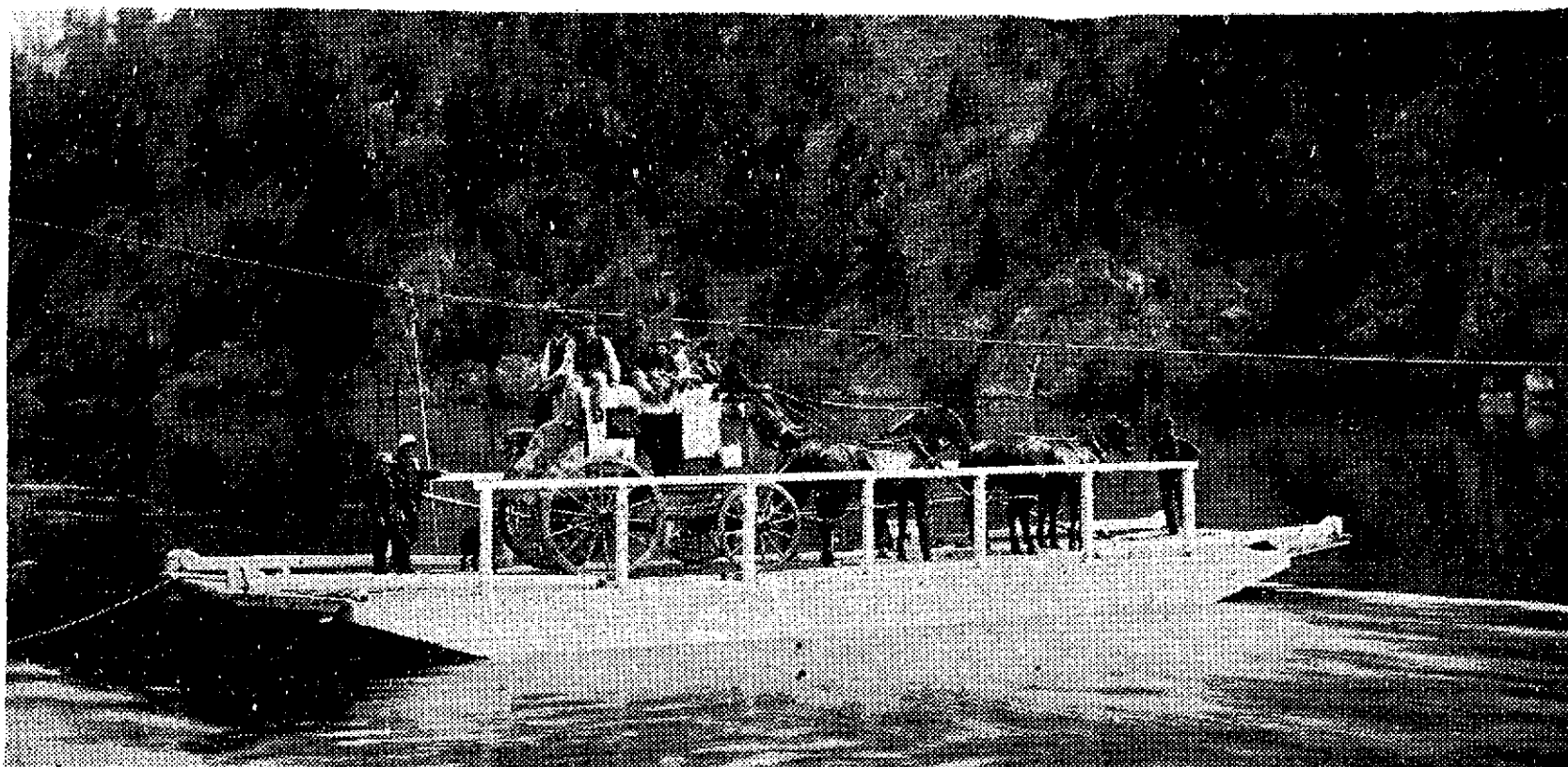


History of Canyon Ferry Evolves Around Sheriff Family



ORIGINAL CANYON FERRY HOTEL—Court Sheriff, Sr., built this log hotel at Canyon Ferry in the 1870's to house the miners who worked the diggings in the nearby gulches. The elder Sheriff also ran a livery stable, general store and stagecoach line. He is shown at the extreme right with his race horse. Mrs. Sheriff is shown, center, with Court, Jr., and Mary (now Mrs. Charles McCoy of Helena) in the buggy. At left are the stagecoach and teams that "packed the mail" for nearly a half century between Canyon Ferry and White Sulphur Springs. Court, Sr., housed and fed the men who worked on the original Canyon Ferry dam at the hotel for 75c a day. The historic old building was destroyed by fire in 1911.



ACROSS THE RIVER—This shot of the original ferry shows the Sheriff stagecoach going across the river with a party of early day Canyon Ferry residents. The old ferry was strung across the river in the spot where the first Canyon Ferry dam was built by the Missouri River Power company. Court Sheriff, Jr., ran the ferry when he was about 12 years old. The toll was 25c for a horse and 50c for a team. The heavy barge, anchored by cables, was carried across the Missouri by the river current. After the dam was built in 1896, the river below it was too rough for the ferry and it was abandoned. Canyon Ferry residents had to cross the river upstream in rowboats until the first county bridge was built in 1899.

Three Generations Have Found Region Land of Opportunity Between 1865 and Present Day

Three generations of Court Sheriffs have found the Canyon Ferry region a land of opportunity. The third generation of the well-known family is operating a profitable business in the same area developed by the first generation.

Court Sheriff I, came to Helena in 1865 and started in business at Canyon Ferry a few years later. In fact, he practically owned the town. His son, Court Sheriff II, took over his father's business and later started ranching at Canyon Ferry, a business he still engages in. Court Sheriff III, better known as "Van," and his brother-in-law, Ray Johnson, are now in business at the new town of Canyon Ferry, which owes its existence to the reclamation bureau dam now under construction.

When the first Court Sheriff came to Helena in 1865, one year after the mining town was founded, he hired out as a carpenter and worked on a flume construction job on the Magpie-Cave hill ditch, east of the city. The company which built the flume sold water to miners at the rate of \$1 per miner's inch for 12 hours. Caveatown was the only community in the vicinity, and there Sheriff went into the general merchandise business with a Helena firm. He later bought out the firm's interests in Caveatown and continued on his own.

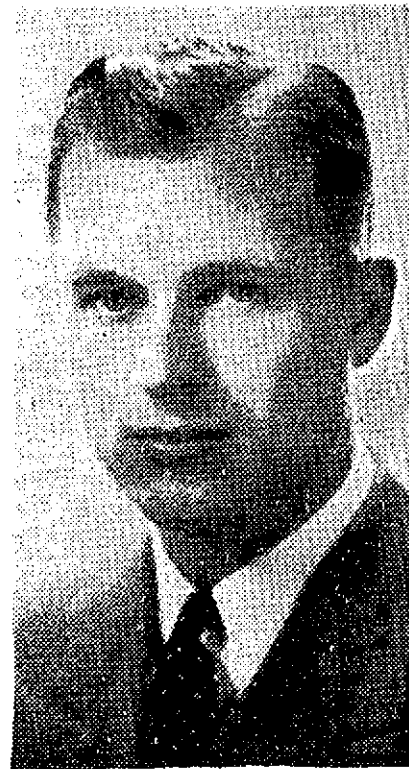
Then he bought the Cap Stafford homestead on the river, continued his business there and opened a hotel and livery. This location became known as Canyon Ferry because a ferry was established there for the river crossing.

Perhaps the business for which the elder Sheriff is best noted, however, is the stage line he operated between Helena and White Sulphur Springs via Diamond City. The family operated this vital communication link until 1915 when the motor vehicle finally replaced the horse-drawn carriage. Sheriff also was postmaster at Canyon Ferry and owned a flour mill at Bedford, near Townsend.

The old Canyon Ferry dam, which soon will be replaced by the one now under construction, was built in 1896. A bridge spanned the Missouri after being built in 1901 and replaced the ferry, but the name Canyon Ferry remains to this day.

Court, Sr., was married twice. Rose Turner, a daughter by his first marriage, resides in California. Another daughter, Edith Badger, died years ago. In 1884, Court, Sr., married Mary Hooper, whose brother, Joe, still lives at Lincoln. There were three children born from this marriage, Court, Jr., and Fred Sheriff and Mrs. Charles McCoy, who both reside in Helena.

Court, Jr., was born in 1886,



Court Sheriff III

attended schools in Canyon Ferry and was graduated from Helena high school where he was captain of the football team and a member of the basketball team. He was graduated in agronomy from Montana State college in 1912 where he also was captain of the grid squad and played basketball.

In 1912, Court, Sr., went on a trip to the Panama canal and Court, Jr., took over the business temporarily. In 1914 the young Sheriff purchased a tract of land from his father and started ranching. The land, which will be flooded when the new dam is completed, is located on a meadow north of the old town of Canyon Ferry.

In later years, Court, Jr., cleared the sage brush from the land, broke the soil, installed an electric irrigation system and seeded alfalfa.

But like his father, the younger Sheriff branched out. In 1916, with Thomas Newland, he hauled ore with six-horse teams from the Argo mine in Hellgate gulch to the railroad siding at Claxton. He took over the business on his own in 1917. He charged \$10 a ton for hauling the ore over the 18-mile distance, a trip which took two days. A six-horse team could pull a five-ton load.

Expanding his ranching operations, in 1918, he took out a grazing homestead in the Canyon Ferry area, a portion of which is now occupied by the government town near the site of the new dam.

The Sheriffs went out of the stage coach business in 1915 when automobiles made the business unprofitable. But mail was still car-



Court Sheriff I

THREE GENERATIONS of Court Sheriffs are shown in these pictures. In the center is Court Sheriff, who came to Helena in 1865 and soon moved to Canyon Ferry where he operated a hotel, stage line, livery stable, and ran a stage line. His son, Court, Jr., is shown at right. He helped his father with the stage line and river ferry, went to college and returned to branch out into ranching. Court III, better known as "Van" Sheriff, now runs a general store, post office and other services for the workers at the new Canyon Ferry dam.

ried by horse-drawn coaches until about 1918.

Court Sheriff, Jr., is still in the livestock business and owns about 3,000 acres of grazing land near Canyon Ferry. The government, however, bought his irrigated and cultivated land and will flood it



Court Sheriff II

when the new dam is completed. A placer mining claim in Magpie gulch, the patent signed by President U. S. Grant, is still among the Sheriff family possessions.

Court, Jr., has tried hard to preserve historical data and relics of the old camp. He lost many fine antiques a year ago when a fire destroyed one of the old buildings he used to house the collection. However, he is beginning anew, and this week he had the famous old Swiss chalet moved to higher ground. The chalet was built more than 50 years ago at Canyon Ferry by Superintendent Cooper of the old Missouri River Power company.

Court was married in 1913 to Emma Van Dyke of Bozeman. One daughter, Mrs. Louis Spain, lives in Bozeman where her husband is president of a hardware company. Their other two children still live at Canyon Ferry and are finding it profitable. They are Court III (Van) and Josephine (Mrs. Ray Johnson). Van Sheriff and Ray Johnson, operating on land owned by the Sheriff family, now operate several services for workers at the dam project. These include a grocery store, tavern lunch counter, post office, self-service laundry, apartment house, trailer camp and a barrack for the dam workers and their families. They also sub-



THE LAST STAGE—This is a picture of the last stage for Canyon Ferry, marking the end of the famed stageline operated by the Sheriff family and the substitution of the motor car. It was taken in 1915 at Helena near the corner where the Watson Motor company is now located. Court Sheriff, Jr., is in the driver's seat handling the four-horse team. The Sheriff family operated the stageline for nearly a half century, carrying mail and passengers to Helena and White Sulphur Springs over the Rocky mountain roads.

lease a mess hall to the construction company.

The Sheriff family history also contains a good example of how prices have changed between the time of the construction of the first Canyon Ferry dam, completed in 1896, and the new Canyon Ferry dam now being constructed. Young Sheriff and Johnson have contracted to feed dam workers at \$3

per day and they must pay extra for their bunks. His grandfather contracted to feed workers on the original dam for only 75 cents a day, and that included a bunk.

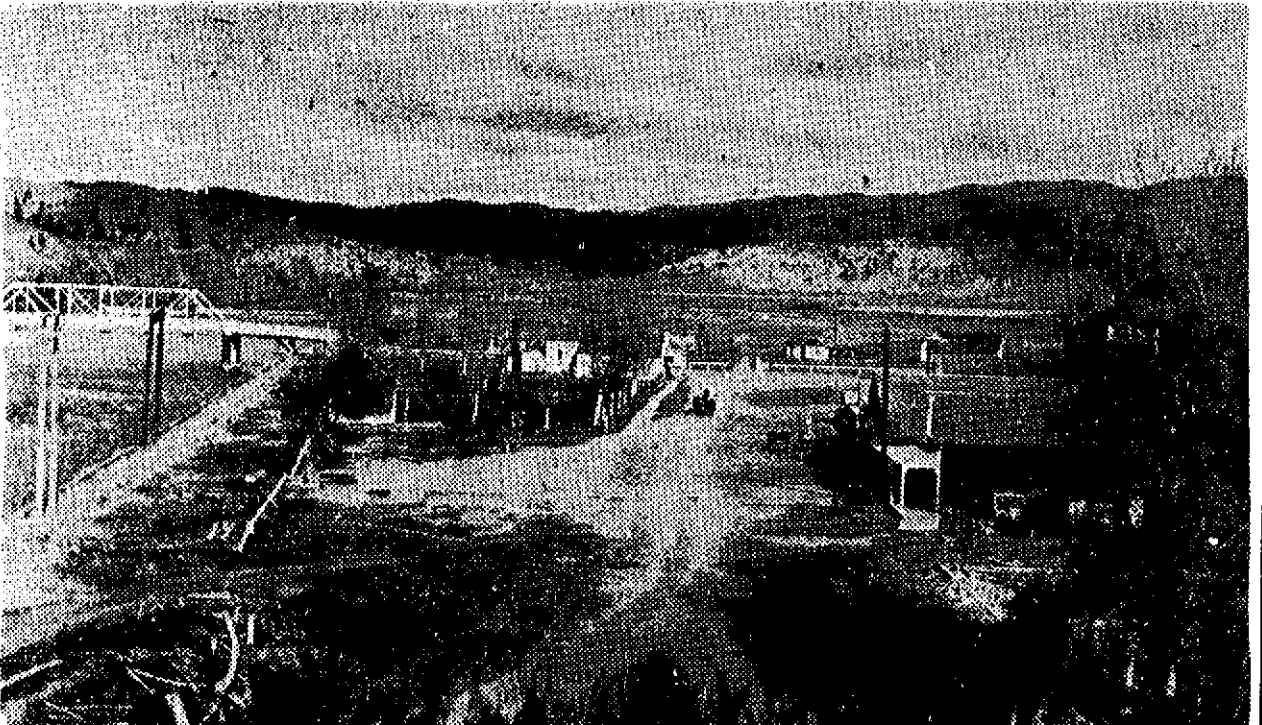
Mechanical pickers, planters and cultivators are more commonly used in western states of the United States in the raising of cotton than is the case in the south-

Farms Collectivized

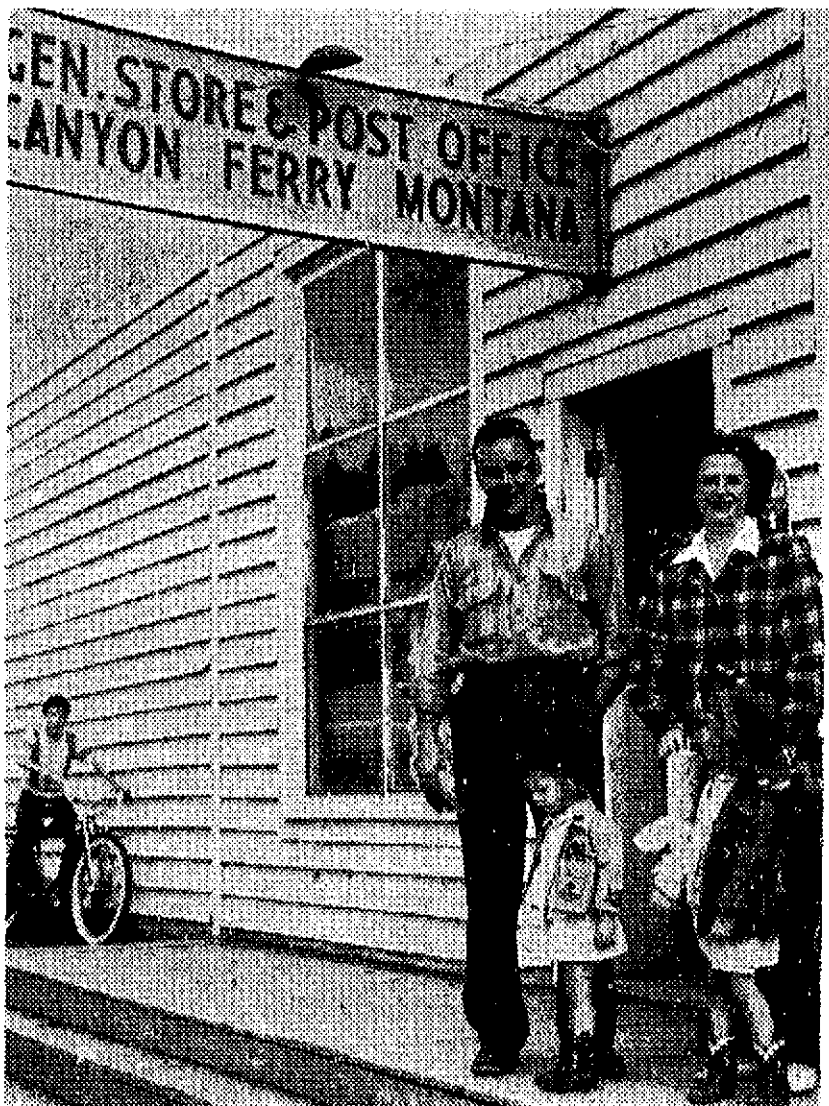
Hong Kong.—(P)—The Chinese Communists so far have set up 45 collective farms as a possible first step toward collectivization of the highly-individualistic farmers of China. There are 10 of the farms in Manchuria containing 200,000 acres. The rest of the state farms are scattered throughout China proper.



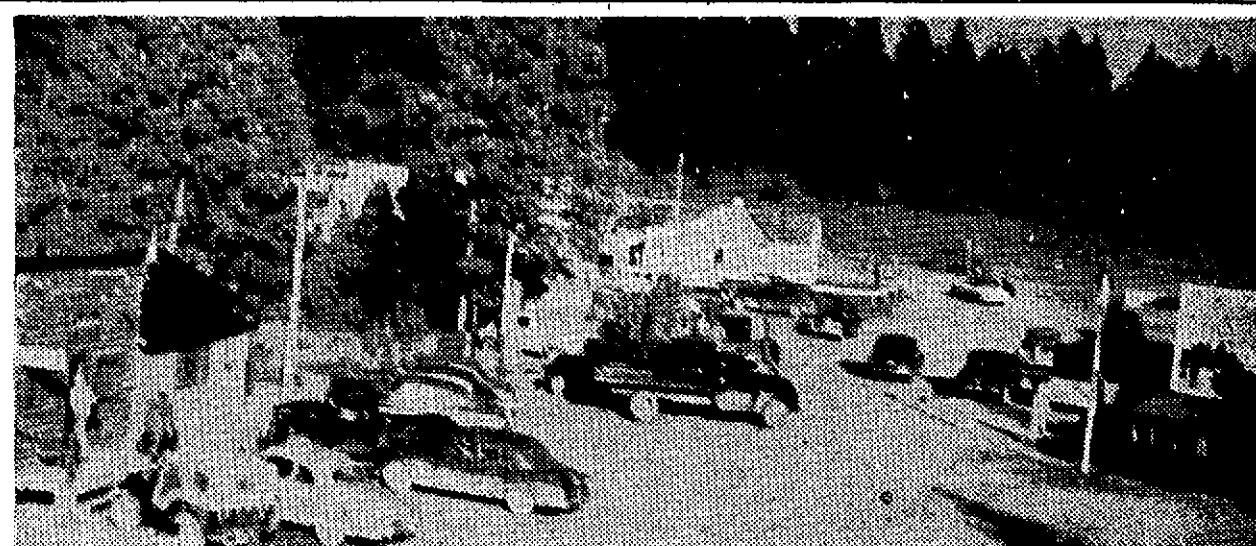
SHERIFFS AT HOME—Mr. and Mrs. Court Sheriff, Jr., shown in their modern home at Canyon Ferry where they can get a good view of the region his father settled in the gold mining days. They have three children, two of whom still live at Canyon Ferry.



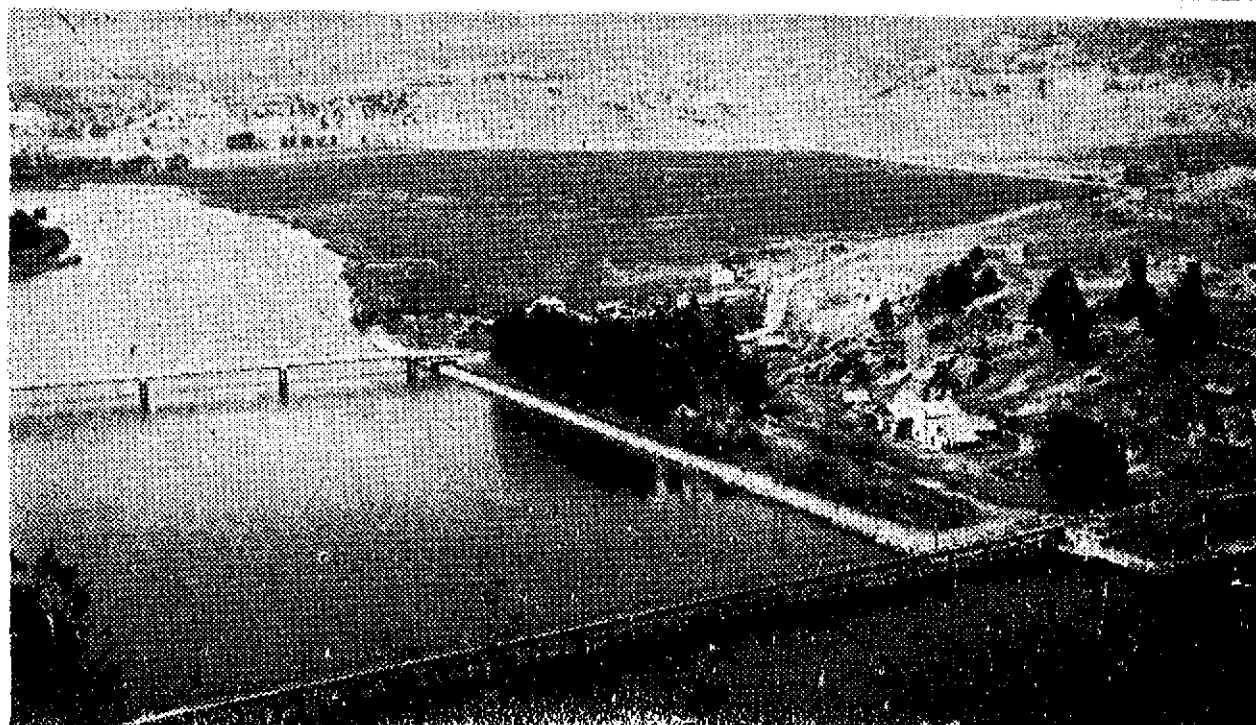
THE OLD TOWN—This is a view of the old Canyon Ferry site looking downstream and northward from the old dam. In the foreground are Court Sheriff's store and other buildings. In the background is the ranchland where Court, Jr., began his ranching operations. At the left is the county bridge which replaced the old ferry across the Missouri toward Helena.



THE POST OFFICE—Mr. and Mrs. Ray Johnson and their children pause in front of the post office and general store at the new Canyon Ferry townsite. Mrs. Johnson is a daughter of Court Sheriff, Jr., and her husband and brother, Court (Van) Sheriff III, operate the store, post office, a tavern, apartment house, laundry and several other services for the dam workers.



THE NEW TOWN—Modern trucks and automobiles dominate this picture of the new Canyon Ferry townsite. The schoolhouse and a few of the old buildings were moved from the old town when Canyon Ferry was relocated on higher ground by the reclamation bureau. This new town serves the dam workers and their families who live at the nearby government camp. The old town will be flooded after the new Canyon Ferry dam is finished.



CANYON FERRY—This picture of Canyon Ferry was taken in 1937. In the foreground is the old Canyon Ferry dam built by the Missouri River Power company in 1896. At the right is old Canyon Ferry townsite, with the Sheriff ranchlands stretching out beyond it. The county bridge is shown downstream from the dam. Nearly this entire area will be flooded by the new Canyon Ferry dam, now nearing completion.