

History of the Bar M

Jack Finch was born in England, but his mother died six weeks after his birth. Jack was left in the care of his older sister, Janie Finch. Janie took excellent care of Jack, and soon he was in school. Immediately after completing his third year of school, Jack's adventurous heart decided to move from England to the Baggott ranch on the Encampment River. As a teenager, Jack moved to Carbon to work in the mines, but was soon lured back to the Encampment valley. He became interested in a young girl by the name of Clara Parr. Clara was the first white woman that was born in Encampment. Jack Finch soon asked Clara Parr to marry him and in the summer of 1904 they exchanged wedding vows. A year later, they purchased the Yost Ranch, and homesteaded an adjoining piece of land to the west of the Yost Ranch. Jack built a home on the homestead and there he started a family. Clara had two children, James Henry and Blanche.

The homestead was known as the Finch Place and was past down the family to James Henry in 1927. Henry owned the Finch Cattle Company, and worked for many years on improving the Finch Place. Along with his wife, Dorothy, he purchased the Henry Pantle, Bill Garrout, Billingham, and Fritz places. He moved from the original homestead area to the Billingham place, where they made their home for the next thirty-five years. While Henry and Dorothy owned the Finch Place, they raised a family with five children.

The ranch was under the management of Henry and his son Russell in 1969. It grew to be 2,000 acres, and ran 500 head of cattle. A feedlot was also built in the 1960's to feed the calves. The Finch Ranch required a total family effort to manage the herd and produce the small grains, alfalfa, and native hay that made the Finch herd of quality reputation. After 75 years in the Finch family and the passing of Russell Finch, the ranch was sold in September of 1982 to Bob Magness of TCI. He sold the ranch to John Malone and the Silver Spur Land and Cattle, LLC in 1999.