

YAKIMA REMINISCENCES

Out in the Ahtanum, today one of the most peaceful and prosperous sections of the Yakima Valley, years ago stood an old sod fort. It was a large fort, covering at least an acre, and to it all the settlers in this end of the valley would rush for protection when the word went out that the Indians were on the war path and were threatening the lives of the white men and their families.

J. E. Burbank, of Cheney, who visited some of his old friends in Yakima and the surrounding country last week, recalls the days when the fort was a place of refuge from the Indians, and the pioneer families, driving their horses and part of their stock with them, would be crowded together there for days and sometimes weeks.

Mr. Burbank's father, Harry Burbank, brought his family to the Yakima Valley from Oregon in 1870. Mr. Burbank was then a lad ten years old, and noticed and remembers much that happened during his life here. The family settled on the Yakima River, across from the present site of Mabton. After a time they came up to what is known as the Burbank Canyon, which is named for the family. After a short time there they settled in the Kittitas Valley, later to return to the Wenas, where they resided until 1882. They moved then to a ranch near Spokane.

"The Indians were still giving the settlers considerable trouble in those days," said Mr. Burbank. "I remember in 1877 there was much anxiety because of the frequent outbreaks. That was the time of the Perkins murder, over which all the settlers were much wrought up. The Indians once fired at my brother and cousin at Willow Springs. The boys escaped without injury, but the Indians got away with a band of our horses.

"The word would be sent out that an Indian attack was expected, and everyone would get his family together, and as many of his horses and cattle as he could muster on short notice and go to the old sod fort in the Ahtanum. I remember one time we stayed there more than a week, in constant fear of an attack. There was always some one on guard, but that did not make us feel any too easy. The families were camped all about the fort. We were not attacked that time, the Indians that were moving up from further

south being checked as they came across the river, and the other Indians in the upper valley not daring to make the attack alone.

"We were always on the outlook for Indians. No one knew at what moment they would attack some settler's house. We did not dare to sleep in our home when the word was out that the Indians were on the warpath, but the whole family would go to a little ravine, where we would be hidden, and sleep there."

There were no soldiers stationed here at that time, and the government sent guns and ammunition to the settlers with which to protect themselves. They were sent up from The Dalles. Every man who could shoot was given a gun, and Mr. Burbank was among the number. The guns were the long type, called "needle" guns.

Yakima was a very small village when the Burbank family arrived. There were very few settlers in the valley, almost all of them making their homes along the River. They raised practically everything they used for food. There was no scarcity of meat, the valley being a cattle country, and each family would have a garden and a patch of grain. They did not raise enough flour, however, for their own needs, and some of it had to be brought up from Umatilla and The Dalles.

Mr. Burbank tells an amusing story in connection with the wheat-raising. He went to call on one of the neighbors, and remained for dinner. During the time he was there the daughters of the family, of whom there were several pretty, energetic girls, went out into the wheat field, cut some wheat, threshed and cleaned it, ground it up into flour, made biscuits and served them for dinner.

"The only things that are familiar in the Valley any more are the higher hills," said Mr. Burbank. "I never would recognize Nob Hill as the place where I used to hunt rabbits in the sage brush that was higher than my head. Today it is covered with beautiful homes and fine orchards; and still those rabbit hunts of mine do not seem very far away."

The elder Mr. Burbank was engaged in the stock business on a fairly extensive scale, owning several thousand cattle and many horses. He prospered well until the terrible winter of 1881, when he lost almost all of his cattle. That winter, Mr. Burbank remembers, he could see a band of his father's horses upon a hill. He

watched them every day during the winter, seeing the number lessen gradually, until when the spring came and the snow melted there were only three of them left. After the losses of the winter the family left the Valley and settled on a ranch near Spokane.

Naming Sunnyside

"Sunnyside, according to one of these young railway boys, was named after the Sunnyside canal. At least that is what I see in the papers," said "Governor" S. J. Lowe. "I might say a word about that. I guess these boys that the O. W. and the Northern Pacific railway have here are mighty nice fellows. Anyhow I am told they are. They want help in naming the country along the railway but they start giving out the wrong dope. Sunnyside was named in 1882 and the canal wasn't constructed until 10 years afterwards. Let me tell you about it.

"Along in 1882 we had a need for hay. We didn't grow alfalfa here in those days, but had a steadily growing need for hay and The Dalles were too far away to bring it in from there. There was a nice bunch grass country down in the lower valley so Joe Stephenson, Andy McDaniels, one of the Nelsons and myself went down to look about the hills there for land. We were together for some considerable time surveying about. It was in October and the weather was beautiful. When we came down off the hills and got the line of the sage brush and struck into the fog I told Joe Stephenson that I proposed to name the country before I left it. Joe said, 'Go to it. What do you propose to call it?' I looked about, remembered the sunshine and got the contrast of the mist in the bottom lands and said, 'We will call it Sunnyside.' When we came out we met J. M. Adams who was running the *Signal*. He asked us where we had been. We told him we had been down to Sunnyside. He published that in his paper and that's how the name started. I named the place and the canal came along years afterward."

Indian-Fighting Stage Driver

Ezekiel McCausland, father of Mrs. H. H. Short of Toppenish, who died a few years ago in Seattle, was a picturesque figure of the Northwest.

He was 86, the hero of a number of skirmishes with the Indians in the early days in this state, and a realistic counterpart of the stage coach driver of Bret Harte's tales.

While Bret Harte's character had his encounters with road agents when a lawless society ruled California, McCausland, who conducted the first stage line between Olympia and Portland, faced redskin enemies.

On one occasion, while driving his stagecoach to the Oregon settlement, his aid was sought by six settlers to assist in routing a band of renegade Indians. Leaving the box, he put his six horses at the service of the settlers, and went with them in search of the marauders. It is reported that, after three weeks, the Indians were conquered, and the stage resumed its journey.

Before the advent of the taxicabs, McCausland was a well-known figure in Seattle. He drove one of the first hacks seen on the streets there.

Ever in the best of health, he is said to have always planned for the future. His last desire had been to make a journey to Alaska in the spring. McCausland's avocation was gardening. He sowed the seeds, cared for the plants and harvested his crop in the backyard without assistance.

Born in Gardner, Maine, McCausland felt the call of the West when he was 20 years old and made his way by boat to Central America, crossed the Isthmus of Panama, it is said, on the first train operating from coast to coast, and from there by boat to San Francisco. After six months he went to Seattle on sailing vessels, from where he went to Olympia.