

THOMAS BJORNSTAD

1889-1949

Researched and Compiled by Faye Bell (SLC) 2013

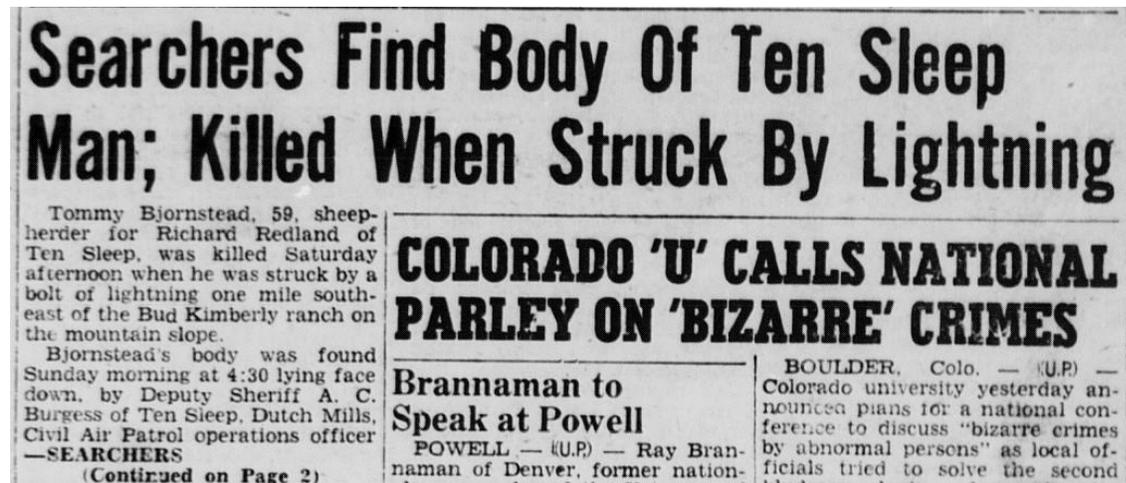
Data confirmed by Bernard and Orville Bjornstad, nephews, Cody and Byron, WY, respectively.

Thomas Bjornstad was born in Sirdal, Tonstad, Norway in 1889. He was born to Rasmus and Serene (Torstein) Sigbjorson and a year later his brother Benjamin Bjornstad joined the family. Both young men planned to come to the United States and had hoped to come on the Ship Titanic^[1] but they missed it and came instead the following year (1913).^[2] Tom began his life in America with settling in Montana and held acreage there as a farmer. 'Tommy' stayed a bachelor and in 1946/47, he moved to the Nowood and worked for Richard Redland who was a sheep rancher. In 1924, his brother Ben had moved to the Lower Nowood country. Tom rejoined the Bjornstad family and was there until his passing. On June 14, 1949, Tom Bjornstad was leading his horse in the middle of a fierce electrical storm and was killed by a lightning strike. It is believed that Tom was working as a herder for Richard Redland at the time of his passing.

Memories: It had been a dreadful spring in 1949 of continuous, frightening lightning storms—day after day—until I recall having said that it seemed like the lightning was looking for a person to strike. I made comment to this effect and it is strange to imagine, but the storms were over not long after Tom Bjornstad was laid to rest. fb

^[1] This fact was given to me by Ben Bjornstad's son Bernard on March 29, 2013 via telephone from SLC to Cody, WY and other data come from Orville Bjornstad on April 1, 2013 to Byron, WY.

^[2] Family members agree that the port of entry was New York City. Ben Bjornstad said on the 1930 U.S. Census that he had immigrated in the year 1913



Searchers Find Body Of Ten Sleep Man; Killed When Struck By Lightning

Tommy Bjornstead, 59, sheepherder for Richard Redland of Ten Sleep, was killed Saturday afternoon when he was struck by a bolt of lightning one mile southeast of the Bud Kimberly ranch on the mountain slope.

Bjornstead's body was found Sunday morning at 4:30 lying face down, by Deputy Sheriff A. C. Burgess of Ten Sleep, Dutch Mills, Civil Air Patrol operations officer —SEARCHERS

(Continued on Page 2)

COLORADO 'U' CALLS NATIONAL PARLEY ON 'BIZARRE' CRIMES

Brannaman to Speak at Powell

POWELL — (U.P.) — Ray Brannaman of Denver, former national...

BOULDER, Colo. — (U.P.) — Colorado university yesterday announced plans for a national conference to discuss "bizarre crimes by abnormal persons" as local officials tried to solve the second...

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—Searchers

(Continued from Front Page)

Harry Mills, and Redland and his two sons.

According to Mills, the Ten Sleep ski patrol squadron of the CAP was called into the search when Bjornstead's sheep began to mix with another flock on the mountain slope. His riderless horse and his sheep dog had returned to the sheep camp. A Ten Sleep flying club plane and Don Smith's private plane were put into use to scour the mountainside, while a group searched on foot. The planes were about ready to give up the search when Mills, his brother, Burgess and the Redlands found Bjornstead's body.

He had been about a mile from the wagon at the time when the bolt struck, hitting him in the top of the head and ranging downward. It split his trousers and cut the shoestrings from his shoes. His shredded hat was found about 30 feet from the body with the crown blown away.

Mills and Burgess brought the body to Worland Sunday.

Bjornstead is survived by one brother, Ben Bjornstead of Ten Sleep, and a number of brothers and sisters in Norway, where he was born. He came to the United States in 1909, and worked on ranches for many years in this area.

Funeral services will be held Thursday at 2 p.m. in Ten Sleep with the Rev. R. F. Goff officiating. Burial will be in Ten Sleep under the direction of the Veile mortuary.