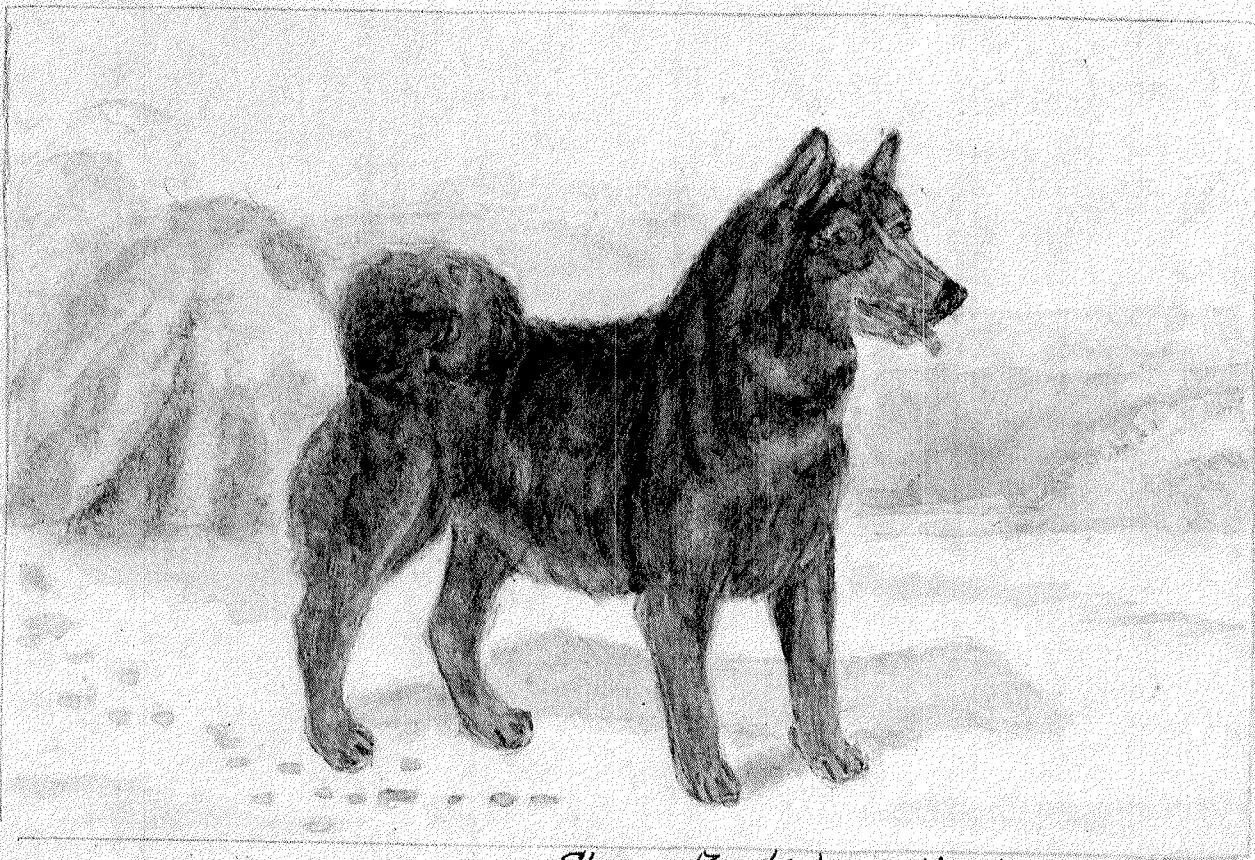


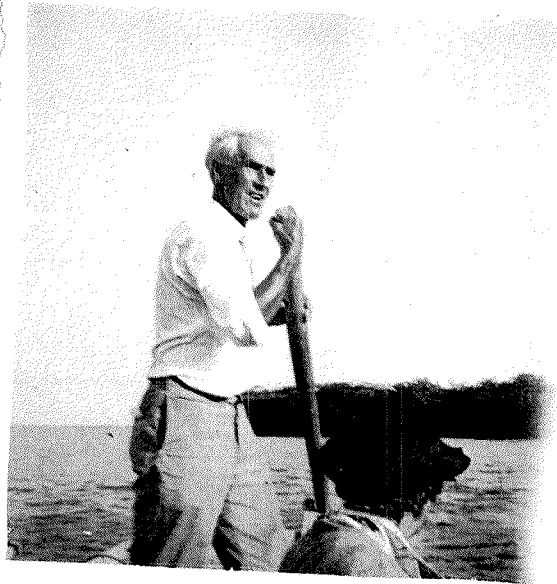


TWENTY FIVE YEARS  
UNDER  
WESTERN SKIES



*Shep - Ready for action!*

TO MY HUSBAND



who for twenty-five years shared  
with me these highlights and  
experiences, is this manuscript  
respectfully dedicated.

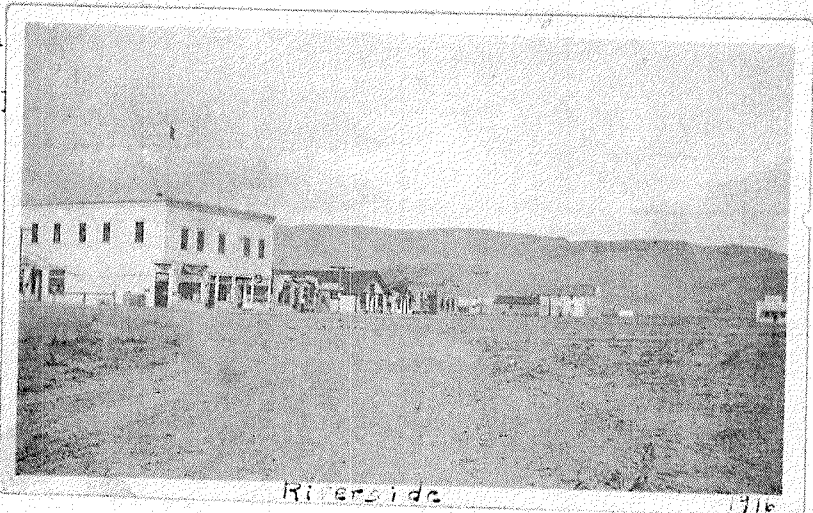


And so they were married. At 12 Noon, June 29th, 1916 at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Valley City, N.D. The reception at the home of brother Andrew, who also gave the bride away, Art was best man while Al had the honor of being the driver of the wedding "taxi!"

well wished of friends and relatives, they were off on the Soo Line for Canada and Oregon with a brief visit at Carpio, ND with relatives.

On July 4th, we arrived at Vale, Oregon going on to Riverside that afternoon where a friend and his sturdy farm wagon and two spans of mules met the newly-weds.

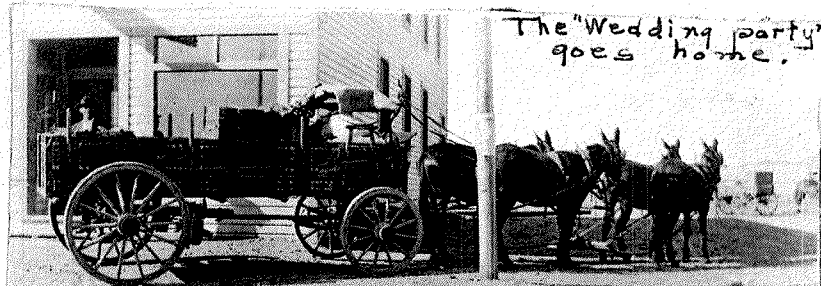
July 5th at 5 AM, we started out from Riverside. All day long we jogged along the hot dusty and deeply rutted road. I sat between the two gentlemen--one minute sleeping on one shoulder and ere long on the other fellows. At 7P.M. the homestead came to view---my new "Home Sweet Home". We found supper ready prepared by Joe--the man and maid of all work while Norm was getting married. It consisted of hot sour-dough bread and brown beans well flavored with red pepper. I can't taste them yet--they left a hot trail all the way down. Those beans more than anything else, made me realize that now the honeymoon was over and the desert had me cornered. Norm was very good--he stuck pretty close to the house until I got my bearings. Housekeeping here was entirely different from what I had been used to.



That first summer was spent in household duties, including the care of the chickens and the milking of cows. I papered our little home and hung up curtains---it was really cute.

Norm was busy heading grain for the neighbors and much of the time was away from home nights also. He gave me a lovely pearl handled pistol to keep under my pillow, in case I had use for firearms! I never had occasion to try it out.

My worst pest that summer was the milk cows. In Oregon, the calves share the milk with the milk<sup>2</sup> half and half. The calf



first gets his half, then comes the milker's turn. Sometimes both milk at the same time and it is quite a race as to which one gets thru first. Cows stay in the corral at night while calves browse outside and in the day time it is visa versa and cows stray wherever fancy takes them; perhaps miles away.

My first ride in Ea. Oregon - 1916 -

Well trained cows should come home to their offspring at dusk. Every night I would scan the horizon in every direction for a sign of the strays. Along about midnight, they would announce their coming---it was a regular bedlam, with calves and cows bawling. In sheer desperation, I would get up and milk in order to have peace.

I think, possibly, the scariest time I had that first summer, was the day half a dozen of the neighbors came to visit---coming at 10:30AM and staying all day---men women and children. They no doubt planned it so to see if I was equal to the occasion. Thanks to a fine garden, a big home-cured ham and by sacrificing my one jar of strawberry jam, that Mother had sent along in my trunk from home--and using it as flavoring for a tapioca pudding we had a "swell feed", so they said. Which reminds me--Norm had it on hand at that time 10¢ each of tapioca and sago which lasted me for 15 years.

Having filed on a homestead the spring before, come Sept. we moved onto it and lived in a tent while we built a little home there. It was built from native rock quarried right on our own land. The house had three rooms with plenty of windows. Neighbors called it the "Glass House". By Thanksgiving the house was finished



1916

and once more I got busy papering, varnishing, making curtains etc. It was this fall also that Norm brot me Snowball-a little white Indian pony. He paid \$12.50 for him. I had tried to ride one of Norm's saddle horses before this but they were so tall, I was scared to death. I soon learned to ride Snowball---he could run like the wind which I thoroely enjoyed after I once had courage to try it. The neighbors used to tell how they watched the fence posts when I first started to ride to see if I was actually moving. Come C hristmas, we trimmed a juniper tree and asked

House on my homestead.



the house from the time I was a child

our neighbors for Christmas dinner. We had nice dishes and silver that had been given us as wedding presents and I set a nice table. But our neighbors felt that I was trying to put on "dog" and laughed at me for it--I never tried that again.

In Feb. Norm brot me two orphan lambs that I raised on the bottle. Because

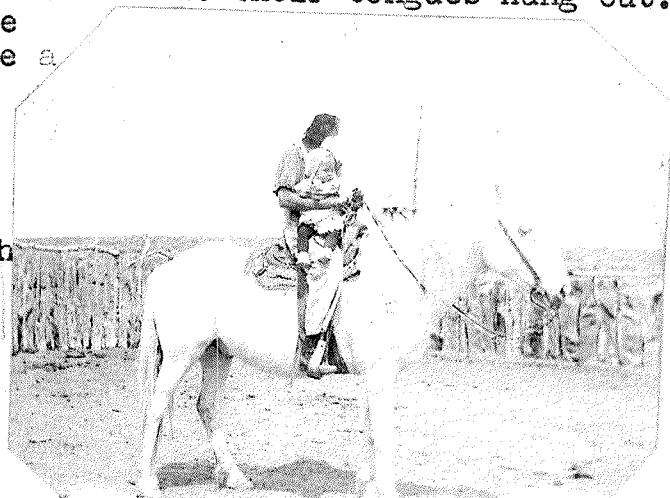
one was little and the other big, I named them Mutt and Jeff. They furnished us with no end of amusement and as it happened Jeff was the start of our flock of sheep and lived to a ripe old age.

In March, the time was up on the homestead and we moved back to Norm's place. The summer passed very much as the year before--Norm working away from home and I sleeping with a gun under my pillow. Norm's father came to see us in August--he did not think much of our location for a home but he did enjoy hunting our jackrabbits with which the country was over-run. When he left I went with him as far as Ontario, where I stayed for a month during which time a big event in our lives took place. Kenneth was born on Sept. 6th. I remember how Norm sold his favorite saddle horse to the U.S. Cavalry to pay Dr and hospital bills. The only three babies born in our valley that year, came during the week of Sept. 5 to 12th.--two boys and a girl.

Back to the homestead for the winter. We raised a bumper crop of potatoes that fall and what we did not sell, went into a pit. Towards spring Norm had a bad attack of "flu". Now Snowball and I did "our stuff". As soon as Ken was put to sleep in the morning, I'd jump on the pony, gallop the mile across to N's ranch, to feed the stock. The lambs were a year old now and they galloped along with us--so tired sometimes that their tongues hung out. Wouldn't that have been a movie for you? We made the trip twice a day for a week and luckily I kept well.

When spring came we found the potatoes had rotted so were thrown out.

And back to Norm's ranch again. Now however I had Ken who was a lot of company. Norm acted as deputy assessor this spring and was gone from home a long time. Got a wagon for Ken so he was safe while chores were cared for. One evening during this time I found



Klara and Ken 1917

I must make a trip to the P.O? As soon as Ken had gone to sleep I tied him to the bed so if he awoke before I got back, he would not fall out of bed.

Something funny had taken place on my homestead during the summer while we were gone. When we opened the door to the house in the fall, the awfullest odor met us. We had quite a hunt before we found the cause.--Way over in a corner out of sight, we found all the rotten potatoes we had thrown out the spring before--there were several pails. Some pack rat had been very industrious during our absence. Too, we found the overshoes full of dried prunes and beans that had been left behind.

War was on in earnest and men of Norm's age were being drafted. He had received his call for sometime in November and we were planning what Ken and I were to do during his absence. Norm leased his range cattle--35 head--to a man on the Owyhee River for a period of three years. Then shortly before he was to leave, we



Ken, Klara — Matt and Jeff.

learned that the Armistice had been signed. We were ofcourse delighted about this---but what should he do now! He was like a "fish out of water" without his cattle. So the following spring he negotiated with Mr Harral to get his cattle back and made a purchase of his ranch.--This spring he was deputy

assessor once more. Then along in May, we loaded the farm wagon with our belongings, crossed Juniper Mountains over some awful roads and literally catapulted onto the Owyhee River over a steep grade. Our hired man welcomed us with the fact that the house was "alive with bedbugs". We set up our tents where we lived all summer while house was fumigated again and again until by fall it was fit to move into.

Once more I got busy with paint brush etc. The house was very dark and dingy so the rock walls were kalsomined white and the woodwork also white. Now, it was more inviting.

For three years I had been dreadfully homesick so in Nov. Norm took us to the railroad and we made a trip back to Minnesota and North Dakota to see my folks. Kenneth was now two years old but had not offered to say a word. However as soon as he had other children to play with, he talked plenty. We stayed until spring when we went back to Oregon and we were both glad to get back. While we were gone, Norm had cleared ground and set out a nice orchard. We found there was a lot of work connected with irrigation but it did raise crops.

In the meantime Mutt had been killed by a bobcat but Jeff came with us to the river.

And here we are right at 1920. And it was a memorable

A Trip to town.



Norm after supplies 1919

year for two reasons. It was the year we got \$20.00 for our hay. Things looked rosy--things do when there is cash in your jeans! This was also the year I taught school at \$125.00 per month--biggest pay check I ever received. It meant a new floor and a screened porch on the old house. Five miles morning and night for Snowball and I--leaving before short winter days.

and Ken was on the daylight and coming home at dusk during the We also built the new water wheel this year and Ken was on the job with daddy every day.

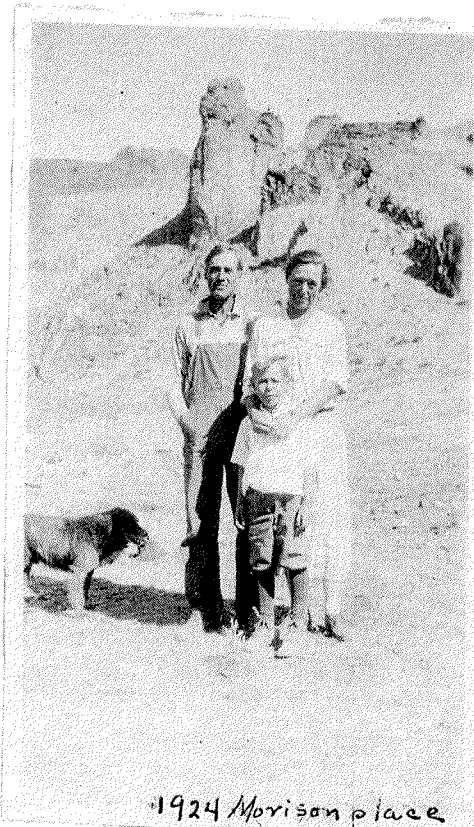
From this time on until 1924, life was one round of irrigating, haying and riding for cattle. Twice a year Norm made a trip to the railroad for supplies--it took a whole week. The pace was too much for Norm and his health broke. I had raised a few "bum" lambs every spring so by now had a flock of 57 head.. We decided to give up ranching. Norm was not able to do the work and by the time we hired a man and paid our interest, we had nothing to show for our work. In the meantime we had sold our cattle.--We lost too much of our profits each year--the Owyhee was an ideal country for "rustling".

In the spring of 1924, we gave up the ranch--leaving with wagon and team, 3 milk cows, 57 sheep, our chickens and a few personal belongings. Camped that summer on the old Morison place, 5 miles up the river. We slept under an open shed--cooked and ate in a little rock shack, 6x10. Kenneth and I watched the sheep while Norm helped the neighbors hay. That summer had my first experience cooking for "outsiders"---Fed 5 surveyors 3 squares a day for three weeks. Got rid of my surplus chicks and incidentally put some surplus cash in the purse.

Had quite an experience while here. One night while Norm was gone, I woke up to find a strange man at the foot of my bed. I asked him what he wanted. He was "looking for a place to sleep". I told him being campers we had no place for him but



Kenneth



1924 Morrison place

if he would go on up the river a ways he would find folks that could accommodate him. After much hming and hawing he finally went on. When I got up the next morning, I saw him sneaking out of the shack. We learned some time later that he was an escaped lunatic.

We had a fine Sunday School here that summer that was well attended. We had our lessons out under the trees and we usually ended up by having a watermelon feed.

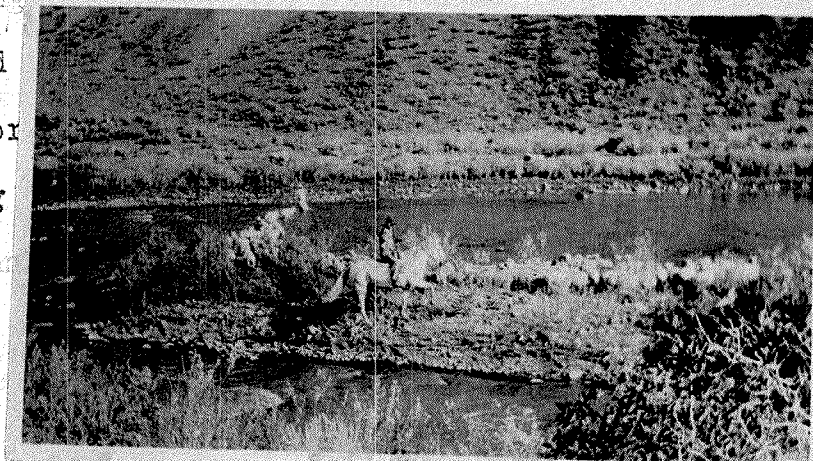
In the fall, we moved down river for our hay. We built a corral for our milk cows almost a quarter of a mile from where we were camped. This was all right until Norm went out as census taker (agricultural) but not so good when I had both sheep and cows to look after. It was January and I often built a bonfire to thaw out my hands between cows milked.

Come spring of 1925. Our flock had increased to 100 sheep and we decided to go to the mountains for the

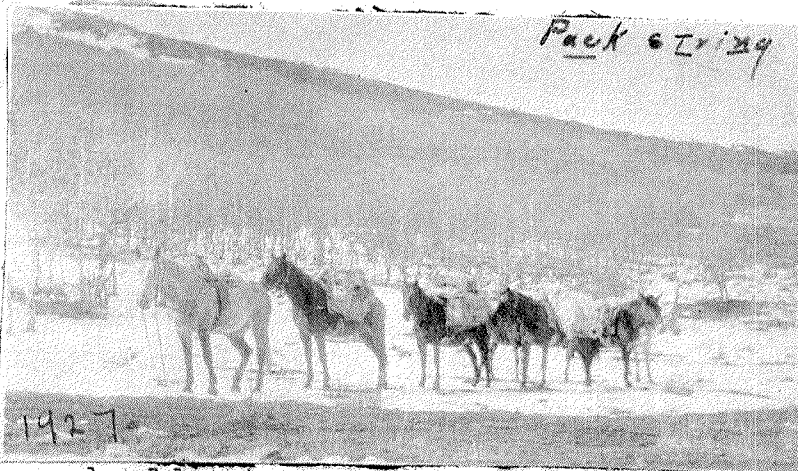
summer--Steens Mt was the place! After a three weeks trail where we experienced and overcame any number of difficulties, we arrived on Steens Mt. I herded the sheep, Norm brot the pack string and Kenneth on Snowball drove the old black cow and calf. We had disposed of the rest of our cows. When this trip was over, I felt that I knew all there was to know about sheep and I decided they were the stubbornest, orneriest and most perstiferous animal on the face of the earth. I had herded them the winter before but evidently their cussedness lay dormant only to show up on the trail.

We arrived on Steens Mt the 4th. Norm and Ken must go fishing the first thing. They had good luck and we were fish hungry. We each ate a dozen trout for our dinner!

Well, we were now launched in the sheep game, as the saying goes. Every spring we would head for the mountains and by November would be back on the Owyhee for our winter's feed. Ken got his Schooling here and there--no two winters in the same place. For five years we lived in our tent--summer and winter. The flock grew and we inched ahead some every



Crossing the sheep.



Pack train

year. Oh no, it was not all smooth sailing! At times difficulties loomed up that seemed almost insurmountable--mostly shortage of cash --but we had had our "eye teeth" cut by now and somehow managed to get thru.

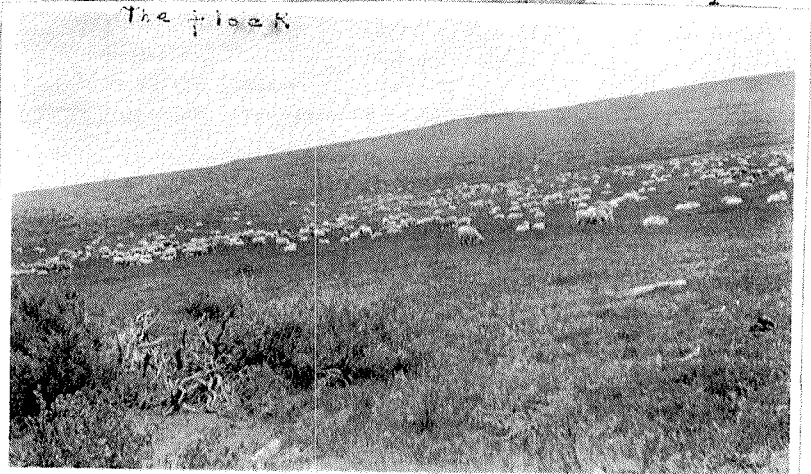
By 1928, our flock had increased to 800 and we felt that by selling now,

we should get enough out of them to buy a home again. Anyhow I was beginning to feel that the strenuous life I had been living was getting the best of me and it was time to quit. We sold the sheep to two men--four hundred to each (security but no money). The home was still in the future.

Our little house on the homestead had burned during the summer so Kenneth and I moved into a vacant house near the school house at Crowley--so he could get his usual portion of schooling. It was this fall that Hoover and Smith were running for the presidency. I was on the election board at Crowley. Twenty-six votes were cast--divided evenly between the two candidates.

Just before Christmas, Norm came in from sheep camp with the announcement that we were going to San Diego for the holidays. What a scurrying around to get off! We got there Christmas Eve. Afterwards Ken and I stayed on till Easter vacation when back to Oregon we came. Norm and I went to work for a Basque

in lambing camp. Ken boarded for the rest of the school year. While in camp, I got smallpox and was pretty sick for a few days. As soon as I could sit on a horse, we went to the Blue Mts for the summer to look after this same man's range. It was a beautiful location and we enjoyed the time spent here a lot.



The flock

Every morning we could see deer out in front of the house and they did not seem to be afraid. Late in the summer, Norm went to California again to see his father who was very sick. He died in July. When Norm came home, he was driving Father's Model T.---our very first limousine!

That fall we moved to Ontario where Kenneth entered 7th Grade. Norm and I got a job in the packing plant--sorting and packing prunes and apples. We made good money.