

Fred Bauder and the Blizzard

Before barbed wire closed in the sprawling range lands of the large cattle outfits, cattle would always be looking for better grass and would graze and drift many miles from the ranch headquarters. The big Bar T ranch had its headquarters on the South Fork of the Republican River in what is now Yuma County, just north of the Kit Carson County line, at a place where the river valley was broad and flat with a scattering of large cottonwood trees. Fred Bauder was a steady hired hand for the Bar T and was a typical wild west cowboy that brought him many adventures.

One year at roundup time some Bar T cowboys, including Fred, were near Deer Trail, which is halfway between Limon and Denver. They were bringing back cattle, that through the summer had drifted all the way from the South Fork of the Republican. It was early November and a blizzard blew in and caught the men out on the flat prairie with no protection from the storm. They had a large tarp, so they laid it out on the ground, crawled under and waited out a 3-day blizzard.

Most feared of all storms was the winter blizzard with heavy snowfall and driving winds. These blizzards would cause the ravines and draws to be filled with snow, and the cattle that would drift with the storm became trapped if they fell over the edge of one of these ravines. A cow suffocates very quickly if its nostrils become plugged with snow or if ice forms and fills their nostrils, because a cow will not open her mouth to breath. In one of these blizzards in 1905 Gottlieb Bauder lost all his cattle and horses.



Hail stones from a severe storm in 1928, displayed by Walt Bauder.