VIRGIL TURNER
1877-1950

Virgil Turner was born in 1877 in Rocky Fork, Boone County, Missouri, to Samuel D and Frances Turner, the 9th child of the Turners and shown as 2 years old in 1880 Federal Census.   In the 1930s when he moved into Ten Sleep, he already had a reputation of going from ranch to ranch, sheep herding, hired man sort of work and also a hermit type personality. He rather kept to himself in his small log house on Lots 3 and 4 in the 2nd addition of the Ten Sleep community. His most immediate employment at that time had been for ranchers in the Big Trails area. It is written of Virgil by Governor Bryant S Brooks of Natrona County [Memoirs] that Virgil had shot a man for belittling his mother and later killed a man in defense of his life—both these events were when Virgil Turner was still a teenager and he was acquitted in both cases. In the 1900 census Virgil lived in Lone Bear, Natrona County and was then 26 years old *(that changes his birthdate to 1873).* By 1930 he was listed as residing in District #1, Washakie County, born 1877 in Missouri and 53 years old. That would have been in the Big Trails area. He remained in Ten Sleep without much interaction with the people of Ten Sleep until he passed away in 1950.

Memories: Virgil Turner stood over 6 feet, wore a grimy Stetson hat and new levis—I never saw him in faded or worn clothes—the levis were always in partnership with a blue chambray shirt. On his shoulder as he strode through town, sat a black cat and he shopped solely for the cat: catfood was his main purchase so it was rumored. How he survived none knew, but he was independent in every way. Virgil was very respectful of women and stood aloof from them at all times. However, Mary Tully, local girl and daughter of Henry and Fanny Washburn Tulley, later Mary Fehlberg, said that Virgil loaned her $100 when she wanted to attend school in Casper, WY. (Vanguards of the Valley by Faye V Bell as told to Faye by Mary Fehlberg.) The tall figure in the Stetson was familiar to all and well-known despite his solitary ways. (Faye V Bell, SLC, 2012)

SERVICES PENDING FOR TEN SLEEP MAN

Funeral services are pending for Virgil Turner, 77, who died Saturday in a nursing home at Huntley, Mont.

Mr. Turner started ranching in the Ten Sleep area some 50 years ago, and lived in the town of Ten Sleep after his retirement, until he entered the nursing home at Huntley 16 months ago.

He was born in Montgomery, Mo., July 9, 1876. He had never been married, and there are no known living relatives.

Veile mortuary will be in charge of funeral services. Burial will be in the Ten Sleep cemetery.

TURNER SERVICES

Funeral services have been set for 2 p.m. Friday at the Methodist church in Ten Sleep for Virgil Turner, 77, early-day Ten Sleep rancher, who died in a rest home at Huntley, Mont., Saturday.

The Rev. Grier Hunt will conduct the service. Burial will be in the Ten Sleep cemetery. Veile mortuary is in charge of arrangements.