Crawford place. We cut one of her cakes to treat the boys with while we got ready for the dance. Then we took a second cake to the dance. Everyone took something to those old-timey dances. Well, the next day we were in trouble! Mrs. Godlove discovered the robbery and stuck a big butcher knife accusingly in the face of poor innocent Cookie, saying, “When I find who took my cake, I’ll run this butcher knife through him and clinch it on the other side.”

After the dance Lowry came in and exclaimed, “You went to the dance with all of those young bucks?”

I answered, sweetly, “I went with Marge.”

He said, sternly, “You are a married woman!”

Marge and I still laugh over that episode. The next time the boys went to town, they came home to the ranch about daybreak singing. They called themselves “The Salty Seely Serenaders.”

One June, about 1959, I had gone to Provo to bring Sunny home from the university. Lowry called and said, “See if you can find a boat and bring it home. I have a calf on an island in the river. The mother cow swam over, but it is too high and swift to get the baby back. I can’t find a boat here I can use.”

What an opportunity! And did we ever take advantage of it! We went shopping, all right, and bought a small boat and motor that could pull a water-skier. David and Sunny both chipped in all they had in savings. What fun we had water-skiing, the only real recreation and time off any of us had taken from the ranch.

It’s a good thing I love to read and can and be happy with myself because there have been very few women friends, except when we moved to Craig. Although all of the ranch women are friendly, some are shy and reserved. I had Margaret, Hugh’s wife, Mother Seely, and Lowry’s sister Marjorie when she visited from Chicago, for gabbing partners. And when we had guests, there was always a lot of woman talk. I guess we were always too busy to ride horseback three or five miles to the Sullivans or Burgesses just to gab. Lowry worked long, long hours and usually came in so late. In Craig I joined clubs and participated in community and church activities.

The Yampa River here at this ranch in Craig has come out of its banks twice since we have been here. It hasn’t been a threat to our lives, but it has been up to the top stair at our back door entrance. At that time the neighbors were here helping to start to move the furniture out. They had already moved the ranch machinery to higher ground. Everyone was here helping except Lowry. I finally was able to get him on the telephone
out at the Williams Fork Ranch. I told him we were being flooded out and for him to come in.

He said, “Well, I can’t come now because I’ve got a cow that’s calving.” So I told him to bring the cow in, calving or not, because we were going to be washed away if he didn’t get in here now! The men from the church and our neighbors were down here shoveling. Everybody was helping but Lowry. Finally, he came in dragging the trailer with the cow. I watched the cow in the trailer and she had her calf without help. He could see that he had to get to work right away. Some of the livestock had gotten marooned on an island the flood had created and they had to be rescued. While the flood was taking place we kept calling Steamboat Springs and Hayden (both upstream) to ask about the crest, but luckily it crested about ten o’clock that night and it didn’t come up above the top step of our rear entry.

We expected a flood this year, but we got cold weather and that slowed the runoff. Lowry had hired a machine to build a dike along the river, but we didn’t need it. When we get to thinking about threats to our livelihood, I’m really concerned about the unreasonableness of the BLM and some environmentalists who put wildlife above human life and wilderness designations against a way of making a living. We have to be able to make a living and furnish food for our country. I’ve been concerned about trying to keep a balance between factions.

I have worked in campaigns for national and local politicians and have called our senators two or three times. I’ve written, too, but when I write it down, usually I am too frustrated and too angry, so I don’t mail the letters. I’m always going to reconstruct the letter and then don’t get it done. I have written on occasion to our state and national senators and representatives. I always get answers, which I appreciate.

Several exciting things have happened over the years. When I was young I won an essay contest sponsored by radio station KSL. My mother called up to me while I was still asleep that the station was going to announce the winners. I crawled out of bed, came downstairs and sat on one of the steps trying to hold my head up. My name was the second one announced! I was so excited I leapt over the last six steps into my daddy’s arms. They took me to Salt Lake City where I got to read my essay over the radio. I had a choice for gifts and chose a beautiful, big doll buggy which I used later in my life for all of my babies.

Here in Craig we had a mooing man radio program. It had something to do with the milk program for the children. You were to write a jingle, and if your jingle won that day, you could guess who the mooing
man was. His voice would come on with a big Moo. I guessed it right off, right at first, but I didn’t try to write a jingle until the contest went on for a couple of weeks. I decided that nobody knew who it was, so I wrote a jingle and it was chosen and I won the contest.

It was disappointing and exciting once when Lowry and Hugh got me in a race. One time I said “I think it would be kind of exciting riding in one of those ‘ride and tie’ rodeos.” That particular morning we were doing a float for our Ladies Recreation Club. Millie Bilsing and I had gotten up at four o’clock in the morning, after working very late on the float, to scrape the frost and the ice off the freezers because we needed frost and ice on the float to make snowballs to throw at the spectators. Then I drove the vehicle in the parade. Our place was always a gathering place, and when I got home everyone had come in from the ranch. We had this great big crowd to hurry and fix dinner for. In came Lowry and Hugh to tell me they had signed me up to run in the relay race.

I said, “Oh, no, I haven’t ridden a horse for years. I need to get into shape.”

They said, “Well, you’re already signed up.”

Then, instead of just a short race, they had stretched it out so we had to go around that whole race track three times. To start out with, it was not fair. We didn’t have a starting gate, we just had a man who started the race by waving a flag, and you were to be off. The other contestant wouldn’t come up to the start line, and my horse finally had just settled down, then here came the other contestant at a dead run. She went past me and my horse had to start from a dead stop. I started out behind and I caught up to her once, but that was the second round. I was so exhausted those guys just pulled me off and threw me on the different horses at the relay points. I couldn’t even get off on my own. I came in close, but she still stayed ahead. When I got off, I was drained of strength and I just fainted. The ambulance came, but there was nothing really wrong with me. I was simply exhausted. In all the race was a mile and a half in length. Each horse was ridden a half mile on the relay. Lowry confessed later it was pretty dumb of him to enter me in a race when I hadn’t ridden in a long time, and had been up late the night before working on the float, and also had been at it since four in the morning getting the float ready for the parade.

Another highlight in my activities was when I was chosen to serve on the anchor committee for Craig’s Golden Jubilee Pageant. I was one of the narrators for the history section of the pageant.
When people talk about excitement in life, I found excitement in most everything I did. I loved school, I liked all my teachers. I liked the activities. I wasn’t good at anything, but I did everything in sports: ball, rifle, swimming, dancing, and tennis. My father had a beautiful home with a tennis court. I loved playing tennis. I loved riding. I ran for rodeo queen; I was the first attendant, once as a teenager in Idaho and later in Craig. I danced, I sang, was in plays and lots of clubs. When I moved into Craig I belonged to the Ladies Recreation Club. I enjoyed that club because many of our activities would involve the family—Lowry, and sometimes the children. I frequently was asked to judge speech contests at the school, and for the queen contests for radio functions. I belonged to the Community Club. I helped to get people to start thinking about getting rid of the mosquitos here. There were no outside activities, no flowers, yards, no outside furniture sold in the stores. It was impossible to live outside because of the mosquitos. I have been active with the Wool Growers Association, the Cow Belles, I worked in the church, the Missing in Action Organization, the Republican Women, and the PTA. And I was a room mother. At the school each room has a room mother. Every year I invited the children’s teachers to a dinner. I love to entertain and I did a lot of it. It seemed like everything I joined, I was eventually asked to be president. I think my talent was organizing and delegating. I could get people to work, to cooperate with each other.

Other exciting things were our trips to Europe and Mexico, and a stay in New York City where we saw *The Sound of Music* on stage. Those were exciting for me. Another time we were guests of Milburn Keith in Kentucky for the Kentucky Derby. We attended the Governor’s Derby Breakfast at Spindeltop Mansion. That was fun. We also met and visited with President and Mrs. Nixon.

Lowry had racehorses. Winning was very exciting, and so was learning the personality and disposition of each of those beautiful animals. Riding one of them, Ute Chief, frightened me a little because I felt I did not have complete control of all of his power and strength and high spirit.

Then we started showing purebred Hereford bulls at the National Livestock Show in Denver. Later we took fancy club calves to many shows—Phoenix, the Cow Palace in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Denver, as well as to private sales in California. These calves were for 4-H, Future Farmers of America, and college kids with fat steer projects. The fancy club calves were so beautiful and uniform when washed, scrubbed, dressed, clipped, and sprayed. Even their ears got
cleaned and their tails combed and fluffed. They won many grand champion prizes.

We often attended the 26-Bar Bull Sale in Arizona. It was owned by Louis Johnson and John Wayne. I enjoyed the personality of the “Big Duke” and his patriotism. The sale was quite a social event with their parties for the bull buyers. We also traveled to Oklahoma City for the National Quarter Horse Show where Lowry also won championships.

Then there were, and still are, innumerable roping events. I remember telling him, “Our lives are in a rut and they are full of manure. Animals control our lives.”

It has been satisfying for me to see David take his responsibilities in jobs in the community—scouting, church, president of the Cattlemen’s Association and president of the Farm Bureau. Geddes was an active member of the Jaycees and worked enthusiastically.

I really enjoyed the life we lived in Grand Junction. Lowry had bought a stable and with it came a lovely, large house. It was an interesting, but challenging house; it had a swimming pool in the living room and beautiful flowers and fantastic views. We had many great friendships there. I was a licensed real estate agent and worked at that. That was a different kind of ranch life.

But all the way my priorities have been my husband, my children, and the ranch.
Chad Moore

Chad Moore's father, Andy Moore, has been described to me as the epitome of a western cowboy. With his two sons and an occasional ranch hand or two, Andy made a name for himself by developing a good-sized herd of cattle. In a tragic accident while on the range he lost one of his two sons. Chad was there at the time of the accident, but there was nothing he could do. Even today in this wild and dangerous country medical help is miles and miles away.

Chad lives in Green River and carries on running cattle at his ranch headquarters at the Texas Well. The well is about fifty miles south of town across some of the best grazing land imaginable. That is, when it rains! His dad cross-bred stock until he developed a breed that could withstand the desert life better than the pure Hereford. Chad has continued with that science, and I honestly think he will never retire from life on the range. Neither will he change his attitude about the BLM. He has very little good to say about that outfit. Just ask him!

July 21, 1994
Green River, Utah

My dad and his dad and the rest of the family left Texas and worked their way up to Wyoming. Dad and the family came to Green River after they left Wyoming. They ran horses out there on Dead Horse Point. They gathered a bunch of horses and shipped them to Boston to sell them. My uncle accompanied the horses to Boston, and when he came back he had on a new suit of clothes. They asked him how much money he got out of the horses, and he said, “That was it.” So they sold
the horses. They had thoroughbred mares and Hambletonian studs. I don’t know if they were selling the horses to the army or what, but when they didn’t make any more money than that, they sold the mares for ten dollars a head. That is what they cleared after freight and feed costs were subtracted. The different family members all took their share of the money and went their own way. My dad went to work for Neal McMillan. He was down in Sevier County over near Richfield. That’s where Mother was raised, and that is where he met her. They got married in 1920, and moved out here to Green River where we have been ever since.

Pa worked for McMillan until he went in the service, and when he came back out, McMillan had gone broke. Pa started buying a few cattle, and kept adding a little bit to them whenever he could. He ran his cattle just north of Green River where Wayne Smith runs today. From there he moved out onto the San Rafael River. He didn’t like the river because of the mud in the spring. That’s when he bought some springs off Neal McMillan and moved the head camp out further on the desert. Out there he bought Dugout Spring number one, number two and number three, and bought Twin Spring, too. It was there that he headquartered the camp. Back in those days if you owned the water, you had the land.
When some people in Green River wanted to sell a few head of cattle, then my dad would buy those and add to what he had. He didn't borrow from the bank. He didn't believe in borrowing money when he didn't know whether or not he could pay it back. We started from there, and after we got too big for that area, then we moved on up and bought the Tomlinsons’ spring called the North Spring. We moved our headquarters up there. You couldn’t get an automobile in there because it was too sandy. When we were little, Mother drove the wagon to get there. If it wasn’t the wagon, it was pack mules. We stayed there at North Spring until 1939 when we bought the Texas Well from George Franz, and that is where we are headquartered today. We just kept adding to the place and we had it pretty good until the BLM came along. When they came along, things started going back downhill.

Every so often somebody would quit ranching and Pa would buy them out and we would get back up there a ways, then the BLM would give us another cut. Then someone else would quit, and we’d buy their grazing rights. We had to buy a ranch down on the San Rafael River to get our original grazing permit so we could have commensurates. We have to have deeded land that we own before we can get grazing rights or rights to use water on the public lands. So much deeded land allows one to have commensurate rights in the public domain. People can also get commensurate rights on springs or wells. We bought that land on the San Rafael River from the bank; it was 320 acres and Dad bought it for fifteen hundred dollars Noah Aubert had it and went broke. Then the bank had it and couldn’t sell it because it was during the Great Depression of the 1930s, so Pa bought it. Then he picked up four hundred acres from the county in 1936 for a dollar an acre for taxes and added that to our place. We kept it until 1980 when we sold it to the Utah Power and Light Company.

When the BLM came along, we had a permit for six hundred head of cattle. This permit was on water and land both. You had to have feed in a four-mile radius around your water holes to take care of so many head of cattle, and on that land you had to raise feed to take care of so many for two months.

I don’t remember the year that it was dry and the BLM cut everybody by one-third of their number. The rancher whose grazing rights were based on water was cut on water, and the one whose grazing rights were based on land, the number of cattle he could graze was cut. As we were based on both land and water, we took a double cut. We would have somebody from the BLM office come out and take a look, and it
was just one man’s opinion on how many cattle one could run. It didn’t do any good to take them to court, which we did. We still lost, so we got cut back bad on that deal.

In 1980 we sold the ranch and the rest of the deeded land on the San Rafael, but we kept our permits for grazing. We had 718 acres of deeded land, and we ran six hundred head of cattle. We were up river about fourteen miles above the Chaffin Ranch. They kept cutting us down, so now we can’t even run four hundred. The BLM haven’t been our favorite people.

You have to have deeded land, or you have to have enough water to handle them. We had both. There were only two outfits that had both, ours and Pearl and Slim Baker at the Biddlecome place known as the Robbers Roost Ranch. Slim Baker was there when the BLM took effect. His grazing rights were all fixed on water. The Biddlecome Ranch sold to the Ekkers. The ranch house is at Crow Seep where a good spring flows.

We always had a dispute with the BLM over grazing. They say we can run four head to a section. We always said we could run eighteen, sixteen to eighteen. They wanted to know where we came up with that figure. I said, “I couldn’t tell you. But,” I says, “I know we can run more than four.” My dad always said we could run about sixteen head. That was about all we wanted to run. They would eat off half the grass and leave half, so that’s what we did. In 1939 we bought George Franz out. That was another permit, but we didn’t get any deeded land with it. Then we had to lease a lot of school sections. At one time we had 104 state school sections leased. That is a lot of land, sixty-six thousand acres. We had some of them leased north of the town of Green River. It didn’t make any difference where you had them leased just so it was on the books that you had that many acres leased. That was all the BLM cared about. Then finally they came and they were going to divide us up. That was when we took a big cut in our permit and they put us all under a fence. They wouldn’t let us lease any sections that weren’t under our fence. That really cut us back. They built boundary fences around each permit holder, and I couldn’t have a lease over here in this other guy’s allotment. We had those leases for twenty years, but we had to give them up, so we transferred them over to our deeded land.

We used to run six hundred head; we had a permit for six hundred when we first started. We never did own more than 718 deeded acres, but we had one hundred and some sections leased. We didn’t run any sheep. To run the cattle we never did hire more than two men. I was going to school, so Dad hired one man to work the cattle and one man
to farm at the ranch, just out there in the summertime. At melon picking time, the hired hand would leave the ranch and go pick melons. He could make more money doing that than farming on the ranch.

When the war came along we had three men working for us then. They kept drafting them as fast as we could get them. I was still going to school and my brother was going to college. Soon my dad and I were the only ones left. They had taken all the hired hands and Bill too. Bill, my brother, died in 1982. We were putting a well in out here on the desert, and he came down to help me. We had a winch truck out there. We broke a rod off, and when we went to pull it up a chain slipped. Everybody just stepped back when it slipped, and when Bill stepped back, he fell over backwards and hit his head on a bucket of cement and severed his spinal cord. He died right there.

We used to run up north into Antelope Valley all the way over to Horseshoe Canyon, but when the BLM divided it up, they took that away from us. They said we had too much country. We’re the only outfit out there that ever drilled a well. The Chaffins were great hands to build ponds. They were underneath the ledge, so we never ran cattle with them. They had a few head of cattle down at their ranch that would get out here on the desert, but their main herd was Under the Ledge, so we never mixed with them.

The Chuchuru, a sheep outfit, bought the Tidwells out, and another sheep outfit, the Moyniers, bought the Chaffins grazing permits and ranch. The Chaffin Ranch was sold four times before it was sold to the Utah Power and Light Company. The old sheepherders, they got all over the area. The Moyniers had a herder named Pete Masset. Old Pete never had a big bunch of sheep, if I remember right. I just remember going out there with my dad in the wintertime on the weekends, and if they was going through the country, Pa always stopped and talked to them. I remember he liked kids, Pete did, and he was always friendly with me because I was just a kid. I never really knew him. I think the Moyniers were in bad financial trouble. I could be wrong about this, but I think he told his herders—Pete was one—if they would stick with him he would pay them in sheep. And he did. So they had a few sheep to call their own so they could sell the sheep and get a little bit of money. Then they got in the business that way. Pierre Moynier always paid them what he said he would.

The Tidwells grazed on the North Spur, north Horseshoe. They used the land, and now a cowman owns that land from Horseshoe Canyon over to the dirt road to Green River. But he has never had a cow
or sheep out there for about six years now. There isn't any water in that area, that's why it looks good today. No one is going to run stock there if there isn't any water. Chuchuru bought Tidwells' ranch, and that is when they put that pipeline down in Horseshoe Canyon. They used to take sheep in there, into Horseshoe, to water them. In the spring when the ewes got heavy with lambs, they told me, the sheep can't take that. It's a long ways down there, and those sheep get full of water and they can't pull up out of there. There could be all the feed you want up on top, but there is no water up there, so they can't move back and forth. That is why they moved over to Keg Spring. There was a pipeline in the canyon down there, so they would move down there for maybe another three weeks. Depending on the weather, they might stay three weeks, but if it got cold the pipeline would freeze, and they couldn't even pump it. Then they would go back over to Colorado. But it got so it didn't snow any more around here, so they would go south and get over there where there was some feed and water. Got so it wasn't worth it to stay in the canyon.

Back there, anyone who looks at Antelope Valley says that's the most wonderful place on earth, but when they looked at it and there isn't a water hole on it, no wonder it's good-looking grass. You can't graze where there isn't any water.

I've never been Under the Ledge. When we bought George Franz's Texas Well out, he had a permit down there with the Chaffins, but the BLM wouldn't transfer that over to us. They told Pa he had too much anyhow, so outside of that we didn't have any reason to go down there.

They put sheep ahead of cows on these mountain pastures. The sheep go through and eat all of the larkspur out of the grass. The larkspur will kill a cow, but won't harm a sheep. So you know darn good and well that cows will follow sheep, eat in pastures the sheep have grazed in.

Larkspur isn't found on the desert. It belongs to the buttercup family. The western larkspur is a native to the Rocky Mountain country. It is highly toxic in higher elevations with larger leaves and taller than the species found at lower elevations. It is highly toxic to cattle, although the cattle can follow sheep on it, but it doesn't bother the sheep. If the sheep graze it first, then there is not enough left to bother the cattle. The only way you can kill it is to graze it with sheep or spray it.

Locoweed, sometimes called crazy weed, is a member of the pea family. Any livestock can be poisoned by eating locoweed. Horses never recover once they are poisoned. Cattle gain weight slowly and often will abort their calves after eating locoweed. Sheep abortions also are high after eating locoweed. Livestock generally avoid eating the crazy weed
until feed is scarce, but once they have eaten it, they seek the plant out. In our area we have quite a lot of locoweed. In years past we have had to move off of certain areas until after the weed has come up and flowered out. It’s worse when the weather is dry; in dry weather and after it has flowered out and dried out, the cattle will eat it. It seems to bother their nervous systems. They have no sense of balance or movement. Finally, they just die. They get to a water hole and just stand there and swallow, but never get their heads down and drink. It is a pitiful sight to see. One year Ekkers and we lost just about all of our replacement heifers because we had them in town and when they got out here the grass had just started up and the locoweed was thick. It got just about all of them.

One year out here on the desert we had a sheep outfit come in. They were south, between the Texas Well and the Dirty Devil River. There isn’t any water down there and the sheep were eating the locoweed when it came up in the spring of the year. The sheepherder told the owner that he’d better do something, that the sheep were eating that water weed down there. The owner of the sheep said, “Just leave them down there. We don’t have to haul water if they are eating that.”

The sheepherder told the owner to “. . . find a replacement for me because I’m not staying. It makes the sheep go crazy.” Within three weeks the sheep started dying. Their eyes rolled back in their heads and they died. They got some of them up to our corrals at the Texas Well and started skinning them. They were dying faster than they could skin them.

We tried to tell the owner that was what he was going to get into if they ate that weed, but he ignored us like he did his sheepherder. He tried to trail what was left of the herd over to Colorado, but he lost everything he had before he got to Colorado.

We do have coyotes in this country, but they aren’t a great problem to us. We probably lose three or four calves a year, and we have calves with their tails bitten off. We don’t have any lions or other predators, so we’re pretty thankful we just have the coyotes to contend with.

I don’t remember larkspur being a problem around Moab, but during the last ten years or so the Taylors had to buy some sheep to go ahead of the cows to eat the larkspur, especially in the timber. Over here at the M & O Ranch, the Mountain and Oak Springs Ranch, they went to sheep finally because so much larkspur has showed up.

I remember when the BLM first came into effect, the first thing they tried to do was take a well, our Texas Well out there, away from us. That was in ’39. The BLM never did do nothing. I guess the sheepherders came from Colorado, we had eight or nine herds that came from
there living out here. Well, when the BLM came in, that stopped that. Those boys didn’t get to renew their permits. One guy owned I don’t know how many permits, but he didn’t even have any sheep. He just owned a lot of land there, and sheepmen leased the land from him. When the BLM came in effect, he was smart enough that he applied for permits down here attached to that land of his. So if you wanted to run out here, all you had to do was go talk to him. He’d let you run on his permits. He was making money off them. Finally those old boys got tired of paying him, and some of the permits got set aside. I don’t know of any good the BLM did because everybody started going downhill after that. They never did anything to help you. They were always giving you a cut, or you can’t do this, or trespass here. The BLM never did any good for anybody that stayed here. And they knew we had to stay here. We were here because there was no place else to go. So we just stayed there and made the best of it.

The shepherders, though, they could pack up and trail the sheep. Back then they didn’t haul them in semis. They’d trail them into Green River and go out across the ground and graze it. They had a cheaper rate at Thompson than what it was here in Green River, so they’d trail them from here to Thompson where they’d put them on the rail to send them to Montrose or even to Grand Junction. They got all over the country and ate it coming and going. That’s what was wrong with the country.

There is no place in this country that has been hurt by overgrazing, because if you overgraze, you won’t make any money off the land, so you won’t hurt the land by overgrazing it. If we get enough moisture, you couldn’t get enough stock together to eat it off. In good years we got plenty of feed; if it doesn’t rain, then we haven’t got it.

We had a little cabin over at North Springs. The roof half caved in and we didn’t do anything about it. The BLM said you either fix it or get rid of it. I said, “That’s a historic building. It’s even on the map. It’s a hundred years old, and you people have to take over.” I was just kidding this old gal. She’s the one I report to at the BLM.

She said, “That’s right. We don’t want to argue with you over that. We want it cleaned up.” Well, it should be cleaned up and so we’re going to do that. At the dugout we had a cabin where you could get in out of the weather. It didn’t come up to their standards. Every Tom, Dick, and Harry that came by stole something from it. The table was gone, the stove was gone, the beds were gone. Everything had been taken out of it. We went down there the other day and set fire to it and buried the remains. And that was that.