THE RIVERSIDE CEMETERY
FORT MORGAN, COLORADO

Karol Mack
Riverside Cemetery
8” x 10” oil

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HISTORY OF FORT MORGAN

Fort Morgan is part of the high plains region that an early explorer, Major Stephen Long, called the “Great American Desert.” A city of approximately 12,000 people, it is the center of an agricultural area. As the county seat and the largest city in Morgan County, it is also the center of professional services, shopping, and other consumer services as well as cultural opportunities.

Military Fort Morgan was in existence from 1864 to 1868. It was located almost a mile east of the cemetery. The fort was created to protect wagon trains and stagecoaches.

The city was founded in 1884 by Abner S. Baker, an energetic Wisconsin man who had moved to Union Colony Number One (Greeley). While hunting bison near Beaver Creek, east of the town, Baker recognized the potential of the land if it could be irrigated. Because the early years were difficult, the town grew slowly. However, 1900 to 1920 was a period of rapid growth. Jackson Lake, completed in 1905, was the first reservoir finished, followed by others. In 1906, the Great Western Sugar Company built a large factory. The local farmers were encouraged by Main Street businessmen to grow sugar beets. During this period, the city developed City Park, a waterworks, electric generation plant, opera house, court house, City Hall, and sewer system. A Carnegie Library was constructed in 1916.

Immigrants during this time period were largely Germans from Russia. They were brought here primarily to raise sugar beets. Later many Mexican-Americans were brought in to weed crops. Many Danes and other Scandinavians settled here as well as Brush.

Today, Fort Morgan prides itself on its agricultural roots and diverse populace, with the goal of being the city of choice for the current and future generations – beautiful, clean, and safe.
**SERENITY FALLS**

Serenity Falls is reserved for cremains only. It opened in 1996 and is located near the Sexton's Office on 8th Avenue. This section is enclosed with a fence for safety reasons, because of the beautiful waterfall, and is open for visitation on weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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**MARK BYRON GILL** (1863–1957)

His one ambition was to go down to "the ranch" and become a cowboy and cattleman. So in the fall of 1879, he left his home and family in Greeley and went down to the ranch and became associated with his brother-in-law, Bruce Johnson, in the cattle industry. The forty years he spent managing the ranch were the happiest years of his life.

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**WILLIAM SANDERSON** (1905–1990)

Born in Dubben, near Riga, Latvia, Sanderson immigrated to the United States in 1923. As a respected painter and educator, Sanderson was an important contributor to the development of modern art in Colorado, and his work is exhibited in museums and collections throughout the state.

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**LAURA FORBES** (1846–1918)

Laura Ladocia Ingalls Waldvogel Forbes whose brother, Charles Ingalls, was the father of Laura Ingalls Wilder of *Little House on the Prairie* fame. Forbes is referred to as “Aunt Docia” in the *Little House* books. Forbes married her first husband, August Eugene Waldvogel, Sr. in 1866. They had two children, a daughter named Lena and a son named after his father but called “Gene.” The couple divorced after August was arrested and jailed for shooting a man that broke into their home. Forbes later married Hiram Forbes, with whom she had 7 children. Docia moved to Colorado in 1906 following Hiram’s death. Her son, Gene, owned the burial plot where Docia is buried with two of her daughters, Katie Forbes Presley and Frances Halda.

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**WILLIAM WESLEY RICKEL** (1855–1949)

An early homesteader, he took part in the birth and death of the Pony Express, fought in the Civil War to preserve the Union, and was present at the decisive “Gettysburg of the Southwest” better known as the Battle of Glorieta Pass.
**W.H. CLATWORTHY** (1856–1944)
Clatworthy established his own hardware store after working for Abner Baker’s General Store. He later served as mayor and was part of the Fort Morgan Improvement Association, which had among other aims, the objective of fostering all kinds of public improvements beneficial to the town of Fort Morgan.

**SARAH F. BAKER** (1853–1895)
As a token of esteem in which Mrs. Baker was held by her neighbors, nearly the whole town was in attendance upon the last sad rites: “For eleven years she has been a resident of Fort Morgan where she has been universally respected.”

**ABNER S. BAKER** (1844–1898)
Town founder, businessman, canal builder — “No one who has lived in Fort Morgan was entitled to so much consideration for what he did and tried to do for the community (and no one had tried to do more.) No one had been so poorly rewarded.” Quote attributed to George Warner.

**KATE CLATWORTHY** (1856–1937)
From the inception of Fort Morgan, Mrs. Clatworthy was active in most of the improvements of the town. When the town was laid out—part of it on her father's homestead—she, with a select few named the streets and helped to take care of the trees. Later, she was instrumental in getting the first city park started. She helped to organize the group which formed the Riverside Cemetery Association and supervised the local boys who watered the trees with buckets.

**EARLIEST GRAVE**
The oldest known marker in the cemetery is for Ethel Rouse who died Sept. 12, 1884 — aged 9 days. The Rouse's were early homesteaders to the area (See ‘Earliest Grave’ on map).
LA FAYETTE MORE  (1848–1922)

LaFayette More or L.F. formed a partnership in raising and grazing sheep on the prairie grass north of the South Platte River. Their activities centered around the Wildcat Creek area. L.F. was an early homesteader and was active in the formation of the Deuel and Snyder Ditch Company. In 1915 L.F. and Effie were honored at an old-timer's celebration as the “oldest resident couple in Morgan County.”

DR. ARTHUR FREDERICK WILLIAMS  (1881–1959)

He was very active in all medical affairs both locally and state-wide. Williams had a very large practice. It was often said that he was very rough and gruff; however, he had many dear friends as patients who loved him dearly and praised his ability as a physician and surgeon. In 1953, he received a citation from the Colorado State Medical Society for his fifty years of medical practice.

DR. HUBERT WORK  (1860–1942)

Born in 1860, Dr. Work moved to Colorado after graduating from medical school at the University of Pennsylvania in 1885. He practiced in Fort Morgan from 1887 to 1892 as one of the town’s earliest physicians. Following Dr. Work’s time in Fort Morgan, he relocated to Pueblo, Colorado where he became involved in politics in Pueblo, an interest he developed after serving as a town trustee in Fort Morgan. Dr. Work decided to pursue a political life. He served many offices in the Republican National Committee before being selected to serve in the president's cabinet. Under President Warren G. Harding, Dr. Work served as the Postmaster General from 1922 to 1923 and as Secretary of the Interior from 1923 to 1928, continuing to hold the office under President Calvin Coolidge. He maintained ties with the Fort Morgan until his death in 1942. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery, but his children, Frances Mary and Hubert, Jr., are buried at Riverside Cemetery.

GEORGE WARNER  (1855–1913)

The promoter and developer of Fort Morgan. In 1895, he published a real estate pamphlet, titled *An Oasis in the Desert* that described the agricultural area of the county for the purpose of attracting outside investors.

J. P. CURRY  (1855–1942)

Successful in ranching, banking, and business, he made a practice of helping his neighbors and the community financially. He never pressed anyone owing him money if the person made an effort to meet their obligations.
CHARLES P. EYSER (1856–1916)

MARSHALL EYSER KILLED

On Oct. 2, 1916, Marshall Charles P. Eyser, was killed during a gun battle with John Swan, a known bootlegger. Eyser, who for four years patrolled the streets of Fort Morgan during the long, dreary, bleak, lonesome hours of the night while others slept in peace and safety, sacrificed his life upon the altar of faithful duty and Mrs. Mary Weimer (see # 26), wife of the proprietor of the Manhattan Café is dead, innocent though she was, from a stray bullet from the gun of a crazed malignant-hearted youth. The coroner jury read their verdict on the awful tragedy that will hold John Swan, himself reared in the city that now turns to bitterness against him, to the District Court for murder, thus start the wheels of punishment if the perpetration of the most sensational and horrible crime ever committed in Morgan County or this section of the state.

HELEN MURA (1899–1922)

TRAGEDY AT NORTH STAR SCHOOL

The tragic murder of a young teacher, shot in front of her class, shocked the county. On March 21, 1922, Miss Helen Mura, a twenty-two year old teacher, in the one room North Star School, was shot and killed by a “love-mad suitor,” Maggarino Stabio, who then shot himself.

Miss Mura was teaching her class of twenty students when Stabio attempted to enter. Stabio stayed near the school all morning, even offering a quarter to a little boy if the boy could convince Miss Mura to talk to him.

Stabio entered the outer room of the school at noon. Miss Mura went to plead with Stabio to leave. As she stepped into the room he grabbed her. The door was pushed open and the pupils saw Stabio grasping the girl by the neck. He raised a revolver, pressed the weapon against her head, and fired, killing her instantly. Stabio pushed the door open, and, standing in full view of the twenty children, placed the muzzle of the revolver to his right temple and shot himself.
James E. Jewel (1847–1939)

James E. Jewel was born in 1847 in Ohio. His life was dedicated to serving his country, mainly in the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR). The GAR was a fraternal organization composed of veterans of the Union Army (United States Army), Union Navy (U.S. Navy), Marines and the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service who served in the American Civil War for the Northern/Federal forces. Jewel joined the GAR in 1878. His service earned him the honor of commanding the Colorado and Wyoming department. He later served as Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief in 1928 and Commander-in-Chief in 1930. Jewel was a Fort Morgan resident from 1901 until his death in 1939 at the age of 92. He practiced law in addition to farming and ranching. He is buried in Arlington Cemetery, and has a monument in Riverside Cemetery.

Josiah Work (1835–1909)

He formed the Bijou Irrigation Company -- the organization that built the Bijou Canal and three reservoirs. He also built the United Presbyterian Church (UPC) in 1903. At the time of his death, the church had the largest attendance UPC members west of Chicago, Il.

George Cox (1867–1951)

After serving as City Superintendent for 33 years, Murlin Spencer wrote in his Fort Morgan Time column, “George Cox has done one thing no other man in this town has done; that is, made himself so valuable that this town needs him more than he needs the town.”

Adrian Van Santvoord Saunders (1848–1935)

In 1913, A.V. Saunders was elected Justice of the Peace, from then on he was known as “The Judge.” He was reelected successfully until he choose not to run in 1934.

Moncellus L. More (1844–1912)

M.L. More established the Morgan County Bank. He was particularly interested in beautifying the town. He encouraged the City Council to have trees planted along the residential streets. He later served as Mayor.
JULIAN HERMAN ROEDIGER  (1875–1951)

When the Great Western Sugar Company built a factory in Fort Morgan in 1906 and imported German agriculturists from Russia to work the beets, Mr. Roediger became the liaison with the foreigners who spoke only German. J.H. gave a block of his property for the effort of the Morgan Community Hospital and started the building fund with a substantial sum.

HIPPOLYTE GIRARDOT  (1844–1922)

An early pioneer and later president of the Orchard State Bank. No one was ever turned away from his ranch. They were welcomed, fed, and lodged if necessary. Many people found a haven with the Girardots.

VETERAN'S SECTION

Section D is the site of annual patriotic programs. It is the Veteran’s Section and the gravesites are placed in the shape of a V.

LEWIS & MATTIE MILLER  (1867–1936), (1872–1963)

Parents of the famous big band leader Glenn Miller.

GLENN MILLER

Alton Glenn Miller (1904 – missing in action December 15, 1944) was an American big band musician, arranger, composer, and bandleader in the swing era. He was the best-selling recording artist from 1939 to 1943, leading one of the best known big bands. Miller's recordings include "In the Mood", "Moonlight Serenade," "Pennsylvania 6-5000," "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "A String of Pearls," "At Last", "(I've Got a Gal In) Kalamazoo," "American Patrol," "Tuxedo Junction," "Elmer's Tune," and "Little Brown Jug." While he was traveling to entertain U.S. troops in France during World War II, Miller's aircraft disappeared in bad weather over the English Channel. Miller has markers in Grove Street Cemetery (Connecticut) and Arlington Cemetery (Virginia). Glenn’s parents are buried in Fort Morgan (see #25 on map).
MARY WEIMER  (1864–1916)

Mrs. Mary Weimer was the innocent victim of an assault upon Marshall Charles P. Eyser (see # 17) during a gun battle with John Swan, known bootlegger. On Oct. 2, 1916, Mrs. Mary Weimer, wife of the proprietor of the Manhattan Café is dead, innocent though she was, from a stray bullet from the gun of a crazed malignant-hearted youth.

ROBERT B. SPENCER  (1872–1965)

Editor of the Fort Morgan Times for fifty-eight years, devoted his lifetime in Fort Morgan to the city’s activities and his church. Foremost in his mind was the betterment of the community.

J.H. BLOEDORN  (1889–1967)

President of the Farmers State Bank of Fort Morgan; one of the largest in Northeastern Colorado. J.H. also served three successive terms as director of the Denver Branch of the Federal Reserve System of Kansas City.

GEORGE GLENN  (1878–1967)

Rancher, school board member, County Commissioner, and two terms in the State Legislature. “The life of a cowhand was a good life,” he states, “The food was rough. We had beans, dried fruit, and the best meat ever eaten. We lived outside, and were just as tough as one of the rawhide steers.”

PHILIP K. DICK  (1928–1982)

An American writer notable for publishing works of science fiction. A variety of popular films based on his works have been produced, including Blade Runner, Total Recall, Minority Report, A Scanner Darkly, Paycheck, Next, and The Adjustment Bureau. In 2005, Time magazine named Ubik one of the hundred greatest English-language novels published since 1923. In 2007, Dick became the first science fiction writer to be included in The Library of America series.

Photo courtesy of Tessa Dick
IVO B. DYAR  (1889–1968)

As a nurse, her life-long work produced Fort Morgan’s first hospital, which she and her sister operated out of their home on Sherman Street. To Ivo, helping people was a way of life.

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SYMBOLS ON HEADSTONES

Oftentimes headstones are decorated with a number of different symbols. Listed below are just a few of the symbols and their meanings.

**Lamb:** Innocence (often used for children).

**Oak Leaf:** Strength or Courage

**Dove:** Peace

**Anchor:** Hope

**Short Tree:** Symbolizes a person whose life was cut off in the prime of their life

**Lily:** Resurrection

**Palm Leaves:** Victory over death

**Rosary:** Prayer

**Wheat:** Bounty of the earth

**Torch:** Eternal Life
COMMON TERMS

**Headstone:** A marker at the top of a gravesite.

**Footstone:** A marker at the end of gravesite.

**Military Marker:** A flag, metal plaque or symbol to show that the person served in the armed forces.

**Columbarium:** A structure of vaults lined with recesses for cremains.

**Grave:** A space of ground in the cemetery used, or intended to be used, for the internment of human remains.

**Urn:** A container designed to hold cremains.

**Interment:** The disposition of human remain by burial, entombment, or inurnment.

**Cremation:** The reduction of human remains by intense heat and flame to ashes.

**Sexton:** Originally meant “keeper of the church property and church bell.” Now, it is the manager or caretaker of the cemetery property.

A 1902 photograph shows the first bridge over the South Platte River where Rainbow Bridge now stands. The river is flooding, and the north end of the bridge is washed out. Lafayette More’s (See #11) ranch buildings can be viewed in the background.

This image appeared in *Ranch and Range* magazine that was dedicated to the scenery, resources, development, and opportunities of the West. The winter 1902 edition was largely devoted to an illustrated description of Morgan county, “. . . which is soon to be numbered among the leading counties of Colorado in the wealth of her agricultural products.”
INFORMATION FOR VISITORS

RIVERSIDE CEMETERY IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The cemetery cannot be held responsible for any damages to markers or items placed as a memorial on individual lots. This includes damage incurred through regular maintenance.

Approved decorations must be secured to headstone.

All dogs must be leashed and remain on roadways or on common areas. Waste must be removed by owner.

In ground planting prohibited.

Exception: Riverside Cemetery where plantings are restricted to within 10 inches of foundations.

Winter decoration allowed December 1st through April 1st.

Cemetery staff will remove all decoration not following guidelines, or those that have become unsightly or adversely impact upkeep.

Memorial day Holiday observed from 5 P.M. Friday prior to Memorial Day and ends the Sunday following the Holiday. Decoration not removed by Sunday will be discarded by cemetery staff.

CEMETERY MANAGEMENT AND THE CITY OF FORT MORGAN APPRECIATES YOUR COOPERATION. PLEASE ADDRESS CEMETERY MANAGEMENT SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS.

Cemetery management reserved the right to amend these rules without notice.