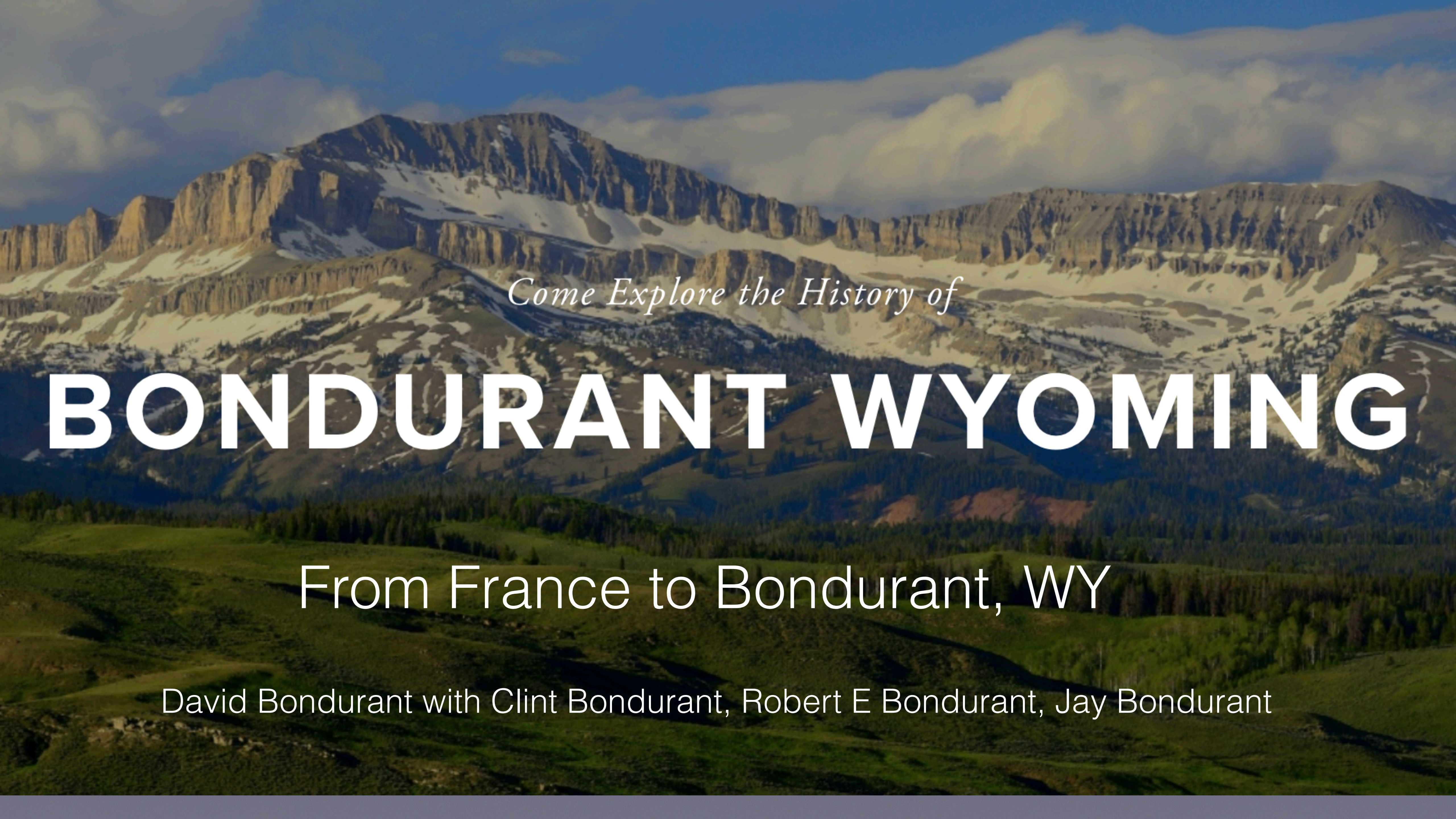




Come Explore the History of

BONDURANT WYOMING

From France to Bondurant, WY

David Bondurant with Clint Bondurant, Robert E Bondurant, Jay Bondurant

From France & England

- Who are the ancestors of Bondurant, WY founder, **Benjamin F. Bondurant**?
- Where did he get the pioneering spirit to arrive in frontier Wyoming in 1898, acquire land holdings, establish a town
- How did his ancestors travel from France and England to Bondurant, WY?



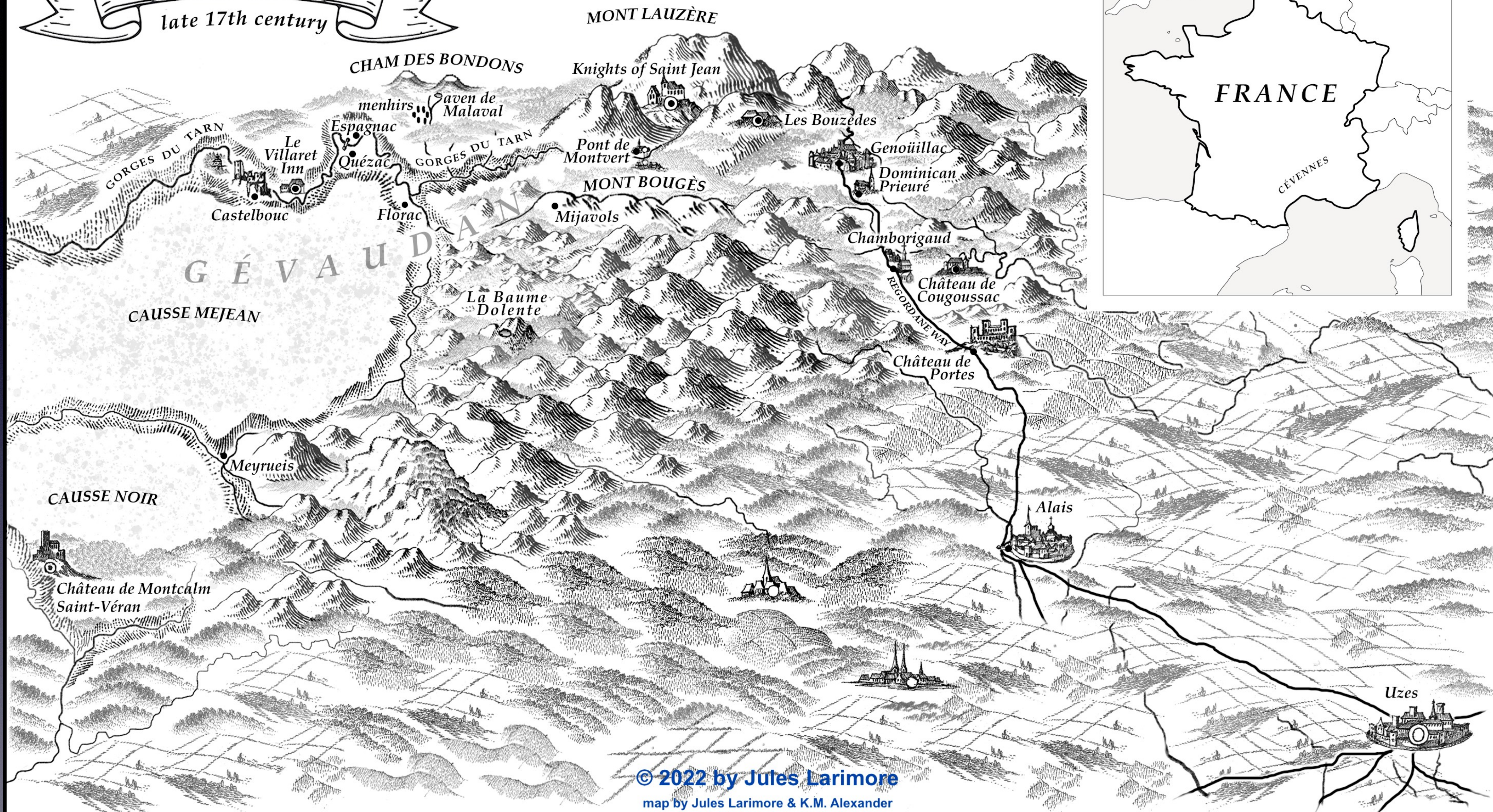
Jean Pierre Bondurant



Ann Tanner

CÉVENNES

late 17th century



Jean Pierre Bondurant Dit Cougoussac

- From a long line of Bondurants (from before 1280) in the Cevennes area of France
- Descendent of the Scottish Guards to French Nobility - Cougoussac means “of the Scots” (Mother’s side)
- Son of Jean Pierre Bondurant, Seigneur de Cougoussac (Lord of Cougoussac)
- Born a Huguenot in 1677 during a time of religious persecution
- His Father imprisoned by the Bishop of Uzes
- Forced to become Catholic in 1684 and Sent to a Dominican Priory
- Inherited significant property from his father in 1695
- Trained as an apothecary & doctor
- Flees the Kingdom for Switzerland where he recants his Catholic faith
- Boards the 2nd Huguenot Ship from England
- Arrives in Jamestown, Virginia in September 1700
- Becomes a citizen of the first English Colony in America and practices medicine among the English Planters living on the James River in Henrico County, Virginia



Jean Pierre Bondurant

Ann Tanner

- Descendant of Christopher Newport, the Admiral of Virginia who led the first expedition to Jamestown, Virginia and Claimed Virginia for the King at Cape Henry on April 29, 1607 (her great, great grandfather)
- Descendant of William Hatcher, an English Planter who arrived in Jamestown in 1634 and became the first Burgessess to the House of Burgessess from Henrico County in 1644 (her great grandfather)
- Her father and mother were Edward & Mary Tanner. Mary was William Hatcher's grand daughter.
- The Tanner's plantation was on the south side of the James River



Ann Tanner

Jean Pierre & Ann

- Married in 1709, they are believed to have lived on the Tanner plantation south of the James River in Henrico County, VA
- They have 5 children: Joseph, John, Peter, Ann, and Frances
- Jean Pierre and Ann buy 400-acres in Manakin, VA, west of Richmond, VA. This area is where the original French Refugees settled
- Jean Pierre died in 1734 and is buried on his daughter, Ann Ford's property near his land.



Jean Pierre Bondurant

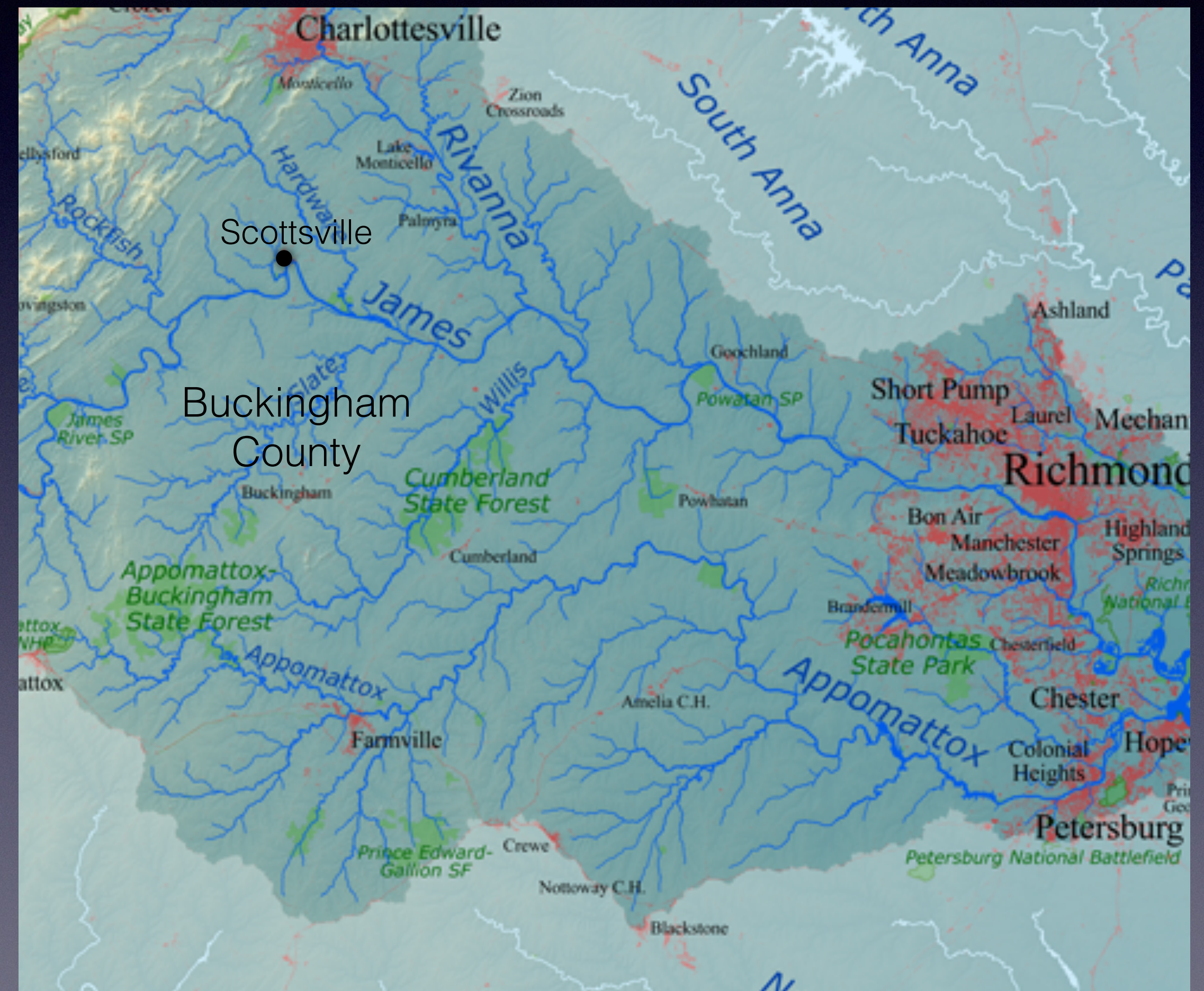


Ann Tanner

James River & Scottsville

Early settlers along the Atlantic coast found three main rivers carving passages through the Appalachian barrier into the interior of the continent. One of these three, the southernmost, “led up the James, down the New and Kanawha Rivers and so on into the Ohio, the spot on the James River that lay at the hub of the wheel of exploration, commercial development, and cultural expansion, was a pleasant patch of land at Horseshoe Bend. Here at the northwest limits of the river’s navigability, grew Scottsville, the principal port for river and canal traffic above Richmond and the destination of wagon and pack trains from the upper Shenandoah Valley across Rockfish Gap into Albemarle County.

“So strategic was Scottsville’s position that Tarleton threatened it, Lafayette defended it, and in another was Sheridan and Custer occupied it.”



John Bondurant Moves to Buckingham County

- Jean Pierre's family continued to raise their families on his land for many years.
- His son, John, moved to Buckingham County in 1759-60 to land bordering Green Creek.
- John's 3rd son Thomas Miles was born in 1744. He married Rhonda Agee. They had 11 Children and presumably lived on or near John's land in Buckingham County
- Thomas continued to live in Buckingham County throughout his life and died in 1822.



Noah Bondurant Weds Martha Chastain

- Noah Bondurant is the 4th son of Thomas Miles Bondurant
- He was born 10 Sept 1781 in Buckingham County
- He married Martha “Patsy” Chastain on 10 Sept 1807. They were married by Rene Chastain, the pastor of the Buckingham Baptist Church



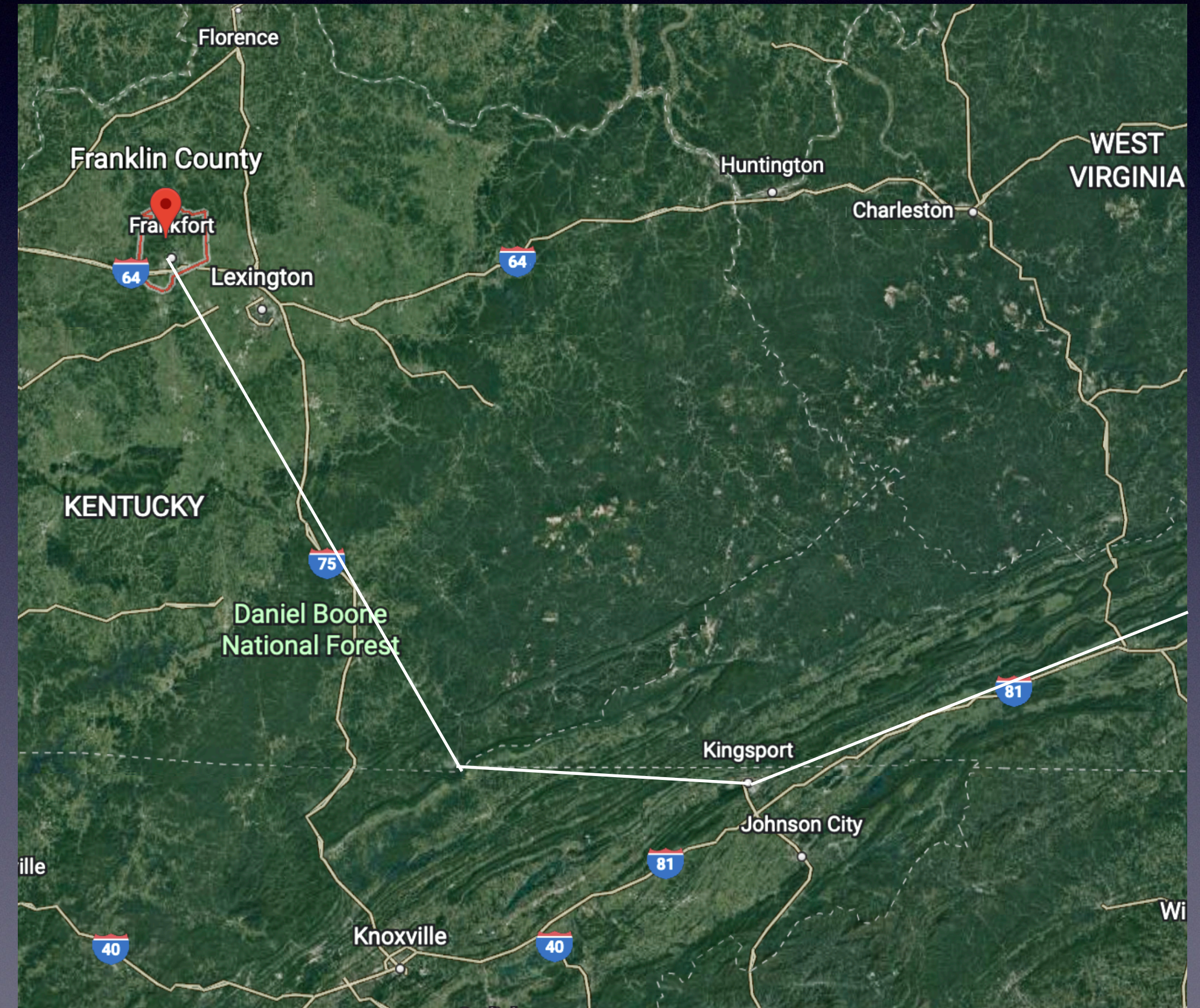
Route to Boone County

- In 1775, Daniel Boone had established a route through the Cumberland Gap into KY and had established Boonesborough near today's Lexington, KY
- By 1796, wagons were moving west through the gap and a network of outposts supported travelers moving to KY
- Noah and his family may have found their way from Buckingham County to the Wilderness Road, through the Cumberland Gap
- They settled in Franklin County, KY near Lexington.



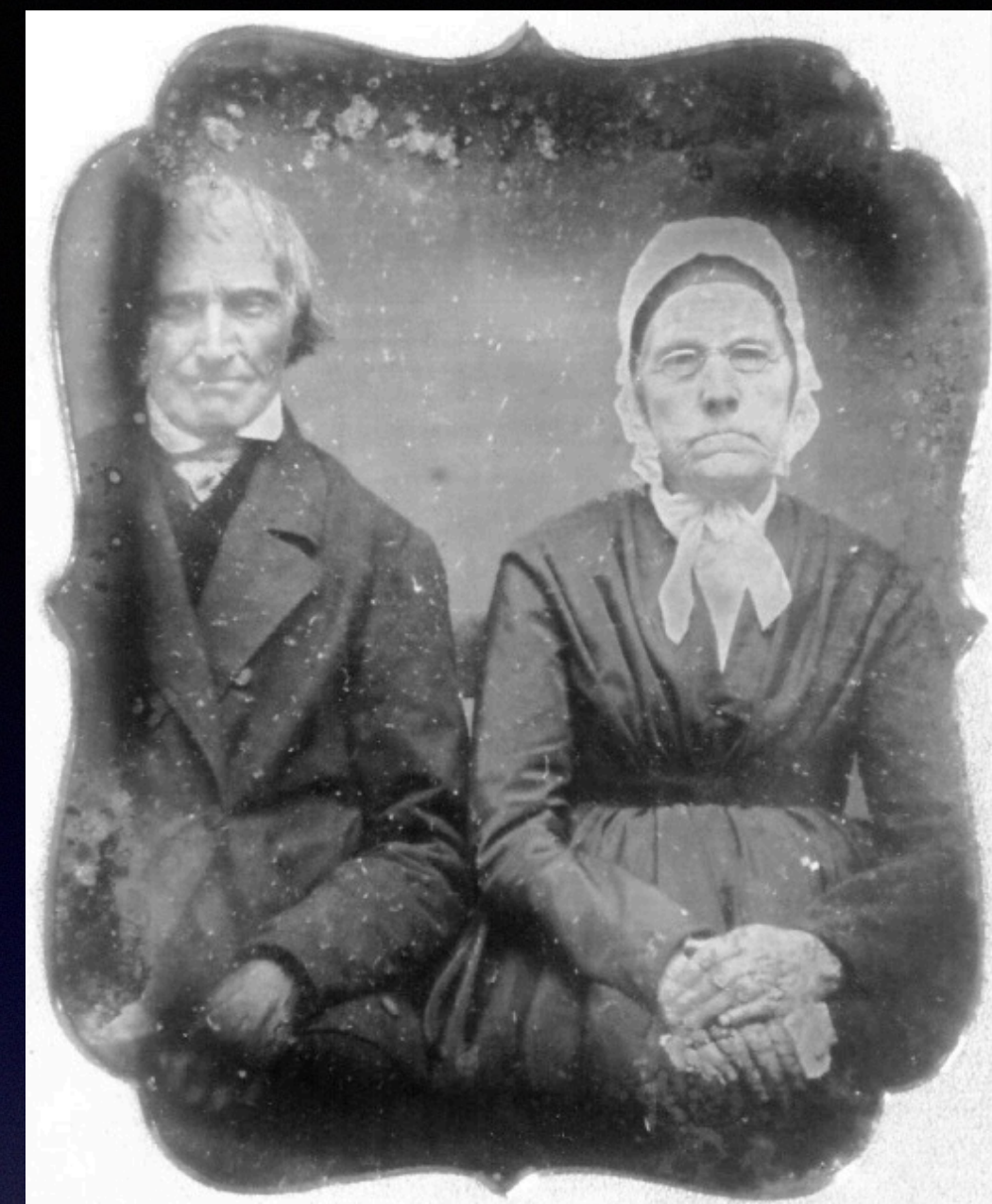
Noah and Family to Franklin County, KY

- Noah Bondurant arrived to Franklin County, Kentucky in 1815 from Buckingham County
- Franklin County is near Lexington KY

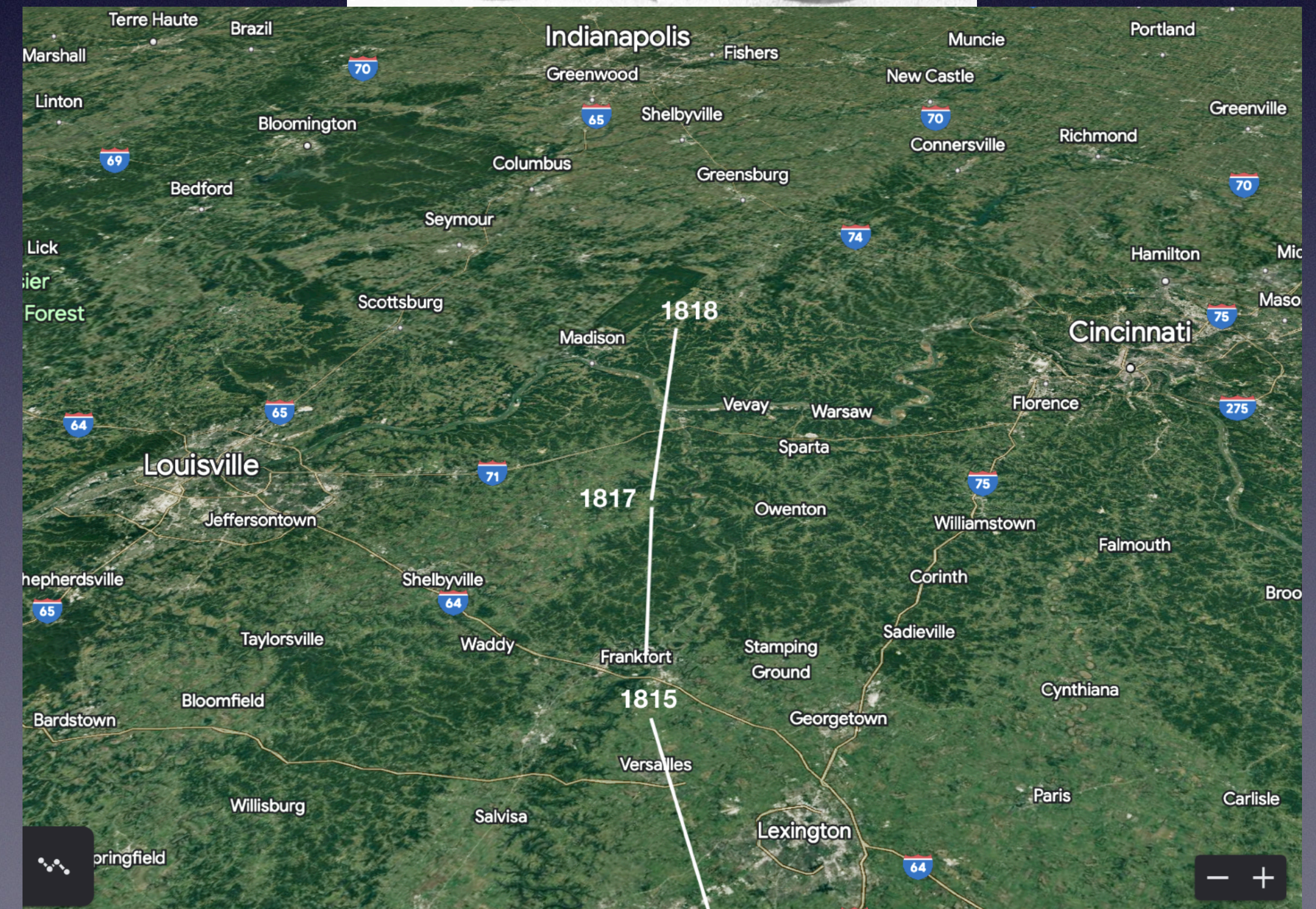


Noah Bondurant is buried in Jefferson County, IN

- Edward Jackson Bondurant is born in Henry County KY in 1817. His sister, Mary is born in Jefferson County, IN in 1818.
- They seem to have settled in Canaan, IN in Jefferson County, just across the Ohio River from Frankfort
- Noah Bondurant died 14 Dec 1856 and is buried in East Canaan Cemetery
- His son, Edward marries Keziah Monroe Magee
- Edward appears to farm on the family property until 1853 at age 36 when he moved west to Missouri

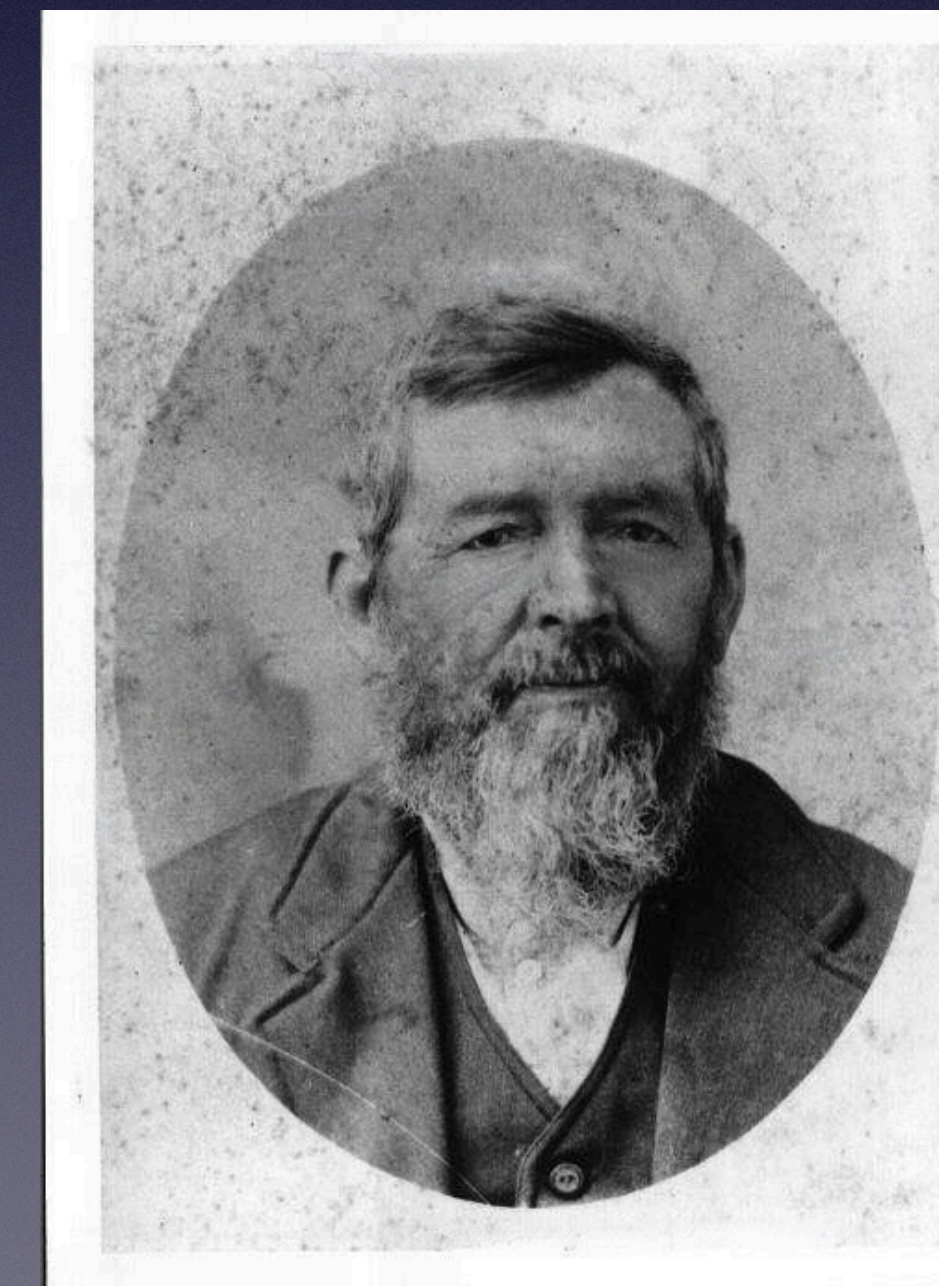


Noah & Martha Bondurant



Edward moves to Harrison County, Missouri

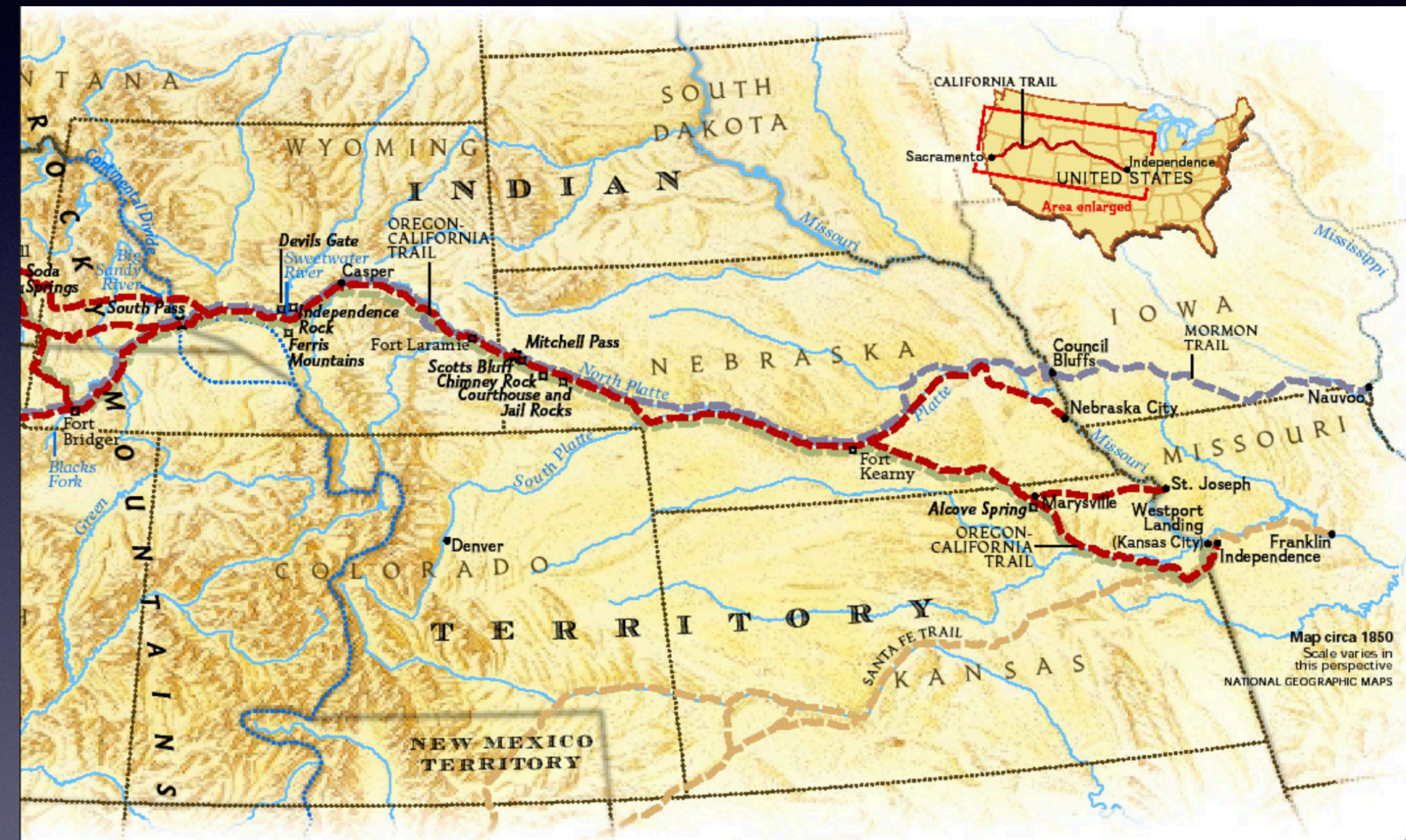
- Edward J. Bondurant moves his family westward from Jefferson County, IN to Bethany, MO (Harrison County) in 1853
- His son, Benjamin Franklin Bondurant is born in MO on March 4, 1861
- He Marries Sarah Ellen Goucher, daughter of Judge David Goucher of Bethany.
- They have their first son, Perle Oscar Bondurant in Bethany.



Edward J. Bondurant

The Oregon & California Trail

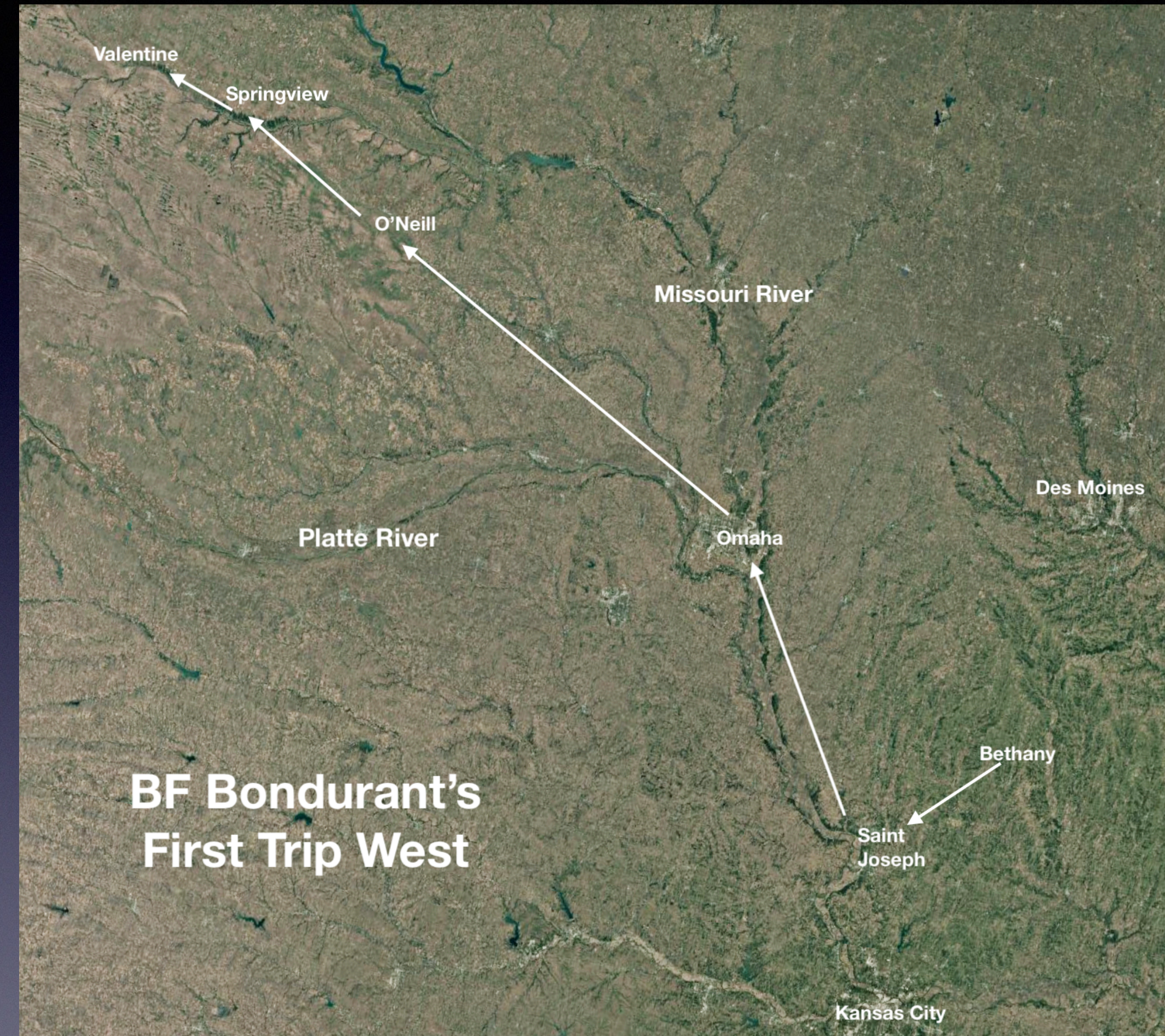
- In the 1850s, the Oregon & California Trails were running westward from Missouri and Iowa
- The Oregon Trail follows the Platte & North Platte River to Wyoming
- People were moving westward for good land being made available by the Homestead Act of 1862
- The Homestead Act of 1862 declared that any citizen or intended citizen could claim 160 acres - one quarter square mile - of surveyed government land. Claimants must "improve" the plot with a dwelling and grow crops. After five years, if the original filer was still on the land, it was his property, free and clear.

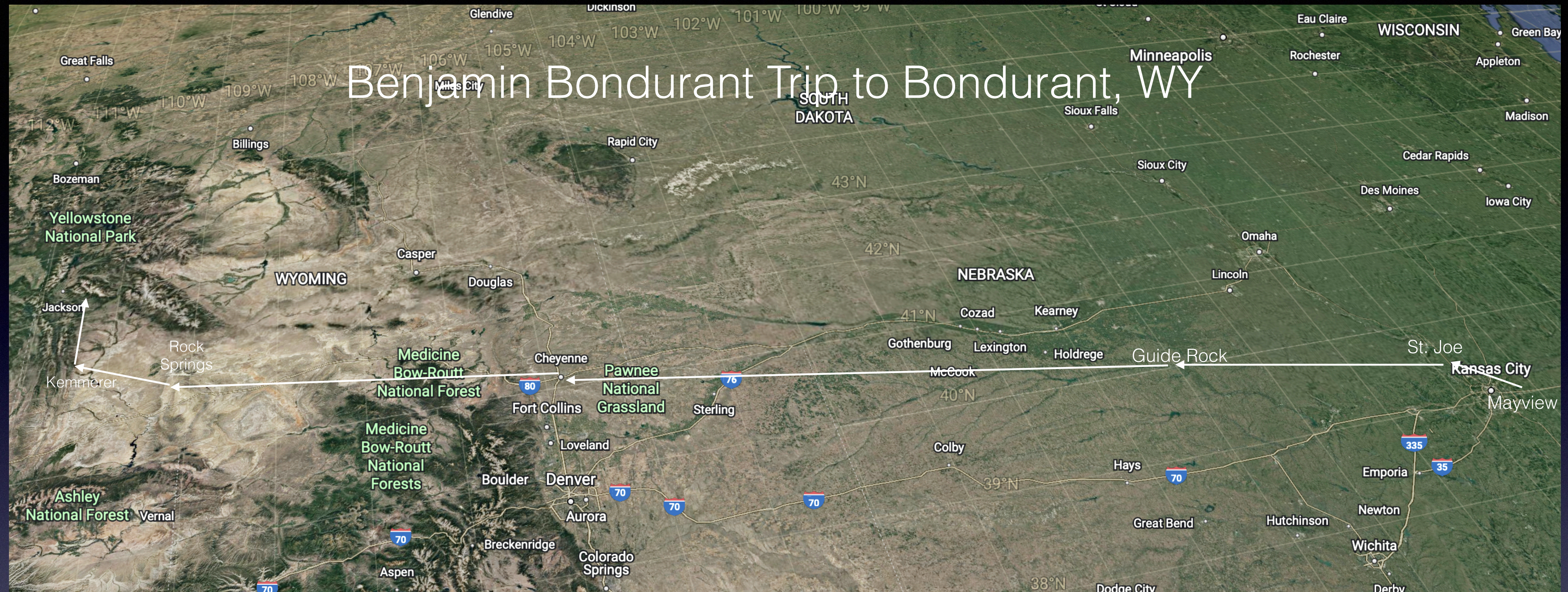


Oregon/California Trail Map 1850

Benjamin Bondurant Migrates to Nebraska

- Benjamin Bondurant migrates westward in 1884 at age 23 by railroad to Apple Creek, NE (near O'Neill)
- He leaves MO with his wife and 1 son, Perle along with 4 Blind mares for farm work. He leases land, grows a corn crop.
- In 1885, he moves on to Springview and files for 160 acres, farms for one year
- In 1886, moves on to Valentine, where he farms and helps build a school & church but only stays a few years
- He moves back to Bethany, farms for awhile, sells the farm and buys a store in Mayview which goes bankrupt
- By 1897, he is ready to move west again





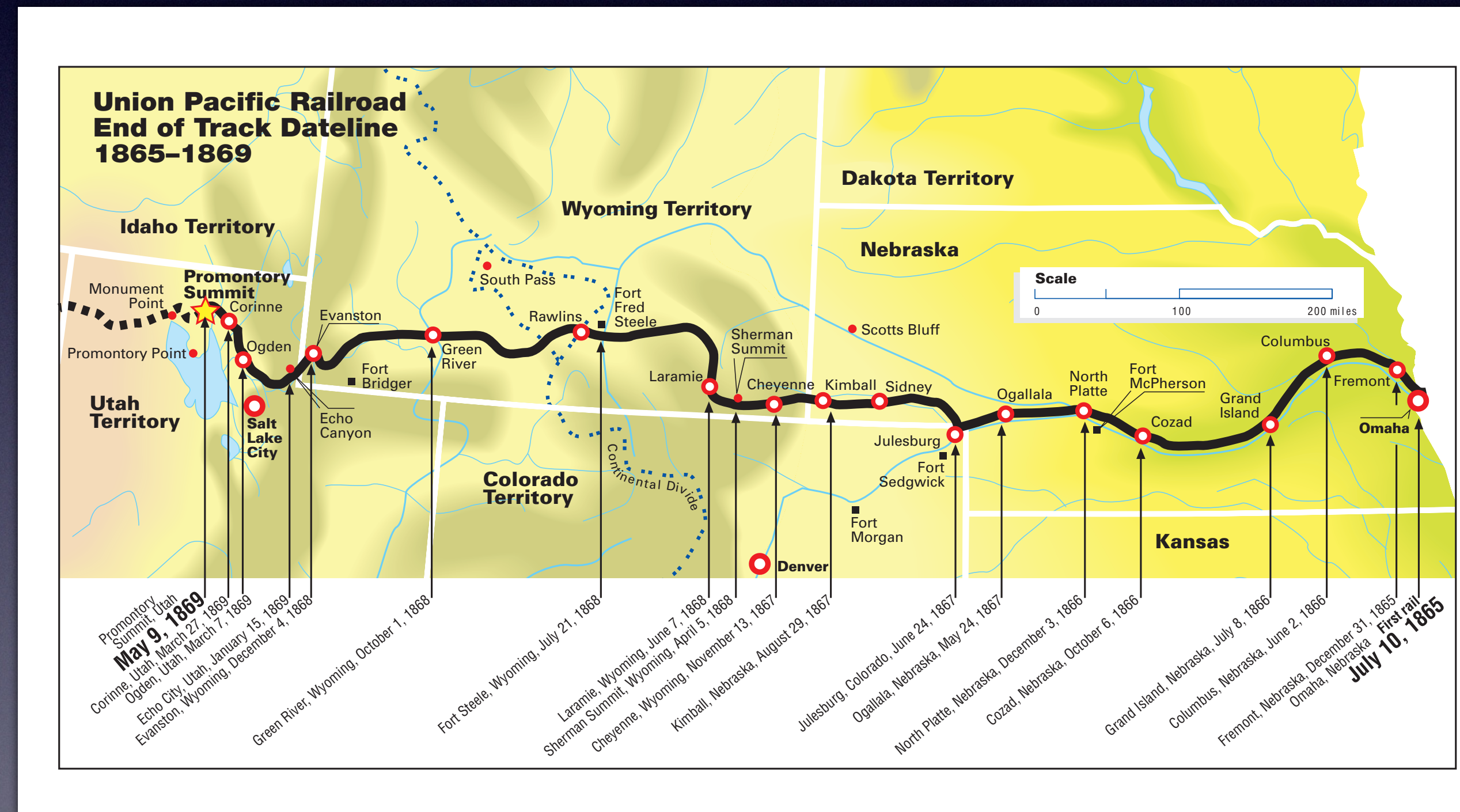
Benjamin Bondurant Trip to Bondurant, WY

- BF Bondurant say he had \$95 to his name after buying a blind mule & borrowing money to buy a mate and 2 second hand wagons. He buys 2 Plug Horses west of St. Joe to complete the team.
- He now has 5 children (Perle, Clare, Rollo, Essie, Herschel). He heads west to Oregon with a family named Wilson.
- By Guide Rock, the horses are played out. He stores some of his possessions in a rented room and loads everything else on 2 mules. They complete the journey to Kemmerer, WY.
- They stop along the way at Cheyenne and Rock Spring, WY banks. BF Bondurant is expecting money to be sent but it never comes.

Union Pacific Railroad



- During the 1860s, the Union Pacific Railroad was building the first transcontinental railroad.
- Starting in 1865 in Omaha, track was laid through Nebraska and Wyoming, meeting track from the Central Pacific Railroad from Sacramento at Promontory Summit, UT in 1869



Significance of Kemmerer

- The Union Pacific railroad was passing through Wyoming by the time BF Bondurant arrives in Kemmerer which is on a spur of the Transcontinental Railroad
- BF Bondurant's trip west basically followed the Railroad line from Cheyenne to Rock Springs to Kemmerer
- This would be the resupply point for settlers in the Wyoming area



Benjamin Bondurant Trip to Bondurant, WY

- By the time, BF Bondurant arrived in Kemmerer, he only had enough money for a couple of bags of flour. There is snow on the passes heading west.
- The Wilsons head on to Oregon. BF decides to winter in Kemmerer. BF and son, Perle gets jobs at a local bank, digging ditches, and putting up hay. They raise \$233.
- BF and family load up the wagons for the 150 mile drive to Jackson Hole where they heard the wildlife and game were abundant. They end up settling on the Hoback River



Kemmerer to Bondurant



*"The stories they heard of the game, the fish,
and the beautiful country seemed to answer a
yearning in them all. ...they fell in love with the
Hoback Basin where they stopped and settled."*

Homestead

Jack Creek

Hoback River

Hoback Basin Where B.F. Bondurant Settled

The Homestead

- It was spring 1898, they picked a place on the River
- Built a tent-house to unload the wagon and set up housekeeping
- They even brought an organ which Ellie would play as the family gathered around and sang
- They built the necessary barn, corral and site for the new house.
- There was timber work to be done, hay to be put up and finally the trip to the railroad for winter supplies



Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Bondurant, Early Pioneers of the Fall River Basin

One of B.F. Bondurant's Homecoming

- “Twas a gorgeous morning in October as my five children and myself watched our husband and father drive off in our only wagon pulled by our only team of mules, Jack and Jenny, both blind. ...Father was now on his way to get our winter food supplies and roofing for our house.
- Our older boys were going to help a neighbor get out wood for the winter, this just left my daughter , Essie and six-year-old Herschel and myself to look after things. It would take Father at least two to three weeks to make the trip to Kemmerer and back.
- Essie and I had planned that we would surprise them all..... we see how much ground we could grub to remove the sagebrush. As the last of Fatherfaded from sight...we had our bonnets on and the grub hoes in our hands.” Ellie Bondurant



One of B.F. Bondurant's Homecoming

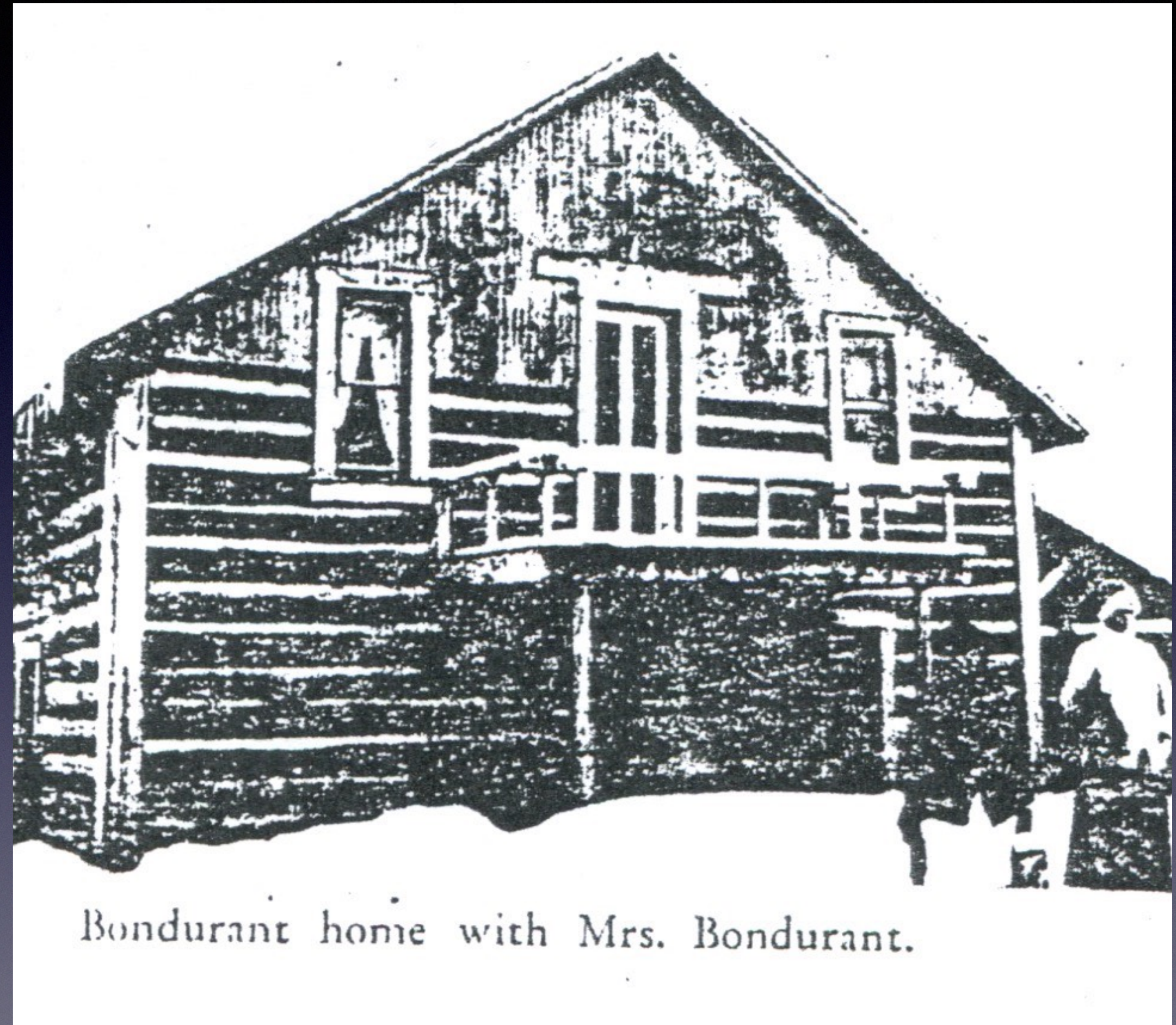
- “At last the day came when Father returned. Our supplies were all in for that first winter. Essie and I were so excited over our surprise.
- Morning finally came, we took Father to see.
- He was surprised, all right, but an ever-gathering cloud was covering his face, till at last he really blew his top.
- Blankety,....Blank! Didn't you know enough to grub on our land instead of the governments.
- Just another incident in the hardships and excitements of being a pioneer!” Ellie Bondurant



Mr. and Mrs. B. F. Bondurant, Early Pioneers of the Fall River Basin

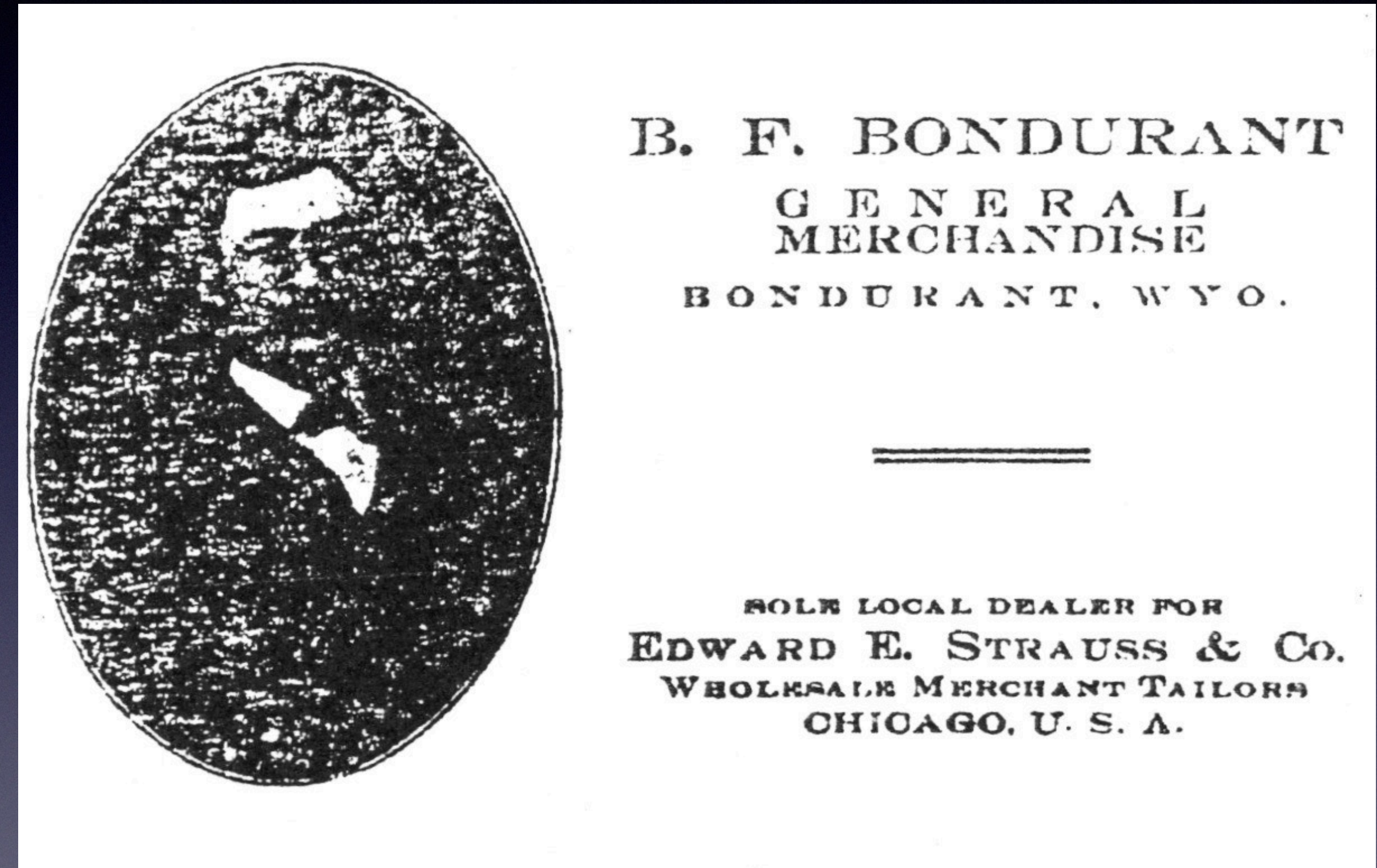
Bondurant House, Store, and Post Office

- They initially built a five room house with dirt floor and roof.
- By 1903, B.F. Bondurant and sons had built a larger new 2 story house with 6 bedrooms up and 3 bedrooms down with large dining room and kitchen. A long lean-to on the west end was for washing, storage, in addition to a large living room and office.
- This house would be the location of a store and post office which opened in 1903 with Ella Bondurant as postmistress.



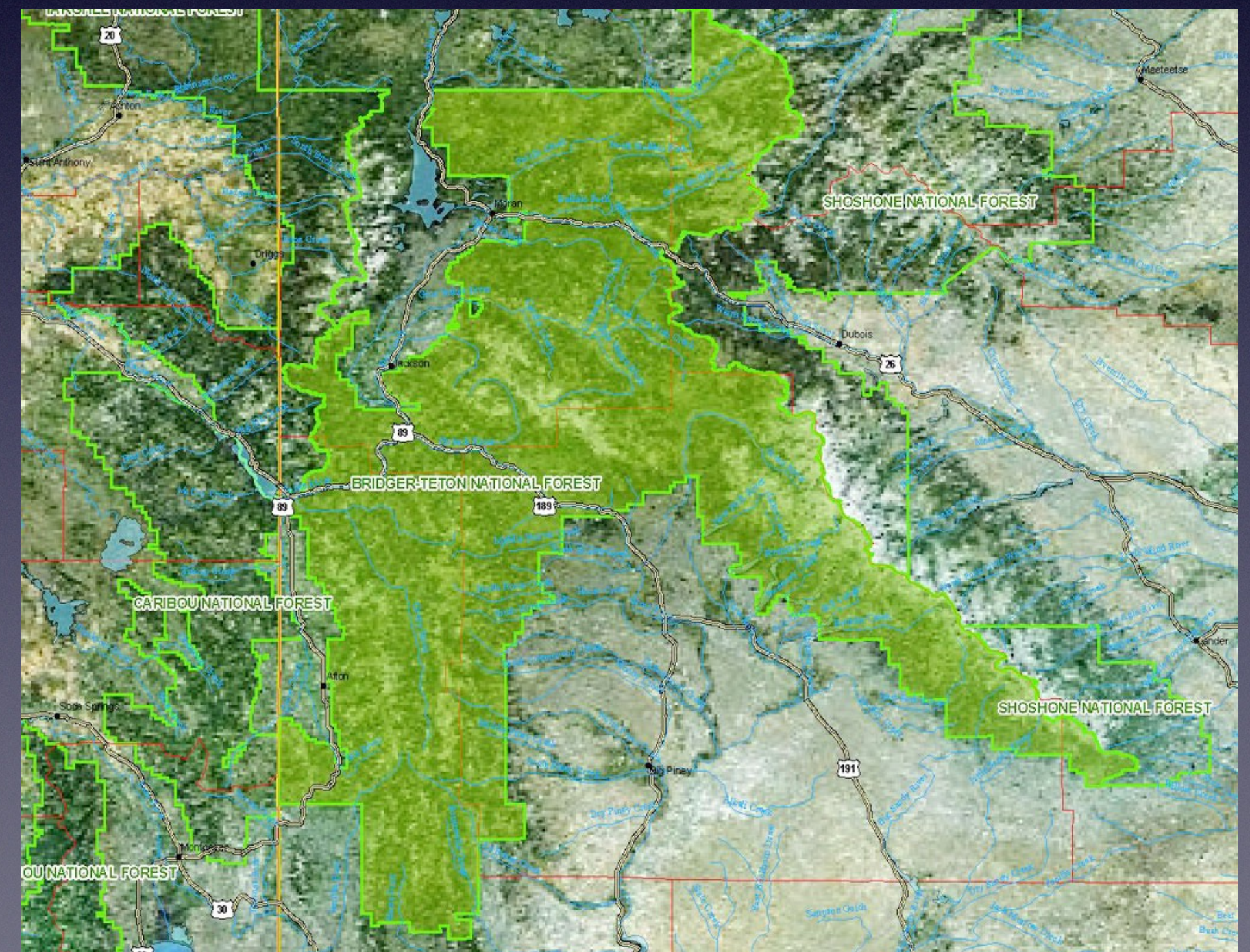
B.F. Bondurant General Merchandise

- BF Bondurant started a General Merchandise store
- Green Hunt arrived from Missouri with a carload of goods for the store
- The store would be resupplied by freighting from Opal, Wyoming (near Kemmerer) about twice a year.



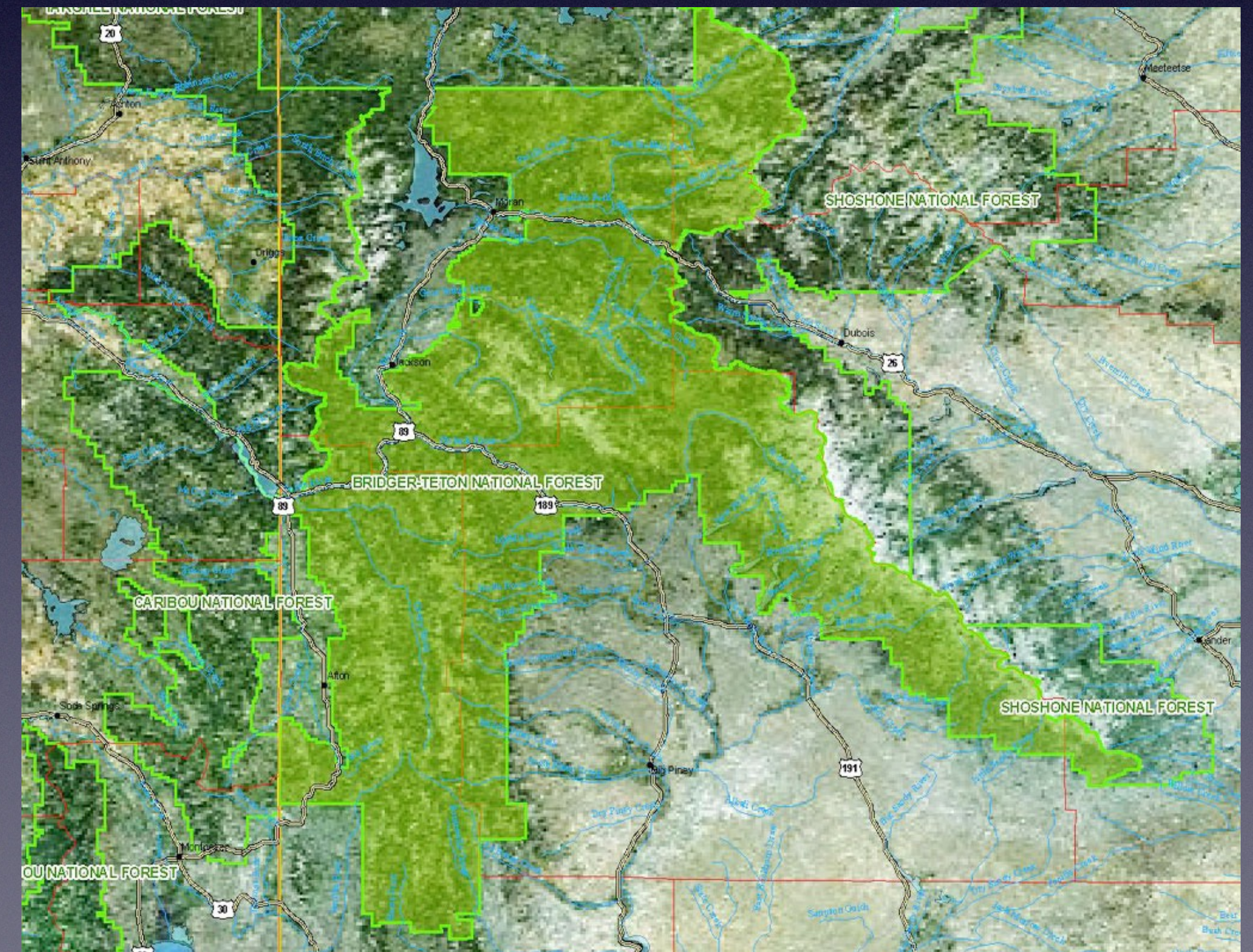
US Forest Service

- In 1891, the Forest Reserve Act created the National Forest Reserves
- The Bureau of Forestry was created in 1901
- A. A. Anderson becomes Special Forest Superintendent of Yellowstone Forest Reserve in 1902
- During Summer, Anderson & 10 Men Map the Area and Create 4 Divisions - Shoshoi, Wind River, the Absoraka, and the Teton
- The Teton Reserve Headquarters is in Jackson. Bob Miller is Superintendent, Rolf Spenser is Ranger
- US Forest Service is formally created in 1905



BF Bondurant Becomes a Fire Guard

- In 1903, Benjamin applies for a job as a Fire Guard. He is hired to work for the August-October period at \$75/Month. He provides his own food, saddle, horses, and camping gear
- During 1903, he meets with Ranger Rolf Spenser at HQ in Jackson, tacked up Fire Warnings in the forest, worked on trails and met with local ranchers, burned sage brush & willows, and met Ranger Yarnall
- His sons are now old enough to keep the house and ranch going back in Bondurant



BF Bondurant and the Sheep Wars

- The Forest Service was in charge of regulating cattle & sheep herders using government land for grazing. This created resentment & conflict
- During 1904, Benjamin is involved with putting out a fire caused by lightning.
- Anderson is informed that 6000 sheep had entered the Teton division without permits. Miller is aware but doesn't feel he has the authority to take action. The sheep from Utah are guarded by 40 armed men.
- Anderson, Zeph Jones (superintendent of Wind River), Bondurant, and 4 Rangers move a quarter of the sheep off the Reserve and file an injunction in Cheyenne. It took a week for the injunction to arrive. The owners drive the remainder of the sheep off the Reserve
- Injunction served on 2 owners. Angry cattlemen from Green River, kill the sheep of one owner, almost kill an owner, and burn his camp. Remainder of sheep are driven out of the Reserve.
- All owners ordered to Cheyenne and fined for trespass.
- Bondurant continues to put up Fire Warnings, visit Ranchers, and develops a proposal to build a wagon road south of the Hoback River
- Bondurant will continue to work for the Forest Service for 3 more years in the summers while developing his business back in Bondurant



Bondurant Post Office

- The nearest post office was in Daniel 33 miles away
- Mail was needed to operate the store
- Application was made in the name of Mrs. Bondurant to establish a post office
- They were compelled to carry mail for free for 2 years to start a Post Office. During summer, mail was brought from Daniel by team and buckboard. In the winter, by horse & sled or by men on skis.
- Mrs. Bondurant ran the post office for 24 years starting June 30, 1903.
- Bondurant was the name of the town from 1903 through 1935. It would officially become the town of Bondurant in 1938.



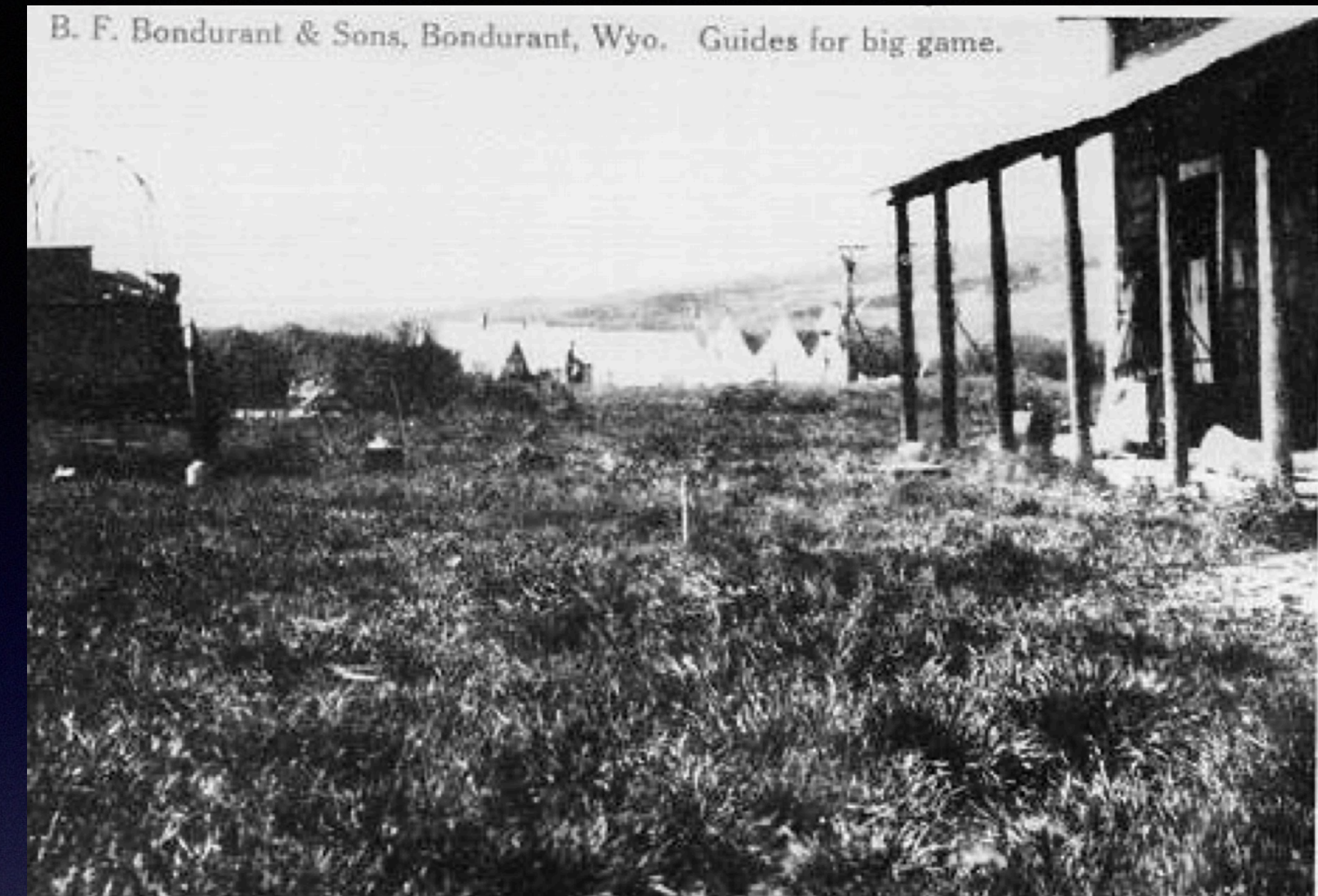
Old Post Office is now the Bondurant Library

B.F. Bondurant & Sons

Guides to Big Game and Trout Fishing

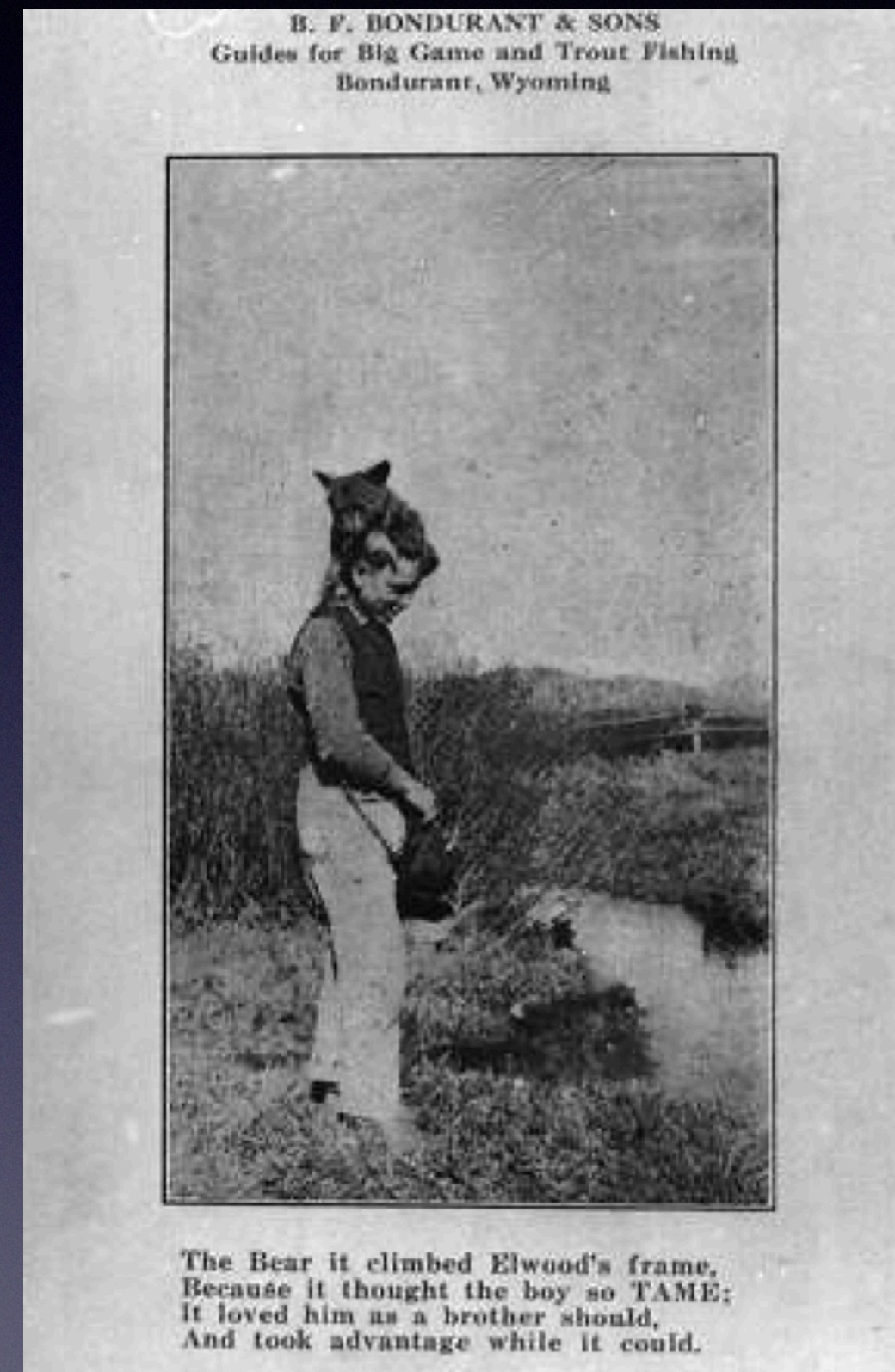
- B.F. noted that he was meeting so many hunters with guides coming through the store, it gave him the idea of taking out hunting parties.
- The big house would become a Boarding House for the Dude Ranch operation and his boys were old enough to act as guides
- It appears that in addition to renting rooms, B.F. must have had a small tent camp in the summer time.
- “The house was most homey and inviting. The beds were unusually comfortable and had outing flannel covered comforters. There were elk-hide rugs on the bedroom floors. In the living room, the organ had a prominent place. The house boasted a most cheery kitchen presided over by Mrs. Bondurant, the grandest cook! She was famous for her soda biscuits and light bread. ... The dudes were all enthusiastic about the pleasant atmosphere and the excellent food.”

New Enterprise



The Bondurant Pets

- The family was fond of pets and they had a lot of them. They brought their dog, "Tip" all the way from Missouri
- Mr. Bondurant and boys caught a young cow Elk. They added a bull Elk and they had a baby Elk. They were kept in a pasture with very high buck fence. A much photographed attraction. The Bull Elk was mean and would knock logs off the fence.
- The Bondurants had 4 tame antelope that played with Essie and Herschel just like a playful dog.
- They had four little bears that they got as cubs. They were an attraction for the dudes. They were turned loose when they got too old.



BF Bondurant's Trip to Yellowstone

- BF Bondurant and Ella take a trip to Yellowstone Park in July 1907
- They travel with team and covered spring wagon. Rivers are high. They must float possessions across on a log and then swim the team & wagon across.
- They travel up the Snake River, past Jackson Lake, Snake River Station to the South Entrance
- They observe campers catching fish and boiling fish and eggs in boiling springs
- They stop at Yellowstone Lake Hotel and then on to Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone Hotel
- They continue the circle route at the Norris Hotel and Sulfur Springs
- They finally arrive at Old Faithful Inn and see the geysers.
- They return south until they reach the Hoback River where a Ranger helps them ford the River again
- BF says that 2 more bridges are completed in 1921 making the entire route to Yellowstone possible without getting wet

BF Bondurant Letter Dated Feb 8, 1921



Boiling Springs



Grand Canyon
of the Yellowstone

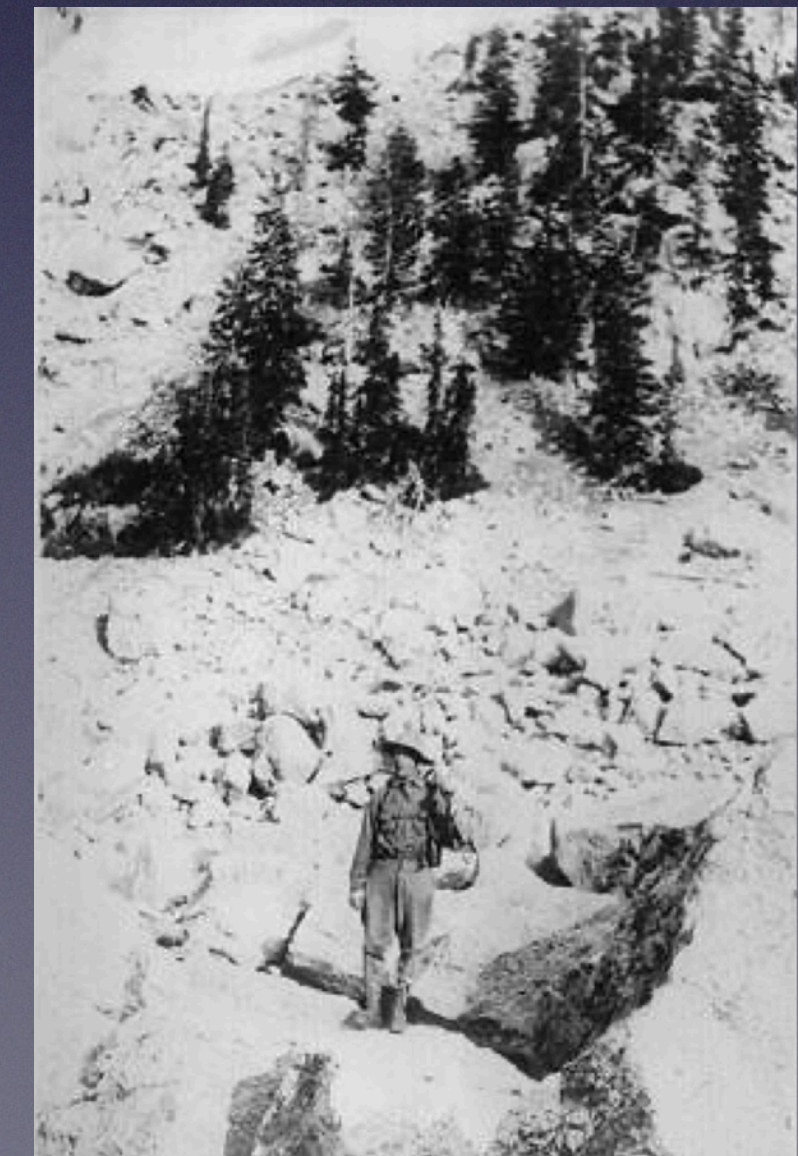
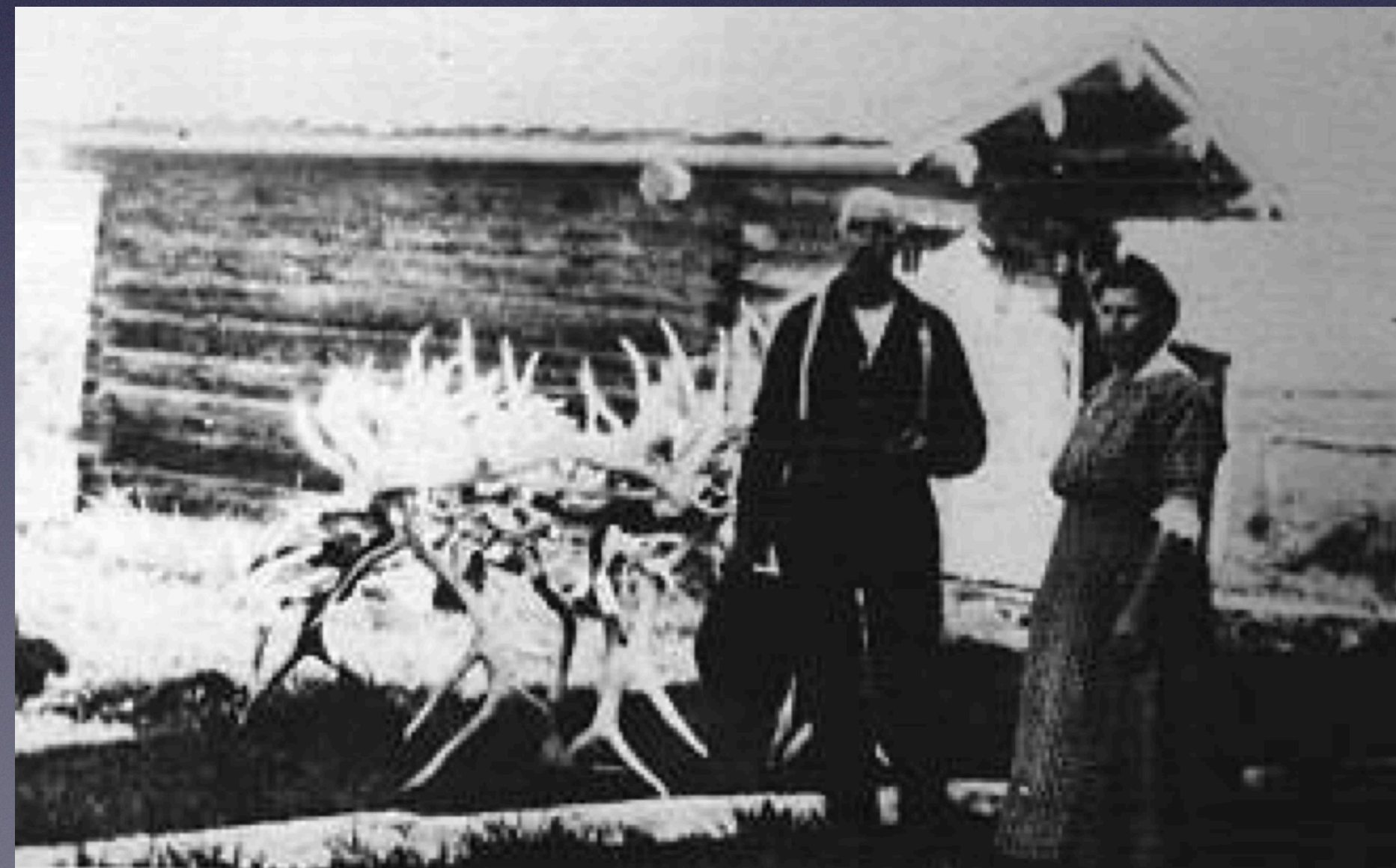


Old Faithful



Jackson Lake

Some Picture of Life in Bondurant, WY



Some Picture of Life in Bondurant, WY



B.F. and Ella with Grandkids



Clare Brings Home a Trophy

Children of BF & Ella Bondurant

- Lost 2 Children in Missouri, 2 Children in Nebraska
- Lost 2 Children in Bondurant - Orly A and Lura M Bondurant (buried on the ranch)
- Perle Oscar Bondurant, their oldest son, settled on Dell Creek and Married Mary Lucile Williams. They later moved to Parkerton, WY (near Casper)
- Clare Edgar Bondurant, homesteaded East of BF on Jack Creek, sold to BF, and died in 1918 from pneumonia during Spanish Flu pandemic
- Rollo Grover Bondurant, married Hazel Iva Comstock, homesteaded in the area but later moved to Washington State
- Herschel Bondurant, married Dewey Haddenham, settled in Labarge, WY
- Essie Vonnie Bondurant, married Frank Milo Hansen, moved to Labarge, WY initially, returned to Bondurant to care for Ella following BF Bondurant's death, following Ella's death, sold Bondurant property to Jim Noble of Cora, purchased another ranch on Dell Creek, and later moved to Montana

Bondurant Cemetery

- Bondurant Cemetery is located near corner of Jack Creek Road & Bondurant Cemetery Road
- Clare Bondurant died in 1918 of pneumonia resulting from the Spanish Flu pandemic
- Land was set aside as a burial ground for local residents at that time
- BF died on October 15, 1927 at age 66 in Kemmerer. He was on one of his trips when he fell into a basement excavation in the dark breaking his hip.
- Ella Bondurant died the next year on June 21, 1928
- In 1959, Mrs. P.O. Bondurant writes that Clare, Benjamin F and wife Ella, and Herschel Bondurant are buried there along other locals including Alec Swanson, Pappy Booker, two babies of John Wertz family, and three other children

History of the Bondurant, Wyoming Area



St. Hubert the Hunter Church Bondurant, WY

- Built in Sept, 1940
- Consecrated August 3, 1941
- Site of the Annual Bondurant Picnic
(Last Sunday in June)



Stained Glass in Church



The Church Today



Building the Church in 1940



The First Bondurant Picnic
Church of St Hubert the Hunter, Bondurant, Wyoming
The Day of Consecration - August 3, 1941

CHURCH OF ST. HUBERT THE HUNTER, BONDURANT, WYOMING
THE DAY OF CONSECRATION — AUGUST 3, 1941.

Acknowledgements

- My First Presentation on Bondurant WY was done at the BFA meeting in Colorado Springs in 2003 with assistance of Clint Bondurant
- I have worked with Robert E. Bondurant (Casper) and Jay Bondurant (Cheyenne) who provided biographical material and short papers from the family
- Bondurant, WY has a Historical Society. For more information, see: <https://www.bonduranthistory.org/>



In Memory of
Clint Bondurant (Right)