

John Jarvie

He was born in Scotland in 1844 and, according to family legend, worked in a Scottish mine where he was severely beaten by his supervisor. After recovery he supposedly stowed away on a ship bound for America. Arriving in America by 1870, he immigrated to Rock Springs, Wyoming, and bought a saloon for \$500. On October 8, 1875, he became a citizen of the United States.

In 1880, the 36-year-old Jarvie married "Pretty Little Nell", Nellie Barr and they moved down to Brown's Park in the remote, but beautiful, wilderness area of northwest Colorado and northeast Utah. The area was often referred to as the "outlaw trail" and was used for a hide out by many notorious outlaws of the day, including Butch Cassidy and his Wild Bunch. He opened a general store and trading post on the banks of the Green River. He was also the postmaster for a few years, operated a ferry on the Green River, and was the station-keeper for the stage coach. In addition he was the unofficial undertaker and doctor after the only doctor in Brown's Park died.

The Jarvies' first child, John Jr., was born in 1881 and was followed by a brother every two years, all boys (Tom, Archie and Jim). Nell died of tuberculosis when the oldest was eight years old. She was buried in Ogden, Utah where the Barr family resided. Jarvie kept her possessions exactly as she left him until the day he died.

His store was the supply source for Butch Cassidy and other outlaws. On occasion he allowed Cassidy to hide out in his root cellar.

On July 6, 1909, George Hood and his brother-in-law tortured, robbed, and killed Jarvie. For their dastardly deed they netted about \$100 in cash, a pearl-handled .44 caliber hand gun and a few miscellaneous items. The murderers threw his body in a boat and set it adrift on the Green River. His body was not found for eight days, but the condition of the store and the large pool of blood made what had happened obvious. The outraged neighbors and John's sons formed a posse and began to track the murderous pair. One of the sons, Jimmie, tracked them to a hotel in Pocatello, Idaho, but he died instantly from a broken neck

when thrown from the second story window. Another son, Tom, eventually traced the killers to Chicago and reportedly lost them. But years later he would smile wryly and say that vigilante justice just might have caught up with them.

Tom took the Jarvie Ranch cattle and moved them to a spread near Dutch John, Utah, where he met and married his wife. John, Jr. stayed on at the ranch but tore down the store and the house and built a new five-room whipsawed log home. In 1924, he sold the ranch. Today the ranch, rebuilt general store, home, blacksmith shop, and small cemetery, containing four bodies, are all a part of the John Jarvie Historic Property and are maintained as a park and museum by the Bureau of Land Management.

John Jarvie was buried in the Lodore Cemetery next to the Old Lodore School in Brown's Park.







