



"Well, as I remember, Sidney was never a town. It was just a stopping place. There was a gas pump, and you could get oil. A bench was out in front of the store where people would come and sit and look over the valley, but it was never looked upon as a town; it only remained a farm community. A train stopped here until the sixties. Every morning the passenger train would come up from Craig and go through here; every afternoon about five it would return. It would come in at night and go out in the morning and would carry the passengers. They tried for years to keep it going, but people quit riding it, it cost the railroad money and it didn't near pay for itself so finally they had to give up. There was a little depot here and it said Sidney on it and the elevation 6700 and some odd feet. Quite often we could ride the passenger train to Steamboat for 50¢ or come out on it. The people were just continually riding the train because it would stop. The post master who was also the storekeeper would meet the train with his bag of mail every night and morning. The people depended upon it to get to and from Denver.

"Even though Sidney was a small community much produce left the township for places unknown. Cream and cattle were in abundance when the train stopped to pick up a load. Every few days people could ship their cream. We, like all the neighbors would go there, and there might be twenty cans of cream, sitting by the little depot. The train would stop and load these twenty cans of cream and thus they were shipped to various creameries in Denver. The people would do this for part of their income.



"Sidney did have its own school building though. It was a log building. As long as I can remember that school was always the same. It was built in 1912, the log one, and it was a going thing till 1953. When I started the first grade there were at least thirty kids, but it didn't last. It declined fast because this was a homestead, and in most of these places people were trying to make a living on one hundred and sixty acres of land back in the hills. It just couldn't be done. When I finished school in the eighth grade down here I doubt if there were a dozen people. There was a horse barn to saddle the horses in at most of the schools, also there was a house close to the school where the teacher lived called a teachery. I went to three years of grade school in Steamboat and also three years at the Steamboat High School.



**SIDNEY SCHOOL IN 1930**

"There were a lot of country and western dances held in the school house. In the winter practically every weekend there would be a dance. People got together through country dances more than any other way back in the Twenties. I do remember in the depression there was a range rider, Frank Officer, who gave a hard times dance people came in the worst worst clothes, because it was during the hard times. Frank came with a tie made out of a potato sack with a clothes pin on it.



Front row-Jane Muirhead, Valene Cook Howe S.S. Edna Sampson, Peggy Neff, John Sampson, Wilbert Neff.

Back row - Helen Muirhead, Eula Becker, Ellenor Muirhead, Nadine Becker "Reager" Craig, Elaine Becker Gay, "Steamboat" Fletcher Muirhead, Vernon Cook.

"We would get musicians who wouldn't charge much to play there. There would usually be a violin, a piano, maybe a guitar or banjo. Over in Cow Creek there were some awful good musicians. Elmer Dorr could play the piano fantastically and he had a neighbor Mike who could play the violin. They could really make music. They would go as far as Deep Creek in the winter with a team and play for dances.

In latter years the farmer's union came in here in 1939 when I was out of high school. They'd meet every month at the Sidney school house and I got the job of making coffee for the dance. People used to say they had a better time at those hard times dances in the depression, even more than when the times got better.

"There weren't just dances; they had a lot of social activities there. They would have a box supper if there was a needy family or if someone got sick, then one of us would engineer a box supper. They decorated a box with a lunch in it, and usually the guy who called the dances at square dances would auction off the box at midnight. People would bid quite high, and the money would go to a worthy cause.

"When I was pretty young, they did have a literary society that would meet at the Sidney school house. The Barber family lived here, well educated prominent and progressive people. They took quite an interest in the Literary Digest. They joined some group to help promote the plays. Mr. Barber was a teacher in the early days and he had a part in one which was a comedy type play. The plays were more on the intellectual order. The people in these parts were tired of all that old western stuff and were more progressive.