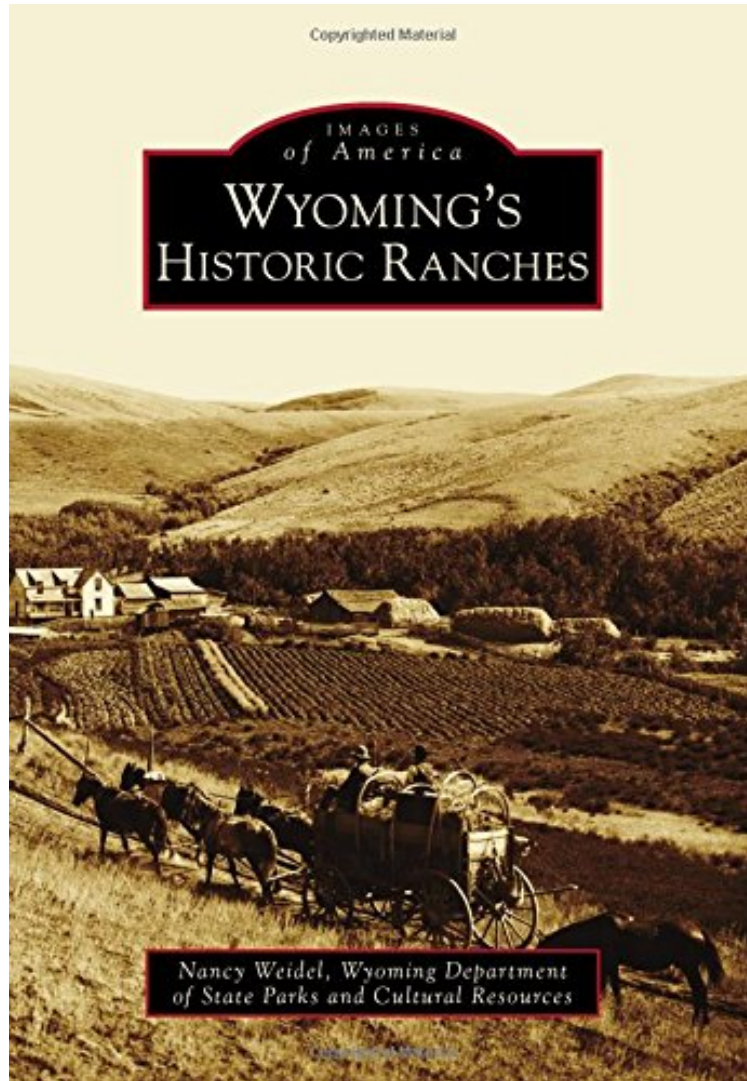


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Wyoming's Historic Ranches (Images of America)

Nancy Weidel, Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources

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Wyoming is so closely identified with ranching that it is often known as the Cowboy State. The prosperity associated with the cattle industry drew wealthy investors to Wyoming Territory in the 1870s and early 1880s. They stocked the range with thousands of cows and made considerable fortunes until the harsh winter of 1886-1887, when the cattle market collapsed. Many of those early ranchers left Wyoming, which opened the door for the establishment of what would become a huge sheep business. During the 1890s and the early decades of the 20th century, the various Homestead Acts drew others to Wyoming in search of a brighter future. As most of Wyoming's land was suited for grazing, not farming, smaller ranches began to play a more important role in the state's growth. Wyoming's Historic Ranches provides a rare glimpse of the cattle baron ranches as well as the more modest operations that are tucked away along remote valleys and streams, not visible to the average visitor or resident of the state.

About the Author Author Nancy Weidel has been a historian at the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office since 1992. Photographer Richard Collier, who provided most of the modern images for this book, began working for the State of Wyoming in 1983.