

“You will all have to come by the ranch some time and we’ll fish and talk and talk.”



“And we’ll make bets on who can catch the biggest fish.”

by Cindy Sandelin

“Why do I get homesick for Yampa? I don't know. Can't understand it myself,” explains Mrs. Lucy Marshall, from behind one of her hand-made quilts. “Never get homesick for anyplace else, but I get homesick for this place. And why do we sit here in this snow? I can't understand it, but I feel good here. I love the people. You know, there's lots of nicer places to be, especially in the wintertime. But I don't like the places where the seasons don't change—where it's the same all the time. It's no good. You get to looking forward to seeing them snowflakes fly!”

And in Yampa, as in all towns of this area, snowflakes do fly.

Yampa, a small farming and ranching town, is nestled deep in the Yampa Valley. First called Egeria, Yampas' settlers began coming in 1881.

The name Egeria came from a pioneer who named it after a legendary Roman nymph. The nymph, Egeria, was taken to the underworld by the king of Rome, Numo. Every spring Egeria issues forth, carrying buds and blossoms with her.

The word Yampa comes from the Indian name for the North American bulb-like plant with fleshy, edible roots.

But whether it is called Egeria or Yampa, Yampa is still the same place—the place with sloshy mud, flurrying snow, and bright sunshine. However,



Mrs. Marshall, with her dog, Pepper, in her lap, gazes out of her window.

it isn't any of these that make Yampa, it's the people; people like Mrs. Clarice Lucille Marshall.

Mrs. Marshall, an energetic, bubbling, vibrant woman seventy years young, has been a resident of Yampa off and on since 1928. Lucy and her husband, Doc, also own a ranch which is located about a quarter of a mile past Finger Rock.

Finger Rock, a familiar landmark to Yampa residents, stands alone in its field, a short distance from the railroad and highway. Unsurrounded by other mountains, rocks, or hills of any kind, Finger Rock is set against the sky, pointing upwards like a finger.

"We move back and forth from town to the ranch. It's really nice up there. We've got everything—light, water, telephone, and an awful good spring. But it's not dusty up at the ranch like it is down here. Like here when that dust blows, I can't stand it. I can't breathe," Mrs. Marshall explains.

Up on the ranch there is also a farmhouse, a barn, and a place to keep stock. "We've rented out the place since last August. We decided that we'd rent it out to someone who wanted to live there year round. We have a little trailer up there that we live in in the summer, but it's just not comfortable. It's fine for a while, and then everyone visits and we just don't have enough room. So we decided we'd move this trailer up there and live in it. It'll be nice when we get moved.

Yampa's just getting so large." (In the last population census, in 1970, there were 236 residents of Yampa.) "Course it's not a city, but in a way we've lived out, like on the ranch, for so long, we just wouldn't be happy any other way, I guess."

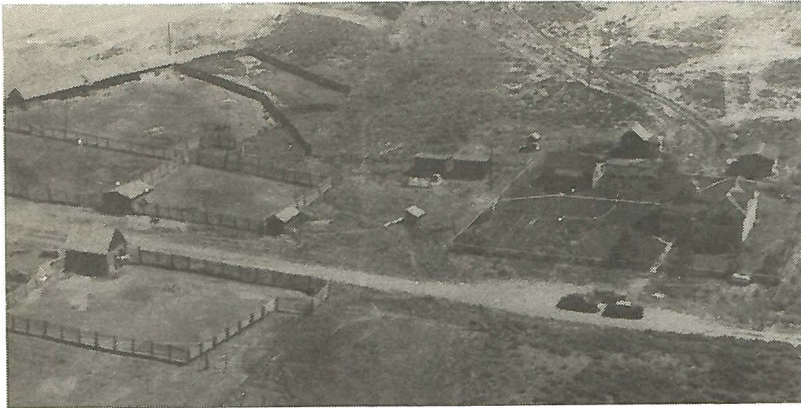
And out on the ranch, it seems, is where most of Lucy Marshall's happiness and joy lie, for her fish pond is also near the ranch. Mrs. Marshall, who has raised four children and innumerable pets, also raises fish.

"Yeah, I raise fish," she says, leaning back, now on a subject that she could tell anyone about. "I've been going over to Kremmling an getting these little tiny fish. Two years ago I got about 5000 babies. Then I put them in this little raceway. The

FINGER ROCK



Lucy Marshall and her husband, Doc—partners for 37 years.



The layout of the Marshalls' ranch as seen from the air.

raceway is a big ditch-like thing that's about one hundred feet long. There are screens at each end so that the fish can't get out with the water that's running through all the time. We lose a few and a few jump out, but that's all right. Some of 'em get out into the creek, but someone will catch 'em. The first year we lined the raceway with plastic. That didn't work so well, so the second

year we lined it with gravel. We liked the gravel a lot better.

I feed 'em just like I feed little chickens. Feed 'em canfuls of food every two or three hours. They just really come to that feed! Like cats and dogs. They get to be pets like anything else. I raise 'em in the raceway until they're about three inches long, then I put them out in the pond. I try to keep them in the raceway until they're big enough to get out of the bigger fishes' way. But I don't always do it. We had the toughest time putting them in the pond. We couldn't catch them! We used this curtain material-about quilt size. That's the only way you can catch them. After we got them into the material, we dumped 'em into these buckets of water that we had in the back of our pickup. Then we'd haul 'em up to the pond and dump 'em out. Never got all of 'em washed out of the raceway. I knew for sure at least one fish was left in there because I saw it. The next time we got the small fish out, he was still there! We let him get washed down into the creek. He was probably scared to death of other fish; hadn't been around them for so long!" explains Mrs. Marshall, laughing at the thought of that fish.

"We've tried all kinds of fish-Rainbows, Brooks, Browns, and Natives-but the best kind we had were kamloops." (Kamloops are a large black-spotted Rainbow Trout.) "I've always liked to fish-liked places where there was good fishing, says Mrs. Marshall, an expert fisherwoman. "I decided, one day, that I'd like to raise fish myself. We have that nice little pond above the house, and the fish really grow in it! Get some seven pounders even! I think that I'd like to raise some more. But I don't want to put any new ones in until I get most of the bigger ones fished out, 'else the big ones will eat all the little fish. In the winter they get thinner and flatter, so it's not real good fishing in the spring, but I like to fish then, too. I have to keep putting new fish in all the time, though. They lay lots of eggs, but the other fish just dig out the eggs and eat 'em. Well, you'll just have to come by the ranch sometime, and we'll fish and talk and talk. And we'll make bets on who can catch the biggest fish." It was unanimously decided that we didn't need to make bets to see who could catch the biggest fish. It would be Lucy Marshall-even though she chuckled and denied that she had such talents. But, the THREE WIRE WINTER kids still agreed that we'd pop in and out of the ranch this summer and try to catch the biggest fish.

Then Mrs. Marshall recalls her own children, Bill, Marion, Marguerite, and Virgil.

"One time those kids got me into the backhouse. The window was broken. We'd just ate some watermelon. Well, they got me in there and they got to throwing them melon rinds at me! I finally crawled out 'o there and got away. But, we used to do everything together. We all rode horses. When the kids were too little to ride big horses, they had these little danny horses and two-wheeled carts. On the weekends and holidays



A younger Mrs. Marshall at the Flat Top Mountains.

those carts would come home full of kids. They'd all want to come up and stay at the ranch. When the kids got older, we got them regular-sized horses. Then we'd all ride up to the Flat Tops together. Some awful good horses we used to ride! We had lots of pets besides horses, though. "We've always had pets."

"One time we had this pet deer." Mrs. Marshall smiles, props up a few pillows, and says, "We got it back in the '50's. The mother got her leg hung up in the fence. She was dead. Here was the little deer. It was almost dead, too. The kids found it and brought it down to me. Ed Wilson was our game warden. I talked to him about it, and he told me to take care of it and he'd put it out later in life. We took it and fed it. We named her Speck because of her little spots. She was a real pretty thing-pretty little doe. She'd follow us everywhere. But after a while she got awnery! She'd bite at the girls-rip and tear at 'em. The same time we had Speck we had three lambs, and three calves. The train went right up through our place there.

Boy! We had a time with them young fellas! Couldn't keep them off the railroad track. The railroad men would call me up and tell me that my 'herd' was on the tracks again. That train never did hit them.

Whether it missed them or what, I don't know, but they never did get hit." Lucy laughs, unsuccessfully trying to keep a straight face.

"But that Speck! She'd follow me everywhere, just like a little dog-her little tongue just hanging out and panting. One day Marguerite and I started to Steamboat. She was driving. We looked back at Finger Rock and Speck was right behind us. I said, 'I can't do this. I've got to go back. I can't let her get hit by a car.' So we took Speck back. As Marguerite was going up the road, I crawled in the back seat and laid down. Marguerite went to the house door and looked like she was looking for someone. Speck looked and looked, too-didn't see nothing. So Marguerite went on back down to the car and off we went. Speck didn't follow us this time because she didn't see me.



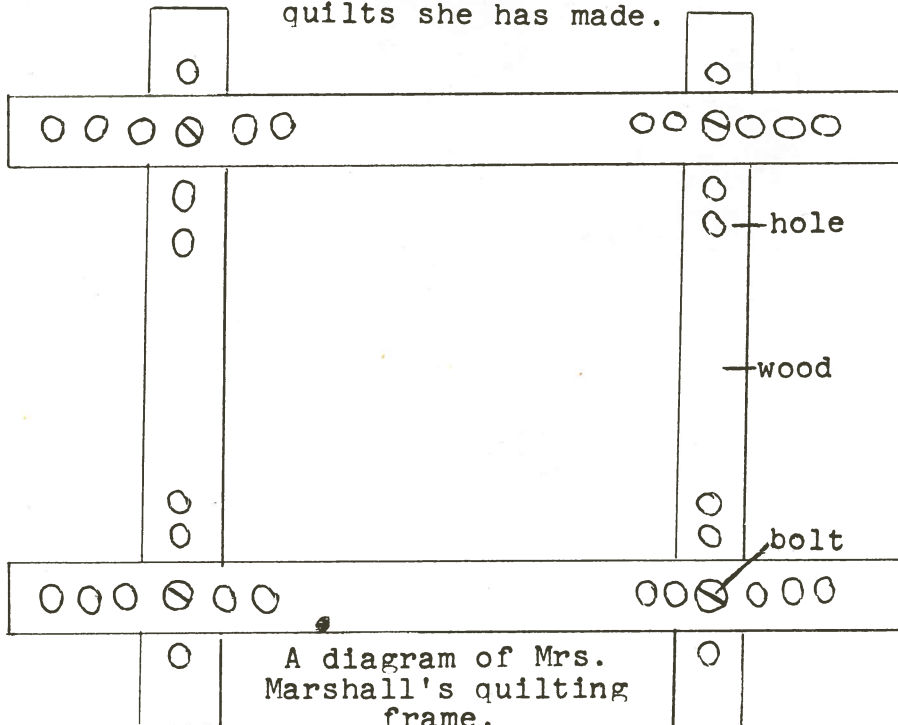
-Speck-

It was me she was following. I just couldn't get away from her!" she exclaims, laughter shining in her eyes. "I just really like animals. Right now I have a little miniature silver poodle. It's named Pepper. I have a real pretty long-haired cat, too. She's got the prettiest bushy little tail. My great-grandson is taking care of her for me until we get moved back up to the ranch. I haven't named her yet, but when I get her back I will. I'll get her back pretty soon."

Suddenly Mrs. Marshall grins, jumps up, and says unexpectedly, "Do you like pretty quilts?" (You never know quite what to expect from this cheerful woman.) She moves towards a large trunk in the corner of the room. Quilts come pouring out—patchwork quilts, baby blankets, and crocheted quilts. The maker of these creations then explains, "I've made lots of quilts. I made quilts for all my kids and grandkids. I don't know how many years I've been making 'em. Don't need to make 'em, but I like to. I'm not sure how many I've made either. You see, I was raised down in Arkansas,



Lucy Marshall displays one of the quilts she has made.



A diagram of Mrs. Marshall's quilting frame.

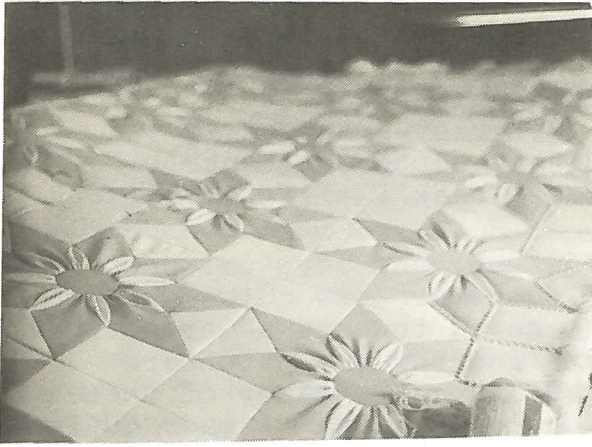
and we made lots of quilts down there. So when I came up here, I just got to making quilts."

Mrs. Marshall's quilting frame is probably her best quilting helper. The frame hangs from the ceiling of her bedroom. It can be let down or pulled up. "Doug Glaze made it for me," says Lucy. "I had him get some pieces of wood from the lumberyard. He took a drill, made some holes in it, and hooked it to the ceiling."

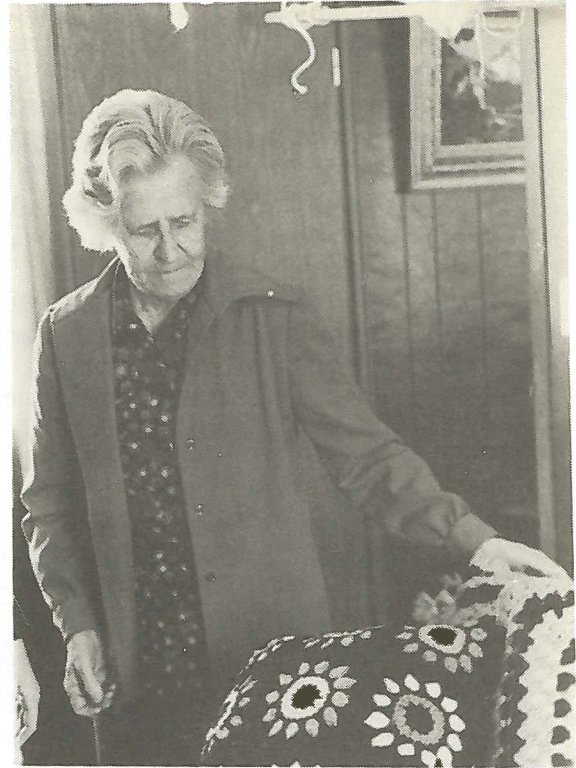
"I used to have one of those frames that stand on the floor. They're fine when you have lots of extra room. I never could get around it or do anything. I said 'Gee, I'll make one like I used to have and hang it from the ceiling.' I can let it down when I'm going to quilt."

Besides quilting, the versatile, energetic Lucy Marshall also likes to sew, crochet, cook, knit, and go out and walk in the fresh air and snow.

"I guess I'm doing what I like to do. I don't want to go anywhere else. I just love the snow. I love to get out and play in the stuff.



Shown on the quilting frame
is a quilt that Mrs. Marshall
is now working on.



Lucy displays some of her
crocheted pillows.

I'll make you a bet that as soon as a warm, snowy spell comes-when it's coming down easy-I'll find some excuse to get out and walk in it. I'll go to the store or something-just so I can get out and walk in it. Well, the air's always so fresh and cool. It's really nice. You know, in the city, you look up and you never can see the stars. Never see the pretty blue sky. It's hazy or funny lookin'. It's just not clean. If I could go anywhere that I wanted to, I'd stay right here. I just don't want to go anywhere else, and I don't know of anything else that I'd like to do, either. I've done everything I've wanted to. I'm just thankful that I'm as well off as I am!"



Mrs. Marshall, Pepper, and your author.