

"The first settler here, I heard, was a Mister Lyons, Jarred Lyons. The Reager place was where he lived. They had a store there, the Lyons Brother's Store. I assume it was there long before the railroad. There were other families followed by the Lyons who were merchants and had property. At one time a neighbor farmer bought milk and made cheese. My grandfather sold milk to him and the neighbor would drive to Craig and on the way there sell the cheese. He was known as the old Austrian cheese seller then.



First train traveling into Sidney and Steamboat Springs

"After the railroad came, there was also a boarding house and a storage house for the hay. They raised hay on these bottom lands and at one time these meadows produced more meadow hay per acre than any in North America. They stored baled hay here. The store location was also a creamery and right across the road what we used to call 'The Black Building' in the early days was the blacksmith shop.

"There were probably about ten people in the immediate community and we had a school house. Right across from the railroad was the community church. It sat there till the early 30's. and the Methodists sponsored it, then it was so close to Steamboat and was unused so the conference rules required it be sold. I don't believe there was ever anybody in that church on the hill, but I have heard that there was one funeral in it. When it was built there was a corner stone and a Bible put in the corner of the church.



Transportation during the winter

"The present church in Steamboat was built in 1960. Being that our church was a part of the new one then, Virginia Andrew and I went up there to get the corner stone. It now sits in the new church in Steamboat. We in Sidney went to Sunday School at the community church during the twenties. Later if we went to church at all, we went to Steamboat. The Methodist minister from Steamboat would come out on Sundays and conduct services. There were very few in the congregation, only about twenty, but at times there were quite a few visitors. Sometimes the minister would come out in the winter when the church was snowed in and would have services in the Sidney school house.

"In the upstairs of the early store there was a pool hall. Long before down the road there used to be a saloon, the Old Gus Durbin saloon; it was a stopping place. There were people with horses who would ride to it. And the Sarvis Timber Company men during World War I, and possibly in the twenties, would stop there. I remember floated logs down the river and I've heard tales of those timber workers who would come over to the saloon and buy whiskey. They were going up and down the rivers to keep the logs moving down to the Sarvis Timber Sawmill near Steamboat. It was quite a logging operation with seven miles of flume made out of wood. The lumber was shipped to the sawmills. You can still see remains of the flume there on Service Creek.

"A big shipment of cattle would go out of here in the fall, sometime in October. It was a going thing. Sometimes the corrals wouldn't hold all the cattle and you could see herds of cattle being held up the lane there till the brand inspector could brand them and load them on the cars to haul them away. The cattle came from Trout Creek area, Pleasant Valley and the Mesa, just clear around.

"That was the common practice, shipping cattle in the fall. It was something to look forward to, there were as many as twelve car loads a day that would go out on the weekend in the falltime. There would be over a thousand head shipped out. If there was a car full of cattle going to Denver then you could get a pass and ride to Denver on the caboose and come back on the passenger train. A group would get together, if you had any amount of cattle going, get a pass to Denver, go to the stockyards and see the cows sold. They did this every year. I only rode the cattle drive once, in the fifties. We left here in the afternoon and reached Denver about daybreak. The trip was free if you had cattle, it was the depression during the thirties and the far cost five to ten dollars each way. It was pretty expensive.



Sidney General Store

"I wasn't around when the railroad hit Steamboat in 1908. There were long freights and huge locomotives that they called Mallis and some of them Mikes. Three huge steamers

would be the most you would ever see, they made a lot of pollution. It isn't the steam but the coal burning. There had to be a fire in the tender just like a fire from a stove and also the steam would come out, but they were also very efficient. They had to have either a V or a turn table to turn the locomotive around, and they didn't have one in Sidney. There was one in Steamboat where they turned it around, and another one in Craig so the train only passed through Sidney.

"A group of local people organized a store there and called it the Valley Mercantile. It was an impressive building with a high front and a pool hall upstairs. It didn't pan out because Steamboat was too close. People thought with a better road instead of trading at a country store they would go to Steamboat. Now, a town like Clark where they are twenty miles from town had a decided advantage. People won't go all the way into Steamboat but would shop at Clark. I remember the store keeper's wife said 'People just used our store as a place of convenience,' which was very true. The last people who owned it were the Iacovettos of Phippsburg. The old storekeeper who owned it was Tom Wismer. He got older and sold out and went to Denver. He sold it to the Iacovettos who used to own a store in Phippsburg. Ray was one of their boys. The old people are still living, but they are no longer in the store. They bought it in 1940 and closed it in 1941. It has been torn down since then.

