

## The Brands at the Crail Ranch Homestead Museum

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Originally published in the *Lone Peak Lookout*, "Crail Ranch Corner," September 5, 2013

Historic Crail Ranch Conservators and docents are often asked if the brand immediately outside the kitchen door on the south side of the main Crail home is the Crail brand.

The "Quarter Circle T" embedded in the cement with the date May 21, 1956 actually belonged to J. M. Hume, who registered it in March 1955. Hume had permission to use the brand on cattle on the right rib. In 1949, after living at the ranch for 47 years, Emmett Crail married his sweetheart of several decades, Annie T. Breneman, and they moved into a home on Violet Road in Four Corners. At that time, Jack and Elaine Hume (along with Tom and Florence Boa) bought the ranch from Emmett Crail.



*Quarter Circle T brand outside kitchen door*

Jack and Elaine were recently married also. Oakland, California residents, they honeymooned at Buck's T-4. Jack asked Buck to keep an eye out for a ranch for sale, and Buck delivered ... the Crail Ranch.



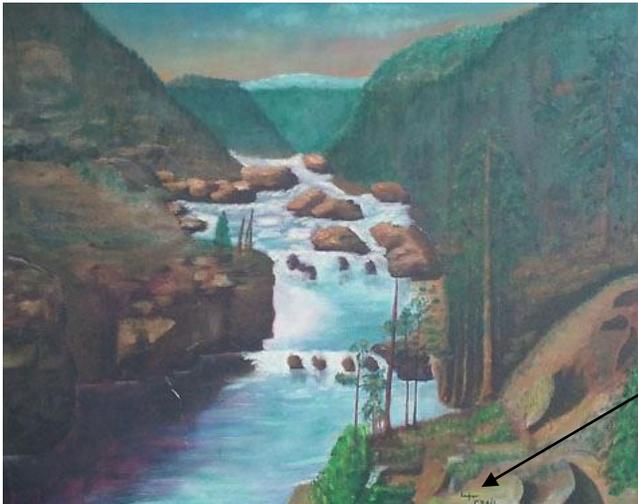
*AF Crail's "Lazy FR" brand 1906*

Through historical research, the Crail brand, the "Lazy F R" was recently discovered and "brought back" to the Historic Crail Ranch for decorative use only. Augustus Franklin "Frank" Crail of Eldridge registered the brand in April 1906. (Eldridge was the location of the post office at the Cooper Tie Company in Taylor Fork at that time.) The Crail Brand could be applied to cattle on the left hip or to horses on the left thigh.

A curious find is that on the same day, Arthur S. Duntley of Virgelle in Choteau County was granted the same “Lazy F R” brand, to be used on the stock animals’ right side. Duntley is an enigma to us. Through U.S. Census data we conclude that he was 16 years old at the time of the brand application. His parents were born in the mid-west, and he lived with his rancher stepfather in Fort Benton. On the 1930 census, Duntley listed himself as a farm laborer on his brother-in-law’s ranch. Was there a relationship between the Crails and Duntley? This might just remain one of the many Crail Ranch mysteries!

Montana brands from 1873 through 1980 can be located on the website below, which is maintained by the Montana Memory Project in collaboration with the Montana Historical Society Research Center. Historical information and brand regulations can be gathered at the Montana Historical Society at 225 North Roberts Street in Helena or through online access of the digital library and archives: <http://mhs.mt.gov/research/MTMemoryProj.asp>

One more brand showed up at the Crail Ranch Homestead Museum this summer. Eugene Crail’s granddaughter brought several paintings done by Eugene. Until his death, Eugene signed his paintings with a “brand” reading the “Lazy E F,” mimicking his father’s brand. Eugene was a carpenter, and he studied architecture. During WWI, he surveyed for hospital construction in England. However, on the 1940 U.S. Census, Eugene listed himself as a farmer, living on West Babcock in Bozeman. This brand is not registered in Montana. The search is on in other northwestern states to discover if Eugene’s brand was ever registered anywhere. Or will Eugene’s “brand” remain another of those Crail Ranch mysteries?



*Eugene Crail's brand, derived from AF Crail's "Lazy FR" brand*