with his two sons, Trube and Everly.

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[115]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Probate Records, vol. 9, (County Courthouse, Ouray, Colorado), 11, 27 April 1908.

[116]see Carol Cornwall Madsen, "At Their Peril: Utah Law and the Case of Plural Wives, 1850-1900," Western Historical Quarterly 21 (November 1990): 23-38; and Glenda Riley, Divorce: An American Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

While Marie and Loraine were left without a father after Trube's death, they were still surrounded by his family. His brother, Uncle Everly, lived nearby, on the original James Scott ranch. His mother, Martha, had actually moved in with her widowed daughter-in-law and granddaughters sometime after the 1900 census; Grandfather James, it appears, was no longer living in the region. Ida cared for Martha as she suffered the effects of old age and cancers.[117] Then, another tragedy struck the small Scott family.

On January 5, 1906, two years after Trube's death, his mother and brother both died of pneumonia. Martha was sixty-four years old by that time and considerably weakened from her long bouts with illness. Her death may have been a relief from suffering. The death of her thirty-eight-year-old son was more surprising though, even "untimely."[118] Everly died at 9:15 that morning; Martha passed away nine hours later in Ida J.'s home. She had outlived both her sons.[119]

The Ouray (Colorado) Herald indicates that James, who

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[117]"Pneumonia is Cause of Two Deaths at Ridgway," Ouray (Colorado) Herald, 6 January 1906. On microfilm in Walsh Libray, Ouray, Colorado.

[118]Ibid.

[119]Ibid.

would die ten years later,[120] was not living with Martha at the time of her death: "[The Reverend James H. Scott], who resides in the east, was informed by telegraph of the death of his son. The funeral arrangements will not be made until he is heard from."[121] Interestingly, the newspaper mentions James only in conjunction with his son Everly, not his wife, even though accounts of both deaths occur in the same article. Reverend Scott may have been working in the East, continuing his ministry there, or he and Martha may have separated some time before her January death.

The winter of 1905-6 had been particularly harsh in the region, and not just through illnesses. Avalanches killed one hundred people in Telluride alone.[122] On the Dallas, thirty-nine-year-old Ida faced the prospect of raising her two young daughters by herself on close to 1,000 acres of combined Scott properties.[123]

She saw to it that her girls received a basic education. Loraine and Marie finished grammar school in Ridgway, but the high school was miles away in Ouray. It

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[120]"The Scott Sisters," 158.

[121]"Pneumonia Cause of Two Deaths."

[122]Perry Eberhart, Guide to the Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps (Denver: Sage Books, 1959), 360.

[123]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 15 June 1993. Mr. Zadra was one of the people closest to Marie Scott throughout her lifetime and was one of her beneficiaries.

was not unusual for children of that time and region to travel long distances to reach the nearest schoolhouse. Many left in the dark of morning, returning home in time for bed at night. Other families actually moved to a school town for at least part of the year so their children could attend.[124]

Both Scott girls made the daily trip to Ouray's log cabin high school for awhile; but despite being the children of a schoolmarm, neither of them liked school very well.[125] Marie stayed less than a week before coming home to the ranch. "She took her horse and rode up there, and . . . I think she said she went three days, and then come home."[126]

Most stories limit Marie's high school days even further. Several accounts--the majority, in fact--have Marie claim that she went through high school faster than anyone she knew: "And she always said she . . . went one day in the front door and out the back."[127] Marie then

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[124]Elliott West, Growing Up with the Country: Childhood on the Far Western Frontier, Histories of the American Frontier Series, ed. Ray Allen Billington (Albuquerque, New Mexico; University of New Mexico Press, 1989), 195.

[125]"The Scott Sisters," 158.

[126]Dwayne Wilson, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 28 July 1993. Tape in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[127]Mario Zadra, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections,

"graduated" to life on the ranch, a fact most people see as an indicator of her strong will and drive.

> When she didn't want to go to school up in Ouray, she said, "I'm not going to school." And of course her parents wanted her to go, but she was determined not to. . . . So she decided to go to work. And she would have worked as a cowhand or do anything that needed to be done to get what she wanted.[128]

Marie's version of the incident is recorded in Teresa Jordan's Cowgirls: Women of the American West:

> I've ranched all my life. I never wanted to do anything else. My mother was a schoolteacher, and I think she was a little disappointed that my sister and I didn't want to teach. She sent us to school over in Ouray. When I was twelve I was there in town and a neighbor pulled his team up and unhitched them. I asked him, "When are you going back?"
>
> "Oh, not for a couple hours, anyway."
>
> "Well, I'm going with you."
>
> "No, you're not. Your mother would kill me if I brought you home."
>
> "Well, I'm either going with you, or I'll walk over that mountain myself. I know the way all right. And I'll make it in a third the distance!"
>
> "All right. But you'll have to deal with your mother yourself." So he took me home. And then he cleared out quick, `cause I think he thought something was going to happen.
>
> I walked in a my mother was in the kitchen. There were about ten men at the table. She looked at me and said, "Marie, where did you come from?"
>
> "I graduated," I told her, "and tomorrow I'm going to work in the hayfields, or I'll go down the road and get a job on my own." I knew I could do that, you see, 'cause I could irrigate and dig post holes and all that. Whatever a man could do, I could do. I knew I could do it, and I knew I could get hired. And I'd

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Logan, Utah.

[128]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> rather dig ditches than go to school.
>
> "No, you're not," my mother said. "Tomorrow you are going back to Ouray and go to school."
>
> "I am not. I've never told you I won't do something before, but this time I'm telling you. And you can do what you want. Because I'm either going to work in the hayfield or I'm going out on my own. I've graduated from school."
>
> So the next morning, I went to work in the hayfield. It was hard work, but it was what I wanted to do. And it's what I've always wanted to do, and it's what I've always done.[129]

Eventually, according to local legend, Marie took over the ranching that had been in her mother's care ever since her father's death. She managed to pull the ranch out of debt and turn it into a profitable outfit.[130]

At least, that's the legend surrounding Marie's childhood. From the court records, it appears that Ida did just fine on her own. In fact, she began guiding both her daughters at a young age to acquire property and to become involved in all aspects of ranching. While Loraine and Marie were still minors, Ida controlled their shares of Trube's estate. She continued to acquire land in her own name, but she was also careful to purchase land for her young girls, teaching them at early ages the ins and outs of land deals. For example, Marie bought property (from

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[129]Teresa Jordan, Cowgirls: Women of the American West (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 105.

[130]"Marie Scott Buys Another Property," Ouray County Herald August 15, 1941, (Ouray, Colorado). On microfilm in Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

Loraine) at age fifteen, when Ida J. served as trustee for both her minor daughters.[131] Ida also sold the girls land for "$1 and [their] love and consideration."[132]

It is logical to assume that Ida taught Marie most of what she would later use to become one of the greatest ranchers in the region. With her mother and sister, Marie continued the Scott brothers' earlier pattern of land trading within the family circle, buying tracts from each other and selling them back again, strategically acquiring ditch access and water rights, and building up a contiguous quilt of Scott ranches. The three women apparently shared the responsibilities of managing the land, giving the crops adequate water, supervising any hired hands, and running the livestock.

Despite the heavy work on the ranches, the teenage Scott sisters also enjoyed a social life, which consisted mostly of community activities like dances and dinner parties. The young Marie Scott would occasionally take time away from her busy schedule to visit town. "When [Marie] was younger, I heard her talk about coming to town here on horseback for dances before they had a car,"[133] one of her

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[131]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records, (County Courthouse, Ouray, Colorado), #64267.

[132]Ibid., #71447 and #71448.

[133]Walter "Tude" Domka, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and

workers would later remember.

Even as a young girl, though, Marie would never let visiting interfere with business.

> [G]enerally she was too busy [to go to dinner parties], but she came to some of them. And there was several ladies, including my grandmother, that had birthdays in the spring. And Marie's was in March and if she could make it, she'd come to that gathering once a year.[134]

As Marie matured and her responsibilities grew accordingly, she took less time to visit. "I remember when she was young this is when she socialized. . . . She came less and less the older she got."[135]

Marie apparently loved to work and enjoyed ranching more than visiting. Loraine was more sociable and would often ride her horse long distances to visit "neighbors." But the Scott sisters were alike in many ways. They both loved cats, dogs, horses, and red geraniums. They even looked alike.

> If you see the two separate you didn't know whether it was Marie or Loraine. . . . I remember one day Loraine was crossing the street and I hollered, "Hello, Marie."

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transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[134]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[135]Ibid.

> And she said, "I'll have you know I'm not Marie. You know better than that George."
> It was Loraine. . . . You know, it was just hard to tell them apart.[136]

Both sisters had red hair and a quick sense of humor. But Marie almost always dressed in red and used red makeup too. She loved the color. Somehow it seemed to reflect her personality.

Marie's red garb quickly attracted outsiders' attention. The red apparition was the first thing to greet Huphyllis Sherbino's mother when she first arrived in Colorado, fresh from "civilization."

> She got off the train, and my mother was, I would say, not backward. . . but raised right. And proper. And the first person she saw when she stepped off the train from Missouri was Marie Scott, with her painted cheeks. My mother said she almost turned right around and got back on the train![137]

The young Marie Scott was quite pretty, though, Mrs. Sherbino notes. "I used to watch Marie dress in red dress, red hat and red spike shoes. With shining red hair and rouged cheeks, she was beautiful!"[138] Frances Talbert agrees. "I don't know about the guys, but she was very pretty, Mom said. Had a real pretty pink complexion and the

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[136]Gene Adams, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 2 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[137]"The Scott Sisters," 166.

[138]Ibid.

reddish hair. [But] about romances I don't know."[139] Romance and marriage would come soon to all three Scott women; but only Loraine's marriage would last.

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[139]Talbert.

CHAPTER 5

WORST DAMN HUSBAND; BEST HIRED HAND

Marie and Loraine's mother, Ida Josephine Culver Scott, did not remain a widow long. Within at least four years of her husband Trube Scott's death, she had remarried.[140] In fact, Ida was Mrs. Allison McCready two years before the courts finally settled Trube's estate in 1910.[141] Unlike his wife, McCready was not very involved in land deals. His name never appears on Ouray County land records, but during their marriage Ida remained as active as ever.

By all accounts, Marie hated her new stepfather. McCready probably drank heavily. There are several vague stories in the community about Marie threatening to kill her drunk "father"; however, since Trube died when Marie was only eight, the stories more likely indicate her hatred for Ida's second husband.

Those people who do know that Marie had a stepfather attribute her disgust with alcohol to his bad example.

> If I'm getting it straight. . . I think that [Marie's stepfather] was quite a drinker. I think it helped [make Marie dislike him]; I mean she wouldn't touch liquor with a ten foot pole. And I always figured that was always part of it, but that wasn't her

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[140]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records, vol. 91 (County Courthouse, Ouray, Colorado), 386.

[141]Ibid., vol. 95, 165.

> saying it to me. And that she just didn't like her stepfather. And there was a story. I won't say who told me it but they said that she told [them] to go get her gun for her because she was going to go and shoot him, her stepfather. And then the next day her mom came up and told her she was getting a divorce and so she didn't have to do that.[142]

Ida divorced McCready in July of 1918[143] and began calling herself Ida J. Scott again. Each of her two marriages lasted roughly ten years. Her daughter Loraine had more luck. In 1917, one year before her mother's divorce, twenty-three-year-old Loraine married William Harney,[144] who was seventeen years her senior.[145]

Will Harney came into the Ridgway area after spending time on nearby Specie Mesa. His father, also named William, was born in Vermont in 1831. William Sr. was a farmer, the son of a Connecticut father and New Hampshire mother. His wife, Martha, was born in 1852 in Missouri. Her parents were from Illinois and Tennessee. Martha and William Harney Sr. had at least six children: Joseph B., born in 1877;

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[142]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[143]Ouray County Land Records, vol. 104, 374.

[144]"The Scott Sisters," Ridgway Recipes and Remembrances, 2nd ed., (Ridgway, Colorado: Ridgway Community Pride, 1985), 158.

[145]Department of the Census, "San Miguel County, Colorado," United States' Census, 1900, (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1900), #51, #53, #3.

Millie M. born in 1881; Will, born in 1887; Leo D., born in 1888; Magria G. born in 1890, and Rolo G. born in September of 1891. The 1900 census shows all the children living at home except thirteen-year-old Will Jr.[146]

Will Harney Jr. grew to be a quiet man who tried his hand at many ventures before settling down as a rancher. According to his nephew, he hoboed around the region, hauled gravel, helped build the Colorado Fuel and Iron ditch in Pueblo, Colorado, and did some railroad shipping before staying for good on the Dallas Divide with Loraine Scott.[147]

Will seemed to fit right into the Scott women's pattern of land trading and ditch exchanging. His name appears in the land records as often as his wife's, often in conjuction with mother-in-law Ida or sister-in-law Marie. Like Loraine, he seemed to enjoy visiting neighbors and socializing in town.

Loraine and Will Harney were married forty-seven years, until his death in 1964.[148] They had only one child, a boy they named Donald Keith. Sadly, the baby died in 1919, the same year he was born. He was buried next to his

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[146]Ibid.

[147]Walter "Tude" Domka, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[148]Paulinel Lydal, Ouray County Cemeteries (n.p., 1984), 174.

grandfather Trube, great uncle Everly, and great-grandparents James and Martha at the Ridgway cemetery bordering his Aunt Marie's land.[149] Donald Keith was the only grandchild Ida would have. The Scott family would not see a fourth generation on the Dallas Divide.

In 1928, Marie also married. Her husband, Robert Valiant, a cowboy from Norwood, "ran cattle and owned thousands of acres on Beaver Mesa and the Little Cone area."[150] By the late '20s, Marie had "extended her own holdings to include thousands of acres surrounding the old . . . homestead"[151] and lived with her mother[152] across from the original Scott farm in a white wood house with a red tin roof and bright red trim. Valiant, who was working for Marie, broke his leg when a horse fell on him. He stayed in the house with Marie and Ida while he recovered.

By all accounts Bob Valiant was good looking. Even those who didn't particularly like him could see how Marie could fall in love. Annaley Redd commented that "[Bob Valiant] was tall and kind of nice looking. And sort of the . . . drugstore cowboy. . . . I could see how he could

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[149]Ibid.

[150]Cynthia Hansen-Zehm, "Lady in Red," Telluride (Colorado) Magazine, Summer 1990, 23.

[151]Ibid.

[152]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 15 June 1993.

sweep Marie off her feet."[153]

Romance followed, and Bob and Marie soon married.[154] While newlyweds, the Valiants visited Annaley and Charlie Redd in La Sal, Utah.

> When I met Marie she came here just after she'd been married. And Charlie said, "Oh! Let's have a dance!" Well, we couldn't have a dance [laughs], but we played the phonograph and she and her husband danced. They made a funny sight. She was a quite a short gal. She always wore orange rouge (she must have slept in it), had red hair and piercing blue eyes, and never wore anything but cowboys boots. [Valiant] was a tall fellow and he hugged her so tight, and she had boots on, and it was really quite comical.[155]

There was nothing amusing about the current economic situation, though. Marie and Bob Valiant began their marriage just as the country was starting to slip into the Great Depression. This region of Colorado was not immune from the financial difficulties the rest of the nation faced in 1929. Agricultural workers, like most other people, had a hard time finding jobs or paying their hired help. Will and Loraine Harney, for example, could only pay their workers a dollar a day or less. According to one of Will's nephews,

well, you were lucky to get a job. If you got one it

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[153]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993. Tape and transcript are available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections.

[154]Ibid.

[155]Ibid.

> would be about a dollar a day. I was working the most of it and I got a dollar a day doing beans. . . . Mrs. Harney, my aunt, she took good care of the clothes and done their [workers'] washing. The rest of them, they had to take their washing someplace and get it done, you know, during that time period. But I worked harder than the rest of them. I'd get up in the morning and go help milk these eight or ten old cows and at night, when I got in at dinner time I helped milk and separate. Most of them working for that they was. . . done when their ten hours was up.[156]

The times were quite difficult for ranch people like the Harneys, the Valiants, and Ida J. Scott. Every aspect of their livelihood suffered. On the average, farm income "dropped 20 percent in 1929-30, another 20 percent in 1931, and still another 20 percent in 1932-33."[157] Livestock fared no better. In nearby Utah, sheep values fell 78 percent and the combined cattle value plummeted by $17 million. The financial depression corresponded with the worst drought in American history. Facing scorched land, no rain, and record-setting heat waves, many ranchers had to bring livestock off the range and begin feeding them winter grain "as early as September."[158]

Despite the economic hardships and the intense agricultural difficulties of the Great Depression, Bob and Marie Valiant managed to increase their holdings. Most

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[156]Domka.

[157]Leonard J. Arrington, Utah's Audacious Stockman: Charlie Redd (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1994), 143.

[158]Ibid.

people would later attribute Marie's legendary success to two factors: purchasing land through tax sales or mortgage foreclosures, and Bob Valiant.

> A lot of people got a big start in the Depression. Marie got the big share of her land from Bob Valiant and from tax titles. She would appraise land on her own based on timber and grazing fees. The land kept appreciating. Valiant was tied in with the bank of Telluride. He handled a lot of land in foreclosures as a bank administrator.[159]

In fact, Bob Valiant's tie to the Bank of Telluride poses some interesting questions, since the region's banks faced particularly difficult economic problems of their own during the Great Depression. As banks around the country closed their doors to former depositors, Telluride's banker, Charles Waggoner, used some "creative financing" to keep his bank solvent:

> Waggoner, a small-town banker, was the talk of the banking world a few years ago. He achieved his reputation by swindling some of the best banking brains in the nation out of half a million dollars in order to keep Telluride solvent.
>
> It began with the crash of 1929. Banks were closing throughout the country. Workers who had scrimped to save a small nest egg were penniless. Waggoner saw the same thing happening to his bank and his longtime friends. But he couldn't cover the deposits. Something had to be done.
>
> Waggoner went to Denver. Using a system of banking codes, he wired the top New York banks and told them, on authority of their Denver branches, to deposit huge drafts to the credit of the Telluride Bank.
>
> Then he went to New York, showed his credentials,

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[159]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> and withdrew the money. He sent a large sum in cash to the Telluride Bank to cover the deposits. He deposited the rest in the name of the Telluride Bank in so many banks around the country that much of it was impossible to trace.
>
> When he was arrested a few days later in Wyoming, he took full blame for the swindle, and stated that the bank, its employees, and depositors were in no way responsible. He was sentenced to fifteen years in prison, but his friends in Telluride didn't lose a cent of their savings.[160]

Waggoner paid the Central Hanover Bank two notes owed, one for $60,000 and another for $250,000. He sent $10,000 to Telluride to cover depositors, and spread a final $180,000 throughout the nation. His efforts kept him six years in an Atlanta penitentiary.[161]

By the time Waggoner was arrested, his questionable deals had already touched Bob and Marie Valiant, who were his co-defendants in a 1929 lawsuit one month before the Great Crash. In September of 1929, Grant McIverson, the State Bank Commissioner of Colorado, and J. A. Lamb, Special Deputy State Bank Commissioner in charge of the Bank of Telluride, charged Waggoner with transferring some of the bank's property to

> his own individual name; when in truth and in fact said real estate was conveyed by the grantors thereof to [him] as Trustee for the Bank of Telluride, in satisfaction and in liquidation of indebtedness owed .

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[160]'Doc' Cyrus Wells Shores, Memoirs of a Lawman, ed. Wilson Rockwell (Denver: Sage Books, 1962), 322-323.

[161]Wilson Rockwell, Sunset Slope (Denver: Mountain Press, 1956), 200-04.

. . solely to the Bank.[162]

Waggoner tried to sell the property, 1,884.59 acres, to Bob and Marie Valiant, but the banking commissioners managed to block the deal.[163]

Ridgway's bank had problems too. Its president, C. M. Stanwood, had purchased stock with almost all of the bank's cash and negotiables, including the contents of safety deposit boxes. As stock values kept falling, the bank lost almost everything. While cash depositors eventually received half of their total savings in the end, securities owners were left with nothing. Of the bank's three directors, two had to make restitution out of their own pockets. The third managed to get his assets back.[164]

Ridgway's banking struggles became Marie's opportunities. That same year, 1929, was when she started building up her property and adding to her holdings on a large scale.

As with most other aspects of Marie's life, her transactions of 1929 appear in varying accounts, but with many elements in common: Marie was serving on the Board of

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[162]San Miguel County Recorder's Office, County Court Records, vol. 162 (San Miguel County Courthouse, Telluride, Colorado), 21-2.

[163]Ibid.

[164]Josie Crum, Ouray County, Colorado (Hamilton, Illinois: Hamilton Press, n.d.), 107-8.

the Federal Land Bank and on her way to Kansas City on business. En route, she sold cattle for a good price, usually stated at $7,000,[165] and was just about to wire the money to the Bank of Ridgway when her mother called to tell her the bank had collapsed. So Marie returned home with a small fortune in cash and bought 3,000 acres near Norwood.[166]

In these stories about Marie's big break in 1929 (which usually appear in detail in 1980s newspapers, rather than oral accounts) it is her banking connection that makes the difference, not Bob Valiant's. In fact, the land records similarly show that Marie was much more active in acquiring land than her husband was during the five years of their marriage.

Marie made at least twenty-seven land transactions in San Miguel county while married to Bob Valiant; most of them involved buying land, mortgaging it, or trading it with the federal government. Bob, on the other hand, made only six transactions, four of which entailed selling land to his wife. It appears, too, that Marie had assumed responsibility for the mortgages and the maintenance of

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[165]Guy Kelly, "Marie Scott's Mountain Empire," Daily Sentinel (Montrose, Colorado), 17 October 1982.

[166]Ibid.; and Bob Silbernagel, "Scott's Country," Daily Sentinel Sunday Magazine (Montrose, Colorado), 8 March 1981, 9.

property Bob had brought with him to the marriage.[167]

This is not to say that Bob Valiant was not a hard worker. In fact, most oral accounts of his marriage to Marie Scott indicate that his work ethic was one of the things that endeared him to Marie.

> She married Bob because he was a good cattleman and I think she admired that. . . . She admired hard work. I mean, if you wanted to impress Marie, get up early and get going. I don't know if that tells you much or not.[168]

Most stories, though, show a doomed marriage and a flippant Marie Scott exclaiming that she would be better off without some man bossing her around. One of her workers, Gene Adams, remembered, "Then Marie said she never could live with anybody. . . and I could believe that."[169] Hardy Redd explains, "Well, the feelings that I'd always [had], the thing I'd always heard was. . . that [Bob Valiant] thought maybe he'd be the, kind of the boss after they got married. And Marie didn't."[170] Gene Adams adds,

> I remember a statement one time when . . . we was teasing her a little bit and she said, "I never had time to entertain a man and sleep with him." And I

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[167]San Miguel County Recorder's Office, County Court Records.

[168]Talbert.

[169]Gene Adams, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 2 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[170]Redd.

> can't remember how the hell that statement was put. But anyway, she didn't have time for a husband.[171]

According to one of Marie's neighbors, Gertrude Perotti,

> When she was married, she'd been an old maid for so long, someone asked her, "What do you think about being married?" She said, "Well, having a man around is very much like having a dog around. They're more trouble than what they do good."[172]

Not surprisingly, Bob and Marie Valiant divorced in 1934. As part of the divorce settlement, Marie's name reverted back to Scott, and she bought the Valiant property on the Little Cone for $10,000.[173] Their divorce apparently caused few hard feelings; Bob later came back to work for Marie after trying to run his own liquor store. He brought his new wife back with him.

> When they divorced they made a clean deal. He sold out and bought a liquor store. Valiant [later] came back and worked [as Marie's ranch hand for] twenty years. She thought he was a good worker, a good manager. That's why [the marriage] probably didn't work. Neither liked to be bossed. [But] both got up early and worked the whole day.[174]

> She was married for a time to Bob Valiant and then they were later divorced. . . Oh and then she hired him later to work for her. . . She said he made a lot

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[171]Adams.

[172]Gertrude Perotti, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Ridgway, Colorado, 12 July 1993.

[173]Hansen-Zehm, 24.

[174]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

better ranch hand than he did a husband.[175]

Teresa Jordan notes that "[t]he marriage lasted only a short while, but she kept the man in her employ. 'Worst damn husband I ever had,' she says, 'but best hired hand.'"[176]

Most legends about Marie's marriage contain certain essential elements: the fact that Marie got Bob's property in the end, the brevity of the marriage, and the fact that Bob worked for Marie before and after their wedding. The stories reveal elements of Marie's personality that are essential to her standing as a local character.

Buying Bob's property when they divorced shows Marie's shrewd business skills. Thus it is not important what exactly she bought from her ex-husband; it is important that the divorce helped her build her empire. Gene Adams notes, "It seems to me the story I've heard is he owned a little bunch of cattle or something. Anyway, Marie bought him out when she married him."[177] Ted Royer, who ran a local timber mill, adds, "Rumor has it that Bob Valiant had a little

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[175]Brent Jensen, interview by Charles S. Peterson, tape recording, St. George, Utah, 27 October 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[176]Teresa Jordan, Cowgirls: Women of the American West (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 104.

[177]Adams.

spread and ranch. Marie got that and got rid of Bob."[178]

Similarly, the brevity of her marriage seems to indicate Marie's strong will, resolve, and perhaps a cantankerous personality. None of the oral accounts, interestingly enough, come even close to the actual length (about six years) of the marriage. Gene Adams: "But they wasn't married, I don't know, maybe a couple of years. It wasn't very long."[179] Annaley Redd: "I don't know [why they divorced]. I don't think it lasted even a year. I don't know if he was unfaithful to her or what. He was that type of a guy."[180] Annaley's son, Hardy: "They got married. They realized a couple weeks later that it wouldn't work. He offered to settle for $5,000 and she got the Valiant property."[181]

Stories of Bob Valiant later returning to work for his former wife (his new bride in tow) illustrate Marie Scott's fairness, admiration for hard work, and compassion for others. According to Hardy Redd, "Later he came back and worked for her as foreman for twenty-two years. Bob Valiant worked well with her because he knew what kind of fences she

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[178]Ted Royer, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 11 July 1993.

[179]Adams.

[180]Redd.

[181]Ibid.

wanted and would do it."[182]

Later in the same interview, Hardy added, "But he was a really good friend to her. I mean . . . he came back and worked. . . . And, he certainly was . . . somebody she could trust to do things kind of right."

His mother disagreed. "I didn't have that feeling about him at all. I thought she took him back because she felt sorry for him. She was tenderhearted," Annaley said of Marie, "even though she seemed like a hard worker, she was [tenderhearted]. And he just didn't have the energy."

"Now," Hardy continued, "he took the money that he got when they got divorced, and went and started a store. Was it a liquor store?"

Annaley laughed. "That sounds right."

"In Montrose," Hardy added, "and apparently failed at that. Is that right?"

"Yeah," Annaley agreed.

"So it may have been that, you know, that she still felt tenderhearted to him at that point and gave him a job."

"I don't know if he asked. I don't know if he came or [if] she found him. I heard that he was drinking a lot," Annaley admitted. "He was really in bad shape when she got him. . . . I think he had a lot of fondness for Marie. She

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[182]Ibid.

gave him a little boost.[183]

Gay Kappis of Telluride said almost the same things about Bob Valiant; so did Gene Adams:

> Well, he was kind of a tall, thin, kind of a quiet sober guy. See he was Marie Scott's foreman for quite a long time and then they finally got married. And uh, she just, that never worked out. And they got divorced and he used to help her and he still worked for her and everything.[184]
>
> Anyway, they got a divorce and he remarried, but I don't remember his wife's name. But then ten, fifteen years later after [Marie] divorced him she hired him back. Because he was a hard worker and he sure built those tall fences. And he worked for her for a long time after that.[185]

For Frances Talbert, the focus is on Marie's compassion.

> She seemed to have a deep caring about people. She really did care about them. She was married to Bob Valiant briefly and she cared about his welfare. She didn't want to be married, but oh! she was nice to his wife.[186]

Bob Valiant remains something of an enigma. Not many people knew him, and his quiet personality was certainly overshadowed by his flamboyant former wife. He seems to have slipped from communal memory except as a foil in stories about Marie. Few people knew enough about him to

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[183]Ibid.

[184]Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[185]Adams.

[186]Talbert.

talk about his death in his sixties. Most of the accounts of his death, like the following statement by Gene Adams, are quite brief. "And I don't remember, I think Bob had cancer or something. He committed suicide, I know that, but I think he had cancer."[187] Doris Roof, of Telluride, added more detail:

> He later married another lady and lived in Placerville. He was always rolling a cigarette and always had a cigarette in his mouth. And he was kind of, he talked in kind of a drawl. . . I don't know what you'd call it. And he and his . . . wife [Frankie] lived in the house that was . . . on Highway 62 about a mile above the junction going towards Ridgway. And he killed himself in the barn up there. . . . It was Marie's place then. And there was a barn where the highway is now. And his wife went to get the mail one day, and when she came back home, why he had shot himself in the barn.[188]

Two years after Marie's divorce in 1934, her mother died. At her death in October of 1936, Ida J. owed $2,024.35 ($40 to the county judge, $515 for funeral services, $1,250 for taxes and debts on machinery, $35 for the doctor, and $155 for Bryant and Stubbs, her attorneys) and only left an inheritance of $1,917.06. Marie and Loraine together paid the $107.29 difference and divided the property.[189] Loraine and Will Harney kept and lived in the

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[187]Adams.

[188]Kappis.

[189]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Probate Records, vol. 12, 283, 21 March 1938.

original home and its surrounding acres.[190]

The one-room school where the young Ida J. Culver had taught so many years ago had burnt down six years earlier.[191] But the Ouray Herald eulogized Dallas Divide's former schoolteacher as one of the area's "leading citizens and most esteemed neighbors" and "a just and kind member of the community in which she lived."[192]

Loraine and Will were Marie's only remaining family. The three were quite close. Even as they aged, the two sisters looked a lot alike and spent much time together. Their personalities, however, were very distinguishable. Annaley Redd notes that "Loraine was usually there when we went. I think she spent a lot of time there, at Marie's house. She wasn't like Marie at all."[193] According to Gertrude Perotti,

> That book [Ridgway's Recipes and Remembrances] says they were as different as night and day, and they were. Course, in a photograph you couldn't tell the two of them apart. Will and Loraine were sociable and quiet. Marie was brash and bold. She wouldn't visit per se. Loraine used to travel a long way up to Horsefly Mesa to visit.[194]

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[190]Ibid.

[191]"The Scott Sisters," 184.

[192]"Obituaries: Ida J. Scott," The Ouray (Colorado) Herald, 30 October 1936, 1. On microfilm in the Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

[193]Redd.

[194]Perotti.

Gene Adams adds that Loraine's husband

> wasn't very big. But he was a hard worker. I liked Will Harney. He was pretty much a home boy. He stayed on and worked all the time. He was a nice little old guy. . . and a hard worker.[195]

Will Harney came from a large family, and some of his nephews and their families also moved into the region. One, Walter "Tude" Domka, stayed in the area the rest of his life.

> My folks lived over on Specie Slope. And Will Harney was raised over there. My dad worked with the railroad, the Rio Grande in Denver. My mother, sister -my oldest sister, and I moved here in 1929 from Denver. When [my sister] went back and went to school, I didn't. . . . And I stayed quite a bit, pretty regular . . . since then.[196]

Tude worked for Will, Loraine, and Marie in return for a share of what he produced.

> I worked for [the Harneys] and I crop-rented, put the hay up and took care of everything for half the income on the cows. And finally my uncle sold his part of the cows and I kept what I could and paid cash rent for the rest to the Harneys. And then I had Marie's place [in Ridgway]. I put the hay up for crop rent, half of the hay and half of the pasture.[197]

Tude remembers his Aunt Loraine as "quite a good-natured lady. I would shoe her horses for her. Loraine Harney, she never could shoe a horse."[198] Tude's step-daughter, Eileen

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[195]Adams.

[196]Domka.

[197]Ibid.

[198]Ibid.

McClennan, also remembers Loraine fondly. Her memorate is one of the best glimpses into Loraine's gentle personality.

> Well, I say my mother married my step-dad when I was probably close to four. . . . I didn't spend as much time with [Loraine], you know, after I left home. You know I left home when I was eighteen. And I'd try to get back to see her or call or to see how she was doing. I didn't spend as much time with her after that. And I've always regretted it.
>
> She had a palomino she called Taffy and . . . two . . . mares. They just . . . were like dogs to [her]. And she liked dogs and cats too, but her horses were just like part of this--her dogs, her cats, her horses--they were just all part of her family I guess. She was out one time, out brushing her [horse's] mane. She loved to ride. . . .She let me ride [the horses]. I don't know if she let anyone else ride them. Um, and I think partly she really wanted company and I just kind of filled that void for her. . . . We spent a lot of hours riding together. She liked to play the piano and she would just sit and play the piano. . . .
>
> [We] had a lot of little chats. [We would talk about] the horses or she loved that area. . . . I know she did tell me she had homesteaded . . . and that first house had burned, and in turn they had moved to the big house where they had spent most of their life together. But as to zero-in on anything in particular that we have talked about, I know that she liked flowers. When we talked we would talk about the flowers.
>
> I don't know that she actually had a favorite [flower]. . . . I know in her yard she had the yellow roses and . . . lilies. . . . She really loved geraniums because she had a huge, huge geranium that she had in her kitchen-dining room window that was just absolutley marvelous. And she really liked that. And she enjoyed gardening as well. She always had a garden too.
>
> As far as I know I can never remember her losing her temper.
>
> She really liked riding in the parade in the rodeo on Labor Day. That's something she really liked to do. She looked forward to dressing up and going and riding in the parade.
>
> She used to make chocolate doughnuts that were really, really good; but as [for] anything favorite that she liked [to] cook, I just don't know if there was. As with all ranch women, you always had to cook.

> And it didn't make any difference whether it was favorite or not--you cooked what you had a lot of times. . . . I do know something that Loraine made that was really, really good were angel food cakes in an old wood-coal stove, which is quite an accomplishment trying to regulate heat in the oven and get them to come out perfectly. And hers always were perfect. It's quite an accomplishment. I can't even make one in an electric oven. . . . Cooking anything on a wood-coal stove was quite a challenge but that in itself [was especially difficult] because it had to be such an even heat burning to cook angel food.
>
> In the times that I remember . . . my step-daddy had pretty much taken over running the ranch for them. So uh from the time I can remember . . . my mother did most of the cooking there. And actually hired hands [did most of the farm work]. Sometimes there'd be two [hands], sometimes only one. They [usually had] one almost year-round because of the irrigating and fences' repair and help with feeding in the winter. And sometimes, just depending on how much needed to be done, they would pick up somebody for part-time help.
>
> Will and Loraine had cattle together and they ran [them] on the ranch. . . .I don't know exactly when they did sell off the cattle. . . . You know, they were still in control at the ranch, but [my] step-dad was more [of a manager]. And later he leased a lot from them as he got older.[199]

Although Marie and the Harneys "didn't live together, they lived as neighbors." Brent Jensen admits that Will and Loraine "had some ranch property, but nothing like Marie had. I don't think she had the same interests."[200] The Harneys were relatively content with their existing land and water rights, but Marie's passion for land soon made her one of the largest landholders in the region, owning vast tracts

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[199]Ilene McClennon, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 21 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[200]Jensen.

of land in Ouray, San Miguel, Montrose, and Gunnison Counties.

CHAPTER 6

THE RANCH ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE

Acquiring land involved more than simply getting a bank loan and buying the desired property. Unlike Martha's and Ida's times, after the 1930s land was not lying ready for anyone to come along and claim it. Marie wanted land touching what she already owned, which often required shrewd bargaining or trades for other pieces of property.

Marie oversimplified the work involved in putting together her ranch when she said, "Well, I just buy one little place then mortgage it and buy another."[201] In reality her acquisitions required much foresight and negotiation.

> [L]ike she bought that big bunch of ground on Keebler Pass [in Gunnison County], sold timber off of it to the Berkeys [Mill], and milled it. Then when she got all the timber off of it, she turned around and traded it to the Forest Service for some ground that she wanted. . . . All she ever wanted was the ranch next to her. That was her goal, the place next to her because there might be some water or some pasture that she wanted. . . . so she kept up a lot of [trading] to square her outfit up. She was great on creating land. She loved creating land. She was ahead of the rest of them too. That gal was pretty sharp.[202]

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[201]Brent Jensen, interview by Charles S. Peterson, tape recording, St. George, Utah, 27 October 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[202]Gene Adams, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 2 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

Many of Marie's land deals involved trading with government agencies, but getting what she wanted often meant taking advantage of someone else's hard times.

> Her biggest goal was, as far as I ever knew, was she just wanted the ranch on the other side of the fence. Somebody would have trouble, she would go and buy it up from under them. And she could get a loan and she got a lot of them.[203]

While Marie occasionally bought land from people who were struggling, there are several stories of Marie anonymously paying mortgages or bringing in supplies for neighbors who were having financial difficulties. Apparently, if she liked someone or thought he was a hard worker, she would help him keep his land; if she did not like him, she would buy it out from under him.

> And she'd find out somebody was going broke and she had plenty of financial backing and a ranch sale. . . . And if she had a friend going broke she'd go help them too, and then she didn't ever want to be exposed. Beautiful lady in my book. She [did a lot of] welfare work. She never did want anybody to know about it.[204]

> I don't want to name names but there were some people that were buying a piece of land from Marie and they were in need and weren't making it and Marie, time after time, would just mark the payments paid even if they weren't paid to keep them going.[205]

Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[203]Ibid.

[204]Ibid.

[205]William Waldeck, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Grand Junction, Colorado, 4 August 1993. Tape

> People had a problem, she would take care of them. Of course, she didn't ever even want it notarized. Kind of a secret. But anyone over there had a problem and they were really kind of decent people, by God, she'd take care of them. . . . Done, a lot, a hell of a lot more than the welfare department did. She had a heart of gold.[206]

Marie's connections with the Federal Land Bank gave her information she needed to move in on the property she wanted. As early as 1929, Marie served on the review board of the Federal Land Bank, which often had its more reputable clients (i.e., those who held loans from the bank in good standing) review other loan applications from their region. Thus, Marie was in a position to know when her neighbors were falling behind mortgage payments.

> And she worked on a Federal Land Bank. I'm not certain of that organization where she worked but they dealt with land and she saw land come on the market. She was in a position where if she could come up with the money she could pick up property, she knew it was available. And she told me you could have all the land you wanted for a dollar an acre. . . but you just couldn't come up with a dollar.[207]

Of course, just because Marie knew about situations where people might be forced to sell their land does not mean she was always able to buy it. While she managed to increase her holdings during the Depression, she did not always have large amounts of cash on hand. After her big transaction of 1929, she appears to have used her land and

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[206]Adams.

[207]Jensen.

her name as collateral for more land, rather than paying cash.[208]

> Everybody in the Depression went broke. And she had a good name and a lot of honesty. But she worked for that, I think it was the Federal Land Bank. And [land] was up for grabs and nobody had any money, but she had a good name so they sold her a bunch of this. And she didn't do nothing but make money off of it. She bought a lot of cheap ground on her honesty; she didn't have all that much money. But she grabbed up all this ground and then she just kept creating. She loved creating real estate.[209]

Eventually, Marie had enough land for summer grazing on Beaver Mesa in the Lone Cone area (centered around the property she bought from Bob Valiant) and winter pasturage surrounding her home in Ridgway. The historic Beef Trail Road, the primary route for trailing southeastern Utah cattle to railway shipyards at Placerville, Colorado, ran through Marie's Lone Cone summer camp. See Figure 2.

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[208]Ouray County Recorder's Office, County Land Records (Ouray County Courthouse, Ouray, Colorado) and San Miguel County Recorder's Office, County Land Records (San Miguel County Courthouse, Telluride, Colorado).

[209]Adams.

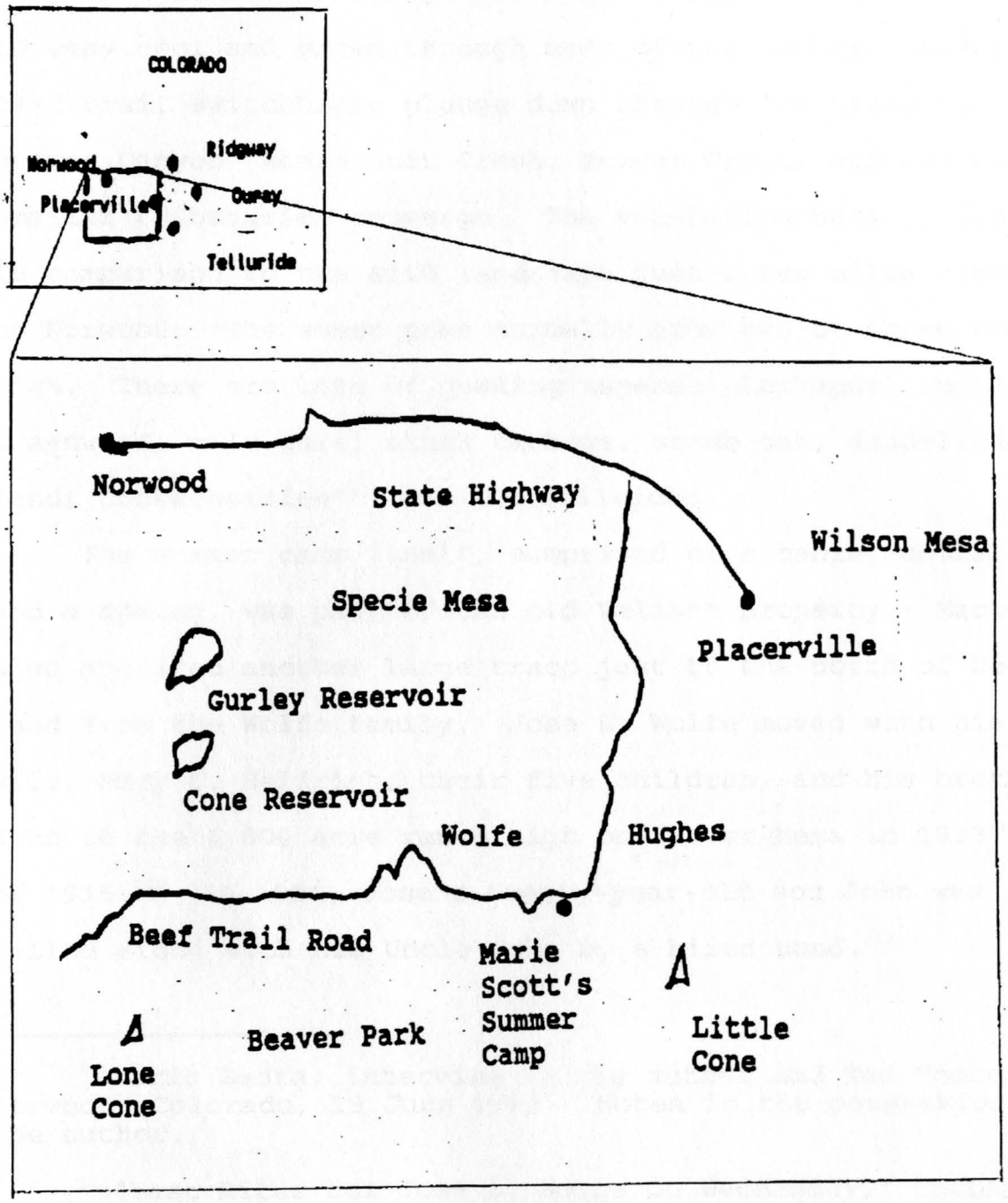

Fig. 2. Marie Scott's summer camp.

This summer pasturage was high enough in the mountains to stay cool and green through most of the summer. Newer beef trail switchbacks plunge down through the trees in Beaver Canyon, where Goat Creek, Beaver Creek, and several smaller tributaries converge. The vegetation here is lush in comparison to the arid landscape just a few miles closer to Norwood: "The sweet peas normally grow two or three feet high. There are lots of quaking aspens. Larkspur, lupine, rosenweed, mule ears, skunk cabbage, scrub oak, dandelions, [and] chokecherries"[210] dot the hillsides.

The summer camp itself, comprised of a cabin, corrals, and a spring, was part of the old Valiant property. Marie also acquired another large tract just to the north of her land from the Wolfe family. Jose L. Wolfe moved with his wife, Mary C. Helfrich, their five children, and his brother John to the 5,000 acre ranch high on Beaver Mesa in 1913[211] or 1915.[212] In 1926, Jose's twenty-year-old son John was killed along with his Uncle John by a hired hand.[213]

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[210]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 15 June 1993. Notes in the possession of the author.

[211]"Last Rites for Jose L. Wolfe On Wednesday," Carthage (Illinois) Republican, 11 August 1937.

[212]Frances M. Wahlin, Tualatin, Ore., to the author, 27 September 1993. Letter in the possession of the author. Mrs. Wahlin is Jose Wolfe's granddaughter.

[213]Ibid.

Accounts of the double murder vary, but all contemporary accounts and most of the stories still circulating in the 1990s emphasize that the murderer was a Native American. Most of the stories are lurid and romantic, revolving around the supposed love obsession of George Nelson, a Navajo sheep herder, with young Leanore Wolfe (sister and niece to the two victims). According to the Carthage Republican, published in Jose Wolfe's hometown in Illinois,

> No writer of romance and adventure, nor has the moving picture ever presented a more thrilling and tragic story. . . . There was the rustic ranch house [The Pines] in its setting of glorious mountain scenery, the day lovely and spring work just opening up. There the lovely young Leanore, occupied with some gentle task in her housekeeping for her uncle and brother, was unexpectedly confronted by the Indian, a faithful and familiar figure on the ranch, but now alone with the girl, suddenly devoid of all moral integrity. Frightened by his advances with no one within two miles to come to her aid, she pleaded with him and finally won, so that he sent her home, accompanying her for two miles, leaving her to make the rest of her seven mile trip alone. She reached home exhausted at about seven o'clock, delivering to her father the Indian's warning, that he should not leave his home that night or he would be shot. Knowing the lawlessness of the Indian nature the Wolfe family spent the night in uneasiness.[214]

The Telluride (Colorado) Journal also states that Nelson "made improper advances" to Leanore,

> which thoroughly frightened her, and he soon grabbed her and tied her hands behind her. All the time she

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[214] "The Tragic Death of John C. [and] John H. Wolfe in Colorado," Carthage (Illinois) Republican, 26 May 1926.

> was pleading with him to desist, possibly fearing an assault which never developed. The Indian finally raised his 30-30 rifle to his shoulder and took a 'bead' on Miss Wolfe

until her pleas finally convinced him to set her free.[215]

According to the Carthage account, when Jose Wolfe finally left the house the next morning and made his way to the cabin at The Pines, he found it burned to the ground. The bodies of the two Johns were draped over the fence they had been building nearby. The elder John had been shot in the back; his nephew was shot through the chest. Both had been shot again at closer range through the head.[216]

The Telluride (Colorado) Journal called the double murder "the most atrocious and heinous crime ever committed in San Miguel county."[217] A massive manhunt spread as far as the Blue Mountain section of Utah and Navajo lands in New Mexico and Arizona, but it could not locate Nelson. Just eleven years later, the Carthage paper had changed its account to show John H. and John C. Wolfe murdered by "half-breed Indians."[218] A collection of local stories shows that the murders had become part of local folklore to the extent that children were afraid of wandering out too late in the

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[215]Quoted in Ibid.

[216]Ibid.

[217]Ibid.

[218]"Last Rites for Jose L Wolfe On Wednesday."

dark for fear that the missing "Indian murderer" would find them.[219]

The surviving members of the Wolfe family left the region for Los Angeles, California, in 1929.[220] The old cabin chimney still stands in its mountain meadow, the burnt cabin a reminder of the Wolfe tragedy (sometimes, however, modern stories claim hippies burned down the cabins in the 1960s).[221] Most 1990s oral stories follow the general plot of contemporary accounts. Some versions, however, say Nelson kidnapped Leanore: "An Indian ran off with one of the Wolfe daughters."[222]

Marie tried to buy the Wolfe property after the family left the area. Hardy Redd recalled Marie saying,

> "One of the happiest days in my life was when they called and said that I could have the Wolfe pasture. I used to think it over and over and the people who owned it refused to sell it." . . . But the time she bought the Wolfe Creek pasture, her eyes lighted up. She said she lusted after that land.[223]

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[219]Howard Greagor, In the Company of Cowboys (New York: Vantage Press, 1990), 55-61.

[220]Wahlin.

[221]Zadra, 15 June 1993.

[222]Mario Zadra, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[223]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

One of the Wolfe granddaughters counts Marie as a good friend of the family: "She even wrote [my grandparents] in California and asked them to come back and live on the ranch if they wanted to. Of course, they did not."[224] Jose and Mary Wolfe spent the rest of their lives in California. Jose died in 1937, Mary in 1946. Their daughter Leanore died in 1978; according to family accounts, "She never was quite the same after that horrible experience."[225]

There were three to four thousand additional acres that Marie wanted on Beaver Mesa, but the owners, the Hughes brothers, refused to sell.

> She would ask about the Hughes who owned land surrounding [Wolfe Creek pasture] up there, and would ask a little salaciously how the Hughes were going, hoping they'd have financial difficulty so she could buy land. Marie wanted to tie things into a nice tidy block to control everything there.[226]

> She lusted after [the Hughes property], I guess is the way I'd put it. At least I was visiting with her once and she volunteered that the Hughes were in trouble, which they were periodically. . . And . . . she said "I think they're in trouble and I think, I think I can buy that place."
> . . .But it was, in effect, she owned the land all the way on three sides of them, and it would just look so neat on the map [laughs]. But she never got it.[227]

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[224]Wahlin.

[225]Ibid.

[226]Hardy Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, La Sal, Utah, 12 June 1993.

[227]Ibid., 16 August 1993.

Marie had a passion for acquiring land. It meant more to her than money.

> Uh, just to have money didn't appeal to Marie. I remember that first hand. . . . She had some extra money from a place she'd sold that was in Placerville. And she was just as nervous as she could be. And then she wanted to get that into land. I mean just having money didn't thrill her, or a big bank account. Her joy was in acquiring land and she did. So you have to admire somebody that follows her dream. It must have been hers.[228]

Marie nurtured and cared for her land.

> Marie not only had a love for the land as I mentioned (she would probably hoot if she heard me saying that) but nevertheless she had a mixture of understanding and . . . emotions toward land that I can put in no other way but saying that it was a love for the land. Uh, it was something to her. It was not just a status symbol or that sort of thing. It was more than that. It was something that needed to be nurtured and . . . cared for and . . . if you treated it right it treated you right.[229]

> And she had a peculiar understanding and connection with the land that I've only seen, that I've only known about in connection with some of the peasant people that came out of Europe and other places had that feel and that understanding and that rapport if you will for the land. Marie had that.[230]

Brent Jensen notes, "She says, 'You know, Brent, I like land. I like good land and I like to take care of my

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[228]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[229]Waldeck.

[230]Ibid.

land.'"[231] Annaley Redd agrees: "I think she really loved it. I think she really, really loved it and loved to own it."[232]

And Marie enjoyed the complicated process of acquiring land too.

> My impression of her--I don't think she was really greedy or over-anxious as much as just, uh, it was a big game. That was her thing, land swapping and building her empire. She did it more as, uh, just kind of a challenge or a form of fun because she actually lived relatively simply.[233]

> She just talked about how she was going to get more land. She'd laugh and say she didn't need more land but she wanted more land. Like collecting something I guess, she just wanted more land. So I think she just, that was it, she wanted more land, all the land she could get. And she got lots.[234]

As Marie continued to amass property, her acquisitions began to attract local attention. By 1941, community newspapers were already touting Marie Scott as "one of the biggest and most successful ranchers" in the region.

> [Aug 15, 1941] MARIE SCOTT BUYS ANOTHER PROPERTY, Widely known local ranch woman adds to already

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[231]Jensen.

[232]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[233]John King, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 22 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[234]Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> remarkable holdings [sic] all acquired during depression.
>
> Marie Scott, one of the biggest and most successful ranchers in this section of CO already owning 16,000 acres and holding lease on additional lands to a total of 25,000 acres, has just completed the purchase of important water rights and holding ground for her herds from Mrs. R. F. Lounsbury.
>
> This ranch woman through her unassisted efforts and during the recent depression years has paid off debts on original holdings and acquired ownership of one of the finest large bodies of grazing and hay land in all Colorado.
>
> Miss Scott took the management of her home ranch at the death of her father under heavy indebtedness. This she paid off and then began buying additional lands largely on Specie Mesa until she had title and lease-holdings that might be the envy of any man rancher in this territory. She is running cattle and sheep for herself and others and constantly expanding her operations. The new acquisition consisted of a series of patented placer claims on Leopard Creek and will be used for the valuable water right attached and for holding her herds as she moves from the mesa range to her valley ranch and vice versa.[235]

By the early 1940s, then, people in the region had already started telling stories about Marie's seemingly single-handed successes. Her childhood tutelage on the original family property had turned into an individual achievement spurred by Marie's strong personality, drive, and ambition; note that in this 1941 account, Ida J. has already disappeared and young Marie has accomplished everything on her own.

Marie's achievements are highlighted by her gender; thus this newspaper report hastens to note that Marie's

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[235]"Marie Scott Buys Another Property," Ouray County (Colorado) Herald, 15 August 1941 (Ouray, Colorado). On microfilm in the Walsh Library, Ouray, Colorado.

holdings "might be the envy of any man rancher in the territory."[236] Similarly, her success while others struggled through the Depression had already become a requisite motif.

Marie's efforts also attracted the attention and the recognition of her (predominantly male) peers. She held membership in the Ouray County Cattlemen's Association and the Colorado Cattlemen's Association until she died.[237] "In the late 1940's, Marie Scott won the coveted Colorado Rancher of the Year Award. She was one of the few women ever to win this prestigious award."[238]

Along with acquiring property (and awards) came the other tasks of ranch life: finding adequate water, fencing the land, and feeding, trailing, and shipping livestock. Marie took great pride in the perfection to which she performed these necessary tasks. Each aspect of ranch work became associated with Marie's life through its own body of lore.

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[236]Ibid.

[237]"Obituaries: Marie Scott," Montrose (Colorado) Daily Press, 7 November 1979, 2 column 5.

[238]"The Scott Sisters," Ridgway Recipes and Remembrances, 2nd ed. (n.p.: Ridgway Community Pride, 1985), 171.

CHAPTER 7

GOOD FENCES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS

As is true of other western agricultural areas, water is a major concern in central western Colorado. And since Marie Scott's primary work was acquiring good land, it is important to keep in mind that in this region "good land" means fertile grazing pastures with generous water rights; less commonly it refers to land covered with timber. Marie's quest for good land was thus a quest for good water rights and for ways of getting the water where it was needed.

> [Marie was particular] with her water, her ditch and her irrigation system. The same way she was quite interested in water, filed [on a] lot of water. She had a lot in the ditches; built lots of ponds over mountains with ditches to fill them.[239]

Keeping track of the land and water required legal savvy, and by all accounts, Marie "knew water laws."[240] Sometimes her quest for good water rights made her unpopular, but for the most part she managed to control conflict in regionally approved ways. According to her attorney,

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[239]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 15 June 1993.

[240]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August, 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> [S]he did obtain some very fine water rights. While some of the people . . . may have thought she was a "water hog," this is a very superficial, untrue charge to be made, because Marie was not a water hog that wanted to obtain water at the expense of others. As a matter of fact, she was always, in my judgment, generous with others with respect to water and the use of water.
>
> . . . She was in very few lawsuits as such. Uh, the records will show that there was a time that Judge Dan Hughes (who's no longer alive), uh, condemned a right of way for a ditch across some of her ranch land on what she called the Cone Ranch, which is in San Miguel County. And, uh, but even that matter was settled by agreement, allowing the ditches to be built prior to the time that the lawsuit had wended its whole way through the court.[241]

Marie Scott had a remarkable ability to keep track of her property in her mind.

> Marie's knowledge of the land and its resources were amazing to me. . . . When she talked about her place, though, the property, the different ranches that she had put together to make up her Beaver Mesa country, she would talk about section 16 and so on. It was amazing to me she had a picture of this in her mind. And I would whip out a map and she couldn't relate to the map as well, but she could draw all of that property on a, scratch that on a piece of paper. [It was] just amazing.[242]

She could also use her incredible memory to protect herself legally.

> She always knew what was going on. I mean, she

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[241]William Waldeck, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Grand Junction, Colorado, 4 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[242]Brent Jensen, interview by Charles S. Peterson, tape recording, St. George, Utah, 27 October 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> had everything in her head. If she had land exchange prospects going on with the government, why she had legal descriptions of everything in her head. You know, she didn't have to have a briefcase full of papers and red tape like government employees have. They came over from Denver and they met down here in the office and figured that they really had her pinned down and was going to put a fast one on her, you know. She exchanged some of her land up here for some other land. . . . She had the legal description of all of her land and their legal description of the land that they wanted to change, had this all in her head.
>
> These guys come into the meeting with the briefcase of documents and legal descriptions and stuff and the thing didn't go over too good. And she saw that they were trying to rip her off. Why she just got up and said, "Well, I'm sorry fellows. The meeting's over and I'll see you later," and walked out and that was it.[243]

Since Marie loved her land, she took good care of it. That meant not only improving water access through building ditches and reservoirs, it also meant carefully removing garbage to keep the land as beautiful as possible. "Marie's ranch property [was] some of the most beautiful ranch property anywhere. She knew how to manage it and how to take care of it."[244]

> And she would buy her land, she would go in there and clean off all the old junk, she would talk about and move all the old fences and old buildings and whatever and fix them up. . . . All her property was that way.[245]

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[243]Cora and Harold George, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[244]Jensen.

[245]Ibid.

Marie was also careful to rotate pasturage and grazing so livestock would not harm the land.

> And I was always impressed that she didn't overgraze anything, no matter what measures--buying some more land or shipping some cows. I mean, the grass wasn't destroyed. . . . She was productive enough to use the fertilizer and what not. She was a good conservationist. Oh any good rancher is. [You'll] dig yourself right into a hole if you're not.[246]

> She was probably as accomplished from a practical point of view in the economic utilization of land and yet preserving it in as good or better shape than it was before her entrance on it. All of her ranch lands were notable by the way in which she handled it so that while yielding its economic return it wasn't hurt or went down hill.[247]

Fences play a critical role marking territory and ownership. In fact, local legend states that Marie didn't keep track of acres, she kept track of fence miles.

> I asked her how many acres she had. She said, "Well I don't keep track of that." Uh, I heard that she had like a hundred thousand acres in ownership. She said, "I don't keep track of that but I do know I have about 900 miles of fence."[248]

Marie also used fences to control grazing within her larger properties. She "fenced and cross-fenced to manage her division pastures. She split the cattle up, or sheep."[249] Good management required proper fencing. "Like I say she

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[246]Talbert.

[247]Waldeck.

[248]Jensen.

[249]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 20 August 1993.

did this: part of owning the land was upgrading it. Good cross-fencing so it wouldn't be over-grazed in certain areas."[250]

Naturally, the materials Marie used in fence construction depended on the locally available resources. These materials also influenced the fence style. Marie's "typically built worm fences,"[251] bark-covered aspen poles attached at intervals to corner posts, zig-zag or "worm" their way over her land.

Marie, like other practical ranchers in the area, used resources she had on hand:

> Her fences were of aspen tree--worm fences/pole fences, with a rock underneath so the bottom pole was about a foot off the ground. She wouldn't haul things a long way just to make them aesthetic.[252]

She could easily cut aspen right on her property, instead of sending to town for barbed wire. Worm fences require fewer postholes than strung wire fences, an advantage in her rockier mountain pastures where "the natural paving of sandstone is frequently covered by only a few inches of soil, if any at all."[253]

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[250]Talbert.

[251]Hardy Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, La Sal, Utah, 12 June 1993.

[252]Ibid.

[253]Muriel Marshall, Uncompahgre (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1981), 69.

Too, the livestock (and other animals) affected the way she constructed a fence.

> "Worm fence is better for deer," a ranger points out, [sic] "Running at full speed in the forest, deer can spot the pole fence in time to leap over. With barbed wire they can get tangled and cut before they know it's there. We do have to make sure the space between the lower poles are [sic] large enough to allow small fawns to slip through where their mothers have leaped over, otherwise babies may be left behind as the band moves on."[254]

According to local lore, Marie understood the implications of fence construction for the "babies," and did not forget its importance even when she pretended to relax. Hardy Redd explains:

> The outside fence is the most important fence. Well, that it be tight so that your babies don't get in it. . . Her life was business and tending to business. I think my dad used to kid with her a bit once about it. He said, "Marie there ought to be a little more romance in your soul." It's a little bit hard for folks who don't have ranches to understand this elusiveness, but I remember once we went over and had breakfast with her early in the morning at the summer camp, her summer camp by the Lone Cone.
>
> And my dad was joshing her a little bit, saying, "Take a little time for beauty and to smell the flowers. Take a little time for romance. Maybe you and I, Marie, could just go down and take a little ride together. And we could say that we were checking the fences and getting a little work done."
>
> And she said, "Yes, but if we go, Charlie, we've got to go around the outside fence. . . . So, it's alright, this romance, but as long as we're going to maintain this little fiction of looking at the fences, let's make sure it's the most important fence on the place that we ride around."[255]

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[254]Ibid., 70.

[255]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993.

While, for the most part, Marie stayed within the regional constraints about "proper" fences, she was peculiar in insisting that her fences be perfect. Her fence posts had to be deeper, the corner braces tighter, and the fences themselves last longer than other fences in the area.

"Them posts," Tude Domka notes, "had to be in the ground pretty deep."[256] Mario Zadra agrees: "Her fences always had to be in good shape; her post holes had to be dug three foot deep. She always had a man checking them out to see that they were set just right."[257] And other people in the community say similar things.

> And she built fence and had it built like no one else did. She would hire people to build fence for her and she would even have the post . . . leaning slightly into the wind. She had a unique way of building the corner braces and the braces. You would put two diagonal braces between the posts, and no one else ever does that.
>
> But you'd talk to people and they'd say, "Well, I didn't think that needed to be done." But you look at Marie's fences and they stay up a lot better than anyone else's. 'Cause over the years--she leans them into, had them built leaning into the wind--over the years you see they're straightened up where everyone

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Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[256]Walter "Tude" Domka, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[257]Mario Zadra, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

else's fences have blown over.[258]

She made a much sharper angle than we did on our fences. Wouldn't you say that? And uh, . . . she was building fences until she died, I'm sure. I imagine there are [several still standing]. They last a long time. We have some on our land. Oh but that's wonderful! I don't know how long they're supposed to last, but I can see a lot of them. They hold up pretty well.[259]

In fact, some of the most common local character legends concerning Marie involve her insistence on deep post holes.

She furnished the posts herself so she knew how long they were. She wanted them so deep and would hold a shovel against the fence posts--if any stuck up she pushed them over with a jeep and told the men to take them all out and put them in the depth she said. She carried a shovel with the depths marked on the handle, which she stuck in holes and made men dig them deeper if necessary.[260]

She had some problems with one of her fence crews She had her fence contracted out. I don't know who the contractor was at the time. She was pretty, you know, stringent on her contractors. She'd go out and test it out. If the posts weren't four feet deep she'd make them dig it up and do it over. Things like that, you know.[261]

I first met Marie nearly 30 years ago. It was in 1966 when I moved to western Colorado. My employment over there with the BLM is how I first met her and I remember the very day in the--I had an occasion to visit with her about some business and, uh, didn't make an appointment, which was a mistake on my part. And as I drove from Montrose up to Ridgway to her ranch, why

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[258]Jensen.

[259]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[260]Redd, 12 June 1993.

[261]George.

she was out running the place. And there was a crew there setting a telephone, a power pole, or a [fence post]. And, uh, she said, "Well, I can't visit with you. We're just swamped here, we're setting this pole."

And here's this little old lady, up in years, and I thought, "Well what are you doing out here? There's a whole crew of men and equipment here." But, uh, that's the way she was. She was very involved with what was going on her place and around her place.[262]

The fence story! As I recall the fence story, she was very fussy about fences, and she was always right there usually. If she wasn't there she directed what they were to do.

And once she bought these long posts. And she wanted a substantial fence, and she wanted the, uh, posts to be deep in the ground. And uh, she came up to see what they had done on the fence. And she was about to leave and she saw a couple of [posts] where two or three feet had been cut off; it wasn't in the ground as far as she thought. So she made them on their own time come back and rebuild the fence.

Now, I've heard that she took a jeep and bumped the posts to see how strong they were; and you remember stories like that [laughs]! But she supervised that fence and it had to be just right. Uh, I don't know how she got away with making those people redo all their work without being paid for it, but she managed it.[263]

That's true. Yep that's true. I hauled many a fence post for Marie. Even if it was god damn solid rock she wanted them [posts] two and a half feet deep. And she said if they wasn't--which wouldn't have really made no difference if they did cut them off--if she found saw dust there on a post hole, they was in trouble.[264]

So, Marie didn't vary drastically from prevailing

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[262]Jensen.

[263]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[264]Gene Adams, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 2 August, 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

regional expectations about fences. But the consistent quality of her fences was unusual. Thus she did things the right way (according to regional norms), to the best of her ability, and became a local legend.

> Yeah, she built probably the best fences that was ever built on Ouray or San Miguel county. I know she did, she had her own corner [posts], corner braces, and that's the way it better be built. . . . Nope she built that fence, [the] best built in any of these counties. By god she wanted to put up [the best]; she put up good fences.[265]

Marie's water rights allowed her to produce excellent pasturage for her livestock; the fences allowed her to manage the livestock properly. She did not have many animals, usually a herd of only about four hundred cattle, significant but not outstanding for the area. They were fat and spoiled, according to Marie's workers, with lighted barns in the wintertime. Mario Zadra remembers that "Marie was always babying her cows. She kept lights in the sheds for the calves."[266] Gene Adams remembers their obesity. "She never really run a lot of cattle. What she did run they god damn sure was fat."[267] News of the spoiled cattle spread throughout the region.

> I heard--who was it that was telling me-- oh the people that I was visiting with said they would round up her cattle and her cows were hard to handle. And

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[265]Ibid.

[266]Zadra, 20 August 1993.

[267]Adams.

> they were always fat. Her cattle were just gross from overweight. It was such a social prize to her, always seeing them in such good shape all the time. I mean, as far as fertility and practicality, I always thought her cows were way too fat. She fed them too much hay in the winter.[268]
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> The fact [is] that she kept her cows too fat. I'm quoting Howard [Talbert], he helped her lots of times pull calves in the spring because they were so heavy it's hard to have the calves. Then they'd have to milk them because they'd have too much milk. But she loved animals. She was good to them, maybe to their detriment. But it was because she loved them, it wasn't anything else. You didn't see skinny cows around Marie's place.[269]

Marie insisted above all on having quality bulls. She often attended the Redd's bull sale in Utah; and according to Annaley Redd, she "always hand-picked the bulls. . . . She didn't buy bulls in big quantity, but she knew what she wanted."[270] One of her bulls was so outstanding that Disneyland shipped him to Southern California so he could be displayed at the amusement park.

Marie also went into the sheep business around 1940, acquiring about 4,000 head. She could handle sheep much easier than cattle, but she always kept a pet herd of about 100 cows.[271] Sheep, of course, require full-time sheepherders. Marie "had two herders in the summer time,

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[268]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[269]Talbert.

[270]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[271]Zadra, 14 July 1993.

and a band of about a thousand ewes to each herd."[272] Sheep, though less work than cattle, came with their own set of problems.

> [It] costs quite a bit to run sheep because you got to have a man live with them nearly [all the time to keep] account of your predators and everything. . . . You got a herd of sheep out there, you pretty near got to have a man live with them. Your dogs are as big a predator as your coyotes. We used to have a lot of trouble with dogs in Telluride.[273]

Once a year, some of the animals were sold and shipped to meat markets. For several decades, the town of Placerville, between Ridgway and Telluride, was the regional shipping center. Marie, like other area ranchers, trailed cattle to Placerville for rail shipment. Unlike the other ranchers, though, Marie's presence merits stories forty to fifty years later. Doris Roof recalls that Marie

> used to ship cattle and everything. There was the stock yards there in Placerville--[it] was the greatest shipping point in the state for years. And all the people would bring their cattle and sheep there to ship. And we owned the scales in the stock yards. So my father would weigh all of the stock. And Marie never stayed at my grandmother's hotel; a lot of the stock people did. But she'd stay in the camp down by the stock yards. And she would always tell my father, "We'll have breakfast at four in the morning. We want to get weighing just at daylight." So about three or four in the morning she'd come up to the hotel, "Glen, Glen we're ready to start weighing and breakfast is ready."
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> And uh, but before she'd do that, sometimes a few years before that they would let her bring a grub box into the kitchen of the hotel and she would fix the

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[272]Domka.

[273]Adams.

> meal for all of her men and everything. But it got to where she would wake up everybody in the house, you know, you can imagine dragging a big grub box in. And she'd wake up everyone in the house, so my grandmother finally had to stop that because she just, you know, the other people couldn't sleep. The Placerville Hotel. And my grandmother was Nora Roof. And she run that for years.[274]

This story indicates that even on the road and in other peoples' homes, Marie insisted on keeping workers and visitors well fed. It wasn't just while trailing cattle either. Often Marie would pack big fried chicken lunches to share while working on fence lines or ditches. "She wasn't sports minded," her good friend Mario Zadra notes. She "thought people ought to have more fun working than playing. If you were going to go on a picnic she'd pack up the equipment and have the men dig fence posts while the food was cooking."[275]

When she had to go to town for business, Marie would usually take people to eat at a nearby restaurant.

> I worked for Nan Lanell who had the abstract office across the street here from the court house. And when I went to work for her she was quite a good friend with Marie Scott and Marie was in her office an awful lot doing abstract work. Um, she used to take us to lunch. If she came in there to work you had to go to lunch with her. You had to eat a T-bone steak and she always brought her big dog. And she'd buy him a T-bone steak, take it out to her jeep and feed that dog a

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[274]Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[275]Zadra, 14 July 1993.

> T-bone steak every time we went to lunch.
>
> And before we'd go to lunch, she wore a lot of make-up. She wore a lot of rouge and lipstick; she would go into Nan's little washroom there and put on some more. She would have to put on a little more rouge and a little more lipstick to get ready to go. And that was about all I really knew of Marie, you know, just with my acquaintance with her where we worked there.
>
> But she was always awful nice. She would talk about her dog and she would talk, she would still talk some business with Nan, you know, that maybe they hadn't got tended to during the morning there. And uh, she would talk about um kind of how she liked to live and she liked to cook. . . . And of course she was always talking about acquiring more land.
>
> And uh, she just was good to talk to about her neighbors and the people that helped her. And I had never been to her house, I mean where she lived. And that's about all I know of her. But we used to go to lunch pretty often.[276]

Another associate recalls:

> I worked for the [Colorado Mining Company] for fifty-two years. As far as Marie is concerned, we'd have a meeting with her once in awhile, meet her off in Richmond or someplace and she'd take us to dinner. I knew who she was but that was all I knew was the meetings with her.[277]

Similarly, acquaintances knew that if they dropped by Marie's house they could expect a big dinner of steaks (cooked in a cast iron skillet), potatoes, and pie. Hospitality, a self-identified characteristic of the region, is very evident in Marie's life. Many informants, when talking about gestures Marie made to her neighbors, classified her actions as "Old Western" traits. In other

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[276]Kappis.

[277]Ibid.

words, her personality, particularly her generosity, was in part a reflection of her culture.

> Marie felt a responsibility and a sympathy for people. And she also, she had that old western business of getting gifts or giving somebody something to eat. Particularly because you know that her place where she lived [was] such a [stopping place most] of [the] time. It's right at the foot on the east side of Dallas Divide. And uh people who would stop there that were going on through, she would always insist that they have something to eat no matter what time of day it was.
>
> And I once talked to her a little bit, I said, "Gee that's kind of funny."
>
> Marie said, "Funny, heck." She said that "back when I was first here and a wagon would stop at a place like this and they were going to go over the top of that Dallas Divide, they didn't even know when they were going to get their next meal because of the weather conditions." Of course the road conditions in those days when you had just a [wagon], and that's a stormy country, somebody better be sure they have something to eat before they start up.[278]

Since ranches were so spread out, it was always common for travelling friends, business associates, or neighbors to stop by, any time of day, for a meal at Marie's.

> . . . But every time we would go to that area we always stopped to see Marie, chat with her, just wonder what all she was doing. Once we took Henry Clyde over. . . I remember, and we stopped on the way and saw Marie. And she was always cooking dinner for everybody. She was always very kind and hospitable. She always made you come in and have dinner. And she kept a lot of food in her house.[279]

As with many ranching communities, beef dominated the meals. According to Frances Talbert, Marie "always had a lot of

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[278]Waldeck.

[279]Redd, 16 August 1993.

steak on hand. You'd always get a good meal. You'd eat a steak, she'd offer you a second one. I mean that was the gist of the thing."[280]

"[When] we was eating at her house," Gene Adams adds, "you damn sure was full because she'd feed you T-bones and taters and you didn't go for hungry."[281] Marie would usually cook the food herself.

> . . . When you went to her house you always had steak and cooked potatoes. She had three cast iron skillets, and she'd fire them up in the wood stove. She always said that was the only way to cook meat, in cast iron on a wood stove. She insisted on eating and eating until you couldn't anymore.[282]

> But [when] you'd stop by the house, I mean my goodness she'd cook! [There she would be,] rolling out noodles, and you know you're suppose to dry them for a long time before you cut them. She just cut them up and threw them in the pot and they were the best thing.[283]

If people did not have time to come to Marie's house directly, she insisted they let her pick up the tab at the local cafe.

> And she was always busy. But I would stop in at her place there on the highway. And she'd say, "Where you going today?" So I would tell her. "Well, you stop on your way back 'cause you can always stop. And if you can't stop [here], why stop down in the Little Chef's Cafe there in Ridgway."

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[280]Talbert.

[281]Adams.

[282]Ted Royer, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 11 July 1993.

[283]Talbert.

> And so I stopped in there [at the cafe]. Anyway, and I'd walk in and she said, the waitress there would say, "Well Marie Scott called and she said I'm suppose to feed you."
>
> So she would always want to cook a steak, I mean or stop at the Little Chef. And we went down there on occasion together, her and other people that were there.[284]

Especially as Marie got older, she would "come to the cafe a lot. She'd get them to pick up the ticket for everybody in the crowd."[285]

For Marie, being a hospitable neighbor also meant picking up supplies for those who lived close by. Often she would buy steaks and groceries for some of the older women living alone in the region. And she was always very thoughtful about her workers. Frances Talbert's husband worked with Marie for many years. "She'd bring the presents to us. Generally it was steak, or cans of coffee, or a sack of oranges. I mean it was practical stuff. She was generous in that way, very generous."[286]

> She also would buy groceries and fruit and things like that [at the] store and take them out to whoever she was going to see. She always had a little bag of something that was a present.
>
> I remember once, uh, there was a sheep herder that had come over from the Basque region, the Pyrenees--either Spain or the French side. I'm not sure where. And, uh, we had to walk up to his tent, etc. He spoke no English at all at the time. Marie visited with him, talking to him, brought him a sack of goods. And I'm

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[284]Jensen.

[285]Talbert.

[286]Ibid.

> sure he didn't understand a word that she was saying, and vice-a-versa for sure. But nevertheless he understood that a kindness was being done to him and he appreciated it.
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> Uh, on a bar scale there's all kinds of things Marie did, too. As far as assisting anything that was going to be done in the county, almost, it could depend on Marie contributing toward it. And, uh, I didn't, I've seen nothing that I'd considered ungenerous in what she did.[287]

Marie did not limit herself to buying food for others, either. Sometimes when she would pick up supplies of things she needed on her ranch she would buy extra amounts to take to other ranchers.

> She would uh [always be] buying livestock supplement and fertilizer and these kind of things for local ranchers in quite a wide area there. She would order the product, fertilizer or whatever, and then they would spread it out to the different people that bought it, you know. I don't, I think the person that goes to the extra bother to do those kind of things is a pretty up front person. And pretty good to do business with.[288]

Marie Scott made it a point to look after her workers, her neighbors, and even the government employees with whom she did business. Each of these groups of Marie's associates also has stories about her, about her work, and about her hospitality. They also have stories about themselves and their role in the region.

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[287]Waldeck.

[288]Jensen.

CHAPTER 8

JUST PART OF BEING HERE

If Marie Scott's life is more than just her personal history, if it is also a study in the regional culture, then it cannot be isolated from the stories of her friends, neighbors, and workers. Their accounts provide important glimpses into the cultural history of the area and help put perspective on Marie's experiences. Her associates' histories are a part of her life just as she was a part of theirs.

Most of Marie's friends lived on neighboring ranches and shared her work and concerns; others were local shopkeepers or businesspeople. Some knew her quite well, others only casually. But they all formed Marie's community, and they all share a body of lore about their own experiences and those of their extraordinary neighbor.

Of course, in this context the "neighborhood" stretches from Ouray to Ridgway to Telluride to Norwood. Doris Roof, for example, lives in Placerville, midway between Ridgway and Telluride.

> Placerville was named for the placer gold discovered there in 1876. Although early residents had already built and platted a town by 1877, the town site quickly migrated a mile and a half in order to flock around a newly built store and saloon. The town never produced enough gold to really boom and reached its peak only when ranchers started using its railhead as the major

regional shipping point.[289]

Doris Roof's family ran some of the biggest local businesses, including the Placerville Hotel.

> But my great-grandparents bought where we live now, that same place in 1910. And so then my great-grandparents ran it until they died. And then my grandmother ran the hotel and then she was getting older, it was too much work for her. It was about 19-probably '49 or '50 when we started running the hotel. But my father . . . always sold cars and we built a dealer[ship], or a repair shop and a show room and everything and sold cars there. And then we just lived in the hotel.
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> . . . Well when the railroad went out, what was that '52, or something? Why then of course they tore down the stock yards. And the road covers part of where the stock yard was now. Well, that isn't, the town of Placerville where the depot was and everything, that is what we call New Town. Right at the junction of Highways 145 and 62 is the original town of Placerville. And that's where we live and that's where the stock yards and everything was. And then when the railroad came in there wasn't room enough there for the depot. And there were other houses up in what they called New Town anyway. And so they built the depot and everything up there. It's a half mile apart.[290]

Marie and her hired help ate at the Placerville hotel when shipping livestock on the railroad until the 1950s. She occasionally wrangled business deals in the hotel's cafe. Doris Roof's family business thus made it easier for Marie to run her enterprise. Once Doris's father also

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[289]Perry Eberhart, Guide to the Colorado Ghost Towns and Mining Camps (Denver: Sage Books, 1959), 324.

[290]Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

helped make the area safer for local sheepherders, Marie's included.

In the late 1930s,

> the sheriff was shot down below Placerville it must be, I don't know, five or six miles. The McDaniels brothers shot . . . Russ Dunlap which was sheriff. And . . . somebody came up to the hotel there at Placerville and uh said that the sheriff had been shot and nobody would go down to get him or they were scared to death that they'd get shot. So my father, Glen Roof, and this Nellie P. Bull went down and got him and brought him up to the hotel and sent for a doctor up here in Telluride. Oh, heavens that's when I was a kid. It would be in the early `30s but I don't know just when. This Dunlap was taking these guys to jail or something. And they got away from him and shot him.
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> Yes, I remember [the McDaniels had tied up a sheepherder someplace and he couldn't get loose.] He died. They robbed him, tied him up and he just sat there and starved or something and he died.[291]

Other people in the region shared Marie's pioneering background and work experience, with similar cultural (if not financial) results. For example, Frances Fournier Talbert's family settled in Ridgway in the 1880s. They shared James and Martha Scott's struggles with illness and difficult travel. Frances' grandfather had been a miner in Telluride, but

> he didn't like it so he came down and bought the ranch about 1884 and he married my grandmother and she come from Denver or New York. She was also French-Canadian just over the line. Came in here by stage coach and her family ran [a business in] Ouray. And uh then they got Lake Leanore there, . . . that's where my dad was born was at Lake Leanore. And then they came to the top of Dallas to buy it up here.
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> My great-grandfather . . . died the year I was

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[291] Ibid.

> born. And we didn't keep record. I mean a lot of this is lost. It's too bad. Why he came from New York I couldn't answer you either if you asked me. Grass was greener perhaps. It must have been to make that kind of a trip. . . .
>
> Well I don't know why [they decided to come]. . . . My grandmother . . . came in when she was four years old, but she met [my grandfather], he was ten years older than she. And they met when she was sixteen. But he had the ranch here and that's where she spent her whole life. So um they're old timers. . . . There wasn't much of a road. Why they came I don't know. It would be fun to know. . . .
>
> They had three [children]. They lost one, the first one. Great big boy, I mean this sounds [awful]--he weighed 16 pounds and it was her first and he was a real wrestler. Big, big kid. I've seen his picture. They took a picture on the bear skin rug up in Telluride and I think that's where he caught cold. It turned into pneumonia and they lost him. And he's buried up at Telluride but we've never been able to find the grave. Then they had the two more, Louise and Eugene. So that was their family.[292]

Like Trube and Ida Scott, the Fourniers struggled as a family to hold on to their property during difficult times. Like Marie, their success included acquiring large stretches of land to make it easier to trail livestock. In fact, they traded property with Marie to make connected holdings possible for both parties.

> . . . My dad ran the ranch. Now my brother [Gary] is [running it] so it's still in the family. . . . I have two sisters but Gary's running the ranch. [The ranch is almost] like it always was. He did trade Beaver Creek property for the property Marie had up here on the Divide. So Gary took it and so he left Beaver Creek pasture go to this up here. You know they don't have to trail on the highway, I mean it's all

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[292]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> connected. Because you can't trail on the highway anymore. . . .
>
> [He used to be able to come] down the road with several hundred cows by himself. Now somebody's on the road with fifty, they got twenty riders and still can't get through. Things have changed an awful lot. But that's how Gary has it all hooked together.
>
> But this is the original ranch my grandfather got. He bought the head quarters. I guess it had been an Indian fort at one time.[293]

Frances Talbert's husband, Howard, worked for rancher Harry McClure (and occasionally for Marie). His story shows the difficultly of cowboy life and the interdependence within a ranching community.

> My husband [Howard] was one of the true old time cowboys and he hardly ever needed a bed in this valley. Howard just had a knack. Marie liked Howard because he would work seven days a week, she admired that you know. Not much play time. Howard worked around the clock . . . and he'd do it graciously. He was very knowledgeable.
>
> . . . Howard help build th[e McClure] ranch. In fact in the 1940s he quit getting wages with the privilege of building up a herd of his own. So Howard worked without wages from then on with the promise when Harry [McClure] died he'd have a place. Well it didn't happen. He got pushed out.
>
> Um, Marie liked Howard and wanted him to have a bunch of her land, but he was pushed out there by the people surrounding Marie. So he had two rough blows. So he had devoted his entire life and talent and health, but I don't think he'd have it any other way.
>
> Don't misunderstand me. That's what he did and in this way Harry McClure having that kind of a talent to build up a herd had one of the most beautiful Hereford herds there was in the country. About 1200 head. Had all that land clear up to the mountain there. Ralph Lauren has it now you know.
>
> H[oward] just paid for his hay and salt and . . . survived on the . . . crop. Never did have much money. But like I say it was a way of life that was satisfying.

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[293] Ibid.

> . . . The [McClure] house burned in '65. Oh lightening struck it the only day we'd been gone for ages. Lost the whole shooting match. Oh, Harry [McClure] said that he'd build back, but he just never did it. [McClure] had four nieces and nephews that moved in and took over his business. He was a pretty good business manager. . . . And Harry [McClure] stayed here and did the work. It was a good partnership. . . .
>
> But my brother had to subdivide when Harry died to let us stay in the valley, because we didn't get any of the land.
>
> . . . Things would get tough, you know, some years. I mean . . . the people hung on through thick and thin that survived because there's a lot of lean years, a lot of hard work on these places.
>
> Uh, Harry [McClure] was down financially one year and he asked Howard if he could get along without his check. Well, it's just one pay check a year. To live you have the [money from the] crop in the fall that they sold. And Howard, being easy-going, said yes. And he paid taxes on it the next spring, [but he] never did get it. I asked the estate when Harry [McClure] died, but Harry's house had burned [and the papers all] burned. It was just a hand shake anyway so they were able to get out of it, so they got lucky.
>
> See it was just the goodness of my brother Gary Fournier that subdivided that we stayed on the Fournier Ranch that I'm here. I lost Howard a year ago in March. Marie had wanted, because she did like Howard and he was a hard worker, to let him have some land that had been his forefather's and what not. But that didn't get accomplished before she died either. So that's what I'm saying, he got pushed out in two directions. But . . . he was born in Ouray county lived his whole life and worked here and was buried here. He's a true native.[294]

Ranching in the region also involves covering long, sometimes dangerous distances to get from property to property, as Frances Talbert implies:

> . . . I have a lot of driving under my belt. . . . The divide is tricky. It looks harmless but it's not. Lot of people have wrecked up there. Going over the top

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[294] Ibid.

> they'd pass me and then I'd find them upside down there. But I should have known that road driving it everyday.[295]

And part of belonging to a region with large distances but few people means knowing neighbors who did not necessarily live very close. Marie, like others in the area, "had a wide acquaintance of people."[296]

Ed and Linda Ingo were also some of Marie's neighbors. Their stories of interaction with Marie indicate the level of community involvement expected of all residents. Marie, of course, took civic duties a step further.

> We went out and had to collect--Ridgway had a mosquito spraying program and people volunteered to collect money for it--and we went out to Marie. And each rancher was asked to pay fifty dollars to help spray the mosquitoes. And she, you know, supported the town and the area, so she also paid her fifty dollars. And my husband and I went out there and asked her if she'd like to contribute to the mosquitoes spraying program. And she said yes and she signed a check and gave it to us. A blank check! And she just, if she trusted you she trusted you. And uh that's the way she did business. I was just flabbergasted, but they like Ed and they, you know, trusted him. Somebody at her status to give you a blank check, I'd never seen anybody do anything like that. I was floored but that's the way she was.
>
> And then . . . we had some gas and oil and mineral leases and the company came in, going around to the individuals asking them to sign a lease. And what they were offering we thought was just pittance. And so we didn't know what the market was but we told the . . . man, "Well, we want what Marie gets." And then two or three weeks later he came back with a. . . very improved mineral rights lease. We knew that Marie would know what the market was.

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[295]Ibid.

[296]Ibid.

> And in the interim we saw her down in the grocery store and told her about it and she confirmed that: "Yeah, that shouldn't be. That's not right," what they were offering to do. And she was there just getting her vegetables in the grocery store and she was telling us what mineral leases she made. So the guy came back and gave us what he gave Marie. Which was significantly improved.[297]

Working out good contracts usually required legal assistance. William Waldeck was Marie's attorney for years.

> I returned from the Pacific in the end of World War II. I returned to the United States and . . . enrolled in law school at the University of Colorado and . . . graduated in the first of 1949. And in the first of 1949 I came to . . . Montrose, Colorado to start practicing law with a firm that was called Bryant and Petri, and soon after became Bryant, Petri and Waldeck. A client that they had at the time, who I started doing work for almost immediately, was Marie Scott.
>
> Also . . . we did work for her sister who is Loraine Harney. But Marie Scott was by far the most active of the two sisters. So my first work for Marie Scott started in the first part of 1949 and continued until the time of her death in 1979, spanning some 30 years.[298]

Of course, the people actually working on Marie's ranch had the most contact with her and their activities reflect hers as well. During the Depression, Will Harney's nephew, Tude Domka, worked with Marie.

> And [Marie] always treated me alright. I worked

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[297]Linda Ingo, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[298]William Waldeck, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Grand Junction, Colorado, 4 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> for her regular. . . feeding cows, in winter time. I'd get home about Christmas time. . . she always had that figured. And her and I would go to the Cone and stay there. . . . Oh yeah, it was a big thing Christmas, Thanksgiving. The first time I was ever at the Cone to her place was July, 1939. We were over there Fourth of July. Big picnic dinner there at camp that day. And she had a dress on that day. . . . [When you worked for Marie] you were already up at daylight, shuffling your feet. I never did stay right, much in the house right with her when I worked for her that winter. I was married and I moved off in a different house. But she got up early. [Went to bed] maybe nine o'clock I suppose. She wouldn't stay up too late.[299]

With money so hard to come by in the '20s and '30s, Marie, like other ranchers, would often compensate for low wages with gifts in kind. "Well, it wasn't pay in monetary it was in kindness. [Sometimes] she give me hay. I wouldn't say I was well paid but. . . . she was more than fair."[300]

Marie hired several hands to help with the ranch work during peak seasons. Obviously, some workers were more dedicated than others. According to Tude Domka, working hard made Marie happy and brought about certain rewards.

> A lot of them didn't get along with Marie. If you wanted to get Marie mad at you, you sloughed off and not work or something. And she was your enemy. But if

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[299]Walter "Tude" Domka, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[300]Gene Adams, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 2 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

she felt you was doing your, doing your day's work, why you was alright.

I must have been alright, because after I got old enough to drive a car--she always had a pickup--and she wasn't using that pickup, and I wanted to go to town or something, I could get that pickup and go. She had a pretty nice Chevy coupe at one time, that was a cute piece. And when her husband, he wanted to go to camp when we was at the Cone (we was haying), she wouldn't go with him. . . . I said, "I'll go with you and drive, bring the car back tonight." Well he told her and, sure! So after work why I took him to camp and that's when the railroad went over the Dallas Divide, up where the railroad and highway crossed. And the railroad, it was a little curved, you know, the outside rail was the highest? And I come over Dallas Divide, I didn't realize but I had got put out of the top pretty quick and I flew over the top up there and I hit that dang [track]. Gosh, and I think I was airborne for awhile.

Boy I was scared I was going to wreck that car. It hit down on all four wheels and came down and I never told anybody about it for a long time. You know I never did hurt nothing, I guess, for I don't think they had any trouble with the car.

We was haying one time and Old Jim Harrison--an old guy that lived when we were around out there, he had a place up on Beaver Creek. And he helped Will Harney haying and we'd go up and put his hay up--Marie come by and Old Jim one day, I heard Old Jim say it won't hurt her to take him to Montrose to get some timber for his stacker, you know. I forget where it was now. But she couldn't go, she wasn't able.

But I heard her tell him, "There's a guy, there's a driver right over there. If you can get him, you can go. Take the pickup." So he searched around, got me off of my job, [and] he and I went to Montrose to get lumber and all for his stacker. In her pickup.[301]

Marie extended privileges to hard workers; but those who did not do what she expected of them would not work for her long.

More than once she would say to me, "You know, I like your boys." She'd say, "They're dependable and

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[301]Domka.

> they know how to work." [Laughs.] Well, I'll say one thing, you know, she liked people who were dependable. She could not stand people who didn't do their job well.[302]
>
> Well she was domineering. I mean, she was the boss. No, Marie was always really great with me. I thought the world of her but she got [work] out of [everybody]. I mean, seven days a week, and she wasn't a driver. I mean, as long as you was doing something, that was fine. . . . But she didn't want you to work five days a week, she wanted you to work seven days a week, and twelve hours a day.
>
> But I hope she thought you ought to put in a day's work, and she didn't give a damn in hell what it was. I remember [some guys who were] cleaning corrals and stuff for her, and they thought they ought to have a little more money. Told her. They says, ["We want] a little more money."
>
> "Well you can get a little more money," [she said.] "Just put in a few more hours."[303]

Hardy Redd speculates, "Well, I think what [her workers] found out is if they didn't do it right they never worked for her again."[304] Gertrude Perotti puts it more bluntly: "If she liked you, she'd do a lot for you; if she didn't, get out of her way."[305] Gene Adams agrees, "If she didn't like you, you'd better get lost."[306]

Similarly, Marie did not have a lot of sympathy for

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[302]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[303]Adams.

[304]Redd.

[305]Gertrude Perotti, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Ridgway, Colorado, 12 July 1993.

[306]Adams.

incompetence.

> She once told me about a herder who couldn't cross the [creek]. He was up on Bull Creek and he decided to rope [a bull elk] and he roped that bull off. . . . And it charged him--gored him in the leg. And in the process of it, the elk's run away with the lariat. Marie was giving him hell for losing the lariat. She didn't give a damn about the hole in his leg.[307]

> She uh, she didn't put up with nonsense, non-production. I remember telling about some individual, she says, "Well, he's not very smart. About the best thing he could do is look down a crow bar at a post hole."[308]

Perhaps the most common anecdote about Marie revolves around her refusal to hire someone because she could tell just by looking at him that he would not work as hard as she wanted.

> There is a story, probably ninety-nine percent imagination, about a guy who went to find work from her, dressed in overalls and rolling his own cigarettes. Marie asked him, "Do you always wear those fancy overalls?" When he said yes she said, "Do you always roll your own cigarettes?" When he said yes to that question too, she replied, "I can't use you then. You'd always have one hand busy holding up your pants, the other hand busy rolling your cigarettes, and you'd never get any work done."[309]

> A young man was looking for a job. He was wearing Levi overalls, which were new then, and rolled his own cigarettes.

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[307]Walter Rooney, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 28 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[308]Jensen.

[309]Ted Royer, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 11 July 1993.

> "Do you always wear those new-fangled jeans?" Marie asked him.
> "Yes," he said.
> "And do you always roll your own cigarettes?" she asked.
> "Yes," he said.
> "No blankety-blank cowboy's going to work for me like that. He'd need one hand to hold his pants up and one to roll his cigarettes. He wouldn't get any work done." She never hired him.[310]

Walter Rooney's version is more compact. "Another thing that she told me that she didn't like was to hire anyone that rolled their own cigarette. She says it takes too much damn time rolling; spend all their time rolling cigarettes."[311]

This story is usually told by those who did not know Marie very well. The further removed the teller is from Marie, the more structured the story becomes. Notice that in the first two versions listed above, told by people with only a casual association with Marie, the dialogue follows a set pattern: Marie asking questions, the cowboy answering in the affirmative. Marie's response has three necessary parts--one dealing with the pants, the other with cigarettes, and the third with the issue of quality work.

The shorter version, told by Marie's car dealer, omits the emphasis on rolled overalls and thus loses its familiar structure, probably because, as his introduction suggests,

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[310]Martha Robinson, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Ouray, Colorado, 16 June 1993.

[311]Rooney.

Marie told it to him herself as a statement of fact rather than as a story.

Interestingly, at least one description of Bob Valiant describes him as rolling his own cigarettes: "He was always rolling a cigarette and always had a cigarette in his mouth."[312] Marie's rejection of an incompetent worker is thereby subtly melded in the stories with her rejection of an incompetent husband.

Since Marie demanded perfect work from her employees, she subsequently devoted a lot of energy to supervising their labor.

> She occupied--spent a lot of her time occupied out where she had a fence crew. She'd probably dig a fence everyday, make sure they were putting it in the right place. Or if she had a caterpillar doing any ditch work or making a reservoir or something she'd, she would be there every day.
>
> She had a hay crew down at Ridgway and they were putting up bales, [piling it] loose in a big stack. So she, I think she probably had a foreman there, but still he needed some direction about putting up the hay, stacking it and so on.[313]

Good workers became Marie's substitute family; she enjoyed spending time with them. "She liked Mario [Zadra], she liked Dick Swyhart, she liked to watch the heavy equipment work. She'd take a sandwich in her pocket and stay all day."[314]

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[312]Kappis.

[313]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[314]Talbert.

Marie never really had her own cowboys per se. Often she took in other ranchers' cattle, but they came with their own hands. For about seventeen years, John Howard and Jim Harrison were her right-hand men. But one of Marie's closest friends was Mario Zadra, who helped her with her cows along with his for a long, long time in summers. Other men watched her herd in the winter.[315]

Mario Zadra has spent his entire life ranching. Initially he worked out on other people's properties, owning only a few small tracts of his own, until he was thirty. He bought his first tract of ground in 1930 in Ouray County, but he really started building his property in 1957.[316]

Marie and Mario developed a partnership of sorts, a reciprocal relationship of mutual help, support, and affection. Marie helped Mario buy property of his own, and he occasionally bought land for Marie when people who thought she already had too much property refused to deal with her. He would keep the land three to four years and then sell or trade it to Marie.[317]

Mario had a great affection for Marie. He helped her out, went partners on some cattle, and worked as a

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[315]Mario Zadra, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[316]Ibid.

[317]Ibid.

> cowboy for her when she needed it. She might have loaned him down payments of something. When [she grew older and] she couldn't get around much and her men weren't working, he noticed that her haystack was not her usual model of perfection; it was falling off in one corner. He spent an hour or so while she waited straightening it up for her.[318]

Gene Adams also worked for Marie from his early teens. He was seventy years old in 1993, when he recorded his memories of Marie Scott.

> When I knew Marie Scott. . . I probably had been fifteen or sixteen; that's a long way up the river. . . . Well, I was born in the . . . San Miguel basin. Moved down there when I was five years old and went to Telluride. I was County Commissioner of San Miguel County eighteen years. I spent a lot of time there in Telluride. But I knew Marie, to me forever. I couldn't say how long I've known her. . . .
>
> Oh yeah I used to help Marie a lot. . . . Well I hauled cows and hauled hay and [did] odd jobs. . . . Like I said I did quite a lot of trucking for her. But she used to move the cows . . . here in the fall, [from the] Cone . . . early in the '40s and '50s; maybe in the '60s. I don't know. I don't have no diary.
>
> Like I said I hauled a lot of calves [and] a whole lot of hay for her. I hauled a lot of cedar posts. She'd give me a big old blank check with her name on [it]. Carried those legal blank checks, I did, for twenty years. She knew she could trust me. . . .
>
> One time over to Grand Junction I had this two-ton truck down to some implement place or somewhere and they [had a] big old pile of cedar posts. And they wanted to get rid of them and they made me an offer and I knew it was a bargain so I bought them. Gosh dangdest load of cedar post [you ever saw] on a little truck, [and I] come home with them. [Used] one of her checks she got [signed]. Yeah, she's a neat lady as far as I was concerned.[319]

Marcelino Alchu worked as Marie's sheepherder before

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[318]Redd, 12 June 1993.

[319]Adams.

she helped set him up with his own outfit and leased grazing land to him. She did the same for the Pouchoula brothers, who, like Alchu, were Basque sheepherders. Alchu was a favorite of young Doris Roof.

> I never would forget him because our desk, there was like a big desk . . . in the hotel and the [sheepherders would] all come in there and sit down and write their letters or whatever they wanted to do. And one day I sold him, I was selling him gas. I came in and I had this real big color book about two inches thick and I don't know how many pages. He'd put his brand on every one of those pages of my coloring book. You know it's funny how you remember something. He was a very nice person too.
>
> . . . But they'd all come in there to eat and sometimes they'd stay and sometimes they wouldn't. But we had kind of like a small store, like candy and cigarettes and a few items and the gas. And they'd all get their gas there.
>
> He was more of a stocky fellow and . . . he was always telling me [John Goney] was going to take me up to the sheep place with him. When I'd see John Goney coming, I'd run because I was always afraid he was going kidnap me and take me. He was just kidding me, but you know![320]

Marcelino Alchu had the longest standing lease on Marie's property. She was very particular about the people to whom she leased her land. One of her favorite lease holders was Charlie Redd of La Sal, Utah, who from 1930-1960 leased "16,000 acres of irrigated meadows and perhaps 65,000 acres of mountain pastureland within trucking distance of [his] La Sal winter range."[321]

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[320]Kappis.

[321]Leonard J. Arrington, Utah's Audacious Stockman: Charlie Redd (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 1994), 144.

The La Sal Livestock Company and Redd Ranches ran cattle and sheep on Marie's property each summer before shipping them through Placerville or Montrose. Marie and Charlie Redd trusted each other. According to her attorney, William Waldeck,

> . . . I think you'll find that from the Redd family . . . she . . . required no written documents or anything. A telephone conversation between Marie and people of the integrity and dependability of the Redds, that's all it would ever take.[322]

Marie told Charlie's son, Hardy, that once after the Utah cattleman assumed a heavy debt to purchase more property, he began having second thoughts.

> Charlie complained about his foolishness at buying the outfit. I looked at him and exploded: "Quit whining, Charlie. You and I are winners; we are plungers; we are 'riskers.' We've succeeded because we've had foresight and good judgment and the guts to take risks. Don't come to me looking for sympathy. Just go home and work like you have in the past and you'll pay the ranch off just like everything else you've bought."[323]

Although Marie liked Charlie Redd and leased land to him, they were still rivals. According to Charlie's wife, Annaley,

> They had an unusual relationship. Charlie admired her and I think she admired Charlie. But they had to compete for land and business. They were competing for the same [parcels], when the forest service had something to sell. And I think they came out about even. They loved to remind each other about it, especially Marie. She'd never let Charlie forget when

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[322]Waldeck.

[323]Quoted in Arrington, 199.

she made the best deal. [Laughs]. . . .

Well, whenever we went to Colorado, Charlie and she had a, I don't know what kind of relationship you would call it but they respected each other but they loved to--they were both looking for a bargain in buying land. And sometimes I don't think Charlie liked it as much as Marie. [Laughs.] And they sort of competed, you know. And they loved to get the better of each other, wanted to get a better deal than the other. And they'd never let them forget it. If Marie got a better deal than Charlie, she'd remind him of it.[324]

Charlie's biographer, Leonard J. Arrington, notes that

Marie was a tiny redhead, feisty, very bright but not well-educated woman--one of the few who, though she admired Charlie, told him what to do instead of the other way around. Charlie and she kidded, sometimes pretty vigorously, but Charlie got back as much as he dished out, and sometimes more quickly than he expected.[325]

Both Charlie Redd and Marie Scott were prominent in the region because of their large landholdings. It is not surprising, then, that their names are often combined in local character legends. Doris Roof recalls an incident at her family's Placerville Hotel:

Marie and Charlie Redd used to meet at our [cafe] all the time. And Charlie Redd, he used to say to my grandmother, "Well how many of my rubber checks are going to take today?" And he had millions you know. You never needed to worry about [it]. And uh, well he had gone to grade school with my grandmother in Provo, Utah.

But anyway then he was meeting Marie and they had their lunch at our place there and we always had white linen tablecloths. And they sat there, Marie and Charlie, and did business, big land business and everything on this white linen tablecloth and marked

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[324]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[325]Arrington, 144.

> all over it with their--all their business--with a pen, or a pencil. . . . Well when they got ready to go I can remember my grandmother saying, "I wonder if I'll ever get that out of that tablecloth?"
>
> And I think today if we had saved that tablecloth with all of their big business and even thousands of dollars and everything they had down on the tablecloth--and that was a lot of money then--and I just think how much that would be worth or how nice it would be to have it.[326]

Marie leased land to many of the local ranchers; in turn she traded or leased land from government agencies, particularly the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service. These agencies are often at odds with ranchers' work and lifestyles, and have been for a long time. As Annaley Redd comments, "Ranch people have a special relationship with the forest service. [Laughs]."

"A love-hate relationship!" her son Hardy is quick to add.[327] However the government workers share many cultural assumptions and folklore (including stories about Marie) with the local ranchers. Predictably, Marie's relationships with government agencies inspired their own character legends. A common theme is her extension of hospitality, an indication that the (often maligned) agency workers held tenuous insider status, at least in Marie's eyes. Cora George's husband, Harold,

> was in the Forest Service and [was] dealing with [Marie], when we'd go to work up there, he said, "You

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[326]Kappis.

[327]Redd, 16 August 1993.

always stop in and she'd fix you breakfast." [Even if] they had already ate.[328]

Harold explains,

> I'd stop to get the keys and permission to go through her property, you know, to do the whatever we were doing for the Forest Service. She'd always invite you. It didn't make any difference, you know, what time of day it was. And I'd always, you know, bring the key back when I came back out. Or if I had other guys working on different projects that needed the key, I'd tell them, you know, "Be sure if you borrow the key from her, be sure to give it back to her."
>
> I remember one morning we left . . . about seven in the morning. I had a crew working in the [area] and [Marie] was cooking breakfast. And she had T-bones. . . . The forest supervisor and work engineer, and the regional forester out of Denver were coming up to her to meet with her and go up on her property and [do an] inspection and [check her] water-shed management, [her water] projects.
>
> She tried to get me to stay but I couldn't because I didn't have time to stay there waiting for breakfast. I had to get up there because I was to meet the guys.[329]

Brent Jensen met Marie through his Bureau of Land Management work, but they soon became friends.

> I worked with her on her land exchange. And uh, . . . there were BLM lands, scattered tracks inside her holdings, that she surrounded. And . . . she wanted those tracks, she had some lands on the San Miguel River called the Willow Placer [with water] values right on the river and highway below Telluride, between Telluride and Placerville and some other land in Leopard Creek. Anyway we worked up this exchange program and uh I'd go out with Marie to look at the land and try and put things together.
>
> I had occasion to drive by her place quite frequently [on BLM business] and she would say, "Well I'm glad you stopped, Brent, and always stop when you go by, always stop." So I would stop. Of course a lot of the time she wasn't there. She was so involved with

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[328]George.

[329]Ibid.

> all of her ranch and properties that, well, she told me that she couldn't stay around home because people would call on her till she couldn't get any work done.[330]

Marie indicated her friendship with government workers by privileging them over more obvious outsiders. She encouraged those she knew to stop by her home, as she would other ranchers, and she also gave them opportunities she would only grant real outsiders for a fee:

> She asked me one time, she said, "Well Brent do you hunt?"
>
> I says, "Yeah, I love to hunt."
>
> "Well," she says, "I got a key here to Beaver Mesa country. And why don't you stay in the Taylor camp and stay there in that camp and hunt." So she said, "Take a friend with you." So I did, every year I went over there. She [said,] "If you're going hunting this year well come and get the key."
>
> And of course her [camp was] leased to some Texans. Texas bankers or whatever. And they resented knowing us being in there. And so, and I felt a little guilty about it. They were paying her for renting the property and we were in there hunting. So I mentioned that to her. I mentioned that they had given us a little hassle over there.
>
> She says, "Well I tell you what. You have as much right in there as they do. And next year their lease comes up and we'll write a new contract. And the contract's going to say that you can hunt in there." And I have a, I have a big old trophy buck that I have mounted in my office that came from her place.[331]

Predictably, the most common stories involving Marie Scott and government employees show Marie getting her own way.

> And she had water rights out [on the mesa] up there. And she'd just go in there and [when they'd

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[330]Jensen.

[331]Ibid.

> say], "Marie needs a ditch," they [the forest service] could go in there and clean her ditch. She'd go file on the water and get it to where she wanted it. If they liked it, okay; if they didn't, why it was their problem.[332]

Even the agency employees tell stories about Marie getting the better of them.

> I worked with her on a little problem area on some of her property on the, at the Beaver Mesa country, where she had hired a bulldozer to come in and build some ditch. And she had water taken out of Saltado Creek and run this water all the way down through Beaver Mesa through many fenced pastures there. And [she] built little ponds and had stock water in every pasture. And, uh, BLM had a project out there to plant some rootfly and oak brush, and uh [brought a] bulldozer to do this rootfly. Well he run into some of Marie's, uh, ditches and just buried the bulldozer. Had to bring another one from Grand Junction to pull it out of the mud.
>
> I was the area manager for BLM in that area. So [the] forester said, "Well you should get over there and you should trespass that Marie Scott for building those ditches without authorization [from the] BLM."
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> So I go over there and get the maps out. It looked to me like we were trespassing on Marie Scott, planting the trees and the root plowing! So, I understand that land has since been surveyed in the last maybe five years, so maybe now we'd know where we were. But we never could tell then. My friend the forester said, "I'll never forgive you for not trespassing Marie Scott."
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> I told him, "Hey, we're lucky she don't trespass us!"[333]

The local character legends about Marie Scott revolve around certain themes: her determination, her insistence on hard work, and her sense of humor. All three groups of her associates-- friends, workers, and government employees--

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[332]George.

[333]Jensen.

tell stories about her kindness, too. Marie Scott seemed to truly care about her friends and neighbors. Doris Roof describes her as "a lovely person" who would "help anybody."[334]

Brent Jensen indicates that Marie was personally and emotionally affected by others' hardships.

> I noted that, we had mutual acquaintances that would pass away or would have misfortune or what ever, and this was very devastating to Marie. So from that I think that she had a very genuine feeling for people, for those that she worked with and knew and particularly the hard working or western rancher and live stock people.
>
> . . . I think she [earned] a lot of respect because of her character and the kind of person she was. I remember when there was a fellow by the name Mills over there in [a] construction company in Montrose, Mills outfit. And one of the brothers died and I came by Marie's place that next day when she got the word. She was totally devastated. This fellow was set in a hard life and got cancer [and] in a matter of a few months was gone. That's an indication to me how concerned she was about people. It really bothered her. It really upset her to lose valued friends.[335]

Frances Talbert seems to summarize community feelings about Marie and her relations with her neighbors. "I liked Marie and Loraine very much. They were good to us. That's just part of being here."[336]

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[334]Kappis.

[335]Jensen.

[336]Talbert.

CHAPTER 9

WOMAN IN RED

Will Harney died in 1964, leaving Loraine alone. She and Marie continued to live in separate houses, but spent much of their time together. They had a great number of animal friends. Loraine was particularly fond of horses; Marie loved cats and dogs.

Many of the stories about Marie revolve around her pets' treatment. In particular, stories about her insistence on feeding her dogs and cats steak emphasize a cultural dietary pattern (eating beef almost exclusively), but Marie exaggerated the pattern by extending it to include animals. These stories also demonstrate Marie's generosity and her eccentricity. Her grocer, for example, recalls, "Then she'd go to the meat market and buy steaks for her dog. I thought it was for her--of course, she'd buy meat to cook, you know--[but she] had to have steak for her dogs [too]."[337] Her favorite dog was named Blaze. "And she'd buy some steaks for herself and then she'd always buy a sirloin for Blaze. I said, `Why don't you feed him round?' Oh no,

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[337]Cora and Harold George, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

not to Blaze. He had to have the very best.[338]

Marie would even feed beef to her constant companion when she ate out at cafes. "When she'd go into a cafe, she'd order a steak for her, and when she was done she'd get a hamburger or a steak for her dog."[339] She was even concerned about the dog when she was joining other people for lunch. "She always brought her big dog. And she'd buy him a T-bone steak, take it out to her jeep and feed that dog a T-bone steak every time we went to lunch."[340] Another neighbor notes:

> She always had a good dog that stayed right with her there and [she] had seven or eight cats. She would buy hamburger for her cats and her dogs and uh chicken fried steak. And her dogs lived a lot better than a lot of people.[341]

Some people claimed Marie liked her dogs even better than she liked people.

She was very sentimental about her dog. I imagine

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[338]Walt Rule, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 21 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[339]George White, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, Moab, Utah, 20 August 1993. Tape in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[340]Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[341]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 15 June 1993.

> you've gotten that before. Yeah uh, she [was once] involved in a deal where something seemed outlandish to her--she was very knowledgeable so ignorance in somebody else probably rubbed her the wrong way--because she made the statement [that] the more she was around people, the better she liked dogs.[342]

Marie kept several cats around her house too, "a jillion cats during her life time."[343] These were no farm cats who had to rely on mousing to get their food. Sometimes they ate "beef steak, she'd cut up beef steak and feed it to her cats."[344] Other times they had to settle for "round steak, minute round steaks, that's what her cats ate."[345] Usually, they ate what Marie and her guests did.

> . . . And one evening--we have five children--when they were not too old we were over there at her house late in the evening for some reason, and she insisted that we stay to eat with her. And uh, as usual she cooked quite a bit of steak and she had too much. So she put down newspapers and put around different pieces

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[342]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[343]William Waldeck, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Grand Junction, Colorado, 4 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[344]Hardy Redd and Annaley Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, La Sal, Utah, 16 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[345]Delbert Frasier, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 22 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

for different cats.[346]

One cat, Ike, used to sleep in a platter on Marie's table.

> . . . And one day I went to see her about something. . . . And I think this certain day we sat down at the kitchen table and uh she happened to look over the platter, and uh the old cat was sitting on the floor. And she says to me uh, that Ike, that was the name of the cat, liked to sleep in this platter and she would like me to tell her what I thought of this. . . . She says, "Loraine just thinks it's terrible." She said, "But before I use it I always wash it real good. Now," she says, "what do you think of this?" And I told her I really didn't think it would hurt any, that was my opinion.[347]

Once Marie told a judge she had traded her husband for cats.

> . . . She was full of stories like that, in fact we were in court proving up on some water one time and the judge asked her if she didn't have some man or somebody to uh help with her business, because she was always talking about her business. And she said "Yes, I have had one of them things once and I traded the damn thing off for twelve cats and started running my own business!" So that's what she told the judge. I couldn't have gotten away with it.[348]

When the new state highway divided her home from much of her property, Marie took precautions to prevent her cats from being killed by cars.

> Mario built her a pen out in the back of her house out of chicken wire. And when she'd cook she'd get the

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[346]Wilma Potter and Jack Potter, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ouray, Colorado, 21 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[347]Ibid.

[348]Mario Zadra, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 15 June 1993. Mr. Zadra was one of the people closest to Marie Scott throughout her lifetime and was one of her beneficiaries.

> fire so hot that it would be too hot in the kitchen. . . . She'd crack the door and [put the cats in the pen], . . . her favorite cats you know, so they wouldn't get run over. . . . See, you know the highway it was even busy then, [and] they'd cross back and forth.[349]

Marie did not care about a large house or elaborate gardens; in fact she once noted that the Redds should build big houses and she would build fences.[350] However, Marie loved geraniums, especially red geraniums, and used them to decorate her home.

> . . . And she told me before we got busy and talked about business to stop and look at her house plants. I think geraniums were her favorite, . . . like her dark red or white one. She'd say, "I like this, this is pretty," or "This one's pretty." And then she'd come back to a bright red one and say, "But I like this one best of all."[351]

> And another thing I liked about Marie, she loved, she didn't have a very pretty yard, but she had a table by a big picture window that overlooked those beautiful peaks. And she loved geraniums and she had geraniums blooming in that house all year.[352]

Marie and Loraine both kept huge red geraniums on their kitchen tables.

Marie was also quite fond of Jeeps, and, predictably, preferred them red. Jeeps were practical around the ranch, and as with other areas of her life, Marie preferred

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[349]Potter.

[350]Redd.

[351]Potter.

[352]Redd.

frugality when it came to vehicles. "She didn't drive big fine automobiles," Frances Talbert remembers. "She had a little jeep that she [drove] around in and a pick-up earlier, but she liked the jeep the best."[353]

Mario Zadra agrees. "She was a plain operator, nothing fancy. She drove a jeep or went on horseback, never had a pleasure car."[354] Tude Domka remembers a particular jeep she purchased second-hand.

> Oh, she had several jeeps. She'd buy them and then trade the old one in. . . . Her brother-in-law was setting her up to buy a second-hand jeep about the time her and I went [to] Olathe and bought [a new]. . . one there. Boy he was [mad]! That didn't make no points with him, after she bought the new jeep. And she says, "What do you think of that new jeep?"
>
> I says, "It's all right. . . . And Marie, it's under warranty. If anything goes wrong with it in a certain time, they'll fix it for you." The second-hand jeep they wouldn't have done that probably. But [Will Harney] was mad at me![355]

In addition to being practical, jeeps also allowed Marie to keep mobile, despite the effects of aging in her later years.

> And the last time Marie was in our home she had come over to look at bulls and she grew tired so she

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[353]Talbert.

[354]Mario Zadra, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[355]Walter "Tude" Domka, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

> came in to rest. And I believe that it was Mario Zadra that was looking at bulls with Jack [Potter] and they were out in the field, so I invited her to sit down at the table. I happened to be making pies and she told me, she said uh, you know she said, "It's really nice to make pies, but I just don't have time to do that." She told me how her feet got tired and she said,"I just can't wear boots any more." And Marie's little black boots--that is one thing that is up in the [Ouray] museum now--and she told me, she said um how she was wearing Mr. Harney's shoes. She said that they were comfortable and that's what she wore any more. Marie as she grew older had changes like anyone had changes. She went from her pickup to her jeep, from cowboy boots to shoes.[356]
>
> [In her] later years you could find her asleep out on those roads. I mean you had to watch for Harry McClure and Marie. They both worked pretty hard and you'd find them asleep in the road. You see a car coming backwards it might be Harry. You had to learn to dodge. . . .Everybody lived around here so we all watched out.[357]

Marie's body had long shown the effects of hard work outdoors. Her legs were permanently bowed and her fingers had knotted with arthritis, but she continued to dress in Levi and red silk shirts--with coordinating makeup--until she died. "You know, but she liked her makeup, her red cheeks," Harold George remembers.[358] Her hard work showed in her appearance. "Marie was . . . quite small in stature, [had dyed] red hair, wore heavy rouge on her cheeks. [She was] bowlegged, [a] hard worker; you could see the arthritis

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[356]Potter.

[357]Talbert.

[358]George.

in her hands and feet."[359] But she was concerned about her appearance too.

> She wore a lot of rouge and lipstick, she would go in Nan's little washroom there and put on some more. She would have to put on a little more rouge and a little more lipstick to get ready to go.[360]

> But she would buy her gas there at our place and she'd get out or she'd be sitting in her little old jeep and the first thing she'd do was reach over into the glove box and get out her rouge. She was always putting rouge on and had to be just so, you know. But she was a lovely person.[361]

> But as you come in [the cafe] she would have her cowboy's hat on with just lipstick, you know, and rouge clear up the sides of her cheeks, and her Levis and a real pretty shirt on, boots, and bowlegged--just as bowlegged as you could get. . . All I remember is her red rosy cheeks and her cowboy boots and Levis.[362]

In fact, Marie preferred wearing unwashed men's Levis or overalls. "But uh she wore a western hat and men's Levis, Levis anyway. One day she says, "You know, Brent, I wear overalls just like you do."[363] Unwashed jeans were not unusual attire, according to Frances Talbert and Gene Adams.

> . . . My husband . . . wouldn't wear washed jeans [either]. I [gave them away]. [When they got old and faded] I gave a gal in Norwood I think about thirty-

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[359]Brent Jensen, interview by Charles S. Peterson, tape recording, St. George, Utah, 27 October 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[360]Kappis.

[361]Ibid.

[362]George.

[363]Jensen.

five pair one time. She laundered them and thought she had a treasure. What Marie did with hers, I don't know. Yeah she liked new jeans. Get 'em broke in and they felt good.[364]

I . . . never seen her wear a pair of washed Levis. She always wore Levis but she gave them to somebody that could use them [when they needed to be washed]. . . . But she always when they got dirty--and sometimes they got pretty stiff--but she'd give them away and put on a new pair but I never did see her wear a pair of washed Levis. . . . I don't wear a pair of Levis that haven't been washed myself. Damn dye comes out of them. . . . Get a new pair of Levis and ride out here in the rain and you'd be blue when you got home. That's all she ever wore was Levis and a red shirt.[365]

And the fact that Marie's pants were just like any man's sometimes caused confusion.

Yeah, oh she always told a funny one and I don't know if that was true. Got up one morning and uh pulled on her overalls and went to town and got some coffee and reached in her pocket and there was some change. And she said, "I realized I didn't have my [own] pants on. I don't have any money!" They tell that in the old time over here; I don't know if it happened or not. But, "These aren't my pants. I don't have any money." She'd just stuff a check a blank check in her pocket and she'd write a check at the cafe or any place else. And she might have said something like that, I wasn't there at the time. But that was the story. "These aren't mine!"[366]

Several stories revolved around Marie's wearing a dress. They all tend to follow a common pattern: noting

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[364]Talbert.

[365]Gene Adams, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 2 August, 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Libray Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[366]Talbert.

that Marie only wore a dress one, two, or three times, and then proceeding to name the events. "Marie only wore a dress once, to Loraine's funeral," Gertrude Perotti claims.[367] But according to Ted Royer and Hardy Redd, "The only time anyone ever saw her in a dress was on her wedding day";[368] she may have worn a dress "once maybe when she married. I don't know if that's true or not."[369] Or it could have been at Will Harney's funeral: "I only saw her wear a dress twice--at Loraine's husband's funeral and one other time."[370] Even Marie seemed to speculate about her attire: "She told me once that she'd only worn a dress one time, or maybe twice in her life. Once to a wedding once when someone died. I don't know."[371] But funerals and weddings seem to be the common impetus for Marie's rare dressing up.

> . . . I don't think I ever seen Marie in a, seen her in a dress [more than] one time, at a funeral. That's the only time I've [seen] Marie Scott wearing a dress, is one time. She didn't believe in dresses. . . . Her sister wore them all the time but not Marie.[372]

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[367]Gertrude Perotti, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Ridgway, Colorado, 12 July 1993.

[368]Ted Royer, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 11 July 1993.

[369]Redd.

[370]Zadra, 15 June 1993.

[371]Redd.

[372]Adams.

> She wore overalls because she worked hard and I don't, well I guess she did go buy a dress when she lost her sister Loraine. She made a trip and got a coat and dress and did come into service. That wasn't her usual attire.[373]

Interestingly, at least one informant proceeded to recite the "Marie never wore a dress more than three times" litany even though his previous sentence had mentioned, in passing, that Marie had been wearing a dress for the Fourth of July in 1939. When asked whether she wore dresses often, the informant relied on folk legends instead of his own experience, but put the folk legend in the form of his own experience.

> [I saw her] two or three [times in a dress]. I don't think it was over three times anyhow. Will Harney's funeral, and then she borrowed a dress from Loraine and I think one other time I seen her in a dress. She got to wearing Levi overalls, Levi pants all the time.[374]

Of course, jeans made Marie's work easier, but her consistent work as she grew older seemed incongruous with her stage of life. Many stories focus on her ability to carry out her labor as usual, despite having become "a little old lady."

> And here's this little old lady--[at] this time, I don't know, she was probably in her seventies and I was in my thirties I guess. And we'd drive down through Beaver Mesa and try to get to these various tracts. And uh she insisted that she open all the gates. And I

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[373]Talbert.

[374]Domka.

> always felt guilty about that. Here was this little old lady shuffling along opening the gates and I'm sitting there in the pickup. . . .
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> I was always amazed to visit with her and note the direction the conversation would take. Marie wouldn't talk about her aches and her pains and her little problems like that. She'd talk about the price of cattle and what are you getting for timber these days. Uh, that kind of thing was just something you don't expect for an elderly [woman] to talk about. And she would talk about building fences and she always drove a jeep. She'd talk about her jeep and her meadows and when she was putting up her hay. . . To me [it was] really a unique thing to see this funny little lady so involved in this big operation.[375]

The fact that Marie's lifestyle did not fit what others deemed appropriate was nothing new. Younger people were always amazed at what she accomplished despite her gender, let alone her age. Some even called her "ahead of her time."

> This is another thing that is amazing to me is that she is so far ahead of her time. Uh, we're seeing women more involved nowadays. She was a whole generation ahead of her time. Few people have been able to do what she did. What's even more amazing is to see that she's a woman and a single woman for the most part.[376]
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> I mean, she was not one to. . . say, "No, I can't do it because I'm a woman, I can't do it because I'm afraid, I can't do it because of this." She had kind of an inner resolve and a will and she knew what she wanted. She always told herself what she wanted and then went after it.[377]
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> . . . Women didn't do that. They scrubbed the floor and cooked the meals and had the kids and... she

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[375]Jensen.

[376]Ibid.

[377]Redd.

> just uh, I don't think that that was that important [to her]. Say, I think she was pretty single-minded in what she did. Sure she made some enemies along the way. This day and age [when] people have things, some people don't like them just for that very reason. But . . . I imagine a lot of [women] would rather they didn't have to work as hard [as Marie did]. You can't discount that she put in hours and hours and stayed with something. If she got on a project she generally followed it through.[378]

As with most story types involving Marie, government agency stories occasionally revolve around her gender and the unspoken implication that her business was somehow unusual for a woman or that it created uncomfortable situations for the men with whom she worked.

> I have a little story I'd like to tell you that I was told about her. Her and the game warden was out some place checking the cows. They got caught out after dark in the night and they couldn't get back on horseback. They only had one sleeping bag and it got cold and Marie told him, she says, "We got one sleeping bag." She says, "If you get in here you're not going to freeze." And she laid the gun under her pillow and she says, "And you're going to sleep too."[379]

While Marie did not fit the age and gender roles considered typical during the last half of the twentieth century, she had plenty to say about the folly of those roles and the women who followed them.

> She had quite a sense of humor. She could laugh at herself. . . . She didn't have much patience, you know, with ladies' parties and foolishness like that. But she was busy, truly busy and she was doing what she

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[378]Talbert.

[379]Kappis.

wanted. It was her choice. Nobody made her do that.[380]

> Marie had a really keen sense of humor that I appreciated. I remember on one occasion when she was talking about the work that she did and she would talk about women. She says, "Women wouldn't have to worry about going on diets and things if their feet hit the floor at four a.m. every morning like I do." And uh she says, "And I get home when it's way after dark and by then," she says, "that's about all the tracks I got." . . .
>
> . . . She uh would drop by the office periodically and she'd [invite me to dinner.] And uh we'd go to dinner together. I remember one time she said, "Well, why don't you call your wife and see if she would like to go with us." She says, "You know how these women are. You need to call them in advance and give them time to put on their war paint before they go out."[381]

Marie apparently claimed, "You just can't do business with a woman."[382] Yet despite her protestations, Marie Scott often performed traditional female functions and even enjoyed them.

> I'd always get a kick out of Marie when she was getting ready to cook. People said that she really wasn't too much at being a woman, but I don't agree with them. She'd always get her little apron and put it on and get ready to get busy and cook her meal.[383]

Many people feel Marie liked men better than most women; yet she had plenty to say about the stupid things men did too. And she was none too fond of marriage.

> She didn't think too much of married life. Really she . . . always kind of criticized it. . . . When

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[380]Talbert.

[381]Ibid.

[382]Rule.

[383]Potter.

> [she would talk about her own marriage she said] she uh lived with a "damn man," she called him, and would trade him off for bobcats. But she got along better with men than she did with women. Oh she always gave men heck. She always said a man was just like a bronco--there weren't a lot of times where you could get along with them.[384]

> When she was married, she'd been an old maid for so long. Someone asked her, "What do you think about being married?" She said, "Well, having a man around is very much like having a dog around. They're more trouble than what they do good." Marie flat-out liked men. She had no use for women or children. Unless you'd talk about horses, cattle, sheep, acreage, or men, she wouldn't have anything to do with you.[385]

Marie never hesitated to voice her opinion about institutional folly either.

> Something that did bother her that I noticed was daylight savings time. Marie hated [it]. She says that it is the worst thing that had ever happened, daylight savings time, and she wouldn't change [to] it. She stayed on standard time year round. So you always had to make sure when you talked to her that you had the right time [if] you were going to meet her or something.[386]

Marie was also noted for her unusual expressions and colloquialisms. According to Brent Jensen, "Whenever you talked to Marie she. . . liked to use the word `swamped.' That meant she was busy."[387] William Waldeck and Harold George remember other unusual expressions.

> She . . . had very colorful speech. She uh, she

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[384]Zadra, 15 June 1993.

[385]Perotti.

[386]Jensen.

[387]Ibid.

> used all sorts of little similes . . . that came from the earlier days, and even some uh words that were unfamiliar to me. For instance, she once said that the fence line went "anagoggling" . . . across the field. And uh I think that saying is somewhat "caddywampous" as to what it means. It was just one of the things that she used. Another kind of a colorful saying that she had, she said that the land was so wet out there that it would "bog a Jaybird," if you could imagine such a thing.[388]
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> I asked her "How bad is that road up there, Marie?" And she said, "Oh, it's wet enough to [drown] a saddle blanket." She always had those expressions. And she always had the habit of saying "Yeah-yah."[389]

In fact, the Denver Post ran a short column called "A Way With Words" comprised entirely of Marie Scott quotations:

> **Asked about a neighbor:**
> "You can shake that whole family up in a sack and you wouldn't come up with the brains of an oyster."
> **Reprimanding a ranchhand:**
> "You sure are slow freight for this country."
> **On a business competitor:**
> "He's as two-faced as a double-bitted ax."
> **On a proposed land deal:**
> "We'll take that old papa around the barrel."[390]

But while the Post article claimed Marie always said "fine and dandy,"[391] the phrase "yeah-yah" was her real trademark. "She always said `Yeah-yah,'" Ted Royer remembers. Gertrude Perotti agrees. "She always said, 'Yeah-yah.' I never heard

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[388]Waldeck.

[389]George.

[390]Zeke Scher, "A Way With Words," Denver Post Sunday Magazine, 29 May 1983, 1-A.

[391]Ibid.

her say `fine and dandy.'"[392]

Marie and her ranches attracted Hollywood's attention as early as the 1950s, and several movies including True Grit and How the West Was Won were filmed on Marie's property. In fact, the region is ideal for classic Hollywood westerns: the Sneffles Range and the Cone areas with their snow-capped, rocky peaks and heavily timbered tracts offer perfect mountain scenery, while down in the valleys not far to the west are more arid stretches of butte, mesa, and sagebrush.

Marie grew quite fond of the actress Debbie Reynolds, who stayed with her while filming How the West Was Won and returned a year later to stay with Marie while making The Unsinkable Molly Brown. Marie's friends say she liked Reynolds because she too was hard working and independent. Almost all informants note Reynolds's affection for Marie and vice versa.

> Marie had a relationship with Debbie Reynolds the actress. . .I think there was a mutual respect there; they got acquainted. . . But they had this continuing relationship. And I remember Marie was telling me about making this one movie. Now, they had a team hooked to a wagon and it took off and Debbie Reynolds had to chase it to catch up with it. And I [guess when they] make movies they have to do retakes and reshoot it. She had to keep running after this wagon. And Marie said she sure was a good sport about it. [Of course,] she was making mega bucks doing it![393]

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[392]Perotti.

[393]Jensen.

But Marie did not buy into the film industry's rigid class structure. She insisted on extending her hospitality equally to all the film crew.

> Oh uh Marie also had, was almost completely classless, or without class consciousness. Everybody was a person and an individual and class didn't enter into it at all. There was a time and a place that she lived in that uh the movie group that was filming there was going to move out. I'm not sure whether this was a part of How the West Was Won or whether it was The Unsinkable Molly Brown.
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> Anyway, she had invited the star and the men and women that were starring in it to have lunch at her house, and she didn't realize what they did. They . . . were moving the equipment out . . . and they had uh a bunch of wagons . . . that had been sets. And they were using that also as a means of carrying out some of the equipment and gear that they had had there. And so they drove along the highway with this sort of caravan and that to uh where Marie Scott's place is.
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> And . . . the stars came in and Marie went in her old stove kitchen there to cook them up some steaks. And [she] happened to look out the window and she saw those other wagons out there. And she said to them, "What's that out there?"
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> "Oh," he said, "that's just some of the roustabouts and other people. They're just moving that stuff out."
>
> "Well bring them on in," she said. "Heck in an outfit like this, when it's time to eat, it's time to eat for everybody." In they came; Marie in her little stooped way got behind that old wood stove and cooked up a bunch of steaks and had lunch and was off.[394]

Like Marie Scott, the Debbie Reynolds of local character legends ignores class barriers. The most popular story about her stay in the area has Reynolds washing dishes at Marie Scott's sink following a large dinner for the cast and crew. Of course, all Marie's hired hands and cowboys

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[394]Waldeck.

mysteriously volunteered to help dry the dishes.

Marie and Reynolds even appear together in a studio publicity shot for one of the films.

> I don't know whether you've seen this picture [taken when] Debbie Reynolds was in the area. I think they were on Marie's place filming The Unsinkable Molly Brown. I've got a copy of that picture, Marie is there howling and the dog [Blaze] is sitting up howling and Debbie Reynolds is in the picture just having the biggest laugh.[395]

The two women also shared their divorce experiences (Reynolds's divorce from Eddie Fisher, after he left her for Elizabeth Taylor, had been a national event). When Marie complained to Debbie Reynolds that, "It cost me $2 to get married and $10,000 to get out of it," the actress is said to have replied, "My goodness, you don't know how cheap that was." Of course, Marie had to have the last word, and her retort emphasizes again her frugality: "You don't know how tough it was to get that $10,000."[396]

After completing their work, the stars and crew of The Unsinkable Molly Brown gave Marie a lighted picture of the Sneffles mountain peak visible from her front room window. The nearby town of Ridgway named a park after Reynolds, and her parents bought property in the area.

As they aged, both Marie and Loraine were actively involved in their community--in the small towns of Dallas

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[395]Ibid.

[396]Scher, "A Way With Words."

and Ridgway as well as in Ouray County and the outlying region. Often, they actively opposed developments that would affect their way of life. Both sisters supported the Ouray Protective Association from its 1976 inception to fight the West Dallas Feeder Canal, a huge project that would have drained at least three of the creeks in the area. The Association, comprised of local ranchers, succeeded in confining a planned reservoir/dam to the Uncompahgre River alone.[397]

Then in March of 1979, Loraine died. Some of her friends felt she had had a premonition that her death was imminent.

> One day I went to see Loraine. Her table was just piled with pictures and photo-albums. I asked her if she was putting her albums together. She said no, she was getting ready to burn the lot since she and Marie didn't have much time left and she didn't want people looking at her face after she was gone.[398]

Apparently, Marie suffered some kind of a stroke or heart attack shortly after Loraine died. In any case, she became disabled the last few months of her life.

Brent Jensen remembers the last time he saw Marie alive.

> I moved away from Colorado in 1978, moved to Idaho. And I told her I was leaving Colorado and she

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[397]"The Scott Sisters," Ridgway Recipes and Remembrances, 2nd ed. (n.p.: Ridgway Community Pride, 1985), 160.

[398]Perotti.

said, "Boy, is there any way you can stay?" And I told her [I felt I] needed to make this move. Hardest thing I'd ever done but I had to leave. She said, "Will you come back?"

"Oh sure I'll be back."

And she said, "Where you going?"

I said, "I'm going to Idaho."

"Well, if you got to go someplace, Idaho is probably as good as any place. It's a lot like Colorado," she said. So I moved in the spring of '78 and then I came back the next summer to visit. Called her up, her health had deteriorated considerably in that time. And she said, "Well come up and see me." So I went up and she said, "I want you to come back tomorrow [and] the next day." And so I did, I came back.

And she had Dick Swyhart lined up for the day and had a lunch she sent with us. And we went and toured over on the Cone property, the ranch property in San Miguel county. We toured around all day and just looked at ranch property and talked about Marie Scott.

And then that fall, November 5th of '79, she passed away. I saw her not long before that and she was kind of propped up there in her kitchen. She lived in that kitchen. And still running that ranch. Still involved right up to the very last.[399]

After Loraine's death, Marie had single-mindedly gone after the original Scott homestead, finally adding it to her own holdings before she too died six months later.[400] Many people claimed Marie thought she would live forever, until Loraine died and she suddenly realized she too was mortal.

Anyway, I got the feeling, and this is conjecture, that Marie thought she was indestructible, that she herself was indestructible. And she and her sister,

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[399]Jensen.

[400]See Cynthia Hansen-Zehm, "Lady in Red," Telluride Magazine, Summer 1990 (Telluride, Colorado); Bob Silbernagel, "Scott's Country," Daily Sentinel Sunday Magazine (Montrose, Colorado), 8 March 1981, 5A; and Zeke Scher, "Taxes Win Out: Cattle Queen's Estate Dwindles Away," Denver Post Sunday Magazine, 29 May 1983, 11A.

uh, were close but didn't live together. But they lived fairly close there. Within a block or two of each other. And then her sister died. It seemed to take a lot out of her. It seemed to be really hard on her. I think maybe for the first time she realized her immortality.[401]

Well this was probably back in the, uh, I don't even remember, early '70s, mid-'70s, shortly, not too long before she passed away. But, uh, she came in here one day looking for the district ranger. It was at lunch hour and I happened to be the only one in. I knew her well enough to visit with her a little bit, kind of joke a little bit and get by with it. She was saying she wanted to talk to him about a land trade. I just got to joking with her, kind of kidding, you know.

We'd say, "Marie, you know you can sit back and take it easy. I mean you're not getting any younger. You know, you can't take it with you."

She just looked me right in the eye and she had this sort of cackly laugh. She laughed that cackle and she say, "Sonny"--anybody that was younger than she was "Sonny"--"Sonny," she says, "If I can't take it with me I'm not going." Unfortunately she went and it's still there.[402]

Dad told Marie one time, "I don't know why you're accumulating all this land. You can't take it with you, you know."

"In that case, I'm not going," she said.

But of course, she did. . . .

I think she probably died of a heart attack. Mario told me that Marie kept saying, "Well, when I get ready to go I'll have to make a few changes. But I've got a good ten years left." Mario said he could tell she was only weeks away.[403]

I always gave geraniums to the bull buyers, and the last time she came to the [Redd] bull sale she didn't get out of the car. But they came up anyway.

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[401]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[402]John King, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 22 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[403]Royer.

> And Mario was there and bought some bulls. So I took her some big geraniums that day and she was so pleased. I think she thought she'd live until they bloomed [laughs]. . . Oh, I think she died soon after that. She didn't even get out of the car.[404]

> One time I came to her place and she said, "I got something to show you." So I noticed her . . . big picture window in front of her house, it faced the highway out there. And apparently some kid that lived down the creek a ways, I don't know, something went wrong, and [he] fired a rifle bullet into her house. I went to the picture window, [and saw it had gone through the] door from her living room into her kitchen, and the bullet traveled on over and hit the cupboard and fell into the sink. . . . And she was telling me this and it was just a big joke to her. She was having the greatest time with it. She said, "If I'd have been standing in front of that window, why that bullet would have parted my hair," she says.[405]

In more somber moments, though, Marie confronted with friends the prospect of her own demise.

> And then during this conversation it was very odd. She said, she asked me what I wanted to accomplish before I died. And I was so surprised to hear her say this because everybody always said that Marie Scott thought she was going to live forever. And I says, "Well Marie," I says, "I really don't know," I says. Well she said she would tell me what she wanted to accomplish. She said she wanted all of her gates, all of her fences and I can't really remember what else but she wanted them in top condition.[406]

Marie died in her home on November 5, 1979 at the age of eighty-three.[407] She was buried, according to a local

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[404]Redd, 16 August 1993.

[405]Jensen.

[406]Potter.

[407]"Obituaries: Marie Scott," Montrose Daily Press, 7 November 1979 (Montrose, Colorado), 2 column 5.

history,

> in a manner befitting her. . . . in a red jacket and a new pair of blue jeans and laid in a 2" thick, solid mahogany casket and buried under a huge pine tree looking up towards her beloved San Juan Mountains.[408]

A carving of the Lone Cone dominates her granite gravemarker in the Ridgway cemetery, bordering what once was her property. Marie had earlier requested that "memorial contributions be made to the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind" in Montrose.[409]

But Marie's death was not the end of her influence on the region. As the principal landholder in the area, she left behind a substantial estate. And as the last member of her family to die, she left behind no relative-heirs, so Marie's twelve beneficiaries or "debases" were friends and business associates: Mario Zadra, the person who came closest to being Marie's partner; Duane Wilson, one of her ranchhands; Charlie Cristelli, who worked as her sheepherder; Fred Richardson, another former hand; Richard Swyhart, who also worked on Marie's ranch; Howard Noble, fellow rancher; Mable "Sally" Lewis, her companion in later years; Denise Kay Adams, former County Commissioner in San Miguel County; Howard Talbert, another fellow rancher; Brent Jensen, BLM employee and friend; Delbert Frasier, a helpful

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[408] "The Scott Sisters," 161.

[409] "Obituaries: Marie Scott."

feedstore clerk; and William Waldeck, her attorney.[410]

Because Marie had debases (non-related beneficiaries) instead of heirs, the IRS levied "the maximum tax permissible at the time of her death: 70 percent. That meant the land had to be sold to the highest bidders just to pay the tax bill" and to give each of the twelve beneficiaries an equal share of her property.[411]

While the 1979 estimate of Marie's estate reached $15 million, changing land prices cut the total value to $12.2 million by 1982. The estate buckled under several legal disputes, and the IRS charged 20 percent annual interest against the unpaid taxes of the unsettled estate. Since William Waldeck, Marie's attorney, was one of her beneficiaries, David Wood of the Ouray bank was appointed as the estate's "personal representative."

In 1981, Montrose's Daily Sentinel reported that Dave Wood, as the estate administrator, had sold a large percentage of Marie's former property. "[Marie's] remaining lands [we]re being sold--on a cash only basis." Wood noted "We still have roughly 12,000 acres left to sell. . . in a number of parcels, the smallest being 440 acres and the largest, 4,735 acres."[412]

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[410]Zeke Scher, "Taxes Win Out."

[411]Ibid.

[412]Silbernagel, 5A.

The property was all zoned for agricultural use, but some of the beneficiaries wanted to divide their parcels into developments and smaller homesites than contemporary zoning allowed.

> Dick Swyhart, Scott's ranch foreman in her last years, bought a number of parcels of land from Scott before she died. On one 1,400-acre piece near Ridgway he and another man proposed building 250 homesites. But the Ouray County Commissioners denied the proposal because they said it did not meet their zoning requirements. Swyhart says he has abandoned the plan for the time being, although a court challenge to the zoning has been made.
>
> Ouray's zoning regulations may prevent much of her lands from being divided up, other than into 35-acre pieces as allowed by state law.
>
> Ouray County limits developments to non-irrigated meadowlands, and alpine lands, which are generally above 7,800 feet in elevation, are restricted to uses such as ranching, foresting, parks and underground mining, says Chick Rahm, Ouray county planner. Of Scott's land, he says, "An awful lot of it is either irrigated meadowland or alpine. The maximum density allowable would be 35-acre parcels."[413]

In 1982, with Marie's estate still unsettled, Dave Wood claimed,

> The IRS put us in a bind with that 20 percent interest. . . . We were forced to sell some land below the appraised value. An auction last October brought in a lot less than we expected. In fact, that was the basis of our claim for a tax refund of $500,000, which the IRS has just approved.[414]

Marie's debases each received $20,000 by December of 1982. Three months later they got another $40,000 apiece. By May 2, they had received a third "partial distribution,"

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[413]Ibid.

[414]Scher, "Taxes Win Out," 1A.

$25,000, for a total of $85,000. Only $1.02 million of the estate had been distributed to her beneficiaries.[415]

By 1983 though, "[a]ll but one 1,887-acre tract (on the west side of Dallas Divide and valued at $925 an acre) ha[d] been sold to 16 individuals or outfits." The IRS then took $4.7 million, Colorado took $1 million, and interest claimed $952,911.32.[416]

Most of the debases received individual parcels of land in addition to cash from estate sales. Many of Marie's beneficiaries have kept the land she gave them and added it to their previous holdings. Some, however, managed to subdivide their land, develop it into vacation homesites, and sell it to wealthy outsiders.

Outsiders were the only people who could afford the largest tracts that went up for auction to cover inheritance taxes. Ralph Lauren, the New York fashion designer, bought the largest tract, including Marie's original Ridgway ranch, which is still a working cattle outfit. But the international attention the estate auctions and subsequent developments brought to the region have inflated land prices, and many of the local ranchers are also being forced to sell their property to keep up with increased taxes from the higher land values. Marie's death introduced outsiders

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[415]Ibid.

[416]Ibid.

to the region on an international scale not seen since the gold rushes of the previous century.

CHAPTER 10

BUTTERFLY PINNED TO A SCREEN

After Marie's death her position in local folklore remained strong, perhaps growing even stronger as outsiders who moved into the region made area ranchers more aware of their own culture. It is often while discussing Marie's life that locals comment on the "wrong" things outsiders do. The insider/outsider differences appear most commonly in the form of projecting what Marie's reaction would be to _____ today. But they also show up in stories about her passion for the land, her work ideals, and her relationships with others. In fact, the ability to tell stories about Marie has become one of the subtle new esoteric markers.

Not only does Marie play a primary role in local character legends, but particular elements of her work and her land--elements in accord with regional folk patterns--are highlighted in stories about her life. As the jeopardized local culture fights against exoteric influences, Marie's insistence on excelling within folk norms and her exaggeration of folk custom provide sharp contrast to the contrived Western mountain culture outsiders try to create.

Television, music, and film personalities like Sylvester Stallone, Oliver Stone, Dennis Weaver, Billy Joel, Christie Brinkley, and others spend a few weeks of the year

in their vacation ranches or in the luxury ski resorts pimpling the mountainsides around Ridgway. Victorian timber frame houses and old rock churches in Ouray and Telluride have become exclusive tourist shops, supplying vacationers with Naugahyde and horsehair sofas, lodge pole pine beds, and southwestern pottery (probably made in New Jersey or trucked up from Arizona). Mountain Columbine flower seeds are about the only artifacts for sale that are actually indigenous to the region.

Even Ralph Lauren, whose 13,000 acre purchase kept most of Marie's Ridgway ranch intact, tried to revamp his new western setting in his own image of the Marlboro Man gone British Imperialist.

> The ranch, redecorated to his exacting standards, has become the setting for his collection of the "real" antiques that have inspired his clothes and furniture. Lauren has been able to design and build the structures of the western past on his own land, he has been able to hire cowboys whose rugged good looks complement his dramatic landscapes, and he has begun to produce steaks, a mythic food of the western diet, to feed his well-dressed customers.[417]

But when Lauren offered to redecorate the entire town of Ridgway to fit his aesthetic guidelines,[418] the locals refused to allow "that guy from New York" to tell them how

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[417]Ann Fabian, "History for the Masses," in Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past, eds. William Cronon, George Miles, and Jay Gitlin (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 237.

[418]Ibid.

to be Westerners.

Other outsiders, though, prefer to give Lauren credit for the beauty of Marie Scott's ranches. Vanity Fair characterized Lauren as a "real godsend to Ouray County. He set the tone for the new look of it--really beautiful, well-kept land'" (emphasis mine).[419]

Of course, to those who knew Marie Scott, she was the one who kept the land beautiful. Her perfectionism about land management, fencing, water control, and livestock care are gauged according to regional folk norms. True to Marie's legacy, today one of the surest signs of an outsider is the "incorrect" use of fencing.

Ralph Lauren's property now bears the mark of leisurely and wealthy vacationers' fences: a straight, square fence of stripped, rounded, and varnished lodge pole pine. These fences tend to be ornamental, rather than for pasture management, even on Lauren's showplace working ranch. By contrast,

> [Marie] kept the pastures in good shape. She wouldn't have pastured a ground to the dirt like this bunch for Ralph Lauren. . . . [His workers put up those] fancy fences, and if he comes in they pick up the beer cans and trash. She truly healed so many gullies and fixed good irrigation systems and did a lot of sod work.[420]

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[419]Ibid.

[420]Frances Talbert, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 3 August, 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

In local speech, these outsiders' fences are labelled "fancy" or "development" fences, and despite the celebrity status of new owners, the land is still Marie's:

> Heading for Montrose from Placerville past Leopard Creek, come up on the Dallas Divide. Marie's place starts when it gets over being steep; the fancy fence on the right-hand side wasn't hers.[421]

Too, the wrong kinds of fence signal the end of an era.

> Before the development fence is the north boundary line of her property. . . . A big share of her land on the north end is going for development, the land that was left to Sally Lewis. It ruined the ranching. People say it's too pretty a country for livestock. They put up rail fences, of lodge pole pine. Not like Marie's aspen worm poles. [But at least] the Ridgway lot was kept in one piece by the Double RL [Ralph Lauren's ranch].[422]

And since Marie so often symbolizes the regional way of life, insiders occasionally vent their frustrations with outsider peculiarities by projecting what Marie would think of the changing cultural patterns. "I don't think it would suit her a bit," Will Harney's nephew Tude Domka speculates. "Neither one of them, her or Loraine either. [To] see [the land] divided up, houses on it, that wouldn't suit them one bit."[423] According to Mario Zadra, "A man named Carsten is

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[421]Hardy Redd, interview by the author and Ted Moore, La Sal, Utah, 12 June 1993.

[422]Mario Zadra, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[423]Walter "Tude" Domka, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Ridgway, Colorado, 19 July 1993. Tape and

doing a lot of developing now--housing lots, mostly summer homes. Marie's probably turning in her grave."[424] Her attorney, William Waldeck, comments,

> I just wonder how Marie would ever react if she could see what has happened to the Ridgway area, in which it's become a. . . it's not the same old ranching area. It's an area in which people come to get away from urban pressures and to have ranches for the beauty etc. . . . Marie judged a ranch not only by its beauty--although she liked land, the picture of land and all--but [what] she liked is the yearly progression of things that happened on land, the changing of the season and the renewal of, the new crop of . . . animals that were growing up (I mean wild as well as domesticated ones) and the fields that went through their regular steps of being irrigated. The, uh, crop ripening and being harvested and all of this was something of--it sounds strange to say--but of beauty to her.[425]

In fact, even before she died, Marie's life came to be so associated with the local culture that insiders wanted their children to know her while she was still around. "Not long before she died," Ted Royer explains, "I took all four of my boys and we stopped at her house. They all got acquainted with Marie. I wanted them to know her."[426]

People who never met Marie could recognize her

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transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[424]Zadra.

[425]William Waldeck, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Grand Junction, Colorado, 4 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[426]Ted Royer, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Norwood, Colorado, 11 July 1993.

immediately from the local character legends about her.

> I was fascinated by her; that's just the kind of person she was. And I told my wife, I described her to my wife one day. And one day she came from the store and she said, "I saw Marie Scott at the store today."
> And I said, "How do you know Marie Scott? You've never met her."
> She said, "Well, you couldn't miss her from the description you gave."[427]

Informants don't hesitate to verbalize explicitly Marie's role as symbol of the region.

> Well Marie was, well she's legendary. . . . When she came to town people said, "There goes Marie Scott." . . . Marie was one of the most unique persons. . . that I've ever met. You know they're legendary figures, like John Wayne and Winston Churchill. I put her right in the same category with these kinds of legendary people.[428]

> [Marie was] one of the last retrievable characters of the frontier. That's really what Marie was. . . . She was in the transitional period that spans clear back to the time in which it was indeed the day of homesteading and development of the frontier. Too, all the changes that she had to make in her lifestyle and her methods of dealing. . . as all of the changes brought on by the urbanization of the country--not particularly there, the country in general--and the different types of communication and the different size units being necessary to make an economic go of it and all. And going through a period of real economic turmoil during the '30s and all during the Great Depression. But I for one would be very happy to see some of those traits and some kind of a picture maintained, or retained, of Marie Scott.[429]

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[427]Brent Jensen, interview by Charles S. Peterson, tape recording, St. George, Utah, 27 October 1993. Tape and transcript available in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[428]Ibid.

[429]Waldeck.

> I feel privileged to talk about someone as special as Marie Scott--the legendary person in Western Colorado, and certainly a person that I've held in high esteem as we were acquainted and still do after she's gone.[430]

Because Marie is so legendary within the region, outsiders often falsely claim to have known her in an attempt to establish themselves as insiders. Usually, though, they try to make Marie fit their image of the region just as others try to make the material culture fit their expectations.

> I've heard people that didn't know her say such things--"Yeah, I know Marie. She'd belly-up to the bar, you know, and light up a cigar."
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> She never took a drink probably in her whole life! She didn't smoke; she didn't, you know, use swear words as a common everyday part of her language or anything. She was very feminine even with her overalls. She liked her rouge. She always kept her hair dyed red and always had rouge, you know. I've heard her described as so masculine, but she certainly wasn't. She wore overalls because she worked hard. . . .
>
> Everybody you talked to [would say], "Oh yeah I know Marie." I think they wanted to be associated with Marie. Some of it, I used to [think they] were kind of tongue and cheek, you know: "Oh yeah I know Marie." You get right down to it and you know they didn't. That's where we got the story. . . my dad was in the hospital in Grand Junction. And I went down every night and stayed with my mom and took her to a beauty shop to get her hair washed. [We] got to talking about where we lived. Oh yeah, [the hair dresser] knew Marie Scott. And she's the one that went into this narration about bellying-up to the bar and how rough and tough [Marie] was.
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> [I thought], "Yeah you know Marie." I didn't challenge her. But I knew a lot of people that claimed to know Marie that I knew didn't.[431]

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[430]Jensen.

[431]Talbert.

Since Marie Scott's memory is so often falsely touted by those trying to gain insider status, some of the people who actually knew her are hesitant to discuss her life with obvious outsiders (like graduate students from Utah). One neighbor, for example, noting the hurt Marie felt over a newspaper article that misquoted her, said, "I don't really feel comfortable talking about her. She was a very private person. She told me, 'I don't want to be like a butterfly pinned to a screen for everyone to look at.'"[432]

Marie disliked publicity, claiming, "I don't need any advertising."[433] Yet as outsiders move in and insiders move out or die off, many of Marie's friends feel the necessity of preserving her memory and the culture associated with it as found in oral tradition.

Indeed, this is often the role given specifically to oral folklore: preserving memories of people and ways of life. According to anthropologist William Bascom, folklore, like other art forms or customs, originates with an individual. If it does not fill "a recognized or subconscious need" within the community or if it is "incompatible with the accepted patterns and traditions" of that community, it will quickly fade. If, however, the

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[432]Gertrude Perotti, interview by the author and Ted Moore, Ridgway, Colorado, 12 July 1993.

[433]Zeke Scher, "Cattle Queen's Empire Crumbles," Denver Post Sunday Magazine, 29 May 1983, 10A.

folklore fits the culture in same way, it relies on retelling, restatement, and reenactment to survive. Material folkculture, fences, for example, can exist independently for some time, but must also be repeatedly recreated to remain part of the culture.[434]

Thus stories about Marie Scott and the materials she created serve an important function within this mountainous Colorado community. While the stories circulate, the culture they represent still survives. It remains to be seen, however, whether the pattern of retelling Marie Scott character legends will continue with subsequent generations. It may be that Marie Scott stories are both regional and generational folklore.

As the stories are retold, they continually undergo a process of cultural rejection or further acceptance and retelling. If stories about Marie Scott survive the next generation, it will be because they serve some need within the community.

The current generation's folkculture, as it unravels itself in local character legends about Marie Scott, contains certain essential elements. First, Marie's behavior, while it often epitomized the best of the regional folk culture, had to be deviant to some extent to merit

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[434]William R. Bascom, "Folklore and Anthropology," in The Study of Folkore, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), 29.

attention. If Marie had not been somewhat unusual, her stories would be too mundane and commonplace for further retelling. The most strikingly deviant of Marie's behavior in the current stories is her ability to get by without men's help. Stories about her single-handedly saving her father's ranch serve the same purpose as subtle jokes about her sexuality (or lack thereof), her failed marriage, her acquiring "most" of her land from her former husband, and accounts of her jokes about other women. While the approach may vary, all these types of stories show Marie as different from "real" women as a means of explaining why she did not fit the cultural norm for the current adult generation.

Many informants explain Marie's deviance by claiming she was "ahead of her time" or "liberated before the women's movement." Yet some of the old-timers in the area understand what really made Marie unique: she was not ahead of her time, she was behind it. Marie was somewhat exceptional, even as a child, since her work was no longer part of the work expected of women. But for her mother's generation, the work was not that unusual. Since the norms had changed by the time stories started circulating about Marie, Ida's example and guidance no longer fit the culture, and she disappeared almost entirely from the character legends.

But Ida was not the only woman of her time to be

heavily involved in ranching. James and Martha Scott bought and mortgaged their property from a woman named Julia Trenchard. And a generation before Marie Scott, a woman named Grace Estep became legendary for her vast tracts of land (near what became Marie's summer camp) and her good management.

In fact, many of the older people who knew Marie Scott make the connection between her life and work and Grace Estep's earlier experiences. Grace Estep had owned much of Hasting's and Specie Mesas (which Marie later acquired) and she owned most of the land in Placerville. She also worked as a postmaster, collected and sold antiques, and ran race horses. Note the similarity between descriptions of her personality and stories about Marie Scott: "[Grace Estep] was a nice person," Doris Roof remembers, "[but] if she didn't like you, boy! you didn't want to be around her. But she was quite a character."[435] Howard Greagor, who has written at least three books about local history and stories, also mentioned Grace Estep in conjunction with Marie.

> I understand that there was a woman by the name of Grace Estep who is kind of a legendary person in this country. She put together a lot of things like Marie

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[435]Gay Kappis, George Kappis, and Doris Roof, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Telluride, Colorado, 14 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

Scott did. She was kind of an early land owner.[436]

Mrs. Estep came to Colorado from England with her husband, but she was later widowed.[437] As a single woman she, like Marie, inspired stories laden with sexual implications or with veiled questions about her lack of sexual relations.

> She built a place up there . . . on the upper end of Specie Creek where the cowboys. . . started down the hill. She had a big pasture there where they could hold their cattle. And uh this house, she had six or eight beds and she'd cook meals and furnish beds for cowboys that was waiting for their turn to ship cattle. And uh they called it Cowboy Heaven. I don't know everything that she furnished there, but [it] . . . must have filled all their needs, you know, to get such a name as Cowboy Heaven.
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> . . . Every day some cowboy would ride into Placerville and get the word about the cattle cars. Then . . . as he went back he'd spread the word to everybody. "Your cars will be here Wednesday, and yours will be on Friday." . . . But almost every day somebody would ride into Placerville and check on the cattle cars.
>
> That was another reason why the. . . CCC camp was here from about 1930, '33 or '34 till 1938, I guess. They built a set of corrals along the San Miguel River between the mouth of Specie Creek and Placerville. And that was an aid so the cowboys could coral their cattle and not have to night-herd. Because Placerville was only a mile away and the saloons and all this good stuff--why they'd go spend their money, you know, instead of night-herding cattle. Any cowboy worth [anything] would have spent his time in a saloon, I think.[438]

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[436]Howard Greagor, interview by the author and Ted Moore, tape recording, Norwood, Colorado, 4 August 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

[437]Kappis.

[438]Greagor.

As Grace Estep grew older, she left Cowboy Heaven and moved to Placerville where she concentrated on buying and restoring old houses.[439] She was one of the widows for whom Marie Scott occasionally bought supplies.[440] Mrs. Estep was yet another example to Marie Scott of capable women ranchers, like Ida, Martha, and Loraine Scott. As the times changed, though, many people forgot about the earlier acceptance of ranch work as a woman's role.

Another common element in stories about Marie is an emphasis on her lack of education. Often informants preface their anecdotes about Marie with a disclaimer that "she wasn't very educated, but she sure was smart." Stories about her attending school for only one day, about her getting the better of highly trained attorneys, and about her outsmarting government agencies validate the regional truism that school-learning does not make good ranchers. The idea that ranchers with little education are really smarter than the well-educated, wealthy outsiders who are overrunning the region has special appeal.

Similarly, Marie's focus on land offers a relieving contrast to the newcomers' emphasis on money, possessions,

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[439]Kappis.

[440]Walt Rule, interview by Ted Moore, tape recording, Montrose, Colorado, 21 July 1993. Tape and transcript in Utah State University's Merrill Library Special Collections, Logan, Utah.

and social status rather than a love of place. Many types of legends allude to this attitude: legends about Marie's concern for fences instead of houses, her habit of passing around blank signed checks, her ability to recall minute legal descriptions of her land, her extremely effective management, and her familiarity with the people inhabiting the region.

The local character legends told about Marie Scott serve several purposes within the community. They reveal her personality in ways that dusty documents in old courthouses cannot. They also indicate what makes her life important to the regional folk culture. Legends about real lives transcend one woman's life cycle; they capture the essence of her culture.

Shortly before Marie died, the new curator of the Ouray Museum called to ask if she had any property near town for sale. Marie snapped, "Ranchers don't sell; they acquire," and slammed down the phone.[441] Today many ranchers in the region are forced to sell bits of property to compensate for increased taxes from inflated land prices. As the culture and way of life change, chances are good the legends about Marie Scott will evolve to fit the newly emerging folk patterns or disappear entirely from oral tradition.

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[441]Adele Bower, interview by Ted Moore, Ouray, Colorado, 29 June 1993.

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