

Flora and Fauna

"Eastern" Washington

East of Rock Creek..the road sides and swales are radiant with shaparral, sarsaparilla, juniper and wild sage and in late May and June they are ablaze with blooming wild pansy, violet, buttercup, bluebell, blue grass flower, lupin, lilies, iris and two of the most delicate species of the entire wild flower family--the rock rose and the lady slipper.

Camas, kowsh and saw-wit, belonging to the lilacious family grow very rank on the plateau and are three of the Indians' most desired foods. In April and May the pastures are dotted with Indian women digging with long hooks, for roots which they dry and save for winter use.

The creek bottoms are picturesque spots with the natural growth of pine, alder, scrub oak, cottonwood, willow, aspen, wild rose, currant, gooseberry, elderberry, syringa, snow berry and Oregon grape.

The almost round leaves of the aspen--never stop trembling..

Across the Years--Hazel Addie Jensen, 1951.

Ferries

...In the Washington Territorial laws of 1861-62 the right to keep ferries was granted and that year E.H. Lewis and Egbert French received a franchise to operate a ferry across the Columbia River from Washington Territory to The Dalles. However, before the law was passed, James Herman had run a small boat in 1858 across the river at the same place.

A franchise was granted from the territory of Washington about 1885 to Leroy Weaver to operate a ferry across the Columbia river near Alkali, Ore. Mr. Weaver was married to Alice Duncan, first school teacher in Bickleton and they lived on a flat near the river on the Washington side.

On a late afternoon in the spring of 1890 Bill McFadden, son of Mr. and Mrs. William McFadden, accidentally shot himself and the mother, speeding with him to a doctor, reached the dock after dark.

The river was white capped, very rough and Mr. Weaver warned Mrs. McFadden of the danger in crossing, but the child's life was at stake so the crossing was made by Mr. Weaver and his partner.

Mrs. McFadden and the boys stayed at Arlington and the men in the boat did not tarry but turned at once toward home. Somewhere near the middle of the river the ferry capsized and Mr. Weaver was drowned....Across The Years--Hazel Addie Jensen, 1951.

Cattlemen: Snipes, Ed and Ben..(Allen and Murphy)

I lived the first 18 years of my life across the road from the Ed Snipes family and have many pleasant memories of them. Mr. Snipes would relate, by the hour, experiences of crossing the plains; of riding range in early days in Klickitat; of the Hamiltonians and the Thoroughbred horses which his brother Ben brought from Kentucky.

There are a number of great nieces and nephews of the Snipes family but none are living that bear the Snipes name.

Elam Snipes, son of a revolutionary war officer was born in North Carolina in 1813 and his wife, Acanith (Rossen) Snipes was born in 1815, also in North Carolina. They were married at a very early age and were the parents of five children, Ben, Martha, George, Fannie and Ed. Before Ed, the youngest was born, the family moved to Iowa. In 1856 Ben, the eldest of the family, came west.

Historians have written that as early as 1857 Ben Snipes brought cattle into Klickitat county. They were turned on the open range and the first record of Eastern Klickitat is that written of Ben Snipes.

Ben Elam Snipes, known to all Washington historians was a large fine looking man with medium brown hair, gray eyes, a dark beard and mustache and an abundance of the energetic faculty we call will. He was not spectacular in dress but very conservative; it was said that he never wore flashy cowboy attire. He limped slightly, one leg being shorter than the other, but he moved with tiger-like motions smooth and easy. He was twenty-eight years of age when he came to Washington Territory. He was a fearless man but had a warm, jovial and very generous disposition and it was probably those in-born virtues that were the key to his friendliness with the Indians.

With William Murphy as a partner, the Snipes' herd of cattle increased in two years to two thousand or more head and in the fall of 1859 they drove cattle into Yakima county, which at that time was entirely unsettled. The partnership of Snipes and Murphy was

dissolved and Henry Allen, who had married Fannie Snipes, Ben's sister, became a partner in the business.

During the hard winter of 1861 -62 they lost nearly all their cattle in Klickitat and Yakima counties but they had two hundred head farther north in the Okanagon valley which had wintered well. Most of the other stockmen were discouraged with their heavy losses and sold very cheaply, the stock they had left. Snipes and Allen bought all the cattle available and that fall they drove them with the two hundred head in Okanagon to British Columbia, Canada where they sold them at the Caribou (copy) Mines for \$1 to \$1.50 per pound. While in the spring they had been considered "broken stockmen", by fall they had cleared \$40,000.

In 1864 Father and Mother Snipes and the other four members of the family came west by ox team from Iowa. They came through Utah spending six months on the road and they settled on the Little Klickitat river south and west of Goldendale.

The business of Snipes and Allen doubled and tripled yearly and by 1880 it was estimated that they owned between forty and fifty thousand head and were known as Cattle Kings of "Washington" Territory. Drove of cattle with the "S" brand ranged from the Columbia river at Dallesport to the Fraser River valley of British Columbia.

Another hard winter in 1880 -81 came as a blow that staggered all the stockmen; cattle belonging to Snipes and Allen died by the thousands.

Again most of the cattle owners were discouraged and anxious to

dispose of the stock they had left, and again the genius ability

of the stockman who had cleared of Snipes arose to the occasion. He rushed to Portland and borrowed a large sum of money from Mr. Ladd of the Ladd and Tilton Bank and with it bought all the cattle on the vast range--large steers for \$16-cow and calf for \$6. By fall he was again the richest man in Central Washington.

Besides the stock, Snipes had large real estate holdings--a fifteen hundred acre ranch at Parker Bottom, several tracts in the Kittitas valley, a section on Pine Creek in the Klickleton country and an enormous amount of city property in Seattle. The Klickleton section, railroad land, was the first deeded property in Eastern Klickitat county and was the first to be fenced in. The worm fence, which was nine ~~000~~ rails high was built around the entire place in 1862 and was used for a corral for cutting out the beef cattle. Part of the old rail fence is still visible. At that same time, Mr. Snipes constructed a log house and a log barn on the creek bottom which were headquarters for the Klickitat cowboys during the round-up seasons..

The Snipes and Allen combination was a Utopian partnership--as far as was known, a cross word was never exchanged between them. Snipes was, of course, the over-all boss but he never made a final decision without consulting Allen.

Ben Snipes was married to Mary Parrot of Goldendale and they made their home in Seattle. They had one son who was drowned in Alaskan waters in the middle eighties. Ben was of noble birth and with generosity overflowing if a friend or a foe were in need he would, without question, write a check for \$1,000-- \$2,000.

In 1888 Mr. Snipes erected a two and one-half story cut stone building in Ellensburg where he, with Mr. Abram as junior partner, opened the Ben E. Snipes and company banking institution.

Soon after ^athe branch bank at Roslyn was established. For a time the enterprise went smoothly but reverses due to many factors which could not be overcome, caused both the Ellensburg and Roslyn banks to close their doors on June 9, 1893.

The banks' depositors did not blame Snipes but extended him their sympathies. The books showed assets far above liabilities but there was a "black

a "black jack" somewhere in the receivership and the depositors were only paid a small per cent of their deposits.

Mr. Snipes never recovered from the injustice to himself and to his creditors. He made two financial recoveries but every man must sooner or later come to the "end of the lane." He had passed the peak of his energetic years and was going down the declining side; his two outstanding characteristics--perseverance and pluck failed him and he could not make a third comeback. He died in 1908 broken in spirit as well as body.

Ed Snipes, twenty-seven years younger than his brother, Ben, was seven years old when he came with his parents across the plains to Klickitat. He grew up on the range--was a superb horseman and lover of the out-of-doors. When his name is mentioned one can almost smell the bacon and eggs and see Ed Swiftly moving around camp mixing the "goughgods" in the top of a sack of flour and stirring the dumplings for huckleberry duff.

Ed was a man of small stature, active, alert, nimble and had a twinkle in his eye. He was rich in knowledge. The first school in Klickitat county was opened in 1866 which Ed attended, but he received most of his early book learning around the campfires with Ben and the other range riders as his instructors. They carried text books and Ed was assigned lessons. Sometimes he was allowed to take the books with him, during the day, but after his teachers learned that the books were being thrown away, instead of lost, that practice was discontinued.

Mr. Snipes was married in 1878 to Katherine Louise Hause at Spring Creek, west of Goldendale and they lived on the Snipes homestead and cared for the old folks until the parents died. Grandpa Snipes died in 1896 and Grandma Snipes in 1898. Both of them were buried on the old place south and west of Goldendale.

Uncle Ed and Aunt Didd, as Mr. and Mrs. Ed Snipes were affectionately called, had one son, Harry, born in 1884. Harry, always a favorite of

crowd, was married to Emma Gale and to this union one son Harold, was born. Harold, a loveable child and the idol of his grand parents, and grandparents, died when he was 14 years of age and his father Harry, died in 1932.

Recollections of Ed Snipes are of a man much beloved, especially by children and by the Indians whose language he fluently spoke. When he was a small boy they named him "Friend" and he carried the nickname among the Tribal people until he died. No doubt they knew his real name was Snipes but they never spoke it--to the Red man it was only "Friend."

In early days Mr. Snipes served as both doctor and nurse to the people in the little settlement where he lived in Western Klickitat. If it were "snakes" in their boots or having a baby, they sent for Ed Snipes.

He spent his entire life in the saddle and could, at seventy years of age, saddle a horse as quickly as most men of twenty years. He got his first saddle horse when he was eight years old which Ben had made, by a saddler, in the Dalles. In his later life he and Riley, a brown mule, were familiar figures throughout the countryside. Riley never crossed a creek without lying down in the middle of the stream. Mr. Snipes would often laugh and tell of the duckings he had gotten, before he learned that no amount of kinds of persuasives would convince Riley he would not budge.

It was aggravating for Ed would have to ride up or down the creek until he found a log he could walk across and lead Riley--of course waiting for him to take the dip in the water.

Contrary to what one would imagine of such adventurous western people, the Snipes' were cultured and genteel folk which was demonstrated even by their clothing. A necktie to Ed was as important as pants and when dressed in the roughest he wore a neat tie.

Few people have the natural chivalry and are as fascinating as was that

family.

Ed Snipes will always be remembered by his famous expression, "by jollies" and I have an idea his last words were:

"By jollies, honey, I'll go throw a little hay to Old Wiley and then I'll make doughnuts for supper!"

He died in 1940 and with his passing, passed the last member of one of the most colorful and picturesque pioneer families of the Pacific Northwest. While the great name "Snipes" was buried with the Pioneers, landmarks such as Snipes mountain and the Old Snipes' ranches will always live-- Across the Years, Hazel Addie Jensen, 1951.