

**THE Pioneers That Made The Ranch**  
At  
Greenland, Douglas County, Colorado

Bill Noe

April 2023

## **Daniels Ranch 1870s-1881**

790 Acres Greenland, Douglas County, Colorado  
Isaac Jegirtha "Girth" Noe Superintendent

## **Greenland Breeding Farm 1882-1899**

Union Real Estate and Livestock Investment Company  
Kountze and Noe Partners  
Isaac Jegirtha "Girth" Noe Superintendent



Shorthorn Bull



Greenland Ranch Barn and Railroad Loading Chutes



Galloway Bull

## **Greenland Breeding Farm 1899 - 1906**

John A. McMurtrie (Estate)  
Isaac Jegirtha "Girth" Noe Superintendent 1878-1892  
Frank H. Kirk Superintendent 1892-1900  
John Pollock Superintendent 1903-1906

## **"Greenland Ranch"** aka John W. Higby Ranch

Greenland Land and Cattle Company 1906-1980,  
purchased by John W. Higby and C.C. Hemming  
Superintendents John Pollock 1906 to 1909, John W Higby & Sons 1909 to 1980



Herford Bull

## **"Greenland Ranch"**

Conservation Easement Established 2000  
1980 -2000 Several entities owned the ranch prior to GOCO purchased a conservation easement on the property.  
Greenland Ranch is currently owned by Harmony Land ad Cattle LLC

## **Greenland Breeding Farm Overview**

1877 to 1906

Daniels Ranch 790 Acres

Kountze & Noe

I ncreased Ranch to 22,000 Acres from original 790 acres  
3,000 Acres Tilled and Farmed

Established Irrigation System of wells and windmills

Employed sixty men

Established Dairy of 200 head of Milk Cows

Raised 3,000-5,000 head of Beef Cattle

Sold Purebred Shorthorn, Galloway, Berkshire and other Breeds

Raised and sold Pigs, Poultry, Potatoes and various Grain Crops

Raised and Maintained a herd of 500 Horses and Mules. sold  
Draft, Saddle and Purebred Horses

Build new Large Barn,

# Greenland Ranch Kountze & Noe

aka Greenland Breeding Farm circa 1870s to present



Circa 1888

The magnificent red barn, seen from I-25, is a well known landmark for the famous Greenland Ranch. The ranch lands were homesteaded during the years of 1870 to 1875 assembled in the early 1880s and became known as the Greenland Breeding Farm. The original barn, built in 1887 by the Union Real Estate and Livestock Investment Company, was larger than the existing one today. Its dimensions were 36x101 feet and the barn contained 18 box stalls, capable of accommodating over 100 head of the best thoroughbreds. The hay loft had a capacity of 110 tons of hay. A Covered area on the west side of the barn stored buggies and spring wagons. In July of 1922, the barn was struck by lightning and burned to the ground delaying all train traffic for several hours because of the intense heat. The new barn, built by Jim Oker of Elbert, was erected later that same year and is 25 feet shorter than the first building.

I.J. Noe (Isaac Jegirtha Noe) came to the Greenland area from Indiana in 1877 and was Superintendent, Manager and Partner of the Greenland Breeding Farm operations for many years. In addition he helped to assemble the original ranch by purchasing homesteads and then selling them back to the incorporators. In 1890 Mr. Noe founded the Eagle Mountain Ranch, located one and one half miles west of the Greenland Ranch and is still run by members of his family. I.J. married Jennie Cain and they had two children Charles Fred and Gertrude. Mr. Noe's brand is the oldest brand in Colorado and he was well known for his shorthorn cattle.

Cattle ranches were divided into districts with Douglas County and the Greenland Ranch assigned as District 8. The ranch, lying between the Denver & Rio Grande and Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad tracks meant thousands of animals were rounded up and driven to Greenland for transport to market in the fall. Roundups were easily done in those days as there were few fences and mostly open range. Greenland was one of the largest shipping points for livestock in the State of Colorado. The Greenland Ranch provided the holding pens as well as the wooden loading chutes, as can still be seen along the railroad siding. The ranch is stated to have the longest continuously operating cattle ranch in Colorado.

Greenland Breeding Farm was purchased in 1906 by John W. Higby and C.C. Hemming, an officer of the El Paso National Bank of Colorado Springs. The name was changed to Greenland Land and Cattle Company and was recognized all over the United States for its fine selection of Shorthorn, Galloway and Hereford cattle as well as thoroughbred horses. At one time the 15,000 plus acres grazed as many as 1,600 head of cattle and 500 horses as well as raising 7000 bushels of wheat, oats, rye, corn and barley. The ranch stayed in the Higby family until it was sold in 1980 to William E. Simon, U.S. Treasury Secretary, Bruce Shepard, a developer and the Oklahoma Publishing Company.

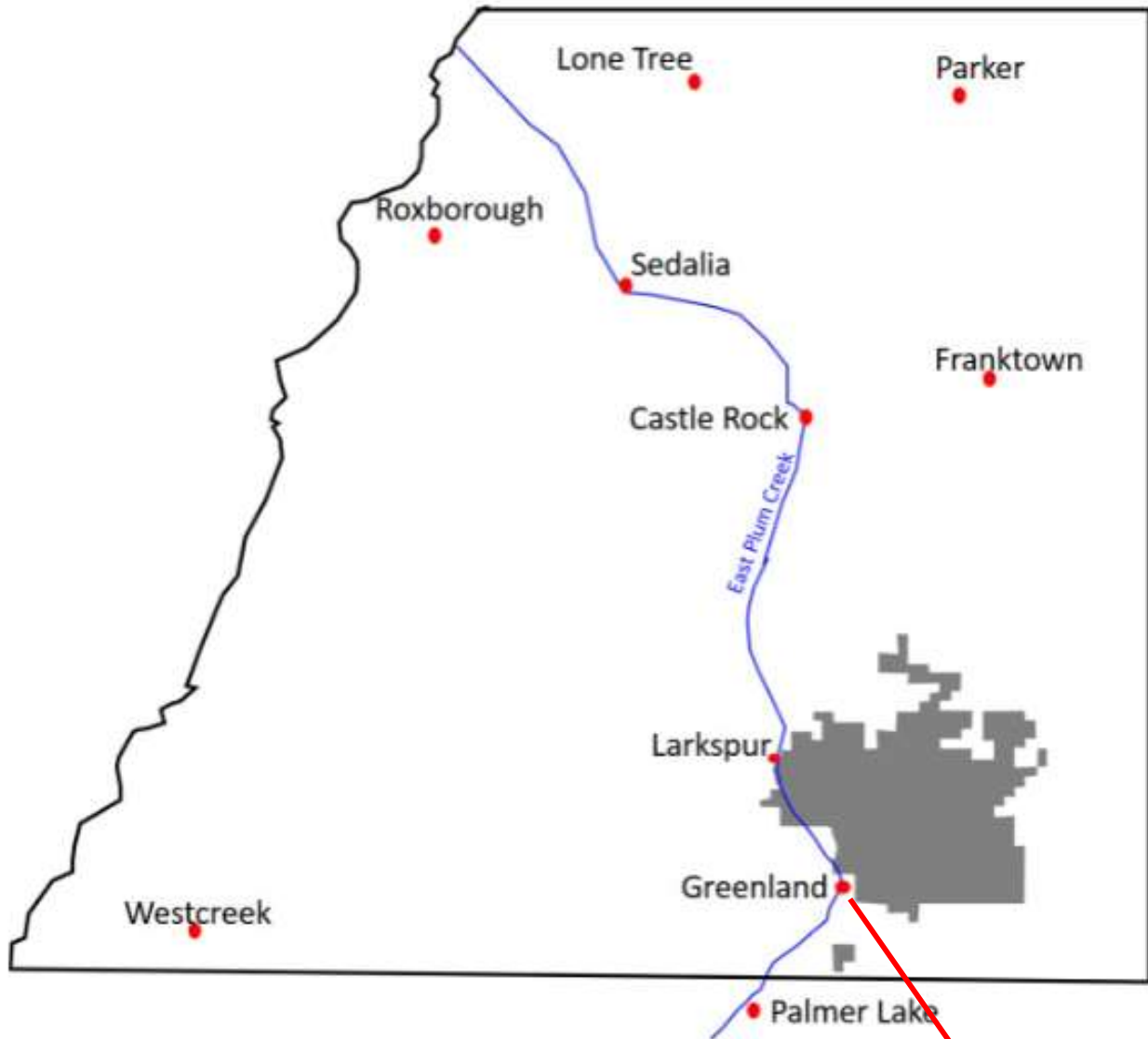
Greenland Ranch encapsulates one of the largest undeveloped tracts of land between Denver and Colorado Springs and more importantly, is virtually unchanged since its beginnings before the turn of the century. In 2000 Greenland Ranch was purchased by The Conservation Fund in a 5 way partnership with Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO), Douglas County, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Colorado State Parks and John Malone, a local rancher. This beautiful landmark is now protected with conservation easements and a very limited development plan thereby protecting its original integrity perpetually *Jenny Burdick 2003*

# MAP OF THE GREENLAND STOCK FARM

Situated in Township 9 and 10 South, Ranges 66 and 67 West,

## DOUGLAS COUNTY, COLORADO.

Map by Larry Schlupp

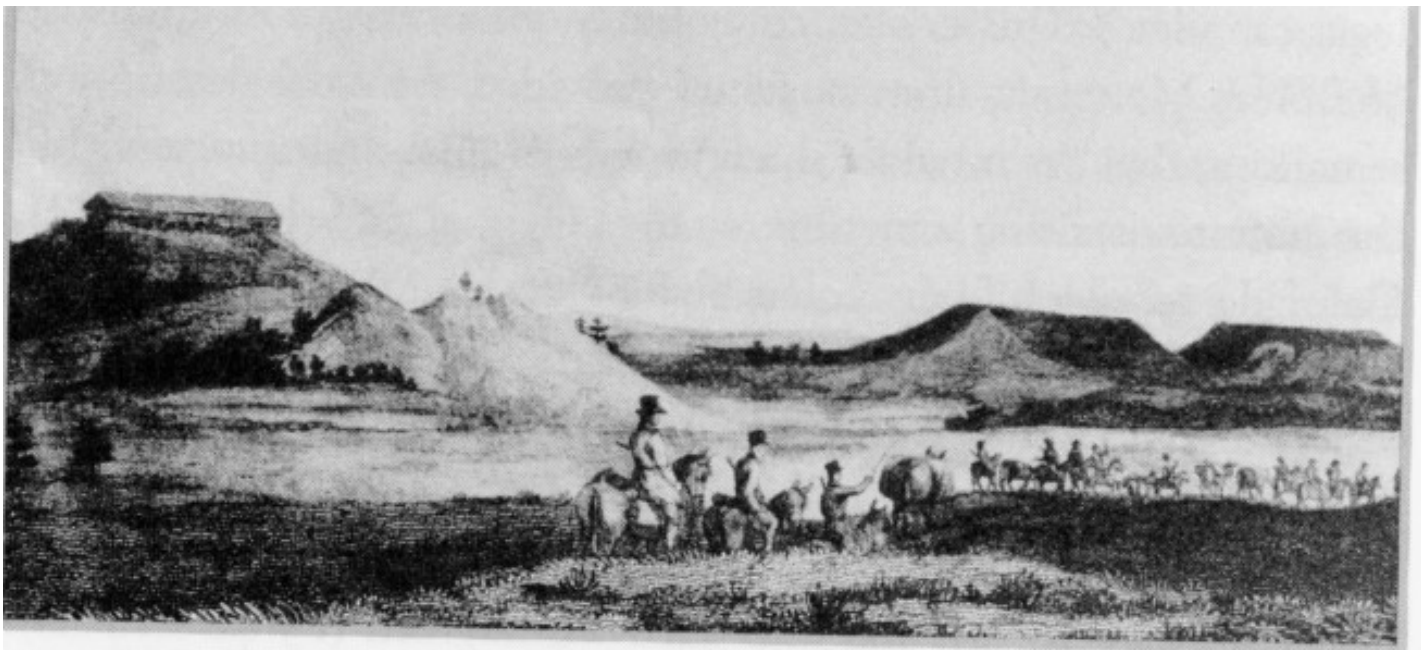


Greenland Breeding Farm  
Greenland Ranch  
Harmony Land and Cattle LLC Conservation Easement

Greenland Ranch and Town of Greenland at horizon



Photo by Bill Noe 2012



Engraving in the Account, after Samuel Seymour, *View of the Insulated Table Lands at the Foot of the Rocky Mountains*. In the foreground, the expedition passes in single file.

1820 Long Expedition Near Present Greenland ,Colorado

Sketch Courtesy of National Archives



Greenland Breeding Farm (Greenland Ranch) Original Barn circa 1880's  
Destroyed by fire from a lighting strike July 1922  
36 feet wide by 110 feet long, Loft for 110 tons of hay,  
accommodating 100 head of thoroughbred cattle plus wagons and carriages



Greenland Ranch Barn  
Rebuilt Barn circa 1923  
25 feet shorter than the original Barn



Greenland Ranch House before fire



Greenland Ranch  
Early hand colored photo  
Original Big Barn  
Circa Before 1922



Greenland Ranch  
circa 1924 photo  
Rebuilt Big Barn

# Greenland Ranch Photos taken From West of the Ranch



Date Unknown LHS Archives



Date 2013 Bill Noe

## Town of Greenland 2012

Located between Denver and Colorado Springs with a view of Pikes Peak about 25 Mile North-East  
The Main Ranch building of Greenland Breeding Farm/Greenland Ranch is Directly North of the  
Town of Greenland, Colorado.



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## Greenland Breeding Farm/Greenland Ranch 18 ??

### Appendix and Supplemental Attachments

Owners

Superintendents and Manager

Newspaper Clippings

Pictures

Credits

Brands

## **Daniels Ranch 1870s-1881**

790 - 1200 Acres Greenland, Douglas County, Colorado  
Isaac Jegirtha "Girth" Noe Superintendent

## **Greenland Breeding Farm 1882-1899**

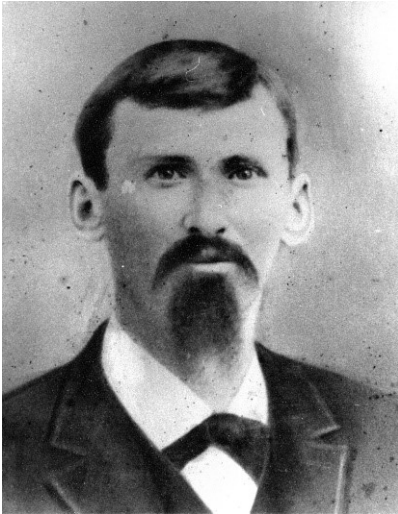
Union Real Estate and Livestock Investment Company  
Kountze and Noe Partners  
Isaac Jegirtha "Girth" Noe Superintendent

**NOTE: President of Colorado National Bank died  
Charles E Kountzs Vice Presiden of Colorado National Bank became President  
of CNB. Kountze also owned the Union Realeste and**

**Alvi B Daniels died**

## Isaac Jegirtha "IJ" Noe Greenland Breeding Farm Partner and Superintendent 1877-1892

IJ Noe Came to Greenland Colorado on May 10th 1877 and became Partners with Charles B Koontz in the Greenland Breeding Farm. Returning to Indiana IJ married Jennie T Cain on March 7th, 1878 then returning to the Ranch. With Jennie. Two children were born on this ranch to IJ and Jennie, Charles Fred (1885 ) and Gertrude May (1890). Gertrude died at age two.



Isaac Jegirtha Noe



Charles Fred & Gertrude M Noe



Jennie T Cain Noe

IJ increased the size of the original ranch by many thousands of acres until it grew to over twenty thousand acres being managed. Many ranch houses barns and other ranch buildings were built on the ranch lands Over 1000 acres on the ranch were improved and cultivated raising Hay, Grains , potatoes and other produce for the growing towns of Denver area, Colorado Springs and beyond. The Greenland Breeding Farm was recognized as as one of the finest producers of prize winning registered cattle breeding livestock and producing beef for the growing markets. Milk and cream were produced by a dairy herd of over two hundred milk cows. Hogs were raised on the ranch. The ranch also raised horses and mules for use on the ranch and for sale to the regional business.

January 25, 1888 Castle Rock Journal

The editor of the Journal made a trip to Greenland this week and while there may be some observations of the country and many improvements they have lately been consummated in the splendid agricultural and stock raising portion of our county. A general view of the country reveals to one as fine agricultural and stock raising land as can be found anywhere. Corn was raised quite successfully last season, and the farmers are anticipating much greater success the coming year. The potato is the great crop. No where in this country can there be found a better and large crop of potatoes than was raised in the southern portion of Douglas County this year. We took a stroll over Union Real Estate and Live Stock Investment Company's ranch. This is a big institution, comprising over 15,000 acres of deeded land and 5,000 acres of leased land. Upon this find tract of country, ranges over 1,600 head of as fine blood stock as can be found in any state in the union. By such enterprises in our midst thoroughbred cattle are rapidly taking the place of the Texas steer and scrubby native. Within the past ten days the company has finished a magnificent stock barn with numerous sheds in connection. The dimensions are 36 X 101, and contains 18 box stalls, capable of accommodating over 100 head of the best thoroughbreds. The hay loft has a capacity of 110 tons. Among the fields of blooded stock, which were too numerous to give an adequate description we noticed two Shorthorn bulls which have just been received from the east. One is a year and a half old, weighs 1,640 pounds and was purchased at Linwood, Kansas, for \$1,300. The other is a two year old, weighs 1,650 pounds and was purchased at Independence, Mo., for \$1,000. Three Galloway cows and one Galloway bull are also very fine and costly animals are greatly admired by all who have seen them. To the east of the main stock barn is a barn of but little lesser proportions and in the yard roams about 100 Shorthorn cows and heifers ranging in price from \$100 to \$600. All the cattle that we noticed on the farm were in good condition, and the recent cold snap had not apparently affected them in the least.

IJ Noe Left the Greenland Breeding Farm to Concentrate his attention on Eagle Mountain Ranch improvements. See Eagle Mountain Ranch story for more details about I J Noe's accomplishments.

Isaac Jegirtha Noe

I J Noe was born in Clark Indiana February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1850 a son of Isaac Willian Noe and Martha Cassidy Richards. He farmed in Indiana until He came to Colorado arriving in Denver on May 9<sup>th</sup> 1877 and in Greenland, Colorado the next day May 10 working for A..B Daniels on the Greenland Breeding Farm. I J returned to Indiana marrying Jennie T Cain (Christina Jennie Cain) on Marth 7<sup>th</sup> 1878 and returned to Greenland Colorado with his new Bride.

I J's two brothers also came to Colorado. The youngest brother Jerry R Noe established a large ranch South west of Larkspur a short distance north of the Eagle Mountain Ranch. William P Noe ,Isaac Jegirtha's middle brother purchased property then built his home in Larkspur he also bought a ranch, Hotel, Stable and other property in Rocky Ford, Colorado.

Two children were born to I J and Jennie. Charles "Fred" (1886) and Gertrude May.1888). "Fred" and family moved to the Eagle Mountain Ranch about the age of six. Gertrude died in 1889.



My Father Isaac R. Noe <sup>July 9<sup>th</sup></sup> Was Born  
 1827 My Mother Martha C. Noe Born  
 March 24<sup>th</sup> 1829  
 My Sister Susan Noe Born <sup>24<sup>th</sup></sup> Oct 1847  
 Isaac J. Noe Born Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> 1850  
 William P. Noe Born Jan 10 1852  
 Jerry R. Noe Born Aug 19<sup>th</sup> 1861  
 I was Born in Owen Township  
 Clark Grant Clark County Indiana  
 Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> 1850 300<sup>th</sup> Ave. He Was  
 Snowing I know because I was  
 There and remember turning the  
 Say the same Course Colorado  
 1877 Landed in Denver May the  
 9<sup>th</sup> and Course to Greenland I May  
 the 10<sup>th</sup> been there ever since  
 Since this was winter Jan 22  
 1930 I J Noe  
 My Grand Father Noe was Mar  
 the 2<sup>nd</sup> time and had 3 Boys and  
 one girl by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marriage  
 11 Children 9 Boys and 2 Girls  
 I J Noe

May 10th 1877. I. J. Noe Arrives in Greenland, Colorado

Noe & Kountz  
 Greenland Breeding Farm Brands

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50 COLORADO BRAND BOOK.

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Kountz & Noe, Greenland. NOE l. s., CJ r. h., N l. h., +V  
 l. s. or h., 6 h. b. l. th.

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Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1887, by  
 STEPHEN H. STANDART,  
 In the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington, D. C.

The nearby Greenland Ranch also became famous for its cattle. An 1888 advertisement tells some of the story.

“Greenland Breeding Farm. Colorado raised, purebred Shorthorn and Galloway. The Union Real Estate, live Stock and Investment Company have for sale, at Greenland, Douglas County, Colorado, (47 miles south of Denver, on the D & R.G and A.T. & S.F. Railroads,) a fine lot of young thoroughbreds, of the best English and Scottish strains. Good individuals and good pedigrees. Lyman of Mount Leonard, a pure Galloway bull, Vicecount Richmond, a pure Craickshank bull, Winsome Duke 4th, a pure Bates bull, head our heard. Come to see what we have. Visitors welcome, Correspondence solicited. Address, Wm. B. Berger, manager, Denver, Colo., or Isaac J. Noe, Supt., Greenland, Colo.”

1911 Colorado Business Directory, Greenland, Douglas County  
<http://files.usgwarchives.org/co/douglas/directories/1911-greenland.txt>

1892 April 27, Castle Rock Journal

I. J. Noe of the Greenland Breeding Farm recently purchased at the horse sale in Denver a fine pair of Norman mares which cost him \$450. The pair weigh 3,400 pounds. They should be brought to the horse show May 7th

1890 March 26, Castle Rock Journal

I.J. Noe was a guest at the Owens house Friday. Mr. Noe has been so long the manager of the extensive ranch known as the Greenland Breeding Farm that his many friends instinctively connect him with that institution, and the owners would feel at a loss to know how to dispense with his services.

1892 August 10, Castle Rock Journal

FOR SALE

20 head of pure bred two year old short horn bulls from Crookshank and other noted families. Call at Greenland Breeding Farm or address I. J. Noe, Supt. Greenland, Colo. (ad repeated through August)

**The story of Isaac Jegirtha Noe and Jennie T Cain Noe continued s in The Eagle Mountain Ranch Story.**

March 16, 1900 Castle Rock Journal

It is reported that Messrs. Kountz & Sheedy, who last year exchanged the Greenland ranch for the unfinished McMurtie block 16th street and Broadway, Denver, are now about to sell the property for about \$500,000. Its new owners, so the report goes, will make it a fine hotel.

**Greenland Breeding Farm 1898 – 1906**

**John A. McMurtrie Estate Owner**

**Isaac Jegirtha Noe Superintendent 1878-1892**

**Frank H. Kirk Superintendent 1892-1900**

**John Pollock Superintendent 1903-1906**

March 18, 1889 West Creek Mining News (West Creek Douglas County)

Miss McMurtrie, daughter of the late, John Alen McMurtie of Denver, announces that she will continue the business of raising Shorthorn cattle at the Greenland ranch. This immense tract of 16,400 acres is located in Douglas county, and on it are \$35,000 worth of as good cattle as can be found in the state. Miss McMurtrie who is administratrix of her deceased father's estate, asked the courts leave to sell certain stocks and bonds, but preferred to hold on to the best income property in the entire inventory of assets. She today is the cattle queen of Colorado.

# Frank H Kirk

From the 1919 edition of "The History of Colorado" by Stone

**FRANK H. KIRK**, superintendent of the Greenland farm at Greenland, Douglas County, was born in Atchison, Kan., November 23, 1865, and is a son of James E. and Mary E. (Hull) Kirk. His father was born on a farm near Springfield, Va., and at twelve years of age was apprenticed to learn the machinist's trade, which he followed for years. While engaged at his trade in Berrien County, Mich., he made the first model for the Gage roller drill, which was extensively manufactured in Michigan. Later he drifted into the manufacture and sale of lumber, on the Missouri River, near Atchison, Kan. During his residence in Michigan he had married, and shortly afterward brought his wife to Atchison. Early in the war he enlisted in Company H, Thirteenth Kansas Infantry, in which he served for three years, participating in the battles of Perry Grove and Pea Ridge, Ark., and a number of other engagements. For some time he was confined in the hospital at Fort Leavenworth, and on recovering sufficiently he was discharged and sent home. After he was taken ill and sent to the hospital his family left Atchison and joined him in Leavenworth, in order to be near him.

After the war Mr. Kirk made considerable money in the lumber business, but he loaned it to a man who bankrupted, and thus the entire amount was lost, and on his removal to Colorado in 1872, he was a poor man. Here he took charge of the cutting and sale of timber on the divide, on what is now known as the K. K. ranch. At this writing he is in the employ of Charles B. Kountze, as land agent for the Colorado National Bank. Of his children all (seven) are living, our subject's twin brother, Charles M., being superintendent of the K. K. ranch at Eastonville.

When our subject was seven years of age he was brought to Colorado. In the schools of El Paso County he obtained a fair education. At seventeen years of age he took charge of the farm owned by W. E. Meek, in El Paso County, and for two years he had charge of the place, Mr. Meek being absent the greater part of the time. At nineteen he and his twin brother were given their time, and they rented from their father a ranch in El Paso County, where they remained for a year. Afterward, in partnership with Kountze Brothers, he embarked in the cattle business, and during the seven years in which he was so engaged he prospered. April 29, 1892, he married Miss Nellie M. Toelle, of El Paso County, Colo., who was born in Wyandotte, Kan., and came to Colorado with her mother in 1872.

Shortly after his marriage Mr. Kirk took charge of the farm where he now resides. Some knowledge of the extent of the business may be gathered from the fact that there are twenty thousand acres of land in one body, of which one thousand are under cultivation. On the place there are twenty-five hundred head of live stock, the buildings have been enlarged and doubled in number, and the monthly pay roll aggregates from \$600 to \$1,200, between ten and forty-five men being employed.

Fraternally Mr. Kirk is connected with Castle Rock Lodge of Ancient Order of United Workmen, he was reared a Republican, but in 1896, favoring silver, he voted for Bryan. He has served his party as delegate to conventions. He and his wife are the parents of two children, Hazel Charles, a daughter, and Wallace B., a son, both of whom were born on the Greenland farm.

The JOURNAL editor made a short visit to the Greenland Breeding farm last week and was very courteously entertained by Mr. Kirk, the efficient manager of the farm. There is at present on the place 984 head of cattle and 267 horses of which about 125 are brood mares. There are 65 colts this year. Although there are three excellent stallions on the farm they are not using them much this year but are breeding to a jack, believing that raising mules will pay better than raising horses.

Castle Rock Journal,  
July 24, 1895

The improvements on this farm are very substantial and convenient and in excellent order. The stable is probably the largest in the county. A large silo is one of the improvements which Mr. Kirk thinks is very beneficial. A small reservoir and fish pond has just been completed and a large one is contemplated. The garden is the best we have seen in this part of the county. Nearly 1,000 acres of crops on the farm are looking well except that corn is not large. All the blacksmith work for the farm is done on the place, there being a shop and tools for the purpose.

# Greenland Breeding Farm J. A. McMurtrie Owner

Frank H Kirk, Superintendent of Greenland Breeding Farm 1892 to 1899

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Fraternally Mr. Kirk is connected with Castle Rock Lodge of Ancient Order of United Workmen, he was reared a Republican, but in 1896, favoring silver, he voted for Bryan. He has served his party as delegate to conventions. He and his wife are the parents of two children, Hazel Charles, a daughter, and Wallace B., a son, both of whom were born on the Greenland farm.

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## **Greenland Breeding Farm circa 1870 to present**

aka **Greenland Ranch**

**John A McMurtrie ( Estate) Owner 1899 to 1906**

**John Pollock, Superintendent 1900 to 1909**

*Biography from History of Colorado by Stone, 1918 S. J, Clarke Publishing CO. 1918*

**John Pollock**, president of the Littleton Feed & Fuel Company and formerly closely identified with ranching interests in Colorado, was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 11, 1848. His father, Richard Pollock, was a native of Belfast, Ireland, and when a little lad came with relatives to the United States. They landed at Philadelphia and some years later he established a grocery business in that city and as the years passed became one of the prosperous merchants in his line but later lost much of his well acquired fortune in speculation in the oil fields, in 1834 he married Sarah Morrison, who came to this country with her parents from Glasgow, Scotland, her native city. Her death occurred in the year 1858. while Mr. Pollock survived until 1865. Their son, John Pollock, after mastering the branches of learning taught in the graded schools of Philadelphia, continued his studies in the high school but did not get to complete his course there owing to the death of his father, which necessitated his providing for his own support. He then took up the painting trade in Philadelphia, at which he worked for a short time, and in 1868 he removed to Omaha, Nebraska, while later he went to North Platte and then to Denver. He spent only two weeks in the Colorado metropolis, however, and returned to Omaha on horseback, continuing his residence in that city until 1871. He was employed there in the painting shop of the Union Pacific Railroad and afterward became timekeeper and bookkeeper for Joshua Taylor, who had taken the contract for the stone used in the erection of the Lincoln penitentiary. This necessitated Mr. Pollock's removal to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he was engaged until the completion of the work, when he started with Mr. Taylor for St. Paul, Minnesota. At Knoxville, Iowa, however, they paused and Mr. Taylor secured a contract there for getting out stone for culverts on the Albia & Des Moines Valley Rail- road, Mr. Pollock remaining in his employ until 1871, when following the great Chicago fire he went to that city to view the ruins. He then continued his journey to Philadelphia and afterward visited New York city but again came to Colorado in June, 1874.

Here he began contracting and secured the contract for painting the courthouse at Castle Rock. In the following year he went to San Juan county when the gold excitement there was at its height. In the fall of 1875 he became identified with ranching interests, beginning to herd cattle on his own account and at the same time was similarly employed by Albert Benjamin. He watched the herds under his charge in the vicinity of Acquia until 1879, when on account of the scarcity of grass he started his herd for the head- waters of the north fork of the Republican river. Mr. Pollock continued in the cattle business until 1883, when he sold his herd of three hundred head, for which he received about sixteen thousand dollars. He then returned to Denver and soon afterward purchased a farm near the city, on which he engaged in general agricultural pursuits for a considerable period.

In 1903, however, he sold his ranch and took charge of the Greenland ranch, owned by J. A. McMurtrie, remaining in that connection until 1909. The following year he lived retired from business, but indolence and idleness are utterly foreign to his nature and when a twelve months had passed he joined with Ben. Kelt and R. F. Gill in organizing the Littleton Feed & Fuel Company, of which he has been president.



### *John Pollock Continued*

They have conducted a substantial business at Littleton, their trade steadily increasing, so that the enterprise has become one of the profitable commercial interests of the town. On the 23d of July, 1854, Mr. Pollock was married to Miss Jessie M. Babcock, of Douglas county, Colorado, and a daughter of Alonzo A. and Rosa (Estlake) Babcock. They are well known socially, having a large circle of warm friends who esteem them highly by reason of their sterling worth. Mr. Pollock is well known in Masonic circles, belonging to Western Lodge, No. 22, A. F. & A. M., of Littleton, and Denver Chapter, No. 2; Colorado Consistory, No. 1, and El Jebel Temple, at Denver. Of the first he is a past master and the treasurer. His political allegiance has always been given to the republican party since age conferred upon him the right of franchise and while a resident of Douglas county he was a candidate for county commissioner, also for the state legislature, being defeated for the latter by the narrow margin of seven votes. In all matters of citizenship he stands for progress and improvement, for development and advancement, and his efforts in behalf of the public good have been far-reaching and beneficial.

## Newspaper Articles John Pollock Family

1848 – May 11 born in PA, Philadelphia.

1868 – moves to Omaha NB (moved to North Platte & Denver but moved back to Omaha and stayed till 1871).

1871 & On employed by Union Pacific r.r. & time keeper & bookkeeper a Joshua Taylor who was a contractor w/a contract for stone to build Lincoln Penitentiary. Stayed through 1871.

1872 – went to Chicago to view ruins from fire.

1874- June came back to Denver after a trip from Chicago to PA & NY. Started contract work, painted the Castle Rock Court House.

1875 – fall, starting ranching, cattle raising, also employed by Albert Benjamin.

1879 – was watching herds of cattle in the Acequia area through that year. There is talk, in the newspaper, of a Pollock ranch in Spring Valley, which is now being rented out.

1883 – sells his herd of 300 cattle for \$16,000. Moved to Denver and purchases a farm close to the city.

1884 - July 23, married Jessie M. Babcock of D.C. Paper say he purchased the Reynolds farm in Spring Valley.

1885 – Pollock helps to put out the Spring Valley store fire w/others.

1887 – in-laws still live in Acequia

## Articles Continued John A. Pollock

1888- has several acres of potatoes. On Republican ticket as representative from Spring Valley. Mrs. Pollock advertises pure bred Brown Leghorns (chickens) for sale. Pollock wins nomination but it says he's from Greenland. Paper describes Pollock dairy in Greenland/Divide, has herd of Holsteins, wife has chickens.

1889 – Mrs. Pollock's ad for her Leghorns, ad says Greenland Colo. Also another ad has Divide Poultry Yard, Greenland, Thoroughbreds- Light Brahmas, B. Plymouth Rocks, S.C. Brown Leghorns, & eggs for sale. John is listed as school district treasurer in district #3. Oct. John on Republican ticket for commissioner of Greenland.

1890 – John also has Rye on ranch. sells milch (milking) cows wife still selling chickens. Horse is killed by lightning. John is district court juror. Turkeys for sale also chickens ad by Mrs. Pollock.

1891 – paper says John has moved to Littleton (this could be the ranch in the Denver area) ad in paper shows trustees sale of S. ½ section 27, SW ¼ of N. ½ of SE ¼ section 28 township 10, range 66 west. John is elected to central committee, at republican convention.

1892- Turkeys, chickens, eggs still for sale by Mrs. Pollack at Greenland. John went before the county commissioner to have changes made to Spring Valley and Greenland roads. John is painting houses. John rents out the Spring Valley farm to a Mr. Smith. John is at the Republican Convention & appt. to a committee on credentials. John will attend convention from Spring Valley. Goes to Cripple Creek to look around. John finds ore specimen at a creek bed in Spring Valley at Spruce Hill. John serves as juror.

1893 – Thoroughbred chickens still for sale by the Pollock's at Greenland, Mr. Pollock is listed in the ad. John is a witness to a neighbors land patent.

1900 – census, John is 52, Jessie (wife) 35. No children listed.

1901 – listed as Superintendent at the Greenland Farm. John is thrown from a cart and hurt falling on his head.

1903 – sells ranch in Denver area to take charge of Greenland Ranch, owned by J. A. McMurtrie.

1909 – no longer in charge of Greenland Ranch.

1910 – went into business w/Ben Kelt and R. F. Gill in the Littleton Feed & Fuel Company.

1912- buys 120 acres township 7S, range 66w, section 18.S

**“Greenland Ranch”** aka “John W. Higby Ranch”

Greenland Land and Cattle Company 1906-1980,  
purchased by John W. Higby and C.C. Hemming

Superintendents John Pollock 1906 to 1909  
. John W Higby & Sons 1909 to 1980

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John W. Higby Owner and Manager changed the name Greenland Breeding Farm to to J. W. Higby Ranch and later became known as the “Greenland Ranch” owner **Greenland Land and Cattle Company**, When John W. Higby passed away his sons assumed the ranch management. They over time reduced the breeding of purebred Shorthorns and Galoways to purebred Herford Cattle. His Biography follows.

Greenland Ranch 1909 -1980  
John William Higby Owner  
Superintendent John Pollock to 1909  
**John William Higby biography** page 1 of 3



John William Higby



Higby Mercantile  
Greenland, Colorado



Emily Briley Higby

While almost four years have passed since J. W. Higby was called to his final rest, Colorado is still benefiting by business interests which he instituted and for many years he was regarded as one of the most forceful, resourceful and progressive men of his section of the state. He possessed unfaltering enterprise, keen sagacity, laudable ambition and high principles of business integrity. Born in Illinois on the 17th of February, 1854, he spent his youthful days upon the home farm with his father and after his schooldays were over began farming on his own account, following that pursuit in Illinois and in Iowa until 1888, when he removed to Eastonville, Colorado.

At that date Mr. Higby secured employment with the Russell-Gates Mercantile Company as a clerk and after six months became one of the partners in the business and for twelve years remained the vice president of the corporation, which at that time operated twelve stores in El Paso, Elbert and Douglas counties. Successful as he was along mercantile lines, this constituted but one phase of his activities. In 1888 he homesteaded one hundred and sixty acres and also preempted a similar amount of land and secured a timber claim of like size near Calhan, Colorado. His wife occupied the claim for six years in order to prove up on the property, while Mr. Higby remained at Eastonville to conduct the interests of the Russell-Gates Mercantile Company. He remained an active factor in the conduct and successful management of that business until 1900, when he sold his interests and removed to Monument, where he established a mercantile house and, contrary to the predictions of all of his friends, he made of it a notable success. He closely studied the wishes and interests of his patrons, as well as the market, ever recognizing the fact that satisfied customers are the best advertisement. He held to the highest standards in the personnel of the house, in the line of goods carried, in the treatment of his customers, and his business showed a rapid and substantial growth. Centering his efforts in a way upon Monument and the district surrounding, he purchased in 1902 sixteen hundred and forty acres of woodland near Monument and erected thereon a number of sawmills, which he utilized in furnishing fifty thousand railroad ties for the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad Company. He also cut all of the tree tops into cordwood, shipping hundreds of carloads of cordwood into Fort Logan and Denver.

Ranching interests also claimed his attention to a still greater degree and in 1910 he purchased the Greenland ranch of sixteen thousand, two hundred and eighty acres at Greenland, Colorado, and up to the time of his death in February, 1915, he spent most of his time upon the ranch, leaving his mercantile interests in charge of competent and trusted employes. The ranch has a capacity of twenty-five hundred head of cattle, with a thousand acres under cultivation and two thousand acres of hay land. After purchasing this property Mr. Higby sold a two-fifths interest in the ranch to one of his closest friends, C. C. Henning, of Colorado Springs. The ranch at present is under the management of two of his sons, Louis and Carl, who carry on the business under the name of the J. W. Higby Ranch.

In 1882 Mr. Higby was united in marriage to Miss Marie Emily Briley, of Garden Grove, Iowa, a daughter of Stephen H. and Jane (Hyatt) Briley, the former a minister of the United Brethren church. Mr. Higby on his deathbed desired it to be known that to his wife he owed his success in life, saying that any man with a wife like his could not do otherwise than win success, for she at all times was the guiding spirit of his life, encouraging and assisting him when there were trials and difficulties to be met. Her cooperation and her encouragement were strong elements in his advancement, as he claimed. In other words, theirs was largely an Ideal companionship. Each shared in the interests, the ambitions and the projects of the other and their deepest concern was for the welfare and happiness of their six children. Olive May, their eldest, became the wife of James Killin, a ranchman residing near Monument, and they have one child, James Lewis. Louis R. married Jennie Lake, of Colorado Springs, and resides upon the home ranch. Carl M. wedded Dorothy Hulbert, of Logansport, Indiana, by whom he has three children, Marie E., Carl R. and John W., and they, too, reside upon the home ranch. William Eugene wedded Blanche David, of Marionville, Missouri, by whom he has two children, William D. and James E., and in his business connections is well known as the manager of the Monument store. Kate is the wife of Fred Noe, living on a ranch near Greenland, and they have five children. William F., Carl F., Charles L., Campbell and Catharine. Jack B., who was manager of the mercantile business at Greenland and died of influenza in the early winter of 1918, married Gladys Johnstone, of Greenland, and had one son, Ladus Jack. The Higby estate comprises three-fifths of an interest in the ranch of sixteen thousand, two hundred and eighty acres and the mercantile enterprises at Greenland and Monument. The business is largely under the management of the children, all of whom are graduates of the East Denver high school, and the daughters are also graduates of the Manual Training school at Denver.

(Note: Kate and Fred Noe had five more children after this story was published. These Noe children were Willis P. , John I., Helen E., James H. and Gertrude Ann.)

Olive graduating from the State Teachers' College at Greeley, while the boys pursued a business course at the Modern School of Business in Denver. The family is one of which the mother has every reason to be proud, for her training and teaching have developed men of high moral principles, none of her sons having ever tasted intoxicants or tobacco, and her daughters are proving to be most efficient in modern scientific housekeeping. Their course reflects credit upon an untarnished family name, and indicates the wisdom of the training given by the parents. Mr. Higby counted no personal effort or sacrifice on his part too great if it would promote the welfare and happiness of his wife and children. In the career of such a man the broadest spirit of the new twentieth century found expression. The philosopher Emerson once said: "An Institution is but the lengthened shadow of a man." Judged by this standard, measured by his extensive ranching and commercial interests, Mr. Higby was a great man who owed his success to intense industry and not to special ability. An analyzation of the records of most successful men will indicate that their advancement is due to that quality of intense industry. However, his life was never self-centered. While he attempted important things and accomplished what lie attempted, his success never represented another's losses, but was built up through constructive effort. He was a dependable man in any relation and any emergency—one in whom to have confidence. His easy dignity, his frankness and cordiality of address, with a total absence of anything sinister or anything to conceal, indicated him to be a man ready to meet any obligation of life with the confidence and courage that come of conscious personal ability, right conception of things and an habitual regard for what is best in the exercise of human activity.

**Wife and Children of John W Higby**

Top Row

left to right William E, Carl M, Louis R

Bottom Row

Left to right Jennie K, Emily (mother), Olive M



**Reference**

*Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection*

*History of Colorado by Stone, 1918 S. J, Clarke Publishing CO. (Copy of J W Higby Bio)*

*Larkspur Historical Society*

*Noe Family archives*

*Compiled by Bill Noe Great-Grand son of Isaac Jegirtha and Jennie Cain Noe*

*John W. and Emily Briley Higby*

*Grandson of Fred and Kate Noe.*

*April 2023*

**John A. McMurtrie**

Information

Died Shortly After Acquiring The Greenland Breeding Farm  
From C. E. Kountze

The McMurtrie Estate Owned the Farm until it was  
purchased by John W. Higby

## Greenland Breeding Farm 1898 - 1906

John A. McMurtrie Owner (Estate)

Isaac Jegirtha Noe Superintendent 1878-1892

Frank H. Kirk Superintendent 1892-1900

John Pollock Superintendent 1903-1906

In the town of Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania, John A. McMurtrie was born December 24, 1848. He was the son of Josiah and Rachel Frances (Bush) McMurtrie. J. A. McMurtrie obtained his education there, joined the military and acquired work experience in various engineering companies. He worked his way west arriving in Colorado in 1870 where he worked surveying for various Railroad routes through the Rocky Mountains. John A. McMurtrie, became the Chief Engineer of the Rio Grande Railroad Company and owner of a Railroad Construction Company. His brother Samuel McMurtrie also an Engineer came to Colorado working with brother John A. McMurtrie involving many Railroad engineering tasks.

John A. McMurtrie was married at Kansas City, on January 1, 1874, to Miss Pheriba Wilson and to this happy union there were born three children: Dee McMurtrie. Became Mrs. Claude K. Boettcher. of Denver, Nettie McMurtrie married Mr. Harry Haley, of Kansas City, Missouri and one son John Alfred McMurtrie.

In 1898 John A. McMurtrie acquired the Greenland Breeding Farm at Greenland, Colorado in a property exchange from C. B. Kountze and Sheedy for the McMurtrie block at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway, Denver.

On February 15<sup>th</sup> 1899 John A. McMurtrie died from blood poisoning. His daughter Nettie B. McMurtrie-Haley is named administratrix of her deceased father's estate which includes The Greenland Breeding Farm. The West Creek Mining News on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1899 labeled her as "The cattle Queen of Colorado"

The 10,400 acre Ranch located in Douglas County, Colorado has \$35,000 worth some of the best cattle found in this State. She announced her intention to keep the Greenland Breeding Farm and continue to raise purebred Shorthorn cattle.

Little is known about how much direct involvement Nettie McMurtrie Haley had in the daily operations of the ranch however the Castle Rock Journal reported that the Greenland Breeding Farm had made very large shipments of grains and cattle to Denver markets.

During the McMurtrie ownership the onsite management ranch operations were both successful and profitable resulting from excellent Superintendents and Managers. I. J. Noe resigned as Superintendent in the fall of 1892 to devote all his time developing and managing his Eagle Mountain Ranch. (*See Eagle Mountain Ranch Story*)

In the fall of 1892 Frank Kirk assumed the Superintendent's responsibilities of IJ Noe. Frank Kirk managed the Ranch until 1899. (*Frank Kirk biography attached*)

John Pollock took charge of the Greenland Breeding Farm as Superintendent where he remained until 1909 working for the new owner of the ranch John W. Higby who had purchased it in 1906 from the McMurtrie Estate. (*See John Pollock biography attached*)

John W. Higby Owner and Manager changed the name Greenland Breeding Farm to to J. W. Higby Ranch and later became known as the "Greenland Ranch" owner **Greenland Land and Cattle Company**, When John W. Higby passed away his son assumed the ranch management. They over time reduced the breeding of purebred Shorthorns and Galaways to purebred Herford Cattle.

John A. McMurtrie acquires Greenland Breeding Farm 1899  
John Pollock Manager, I.J. Noe Supervenient

**The Colorado Daily  
Chieftain, February 17, 1899**

**The Evening Star (Washington, D.C.) February 16, 1899 page 1**

Denver, Col., February 16.—John A McMurtrie, the millionaire railroad contractor, is dead at his home in this city of blood poisoning, caused by an abscess. He devised the plans and superintended the building of the Rio Grande road over Marshall Pass and through the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas, admittedly some of the most remarkable feats of railroad engineering ever performed.

The Castle Rock Journal, March 16, 1900

It is reprinted that Messrs. Kountz & Sheedy, who last year (1899) exchanged the Greenland ranch for the unfinished McMurtrie block at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Broadway, Denver, are now about to sell the property for about \$500,000. Its new owner so they goes, will make it a fine hotel.

**March 18, 1889 West Creek Mining News (West Creek Douglas County)**

Miss McMurtrie, daughter of the late, John Alen McMurtie of Denver, announces that she will continue the business of raising Shorthorn cattle at the Greenland ranch. This immense tract of 16,400 acres is located in Douglas county, and on it are \$35,000 worth of as good cattle as can be found in the state. Miss McMurtrie who is administratrix of her deceased father's estate, asked the courts leave to sell certain stocks and bonds, but preferred to hold on to the best income property in the entire inventory of assets. She today is the cattle queen of Colorado.

The Castle Rock Journal December 21, 1900

**The Greenland Farm**

The Greenland Breeding Farm at Greenland in the southern part of Douglas County, is owned by the McMurtrie estate of Denver and is one of the largest and finest in Colorado. The land deeded and belonging to the farm consists of more than 16,000 acres. More attention is being paid in recent years to cattle than to horses, and the herds of shorthorns and galloways are of the highest quality. There are over 1,000 cattle on the farm and Manager Pollock is constantly sifting out the off colors and improving the stock by new throughbred blood. A carload shipment last week of what he calls "culls" sold at from \$35 to \$36 a head on the Denver market, a good evidence of the high grade and condition of all the live stock on the property.

The Castle Rock Journal August 10, 1892

**For Sale**

20 head of pure bred two year old Short Horn bulls from Crookshank and other noted families. Call at Greenland Breeding Farm or address I. J. Noe, Supt., Greenland, Colo.

*Note: This is the last article mentioning IJ as Superintendent. Frank H Kirk Managed the ranch after his marriage to Nellie M. Toelle in April 1892.*

### **The Colorado Daily Chieftain, February 17, 1899**

#### DEATH OF J.A. McMURTRIE

By an unfortunate coincidence of typographical errors a local item in the Chieftain of yesterday referring to the death of J.A. McMurtrie at Denver doubtless failed to bring to mind to some of the facts that the man who passed away was, during his residence in this city, one of the most prominent citizens of southern Colorado. During the fight between the Rio Grande and the Santa Fe railroads for possession of the right of way through the canon of the Arkansas Mr. McMurtrie figured as conspicuously as any in the stirring events of those time when all Pueblo was wrought up to the highest pitch of excitement and partisan feeling, favoring one or the other line, had laid it's hold on all the population of the city. With J.R. DeRemer and Mr. McMurtrie in charge of the Rio Grande put up its fight for right of way, and they were not leaders of opposing forces as was stated in the telegraphic columns yesterday morning. But the people of Pueblo have much besides for which they hold the name of Mr. McMurtrie in lasting remembrance. After leaving Pueblo he went to Denver, being promoted from division engineer to chief engineer of the Rio Grande Railroad company. Some years later he engaged in railroad construction as a contractor, in which, as in other activities he amassed large wealth. In youth as well as in later years he was possessed of splendid public spirit and was generous to a fault.

## **Greenland Breeding Farm circa 1870 to present**

aka **Greenland Ranch**

**John A McMurtrie ( Estate) Owner 1899 to 1906**

**John Pollock, Superintendent 1900 to 1909**

*Biography from History of Colorado by Stone, 1918 S. J, Clarke Publishing CO. 1918*

**John Pollock**, president of the Littleton Feed & Fuel Company and formerly closely identified with ranching interests in Colorado, was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 11, 1848. His father, Richard Pollock, was a native of Belfast, Ireland, and when a little lad came with relatives to the United States. They landed at Philadelphia and some years later he established a grocery business in that city and as the years passed became one of the prosperous merchants in his line but later lost much of his well acquired fortune in speculation in the oil fields, in 1834 he married Sarah Morrison, who came to this country with her parents from Glasgow, Scotland, her native city. Her death occurred in the year 1858. while Mr. Pollock survived until 1865. Their son, John Pollock, after mastering the branches of learning taught in the graded schools of Philadelphia, continued his studies in the high school but did not get to complete his course there owing to the death of his father, which necessitated his providing for his own support. He then took up the painting trade in Philadelphia, at which he worked for a short time, and in 1868 he removed to Omaha, Nebraska, while later he went to North Platte and then to Denver. He spent only two weeks in the Colorado metropolis, however, and returned to Omaha on horseback, continuing his residence in that city until 1871. He was employed there in the painting shop of the Union Pacific Railroad and afterward became timekeeper and bookkeeper for Joshua Taylor, who had taken the contract for the stone used in the erection of the Lincoln penitentiary. This necessitated Mr. Pollock's removal to Lincoln, Nebraska, where he was engaged until the completion of the work, when he started with Mr. Taylor for St. Paul, Minnesota. At Knoxville, Iowa, however, they paused and Mr. Taylor secured a contract there for getting out stone for culverts on the Albia & Des Moines Valley Rail- road, Mr. Pollock remaining in his employ until 1871, when following the great Chicago fire he went to that city to view the ruins. He then continued his journey to Philadelphia and afterward visited New York city but again came to Colorado in June, 1874.

Here he began contracting and secured the contract for painting the courthouse at Castle Rock. In the following year he went to San Juan county when the gold excitement there was at its height. In the fall of 1875 he became identified with ranching interests, beginning to herd cattle on his own account and at the same time was similarly employed by Albert Benjamin. He watched the herds under his charge in the vicinity of Acquia until 1879, when on account of the scarcity of grass he started his herd for the head- waters of the north fork of the Republican river. Mr. Pollock continued in the cattle business until 1883, when he sold his herd of three hundred head, for which he received about sixteen thousand dollars. He then returned to Denver and soon afterward purchased a farm near the city, on which he engaged in general agricultural pursuits for a considerable period.

In 1903, however, he sold his ranch and took charge of the Greenland ranch, owned by J. A. McMurtrie, remaining in that connection until 1909. The following year he lived retired from business, but indolence and idleness are utterly foreign to his nature and when a twelve months had passed he joined with Ben. Kelt and R. F. Gill in organizing the Littleton Feed & Fuel Company, of which he has been president.