



D. F. BABER

*A
Biography of
D. F. Baber*

Mrs. D. F. Baber was born at Princeton, Illinois. At an early age she moved with her parents to Nebraska, where she lived during the days of the open range. Her perspective was broadened as she was given an intimate contact with raw Western characters—characters whose images

people her story and who live again in all their ruthlessness, vitality, and vigor. She later moved to Denver, Colorado, where she received her education. She remained in Colorado most of her life, where she died in 1947.

Mrs. Baber was an enthusiastic Westerner, with a love of the open spaces, and for horses especially, and from that fact has resulted the particular care she has taken in portraying the true flavor of the scenes and events revealed in *THE LONGEST ROPE*. The task of gathering the material for this book was one of difficulty, since William Walker, whose story she relates, is naturally a reticent person, not desiring to offend anyone with what truth he has to tell about the cattle war of Johnson County. It was necessary, too, to corroborate his story by searching the court records and early newspapers of the vast range state of Wyoming. Through persistence and an undying interest, however, her task was accomplished, and we have preserved an unusual and authentic piece of Americana.

by

*The
Longest
Rope*

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BABER

The Longest Rope

D. F. BABER

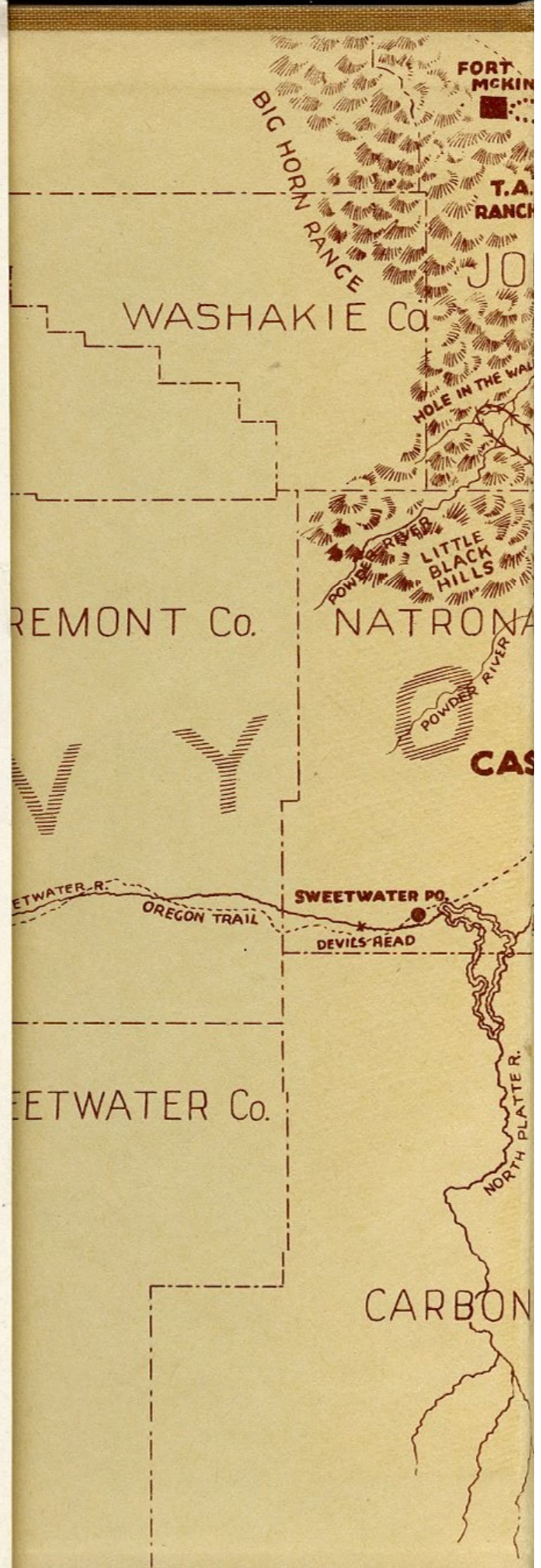
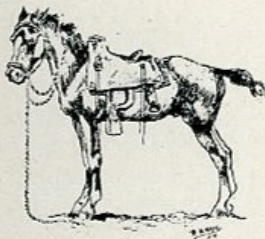


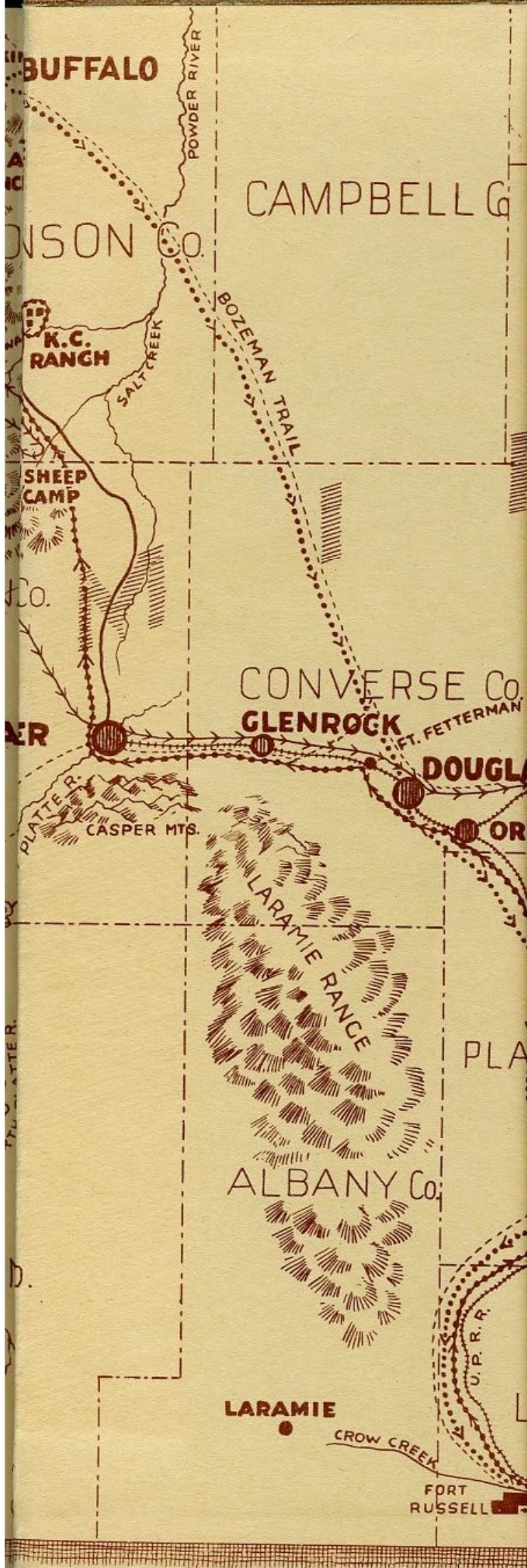
CAXTON

BOB HALL

Bill Walker, "cowpoke, trapper, scout, guide, and freighter, who knew his Western trails as the man of the city knows his boulevards," was the chief eyewitness to the brutalities served by the cattlemen against the nester. His startling account of the ruthless killing of two nesters by an enraged mob of cattlemen—an act which brought into the open the Johnson County Cattle War—reveals facts that have, until now, lain dormant. And because he knew the truth of the outrageous conduct perpetrated by the cattlemen who were defending their traditional rights, Walker was quickly ushered out of Wyoming, so that he would be unable to present his incriminating evidence.

The aim of Walker in telling, for the first time, the truth about this celebrated cattle war has not been to disparage, or to cast "unjust reflection on the dead." Rather, his aim has been to add an entirely novel, colorful, and romantic chapter to Western history.





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It is a well-established adage in the language of the Old Western range that "the longest rope gets the maverick." It was also well established that the monarch cattlemen, the "bosses" of the range, were the law, and that the homesteaders, or "nesters," the little men of the range, were to be subservient. Authority usually breeds abuses, and it was inevitable that the homesteaders eventually rebelled. When the nesters of Wyoming became independent, began building fences and rustling cattle on their own, there was soon precipitated what is known as the Johnson County Cattle War.

This war became famous throughout the United States, and the many stories of hangings and similar brutalities by men who used the "long rope" were emblazoned in the headlines of every leading newspaper. It was only after much bitter suffering and loss of blood that the Old gave way to the New, and the range was free to small and large, alike.

