

ANDERSON DAIRY RANCH
Frawley ~~Historic~~ Ranch, National Historic Landmark
Centennial Valley, R. R. 2
Spearfish Vicinity
Lawrence County
South Dakota

HABS No. SD-22

HABS
SD-22

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Rocky Mountain System Support Office
National Park Service
12795 West Alameda Parkway
Denver, Colorado 80225-2500

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Location: Centennial Valley, R. R. 2, Spearfish vicinity
Lawrence County, South Dakota
USGS Dead North Quadrangle, Universal
Transverse Mercator Coordinates
13:604471.4925763

Present Owner: Frawley Ranch, Inc.
R.R. 2
Spearfish, SD 57783

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The Anderson Dairy Ranch, located in Centennial Valley, was one of the most successful ranches in Western South Dakota during the late nineteenth Century. The Centennial Valley received its name from a pioneer party in 1876 in honor of the United States Centennial. In the same year, James Anderson, a Danish immigrant, located an ideal site for a dairy ranch at a cold water spring. In 1877 he returned with his wife and daughter to establish the dairy ranch. On July 4, 1877, Henry Frawley Sr. arrived in the mining camp of Deadwood to start a law practice and invest in Centennial Valley land. In 1890 Henry Frawley married Christina, the daughter of James and Catherine Anderson. The land holdings belonging to Henry and Christina Frawley included seventeen homesteads and 4,750 acres. The Dairy Ranch, as a major part of the Frawley Ranch, encompasses visually and historically the procession of western rural life from the American Indian through homesteaders to the large ranch. It illustrates the failure of the 160-acre homestead concept on land ill suited for farming. It also illustrates the culture of the time, which gave all of the credit for the success of the ranches to the men even though both Catherine Anderson and Christina Anderson Frawley made substantial contributions.

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Description:

The Anderson Dairy Ranch is located adjacent to and south of Interstate 90, and approximately 2.6 miles west of Whitewood, South Dakota. The Ranch consists of three significant buildings. There is a stone barn of the Danish type, which has an “L” floor plan and a hayloft. A one story stone springhouse is built into the side of the hill, which contains a water pond room into which the spring water seeps. The water flows out of the springhouse into three watering troughs and then into a seasonal stream bed. A two story stone, hip roofed cottage home is located on the hillside above the springhouse. The original wagon trail to Deadwood is located between the home and springhouse.

History:

In 1876 James Anderson, a Danish immigrant, located an ideal site for a Dairy Ranch at a cold water spring located in Centennial Valley. In 1877, he returned with his wife, Catherine, and their daughter, Christina, to establish the Dairy Ranch. The records of Lawrence County Register of Deeds located in Deadwood, South Dakota, indicates that the Patent (Certificate #68) was recorded August 1, 1883, on page 209 of Book 48. It included lots 2, 3 and 4 of Section 18, TGNR4E and the southeast ¼ of the northeast ¼ Section of Section 13, TGNR4E – approximately 146.66 acres and was signed by Chester A. Arthur, President of the United States.

The James Anderson family was one of many settlers who homesteaded 160 acres in the Centennial Valley. The valley’s soil type and lack of adequate rain made the land ill suited for farming 160 acre plots and most of the settlers sold out or failed to meet their mortgages. Fortunately for the Anderson Family, the nearby Gold Rush Camp of Deadwood established in 1876 provided a profitable market for their dairy products which were taken to Deadwood by horse and wagon. An early photograph of the Dairy Ranch taken prior to the Ca. 1888 stone construction shows the dairy products loaded on the wagon leaving for the trip to Deadwood.

By 1888, the Anderson’s were financially able to replace some of the log and wood framed buildings shown in the early photograph with stone buildings as shown in the Ca. 1888 photograph.¹ The stone for the buildings was obtained from a local limestone/sandstone quarry located on the hillside to the north of the homestead. Rex Dillon, a Frawley Ranch employee and friend of the Anderson’s, recounts in his unpublished recollections, that a John Anderson was “a stone mason in his younger years and had worked on many buildings in the area”.² According the Henry Frawley III, his grandmother Christina recalls that her mother Catherine arranged for the passage of many of her relatives to America, including her parents.³ It is

¹ Historic Photograph.

² Dillon, Rex – Unpublished recollections of Life on the Frawley Ranch – Neighbors Story.

³ Interview with Henry Frawley III.

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possible that John Anderson was one of her relatives and that he was responsible for the construction of the three stone buildings.

On October 14, 1886, James Anderson purchased from C. G. Juliand over 480 acres of land by a mortgage.⁴ When James Anderson died, September 11, 1890, he was the owner of considerable personal and real property including several Centennial Prairie homesteads, two lots in Deadwood, five work horses, twenty milk cows, two hundred twenty-five range cattle, one bull, ranching equipment, two hundred bushels each of wheat and oats, various notes for \$7598, stock, a ½ interest in the Red Cloud mine and a judgement against Silkenson and McClintock for \$5,000.⁵ This is further evidence that the Anderson's were an exception to the failure of the 160 acre homestead concept on land ill suited for farming.

At the same time that James Anderson established the Dairy Ranch, a young attorney by the name of Henry Frawley arrived in Deadwood to establish a law practice. Henry Frawley, like James Anderson, prospered. He represented the professional class of men who came to western South Dakota to provide services. He soon became successful by representing such clients as the Burlington, Chicago and Quincy Railroad, the American National Bank, and several mining companies.⁶ In 1890, he married Christina Anderson (1870-1942), daughter of James Anderson.⁷ About this time he obtained a tract of land in the Centennial Valley which formed the beginning of the Frawley Ranch. On September 22, 1903, Catherine Anderson Lane gave a warranty deed to Christina Anderson Frawley which included the Nicholas Keil Farm, the Joshua Dunn Farm, the Jones Farm, the John Mahoney Ranch, the Johanna Marie Thybo Farm, the Amos Goodview Farm, the Andreas Wolfsberg Farm, and the Frederich Keil Farm along with the original James Anderson Ranch.⁸

The combined Frawley and Anderson land holdings created one of the largest and best run cattle ranches in western South Dakota, which reached its present size by 1913. The growth of the Frawley Ranch to its present 4,750 acres was made possible by the acquisition of unsuccessful homesteads by two successful families, and the application of suitable uses to the natural and economic environment. The success of the Frawley Ranch can not be fully understood unless one takes into account the contribution of the Anderson family. Nine of the seventeen homesteads included in the Frawley Ranch were owned by the Anderson Family.

⁴ Lawrence County Register of Deeds – September 22, 1903 – Book 50, Page 18.

⁵ Ibid. July 2, 1925 – Book 238, Page 368.

⁶ National Register of Historic Places Inventory, Page 1.

⁷ Ibid. Page 1.

⁸ Lawrence County Register of Deeds – September 22, 1903 – Book 176, Page 99.

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The history of the Anderson Ranch is so interwoven with the Frawley Ranch that their historical context is one and the same. Before any white settlers came to the Black Hills and the Centennial Valley, the Lakota Indians considered the Black Hills as a Sacred Place and roamed throughout the Centennial Valley and plains in search of food and shelter. Scattered remains of their habitation exist in the form of arrowheads, various flints and burial grounds. Indentations and rock bases of Lakota burial scaffolds atop Elkhorn Peak are evidence of a burial site.⁹ When the Anderson's arrived in 1877, the Lakota Indians used the homestead area as a seasonal campsite as it had springs for water, firewood, shelter from the weather, grass for the horses, deer and other wild game, and edible plants.

Henry Frawley III remembers an 1877 incident told to him by his grandmother Christina when she was 7 years old regarding the Lakota Indians.¹⁰ The first two buildings constructed were the springhouse and a dugout home for the family. The dugout and springhouse shown on the early photograph are probably these buildings. James Anderson had left the ranch in the morning for his trip to Deadwood, leaving his wife Catherine and daughter alone for most of the day. They were working at the table with their backs to the door in the windowless dugout when the light coming through the door was blocked. They turned to see a Lakota man standing in the doorway. After recovering from the surprise and terror, Catherine offered the man some of the meal they were preparing. The man refused to come into the dugout and took the food outside to eat. Christina went outside and sat along side him on a log. She talked to him although neither of them understood each other's language. The man departed on his horse after finishing the meal. The next day, they refused to stay home alone and made the trip to Deadwood with Mr. Anderson. Upon returning home, they found a gift – a deer hanging in the dugout doorway. From that time on, the Anderson's and the Lakota Indians were friends. The Lakota continued to camp and hunt in the area and visit with the Anderson's. Later, when the soldiers arrived in the area looking for the Lakota Indians to force them on to the reservation, the Anderson's warned their Indian friends.

By the 1880's, the homesteaders arrived in the Centennial Valley to farm 160 acre homesteads.¹¹ Seventeen visible sites consisting of dugouts, cut stone foundations, dams, hand-dug wells and cultural debris offer evidence of the futile attempts to farm land ill suited for farming.¹²

Gradually, the farmers sold out or forfeited on their mortgages. Successful business people such as Catherine and James Anderson, and Henry Frawley purchased the land. The Frawley and the Anderson ranches grew and prospered until the two ranches became one ranch as the result of the marriage of Christina Anderson to Henry Frawley. While many of the sites on the ranch are

⁹ National Register of Historic Places Inventory, Page 2.

¹⁰ Personal Interview with Henry Frawley III.

¹¹ National Register of Historic Places Inventory, Page 2.

¹² Ibid. Page 2.

important for architectural reasons, the three structures on the Anderson ranch show continuity in the use of cut stone and are an excellent example of rural architecture.

The Anderson ranch encompasses visually and historically the procession of western rural life from the American Indian through homesteaders to two successful ranches combined to become one of the largest cattle ranches in western South Dakota. It illustrates the failure of the 160 acre homestead concept on land ill suited for farming. It also illustrates the culture of the time, which gave all of the credit for success of the ranches to the men even though both Catherine Anderson and Christina Anderson Frawley made substantial contributions to the success of the ranches.

After the death of James Anderson in 1890, his wife Catherine successfully ran the ranch.¹³ Evidence of this includes the satisfaction of the October 14, 1886 mortgage entered into by James Anderson on January 18, 1891, just one year after her husband's death.¹⁴ After the death of James Anderson, Catherine married a successful rancher by the name of Lane.¹⁵ Together they built a hotel in Whitewood. Christina Anderson Frawley was much more interested in the ranch than her husband Henry Frawley. Rex Dillon recalls that Christina "contributed her twenty cow quota. I have often wondered if the strain didn't contribute to the development of the painful arthritis she suffered in later years".¹⁶ Mr. Dillon goes on to write that "Christina was a country girl at heart. By the time she had raised a family to adulthood, paid her indenture to marriage, been tempered in life by thirty years of coexistence with a temperamental Irishman, she was ready to retire and return to her heritage".¹⁷ The Frawley's were married in 1890 and Henry died in 1926 so they were married for 36 years. Mr. Dillon writes that "she (Christina) had already contributed the jewel (Anderson Ranch) to the Frawley holdings, and now made her headquarters at the Middle Ranch. Here she could make her own decisions, and execute her personal business deals".¹⁸ An example of the business deals was the purchase of a herd of grade stock cows made by Christina, which formed the foundation for the expansion of the Frawley ranches into a real cattle operation.¹⁹ Other business deals included raising turkeys, maintaining a flock of chickens for egg production, overseeing the hired help that was necessary for household chores and maintenance work, and an investment in a Colorado ore mine.²⁰

¹³ Dillon, Rex – Unpublished Recollections of Life on the Frawley Ranch – Mrs. Frawley Story.

¹⁴ Lawrence County Register of Deeds – January 18, 1891 – Book 71, Page 513.

¹⁵ Interview with Henry Frawley III.

¹⁶ Dillon, Rex – Unpublished Recollections of Life on the Frawley Ranch – Mrs. Frawley Story.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid. Cattle Story.

²⁰ Ibid. Mrs. Frawley (Poultry) Story

Bibliography:

Frawley Historic Ranch

National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination form, December 31, 1974

Dillon, Rex - Unpublished Recollections of Life on the Frawley Ranch, date unknown, obtained from Henry Frawley III.

Personal Interview with Henry Frawley III, September 29, 1998

Research of the Lawrence County Register of Deeds for items pertaining to the Anderson Ranch conducted by Christopher Hetzel, November 25, 1998.

Historic Photographs Ca. 1877 and Ca. 1888 obtained from Henry Frawley III.