

G.DOWE McQUESTEN was born on a farm in Litchfield, New Hampshire, 80 years ago this month, next oldest of a family of four boys, sons of Henry Wingate and Sarah (Jones) McQuesten. The McQuestens descended from one William McQuesten who emigrated from Scotland to Medford, Mass., in 1728 and two years later settled on a Litchfield, N.H., farm of about 80 acres, which extended from the bank of the Merrimac river easterly to Londonderry. About half of the land was covered with timber. The farm work was all done with oxen when G. Dowe was a boy, but his father always kept a small horse used to drive to the city, Manchester 12 miles north, or Nashua 8 miles south. Each winter a portion of the timber was cut and hauled by the boys to the river bank, whence it was floated down, on the spring flood waters, to Lowell Mass., to the saw mill.

Four McQuesten boys, G. Dowe's father, his brother William, and Varnum and Leroy N. McQuesten, went around Cape Horn to Calif. in the gold rush of 1849. After an absence of fourteen years, Henry and William returned across the plains to the place of their birth, married and lived there the rest of their lives. --Hearing much about the great West and the thrilling experiences of his father, G. Dowe, at the age of fifteen, decided to go to Calif. With \$7 in his pocket, he had earned cutting cordwood, he struck out 65 years ago this month. He got as far as Buffalo, N.Y., where he got a job in a Tift Farm lumber yard on the shore of Lake Erie, four miles out of Buffalo, carrying and piling lumber ten hours a day, for 75¢ a day. He had to walk eight miles a day, as it cost 10¢ to ride on a tug boat, and he had but 9¢ a day left after paying his board. However, the time was not useless, as he bought a second hand shorthand book and studied it while walking, then on Sunday he went to church and when the preacher spoke any word he could write in short hand he did so, and in about a year he mastered shorthand, without a teacher. After 13 months, he was given a promotion, measuring and tallying lumber at \$1.25 a day. Within three years he was foreman for the company at \$18 a week, and as the Co. had three lumber yards, they furnished a horse and buggy for use in his work. It was not long until he had saved enough to make another start for Calif. He got a leave of absence for three months, stopped off in Denver and got a job as a stenographer, and never went back to Buffalo.

When gold was discovered at Cripple Creek, Colo., he went there to try his luck at mining. There were several tents and a few shacks at the foot of Pike's Peak, and he thought the gold rush was a fake. Since then, however, millions of dollars have been taken out of there. He chanced to meet an

old prospector there, named Bob Crozier, and went with him to Gold Hill, where they did a lot of hard work, but got no gold. Then he went to Leadville and on down to Aspen, then a thriving mining camp. Making up his mind he was not cut out for a miner, he bought a half interest in a steam laundry in Aspen. He soon sold out at a good profit and went to San Francisco, where he bought machinery and again went into the steam laundry business. After 2½ years' hard work in this venture, he sold out and went to Salt Lake City, and got in as clerk of the Board of Education. Utah was still a territory.

Next he took a civil service examination and was appointed a stenographer in the Interior Dept., Washington, D.C., and at once began the study of law at night. In three years he received the diploma from Pres. Grover Cleveland conferring the degree LLB. The following year he received the degree LLM from the hand of Pres. McKinley, ex officio president of the University, took the bar examination and was admitted to practice law, in 1898.

He wanted to get back to the Pacific Coast, so asked for a transfer in government service, and was sent as chief clerk to the Puyallup Indian Agency, and from there as chief clerk at Fort Simcoe. In this position he went to Toppenish every three months to pay the Indians their lease money. There was no town, but Frank Williams (Toppenish Trading Co.) always loaned him a small table and chair, in the little building on the railroad right of way, where the Indians were paid. He often said that if the government would ever allow any land to be sold there, it was a logical place for a town. In 1906 the opportunity came. "I was practicing law in Tacoma at the time, and put in a bid of \$16,000. for the Robbins 80-acre allotment. I came over to Ft. Simcoe at the opening of the bids, and found several other hopefuls there, who had put in bids; but my bid was so much higher than the others, they said: 'Who is that man McQuesten? he must be crazy to bid such a price for that land'" I stood it as long as I could, then said: "I'm that crazy guy; I want the land, is why I bid so high; there ought to be a town at Toppenish" I had all the Indians buildings, fences, etc., torn down, built a bridge across a slough that ran through the farm, and proceeded to plat the land, conforming to the points of the compass, with a 100 foot street through the center of the tract, naming it Toppenish Ave.

Some other men, H.M. Gilbert, Frank Williams, L.M. Tyrrell, et al., had bought a tract adjoining, half the size of mine, and proceeded to plat it conforming to the Ry. right of way, which traversed diagonally through the tract.

When I attempted to get approval of my plat, a protest was filed with the county commissioners (who as I remember it were Dan McDonald, James Stewart and Jim Lancaster), and my competitors sent for me to come over to see them, saying they wanted me to join with them as one plat, calling it the City of Toppenish. This was agreeable to me until informed they wanted us all to go in on equal shares. As I had twice as much land as they had, I declined, and said: "You fellows file your plat as the City of Toppenish and I'll file mine as McQuesten's Toppenish Townsite". After an argument before the commissioners, they agreed to accept both plats, except that the other plat would have to be changed so their streets would meet mine, and added: "You fellows must give half of the connecting ^{or adjoining} streets, same as McQuesten has provided for". This accounts for the decided turn in Toppenish Ave., which will always be somewhat confusing. -- Personally, I feel especially friendly toward Toppenish, as I netted a profit of \$50,000. on that venture in three years. Incidentally, I might mention, we had no internal revenue taxes those days, and bread was a nickel a loaf, instead of two bits.

McQuesten says many interesting and often funny things happen in the Indian service; that while Ft. Simcoe in summer is a very pretty place, in winter it is quite desolate, and when he lived there so far from any town, with no transportation except horses, the employes had to contrive their own amusement. There were thousands of wild horses on the range, and for pastime he and his assistant, Chas. Roblin, used to scatter a little hay on the snow trailing the horses into the back yard, which was enclosed with a high board fence, then they would lasso the horses. One day a young Indian said he would ride any horse, for a dollar, no matter how wild it was, that could be corraled. When we had decoyed a bunch of horses into the yard and pulled the gate shut, with a long rope attached to it, we put up the money expecting to see some fun; but the laugh was on us; when he had lassoed the horse and got a hackmore on his head, he jumped on him and said: "Open the gate?" To our surprise the wild looking buckskin we had picked out, was a well broke saddle horse.

The Agency Physician, Dr. Shock, had twin boys, 12 years old, who were fond of riding, fishing, etc. One day they came into the fort, both on one horse, one holding a big rattle snake on the end of a long pole, and the other with two bull snakes dangling from a pole on the other side of the horse.

When asked how they caught the snakes and what they were going to do with them, they replied, that they made snares from hair pulled from the horse's tail and slipped the snares, tied to a pole, over the snakes, and were going to put them into a pen and see if one rattle snake could kill two bull snakes. Much to their surprise, though, they found one bull snake could kill two rattle snakes.

There were plenty of rattle snakes around there, and I was always willing to give them the right of way. I will never forget a hard trip I had one day, from Toppenish to Ft. Simcoe, 35 miles, on a bicycle. The roads were so bad I had to walk much of the way; it was a hot day in August and I drank from every irrigation ditch I could see. When I got to the allotment of Joe Stwire, alias White Swan, where the town of that name is now located, I lay down and drank all the water I could hold, and upon arising observed stretched out a few feet in front of me, a big rattle snake. I did not get thirsty after that all the way to the fort. I went with the Agent, Jay Lynch, several times, hunting pheasants on the White Swan ranch. ★

STARTING IRRIGATION DITCH.

Wm. H. Redman was the engineer when I was at Ft. Simcoe, and I went with him to start the pay-roll, when the irrigation ditch was to be dug. We pitched our tent in a clump of bushes, right near where the present paved road crosses the canal, a little beyond the Pollock store. The land there is now improved with buildings and a fine orchard, and some of those same bushes are fine, big shade trees. - The Indians dug the canal with their horses and scrapers.

Union Gap was then called Yakima City, and though many years before it had been quite a town, it had dwindled to one small store, run by Herman Kampmeir, and I believe a little grist mill.

FIRST WHITE BABY AT FT. SIMCOE.

In 1939, when I was a member of the legislature from Yakima, I stopped at a hotel in Olympia, owned by Edwin H. Wright, then 78 years of age. He told me his father was the first school teacher at Ft. Simcoe, and that he was the first white child born there. He left there at the age of ten years and had never been back there, so I invited him over to visit me the next summer and took him out to the place of his birth, when we found that he was born in the same house occupied by McQuesten and Roblin, when they lived there and boarded in the school mess.

IMPROVING LANDS.

Shortly before World War One, I bought a number of farm buildings, sold to clear the land for improving Fort Lewis, and shipped the lumber to improve my farms in Yakima County. Years before this time, I had a couple of 80-acre tracts at Mabton, and shipped a carload of lumber there. I prepaid the freight and billed the car to a man named Flower, who had a lumber yard there, intending to go over and be there when the lumber arrived, but was detained. Mr. Flower put up a big protest, saying he did not buy the lumber and didn't want it on his switch. Ted Howell, as I remember it, was the Ry. agent there and said the freight had been paid to Mabton, and it simply had to be switched off. --After I got to Mabton and explained the situation to Mr. Flower it was all right, and I hauled the lumber over to my land and set carpenters to work.

Thought Mabton had bright prospects.

Those were busy days for Mabton, all the wheat from the Horse Heaven country, crops from Green Valley and the Sunnyside section had to be shipped from Mabton, and stages from Sunnyside met all trains, so I had an idea that Mabton would become a big city. I bought three farms and platted three additions to Mabton, thinking I would "make a killing" something like Toppenish, but about that time the Northern Pacific built a branch line from below Prosser up through Sunnyside to near where Parker is now located, which killed Mabton "as dead as a door nail" for a long time. However, I vacated the plats, had the land cleared and seeded to alfalfa, and sold it as farm land, so I came out about even on the undertaking. Now, Mabton seems to have taken a new start, and the prospects are brighter. I sold the last of my land there, which I had owned about forty years, to George Gannon, five years ago, and am told it is now in hops.

FILING ON HOMESTEAD.

While at the Puyallup Agency, a friend, R.H. Bone, and I had heard so much about the good lands subject to homestead in Yakima County, we decided to file. We were shown a lot of land by Marion Tustin, then living in Prosser, but long since deceased. Mr. Bone filed a claim five miles N.W. of Prosser, and in a couple of years the Sunnyside canal was extended across it and he moved over and lived there the rest of his life. I filed a claim a dozen or fifteen miles south of Prosser in the Horse Heaven. It was all Yakima County at that time. I bought another 800-acre tract, also had the homestead cleared, fenced and 100 acres of it seeded to wheat; built a small house, barn, etc. After five consecutive years raising wheat on 500 acres, I barely broke even, so quit in disgust. Shortly after Mr. C.H. Hinman became U.S. Land Commissioner, I relinquished my homestead rights to Mr. T.J. Stockdale (now living in Ellensburg) for \$400., feeling that my homestead right was an affliction. They began to assess the lands for "irrigation district", but being satisfied that water would never be put on the land, I refused to pay the assessments and let it go for taxes. -- Those were days when we had to harvest the wheat with a team of 26 horses, and when we got it to the railroad we received 62¢ a bushel. You could get sage brush land cleared for a dollar an acre, and get it plowed for another dollar; but the farmers then did not half plow the land, skinning it just under the bunch grass roots, and we had to haul all the water for house and livestock in tanks, many miles. Since then better farming and more moisture have produced larger crops, and I'm told this same land has sold for \$75. per acre.

LAW.

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I was active law practice in Tacoma for many years, during which time I took a live interest in local matters, was a member of the Tacoma Board of Education, and in 1910 was elected to the state legislature, which was my first activity in politics. I was chairman of the committee on education in the 1911 session and introduced the first teachers' retirement fund bill ever introduced in this State. Before this time I took no interest in matters political. My father, my uncle for whom I was named and practically all my relatives were Democrats, but I never agreed with them on such matters, and think the first time I ever voted for a president was for Teddy Roosevelt. However, after that one election I was elected Justice of the Peace on the Democratic, Republican and Socialist tickets. We didn't have direct primaries in those days, but you wrote in the names of candidates for many offices. I declined all, with appreciation. But I seem to have awakened to the fact that a good citizen should take an interest in political matters, and I have served in both the house and in the senate from Yakima County.

I enjoyed my experience in the legislature, and was elected again from Pierce County. In 1916 Gov. Ernest Lister appointed me a member of the State Board of Control, also of the Prison Board and of the Reformatory Board. Three of us had supervisory control of the 12 state institutions, hiring the superintendents and buying everything the institutions used, including the construction of new buildings. When my term was up I was re-appointed to these boards, but before the expiration of that term, I resigned and came back to Yakima County, where I had numerous interests in land investments.

MURDER TRIAL.

I never liked criminal law and was never the attorney in but one murder trial. Paul Leschi, grandson of the old Chief Leschi, of the Nisquallis, was in jail accused of murder, and sent for me. When I asked him what he wanted he said: "I want you to get me out of here". When I asked what he was there for he hesitated, but I made it plain to him he must tell me the whole truth if he wanted my help. He then explained that when the Indians were having a big celebration on the Nisqualli reservation, Ed. Jack and John Jim, both drunk, were fighting; that it was plain that Jack was getting the best of Jim, and that something had to be done to stop the fight or Jack would kill Jim, so "I grabbed a rail off the fence and hit Jack over the head

which killed him on the spot". He assured me he had no grudge against either of them, and thought he was doing a kindness, but added: "I hit him too hard". Upon inquiry as to Leschi's character, I was told by his teacher at the Indian school and many others, that there was nothing mean in his make-up, and the county commissioner told me that Jack was a good riddance; that he was drunk most of the time, had pulled a gun on him, threatening to kill him, and many Indians testified accordingly. I knew of my own knowledge he often beat up his wife and family, as I had seen her when she couldn't see, as a result of his beating, so I told Leschi I would do all I could to clear him, but for him not to talk to anybody, except to say "not guilty" when brought before the Judge. I did not attempt to prove Leschi did not kill Jack, but said that it was beyond question he did, and proceeded to show he needed killing. The teacher, county commissioner and many Indians testified in court. The jury was out but a few minutes until they rendered the verdict not guilty. -I knew Leschi had no money and I never expected a cent for my services, but the Indians were so pleased to know that Jack was out of the way and Leschi cleared, they took up a collection among themselves and sent me \$300.00.

FISHING RIGHTS OF PRIEST RAPIDS INDIANS.

From time immemorial, the Priest Rapids band of Indians had taken fish from the Columbia river, but were arrested by state officials and stopped from doing so. Mr. O. V. McWhorter, a genuine, true friend of the Indians, who adopted him into the Yakima tribe as "Big Foot", came to me and asked that I try and get a law allowing these Indians to continue fishing, saying they were a small band of Indians, without allotments or lands, had never been dependent upon charity, were a quiet, peaceable people who managed to eke out an existence by working in hay fields, digging potatoes, etc., and always secured their winter's supply of berries from the woods and fish from the Columbia, which they dried and used for subsistence, and not for sale, and he felt it was a crime to take their fishing rights from them. I, therefore, drew up a bill and introduced it in the senate, but it had "tough sledding" until I came home and got Mr. McWhorter to go to Olympia with me and appear before the committees of both house and senate, then the bill was passed and put on the Governor's desk. Immediately there was a big protest from state officials who urged the Governor to veto it. I had previously taken the precaution to explain the situation to Gov. Clarence Martin, who promised

me if the bill was passed and came to him he would sign it. He did approve it, and these Indians have never since been molested.

40 MILL LIMIT LAW.

One of the last acts I was most interested in while state senator, was in getting the 40-mill tax limit bill submitted to the voters as an amendment to the State Constitution. I had several times secured over 500 signers to petitions allowing the voters to express their sentiments in elections, and was confident if it were submitted as a constitutional amendment it would carry. It seemed almost impossible to get both houses to agree to let the question come before the voters as a constitutional amendment. However, it was finally agreed to let the people vote on it and it carried by an overwhelming vote.

HUNTING FOR LAND.

Early in life I made up my mind that the best investment one could make was in land. After congress passed laws allowing the sale of deceased Indians' allotments on the Yakima reservation, I went to Toppenish, rented a team from C.H. Newell, who had a small hotel and livery stable on the R.R. right of way, and with a list of lands for sale and a good map, I started out. Before leaving, though, I said: "Now Charlie, give me a gentle team and a wagon with good brakes, as I'm going alone and will want to leave the team, with reins tied back and brakes set, so I can read the figures, etc designating the allotments." I have no doubt but that he honestly thought he had done so, but unfortunately his man who hitched up for me, left the tugs too slack.

There were almost no roads and very few fences on the reservation, and the corners of all allotments were plainly marked, so with a good map, one could drive across the sage brush in any direction and find almost any allotment he was hunting. However, when I was out about 25 miles, driving over some very rough ground, the wagon tongue dropped down and stuck in the earth. --When I crawled out from under the wreckage, badly stunned, the last I ever saw of those horses was with their tails high in the air, running at full speed, a half or 3/4 of a mile from me. The result was I failed to find any land I was looking for, but had a most disagreeable walk back to Toppenish. --Mr. Newell put an Ad. in the papers, offering a reward for the return of his horses and wagon, and the following week an Indian came in with them and got his reward of \$10. That doesn't seem like much money, but when I had paid ^{and other expenses of the trip} that and repairs to the harness and wagon, I was a hundred dollars out of pocket, without putting in any bid on land.

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One time on a bike from Toppenish to Fort Simcoe was enough. After that I took the stage from North Yakima. "The stage" was a single-seated one horse buggy, driven by a Mr. Perkins, who was related to the Perkins family massacred by the Indians in early days. His wife taught school at the fort and he had the contract to carry the mail, making three trips a week. Two passengers could crowd into the seat and the mail bag was put under the seat. If more than two passengers were on hand to go, Mr. Perkins had arrangements with the liveryman, who I believe was Mr. Barnet, father of our present Judge Dolph Barnett, to use a wagon with two seats and two horses.

LODGE AFFILIATIONS.

I have been a member of the Masonic Lodge 49 years, and have taken every degree except the 33rd; have life certificates in the Blue Lodge, Shrine, Knights Templar and Royal Arch Masons, and have filled many offices in most of them, besides having been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Masonic Home for over a dozen years. The first Masonic home in this State was located on the McQuesten farm in Puyallup, -dedicated Feb. 12, 1912. Am also a member of the Yakima Pioneers Ass'n. and Wapatox Grange at Naches. Was a member of Nob Hill Grange 26 years, and Past Master, also Past Master of the O.E.S. and Order of Amaranth.

I got sick five years ago, and quit about everything; sold all the real estate we had, including our home on Tieton Drive, but retained a cabin at Rimrock, where we have spent 20 summers and four winters. I bought two crypts in a mausoleum, and the last time I returned from the legislature, thought I would soon occupy one of them, but now I plan to let it stay vacant a long time, as I much prefer to live at 924 So. 26th Ave., in Yakima, and never felt better in my life than I do now at the age of 80 years.

My friend, Joe Alcorn, and I are now taking a trip as far south as Mexico and expect to visit a brother of mine in San Antonio, Texas, whom I have seen but once during the past 65 years, -and also expect to visit our youngest daughter, Emmy Lou Terrall, at Albuquerque, New Mexico, and also visit my youngest brother, David, in Burbank, California. We plan to return home in April.

FAMILY

G. Dowe McQuesten married Mabel LaPlante, only daughter of Joseph LaPlante, who many years ago was foreman for the Moxee Land Co., but later book-keeper for Ezra Meeker several years, and finally City Clerk of Puyallup 13 consecutive terms until his death, which occurred 26 years ago at the McQuesten home in Yakima. McQuestens have three children and three grandchildren: Rosemary (Mrs. Scot Spirk) Seattle; ^{Mrs.} Emmy Lou Terrall, Albuquerque, N.M., and Jos. Wingate McQuesten, now attending the University in Seattle, and who served two years in World War II. His wife was Miss Juanita Brown, of Yakima. and they have a 3-year old son. Joe will graduate from the U. in June.

Mrs. McQuesten is not going on the trip with her husband and Joe Alcorn, as she dislikes such long automobile trips.