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**George and Eva Colgate Oral History Summary**

April 14, 2006

Interviewed by Colby Colgate

George and Eva Colgate, interviewed on April 14, 2006, shared memories of their lives in Custer County, Colorado. George grew up on a family property near Hillside, owned for over 100 years, while Eva's family moved to the area from Pueblo seeking a better life. Their childhoods were filled with hard work, from maintaining wood supplies to milking cows and tending gardens. Both families relied on subsistence farming and lived through significant historical events, including the Great Depression and World War II.

George served in World War II as part of the Army Engineers in Europe, returning home after sustaining serious injuries. Eva shared stories of growing up in a one-room schoolhouse, riding horses to school, and participating in community events like box socials and quilting bees.

Both reflected on the changes in Custer County, noting its shift from an agricultural and mining-based economy to one dominated by tourism and part-time residents. They lamented the loss of rural traditions, such as local dairies and deep community ties. They also described how climate change has affected the region, with shorter winters and less snow.

The Colgates hoped for the county to maintain its rural charm, valuing its simple lifestyle, friendly people, and the majestic Sangre de Cristo mountains. Their stories offer a rich perspective on life in the Wet Mountain Valley and its evolving identity.

*This summary was created with ChatGPT.*