

## CHAPTER 6.

# Ranching History

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## Introduction

Adolf Bandelier described the Valles Caldera in the mid-1880s:

*The Valles Mountains separate the northern section of the Queres district from that claimed by the Jémez tribe. Against the chain of gently sloping summits which forms the main range from the peak of Abiquiu to the Sierra de la Palisada in the south abuts in the west an elevated plateau, containing a series of grassy basins to which the name of “Los Valles” (the valleys) has been applied. Permanent streams water it, and contribute to make an excellent grazing region of this plateau. But the seasons are short. For snow fills the passes sometimes till June and may be expected again as early as September (Bandelier 1892:200).*

Writing circa 1911, U.S. Surveyor William Boone Douglass noted:

*The soil of the valleys is a rich black loam, that may be classed as first rate. At many points in the higher lands the soil is almost as good. This coupled with a copious supply of moisture, produces a heavy growth of grass, making the grant ideal for grazing purposes. The lands, perhaps, have other agricultural values, especially that in the lower valleys, but the high altitude, a mean of about 9,000 ft. [2,744 m] above sea level, tends to prevent the maturing of crops (Douglass and Neighbour n.d.:83).*

Having again surveyed the Baca Location No. 1 (Baca Location) in 1921, Cadastral Engineer Charles W. Devendorf concluded,

*The soil is generally a very rich black loam, but in some of the valleys it is a gravelly brown loam, and in much of the mountain country is more or less thin and stony. In the rougher mountainous portions the soil is largely bare, broken lava rock and huge boulders...At this high elevation, 8,000 to 12,000 ft. [2,439–3,659 m], the rainfall is very heavy, also the snow fall...In the spring of 1921 the period between spring and autumn frosts at my camp was about 60 days. It is probably shorter on the higher mountains (Osterhoudt et al. 1921:98–99).*

These characteristics have ensured that the Valles Caldera will never be ground for conventional farming. At the same time, these qualities make the Valles perhaps the finest summer pasture in the Southwest.

## Cattle and Sheep

Permanent Hispanic settlement began in New Mexico in 1598 with the arrival of Don Juan de Oñate at the head of a major colonizing expedition. Oñate brought horses, sheep, goats, and cattle. Oñate’s breeder sheep flocks thrived, and sheep again dominated the fledgling New Mexican livestock industry after Diego de Vargas’ Reconquest in the 1690s. In comparison, Hispanic New Mexico never became a center of cattle ranching. “Perhaps the single greatest retarding factor was the presence of a substantial established population of Pueblo Indian irrigation farmers” (Jordan 1993:146). Jordan contends that the Franciscan missions established in New Mexico in the 1600s, including that at Jémez Pueblo, blocked the development of a large-scale cattle industry in order to protect the fields and crops of the Indians as well as their own agricultural enterprises based on Indian labor (Jordan 1993:146; see also chapters 5 and 9 for discussions of Jémez Pueblo’s traditional relationship with the Valles Caldera).

After the Reconquest, Governor Vargas began to make land grants, a practice that continued through the 1700s. Subsequent governors made grants north of Jémez Pueblo and west of the Río Grande (Scurlock 1981:135). Hispanics first occupied the Rito de los Frijoles in 1780, the year Governor Juan Bautista de Anza received a petition from Andrés Montoya to recognize a land grant that former Governor Tomás Velez Cachupín had made in 1740 (Morley 1938:150). Although Montoya admitted never occupying this grant, de Anza conveyed Montoya’s title to the land to his son-in-law, Juan Antonio Lujan, who began clearing the still virgin acreage for farming (Morley 1938:150–151). Similarly, Governor Chacòn made the Cañon de San Diego Grant, immediately southwest of the Baca Location in 1798. The first European settlement on this grant was probably Cañon, at the confluence of the Río Jémez and the Río Guadalupe. By 1821 the Jémez Valley’s Hispanic population was 864 (Scurlock 1981:135).

New Mexico’s ranching economy and the lands it occupied gradually expanded during the eighteenth century.

Herding and pastoralism were the principal means by which the region's Hispanic occupation grew from the time of the Reconquest until after the coming of the Anglo-Americans in the nineteenth century. Richard L. Nostrand, an authority on New Mexico Hispanic history, finds that the Hispanic "homeland," or area of occupation, reached its greatest extent about 1900, mainly owing to the sheep industry (Norstrand 1992).

The need for new pastures was the driving force behind this homeland expansion. John O. Baxter (1987:42) notes that New Mexico's sheep industry, while still comparatively small by later standards, was solidly established by the mid-1700s. This period also roughly coincides with the time when Hispanic travelers and soldiers began crossing the Valles Caldera. The Miera y Pacheco Map of 1779 implies the presence of cattle and other livestock in the Valles Caldera during the latter eighteenth century. In his drawing, made at the request of Governor Juan Bautista de Anza, Bernardo Miera y Pacheco (1779) identifies the Valle Grande as the *Valle de los Bacas* (Valley of the Cows).

By 1757 the Pueblos and Hispanics of New Mexico together owned significant numbers of livestock, including seven times more sheep than cattle: 7,356 horses, 16,157 cattle, and 112,182 sheep (Baxter 1987:42). Diego Padilla, who lived south of Albuquerque, owned 1,700 sheep but only 141 cattle in 1740. Sheep became "the economic hallmark of the regional Euroamerican culture" (Jordan 1993:147). The region's Navajo and Ute populations also readily adopted these animals into their economies and cultures.

New Mexico's economy showed little diversification until about 1790. It was almost entirely agricultural and pastoral, and depended primarily on sheep. As sheep became the acceptable means of exchange for imported consumer goods, a small clique of rancher-merchants began to dominate livestock marketing within the province and to control other aspects of the local economy (Baxter 1987:42). Many of these individuals were either natives of Spain or *criollos*, born in the New World but of Spanish blood.

## Partido

The *partido* system, which was a means of lending capital at interest in the medium of sheep, prevailed in New Mexico from at least the early eighteenth century until it disappeared with the new economic arrangements and dislocations of World War II. The *partido* contract required a *partidario* (participating sharecropper) to return a percentage of the annual increase in the sheep herd and a percentage of the sheared wool, as well as to compensate the owner for all losses (Scurlock 1982:4). *Partido* came relatively late to the Valles Caldera, however. Two prominent land barons of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Mariano Sabine Otero and Frank Bond, were largely responsible for the introduction of *partido* to the Baca Location.

The earliest known *partido* contract in New Mexico dates to about 1745. Under this agreement, Captain Joseph Baca of

Albuquerque received 417 ewes from Lieutenant Manuel Sáenz de Garvisu for a period of 3 years (Baxter 1987:29).

Despite the early introduction of *partido* following the Reconquest, livestock production remained at a subsistence level throughout the Spanish colony until the 1770s. After 1780, New Mexico began to produce a truly exportable surplus in numbers such that the trade significantly aided New Mexico's economy rather than depleting it, as had earlier been the case. In 1788 Governor Fernando de la Concha estimated the number of New Mexican sheep sold in Chihuahua at 15,000 head valued at about 30,000 pesos. Six years later:

*"[a friar noted] 15 to 20,000 sheep leave this province annually, and there have been some years when up to 25,000 left." In 1803 Governor Chacon estimated the number of cattle and horses going to market annually in Sonora and Nueva Vizcaya at more than 600 annually, plus 25 to 26,000 sheep and goats. In 1827 Colonel Antonio Narbona reported that there were 5,000 cattle, 240,000 sheep and goats, 550 horses, 2,150 mules, and 300 mares in New Mexico (Gutiérrez 1991:319–320).*

At the end of the century, sheep marketing involved provincial merchants who brought their livestock to La Joya de Sevilleta, the last settlement north of the Jornada del Muerto. November was the traditional departure date. As exports increased, however, the dealers began to favor August when summer rains improved grazing and filled waterholes. The caravans that took sheep to market, called *conductas* or *cordones*, that went to Nueva Vizcaya were escorted by detachments of soldiers from the Santa Fe presidio to guard against Indian attack.

In 1786, after signal military victories, Governor de Anza negotiated the Comanche Peace at Pecos, which also brought a period of peaceful relations with Apaches and some other nomads (but not the Navajo who were unrelenting in their raids on Hispanic settlements in the Río Puerco). In addition, the reforms and development promoted by the ministers of King Charles III (the so-called "Carlist reforms") encouraged economic diversification among Hispanics of New Mexico. After nearly a hundred years of living as subsistence farmers, artisans and skilled artisans began to set up shops, and some cultivators began switching to herding sheep, cattle, and other livestock. Together, these peaceful relations and economic developments encouraged the expansion not only of the Spanish colonial population but also of the territory's livestock industry during the 1790s.

## The Nineteenth Century

The increase in numbers of livestock, especially sheep, created a need for new pastures on New Mexico's frontiers. Ranchers began to move onto the plains between the Sandia and Manzano mountains, and sometimes founded villages. In the period between 1818 and 1824, several rancher-merchant families from Santa Fe and the Río Abajo also requested land grants on the Pecos in what are now San Miguel and

Guadalupe counties. This expansion persisted for more than half a century, until the arrival of Anglo-American ranchers along New Mexico's margins checked and pushed it back.

By the 1820s the sheep population had grown to over 200,000, not counting Navajo and other Indian herds. Hispanic herdsmen were pushing out into the borderlands of northeastern New Mexico and as far as the Texas panhandle in search of pasture. In 1832 there were 240,000 sheep in the department but only 5,000 cattle and 850 horses.

Around this time, Hispanics probably were regularly using the lush high-altitude grazing lands that became the Baca Location for summer grazing (**Scurlock 1981:134–135**), but there is no record of permanent settlement until much later. Manuel Abrego established a ranch at Sulphur Springs in 1856. This operation might represent the first Anglo-American settlement near Redondo Creek (**Huning 1973:63–64**).

As discussed in Chapter 4, the U.S. Congress confirmed the Baca Location to the Baca Land Grant heirs in 1860, although the title was not delivered until the Baca Location was surveyed in 1876. This timing coincides with the development of huge single-owner sheep herds made possible by increased protection by the U.S. Army and the subjugation of the Navajos and other nomadic Indians in the 1860s and 1870s. Like other previously little-known areas next to the Río Grande Valley, the Baca Location became a principal resource for sustaining the continued growth of the New Mexican livestock industry (**Scurlock 1981:137**).

Between the 1860 Congressional authorization and the 1876 survey and patent of the land grant, Baca heirs and other Hispanic *pastores* (an inclusive term that can refer to the owners of the sheep and their *peones*, or employees) appear to have run sheep in the Valles Caldera. As reported by Los Alamos historian and author Craig Martin:

*Use of the Baca Location by the Cabeza de Baca family and their neighbors probably centered not on the Valle Grande but on the smaller valles [valleys] along the north rim of the Valles Caldera. In summer...[small family groups of herders] set up sheep camps on the Valle Toledo (then called the Valle Santa Rosa), the Valle San Antonio, and the Valle de los Posos. Dates carved on aspen trees still testify to the use of these back valleys as sheep camps before the beginning of the twentieth century. Utilizing the tall grasses of the valleys, the herders ran small flocks, probably no larger than several hundred animals apiece (Martin 2003:33, italics in the original).*

The major user apparently was Tomás Dolores Baca, grandson of the original grantee, Luis María Cabeza de Baca (chapter 4). Meanwhile, his older brother, Francisco Tomás, claimed to have obtained the rights from other heirs in the 1860s. Including the land rights then obtained by his children, the Francisco Tomás Baca family claimed to have established ownership of an undivided one-third interest in the entire Baca Location by the early 1870s (chapter 4). Other heirs as well as other *pastores* from the San José, and Cañon de San

Diego Grants might have used the Baca Location for summer grazing. No available documentary evidence shows how the land was shared.

Despite their uses of the Baca Location for grazing, the Baca family heirs permitted members of Jémez Pueblo to run sheep and horses in the Valles Caldera's rich grasslands (**Martin 2003:33**). The Jémez use of these valley ranges for herding was apparently a long-lived tradition that dated back to the early Spanish colonization of New Mexico (**Martin 2003:16**). The horse herd, considered by the Jémez to belong to the whole community, was especially valuable, as witnessed by the fact that the Pueblo's War Captain oversaw the care of the animals. The War Captain appointed men to take the horses into the Valles Caldera each spring to graze, with instructions to ensure that they did not allow the animals to damage pastures by overgrazing. The stockmen would bring the horse herd back to the pueblo in August in time for the fall harvest.

Surveyor General H. W. Atkinson documented ranching on the Baca Location by 1876. In the "General Description" concluding their report, which Atkinson signed, the government surveyors describe the Baca Location as:

*... finely adapted for stock growing, raising a fine rank growth of grass especially in the interior which is filled with several small valleys and fine streams containing myriads of trout. The soil in the valley is rich but on account of its altitude is too cold to raise any kind of grain or vegetables. There are no settlers living upon the Grant. Large herds of sheep are kept here during the summer, but not during winter as the cold is too severe. The east and north boundaries run along the summit of the Valles mountains and are high and slightly broken. The grant contains an abundance of pine and aspen timber (Sawyer and McBroom 1876:14–15).*

The arrival of the Denver and Río Grande Railroad and the establishment of a New Mexico terminal at Española in 1881 created the modern labor market and introduced cash into what had been a barter economy (**Weigle 1975:118–123**). The 1935 Indian Land Research Unit of the Office of Indian Affairs gives an account of how the railroad gave the Bond Brothers their start:

*Among the gentlemen opening stores were Scott and Whitehead, who in partnership had the commissary contract with the railroad company...Early in 1883 the railroad company changed its mind and decided to extend its line into Santa Fe and to build its roundhouse in Alamosa. This left the storekeepers in Española faced with the prospect of another dead railroad town...In what must have been a minor panic, all the merchants sold out. Two young brothers, George W. and Frank Bond, were working for Scott and Whitehead, and these men decided to buy out the stock and the tent of Scott and Whitehead...The Bonds, shrewder than the rest, saw the folly of depending for long-range growth upon the railroad. If they were to grow rich in this country they must do so on the one product that could be sold*

elsewhere for cash. Their commercial operations, therefore, led inevitably to livestock. In 1883 they had bought up 40 acres [16 ha] of land adjacent to the railroad depot for \$200 and proceeded to build the facilities for shipping stock. Soon after that they began extending credit on livestock mortgages, and their herds began to be built up. At first they concentrated on cattle, but these proved to be less profitable than sheep. The grazing land open for free use at that time appeared limited, as did the prospects in the grazing industry. The Bond herd increased, and soon they entered into the system of renting out sheep on a sharecropper basis. The *partidario*, or sharecropper, system, under which most of the sheep industry is carried on in New Mexico today, is as old as Spanish colonization and may have been originally an outgrowth of the Spanish colonial *encomienda* system, whereby the labor of Indians was given to certain grantees, together with grants of land...The Bonds apparently found this system profitable, and their growth since 1883 has been phenomenal. Today this corporation has extended its operations until it covers a good portion of northern New Mexico and controls a good share of the sheep industry.

*The growth of Española has paralleled the growth of the Bond Co . . . (Weigle 1975:119–120).*

The arrival of the railroad greatly accelerated economic and environmental change in the Territory of New Mexico. In his discussion of environmental change and degradation on and around the Pajarito Plateau after 1880, Rothman states that American influence “telescoped into a few years much more environmental and cultural change than Spanish practices had produced in nearly three hundred years” (Rothman 1989:188). (See chapter 4 for Rothman’s [1989:205–206] conclusions on changing land use patterns and how these affected and were affected by grazing.)

Craig D. Allen (1989) emphasizes historic human interactions with natural processes. In a short section titled *Anthropogenic Disturbances*, he discusses livestock grazing. He states that the extremely high historic stocking rates have led to gross alterations in the species composition of local vegetation associations, that continuous grazing has also caused marked reductions in herbaceous plant and litter ground cover, that overgrazing has been seen as a major cause of soil erosion and arroyo cutting, and that overgrazing in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries effectively suppressed previous surface fire regimes throughout the landscape (Allen 1989:145–149).

The earliest homesteads between Redondo Creek and La Cueva were those of John Kelly and Polito Montoya, who established their ranches by 1883. Subsequent homesteads around La Cueva include those of N. R. Darey, Angelién Eagle, J. S. Eagle, and S. D. Thompson (USDA Forest Service 1883–1913).

Mariano Otero and his son, Federico J. (F. J.), acquired the Baca Location in 1899 (chapter 4). With their acquisition of the property, the Valles Land Company began to use the ranch as summer range for large numbers of horses, cattle, and sheep (Martin 2003:44). Martin observes further:

*Although they mostly dealt in real estate, the Oteros were also experienced sheepherders. The partners registered a new brand on June 8, 1899, and brought sheep to the ranch that first summer...In a typical pattern of use, the Oteros grazed cattle and horses on the large valleys and grazed sheep in the mountains. For lambing grounds the Oteros used the meadows above Sulphur Springs. One benefit of this location was that the herders could use the acidic water from the springs to rid the sheep of scab and ticks (Martin 2003:44; emphasis in the original).*

## The Twentieth Century

In 1909 Federico J. (F. J.) Otero sold the Baca Location to the Redondo Development Company, but he continued to lease the Location until 1917 for grazing sheep (chapter 4). F. J. Otero did not renew his grazing lease in 1917, and that year the G. W. Bond and Brothers Company leased the Baca Location from Redondo Development Company for \$500 a month. The Bond Brothers used the ranch for summer grazing, while wintering their sheep on the Ramón Vigil Land Grant (which they bought in 1919) and the Alamo Ranch northwest of Bernalillo. The Baca Location lease required the Bonds to make certain improvements; they spent \$3,054.20 on fencing and other work in 1918. In late 1918 Frank Bond entered into a contract to buy the Baca Location from the Redondo Development Company. G. W. Bond and Brothers Company continued to lease the Baca Location from 1918 to 1926 (Kelly 1972:6–7; Otero 1935:237; Wentworth 1948:239–241).

G. W. Bond and Brothers made their highest profits in wool and sheep in 1909 and 1912, establishing *partido* arrangements throughout the region. They sustained heavy losses of sheep in the severe winter of 1914–1915 (Grubbs 1960–1962). Their greatest profits were made well before they bought the Baca Location and the Ramón Vigil land grants or the Alamo Ranch. Despite further losses on the tract during the severe winter of 1918–1919, the Bonds continued to develop their operations there.

After entering into the 1918 contract to buy the Baca Location, the Bond brothers permitted local Pueblos continued access to the property for ceremonial pilgrimages, limited hunting, and the construction of certain traditional log structures for shelter, hunting rites, and related purposes up to 1963 (Wezłowski 1981:115). A misunderstanding between G. W. Bond and Brothers Company and Jémez Pueblo led to the arrest of members of three Jémez Pueblo families for illegal grazing around 1920, however. Even though the court proceedings, which were held in Española, determined in favor of the Indian defendants, Frank Bond ended the unwritten agreement that allowed the Pueblos to pasture their cattle and horses in the Valles Caldera.

Changing patterns of land use in the region made the Valles Caldera increasingly valuable for grazing and timber. Hal Rothman (1989) notes that the Anglo-American owners leased the timber rights on the Ramón Vigil Land Grant to H. S. Buckman, a lumberman from Oregon, in 1898. Buckman

began large-scale cutting of the Plateau forests with devastating effect. “Buckman’s timber enterprise destroyed what remained of the native ecosystem on the Vigil Grant” (Rothman 1989:203). Rothman explains further that decline in the quality of forage, the extension of the national forests and the loss of open land forced many Hispanics to run sheep on shares, a business dominated by Frank Bond. (Rothman 1989:209)

Bond acquired so much public and private grazing land that small herders, who could not find enough pasture for their stock, had to sign *partido* agreements with him. Bond’s system tended to impoverish these small herdsman. *Partidarios* took his sheep along with their own, and Bond made the herders fully responsible for the animals in their care. Their own stock served as collateral. Bond collected a fee for range use from the *partidarios*, “usually 300 pounds of wool and 25 lambs per 100 ewes (Martin 2003:65). *Partidarios* also had to outfit themselves from his store, where he charged a flat 10 percent interest rate. With expenses mounting, most *partidarios* were lucky to keep their own sheep at the end of a contract. As Bond’s empire grew, he became the most influential man in the Española Valley (Rothman 1989:209–210; see also Weigle 1975:219).

Use of the Baca Location remained seasonal despite the increased herding activity. William Boone Douglass noted:

*The grant is without permanent habitation. During the summer months, the owners maintain a cattle ranch, and near the SE. Cor. is a dairy ranch. The members of both ranches leave before winter sets in. In the valleys to the south and West without the bounds of the grant, permanent settlements are found, where the lands appear to be cultivated with a profit (Douglass and Neighbour n.d.).*

Historian Dan Scurlock (1981) notes that there were 73 Bond employees on the Baca Location in the summer of 1918. He lists the employees identified by informants or found in the Bond and Son business records; all but 3 of the employees were Hispanic or had Hispanic surnames. Most were sheepherders (*pastores*), camp tenders (*camperos*), or camp suppliers (*caporales*). That summer there were 17 sheep camps and 1 cattle camp on the Baca Location. The average number of sheep per camp was 1,257 (Scurlock 1981:144, 147). Clyde Smith, who was born on a homestead at Battleship Rock in 1899 and worked for Mariano S. Otero as a young man, estimated that there were over 100,000 sheep on the Baca Location during the summers of 1917 and 1918 (Scurlock 1982:4). In taped interviews with Scurlock made in 1970, Smith provided a detailed account of life as a shepherd in the Valles Caldera. (See entry for Scurlock [1982] for an extensive excerpt of this interview; see also Martin [2003:60–61] for a concise discussion of herding practices, camp structure, and aspen tree carving as a pastime.)

Ledger entries from November 23, 1918, to September 8, 1919, refer to the Baca Location (Bond and Son 1918–1919). These documents show that individuals were grazing small numbers of stock, such as “35 cows and 8 horses” and “6 cows and 1 horse” (Bond and Son 1918–1919:1) on the

Baca Location. The ledgers also indicate fees paid to Bond and Nohl Co. and balances due. The base price for grazing a horse or cow was \$1.25 for the summer season (Bond and Son 1918–1919).

There is some surviving correspondence about the Baca Location from this period. Herman Wertheim, writing for Vicente Armijo from Domingo, New Mexico on June 19, 1918, enclosed a voucher for \$116 in payment for grazing of 116 head of cattle taken to the Baca Location on June 12 (Bond and Son 1918–1921).

Moses Abouselman sent payments of \$17 for 17 head of cattle and \$65 for 65 head of cattle grazing on the Baca Location. Another letter refers to 14 head (Bond and Son 1918–1921).

Moses Abouselman wrote on June 10, 1918, that it was his understanding that he would pay 50 cents per head of cattle for the month of May or \$1.25 for the season (i.e., “through the summer”). Abouselman wrote a letter dated June 14, 1918, on behalf of José Antonio Pecos of Jémez Pueblo. Pecos requested permission to put his horses on “the grant.” There is some correspondence from the Quemado Sheep Company at Peña Blanca (Bond and Son 1918–1921).

Life as a herdsman, both for the laborer and owner, was uncertain. The good times experienced during the summers of 1917 and 1919 did not last. Frank Bond’s son-in-law, Charles H. Corlett, who worked as manager of the Baca Location for about a year and was later to become a renowned general in the U.S. Army during World War II, describes the great difficulties confronting the Valles Caldera herdsman in 1919:

*Because of the severe winter of 1919 many cattle and sheep died of starvation. Frank Bond was beside himself with worry and nearly out of his mind. John Davenport [known as “Juan Largo” by his Hispanic friends (Scurlock 1981:144)] was overworked and somewhat discouraged as a result of the dreary winter, did not object when Bond made me manager, but became my loyal and valued assistant. I resigned my commission as lieutenant colonel (temporary) in the Army of the United States and became a stockman...After about four months at La Jara, the headquarters of the Baca, Amy and I moved down into the valley and occupied my mother’s house (Corlett 1974:46–47).*

The Forest Service had instituted a program of predator control in the Jémez Mountains in 1916 (Barker 1970). The U.S. Biological Survey (later renamed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) had been trapping predators, mainly gray wolves, in the mountains before 1916. Elk, mule deer, turkey, and prairie dogs were reduced or eliminated in and around the Baca Location by the Forest Service program of hunting and poisoning. Consequently, gray wolves, mountain lions, and coyotes preyed increasingly on cattle and sheep.

The U.S. Biological Survey continued to hunt predators, primarily gray wolves and mountain lions, from Chama south to the Baca Location and in the mesas and canyons to the south and west. John Davenport killed the last native New Mexican gray wolf in the Valle Grande in 1932 (Scurlock 1981:148).

Frank Bond and the G. W. Bond and Brothers Company completed their purchase of the Baca Location, with a half interest in the mineral rights, in 1926 (Chapters 3 and 7). Redondo Development Company retained its full timber rights on the tract for 99 years (**Scurlock 1981:144**; see also Chapter 4).

Most of the *pastores*, *camperos*, and *caporales* who worked on the Baca Location between about 1910 and 1950 lived in the locality. Records show that they came from San Ysidro, Cuba, Regina, Chamita, Española, Cow Springs, Santa Fe, Peña Blanca, Bernalillo, Vallecito de los Indios, and Velarde (**Scurlock 1981:144**).

In its study of the area carried out in March through July 1935 (originally published as the *Tewa Basin Study*), the Indian Land Research Unit of the Office of Indian Affairs discussed the Bond Brothers and how they adopted the *partido* system. Case History No. III describes the *partido* arrangement under which Lazaro Salazar ran his sheep on the Baca Location:

*Lazaro Salazar has been renting Bond's sheep since 1924. He has 300 of Bond's sheep and 900 of his own. Lazaro rents Bond's sheep only to have the right to use the Baca Location (owned by Bond) to graze his sheep at \$.25 per head. Lazaro is an exceptional sheep herder and has been able to stay clear of debt. This he attributed to the fact that only one-fourth of his sheep holdings belong to Bond. When, as is the case with all of the herders, it is necessary to borrow from Bond to finance the herding operations, a contract is made calling for the sale of lambs and wool to the Bond Company at a price to be set by them. In 1934 Bond limited Lazaro's grazing privileges on the Baca Location to 1,200 sheep. He feels that because of the fact that the ratio of his own sheep to Bond's sheep is too great he will be crowded off the Baca Location (Indian Land Research Unit of the Office of Indian Affairs, in **Weigle 1975:219**).*

Following lambing season, the herds were driven to shearing camps, maintained by Bond at Paseo del Norte, which is just south of the junction of Highway 4 and the road to the ranch headquarters, and at San Antonio Springs and at El Cajete (**Scurlock 1981:144**). Some shearers (*trasquiladores*) came from adjacent villages and others came from as far away as Mexico.

A shearer could shear 50 to 100 sheep each day and was paid 25 cents for each animal sheared. About 500 pounds of wool could be stuffed into a gunnysack. Ten or 12 sacks made a freight load, which was hauled by a four-horse or mule team and wagon across the Baca Location through Santa Clara Pueblo to Bond's Española store, or through La Cueva to Jémez Springs. Jémez Pueblo freighters then hauled the wool from Jémez Springs to Bernalillo or Albuquerque (**Scurlock 1981:144**).

**Lorin Brown (1978:158)**, gives a detailed account of his visit to a *pastor*, Basílico Garduño, at his camp "in the shadow of El Cerro Redondo (Round Peak), near Jémez Hot Springs." Garduño worked for a *patrón*, presumably Frank Bond. The *patrón* visited the camp later, but Brown offers no details concerning him. Brown does, however, record

Garduño's conversation about his former *patrón*, Don Marfano [Otero].

*My father and I both worked for Don Marfano, who first owned those springs, that is, the grant on which they are located. He was muy rico, a man of many sheep and much land. We used to lamb in the grassy valley just above the springs and dip the sheep in troughs built just below the main sulphur spring. We used nothing else except the very water from the spring to rid the sheep of scab and ticks. It was much better than this stuff we have to use nowadays (Basílico Garduño, in **Brown 1978:166**).*

Brown describes the shearers, who arrived once a year, as "itinerants, shearing sheep on a commission basis all over the state and into Colorado" (**Brown 1978:171**).

Franklin Bond assumed ever greater oversight of the family business dealings in northern New Mexico following the decline in his father's (Frank Bond) health and subsequent moves, first to Albuquerque and then to California. Because wool prices declined in 1939–1940, he added cattle to the Baca Location ranching operation. World War II brought great demand for uniforms, briefly boosting the price of wool.

Frank Bond died on June 21, 1945, just weeks before Japan's unconditional surrender ended World War II. Soon afterward, commercial manufacture of synthetic fibers developed during the war caused the sheep industry to collapse again (**Martin 2003:67**). Franklin Bond increased the number of cattle on the Baca Location, and began leasing rangeland to cattle ranchers who terminated the traditional *partidos* with local men in favor of cowboys who worked as employees (see **Martin 2003:67–68**).

Even the Bond family hired between 5 and 15 cowboys for the ranching season. Martin reports:

*The ranch hands would be up at 4 AM for a hearty breakfast and arrive at the corrals at 5 AM. Out of the herd of 50, each cowboy was assigned six or seven horses—enough for a week of hard riding. On trail by sunup, the employees rode up to 20 miles [32 km] a day, checking the cows and calves, inspecting the watering holes, and tending other ranch chores. Branding operations were run at Black Corrals near Cerro La Jara in the Valle Grande. During branding time cowboys rode out before sunrise to round up cattle. By afternoon they returned with the stock, the fires were hot, and the branding began. In the 1940s and early 1950s, cowboys and sheepherders received \$90 per month. Skilled horse trainers could make \$125 per month. Meals were served at the bunkhouse and consisted of lamb, beef, potatoes, chili, and fresh pie twice a day (**Martin 2003:67**).*

In the early 1950s, the Baca Location supported some 30,000 sheep and 5,000 cattle (**Martin 2003:69**). After Franklin Bond's death in 1954 at the age of 52, the trend toward replacing family sheep herds with cattle owned by lessees continued. By the late 1950s, ranchers ran as many as 12,000 cattle on the ranch (**Martin 2003:67**).

Sam King and his younger brother, Bruce (who later served three 4-year terms as governor of New Mexico in the 1970s, 80s and 90s), obtained a 5-year lease of the Baca Location grass in 1959. The King brothers helped remove the last of the Bond sheep from the Valles Caldera, ending this important part of the Baca Location's history.

In 1960, the King brothers ran 3,100 head of cattle, which they trucked into the Valles Caldera from their lower elevation ranches, during the summer and early fall. Martin describes the operation:

*Starting in mid-September, cowboys rode out each morning to round up the cattle spread over extensive rangeland. It took two weeks to herd the cows and calves into the large pastures of the Valle Grande. In early October heifers were cut from the herds and moved to the loading pens at the old Bond shearing camp near the headquarters road. Seven trucks, all loaded in two hours, took the yearlings to market in Denver. The Kings trucked the calves to feedlots near their home ranch in Stanley, and kept the cattle on the Alamos Ranch near Albuquerque, which they had purchased from the Bonds for winter range (Martin 2003:69–70).*

The King brothers offered to buy 25,000 acres (10,000 ha) of the Baca Location (they had just bought the Alamo Ranch and could not make an offer for the entire land grant). The Bond Estate, however, refused to divide the property (Bruce King, in Martin 2003:70).

Instead, James Patrick Dunigan, owner of Dunigan Tool and Supply Company in Abilene, Texas, bought the Baca Location from the Bond Estate in 1963 (see also chapter 4, "Divided Rights Part II: James Patrick Dunigan vs. New Mexico Timber" section). After honoring existing grazing lease contracts, Dunigan started running his own cattle on the ranch in 1965.

In his 1968 testimony before 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, J. B. Harrell, Jr., a Dunigan employee, states that Dunigan ran about 7,000 yearling steers on the Baca Location. The ranching season ran from about April 15 to November 15, depending on weather conditions (*Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*). Most of these animals belonged to Texas ranchers who trucked their herds to the Valles Caldera. Under the terms of their grazing contracts, lessees paid Dunigan a per head fee at the end of the ranching season based on the animal's weight gain (Martin 2003:103).

The following year, while making his statement before 10th Circuit Court of Appeals for the same case, Dunigan was asked about the range improvement and ranching programs that his companies had initiated:

*Collectively, when the partners and representatives of Dunigan Tool & Supply Company in a management capacity, took a look at the ranch and decided upon a course of fencing, developing water, creating areas in which to put our cattle, and we had committed ourselves at this point to a steer operation...we felt that we'd get a movement of our steers up into the high county with the proper techniques of salts and minerals and with the development of spring tanks,*

*and we purchased a D-8 Caterpillar and in accordance with plans, proceeded to build sixty-five earthen stock tanks on the ranch. At the time we came to the Baca Location there was a total of six tanks..., besides the running water in streams and natural springs (James Patrick Dunigan, in *Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*).*

Dunigan reported that his newly constructed stock tanks captured flows from intermittent springs, streams, and draws, and that some features were placed in high country grassland areas that previous ranchers had not used.

Under Dunigan's ownership, therefore, ranching operations were expanded into new topographic settings to allow more effective use and long-range management of available grasses. At the beginning of the ranching season, Dunigan separated the cattle among the Valle Grande, Valle Toledo, Valle de los Posos, and Valle Seco, as well as the lower elevations along the streams in the San Luis and Santa Rosa areas of the Baca Location (J. B. Harrell, Jr., in *Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*). Dunigan explained that he adopted this practice because grass comes early to these low-lying elevations and grows well under sub-irrigation through stream diversions (*Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*) Dunigan needed to develop alternative pastures in the higher elevations to maintain the productivity of the valley-bottom pastures over the entire ranching season. He reasoned that by starting a program of high country grazing about the middle of June:

*... we will get the growing season benefits in our valleys and then in the valley in the fall, we have that summer's growth that we can bring to our shipping point and, of course, the cattle won't hurt the grass after it is matured and had its growth undisturbed (James Patrick Dunigan, in *Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*).*

Besides building stock tanks and salt- and mineral-lick stations to develop high-elevation grasslands for range use, Dunigan ran fences along the north side of the Valle San Antonio to help direct the movement of steers into the high country (*Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*).

Dunigan's overall fencing program was ambitious. The ranch built fences for the first time along the north and east boundaries of the Baca Location to reduce losses resulting from livestock wandering onto the Santa Fe National Forest. It also fenced the south side of the Valle San Antonio to hold cattle in the valley-bottom pasture when the livestock returned from the uplands. Dunigan indicated that his ranch planned to build other cross fences throughout the Baca Location to allow implementation of pasture deferral and rotation to improve range conditions over the long term (*Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc. 1967*). Dunigan's goal was to allow individual pastures to lie fallow about once every 4 years.

Baca Land and Cattle Company worked with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and consulted with Texas Technological College on ways to improve the Baca Location's rangeland. One of these collaborations consisted of an experimental plot of 14 grasses to develop cool season varieties to

inter-seed with the native species (James Patrick Dunigan, in *Baca Co. v. NM Timber, Inc.* 1967). The introduction of diverse cool-season grasses would reduce damage to pastures during grazing, and had the potential to lengthen the livestock season by producing useful grass earlier in the spring and later in the fall. Dunigan also hoped that he could use cool-season grasses to reclaim abandoned logging road cuts and other disturbed areas.

Under Dunigan's ownership, use of the Baca Location was not limited to cattle. In the 1960s and 1970s, Dunigan diversified his operation to include commercial elk hunts (Chapter 5), geothermal exploration (Chapter 8), and leases for Hollywood filming (Martin 2003:106–110). He also experimented with training thoroughbreds at high altitude to see if he could improve their performance in races at lower elevations.

*In 1977 Dunigan built a large stable for thoroughbreds about a mile [1.6 km] north of the headquarters area and on the western border of the Valle Grande. The stable enclosed 18 stalls in two parallel rows. Paddocks enclosing many acres extended from the stable area toward Jaramillo Creek. A one-bedroom apartment was attached to the stable so that trainers never had to be far from their charges. However, Dunigan's death in 1980 ended the experiment with inconclusive results (Martin 2003:104).*

## Today

Grazing has continued on the Baca Location since its acquisition by the Federal Government. An interim cattle grazing program began in the summer of 2002 on 23,380 acres (9,461 ha) in the Valles Grande, Toledo and San Antonio, and Cerro Seco pastures, with a maximum defined capacity of 2,000 animal units.

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