



*Dillard French (1869-1946) and
Susan Doherty French (1870-1948)*



*Herbert French (1900-1936) and
Rose Hirl French Francis (1902-1983)*

Dillard French Ranch

Address:

Upper Big Butter Creek

Original Acquisition:

1872 – Homestead of Jesse and Mehetable Hamer was established. This homestead surrounded the current ranch house.

Current Landowner

Susan French

Ranching and Farming:

- 1890s – Homestead of Dillard and Susan (daughter of Patrick (Wee Paddy) and Mary Doherty) French was established. This homestead was south and adjacent to the Hamer homestead. Dillard and Susan French acquired homesteads from settlers in the area expanding their holdings to 8-10,000 acres, including the original Hamer homestead. All of these homesteads have been owned and developed by members of the French family and are currently within the boundaries of the existing ranch.
- 1926- Herbert French (son of Dillard and Susan French) married Rose Hirl (daughter of Phil and Mary Ann Doherty Hirl) and established residence at the Upper Big Butter Creek Ranch. They had three children: Raymond, Joe and Dorothy. It is believed that Herbert, his brother Jack and their father Dillard operated the Upper and Lower Butter Creek ranches as well as the ranch located in the Long Creek area as partners until the three ranches were divided with Herbert acquiring 5,000 acres of the Upper Butter Creek ranch while Dillard and Susan retained 8-10,000 acres of the Upper Big Butter Creek ranch.
- 1936 – Herbert died and Rose inherited the 5,000 acres owned by Herbert. In 1937, Rose married William Francis and they had one daughter, Francine.
- 1946 – Raymond (son of Herbert and Rose French) and Norma Denton French married and moved to the Upper Butter Creek ranch and into the house built by Dillard in 1914. They had three daughters: Karen French Wood, Verina French Schiller and Susan French. Dillard died in 1946 leaving his interest in the Big Butter Creek ranch to Susan. Susan died in 1948 and left 5,000 acres to her grandchildren, Raymond, Joe and Dorothy. The remaining acres were left to her son Jack.
- 1946-1983 Raymond and Norma French purchased those portions of the ranch that had been inherited by other family members, including 640 acres of mountain meadows originally owned by his Uncle Jack and another 40 acres of meadow originally owned by Dillard.
- Present – The current ranch consists of land homesteaded by members of the French family and purchased by members of the French family, and traded or purchased by members of the French family.

Century Farm:

Designated a Century Farm in Morrow County in 1972. In 2022 the ranch reached 150 years.

*Submitted by Susan French,
great-granddaughter of Dillard
and Susan French*

