

FOSS, FRANKLIN W.
SEPTEMBER 7, 1852—FEBRUARY 1, 1937

The Wheatland Times
February 4, 1937

Mr. Franklin Foss, who for many years has lived on his ranch near Diamond, Wyoming, died at his home on February 1st. He was more than eighty-four years of age, but had enjoyed good health, until the sudden illness which caused his death.

One of the real pioneers of Platte County, Mr. Foss was the first railroad agent at Chugwater. He was born in Maine.

Surviving relatives are a son, Ned, who is postmaster at Diamond, and who made his home with his father, a sister and a niece of Denver.

Funeral services were conducted Wednesday by the Watson & Dennis Home for Funerals, at the Masonic Temple in Wheatland. Mr. Millstead of Chugwater had charge of the final rites. Masonic services were held at the grave, with the Chugwater Masonic lodge in charge. Interment was made in Wheatland.

The complete obituary will be carried next week in THE TIMES.

The Wheatland Times
February 11, 1937

Frank W. Foss was born in Hiram, Main, Sept. 7, 1852. At an early age he moved with his parents to Chelsie, Vt., and later to Cornish, N.H. Here he entered the U.S. army and was immediately transferred west to help put down the Indian uprising in 1872. Gen. Crook was then in command.

He took part in some of the Indian battles and at the time of the Custer massacre was on duty in the National Park. His company was ordered on a forced march to the battlefield to bury the dead. After leaving the army he did several and various kinds of work. Drove stage coach, built telephone lines, carried mail and became a telegraph operator. He was transferred to Chugwater in the old stage coach days to take care of the work here, and later when the railroad was built was made station agent in addition to his other work. This was in 1884.

Mr. Foss was associated with the growth of Chugwater, especially ever since its beginning, in fact he was Chugwater for many years. Station agent, postmaster, justice of the peace, banker and general advisor for years. Ranchmen depended on him in many ways.

In 1880 a young lady, Frances Doolittle, came west. She became the community seamstress. She wasn't long in the country when it was evident that Mr. Foss was interested. They were married Jan. 17, 1882, in Cheyenne, and at once were at home to their friends.

The young people in addition to their Chugwater home began to plan on a ranch home also. They soon had some holdings on Chugwater creek near Diamond and to that they added year by year.

In 1913 he resigned the agency of the Colorado & Southern railroad, built himself a home in Chugwater and moved the post office there, continuing as postmaster. In 1914 he resigned the postmastership also and began to take more interest in his ranch. He also went into partnership with Mr. Luke in a plumbing and small hardware business. In 1916 the Banks hotel burned, taking with it the Foss residence and from that time until his death the ranch was his home.

Frank W. Foss during his long and useful life made many friends. Though rough, sometimes seemingly on the surface, he was as tender as a child inside. Someone has aptly put it

in this: "He had a heart as big as an ox." He lived quietly, caring little for public show or display.

In his thinking he was decidedly independent. He admired achievement wherever he found it. Loved the beautiful things in music, art and literature. Counting friendship as his greatest asset he lived it loyally to the end.

Sam W. Foss, the poet and relative, puts it right in these lines:

"Let me live in a house
On the side of a road
And be a friend of man."

This was Frank W. Foss.

In the spring of 1912 Mrs. Foss was accidently killed while riding with Mr. Foss by falling off a small motor car. They were traveling by rail and were on their way back from the ranch.

How it all happened was never definitely known, but it was an experience from which Mr. Foss never fully recovered. Grief stricken for weeks, it was a long time before he could reconcile himself to the inevitable.

Funeral services were conducted in the Masonic building at Wheatland by Chugwater Lodge No. 23, of which the deceased was a charter member, J.R. Milstead, Junior Warden, acting as Chaplain, and the body laid to rest by the side of his wife who had preceded him almost 25 years.

The Watson & Dennis Funeral Home was in charge.

Acting pallbearers were: Bert Morrison, Hugh McDonald, Gus Miller, Mangus Larson, E.M. Hedges and Henry Gustafson.

Honorary pallbearers: Ed. Banks, Robert M. Grant, Wm. Wilde, F.B. Stanfield, A.R. Bastian and D.M. Carley. Mr. Carley, on account of sickness, was unable to be present.

He leaves to mourn, one son, Nedmond, of Chugwater; a sister, Myra Bachelder, and her daughter, Hazel Bachelder Dunn of Denver, other relatives in Vermont, as well as a host of friends.

—A.R. Bastion