

And it's justifiable pride for a couple that saw their whole place go wet from seepage, after about five years of irrigation. It took another five years to get drains installed, the land nursed back to full production through use of gypsum to break up the alkali.

But Weltys brought it back with the same loving care and devotion shown by Mrs. Welty this spring when she nursed to health no less than 22 "bum lambs" saved from their own flock.

Welty described his life at a recent Grange meeting when each was asked to name his hobby and his work.

Work and Hobby

"I work for the community, my hobby is farming," Welty quipped. And he spoke the truth. He's on his third term as Midvale commissioner. He's chairman of the board for Pavilion Methodist Church, Master of Pavilion Grange. He has been ASC committeeman, and has served on the Pavilion Soil Conservation District Board. His wife is chairman of the garden club. She serves on the election board, helps with Grange and church work.

The Weltys know the challenge of farming on Midvale. They know wet lands can be reclaimed. They've done it.

"Lining all the ditches would be a great thing for our district," Welty said. There is drainage needed. Structures need repair, the worn out system needs renovation.

The Riverton project will be in good hands when all divisions are united and managed by the likes of the Carl Weltys.

GID DAVISON

ONE OF THOSE REMARKABLE MEN

"The secret of success on a Riverton Project farm is the guy you put on it."

So says Gid W. Davison, and he speaks from experience. Davison was crawling around in Wyoming sagebrush before he could walk. In the last 50 years, Davison has broken out enough sagebrush ground to make him an expert on the subject.

His dad, C. A. Davison, went to Alaska in the early 1900's to try his luck in the gold rush. He saw an advertisement about the Riverton land opening and filed for a homestead.

He drew unit No. 143 on the Reservation withdrawal area and chose a 160-acre piece of flat ground in what is now Missouri Valley.

Little Gideon was three months old when Mr. and Mrs. Davison moved on the place, believing that water, as promised by the early ditch company, would be coming next year, or the next, or the next.

It came, all right, but 25 years later.

The Bureau of Reclamation started in 1925 with Wyoming Canal, with water reaching Paradise Valley about 1928. Although the Bureau was to take another nine years to get water to the Davison homestead in Missouri Valley, the Davisons didn't wait.

Ahead of Bureau

They ran water down a draw from Paradise Valley into Missouri Valley and started irrigating their lands from their own ditch system in 1932.

Davison Brothers were ahead of the government project again in the early 40's. The elder Charles Davison died in 1942 and the Missouri Valley homestead, along with another 160 bought from Bill Perrin, was split into four 80-acre tracts, one for each of the four Davison children, Willis, Ida (Mrs. Bob Ferrin) Gid, and Barbara, now Mrs. Floyd Verley.

The Davisons bought 320 acres of Hidden Valley farm land from Warren Klocke, land that was still in sagebrush. They started pumping water from the Big Wind River to irrigate their latest homestead in 1946, two years before the Bureau of Reclamation delivered its first water to Hidden Valley in 1948.

Charles Davison always figured he needed about 1000 acres of land to make the right kind of sheep, ranch and farming spread.

To get it, Davison homesteaded on the Big Horns on Clear Creek up the Badwater in 1928 when it was possible to file on a 640-acre mountain homestead. They still have the place, and since have bought the Woodruff place from Van Okie, a ranch dating back to 1898. Davison Brothers' sheep and cattle now graze where the Woodruff and Madden Buck camp stood before the turn of the century.