

Davison's home place north of Riverton is almost across the highway from the Madden farm. The Davisons learned other things from Madden. Madden used his home place, now owned by John Pitts, as an experimental farm, and Davisons learned about raising potatoes, corn, cattle and sheep from the old masters.

It's savvy never to be lost.

Row Crops on Cottonwood

For the last several years, Davison Brothers have raised some whopping potato crops on their Cottonwood Bench leases.

"Our three-year average is over 200 sacks of potatoes to the acre," Gid relates.

The Davisons and their four children, Geraldine, 16, Charles, 14, Bruce, 12, and Helen, 10, pass along their taste for farm and ranch life to their town friends.

"Last year we had 32 kids, including the neighbors and friends from town, out to the Bench helping pick up the spuds," Mrs. Davison said. She packed a lunch for them all. Many of them learned first hand that potatoes come from places other than the fry-basket at the drive-in.

The Cottonwood Bench place keeps producing good crops of hay, corn silage and grain, providing lots of forage for winter feeding of livestock, too.

The Davisons have the last unit down the ditch next to Boysen Lake.

"The growing season on Cottonwood Bench is longer than it is close to Riverton," says Davison. The soil is deep, but sandy.

Know How To Farm

"A man needs to know how to farm land that blows," said Davison, noting wind erosion problems encountered in the Bench lands.

Davison has an understanding about the recreation value of Riverton project irrigation. Back in 1934, Davison helped stock Ocean Lake with fish.

"The fish came in garbage barrels on the train. We unloaded them on Joe and John Nevin's truck and hauled them out to Ocean Lake and dumped them in a stream flowing into the lake," Davison recalls.

What a provident plant it was! Last year, 80,000 fish were caught in the lake, with 25,000 visitations made to the Ocean Lake area by fishermen, boaters and skiers.

"This is a good irrigation project," Davison says. Successful farmers have learned how to raise crops, then sell the forage to the livestock men like Rochelle and Clarence Grieve, if they can't feed it themselves. The valley is full of livestock, brought here to winter because the feed is good, the winter mild.

Two Kinds of People

"There are two kinds of people—builders and destroyers. We need to put the builders in charge of this country and Riverton project," Davison said.

Davison has seen it all. He remembers when the first settlers, the Maddens, for example, cursed the sweet clover that grew so rank. Now it's a valued crop. He remembers when there wasn't a man in the valley who knew how to survey an irrigation lateral—now any schoolboy can do it. He remembers, when he bought his present place, that Haymaker Draw was dry. Now it runs a big stream of water year around.

There's work to be done to complete Riverton project.

"I'd like to see them complete the whole thing. Then everybody on it should be happy," Davison concludes.

Probably no other family has the experience, the perspective, about Riverton project that the Davison Brothers have. They speak with authority.

OTHER REMARKABLE MEN OF MIDVALE

HERB BURDEN

Burden brought wet land back into production. He needs additional land to make it possible for a son to return and establish an economic farm unit.

Herb Burden bought the former Guy Davis homestead in 1946, a place on which all but 13 acres of ground was wet and alkaline from seepage. The land was seeped, clear from its south boundary to the Missouri Valley road. Only two small tracts could be farmed.