

DISCLAIMER

This biography is a rough draft and a work-in-progress.
The research has not been completed, so there may be errors and omissions.
Please return to Tuscania1918.org in the future to see if a revised and
finalized version is available.

Abbreviations:

b = born

d = died

F: = Find A Grave (www.findagrave.org)

NOK = next-of-kin

TUSCANIA

Skelton, Stanford William (Sr.)
1895 MT – 1973 MT



Stanford William Skelton Sr. – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” 3 January 1973 p. 1



National radio personality Paul Harvey (center) talks with Stanford (Bay) Skelton (right) – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Sunday 15 Feb 1970 p 45

Rancher, rodeo pioneer 'Bay' Skelton, 77, dies

Stanford "Bay" Skelton, 77, son of an early-day Stanford ranch couple, pioneer rodeo man, western movie actor and friend of the late Charles M. Russell, died Tuesday in a local hospital.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, one of the first homesteading families in Judith

Basin, Skelton was born Jan. 31, 1895, on his parents' ranch which was his home all his life. He attended Utica grade school and the first grade school built in Stanford. Later he attended schools in Great Falls and Missoula.

A World War I veteran, Skelton was aboard the Tuscania troopship when it was torpedoed and sunk off the coast of Ireland Feb. 5, 1918.

Bay and his brother, Carl, were pioneer rodeo participants and producers in the western United States and Canada. During this period they went to Hollywood and played in several western movies. Some of his close Hollywood friends were Noah Beery, Jack Holt, Bebe Daniels and Yakima Canuck.

Skelton met and married his

Continued on page 2, col. 1



Stanford Skelton

Skelton

Continued from page 1.

wife, Huberta, in Hollywood Jan. 30, 1929, and came to Stanford where he operated the family ranch. Mrs. Skelton died Dec. 4, 1969.

In March, 1972, Skelton received the Bob Schriver bronze buffalo skull award at the annual C. M. Russell Art Auction. The award is made to individuals who were close friends of Russell.

Skelton was a member of the Montana Cowboys Association, Montana Stockgrowers, Elks Lodge 214 of Great Falls, Eagles of Lewistown, Stanford American Legion Post, Historical Society of Stanford and Sons and Daughters of Pioneers and was active in the Democratic party.

Survivors include a son, Bill, Stanford, and daughter, Mrs. Roy (Sharron) Harris, Libertyville, Ill.; three sisters, Mrs. Martha Coughlin, Great Falls, and Mrs. Nina Hogan and Mrs. Lee Sweeney, both of Helena; a brother, Carl, and four grandchildren.

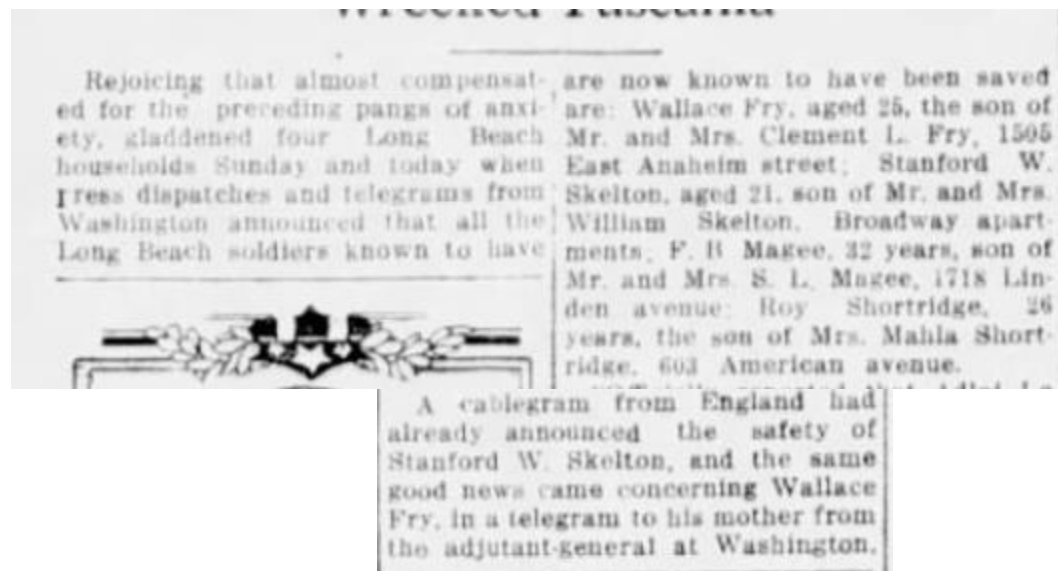
Funeral services will be Friday at 10:30 a.m. at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Stanford. Burial will be in the Stanford Cemetery. A vigil service will be held in O'Connor Funeral Home Wednesday at 8 p.m.



STANFORD W. SKELTON

FOUR HOMES GLADDENED BY RECEIPT OF MESSAGES

Telling of the Safety of Quartette of L. B.
Boys Known to Have Been on
Wrecked Tuscania



Stanford William Skelton - "Long Beach (CA) Telegram & The Long Beach Daily Telegram" 11 Feb 1918 p 4 -

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/608297947/?terms=%22stanford%20skelton%22&match=1>

SKELTON STANFORD WILLIAM		HOSP C 2856180
Wag 16 Co 20 Engrs		K 566 598
Geyser Mont		A 2 784 529
Sn 250 411	Died	T 518 083
Born 1/31/95		R
Enl 12/12/17	Dis 6/11/19	Ct. 1 518 261
		I

U. S. VETERANS BUREAU
MAIL AND RECORDS
Form 7202—Rev. Sept., 1926

INDEX CARD

<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:WW43-SNT2>

V83
TYPE OR PRINT IN
PERMANENT INK
SEE HANDBOOK FOR
INSTRUCTIONS

0711
DECEASED

2731
PARENTS

23-

491X
CAUSE

Records & Statistics, Montana State Department of Health

**MONTANA
CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
ORIGINAL FOR STATE REGISTRAR**

73 0041

DECEASED—NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST SEX DATE OF DEATH (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

1. STANFORD WILLIAM SKELTON 2. MALE 3. JAN. 2, 1973

RACE WHITE AGE—LAST BIRTHDAY (YEAR) UNDER 1 YEAR UNDER 1 DAY DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

4. 77 5. 1-2-73 6. JAN. 31, 1895

CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF DEATH INSIDE CITY LIMITS (SPECIFY YES OR NO) HOSPITAL OR OTHER INSTITUTION—NAME (IF NOT IN OTHER, GIVE STREET AND NUMBER)

7. GREAT FALLS 8. YES 9. MONTANA DEACONESS HOSPITAL

10. MONTANA 11. U.S.A. 12. MARRIED, NEVER MARRIED, WIDOWED, DIVORCED (SPECIFY)

13. 516-46-7460 A 14. RANCHER 15. WIDOWED

16. RANCH 17. BOX 26

18. JUDITH BASIN 19. STANFORD

20. WILLIAM SKELTON 21. VAILLEAIN VANN

22. BILL SKELTON 23. STANFORD, MONTANA

PART I. DEATH WAS CAUSED BY: (ENTER ONLY ONE CAUSE PER LINE FOR (a), (b), AND (c))

24. Acute asthmatic bronchitis 25. 1 week

26. Chronic bronchitis and pulmonary emphysema 27. 2 years

28. Arteriosclerotic heart disease

29. NO

30. ACCIDENT, SUICIDE, HOMICIDE, DATE OF INJURY (MONTH, DAY, YEAR) HOUR HOW INJURY OCCURRED (ENTER NATURE OF INJURY IN PART I OR PART II, ITEM 18)

31. 7-23-70 32. 1-2-73 33. 1-2-73 34. not

35. 10:05a

36. CERTIFICATION—PHYSICIAN: I ATTENDED THE DECEASED FROM 7-23-70 TO 1-2-73 AND LAST SAW HIM/HER ALIVE ON 1-2-73 I DID/DID NOT VIEW THE BODY AFTER DEATH. DEATH OCCURRED AT THE PLACE, ON THE DATE, AND TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, DUE TO THE CAUSE(S) STATED.

37. F. John Allaire, M. D. 38. 1-2-73 39. JAN. 3, 1972

40. Great Falls Clinic, 1220 Central Avenue, Great Falls, Montana, 59401

41. STANFORD CEMETERY 42. STANFORD, MONTANA

43. STANFORD CEMETERY 44. STANFORD, MONTANA

45. JAN. 5, 1973 46. O'CONNOR CO., BOX 2374, GREAT FALLS, MONTANA 59403

47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

MT death record of Stanford William Skelton Sr. - https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1110613:5437?tid=17723210&pid=28021115446&queryId=a5a9d4bd4d20537f546e9beedb23a0be&_phsrc=hFB56492&_phstart=successSource

| | | | | | |
|--|--|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----|
| Skelton | | Stanford W | 250,411 | White | 1½ |
| (Surname) | | (Christian name) | (Army serial number) | (Race: White or colored) | |
| Residence: | | Geyser | MONTANA | | |
| (Street and house number) | | (Town or city) | (County) | (State) | |
| * Enlisted in | RA Ft George Wright Wash | | | Dec 12/17 | |
| † Born in | Stanford Mont | | | 22 10/12 yrs | |
| Organizations: | 20 Engrs to disch | | | — | |
| Grades: | Wag Aug 1/18 | | | — | |
| Engagements: | — | | | — | |
| Wounds or other injuries received in action: None. | | | | | |
| ‡ Served overseas: | Nov 24/18 to May 28/19 | | | — | |
| § Hon. disch. | June 11/19 on demobilization | | | — | |
| Was reported | 0 per cent disabled on date of discharge, in view of occupation. | | | — | |
| Remarks: — | | | | | |

Form No. 724-1½, A. G. O. March 12, 1920. 3-7688

* Insert "R. A.", "N. G.", "E. R. C.", "N. A.", as case may be, followed by place and date of enlistment. † Give place of birth and date of birth, or age at enlistment. ‡ Give dates of departure from and arrival in the United States. § Give date.

MT, WWI military record - <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/37612:62068?tid=17723210&pid=28021115446&queryId=a5a9d4bd4d20537f546e9bee9b23a0be&phsrc=hFB56494&phstart=successSource>

Life:

CHALLENGE

The Great Falls Juniors challenge any team whose average age is 12. Lineup is as follows: Harry Peterson, catcher; Stanley Wryn, pitcher; Ed Hagerty, short stop; Tom Curry, first base; Nick Fontana, second base; Jim Fontana, third base; Bay Skelton, left field; R. Peterson, center field; Jim Wryn, right field; John Hagerty, substitute; Carl Skelton, mascot.

Stanford (Bay) & brother Carl play baseball - "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Thursday 31 May 1906 p 4

Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton of Stanford and their daughters, Mrs. L. F. Coughlin of Geyser, Mrs. J. W. Hogan and infant daughter of Havre, Miss Lena Skelton of Stanford, and Stanford Skelton and L. F. Coughlin left yesterday afternoon for Butte and will go from there today on the Montana special for Cali-

fornia where they will spend several months.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Wednesday 24 Jan 1917 p 7

ANXIOUS RELATIVES VISIT THE NEWSPAPER OFFICES

To Get Details of War's Latest Tragedy
—Three Long Beach Men Known
to Be on Board

War's tragedy hovered over Long Beach today while relatives waited to learn whether their loved ones are numbered among the lost or saved of the troops who were aboard the United States transport Tuscania when it was sunk Tuesday by a German submarine.

One of the soldiers on the ill-fated ship was F. B. Magee, aged 32, the son of S. L. Magee, of 1718 Linden avenue. The young man was a member of the 20th Engineers Forestry division. He enlisted December 13, at Spokane, Wash., and was stationed there at Fort Wright, before being selected for overseas service.

"And he could have been an officer in the 41st division and perfectly safe," said the distressed father today. Magee declined the commission in another division because he wanted to be with friends in the service. The young man was employed in the city treasurer's office of Spokane at the time he enlisted.

Roy Shortridge, 26 years old, the son of Mrs. Mahla Shortridge, of 603 American avenue, and the nephew of

M. E. Kelpp, was a member of the 158th aero squadron, one of the units listed as being aboard the transport. He saw service in Company B, Seventh regiment, N.G.C., when it was at the Mexican border. He enlisted in San Francisco, was sent to San Antonio, Tex., and transferred to Garden City, N. Y.

Stanford W. Skelton, age 21, the son of Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, of the Broadway apartments, was on the Tuscania. He belonged to the sixth battalion, 20th engineers, enlisting from Geyser, Mont. He was in Long Beach a year ago.

Frank Denny, 27 years old, the brother of Police Detective E. V. Denny, enlisted in the engineering service from Wisconsin and may have been aboard the transport. His brother does not know the number of the division to which he belonged, but several Wisconsin units were aboard the Tuscania.

Mr. Denney recently received a letter in which his brother said he was about to leave for France and that no word should be expected from him for several weeks.

"Long Beach (CA) Telegram & The Long Beach Daily News" Thursday 7 Feb 1918 p 5

Anxiety is expressed by relatives of A. A. Curtis, 512 W. 1st st.; F. B. Magee, Roy Shortridge and Stanford Skelton of Long Beach. They are not on the list of known survivors.

"Los Angeles Evening Post-Record" Friday 8 Feb 1918 p 9

Stanford W. Skelton.
Stanford W. Skelton, a student, whose father and mother, Mrs. Wm. Skelton, and sister, are tourists from Great Falls, Mont., wintering in Long Beach, was another soldier in the Tuscania tragedy. His fate, like

that of the others, is still unknown. He was a member of Company D, Sixth engineers' battalion.

"We had a letter from my brother, written about two weeks ago, saying he was leaving at once for France," said Miss Skelton today, and we know that the engineering company of which he was a member, was aboard the vessel. My brother enclosed some keepsakes at that time which he wanted us to take care of for him. That was the last word we have received. My mother is almost prostrated with grief. We have telegraphed to friends in Washington, D. C., to help us find out if we can whether he is alive or dead."

"Long Beach (CA) Press-Telegram" Friday 8 Feb 1918 p 4

MESSAGE OF JOY FOR HIS PARENTS

Stanford Skelton, Tus- cania Victim, Among the Saved

"Arrived safe. Skelton."

Those words, cabled from England, brot greatest joy, shortly before noon today, to Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, Great Falls, Mont., folk who are guests at the Broadway apartments and whose son, Stanford W. Skelton, a member of Company D, Engineering Corps, Sixth Battalion, was on the steamship Tuscania when she was torpedoed off the Irish coast.

He is 21 years of age and enlisted from Geyser, Mont.

"Long Beach (CA) Daily Telegram" Saturday 9 Feb 1918 p 11

CABLEGRAM FROM ENGLAND TELLS SAFE ARRIVAL OF YOUNG TUSCANIA VICTIM

Stanford W. Skelton, one young man aboard the Tuscania, is alive and safe in England, according to a cablegram received today by the parents of the young soldier, Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, Montana tourists, residing at the Broadway apartments.

Private Skelton is the first of the six boys from this city to be heard from. The cablegram was received at 11:20 today and merely conveyed the information that he had landed safely in England.

A message received last night from Jeanette Rankin, woman member of congress from Montana, who is a warm personal friend of the Skelton family, conveyed the definite information that he was among those

aboard the vessel. His message today greatly relieved the anxiety of the parents, who feared he was among the missing.

Wallace Fry, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Fry, 1505 East Anaheim, was among those unaccounted for, according to the dispatches in the morning papers.

Among the missing, whose relatives reside in this city are Adlai Leroy Shortridge, Frank Bert Magee, and a young man named Denny, whose initials were not learned.

Friends of the Holloway family asserted their belief today that it was Clayton Holloway, Jr., and not Samuel S. Holloway, who was aboard the Tuscania. Clayton was at Camp Lewis and Samuel S. at Fort MacArthur, until very recently.

"Long Beach (CA) Press-Telegram" Saturday 9 Feb 1918 p 18

The fourth Cascade county man heard of is Stanford Skelton, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, who have for many years been engaged in stock raising in the country between Geyser and Stanford. His mother who is at Long Beach, Cal., yesterday received a cablegram from him telling of his safe landing, according to a telegram from Mrs. Skelton received in the city yesterday by her daughter, Mrs. J. W. Hogan.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Monday 11 Feb 1918 p 10

LIVES AGAIN TERRORS OF WRECK IN HIS DREAMS

Stanley Skelton, Victim of Tuscania,
Writes He Is Safe—Germans Fired
on Boat Which Rescued Him

A letter written February 11 to his parents in this city by Stanley W. Skelton, one of the survivors of the Tuscania sinking off the Irish coast six days before that date, reached Long Beach this week and the young man's relatives say, in the somewhat disconnected character of the brief missive and in the chirography itself, evidences that he was still shaken and unstrung by the terrifying experience thru which he had passed.

That this was the case is shown also by the concluding paragraph of his letter, in which the young volunteer told how he still would awake at night and see in his mind's eye the lifeboat to which he was assigned on the Tuscania, the futile efforts made to untangle its ropes, the finally, when the ropes were cut, its fall on top of another boat also filled with U.S.A. men.

The "d—n Germans", he said, fired upon the boat which picked him and his comrades up after they had been on the ocean in a small boat for an hour.

But the young man asserts that he would not have missed the experience for a million dollars.

The writer of the short but interesting and extremely welcome letter is 21 years of age. He passed his last birthday on the Tuscania, en route

would not have missed it for a million dollars. I will have a story a mile long that will take two years to tell it. Say, I had a birthday at sea but I don't think the cook knew it.

Was out on the ocean in a small boat for an hour before they picked us up. The sailors were sure good to us on the boat that picked us up and then the d—n Germans tried to hit that boat, also.

We have to whip them and the people don't realize how they hate them over here. I don't blame them. We will have to fight at home, also, to win. That is the way they do here. We will have to be more saving and show more patriotism. They all do it here, and don't kick.

I will close for this time, as I am tired. It sure gets on one's nerves. I wake up at night and see my lifeboat hanging on the port side of the ship, and we could not let it down nor move it as the ropes had got all tangled up. Then, when we finally cut the ropes, we landed on another boat filled with our boys. I cannot tell you about it at all, as it would take all the paper in the country to describe the way I saw it and the way I feel. No use to write more, so will close. With love to all, Your loving son,

STANFORD W. SKELTON.

Friday on the Tuscania, en route abroad. He formerly lived in Great Falls, Mont., whence his relatives came to Long Beach, and he was graduated from the high school of Great Falls. He enlisted at Geyser, Mont., in Company D, Sixth Battalion, 20th Engineers.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, and his sister, Mrs. L. F. Coughlin, and her husband, are living at the Broadway apartments in this city. Young Mr. Skelton was here about a year ago.

The letter just received follows:

On Active Service with
American Expeditionary Force
Feb. 11, 1918.

Dear Mother and All: Arrived O. K. Was on the Tuscania and I suppose you read about it. Most all the boys got away and we will make Kaiser Bill pay for that boat if we get a show. I surely thank my God and you, for it sure makes you want to thank someone for your life after what I went thru. The people treat us grand over here. Be sure and send Uncle Henry's address, as I may be here for some time.

You could also send some money, as everything I had was lost. I had bought \$30 worth of stuff just before I left the good U.S.A. If ever I get back I will tell you about it. I

"Long Beach (CA) Telegram & The Long Beach Daily News" Friday 15 Mar 1918 p 2

SHALL GEYSER TOWN BE INCORPORATED?

This Is Momentous Question County Commissioners Must Decide—Opposition Raises Question of Legality of 63 Names.

[article continues]

DEK. Witness Harney, testifying for the petitioners relative to the residence in Geyser of Stanford Skelton, said Skelton had told him that an adverse affidavit purporting to bear his signature was submitted at the hearing last fall, but that he had not sworn to it and that it had not been attested in his presence. P. J. O'Hara, the witness said, was supposed to have been the officiating notary. In rebuttal Mr. O'Hara said this was a false statement and that the affidavit had been properly executed.

[article continues]

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Saturday 22 Jun 1918 p 8

CORPORAL SKELTON BACK FROM FRANCE

Corporal Stanford Skelton, who was with the troops on board the Tuscania when that ship was torpedoed and sunk off the coast of Ireland and who has been in France with the 20th engineers, has arrived in the United States from overseas and will arrive in Great Falls within a few days. News of his arrival on the east coast was telegraphed to his parents. Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Skelton, yesterday.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Friday 16 May 1919 p 12

Waggoner Stanford W. Skelton has returned to his home in this city after spending the past 16 months serving with Company 16, 20th Engineers in France. Skelton was on the Tuscania when it was torpedoed and while in France took an active part in the conflicts. He landed on his return at New York on May 28 having taken passage on the Santa Paula.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Saturday 14 Jun 1919 p 11

BRONC BUSTERS, BULLDOGGERS TROOPING INTO GREAT FALLS FOR BIG RODEO BEGINNING SATURDAY

Ten gallon hats and high heeled boots made their appearance in Great Falls

nie," "Glorious Girl," "High Pockets," "Fast Mail" and "Super Six."

Wednesday as nearly a score of bronc riders and steer wrestlers, who will appear in the rodeo next Saturday, Sunday and Monday arrived to consult with Mike Reed, arena manager.

All of the entries for the contests must be in the hands of the local rodeo committee by Friday night and several of the riders are not expected in until a few minutes before the books close, but by tonight the greater part of the contingent which will provide entertainment and thrills for the rodeo fans will be on hand.

Chuck Jennings, known as the "Will Rogers of the Arena," was one of those to arrive Wednesday. Jennings is a rider, roper and wrestler and in addition to all this his antics and remarks between events are guaranteed to cause many chuckles. Other riders who are already here are Lee Ross, Dewey Smith, Hugh Salter, Chuck Wilson, Harry Drackert, Fred Reed, Dick Langley, Tommy Lemire, Kid Strong, Lawrence Green and Bay Skelton. Jack Haggerty has been signed as announcer.

Manager Reed announced Wednesday that 79 head of wild horses are here, thus insuring plenty of stock for the three-day event. Among the famous bronses which will be seen in action are "Who Cares," "White Man," "Separator," "Spark Plug," "Grave Digger," "Charley Russell," "Ragtime," "Two Step," "Cascade," "Rocking Chair," "Bouncing Betty," "Black Diamond," "Scarhead," "Slanting An-



"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Thursday 1 Jul 1926 p 3

**FEWER RIDE THAN
HIT DUST IN DAY
AT RODEO ARENA**

[excerpt:]

Steer His Jinx

But Chuck's undoing came in the steer wrestling. This time they took him away in an automobile before he could object. He was hazing for Bay Skelton, whose mount crashed into a steer and fell. Skelton was thrown clear of his horse, but before he or the horse could gain their feet Jennings' horse plunged into the mixup and fell headlong. Both riders and both horses were in a tangle of thrashing legs and lashing hoofs, from which it seemed that neither man could emerge uninjured. That was true of Jennings, but Skelton received only a slight cut on the face.

In going down, Jennings' horse catapaulted him to the ground, striking his head a terrific blow against the earth. Jennings was knocked unconscious and had not regained his senses when he was taken to the hospital, where it was reported later that he was not seriously injured.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Sunday 4 Jul 1926 p 1

Big Lamb Crop

STANFORD, April 20. — Stanford Skelton reports 30 pairs of twins from the first 40 ewes to lamb. He now has 165 lambs, with a loss of only two.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Sunday 21 Apr 1935 p 11

FAIR RODEO WILL BRING REAL ACTION

**Full Week's Program Will Be
Crowded Into Three-Day
Fete Aug. 5-7**

Although the rodeo features at the North Montana fair this year will be confined to the first three days of the event, Aug. 5, 6 and 7, more action will be presented in the three days than was ordinarily offered in the full week's program of previous years.

This is the announcement of fair officials, following completion of final plans for the rodeo.

All of the stock used in the rodeo this year will be supplied by Carl Skelton and Ray Patterson of Stanford. Skelton will act as arena director. While the two have one of the largest strings of rodeo animals in this area, they are now engaged in visiting northern Montana ranches, topping out animals to be featured here in August. The two will provide 50 head of cattle, to be used in the calf roping and wild cow milking events.

All Contests

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Thursday 6 Jun 1935 p 10

MANY BEARS SEEN IN LITTLE BELTS THREE ARE KILLED

Stanford, Aug. 15.—Baye Skelton killed three bears found molesting his sheep in Skunk gulch in the Little Belts. Two other bears were seen. Ten sheep were reported killed. A prospector in Placer gulch reported seeing a silver tip at the juncture of Placer and Snow creeks in Placer gulch. Others reported seeing tracks of the bear and say his tracks are immense, even for a bear.

"Helena (MT) Independent-Record" Friday 16 Aug 1935 p 8

ARMEN Neubert told me some interesting facts about Stanford, Mont., where his Running Wolf cattle ranch is located. The town claims about 300 souls and yet California rodeos have seen quite a number of Stanford's boys in arena action including Stanford Skelton, Mike and Fred Reed to mention only a few. Gene Autry's Madison Square rodeo horses are pastured on a ranch near the Running Wolf. His show is slated for September 20.

"The Californian" (Salinas CA) Saturday 20 Jul 1946 p 15

Mark Anniversary

STANFORD—Mr. and Mrs. Stanford W. Skelton observed their 25th wedding anniversary at an open house at their ranch home. Their son, Stanford W. Skelton Jr., arrived home on furlough from Fort Lewis, Wash., for the event.

“Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Sunday 7 Feb 1954 p 43

Judith Basin's New Historical Museum Receives First Visitors

Great Falls Tribune 9
Friday, Oct. 14, 1966

STANFORD—The new Judith Basin Historical Museum, housed in a concrete building, has been launched with an open house attended by several hundred persons.

Formal dedication ceremonies

are planned next February or March.

William Rauscher is president of the Judith Basin Historical Society which conceived and carried out the project.

When ground was broken for

the building July 18, Stanford (Bay) Skelton, son of the late William Skelton, first homesteader to settle on Wolf Creek, in 1879, turned the first shovel-ful of dirt. Stanford Skelton is believed the only one in the

area still living on his family's original homestead.

William Skelton already was living on Wolf Creek when Charles M. Russell, who became one of the country's most famous western artists, arrived in

the Judith Basin country from St. Louis at the age of 16. Skelton is the figure in “First Furrow” which Russell painted years later after he had achieved fame.

Mrs. Clara McCarty, 83, born

in Stanford and still living here, received the award for the oldest person attending the open house.

Exhibit hours will be established later, probably after the dedication.

“Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Friday 14 Oct 1966 p 9

Wife:



Huberta Placada Sienkiewicz Skelton - <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/169620072/person/322202443545/media/d4cef4da-e1a2-4bd0-bd3e-5705d331f196>

SKELTON — Funeral services for Mrs. Huberta P. Skelton, 65, Stanford, will be held at the St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Stanford Monday at 11 a.m. Burial at the Stanford Cemetery. Rosary 7:30 p.m. this Sunday at O'Connor's. Memorials to the Judith Basin Historical Society or the Heart Fund are preferred by the family.

“Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Sunday 7 Dec 1969 p 10

CA marriage record of Huberta P. Sienkiewicz & Stanford William Skelton – 1 Feb 1929 -
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/61460/images/47732_B354063-00440?pid=900852676

MONTANA CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
 ORIGINAL FOR STATE REGISTRAR

687 LOCAL FILE NUMBER 69 6038 STATE FILE NUMBER

DECEASED—NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST SEX DATE OF DEATH (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)

1. HUBERTA P. SKELTON Female 3. Dec. 4, 1969

RACE WHITE, NEGRO, AMERICAN INDIAN, ETC. (SPECIFY) **AGE—LAST BIRTHDAY (YEARS)** **UNDER 1 YEAR** **UNDER 1 DAY** **DATE OF BIRTH (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)** **COUNTY OF DEATH**

4. White 5a. 65 5b. 65 5c. 5. Oct. 11, 1904 7a. Cascade

CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION OF DEATH **HOSPITAL OR OTHER INSTITUTION—NAME (IF NOT IN EITHER, GIVE STREET AND NUMBER)**

7b. Great Falls 7c. Yes 7d. Columbus Hospital

STATE OF BIRTH (IF NOT IN U.S.A., NAME COUNTRY) **CITIZEN OF WHAT COUNTRY** **MARRIED, NEVER MARRIED, WIDOWED, DIVORCED (SPECIFY)** **SURVIVING SPOUSE (IF WIFE, GIVE MAIDEN NAME)**

8. Pennsylvania 9. USA 10. Married 11. Stanford B. Skelton

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER **USUAL OCCUPATION (GIVE KIND OF WORK DONE DURING MOST OF WORKING LIFE, EVEN IF RETIRED)** **KIND OF BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY**

12. N/A 13a. Housewife 13b.

RESIDENCE—STATE **COUNTY** **CITY, TOWN, OR LOCATION** **INSIDE CITY LIMITS (SPECIFY YES OR NO)** **STREET AND NUMBER**

14a. Montana 14b. Judith Basin 14c. Stanford 14d.

FATHER—NAME FIRST MIDDLE LAST **MOTHER—MAIDEN NAME** FIRST MIDDLE LAST

15. Louis Sienkiewicz 16. Natalie unk.

INFORMANT—NAME **MAILING ADDRESS (STREET OR R.F.D. NO., CITY OR TOWN, STATE, ZIP)**

17a. Stanford B. Skelton 17b. Stanford, Montana

PART I. DEATH WAS CAUSED BY: [ENTER ONLY ONE CAUSE PER LINE FOR (a), (b), AND (c)]

18. IMMEDIATE CAUSE

(a) Blood hemolysis with vascular cardio renal failure 2 days

(b) Closteridium blood stream infection

(c) Minor puncture wound of hand

CONDITIONS, IF ANY, WHICH GAVE RISE TO IMMEDIATE CAUSE (a), STATING THE UNDERLYING CAUSE LAST

PART II. OTHER SIGNIFICANT CONDITIONS: CONDITIONS CONTRIBUTING TO DEATH BUT NOT RELATED TO CAUSE GIVEN IN PART I (a) **AUTOPSY (YES OR NO)** **IF YES WERE FINDINGS CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING CAUSE OF DEATH**

None 19a. Yes 19b. Yes

ACCIDENT, SUICIDE, HOMICIDE, OR UNDETERMINED (SPECIFY) **DATE OF INJURY (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)** **HOUR** **HOW INJURY OCCURRED (ENTER NATURE OF INJURY IN PART I OR PART II, ITEM 18)**

20a. Accident 20b. Home 20c. ? M. 20d. puncture (minor) wound of hand cleaning a deer

INJURY AT WORK (SPECIFY YES OR NO) **PLACE OF INJURY AT HOME, FARM, STREET, FACTORY, OFFICE BLDG., ETC. (SPECIFY)** **LOCATION (STREET OR R.F.D. NO., CITY OR TOWN, STATE)**

20e. Yes 20f. Home 20g. Rural near Stanford, Montana

CERTIFICATION—PHYSICIAN: **MONTH** **DAY** **YEAR** **AND LAST SAW HIM/HER ALIVE ON** **I DID/DID NOT VIEW THE BODY AFTER DEATH.** **DEATH OCCURRED AT THE PLACE, ON THE DATE, AND, TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, DUE TO THE CAUSE(S) STATED.**

21a. DECEASED FROM 1960 + TO 21b. Death 21c. 12 4 69 21d. Did 21e. 7:20P

CERTIFICATION—CORONER: ON THE BASIS OF THE EXAMINATION OF THE BODY AND/OR THE INVESTIGATION, IN MY OPINION, DEATH OCCURRED ON THE DATE AND DUE TO THE CAUSE(S) STATED.

CERTIFIER—NAME (TYPE OR PRINT) **SIGNATURE** **DEGREE OR TITLE** **DATE SIGNED (MONTH, DAY, YEAR)**

22a. Ivan A. Allred, M.D. 22b. 22c. Dec. 5, 1969

MAILING ADDRESS—CERTIFIER **STREET OR R.F.D. NO.** **CITY OR TOWN** **STATE** **ZIP**

24. 210 Montana Bldg. Great Falls, Montana 59401

BURIAL, CREMATION, REMOVAL (SPECIFY) **CEMETERY OR CREMATORY—NAME** **LOCATION** **CITY OR TOWN** **STATE**

25a. Burial 25b. Stanford Cemetery 25c. Stanford, Montana

DATE (MONTH, DAY, YEAR) **MORTUARY—NAME AND ADDRESS (STREET OR R.F.D. NO., CITY OR TOWN, STATE, ZIP)**

26d. Dec. 8, 1969 26a. O'Connor Co., 2425 8 Ave. No., Gt. Fs., Mont. 59401

FUNERAL DIRECTOR OR MORTICIAN -- SIGNATURE **LOCAL REGISTRAR SIGNATURE** **DATE RECEIVED BY LOCAL REGISTRAR**

26b. Thomas C. O'Connor #172 27a. 27b. 12-5-69 88

MT death record of Huberta Placada Sienkiewicz Skelton -
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5437/images/47791_1220706333_0921-00039?pid=1097134

Children:

Stanford William "Bill" Skelton Jr.

GREAT FALLS —June 3, 1930-Nov. 25, 2014.

Stanford "Bill" Skelton died Nov. 25, 2014, in Great Falls, Mont. of natural causes. Bill was born on the family ranch in Geyser, Mont. on June 3, 1930, to Stanford and Huberta Skelton. The Skelton Ranch was a homestead place, settled in 1882, and Bill grew up raising sheep, cattle and horses. He rodeoed through high school and went on to attend Montana State University, where he rode saddle broncs, bull-dogged, and in his spare time, studied agricultural science. He left a few credits shy of graduation to go home to the ranch when his mother passed away. He later served in the US Army, but his army stint was cut short when he was gored in the leg by a steer.

Bill was a salty old cuss who worked hard but played even harder. He hated Western movies and loathed John Wayne in particular. His true loves in life were ranching, livestock, and being outdoors. He always had a good dog or two underfoot, either to help him move cattle or just as a friend to hold down the other end of the seat in his truck. He loved his home place and his work there, especially the spring calving season. Even while at MSU, he came home every calving season just to work with the calves. He loved calves. If a momma cow didn't let her calf suck, one of his red heelers would get after her until she gave in and accepted her calf. If he had to pull a calf and the calf didn't make it, he walked up to the cow and gave her a consolatory pat on the head, saying "I'm sorry, my friend."

Bill loved art, particularly

Western art, and he had a good eye for it. Both his father and grandfather knew Montana artist Charles M. Russell personally. As a result, Bill knew the complete catalog of Russell's artwork, and he attended nearly every Russell art auction. The Russell painting, "The First Furrow," was modeled after Bill's grandfather, and was originally given to the Skelton family. However, the painting was given to a doctor as payment for a bill when one of the Skelton children was ill. Bill also helped to create the "60 Minutes" piece that documented Charles M. Russell and the Judith Gap area. Both he and some of his big Longhorn steers were included in the piece.

Bill was an ardent supporter of ranching and livestock. He belonged to the Montana Stockgrowers Association, the American Legion, and the National Cattleman's Association. He served on the Foreign Trade Committee for the National Cattleman's Association and hosted a group of Japanese in an effort to open the market for US cattle in Japan. He was also a long-standing supporter of MSU, belonging to the Steer and Year Club for several years. In 2012, Bill was inducted into the Montana Pro Rodeo Hall and Wall of Fame. In 2013, he was honored by the Judith Basin County Stampede Club.

Bill is survived by his daughter, Abbie, of Stanford, Mont. and she continues to operate the Skelton Ranch.

Bill will be interred at a private family service in Stanford. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you donate a bale of hay to the Montana Stockgrowers Association or to the ranching charity of your choice.

COMPARED

NOTED

No. 1058

MARRIAGE LICENSE

STATE OF MONTANA

STATE OF MONTANA,
County of Judith Basin

To Any Person Authorized to Solemnize Marriages, Greeting:

YOU ARE HEREBY AUTHORIZED To join in lawful wedlock, and to celebrate within this County, the Rites and
Ceremonies of Marriage between Stanford William Skelton, Jr.of Stanford, Montanaaged 31 years 7 months 12 days; born at Great Falls, MontanaJune 1, 1911color whitewhite

previously married

to

and of Stanford William Skelton, Jr.his mother's maiden name was Roberta F. BaynesAnd Bertha Hardbrook Porter of Stanford, Montanaaged 23 years 7 months 22 days; born at Great Falls, MontanaMay 25, 1909color whitewhite

previously married

Yes Divorceddaughter of John Bradford Hardbrookher mother's maiden name was Ruth Hazel Crabtree

and this shall be your good and sufficient warrant therein.

BY MYSELF WITNESSED, I have hereunto set my hand and official seal

this 10th day of January, A. D. 1973

(Court Seal)

Kathryn A. Hensley

Clerk of District Court.

By

Deputy Clerk.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

STATE OF MONTANA, }
County of Judith Basin } ss.

THIS CERTIFIES, That the undersigned, a _____ Justice of the Peace
did, on the _____ 30th _____ day of _____ January _____, A. D. 1973
at _____ Great Falls, Montana _____ join in lawful wedlock
_____ Stanford William Skelton, Jr. _____ and _____ Barbara Hardenbrook Porter _____
with their mutual consent and in accordance with the laws of the State of Montana, and _____

Attest:

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| Lynda R. Wren | } | Witnesses. _____ Guy Palagi |
| Mary F. Durrin | } | _____ Guy Palagi, Justice of the Peace |

Filed for record this _____ 1st _____ day of _____ February _____ A. D. 1973, at 1:15 PM.
_____ Kathryn A. Humphrey _____
Clerk of District Court.
By _____ Deputy Clerk.

MT marriage record of son Stanford William Skelton Jr. to Barbara Hardenbrook Porter -
https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/60062/images/MM9.3.1_2FTH-267-11856-71437-56?pid=367834

| Stanford William Skelton
in the Montana, U.S., Birth Records, 1897-1988 | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Detail | Source |
| Name: | Stanford William Skelton |
| Gender: | Male |
| Race: | White |
| Residence Age: | 37 |
| Birth Place: | Stanford, Montana |
| Spouse: | Huberta Placeda Skelton |
| Child: | Huberta Vaitleain Skelton |

Which child? - <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/15405296:61591?ssrc=pt&tid=17723210&pid=28021115446>

Mrs. Stanford W. Skelton of Geyser at
the Columbus hospital, Feb. 28, a daughter.

Birth of Sharon Skelton Harris – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Thursday 2 Mar 1933 p 1

Roy H. Harris of Libertyville for 40 years
Funeral services for Roy H. Harris, 76, were held at Burnett-Dane Funeral Home, 120 W. Park Ave. (Route 176), Libertyville. Mass followed at St. Joseph Church. Born Aug. 14, 1925, in Chicago, he passed away Wednesday, July 17, 2002, at Condell Medical Center. Interment with military honors will follow in Lakeside Cemetery. Following his graduation from Lane Tech High School in Chicago in 1943, he enlisted in the Navy and served in the Pacific Theatre during World War II. He later attended Northwestern University in Evanston. Mr. Harris was employed by the American Colloid Corporation (now AMCOL) for 50 years, retiring as president. He is survived by his wife, Sharon Harris of Libertyville; children, Diana (Robert) Brettrager of Tucson, Ariz., Gail (Gerry) Tabert of Lake

Havasu, Ariz., Lisa Wells of Eagle, Colo., Brian (Julie) Harris of Chicago, Brent (Patricia) Harris of Grayslake and Laura (fiance, Dustin Lyle) Harris of Monrovia, Calif.; grandchildren, Matthew (Cindy) Brettrager, Beth Brettrager, Cathy (David) Westcott and Michael Tabert; and great-grandchildren, Christopher, Samantha and Jordan. He was preceded in death by his parents, LeRoy and Elenore Harris. Memorial contributions may be made to Lakeside Cemetery Veterans Monument Fund, P.O. Box 500, Libertyville, IL 60048. Friends may visit www.dailyherald.com/obits to express condolences and sign the guest book. For more funeral information, (847)362-3009.

Published by Daily Herald from Jul. 18 to Jul. 21, 2002.

Obituary of Roy Harris, husband of daughter Sharon Skelton Harris -
<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/dailyherald/name/roy-harris-obituary?id=30201091>

Father:



Father William Skelton - <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/17723210/person/1001419192/media/64c885ae-63bb-4635-a6b2-44dbf0a23687>



Stanford's father William B. Skelton was the model for "The First Furrow" by famous Western artist Charles Marion Russell (1864-1926). According to Stanford Skelton Jr.'s Find A Grave 141012744, the painting was originally given to the Skelton family, who in turn gave it to a doctor to pay a medical bill for one of the sick Skelton children.

<https://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/vintage-charles-russell-print-first-26285936>

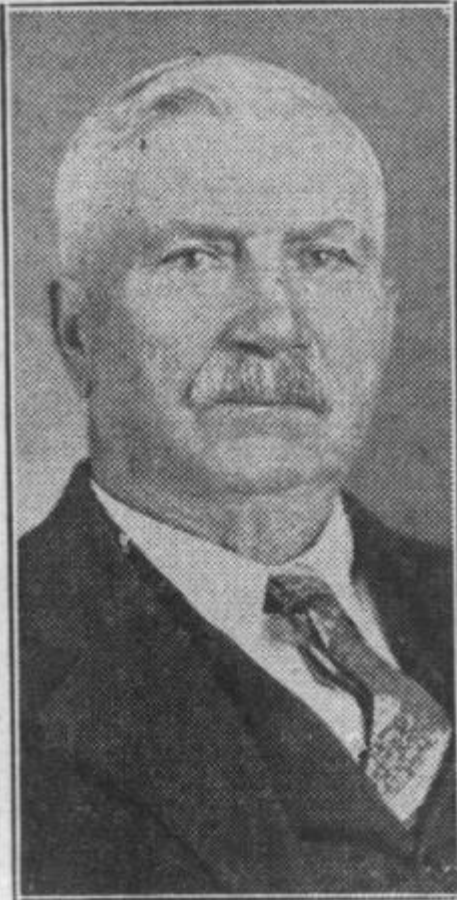
William Skelton, 88, Snowed In While Hunting on Dry Wolf

GEYSER, Oct. 23. — (Special) — When William (Bill) Skelton, 88, and members of a party he accompanied on a deer hunting trip failed to return on schedule, his son, Bay Skelton, of Stanford went with a horse and sleigh to see what had happened to them.

Nothing had happened to them.

They were snowed in and safe and comfortable in Skelton's cabin on Dry Wolf creek. Bill was having a grand time roughing it with the rest of the boys, so his son returned home. With his horse he had been unable to get closer than two miles to the cabin and walked the remaining distance.

William Skelton came to this region 65 years ago, one of the first



WILLIAM SKELTON

settlers in the Judith basin. He was a personal friend of Charlie Russell, the cowboy artist, and Russell's painting, "The First Furrow," depicts Bill Skelton turning the first furrow plowed on Dry Wolf creek, where the Taylor ranch is now located.

Despite his advanced years Bill goes after deer each fall. The last two years he has failed to make a kill, dimming eyesight having affected his aim.

“Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Monday 24 Oct 1938 p 5

William Skelton, Geyser Pioneer, Taken by Death

Funeral services will be held Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 at the O'Connor chapel for William Skelton, 93, Geyser pioneer, who died early Monday at a local hospital. He had been ill four days. Officiating will be the Rev. T. Malcolm Jones, with interment in Highland cemetery.

First settler in the Judith Basin, he was one of the most colorful characters remaining as a tie between the present and the picturesque past.

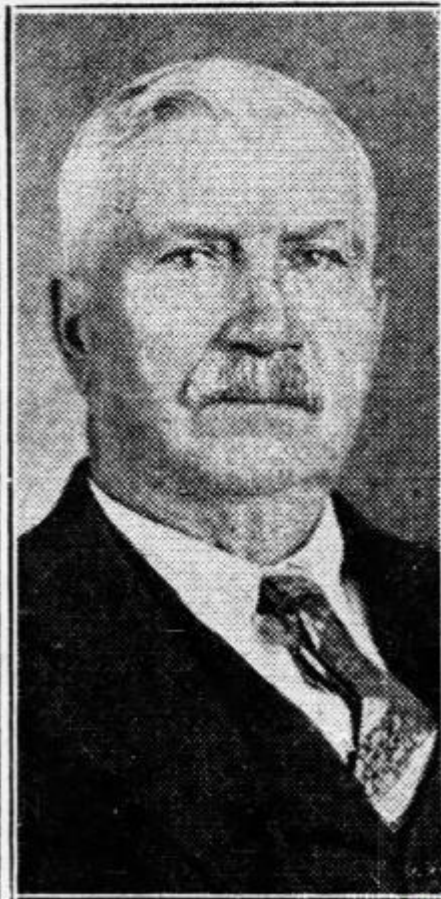
Skelton could count among his many experiences as a resident of Montana, covering a period of 78 years, brushes with Indians in which he narrowly escaped with his life. He had been a woodchopper for Missouri river steamboats, a gold seeker, range rider and rancher and cattleman. At the time of his death he still owned the ranch which he homesteaded in 1880.

Skelton is survived by the widow, Mrs. Vaitleain Skelton and seven children. The latter are Mrs. Martha Coughlin and Carl Skelton of Geyser, Peter A. Skelton of Two Dot, Stanford Skelton of Stanford, Mrs. James Hogan of Chicago, Mrs. William Sweeney of Helena, and John Skelton of Seattle. All will be here to attend the funeral.

Born in England Oct. 22, 1850, William Skelton first came to Montana in 1865 and for a time worked as a woodcutter for steamboats plying the Missouri to Fort Benton. Later, with a friend, Tom Dwyer, he joined a gold rush to the Black Hills.

He returned to Montana in 1876, the year Chief Sitting Bull and his warriors annihilated General Cus-

ter and his Seventh cavalry. At the Little Big Horn river some of the Indians saw Skelton and Dwyer and were about to attack them when Sitting Bull motioned them back. He then motioned to the white men to dive into some willows, which



WILLIAM SKELTON

they did, managing to escape with bullets whizzing about them.

Skelton was married to Miss

SKELTON WAS MARRIED TO MISS Vaitleain Vann Dec. 2, 1879, when he was 30, she 15. They first homesteaded two miles east of Stanford in 1880 and were the first settlers on Wolf creek. They have ever since made their home in the Judith basin, where he was engaged long years in the ranching and livestock business. Among the early friends of Mr. and Mrs. Skelton were Father DeSmet, the pioneer priest, and Charles M. Russell.

At his first meeting with Russell, Skelton had often told how the cowboy artist had asked him:

"What are you doing?"

"I am trying to plow my first furrow," Skelton replied.

From that remark came the inspiration for the name of one of Russell's famous paintings, "The First Furrow," Skelton had said.

Skelton was one of the oldest members of the Montana Cowboys association. He attended regularly their annual reunion at Great Falls and, because of his long residence in the state and his vivid memory for early day occurrences, was always a main center of interest at those gatherings.

On Dec. 2 Mr. and Mrs. Skelton celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary at their home at Geyser.

Obituary of father "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Tuesday 21 Dec 1943 p 10

Mother:



<https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/17723210/person/28021115433/media/4cd5cccf-a69d-45d2-af2c-939e28d99ad7>

Montana Pioneers Ready Preparations for 71st Annual Convention Here

Plans for the 71st annual convention of the Montana Society of Pioneers and the 60th conclave of the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers to be held in Butte, Aug. 25-27, are near completion.

Mrs. Helen Allen Conard, Harrison, is president of the Sons and Daughters.

[article continues]

The two members who died in July were Mrs. Dan (Margaret Jane) Davis, born in Ogden, Utah, Feb. 17, 1863, who came to Montana in 1865, and Mrs. Vaitleain Skelton, Great Falls, born in Camp Snelling, Minn., July 26, 1865, who came to Montana in 1868. Mrs. Davis died July 12, Mrs. Skelton, July 13.

Mrs. Davis was the last of Montana's Mormon pioneers. She came to Virginia City with her parents, who, shortly afterward, moved to Blackfoot City, now a ghost mining camp. She was married to Dan Davis in the late 1880s, and the couple homesteaded in the Little Blackfoot Valley. Mr. Davis died in 1909, and in 1925 Mrs. Davis moved to Helena, where she died.

Mrs. Skelton came to Montana when she was three years old. Her husband, William Skelton, whom she married in 1879, had arrived in the territory in 1865 as a boy. He was the first homesteader in Judith Basin, his homestead being located two miles east of the town of Stanford. Mrs. Skelton resided on the homestead until she moved to Great Falls three years ago. She was nearly 90 when she died and was the last surviving pioneer in eastern Montana, according to Mr. Crismas.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Sunday 7 Feb 1954 p 43

HELENA (AP) — Montana Legislative Calendar for Saturday, Jan. 6, 1973:

HOUSE

Introduced:

HB65, McKittrick — Transfers authority to regulate water projects to Board of Natural Resources and Conservation. (Natural Resources)

HB66, Haines — Increases penalties for shoplifters and provides protection for policemen or merchants who detain persons for shoplifting. (Business and Industry)

HB67, R. Harper — Establishes office of consumer counsel to represent public in affairs involving utilities. (Business and Industry)

HB68, Bradley — Authorizes local governments to levy a tax to establish and maintain day care centers. (Taxation)

HB69, Brand — Provides public employees shall be eligible for vacation benefits after 90 days of continuous employment. (State Administration)

HR2, Murphy — Honors recently deceased Judith Basin County rancher Stanford Skelton. (State administration)

"Montana Standard" (Helena MT) Sunday 7 Jun 1973 p 16

Siblings:

Dr. Vidal was called to Stanford last Thursday to attend William Skelton, Jr., who was found to be suffering from an attack of measles, says the Belt Times. The young man was taken with a rash and it was suspected that it might be a case of smallpox, and there was considerable excitement for a time in the neighborhood. On Monday Dr. Vidal was again hastily summoned and on arriving found that a brain abscess had developed, which resulted in the young man's death Tuesday. Mr. Skelton was the son of Wm. Skelton, one of the prominent cattle raisers of Stanford, and was about 21 years of age. He was well known through this section, and was well thought of by his acquaintances.

Obituary of brother William H. (Willie) Skelton (1881-1902) – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Saturday 3
Jan 1903 p 8

Martha Coughlin, Great Falls, Daughter Of Stanford's First White Settler

By Verna Mae Banta

Martha Coughlin, 79, of Great Falls, daughter of the first white settler in the Stanford area, has many memories of the early



MARTHA COUGHLIN

days, but she doesn't live in the past.

She drives her own car, plays a sharp game of bridge, entertains many guests during the year and travels. She's an example of the adage: "Just because one has lived a number of years does not make one old."

Recently, though, I relived the past with her. We thumbed through newspaper clippings and looked at photographs of long ago. I've known her for more than 40 years—in 1923, a new teacher, I came to her house in Geyser to live.

Mrs. Coughlin's father was William Skelton, who came from Cumberland, England. Her

mother, Vaitleain Vann, came to Montana from Minnesota in a covered wagon. They were married at Fort Benton.

Born on Ranch

Her father settled two and a half miles from the present town of Stanford. Mrs. Coughlin was born Aug. 15, 1885, in her parents' one-room sod-roofed log cabin. Her brother, Bill, was the first white child born in the area.

Mrs. Coughlin grew up on the Stanford ranch. She went to school at Stanford and Utica, but there was school only five months a year. When they rode their saddle horses on the way to school, the Skelton children's father made them walk to school for a week.

"My mother had the first sewing machine in the community, and all the neighbors came to use it, but she had to learn to use it before she could teach the others," Mrs. Coughlin recalls.

Shopping Trips

The Skeltons made two trips a year to Great Falls. Several neighbors went together in four-horse wagons and camped along the way.

"Pa bought 1,400 pounds of flour, about 500 pounds of sugar and 10 or 12 boxes of apples on one trip," Mrs. Coughlin said. "My mother would buy 12 or 14 pairs of shoes of different sizes and fit them to our feet when she got home."

"Pa bought copper-toed boots for the boys. One day I got my

new shoes wet, so I put the shoes in the oven to dry. The oven was too hot and the shoes burned up. I had to wear copper-toed boots to school, but I took them off near the school and hid them under a bridge over an irrigation ditch."

After school she went for the boots but the ditch had filled with water and the boots had washed away. She could find only one.

"We had a teacher who wouldn't give us a vacation," she laughs, "but we did get a forced vacation once. The kids worked out a scheme with a neighbor who loosened a bolt in the teacher's buggy and when she started up her team she went backwards head over heels. We got two days' vacation because the teacher couldn't go to school."

Homesteaded

In 1908 Mrs. Coughlin lived alone on a homestead near Geyser. She kept a pack of hounds for protection. One day a stranger came asking for food. He acted suspiciously, but Mrs. Coughlin's brother was in the other room and had a gun, so she wasn't worried.

When the man left, he started toward her saddle horse. When she saw him trying to catch the animal, she hurried and cut the stake rope. The horse ran away and so did the stranger. Later, the man was caught in White Sulphur Springs. He had killed a man near Windham.

Martha Skelton became Mrs. Louis Coughlin in 1911. She and her husband moved to Geyser

where they owned a half interest in a general store. Coughlin was killed in an elevator accident in the early 1920's. Mrs. Coughlin lived in Geyser until 1953 when she moved her house to Great Falls.

Living on a ranch and in a small town, Mrs. Coughlin was accustomed to helping others. She helped nurse the ill, and a number of times was called upon to prepare bodies for burial, as there was no undertaker in Geyser.

'Little Black Book'

Once she said last rites over

the grave of an aged woman, one of a group of settlers traveling through the country in five covered wagons in 1912. Mrs. Coughlin came upon the party camped near Geyser and talked with the people. The woman died late that night and the men contacted Mrs. Coughlin for help.

She took Mrs. Gene Cobb Sr. with her and they laid out the body, arranged for a coffin to be sent from Great Falls and a minister to come from Belt.

The funeral was held in Geyser, but there was no cemetery there and the body was to be taken to the McLeish cemetery near the Highwood Mountains.

"The minister had to catch the next train back to Belt so he couldn't stay for the burial. He handed me his 'little black book' and asked me to say the last prayers at the grave. I read them while Ray Adams sprinkled dirt over the coffin, and I still have that 'little black book'."



HOMESTEAD DAYS—In 1908, before her marriage, Mrs. Coughlin lived on a homestead $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles southeast of Geyser. Above, she's shown by her 12x24 cabin which she shingled herself, with a little help. Below, she's pictured with her saddle horse and hounds, before the log cabin was re-sided.





RELOCATED HOME—Martha Coughlin's home at 2901 4th Ave. S., was moved into Great Falls from Geyser in 1953. The moving was delayed when Belt Creek flooded—the house was stalled for some time at Armington. Tribune photo.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1964 GREAT FALLS TRIBUNE—9



RUSSELL PAINTED FATHER — "The First Furrow," a Charles M. Russell painting, depicts Mrs. Coughlin's father, William Skelton, with his team and plow on his ranch in the Judith Basin near Stanford. Russell was a teen-aged horse wrangler when he met Skelton. He was so impressed with the fringed leather jacket that Skelton wore that the rancher gave it to the boy. When he did this painting later, Russell put the jacket back on Skelton. The original of this painting hangs in the Northern Hotel, Billings.

Biography of sister Martha Skelton Coughlin (1885-1982) – "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Sunday 25 Oct 1964 p 36

WIDOW GETS \$4,225
 Helena, Dec. 21.—The state industrial board has settled with the widow of Louis F. Coughlin of Geyser for a total of \$4,225, according to an announcement from the office of Chairman Jerome G. Locke Wednesday. Coughlin was killed in a mine accident.

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Thursday 22 Dec 1921 p 11



DONATES RUSSELL LETTER — Martha Skelton Coughlin, whose family history intertwines with that of C. M. Russell, shows a print of famous Russell painting "The First Furrow," which depicts Mrs Coughlin's father, William Skelton, the first homesteader in the Judith Basin country. Mrs. Coughlin has donated to the C. M. Russell Museum a letter from Russell written in 1918 at the death of her uncle, Pete Van. (Tribune Photo)

Charles Russell letter donated by Falls woman

A two-page letter written by Charles M. Russell in 1918 Monday was presented to the Russell Museum. The letter was written to members of the Elks Club, B.P.O.E. No. 214, Great Falls, after the death of Pete Van, a longtime friend of Russell.

The letter was donated by Van's niece, Martha Skelton Coughlin, 90, Great Falls, whose family has had possession of it since Russell's death in 1926.

With punctuation added, the Sept. 14 letter from Lake McDonald reads:

"Brothers I received a telegram today saying that Pete Van, our brother, had crossed the big range. I want someone to tell Mrs. Van that it is impossible for me to be at the funeral. I would write to her but don't know her address.

"Pete and I were friends since boyhood in the days when friendship meant more than a hand shake. Our home was where we spread our blankets. For many years we ate and slept together in a country that mostly belonged to God.

"It was a big home for those who loved it. Often the roof leaked making it wet, cold and lonesome but it's discomforts

that pans out the good and bad in man. Pete always showed good in the pan.

"I have been in storm bound camps all afoot where long-faced men cursed the night-herder, but it was Pete that laughed, went out in the storm and brought back the horses. It's the lonesome, motherless places that tie men's hearts together in a way that time, distance or man's laws, not even death can break. For the grave can not steal from memory our friends.

"Years ago I was lost in a storm on Dry Wolf Creek with a bunch of saddle horses. I was nearly in when Pete found me so weak and cold that Pete had to rope and saddle a fresh horse and help me mount. A few more hours would have meant the cash in for me. Several riders were out, but the storm drove them all back but Pete, and if my big laughing friend had turned back, I believe I would be across the big range waiting for him now.

"Death is seldom welcome but to Pete who had suffered long, death was a friend. Life is sometimes cruel but it is the hand of death that leads those who suffer to everlasting peace.

"The trail is plain that Pete

has taken. Since time began it has been well travelled. And I believe that there will be many of his friends waiting to welcome him in the valley of peace."

Your Brother
C M Russell

Russell and Van met shortly after Russell came to Montana as a youngster of 15 from Missouri. Van, a longtime Judith Basin area cowboy, took the young man under his wing, according to Mrs. Coughlin.

"Russell was just a green kid from the east when Uncle Pete met him," she said.

Van and Russell rode together for 30 years after that. Mrs. Coughlin, who was reared on her family's ranch near Stanford and came to know Russell well, described him as "a grand and wonderful person."

She has various other Russell articles, including books and photographs.

Mrs. Coughlin says she is donating the letter in memory of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, and her brother "Bay." William Skelton was the first white settler in the Stanford area. He is depicted in Russell's painting "The First Furrow."

Martha Skelton Coughlin donated a letter written by C.M. Russell to the Russell Museum. The letter was written in 1918 at the death of her uncle, Pete Van.

25 years ago – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Sunday 17 Sep 2000 p 48

COUGHLIN — Memorial services 11:15 A.M. this Monday in the O'Connor Memorial Chapel for Martha M. Coughlin, 96, Pleasant Hill, Calif., formerly of Stanford and Great Falls, with the Rev. Barry Padgett officiating. Memorials of donors choice are suggested.

“Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Monday 22 Mar 1982 p 6

Coughlin services



**Martha
Skelton
Coughlin**

Memorial service for Martha Skelton Coughlin, 96, daughter of Stanford-area pioneers, will be Monday at 11:15 a.m. in the O'Connor Memorial Chapel. Mrs. Coughlin died Tuesday in California, where cremation has taken place. Burial will be in Highland Cemetery.

Martha Skelton was born in a sod-roofed log cabin near the present town of Stanford. Her father, William Skelton, was the first white settler in the Stanford area and was depicted by C.M. Russell in the painting "The First Furrow."

She grew up on her family's ranch and attended schools at Stanford and Utica. Before her marriage in 1911 to Louis Coughlin she homesteaded alone southeast of Geyser, keeping a pack of hounds for protection. The couple and his brother, Fred, owned and operated a general store in Geyser.

After her husband's death in 1920, she continued to run the store, as well as grain and cattle ranches, with her brother in law until 1946. They moved to Great Falls in 1953 and her home was moved from Geyser to Great Falls with her.

Mrs. Coughlin lived in Great Falls until going to California in 1979. She was a member of the National Cowgirls Hall of Fame and the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers.

Surviving are her daughter, Mrs. Thomas (Kathryn) Steyaert, Danville, Calif.; one grandson, and her sister, Mrs. Lee Sweeney, Helena. Three sisters and six brothers preceded her in death.

Obituary of Martha Skelton Coughlin – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Sunday 21 Mar 1982 p 14

Skelton Rites Set Thursday at Geyser

The body of Joseph Van Skelton, 48, Geyser resident who was killed in an auto accident near Stanford Monday evening, was taken from the O'Connor funeral chapel to Geyser Tuesday afternoon, with funeral rites to be held there at 10 o'clock Thursday morning in the Catholic church. Burial will be in the Geyser cemetery.

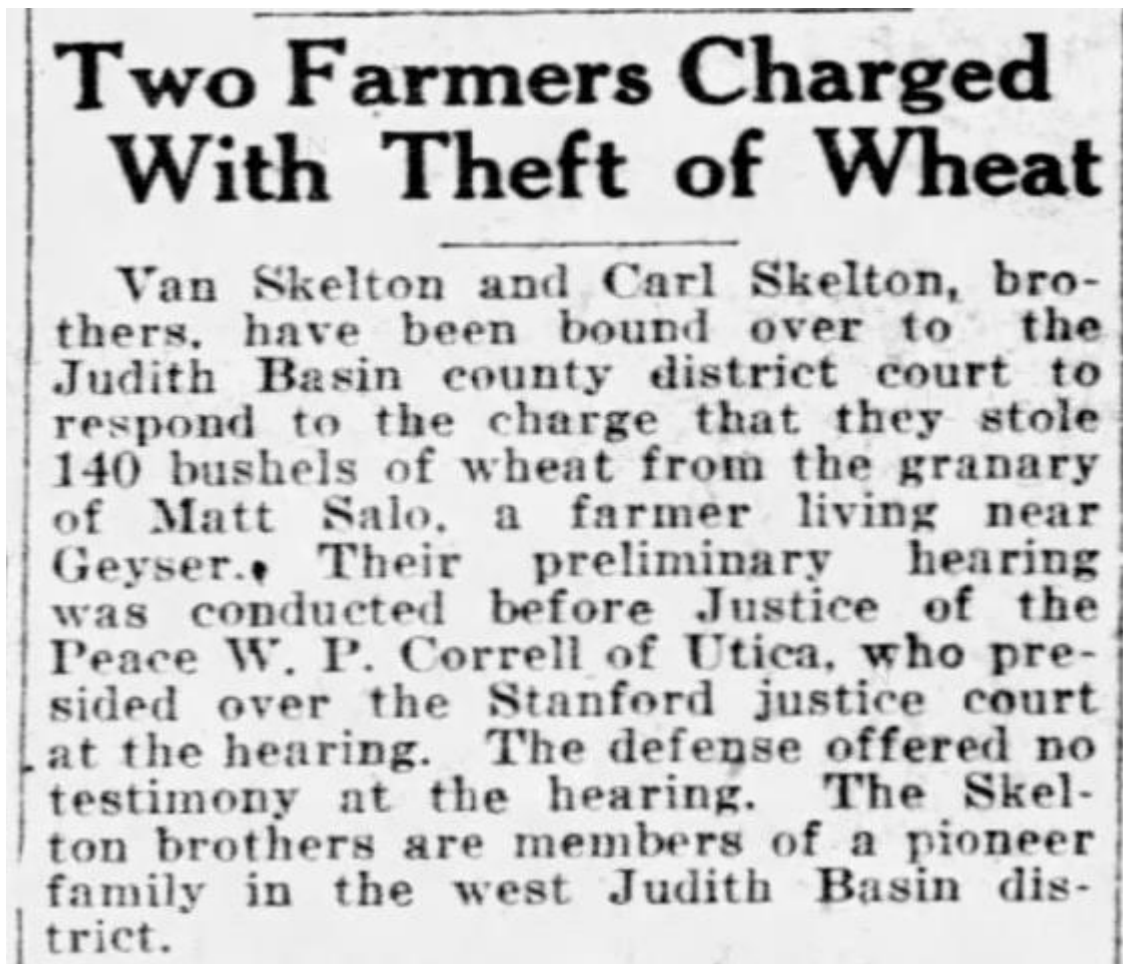
Mr. Skelton was born at Stanford Aug. 5, 1887, and at the time of his death was engaged in ranching.

Survivors, in addition to the widow, are four children, Stanford, Lou, Donna and Donald, all of Geyser; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton of Geyser; three sisters, Mrs. L. F. Coughlin of Geyser, Mrs. William Sweeney of Tucson, Arizona and Mrs. J. W. Hogan of Chicago, and four brothers, John of Great Falls, Peter of Two Dot and Stanford and Carl, both of Stanford.

Death of brother Van/Vann Joseph Skelton (1887-1935) – "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Wednesday 11 Sep 1935 p 9



Joseph Vann Skelton – left: <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/89010877/person/432034281390/media/bc0baba0-496b-4b93-be65-7d76bef5df21>
and right: Joseph Vann Skelton & wife Sophie Agnes Anderson -
<https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/89010877/person/432034659825/media/c37a6b74-82b3-425d-8480-c8b2aeefd69c>



Brothers Van & Carl in trouble with the law - "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Thursday 25 Dec 1924 p 10

J. Skelton Funeral Is Saturday

Funeral services for John L. Skelton, 74-year-old member of a pioneer Montana family and a longtime member of the Montana Cowboys' Association, will be from T. F. O'Connor Co. Saturday morning at 9:30 and at St. Ann's Cathedral at 9:45 when Requiem Mass will be offered.

Burial will be in the family plot, Highland Cemetery. Rosary will be this evening at 7 at O'Connor's.

At the time of his death, he was the oldest living bartender in the Great Falls Bartenders Union and a life member of the MCA. He drove stage coaches between Stanford and Great Falls before the arrival of trains.

Skelton was born March 18, 1888, at Stanford the son of pioneer Judith Basin residents, Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton. His father and mother homesteaded two miles east of the present town of Stanford in 1880 and were the first settlers on Wolf Creek. William Skelton was the first settler in that part of the country and his wife was the only woman resident for many miles. The elder Skelton had been a hunter, prospector and trapper in the Montana Territory prior to his marriage. Charles M. Russell and Father DeSmet, the pioneer priest, were early friends of the Skeltons.

Obituary of brother John L. Skelton (1888/1889 – 1962) – "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Friday 28 Sep 1962 p 8

John Skelton Rites Held at Great Falls

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS—
John Louis Skelton, 74, father of
William Skelton of White Sul-
phur Springs, died at a hospital
in Great Falls and funeral serv-
ices and burial were in Great
Falls. He was born May 15, 1888,
at Stanford. He was a lifetime
member of the Montana Cowboys
Association and had made his
home at White Sulphur Springs
for the last several years.

"Billings (MT) Gazette" Wednesday 3 Oct 1962 p 8

Peter A. Skelton

Rosary will be recited at 7:30 p.m. Monday in St. Anthony Church for Peter A. Skelton, 70, 123 W. Kent St., who died in a Missoula hospital Friday.

Requiem high mass will be celebrated at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday in the church by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. D. P. Meade, V.G.

Mr. Skelton was born July 6, 1891, in Stanford and for many years he operated a ranch in Wheatland County.

He retired in 1948 and moved to Missoula. He was a veteran of World War I and a member of St. Anthony Parish.

Surviving are the widow, Agnes; a daughter, Mrs. R. W. Richardson, Los Alamos, N.M.; three brothers, Carl, Geyser; Bay, Stanford, and John, Great Falls; three sisters, Mrs. Martha Coughlin, Great Falls, Mrs. Lee Sweeney and Mrs. Nina Hogan, both of Helena; and two grandsons.

Burial will be in St. Mary Cemetery under the direction of the Geraghty Mortuary.

Nina Hogan

Nina Skelton Hogan of 816 Floweree, died early Tuesday at the Helena Nursing Home after a short illness. She was 88.

She was born June 16, 1893, to the late Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton, who were early day settlers in the Running Wolf Creek area, near the Judith Gap Basin. She attended schools in Stanford.

She was married to James W. Hogan on May 25, 1914, in Great Falls. He died March 8, 1972.

The couple moved to Chicago, Ill., where they owned and operated a hardware store. They came to Helena in 1945 after retiring.

Mrs. Hogan was a member of the Sons and Daughters of Montana

Pioneers.

Survivors include two sisters, Mrs. William (Lee) Sweeney of Helena and Mrs. Lou (Martha) Caughlin of San Francisco, Calif.; several nieces and nephews, including William L. Skelton of White Sulphur Springs.

A chapel memorial service will be at 11 a.m. Saturday from Hagler Chapel with Dean Arch Hewlett of St. Peter's Episcopal Cathedral officiating. Cremation will take place at Hillcrest Lawn Memorial in Great Falls.

Obituary of [sister Nina Kathryn Skelton Hogan \(1893-1981\)](#) – "Helena (MT) Independent-Record"
Friday 6 Nov 1981 p 8



Sister Nina Kathryn Skelton Hogan (1893-1981) - <https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/89010877/person/432034489191/media/f8f37730-a1a1-4c94-87c7-1cdcca9b57da>

FORM V. S. NO. 12

80 305 Registration No. 944 3

STATE OF MONTANA

CERTIFICATE OF BIRTH Great Falls

Date of Birth Dec 21, 1916 Place Beaconsfield Co. Hosp

Name of Child Katherine Nina Sex Female Color white

Living or Stillborn Living No. of Child, 1st, 2nd, etc. of the Mother 1st

Name of Parents { L. M. Hogan Color white
Katherine Nina Skelton Color white
Give maiden name of Mother

Residence Marre, Mont

Occupation of Father Salesman

Birthplace of Father Iowa

Birthplace of Mother Mont

Received at Great Falls, Montana.

Date Filed Dec 29, 1916 C. E. H. Vidal M. D.
Will Madden Registrar

MT birth record of Katheryne (Nina) Skelton -

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/61591/images/47730_1220706333_0081-00610?pld=30099238

Lee Sweeney

Lee Sweeney, age 86, formerly of Helena, died May 24 at a Great Falls hospital.

She was born July 11, 1896, in Stanford where she was reared and educated. She then attended the Ursuline Academy in Great Falls.

On July 24, 1920, she married William Cruse Sweeney at St. Ann's Cathedral in Great Falls. They moved to Helena where she was associated with the Holter family for many years. She returned to Great Falls in October 1982.

Mrs. Sweeney was a member of St. Helena's Cathedral, the Helena Historical Society, Last Chance Gulch Restoration Association, Son and Daughters of the Pioneers, and the Montana Club.

Survivors include several nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by

her husband in 1954; two sisters and six brothers also preceded her in death.

Mass of Christian burial will be at St. Helena Cathedral Friday at 11 a.m. with the Rev. John Ward officiating. Burial will be at the Resurrection Cemetery.

The O'Connor Funeral Home in Great Falls is in charge of arrangements.

Pallbearers will be John and Troy Holter, Les Brod, Bill Glasscock, Joseph Shevlin and John Fay. Memorials may be made to the donors choice.

Obituary of sister **Vaitleain Charlotte (Lee) Skelton Sweeney (1896-1983)** – "Helena (MT) Independent-Record" Wednesday 25 May 1983 p 8



Mrs. William C. Sweeney (Valleain Charlotte Skelton)

Mrs. Sweeney is the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Skelton. Her father is a well known stockman of Stanford and a pioneer of Montana. Her marriage, which took place at St. Ann's cathedral was an event of Thursday morning. Mr. Sweeney is a nephew of the late Colonel Thomas Cruse of Helena and son of Mr. J. W. Sweeney of Helena. Mr. Sweeney and his bride will make their home at Roundup.

Vaitleain Charlotte (Lee) Skelton Sweeney – “Great Falls (MT) Tribune” Sunday 27 Jun 1920 p 26
<https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/tree/89010877/person/432034281397/media/119d2c1f-0787-4f11-ade3-28dd42ee246f>

Carl M. Skelton

Carl M. Skelton, 78, Geyser, who spent most of his life ranching north of that community, died in a Great Falls hospital early Saturday.

Funeral services will be Tuesday at 2 p.m. in the O'Connor Memorial Chapel. Burial will be in Highland Cemetery.

Skelton was born in 1899 to Judith Basin County pioneers William and Vittelian Vann Skelton.

He married Jane Lloyd, who survives, along with sons, Tom of Geyser and Jerry of Stanford; daughters, Phyllis O'Brien of Missoula and Mrs. Marvin (Joan) Antila of Geyser; 11 grandchildren, and sisters, Martha Coughlan of Great Falls and Nina Hogan and Lena Sweeney of Helena.

He was a life member of Great Falls Elks Lodge 214.

Obituary of **brother Carl M. Skelton (1899-1978)** – "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Sunday 7 May 1978 p

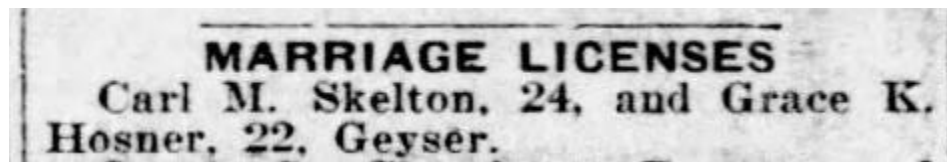
18

TO RIDE IN LONDON.

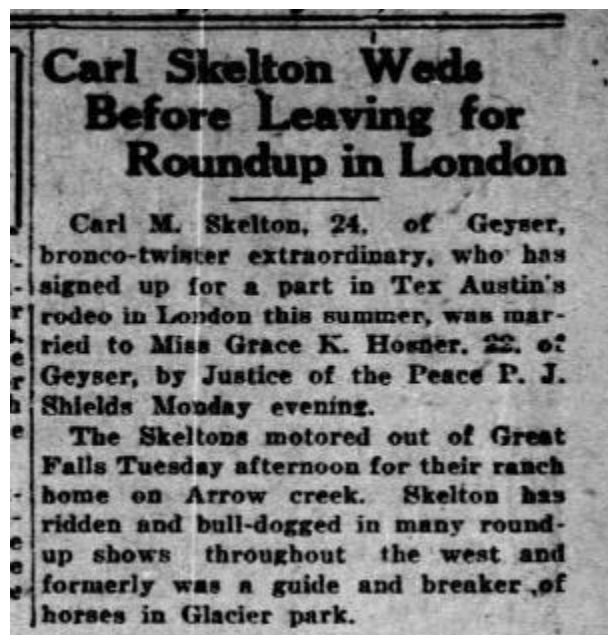
Great Falls, April 25.—George H. Knight and Carl Skelton, cowboys from this vicinity of Great Falls, have signed for the Tex Austin Rodeo in Wembley, near London, June 14 to 28, and leave Great Falls to sail from New York, May 20. Both boys have been raised in Cascade county and both are rated as fearless riders of bucking cayuses.

Carl rides in rodeo in London, England – "Helena (MT) Independent-Record" Saturday 26 Apr 1924 p

4



Carl Skelton's 1st marriage, to Grace Katherine McAfee Hosner – "Great Falls (MT) Tribune"
 Wednesday 21 May 1924 p 7



"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Wednesday 21 May 1924 p 6

Geraldine Girl Weds Laurel Bank Officer

Special to The Daily Tribune.

Geraldine, Aug. 2.—Benjamin J. Hosner of the Security Loan company of Geraldine and Miss Grace McAfee, formerly with Lockwood & Watt Drug company, were married at Billings on Monday, July 28. The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry McAfee, pioneers of this section. The bride returned here Wednesday for a few days, after which she will join her husband at Laurel, Montana, where they will make future home. Mr. Hosner has accepted a position as assistant cashier of the First National bank of Laurel.

Marriage of Carl's 1st wife, Grace McAfee, to her 1st husband, Benjamin Franklin (not middle initial J.) Hosner 28 Jul 1919 in Billings MT – "Great Falls (MT) Tribune" Sunday 3 Aug 1919 p 12

CONDITION CRITICAL.

Benjamin F. Hosner, assistant cashier of the Citizens' National bank of Laurel, who was injured in an automobile accident in the Devils' Basin oil field Sunday morning, is still in a critical condition, according to reports from Roundup, where Hosner is receiving attention. A. L. Garvey and Harry T. White also were injured in the accident, but not badly.

"Butte (MT) Miner" Friday 9 Sep 1921 p 10

Name: Stanford William Skelton (Sr.)

Name variations: nickname: Bay

Military:

On Tuscania: 20th Eng. 16th/Co. D - private

Serial number:

Entered service from: Great Falls, Cascade MT (passenger list: Long Beach CA)

Sailed on "Tuscania" as: Stanford W. Skelton

Next-of-kin on "Tuscania": mother Mrs. William Skelton, Broadway Apts., Long Beach CA

Returned from war on: "Santa Paula" May 1919

Sailed on return ship as: Stanford W. Skelton

Next-of-kin on return ship & rank: mother Mrs. Lena Skelton, Geyser MT (wagoner, 16th Co., 20th Engrs, Forestry)

World War I draft registration (1917): as Stanford Skelton - b. 31 Jan 1895 Stanford MT; res: Geyser MT; registered in NV. Single. Miner for Bullion Mining Co., Jean. Claimed exemption from draft: "rupture" – medium height & build.

World War II draft registration (1942): as Stanford William Skelton - b. 31 Jan 1895 Stanford MT; res: Stanford, Judith Basin MT. NOK Mrs. Stanford Skelton, same address. Self-employed, ranch, 3 ½ miles southwest of Stanford, Judith Basin MT. Height: 5'8 ½" – 175 lbs.

Veterans Administration Military Index:

Enlisted: 12 Dec 1917

Discharged: 11 Jun 1919

Address: Geyser MT

Rank/unit: wagoner, 16th Co., 20th Engineers

Birth & death:

Born: 31 Jan 1895 Stanford, Judith Basin MT (Judith Basin County was formed in 1920)

Died: 2 Jan 1973 Great Falls, Cascade MT

Find A Grave record: 52435784 – presence on Tuscania indicated in flower

Burial location: Stanford, Judith Basin MT

Cemetery: Stanford

Tombstone: veteran flat: Montana Wagoner 16 Co 20 Engineers WWI

Father: William ("Bill") Skelton, 22 Oct 1850 Holme, Abbey, Cumberland, England – 20 Dec 1943 Great Falls, Cascade MT. Son of Henry Skelton & Martha Chambers. The first Caucasian to settle the Judith Basin. Was a woodchopper for Missouri River steamboats. Prospected for gold in the Black Hills SD gold rush. Was at the Little Big Horn when chief Sitting Bull motioned back his warriors from pursuing William & his friend, and went on to defeat the 7th Cavalry under General George Custer. Was a range rider, rancher & cattleman. Personal friend of Western artist Charles Marion Russell & missionary Catholic priest Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, S.J. Buried in Highland Cemetery, Great Falls, Cascade MT.

Find A Grave: 54524990

Mother: Vaitleain (Lena) Vann Skelton, 26 Jul 1865 Fort Snelling, Hennepin MN – 13 Jul 1955 Great Falls, Cascade MT. Daughter of Peter Vann & Mary Jane Belgarde. Came to MT in 1868. Buried in Highland Cemetery, Great Falls, Cascade MT.

Find A Grave: 54525018

Parents' marriage: 2 Dec 1879. Vaitleain was 14 years old.

Spouse: Huberta Placada/Placida Sienkiewicz Skelton, 11 Oct 1904 PA [1903 on Social Security record] – 4 Dec 1969. Daughter of Julian Louis Sienkiewicz (1876 – 17 Jul 1904 PA). Her other, Natalie Osecka (1882-1966) married Joseph Baron (1876 Poland – 1949 IL) in Luzerne Co. PA on 1 Sep 1904. Her surname found as Sienkiewicz on her marriage record with Stanford St. and as Baynor (likely a misreading of her stepfather's surname Baron) on her son Stanford Jr.'s records. Buried in Stanford Cemetery, Stanford, Judith Basin MT.

Spouse Find A Grave: 52435783

Marriage: 30 Jan 1929 Hollywood, Los Angeles CA

Children:

- Stanford William ("Bill") Skelton Jr., 3 Jun 1930 Geyser, Judith Basin MT – 25 Nov 2014 Great Falls, Cascade MT. Born on the family ranch, which was a homestead settled in 1882. Attended MT State University but dropped out shortly before graduation when his mother died. Served in the US Army. Assisted with the TV "60 Minutes" production of a feature on Charles Marion Russell & the Judith Gap area; he & his steers are included in the footage. It aired 7 Jan 1970. Member of MT Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame. – Married 10 Jan 1973 in Great Falls, Cascade MT to Barbara Hardenbrook Porter. – Buried Stanford Cemetery, Stanford, Judith Basin MT. F: 141012744
- Sharon Skelton Harris, 28 Feb 1933 Great Falls, Cascade MT (at Columbus Hospital) - . Listed as Mrs. Roy Harris of Libertyville IL in her father's Jan 1973 obituary. Roy Harris was born 14 Aug 1925 Chicago, Cook IL & died 17 Jul 2002 Libertyville, Lake IL. He is buried in Lakeside Cemetery, Libertyville, Lake IL, F: 7316449

Siblings: In the 1900 census, mother Vaitleain says she has given birth to 10 children, 9 are living. Listed as William, Martha, Joseph (Van), John, Peter, Maud (Nina), Stanford, Lena (Lee) & Carl. [Mary Ann has died] In the 1910 census, she says she has given birth to 11 children, 8 of whom are living. [Mary Ann, Willie & Florence have died.]

- William H. ("Willie") Skelton, Nov 1881 Stanford, Judith Basin MT – 29 Dec 1902 Stanford, Judith Basin MT. Husband of Catherine M. Died at age 21. Buried as Willie Skelton in Steamboat Butte Cemetery, Stanford, Judith Basin MT. F: 60693726
- Mary Ann Skelton, 1883 NT – 1886 MT. Buried in Steamboat Butte Cemetery, Stanford, Judith Basin MT. F: 60693705
- Martha Maria Skelton Coughlin, 15 Aug 1885 Judith Basin Co. MT – 16 Mar 1982 Pleasant Hill [or Danville], Contra Costa CA. Married in Great Falls, Cascade MT on 27 Sep 1911 to Louis Francis Coughlin (1885-1920, F: 54524950). She was a resident of Geyser MT in Sep 1935 when her brother Van died & of Great Falls MT in Jan 1973 when her brother Stanford died. Buried in Highland Cemetery, Great Falls, Cascade MT. F: 54525049
- Van Joseph Skelton, 5 Aug 1887 Stanford, Judith Basin MT – 9 Sep 1935 Stanford, Judith Basin MT. Also found as Joseph Van Skelton & with "Van" spelled "Vann" (which is his mother's birth surname). Married in Great Falls, Cascade MT on 21 Nov 1916 to Sophie

Agnes Anderson (1896-1988, F: 117948422). Died in a car accident near Stanford MT. Buried in Geyser Cemetery, Geyser, Judith Basin MT. F: 59292679

- John Louis Skelton, 18 Mar 1889 [also found as 1888] Stanford, Judith Basin MT – 26 Sep 1962 Great Falls, Cascade MT. Married in Spokane, Spokane WA on 6 Mar 1913 to Sarah Ann (“Sadie”) Huff (1893-1986, F: 54531106). Resident of Great Falls MT in Sep 1935 when his brother Van died. Buried in Highland Cemetery, Great Falls, Cascade MT. F: 54531106
- Peter Allen Skelton, 6 Jul 1891 Stanford, Judith Basin MT – 28 Jul 1961 Missoula, Missoula MT. Married 30 Oct 1915 in Lewistown, Fergus MT to Ida Bechard. They had 2 children & divorced. Marie Ida Bechard (SSN 570-01-5123) was the daughter of Joseph Bechard (1859-1935) & Esther Arsenault. Ida was born 9 May 1896 Matapediac, Canada & died as Marie Ida Nottveit in Santa Barbara Co. CA on 3 Feb 1982. Buried in Goleta Cemetery, Goleta, Santa Barbara CA, F: 82731260. – On 1 Jan 1927 in Anaconda, Deer Lodge MT Peter married Agnes Mary Casey (1902-1997, F: 134382298). Resident of Two Dot MT in Sep 1935 when his brother Van died. Buried in Saint Mary’s Cemetery, Missoula, Missoula MT. F: 134382277
- Nina Kathryn Skelton Hogan, 16 Jun 1893 Judith Basin Co. MT – 5 Nov 1981 Helena, Lewis & Clark Co. MT. In the 1900 census, she is apparently listed as “Maud V.” Wife of James Walter Hogan (1883-1972, F: 141270906), whom she married 25 May 1914 in Great Falls, Cascade MT. Nina Hogan was a resident of Chicago IL in Sep 1935 when her brother Van died & of Helena MT in Jan 1973 when her brother Stanford died. Buried in Highland Cemetery, Great Falls, Cascade MT. F: 141270978
- Vaitleain Charlotte (“Lee”) Skelton Sweeney, 11 Jul 1896 Stanford, Judith Basin MT – 24 May 1983 Great Falls, Cascade MT. Wife of William Cruse Sweeney (1892-1954, F: 31011551), whom she married 24 Jul 1920 in Great Falls, Cascade MT. Resident of Tucson AZ in Sep 1935 when her brother Van died & of Helena MT in Jan 1973 when her brother Stanford died. Buried as Lee Sweeney in Resurrection Cemetery, Helena, Lewis & Clark MT. F: 31011557
- Carl Milton Skelton, 15 Aug 1899 MT – 6 May 1978 Great Falls, Cascade MT. – Married on 19 May 1924 in Great Falls, Cascade MT to Grace Katherine McAfee Hosner, the daughter of Henry L. McAfee & Katherine Messing. Grace was born 30 Jan 1902 Minot, Ward ND & died 25 Sep 1983 Billings, Yellowstone MT. Grace’s 1st husband was Benjamin Franklin Hosner (4 Aug 1889 Sibley, Osceola IA – 2 May 1956 Los Angeles, Los Angeles CA, F: 3718851), whom she married 28 Jul 1919 in Billings, Yellowstone MT. Following her marriage to Carlton Skelton, Grace married Cleveland Alfred Vannoy (1888-1979, F: 39749905) in 1925 in Cody WY & is buried with him as Grace Vannoy in Riverside Cemetery, Thermopolis, Hot Springs WY, F: 39749537. - Married to Jane Catherine Lloyd (1913-2007) in 1935 in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. They had 3 children. Resident of Stanford MT in Sep 1935 when his brother Van died. Buried in Highland Cemetery, Great Falls, Cascade MT. F: 51334331
- Florence Skelton, 9 Nov 1900 – 1 Feb 1903. Presumably born & died in MT. Buried in Steamboat Butte Cemetery, Stanford, Judith Basin MT. F: 60693684

Notes:



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judith_Basin_County,_Montana

Judith Basin County, Montana, was formed on 10 Dec 1920 from the western part of Fergus County & the eastern part of Cascade County. Ancestry.com family trees vary from indicating Stanford MT being in Fergus County (which it was when the Skelton children were born there) or using the current form of Judith Basin County. In this biography, the name of Judith Basin County was used for the location of Stanford MT.

Do not confuse with his nephew of the same name, the son of Van Joseph Skelton.

Pre-war:

Wartime:

"Daily Missoulian" (Missoula MT) & "Billings (MT) Gazette" 18 Feb 1918 p 8 - cable was received 17 Feb 1918 by his family that Fergus Co. resident Stanford Skelton is safe

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" 16 May 1919 p 12 – Corporal Skelton was in France, returned to US, should be in Great Falls MT in a few days, telegram received by parents Mr. & Mrs. W.B. Skelton yesterday

Post-war:

Obituary:

"Billings (MT) Gazette" 9 Jan 1973 p 12 - MT Legislature - HR 2, the bill "honors recently deceased Judge Basin County rancher Stanford Skelton"

"Great Falls (MT) Tribune" 3 Jan 1973 p 1 & 2 - Stanford "Bay" Skelton, 77, son of early Judith Basin pioneer homesteaders Mr. & Mrs. William Skelton, an early Stanford MT ranch couple, was 1 pioneer rodeo man, a Western movie actor, friend of the late artist Charles M. Russell. Brn on his parents' ranch, which was his home all his life. Attended Utica grade school & the 1st grade school built in Stanford MT, also schools in Great Falls & Missoula. WWI veteran, Tuscania survivor. He & brother Carl were pioneer rodeo participants & producers. He went to Hollywood & appeared in several Western movies. Was a friend of Noah Beery, Jack Holt, Bebe Daniels, Yakima Canute. He

met Huberta in Hollywood & they married 30 Jan 1929. They returned to the ranch in Stanford MT. Huberta died 4 Dec 1969. In Mar 1972 Stanford received the Bob Schriver bronze buffalo skull award at the annual C.M. Russell Art Auction (given to friends of Russell). Member of MT Cowboys Association, MT Stockgrowers, Elks Lodge, Eagles, American Legion (Stanford MT), Historical Society of Stanford, Sons & Daughters of Pioneers. Survived by son Bill & daughter, 3 sisters, brother Carl. Funeral 5 Jan 1973, with burial in Stanford MT.

Social Security number: 516-46-4057

Censuses:

1900 Stanford, Fergus MT [now located in Judith Basin Co.] - conducted 2 Jun 1900
 William Skelton, 48 England, Oct 1851, parents b. England, emigrated 1865, in US for 35 years, married 20 years, naturalized, farmer
 Vaitlain, 34 MN, Jul 1865, father b. Canada (French), mother b. ND, gave birth to 10 children, 9 are living
 William, 14 MT, Nov 1881, cowboy
 Martha M., 14 MT, Aug 1885, at school
 Joseph V., 12 MT, Aug 1887, at school
 John L., 11 MT, May 1889, at school
 Peter A., 8 MT, Jul 1891, at school
 Maud V., 6 MT, Jun 1895, at school
 Stanford, 5 MT, Jan 1895
 Lena C., 2 MT, Jul 1897
 Carl M., 10 months MT, Aug 1899
 & servant John S. Nolan, 30, Apr 170 [sic], farm labor

1910 Kibby, Cascade MT

William Skelton, 60 England, parents b. England, emigrated 1856, naturalized, in 1st marriage, married 30 years, retired rancher, own income
 Vaitline, 45 MN, parents b. Canada, in 1st marriage, gave birth to 11 children, 8 are living
 Martha, 23 MT, farmer, general farm
 Van J., 21 MT
 John L., 20 MT
 Peter, 17 MT
 Nina, 18 MT
 Standford J., 14 MT
 Lena C., 12 MT
 Carl M., 10 MT

1920 Great Falls, Cascade MT

William Skelton, 70 England, parents b. England, emigrated 1865, naturalized 1880
 Vaitleain, 54 MN, parents b. Canada (French)

Stanford W., 25 MT, single, rancher, farm

Lena, 22 MT, single, rancher, farm

Karl M., 20 MT, single

1930 White School, Judith Basin MT

Stanford W. Skelton, 34 MT, father b. England, mother b. MN, age 33 at 1st marriage,
farmer, general farm, WWI veteran

Ulberta Skelton, 26 PA, parents b. Poland, age 25 at 1st marriage [wife]

Carlos M. Skelton, 30 MT, single, father b. England, mother b. MN, farmer, general farm
[brother]

1940 Stanford, Judith Basin MT – in same house in 1935

Stanford W. Skelton, 44 MT, farmer

Huberta P., 35 PA

Stanford W., 9 MT

Sharon H., 7 MT

& servant Margory M. Hafenmacher, 19 WI

& 2 hired men

1950 cannot locate