



Branding Calves, L. A. Huffman, 1880-1920

Montana Historical Society Photo Archives, 981-584

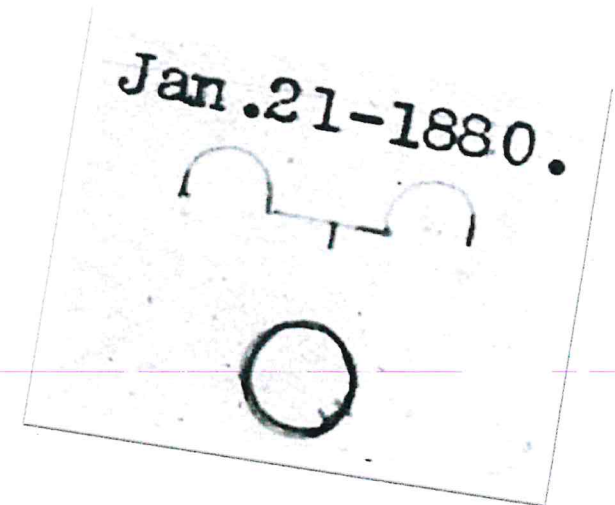
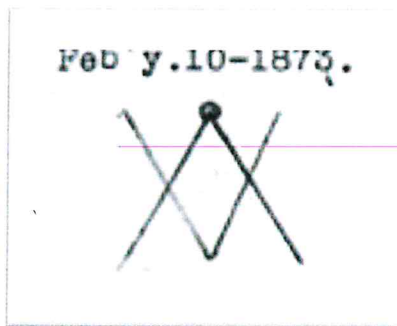
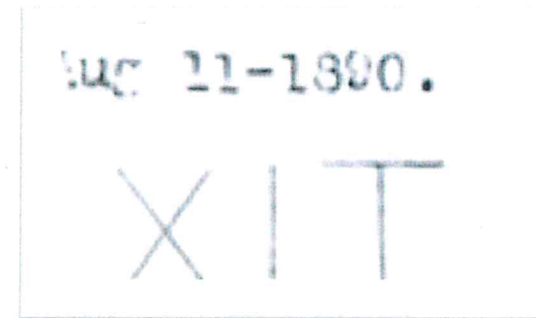
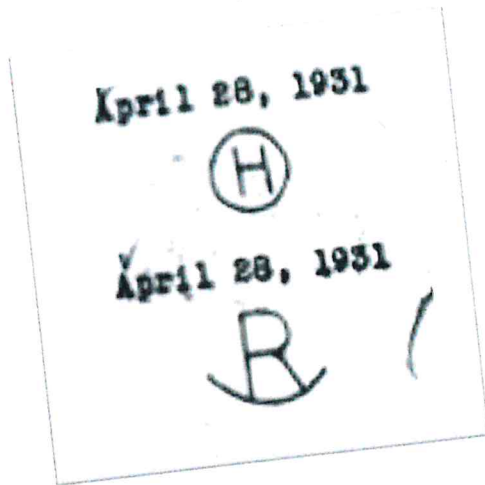
Design your own brand!

Montana Livestock

Brands

Symbols, Stories

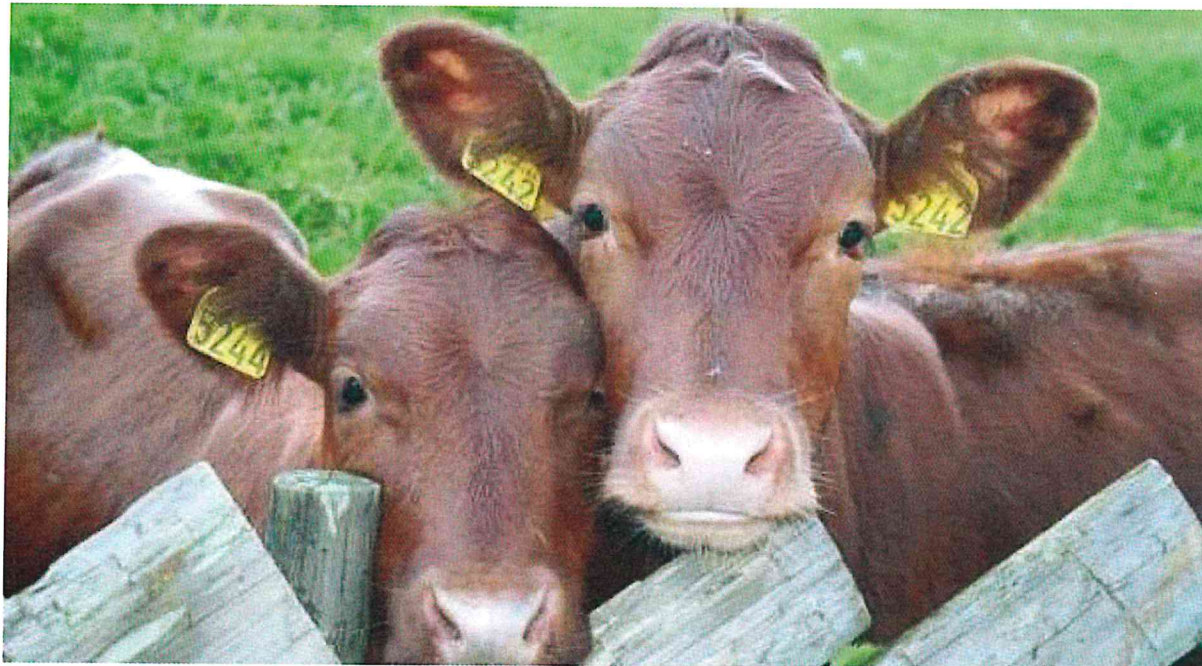
History



They are everywhere! Along the roadside.



And in our backyards!



What is a symbol?



A mark that stands for something else.

Brands are *symbols* of ownership, and so much more!

- Livestock Brands tell us to whom an animal belongs.
- They become **symbols** of the owners and sometimes their families and stories.
- Brands often **symbolize** a specific ranch.
- Now when people see the brand, they think of the people and places associated with the brand rather than ownership.

Livestock Brands Language



- Reading brands is challenging. A brand must be read so that it will be correctly applied or drawn in a transaction.


HOW TO READ BRANDS

Brands are read from left to right, front top to bottom & from outside to inside



































A lazy letter – the top is always to the left ◀ “lazy A”

If the brand lays this way ▶, it is ready “lazy A top to the right”

In case of a B or D & similar letters when turned lazy, they are read as  “lazy B bow up” & 
“lazy D bow down”

A monogram brand has a common center post:  “reverse EH monogram”

Here are some examples

	QUARTER CIRCLE BOW UP		QUARTER CIRCLE BOW DOWN
	O WYOMING SLASH S		O MONTANA SLASH S
	MONTANA SLASH		WYOMING SLASH
	KW SITTING IN A QUARTER CIRCLE		QUARTER CIRCLE OVER KW
	9V OVER BAR		BAR OVER 9V
	LAZY W		LAZY M
	PITCHFORK		RAFTER B
	RAFTER		WALKING Y
	REVERSE B		REVERSE E
	CIRCLE 3		WALKING 5
	SPEAR O		LAZY D BOW DOWN OVER C
	4 BAR P STACKED		E BAR H TIED AT THE TOP
	E BAR H TIED IN THE MIDDLE		E BAR H TIED AT THE BOTTOM
	X HANGING HEART		X STANDING HEART
	BAR JL STRAIGHTAWAY		JL BAR STRAIGHTAWAY
	SLASH DIAMOND T		DIAMOND T SLASH
	WALKING YL OVER BAR		BAR OVER LAZY EY

June 5-1878. Stadler & Kaufmann, Helena, Lewis & Clarke Co.

Brand for cattle across hams and
on right thigh.

Mark-crop left ear and split right ear.

Vent- inverted " R " on right shoulder.



WAITING FOR A CHIMOOK
CMF 1878
The Last of 5000

PaintingNania.com

Some become iconic



G. R. Wilson

~~R. Wilson, Whiteshall, Jefferson Co.
for horses on left shoulder.
for horses, two dots cut together.~~

**Others become
legendary**

“Two Dot” Wilson

Nov 19-1883.



~~G. R. Wilson, Two Dot, Meagher County.~~

~~Brand for cattle on left hip, and right hip.~~

~~Mark-slit dewlap making a handhold.~~

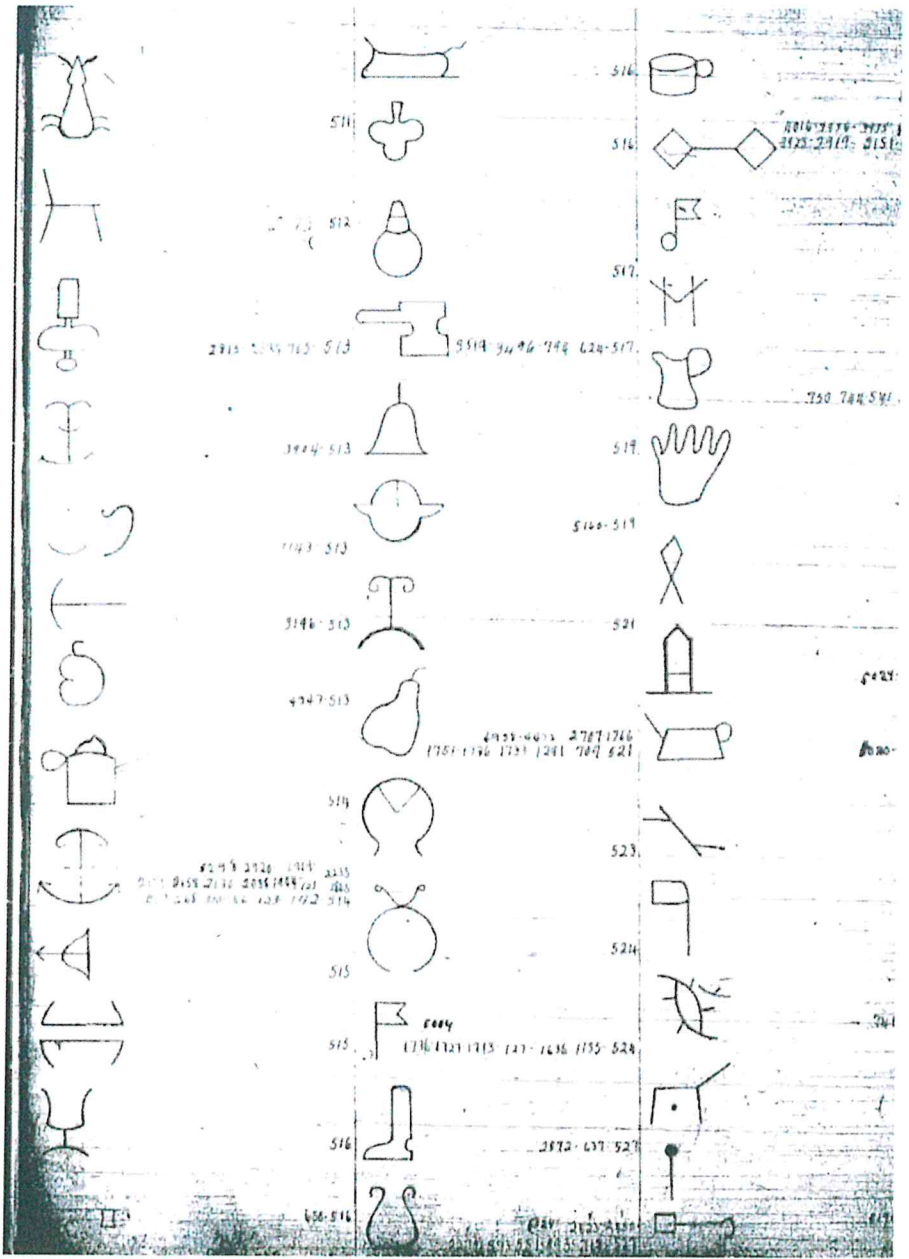
*Transferred to
G. R. Wilson
5-7-09*

The search is on . . . For your brand

- What is important to you?
- Do you have a symbol?
Football, roping, quilting?
- Character brand?
- Letters?
- Endless possibilities



Examples of Character Brands



DR	236	4	366	H	442
D	430-251	7	977-369	D	
D	5313-2250-2207-1045-517-290	L	8990-4125 2-214-595-1771-449-369	D	
D	5554-1120-822-251	DE	372	d	
D	347	S	2459-579	DN	
D	2543-251-102	D	4908-753-658-377	R	
D	316	D	5027-42-398	R	4488-
D	316	E	3107 3117-1718-1158-762-529-487-163	R	4287 5146-2381-2333-233 2244-2242-2239-2231
D	316	E	1774-1122	DAC	
D	318	B	750-424	D	
D	4410-3686	125-392		DD	4262-6262-6
D	346	H	8490-2159-1024-601-479	D	4128
D	352	D	4911-2445-595479-116	R	
D	4370	D		E	3176
D	2150-2042-1129-1059-751-434-358	P	3127-1267-574-455	C	
D	3711-55765-1674-1045607-363	D	8112-1718-156	C	

Examples of Letter Brands

Examples of Number Brands

28	447	2	3472-447	22	
2/2	458	2V	221 532 0 2855-7846 4831 116 440	25	4530-27 1511-150713601071 109
230	810	2R	(1) 3193 3715 449	2S	80
2A	107 411	2Z	2519 443	2N	(2) (3) 3807 3716 419 436 51
5	507	2K	4239-2523 448	29	843
2	5000- 515 201 558 105	2B	174	2K	614-664- 3440-1991-1107-97
E	500 452-620	S	3483 1744 285 442	2	
2F	4521-4434-2820 3517 422 226 530	2	2340 424 228 446	20	
2P	151-3841 3816 402 576	2A	5248-5122-416-4001 1515-901 767 746 482	2X	(2) 3451 3248 3440-16
2	445	2	3824-647 679 4775 3264 2962 1974 194 141 1405 1810-1494 1501 752 459	2C	
2	710 516	2C	5114 805 915 677	2W	4981 8016 3272 1015 941 817 8
2	1781 1274 1355 1331 1330 605	2	(2) 5211-3475 2431 2241-1992 1507 1503 1496 701	2B	(3) 3456 3226-31
2	410	2	1926	2m	
2	4517-813	2	4644 (2) 2476-4517 (1) 1451	20	4894 3610

Why are brands historically important to Montana?

- Establish Ownership
- Genealogy—become part of family stories
- Cultural importance—identified with Western U.S. Culture
- Vital components to Montana's Story
- Show historical trends and stories

Western Ranches/Mining fields

Eastern Ranches/Cattle Drives

Homesteading Era

Modern Trends



**Meaningful symbols, great history, and
endless stories. Your brand is great . .**

**At the end of every branding, we celebrate!
Another Montana tradition . . . More Stories.**