

**SUMMARY OF TAPE W102 INTERVIEW WITH JOHN R. WILLIAMSON**

**January 18, 1978**

**Interviewers: Sandy Crain and Lee Noris**

The subject of this interview is the Hildebrand family and ranch. John Williamson lived close by and knew the family. He went to school at Deer Creek with Dorothy (later Higgins) and Florence (later Higgins) Hildebrand who were the granddaughters of the original property owner.

Frank Hildebrand was a German immigrant who bought up 2500 acres that covered an area that included the west end of Chatfield Reservoir, part of Deer Creek Canyon, and up to the Ken Caryl Ranch. His son Francis ran the original ranch, while his other son, Albert, built another ranch on land that was condemned to build Chatfield Reservoir. Albert then moved to Gunnison where he ran another large cattle ranch.

The Hildebrand Ranch was self-sustaining. Goods and services that were not provided on the ranch, such as having horses shod, barber services, and grocery items, were bought in Littleton. In the early days, some of these items were traded for with butter, milk and eggs. There was a bunkhouse for men hired in the summer for haying and other ranch chores. During the Depression, some men were hired for room and board only.

The Hildebrand family was well-respected in the community. They were active members of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Littleton.