

Chapter 4
Early Otero County Dairies
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Hillside Dairy

The most successfully advertised of the early non-montane Otero County dairies may have begun shortly after the town of Alamogordo was laid out. By April 15, 1899 (the earliest extant issue of an area newspaper), Milton Phillips, manager of Hillside Dairy, advertised, "First-class dairy products furnished to Alamogordo residents at reasonable prices" (*Sacramento Chief*, April 15, 1899). He continued to run his ad until April 3, 1903. This four-year series of continuous advertisements proved to be the longest span of dairy ads in an Alamogordo newspaper until Bass Dairy began its long but inconsistent series of ads on May 12, 1927.

Alamogordo Dairy

By May 5, 1899, Frasier & Gordon, proprietors of Alamogordo Dairy, provided Phillips some competition, although their business seems to have been short-lived (*Sacramento Chief* May 5, 1899). Their last ad appeared on August 17 of that year. Thomas A. Frasier came to New Mexico in 1885 and spent some time in La Luz. He was married to Emma Wayland in Tularosa on March 14, 1892, and lived in La Luz and Mountain Park. Frasier bought the first lot sold in the new town of Alamogordo and built a large, two-story house at Texas Ave. and 10th St. Frasier homesteaded and raised cattle west of town (TBHS 1981:199). Although it is currently unknown whether this was the Frasier who co-owned Alamogordo Dairy, he was certainly in the right place at the right time. I have discovered nothing about his partner, Gordon.

George J. Wofford & Worford and Parrott

A final competitor appeared at a higher altitude. George J. Wofford began advertising the Sacramento Mountain Dairy on June 1, 1899. Located in Fresnal, New Mexico, he offered "Fresh Milk, Butter and Eggs. Delivered daily in the vicinity of Cloudcroft[,] Fresnal and Tobaggan" (*Sacramento Chief* June 1, 1899). In May 1900, Wofford took on J. M. Parrott as a partner. The partnership may not have worked out as well as Wofford hoped, for just three months later, on August 9, 1900, the Sacramento Mountain Dairy ceased advertising (*Alamogordo News* May 31, 1900; *Alamogordo News* August 9, 1900).

George Wofford was born in Nashville, Tennessee and lived his early life in Benbrook, Texas. In 1882, he married Ida Rippetoe, and the couple moved to Black River, New Mexico, in 1886. After moving around New Mexico for a few years, the family settled at Fresnal (now High Rolls) in the early 1890s. The Woffords owned milk cows, hogs, and chickens and made their own soap and butter (TBHS 1981:462-463). Parrott left less evidence.

A. J. Messer, J. R. Watson, and Backues Dairy

J. R. Watson advertised himself as the successor to A. J. Messer in Alamogordo in February 1904. He offered "Pure Milk and Cream" and looked for "Patronage Solicited." His ads only ran for the month of February. Later in 1904, Backues Dairy advertised "Fresh Milk. . . Guaranteed." Backues ads only ran in July and August. Thus, at least three dairies operated in Alamogordo in 1904.

Andrew Jackson Messer (born February 17, 1843) married Matilda Jane Smith on May

21, 1865, and the family moved from Kentucky to Albany, Texas, around 1880. A second migration placed the family in Alamogordo about 1899. One of the sons, Andrew J., Jr. (always called Jack), “was at one time in the dairy business out west of Alamogordo” (TBHS 1981:369).

Cloudcroft Dairy

The Otero County dairy industry also operated at a higher elevation. On May 28, 1904, the Cloudcroft Dairy announced it sold “Pure Milk and Butter” under the proprietorship of B. B. Smith (*Cloudcroft Silver Lining* May 28, 1904). Although its advertisement ceased on June 11, it resumed almost exactly a year later (June 3, 1905), this time with J. R. Smith at the helm. Smith boasted he (she?) had PURE MILK[,] BUTTER AND EGGS” and promised to “deliver to any part of the City daily” along with “VEGETABLES IN SEASON” (*Cloudcroft Silver Lining* June 3, 1905). Like many of his (her?) predecessors, this ad, too, vanished in less than a month.

City Dairy

City Dairy advertised briefly (just over a month) in 1905 that it offered “Pure Milk and Cheese[,] Butter Milk[, and] Cottage Cheese.” E. N. Fisher was manager (*Alamogordo Daily Journal* February 27, 1905). E. H. Fisher Dairy was listed under Alamogordo in the 1905-06 edition of the New Mexico Business Directory. Although the middle initial is different, this is clearly the same Fisher.

Mrs. C. F. Barrett and Barrett’s Jersey Dairy

Although the Barretts had been in the dairy business since 1889, Mrs. C. F. Barrett first advertised in Cloudcroft in 1904. She offered “Pure Jersey Milk[,] Cream and Butter” and boasted that she held “first prize for pure butter from Farmers Institute” (*Cloudcroft Silver Lining* June 4, 1904). Although her ads only ran from June 4 through August 13, 1904, she may have been the Jersey Dairy that was listed in Cloudcroft in the 1903-04 New Mexico Business Directory. The Barretts were silent throughout the next decade but began advertising again in May 1914. [This may not have been strictly true. Issues of the *Cloudcroft Silver Lining* exist for parts of 1908 and 1909, but no issues survive again until the *Weekly Cloudcrofter* of 1914. Intervening issues may have held more ads.]

The May 15, 1914, *Weekly Cloudcrofter* advertised C. F. Barrett’s Jersey Dairy which claimed to be “Modern[,] sanitary and up to date.” The dairy offered “Fresh Milk and cream twice a day” and catered to “Wholesale and family trade[,] Satisfaction Guaranteed” (*Weekly Cloudcrofter* May 15, 1914). Thus began a series of ads that ran from May 1914 to November 1915. The Barretts ceased advertising in the winter when cold weather may have interfered with milking and delivery or may have reduced sales. From February until late April of 1915, the Jersey Dairy expressed its limits: “We deliver Milk three times a week in Cloudcroft until April 15th, then daily” and added, “We also deliver wood anywhere in Cloudcroft” (*Weekly Cloudcrofter* February 26, 1915). From June to September, the ad included the dairy’s establishment date of 1889 and touted the dairy as “The Home of Blue Ribbon Dairy Products[,] The best by every test—Guaranteed pure and sanitary[,] Everything Strictly Modern and Up-to-date.” They offered “Free delivery to all parts of town” (*Weekly Cloudcrofter* June 25, 1915). The ads became progressively smaller until the final ad ran in late November (*Weekly Cloudcrofter* September 17, 1915; November 26, 1915). The Barretts remained in the dairy business from 1889 until at least 1915, a total of 26 years, a record in Otero County up to that

time.

Thomason's Dairy

Thomason's Dairy (Alamogordo) placed a single blurb on April 30, 1929 and bragged that they had "Installed a New Electric Refrigerating Cooling Machine" with "Milk kept always at a cool temperature" (*Alamogordo Advertiser* April 30, 1929). If you did not read the paper on the 30th, you never got another chance to find out about Thomason's.

About 1892, James Turner Thomason (always known as Turner) was born on November 12, 1860, in Fulton, Kentucky. He eventually settled in Bronte, Texas, and married Emma Hazeltine Scott Thompson there in 1886. The couple eventually had eight children. The family migrated in a covered wagon to what is now Cloudcroft in 1892 (TBHS 1981:441-442).

The Thomasons moved to Alamogordo in 1915. Turner "did alot (*sic*) of trading and had a dairy on the north side of Alamogordo" (TBHS 1981:442). One of their sons, Eddie Roy (always called Roy) was born in 1894. On September 4, 1922, he married Sallie Green, and the couple worked at Thomason's Dairy "for awhile" about 1923. Roy and Sallie also ran their own "dairy in the summer for Cloudcroft summer people" in the mid-1920s (TBHS 1981:443; 1985:168).

Smith Bros. Dairy

Although the *Otero County News* bragged that Alamogordo had two dairies in 1917 (*Otero County News*, August 23, 1917), neither one of them advertised in the paper that year. One of the two dairies may have been the Smith Bros. Dairy which advertised in the *Alamogordo News* on October 2, 1919 that it was "Clean and Sanitary" and "All Dairy Cows [are] Tubercular Inspected. We have opened a Sanitary Dairy in Alamogordo and will appreciate your orders for Milk, Cream, Butter Milk, and Butter. We make deliveries both morning and evening. Give orders for whipping cream 12 hours in advance." They added a drawing of a cow on November 6 and ceased advertising on April 1, 1920. They also advertised in the *Alamogordo Cloudcrofter* during that same time period. It is currently unknown whether this group of Smiths was related to the ones who advertised Cloudcroft Dairy from 1904 to 1905.

E. E. Cooperall and M. G. Barber

Instead of column ads, some small dairymen placed brief notices in the personal section. The *Alamogordo Cloudcrofter* noted in 1921 that:

Mr. & Mrs. E. E. Cooperall of Valmount [an Otero County town no longer in existence], have established a milk and butter depot in this city on Tenth Street, and will supply the local trade with milk, butter, eggs, and cream. They own a splendid herd of dairy cattle, and have heretofore shipped their products to El Paso. They will maintain a delivery service to any part of town (*Alamogordo Cloudcrofter* May 27, 1921).

The Cooperalls, however, did not advertise in the newspaper. Two years later (1923), M. G. Barber informed the public, "Having resumed the dairy business I am delivering good Jersey milk at 12½ cents a quart. A share of your patronage solicited" (*Alamogordo News* May 17, 1923). Like the Cooperalls, Barber never placed an ad. Dairy advertisements and notices were scarce and of short duration until Bass Dairy began its long but inconsistent series of ads on May 12, 1927.

Old City Dairy

From February until June of 1922, C. H. Pennington advertised his Old City Dairy (no relation to the City Dairy of the 1930s and later). His motto was “Don’t Forget the Old City Dairy,” and he offered “Jersey Cows’ Milk” at ten-cents a quart.

South Side Dairy

Later in 1922, the South Side Dairy offered dairy products such as “Pure Sweet Milk, Butter Milk, Butter and Cream delivered to all parts of the city twice daily” under the proprietorship of C. A. Edwards (*Alamogordo News* December 28, 1922). However, by March 8, 1923, just four months after his first ad, Edwards withdrew from the *News*.

Richard’s Dairy

Richard’s Dairy advertised in the *News* beginning July 28, 1925, “Since milk is such an important item in the diet of growing children, you should use every precaution to see that it is pure. We guarantee the purity of our milk” (*Alamogordo News* August 13, 1925). Richard’s ads continued until September 30, 1926. Apparently Richard’s Dairy continued in operation after it ceased advertising. Otto Douglas “Doug” McNatt and his wife, Susie, bought “the old Richards dairy on North Cuba Avenue” on June 1, 1942 and sold it again in 1945 (TBHS 1985:289). Apparently they renamed the business the McNatt Dairy—the author is in possession of liginous disks that bear the designation: PURE RAW MILK/GRADE (with an enlarged A)/PHONE 214-J1/M^CNATT DAIRY.



Figure 4-1 - Richards Dairy cap Figure 4-2 McNatt Dairy cap