

(Frank D. + Joseph P.) Frank was youngest of 9 children
Two Kiefer brothers were among the earliest pioneers who came to the Grand Valley and saw in the area a land of great potential. They earned their transportation from Indiana to Colo. by agreeing to work on construction of the Denver & Rio Grande Western narrow gauge railroad from Gunnison to Montrose. They lived at Gunnison until the line reached Montrose & then decided to move on to the Grand Valley.

They walked from Montrose to Grand Jct., swam the Colo River and arrived in the pioneer village of Grand Jct. on Oct 12, 1882 with but 1.35 in cash.

1883 - Caroline Kiefer (mother of Frank + Joseph) and her son Ben Jr. arrived in the Grand Valley. She lived in Fruita for fourteen years until 1908. The house still stands in Fruita - Caroline line is named ~~after~~ ^{for} her and Kiefer Ave. for the Kiefer family. She died in 1913 in a house on the hill by the Gunnison bridge where she lived with her son Joseph.

In 1884 Frank Kiefer staked a claim near where Fruita is now located. He and his brother Joseph had bought 160 acres of land just east of Fruita in 1883. In 1889 they with their other brother Ben platted this land into lots and called it Cleveland after President Cleveland, ^{Cleveland is} now a part of Fruita.

~~The~~ In 1894 the Kiefer Bros. started the Kiefer Extension ditch of the Grand Valley ^{Canal} Ditch. 17 miles of new ditch was completed in 1898 bringing about 10,000 acres of good land under irrigation in the Loma + Mack country. ~~The ditch is an extension~~ The Fruita Canal and Land Co., with a capital stock of \$100,000, in ten-dollar shares was organized for the purpose of building this ~~work~~ ^{project} and to acquire land and water rights. The officers of the company were Frank D. Kiefer, president, Ben Jr. Kiefer secretary & treasurer and Bernard F. Hughes, vice-president. The construction of this ditch brought under cultivation

a large body of excellent land especially well adapted to raising sugar beets — ~~that~~ thus the success of a fine sugar beet factory at Grand Junction which had been a failure prior to this time.

In 1892 Frank & Ben Kiefer ~~there~~ having brought a printing press from Denver, established at Fruita a weekly paper, the Mesa Co. Mail, later named the Fruita Times.

In the early 1900s Frank Kiefer with other progressive men of Fruita started work to pipe water from Piñon Mesa and this project brought good water for domestic services to Fruita in 1907. Its slogan was "Fruita, the town of Mountain Water".

Our father, Charles C. Kiefer came to Colo. in 1889 at the age of nineteen and stayed for 9 years prospecting part of that time around Auray, Silverton and Lake City — sometimes on foot sometimes on horseback. He returned to Indiana in 1898 ^{to stay} for 4 more years, became engaged to our mother during that time, then came back to Colo. in 1902 ^{he had} ~~was~~ filed on a ranch in the lower valley under the pre-emption act in 1892. During the years between 1902 and until about late summer or early fall 1905, he ~~had~~ ^{was} a commissary on the Uintah line at Dragon, Utah. He and his brother, in the summer of 1905, bought Indian ponies on the Uintah reservation for the army. — My father knew Chipeta, wife of Chief Auray, Chief McCook from whom they purchased the horses, and Chief Atches who was a special friend. Mary Francis X
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In 1905 Frank was formulating plans to put irrigation water on the Redlands, even though that project was pronounced impractical and too expensive by those with less initiative. In 1906, associated with his brother B. F. Kiefer and several other prominent men of this area and with some eastern capital, Frank Kiefer started the construction of the Redlands system of canals, ditches and the Redlands power plant which was the first of its kind in the valley. Grand Junction immediately purchased the electric power. With the forming of the Redlands Irrigation and Power Co., Frank D. Kiefer was made the president and served in this capacity until his death in 1909.

The brothers took a piece of land in payment for ~~putting~~ ^{furnishing} water on the balance of the person's land - an exchange which was legal. Some individuals claimed it was illegal and brought suits against them. The brothers lost the suits locally, but they took it to the ^{U.S.} Supreme Court and won.

Frank, before his death, was the president of the United Fruit Showers' Ass. of Colo. In 1889 Frank and Ben Kiefer were instrumental in founding the Mesa Federal Savings in Fruita under the name of The Fruita Bldg, Loan and Savings Ass.

Joseph P. Kiefer, in 1899 during the Klondike gold rush, went to Alaska and returned later with a considerable amount of money, invested in land in the lower valley and helped finance the irrigation systems. ————— Joseph was best man for John Otto when he was married in 1911 at the base of Independence Monument. This picture is in the booklet "Rem of Time" by Stephen Trimble. This picture appears at the John Otto trail overlook in Colo. Natl. Monument.