

## **Hudler Tin Whistle Ranch**

### **Owners:**

Russell J. Hudler

Cook Family - 1920

Dave Cook

Worked presently by alpaca ranchers?

### **Location:**

3201 County Road 41

### **General Ranch Information:**

\* Carol Cook, mother of David and Jon Cook, was born a Hudler.

\* (From Jackie Boyd, Toots Cherrington) There was a Tin Whistle Camp. The Redwood Fishers called Mr. Hudler "Rustling Russell" as branded stock that "wandered away" from Fisher property always seemed to appear on Hudler land.

\* C Lazy U purchased a considerable portion of the Hudler Ranch.

### **Files:**

Obituary for Carol Hudler Cook – 1918 – 2013 (*Sky Hi News, Oct 9, 2013*)

Carol Marydel Hudler was born to the Grand County homesteading family of Hudlers on May 16, 1918. When barely a toddler, she and her older brother Ross lived with their mother Carolyn in a cabin built by their father Russell on what is now County Road 41. The cabin was their home for two years while they proved up on their 160 acres. To get groceries once a week, Carolyn would set Russ behind and baby Carol in front of her on their horse, ride to the Stillwater Store where Dilly Docks currently stands, and a neighbor with a buckboard would later bring the week's supplies down to the cabin. Russell spent winters in St. Louis building houses and summers at the ranch clearing land, creating irrigation ditches from the Red Top Valley Ditch and raising hay for their livestock. At the same time Russell's parents and four of his six sisters homesteaded contiguous parcels which were progressively joined and with the addition of some purchased acreage, became the 4300 acre Hudler Tin Whistle Ranch.

Edna Hudler, Russell's eldest sister, used her homestead to build the Hudler Girls' Camp on Willow Creek. From 1923 – 1934, the camp was summer home to hundreds of girls and sister camp to Camp Chief Ouray Boys' Camp which was sold to Boy Scouts of America in the late '30s. Every summer Edna, Russell and several adult counselors would caravan carloads of campers, gear and food from St. Louis, sometimes having to stay in the little cabins at Berthoud Falls until the pass was cleared. Carol's stories of days and nights filled with horseback trips, fishing, dances and games convey the camaraderie and fulfillment of the campers that brought them back to the mountain valley they learned to love, not only every summer but throughout their adult lives. Edna closed the camp in 1934 after a tragic accident took the life of a boy at Camp Chief Ouray, but she continued to caravan high school boys every summer to help Russell develop other parts of the ranches. The girls' camp was taken by eminent domain in 1948 to

create the Willow Creek reservoir, but gas station maps referenced Hudler Girls' Camp as late as the 1970s.

When Carol married Steve (Stephen Wycliffe) Cook in 1937, they managed the Hudler properties from the easternmost parcel, which was also commandeered later for Lake Granby. Steve helped number the logs of the buildings and drag them by horse-hitch to rebuild them across the newly relocated Highway 34 into what became "the front ranch" headquarters for ranch management for the next 60 years. During World War II, Carol and Steve were stationed as border patrol in Minot, ND but returned to manage the ranch several times; their eldest son David Cook managed the ranch from 1972 to 1999 when it was sold to C Lazy U holdings.

**Pictures:**

**Ad from 1946**