

Affidavit of Wilfred Rand Bailey

May 20, 2016

My name is Witz Bailey. My family has owned and operated the Bailey Ranch in Diamond Valley since the 1860s. Some people call it the Bailey Home Ranch and we have raised cattle on the range in Lander, Eureka and Elko Counties. This is my recollection of our family's water usage on the ranch.

I was told by my family that the Baileys came into Diamond Valley in 1863 where they spent the first winter on a hump of land, near the alkali. That hump of land was located near what we call "the Lower End" of the ranch. As kids, we went down and found an old Dutch oven on the hump where they said it was. They told me they brought oxen and cattle with them.

In the 1860s to 1870s, our family ran up to 1000 cows. Without fences they went north of the ranch and grazed around N.T., Williams, Union and Bailey Mountain in the summers, and south even to Antelope Valley in the winter. We had cattle go to Pine Valley and Roberts Mountain as well. In those days there was tall grass with no brush. It was all rye grass. In 1876, my grandfather, Robert Bailey, married Marietta Shipley in Eureka.

They continued their ranching business and had four children, Robert David, Edna, Laura and my father, Wallace. My grandfather put up hay at the ranch and owned a mower, rake, hay press and other equipment and teams of horses to do the haying.

During the 1870s and 1880s the Sadler ranch would run horses which were killed, skinned and the hides sold for two dollars. There were droughts. The drought caused concern about the availability of water and as water laws were passed, people started filing on the water.

In the winter of 1889-1890, it snowed so much that all the grass was covered and the cattle had nothing to eat. It got cold and did not melt off of the grass. People tried to chop mahogany to keep the milk cows alive.

They called that winter "the Equalizer" because all the cattle died, and then all the ranches were equal.

This was an experience that made the family realize the importance of having extra hay for the winter. Prior to the winter of 1890, only the milk cows and working horses had the luxury of being fed hay and grain. All the rest of the horses and cattle were left on the range.

Before that winter, hay and grain were considered a valuable commodity that was sold for profit. The telegraph, Overland Stage and charcoal workers all were nearby, and all required lots of feed for their working animals. After that winter, the family wanted enough hay storage to feed the cows through the winter and have them close enough during the winter to feed them when necessary.

My mother, Mary Rand Bailey, explained to me that when the snow melted in the spring of 1890, the ground was frozen and the melting snow washed the big gully down through Pine Valley that is still there today.

The 1890s were spent rebuilding the herd and growing hay. In the late 1890s, my grandfather got the flu in the big pandemic. He moved to Salt Lake City for medical care leaving dad and his brother to run the ranch. Between 1890 and 1900, cattle numbers in the county grew, prices were good, and my uncle, Robert D., was purchasing another ranch, leaving my dad, Wallace, running the Bailey Ranch.

In 1908 there was an early snow and a hard winter. The ranch was more prepared. From 1910 to 1929, cattle numbers kept growing and prices were good. In 1926, my dad married my mother, Mary Alice Rand in Eureka. My brothers, sister and I were born and the family still owned and operated the ranch.

The depression hit and cattle prices dropped. In the 1930s we experienced dry summers and severe winters. This was a very difficult time period. In the early 1930s, cattle prices were down. The range was overgrazed. My

mother sold milk, cottage cheese and watercress in town to make ends meet at the ranch. My Aunt Edna even sent a little money to help.

Between 1934 and 1940, prices were getting a little better. Cattle that had been sold prior to the depression as one or two year olds were sold a little younger to save money. My family again recovered from difficult times on the ranch raising cattle and hay.

In 1941, my father was kicked in the head by a horse. They felt it best to put the ownership into my mother's name in case he did not fully recover. The BLM began Commencerability and at that time we ran 30 head of horses below the Romano Ranch besides our cattle. In 1944 there was another early snow. Eighteen inches of snow fell on November 11th that never melted until spring, again confirming the need for plenty of hay to feed in the winter.

When I was a boy, this is how we put the hay up. We would cut, rake and spot buck the hay with teams of horses. Then we would put the hay on derrick nets and buckle the nets. Then we had a cable that raised the net over the stack using another team of horses. The nets were opened up and the hay would fall onto the stack. Fred Crowfoot was killed at our ranch when he fell under a hay rake while I was a boy.

During that time we had 5 hay stacks. We watered the field from the ditches. It was important to keep the ditches clean, which I could do with a team, but dad and Hale did by hand.

We turned out cattle on April 1st. In the fall we would have a rodear. The area around Thompsons would be gathered and the cattle brought to the Sadler Ranch overnight. Then, they would be taken to the N.T. to separate the owner's cattle into groups. Jiggs brought the wagon with food and bedrolls unless you had your own bedroll.

We would spend a week with Joe Flynn leaving our Ranch in the morning, riding over Bailey Pass to Robert's Mountain every day. We would gather any cattle of his or ours and bring them back to the Bailey Ranch where we

would spend the night. After a week of this we would sort his cattle out and he would take them home.

In Pine Valley, we would go from ranch to ranch from the south to north. We would gather the cows, sort them out and go to the next ranch until all the ranches were sorted and everybody took their cattle home. We stayed with each rancher's family where they fed us and we slept.

In 1948, my mother traded the interest she inherited from her mother in the Pine Valley Rand Ranch, for the Yates Ranch, which Uncle Bill Rand owned. So in 1948, my mother and father moved to the ranch in Pine Valley. I stayed at the ranch in Diamond Valley and started to build a herd of my own. We put the hay up together at the Bailey Ranch and the Yates Ranch, sharing equipment and teams of horses. In 1948 my father died.

From 1948 to 1955 I worked on increasing my herd with the help of my Aunt Susan Rand Levett, who let me run some of her cows for part interest. My mother's cows would come back to Diamond Valley, especially in the first few years she moved to the Yates Ranch because that was the country they knew as home.

In 1949, I started using a pump in the ditches to run hand hand lines for irrigation. This helped even out the water which would otherwise go a lot further on a wet year than a dry year. I built a fence around the alfalfa to keep the rabbits out. In 1949 my mother bought a tractor.

In 1951-52 there was a big storm. They did hay drops from airplanes to cattle. The roads were opened by big cats. My sister Rachel was pregnant and she and her husband Bill Marshall were running their cattle along with some cattle belonging to Riggins at the Siri Ranch. Bill was away and I was feeding the cows at both ranches. I would feed at my ranch, then ride this big black horse to the Siri Ranch, feed their cows and spend the night there. Then, the next day do the reverse.

When Bill came back, he made it to the Sadler Ranch with groceries in his pickup. From there he had to take a horse home to the Siri where Rachel

was. The horse could not walk on the crusted snow to come back for the groceries. Two days later, a cat came in and cut the road, but it just filled in with snow again. It began to rain and rained off all the snow. The ground was frozen and the water ran off that year.

On April first through fifth, 1952, we turned the cows out. If a cow stepped off the road, she sunk in to the mud. We never got any more moisture for the rest of the year.

1955 to 1957 I served in the 9th Infantry Division of the Army. I was a gunner in a tank in Germany. While I was away, my sister's husband, Bill Marshall took care of the haying and cattle at the Bailey Ranch.

In 1956, I came home on a 30 day leave. I had six months left in the Army and a chance to buy the Siri Ranch for \$1500, with a balloon payment in three years of \$30,000. I put the money down. Bill Marshall had already put the hay up at the Bailey Ranch and together we put the hay up at the Siri Ranch while I was on leave.

In January of 1957, I was released from military duty and came home. Bill Marshall and my brother Shipley (Lee) started a fencing company. I started contracting to put up hay to make money to buy equipment. It became necessary to sell the Siri Ranch because of the \$30,000 balloon payment. I sold the Siri to George Brown, but I kept the cows and equipment purchased.

In 1959 there was a bad drought. My mother, brother and I decided to lease the Home Ranch in Newark Valley, to raise more hay and winter our cows for that winter. We worked together to put up the hay at the ranches in Pine Valley, Diamond Valley and Newark Valley using combined labor and equipment. My brother Hale spent three days bringing their cattle to the ranch in Diamond Valley. Then we spent two days taking their cattle along with mine to Newark Valley to winter that year.

In 1959 I married Barbara Pimentel. We lived and worked and began our family at the Bailey Ranch.

In the 1960s and 1970s I continued to operate the ranch raising cattle on the range while I grew hay which I fed in the winter there on the ranch. I contracted haying jobs and earned the money to buy a John Deere G Farm Hand with loader, a Ford tractor, and a little Allis Chalmers tractor. I still fed the cows and drug wood with teams of horses.

I leased the Gainer Farm in Diamond Valley for two years and then purchased that farm. I leased the Maggini Ranch for six years and had the intention to buy it to support my growing family when I purchased another farm in Diamond Valley instead.

In 1970 we tried putting the weaned calves on the ranch hay ground in the summer as pasture. Our idea was to raise the hay at the farm in the valley for the winter feed. The pounds gained on the calves was not satisfactory, the calves only gained 165 pounds.

In the 1970s electricity came to Diamond Valley. Farmers were able to pump water consistently to their farms which became profitable and grew. From the 1970s to the 1990s, farms pumped the Diamond Valley basin until the water table began to decline.

In the 1980s the pumping at the farms in Diamond Valley began to affect the surface waters on the east side of the valley. The Thompson Ranch lost the surface water.

In the 1990s the pumping in Diamond Valley began to show adverse effects on the surface water at the ranch. In the late 1990s the State Engineer allowed us to drill a well at the Bailey Ranch to supplement the water that was being lost due to the pumping in Diamond Valley.

From 2000 to today, we have been using the well and pivot sprinkler to grow the hay at the ranch. The cattle still are raised on the range in the summer and come home for the winter. We do not feed with teams of horses any more. My children do most of the work now.

I have faith that my heirs can continue to be able to raise quality cattle like me, my father and grandfather have been able to do for 150 years for generations to come. We still have cattle drives, gatherings, brandings, sorting, shipping and all sorts of haying currently, where I work with my wife, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren all participating. It is our heritage and legacy.

Wilfred R. Bailey
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State of Nevada
County of Eureka

Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on
May 20, 2016 by Wilfred R. Bailey

Diane D. Podborny
Notary

