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Summary of Oral History Interview with Marie Green

October 24, 1985

Interviewed by Barbara A. Hard

Marie Daniel Green was interviewed on October 24, 1985, at her home on Four Mile Lane, where she discussed her family history, childhood, and life in Custer County. She was married to Alonzo George “Bounce” Green and had three sons: Richard, Frederick, and Jerry.

Marie’s family, the Halls, originally came from North Carolina, migrating to Colorado in 1883. Her grandfather, Dave Hall, and his brother, Merriman, sought new opportunities after the Civil War. They settled in Red Canyon, drawn to its red soil, which reminded them of their homeland. Initially farmers, the family later transitioned to cattle ranching. Her mother, Mabel Rosita Wilson, moved to Colorado as a child after living in multiple states.

Growing up in Phantom Canyon, Marie attended a one-room schoolhouse and later high school in Florence and Cañon City. To afford her education, she worked as a housekeeper and nanny. She became a teacher, working in rural schools before moving to larger schools in Silver Cliff and Westcliffe.

Marie met her husband at a community event and they married after a long courtship involving frequent horseback rides. They lived on a homestead in Phantom Canyon, gradually expanding their home as their family grew. The ranch life required hard work—raising cattle, growing crops, and preserving food. She recalled the difficulties of rural living, including reliance on kerosene lamps before electricity was introduced in the 1940s.

Community involvement was central to her life. She helped establish the Extension Homemaker’s Group and participated in school programs, dances, and holiday celebrations. Her family frequently attended local gatherings, playing music, dancing, and organizing plays. She also witnessed the struggles of the Great Depression, including the government buyout of cattle due to drought, and the 1930s banking crisis.

Over time, Westcliffe changed significantly. Small farms gave way to larger ranches, businesses declined, and new residents altered the community dynamic. Despite these shifts, Marie remained committed to preserving family traditions and fostering close relationships. She took pride in her family’s resilience, her children’s careers in education, and the technological advancements she had witnessed.

Her interview provides a rich account of early life in Custer County, emphasizing the challenges and joys of ranching, education, and community building.

This summary created with ChatGPT.

