

# South Dakota Rancher's Diary

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1926



WILLIAM  
& MARY

CHARTERED 1693

## Title Statement

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## Scope and Contents

Diary of a young man who owns a horse ranch near Bison, South Dakota. Each day is full of his ranching activities, but interspersed within the diary are thoughts of loneliness, sadness and suicide. Notes names of friends, relatives and ranch hands. Gives weather for most days. The beginning and end of the diary contain school notes. The writer lives near his Father and Grandmother. The location is in northwest South Dakota near Bison, Strool and Buffalo along present day Route 20.

Farm activities include drilling a well, milking, planting, butchering, husking corn, cleaning barn, putting up hay and maintaining the house and outbuildings.

Horse activities include breeding, making reins, working on saddles, repairing fences, rounding up horses, branding, breeding, breaking, selling, training and riding.

Other activities and events include flat tires, escaped horses, moving a house with horses, getting mail, traveling to other towns on horse business, visiting relatives and friends, going to ball games and movies, reading, pasting pictures into albums and playing card games.

**February**

Feb. 18 "smoked cigarettes and chewed horse shoe."

Feb. 20: "I was lonesome and cried."

Mid February: moves a house by a team of horses.

**March**

March 1: "Earl beat Hell out of his horse today."

March 17: "Meadow Larks appeared today."

**April**

April 20: The day after he takes his Aunt to Dettinger, "I feel blue lonesome and heartsick. I feel like shooting myself - I will sometime. I can't stand the constant pressure of evil fate and natural elements which always works one crossways always."

May

Brings in horses from far pastures. Breeds and breaks some of them. Each day is filled with gathering horses and related activities.

May 27: "Sheriff came after the bank horses. Don and Freddie Green are after the bank horses..."

May 28: "...they tried to claim my horses. Had quite a time."

May 28: Talking of old friends, "I feel broken up again."

On next few pages, intermixed with diary, are notations of 1917 bulls and calves.

June

Continues his work with horses, from breeding to branding.

June 11: "if I get struck by lightning... also if I commit suicide. Or die or get killed." June 17: "...saw the stool pigeons out East."

July

Takes Shetlands to horse sale. Continues riding and training horses, plus helping others with their horses and chores.

July 18: "The day that was the real assurance that I was to be left alone practically alone in the world. Back on the place, the place I liked but it was not the same when it was left alone to me. But I will stay - because I can not leave."

After the August entries, the diary has a few more entries for March and April, then essays and a poem on friendship and other subjects.

## Keywords

Diaries

South Dakota--History--20th century

Farm life--South Dakota--History--20th century

Horses--United States--History--20th century

Ranches--South Dakota

## Description of Subordinate Components

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