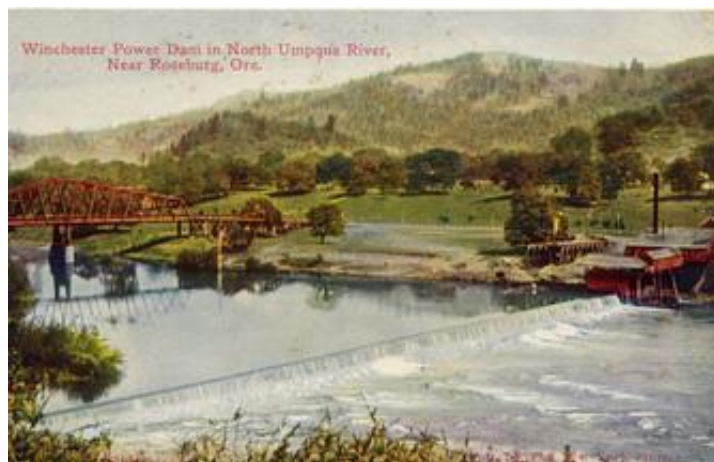


1915 - On the Umpqua River



Ernest Rowe 1915 - On the Umpqua River

One of the most unforgettable years was living in a stilt house on the Umpqua River. It was built on piling over the river. My father, Ernest Rowe had a job building a large barn on the opposite side. Our house was on Smith River side of the Umpqua. Only trails connected the two rivers. Our cousins lived on the Smith River. Everyone had a boat as that was the only means of transportation. The paddle boat the Eva, was so pretty as she churned her way with passengers and freight on her way to Scottsburg. She would pick up milk cans at the farms on the way. We loved to wave at the passengers and crew, and watch her go by. An Indian family lived on a farm down the trail from our house. They were named Maceys. The younger ones were close to my mother's age. Gus and Anna Macy were their names. She loved to come and visit with my mother and tease us kids. She made nice biscuits but my brother wouldn't eat any. She was a little dirty and greasy and that bothered his stomach. My two brothers, Milton and Wilbur, were 9 and 8; I was 5, my sister, Thelma, was 3. My mother loved to fish. We all got in our row boat with our cousin, Delta Keith, who was 14. Mom tied the trowling line to her foot and started rowing up the river where she caught a nice salmon. Then we heard the dogs barking; all of a sudden out jumped a nice big buck deer into the water. It started swimming toward us. Delbert said, "Shall we get it?." The only weapon was Delbert's pocket knife and the oar. Mom grabbed its tail and hung on. Delbert did the rest. IT wasn't long before they got it in the boat when we heard the Eva whistle before coming around the bend. We had a gunny sack and coats to cover it. We all waved and showed them our nice salmon. They wished us lots of luck as they passed by. Our dad was one surprised man when he came home from work and saw the deer hanging in the wood shed. When the rains came with the high water, I noticed my mother was worried but she never frightened us kids. She tied the row boat to the tree on the lower side of the house on shore. Then we went to bed. We woke up hearing water sloshing our wash tub on the porch and water slowly creeping in under the door. Mom told us to get on the bed and watch the river. It was swiftly going by when we saw a rooster on a shed going by and crowing. Then we saw two beautiful horses swimming down the river with their heads held high. Later we learned they were rescued close to Reedsport. Lots of logs, lumber, sheds and boats went by while we watched. Mom stayed busy trying to get hooks onto our boat to bring it close to the porch. She didn't have any luck so came in and said, "I sure hope our house isn't washed off the piling." We heard someone yelling help. Dad went to the door and looked out. IT was our cousin, Harry Bernhardt. He made a raft to try to get to us and our boat, but his raft hit a tree and broke up. So we had to rescue him out of the tree. Dad tied a stick to a fish line

and threw it to him. HE caught it so Dad tied a rope on the fish line and Harry tied it to the tree, then Dad tied the other end to our porch. Harry came in hand over hand, while we prayed. Soon we heard Uncle Elmer Keith with his powerful fishing boat to our rescue. This is a true story and real people. *Pioneers of Douglas County*, by: Elveta Rowe (Barnes) Source: Historic Douglas County, Oregon 1982 Copyright 1982, Douglas County Historical Society