

The Memoirs of

*Bernard Elden Knapp*

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Letter to  
Extended Family  
1983



original

Dear Family,

Bernie March 1983

I have been doing some thinking about writing up some kind of a story or record of Island Park when the folks lived there and each of you were there. Of course I was not, although I spent a lot of time there too and I have been a lot of places with Dad and Warren and Al and I've heard them tell about many different places and things that happened at certain places I have to rely on what I remember being told.

There are so many things I don't know that much about. Not too many years ago I got Ruth South and her uncle, Woods Skinner, to tape some things they remembered about Island Park when they were there. He worked there some. And of course she lived there before and after she married Ren. But there are still so many things that are not known by me that I would like to write about, but also I need to know more about. I'd like to write about the tie hacking days and the tie hauling days too. I talked with Jim Allison a few summers ago. Marj went with me to see him at his home in Ashton. I guess he hacked a few ties but he wasn't one of the old tie hacks. He was one of the young people there. Although he may have married there, his oldest boy is only about my age and isn't likely as old as Glenna South Jones. But anyway he did hack some ties and there aren't very many people alive today that can say they hacked ties for a living or even hacked one period. And the ones that saw them hacking ties are getting scarce.

So I figure if I get this project going and get anything worthwhile from it I had better get started with it. So I am writing this letter to ask you all to help me. Will you try to take a little time once in a while and write down some thoughts.? Think about when you first lived there and what kinds of things you can remember. Then when you think of something write it down or a little note on the subject at least so that later on you can come back to your notes and remember about it. I'm going to give you a list of things to think about that I can remember. Will you make some notes on the subject and also write in the ones you think about that I haven't mentioned? A few years ago Anna suggested that if each of us would write down some of the things that we remembered about our folks and then put everyone's together and make a write-up from that we would have a very good account of our parent's lives. I agree and maybe we could include that here. In some cases it would be hard to separate the two because much of what is remembered as children of parents is tied in so closely to the surroundings where one lived and the things they did. Then the entire family was perhaps involved more with what went on, many times, than today where the kids are always gone some place or just watching TV.



Subjects to be considered.

Summertime.

logging  
sleighs  
cabin building  
log chinking  
tents  
wood and wood piles  
roads  
trails to the outhouse  
trails for water  
trails to school  
" to neighbors houses  
playing in the snow  
jumping into the snow  
getting snow off the roofs  
school house  
recess  
the camp  
Ranger station  
commissary  
thermometer  
cold weather  
icicles  
company well  
church  
primary  
snow storms  
dog sleds  
overshoes  
mittens or gloves  
stockings  
coats  
hats or caps  
melting water for the horses  
cow  
barn  
pets  
wells

Please spend some time writing down some notes on these. One of these days maybe we can get together and add to this list. I hope it will bring back a lot of memories for you. Hopefully many will be happy ones and no doubt some will not be happy ones. At least as kids it wouldn't be happy when you lose a pet or get hurt or maybe scared.



Cont.

Baptisms  
Railroad sidings  
sheep  
cattle  
stockyards  
blacksmith shop Noei ? Noel ? Dennis  
passenger trains  
freights  
passenger service  
how often did trains run  
double headers  
the Flyer, Yellowstone special  
wild animals  
stories about them  
stories about logging  
stories about tie hacks  
tie bucks  
loading ties  
stacking ties  
Ponds fire burning commissary?  
deepness of snow  
finding wagon wheels under snow in spring  
melting snow in the house  
hauling water to the house  
the wells  
the company well  
different peoples cabins,  
locations  
barns.  
roads *Split Creek, Warm River* *Lucky Dog Creek, mouse creek,*  
landmarks Black Mountain, Big Springs, Section Six, Camp B two Betty's  
Cabin, Central cabin, Cook shack CABins of Section six, Skinnerville, Ole moe  
Trail Canyon Trude Eccles Pineview GARrett Ripley Butte *Chick Gards Creek*  
these names and places may bring back a lot of memories and also remind one of  
some other places and names of others. I know that some of these names may  
not have been known then. Osborn Springs would be another location maybe along  
the road into Island Park.  
bridges,  
corduroy  
winter road  
Moon meadow



Cont.

Wintertime:

logging

wagons

carts or buggies

cars, trucks, motorcycles

children's games

picnics

camp

barns

blacksmith

commissary

pig pens

getting mail

trains

rotary

railroad ranch

moving to Island Park

Moving from Island Park to Goshen

living at Gill

Tom's Creek

Buffalo River

families:

Bjorns

Allisons

Al and Ruby Smith

Muirs

Souths

Harvey MaHar Mc Har ? see what I mean

Kuchs

Merrills

George Pelcher

Kents

Charlie Martin

others

Bradley

Dad Gummit

Lee Jensen

visits from relatives:

Mothers sisters maybe brothers, parents

Stories told around camp

hunting for horses

forest fires, Chick Creek burn

Clark Canyon slide or burn

fishing trips



I also hope to clear up some myths from your information. When I was little I got some wrong impressions. Some stayed with me a long time. I can remember living in Goshen and an airplane would go by. We'd stand outside and look at it. I heard them call it the mail plane. Later I was quite a bit older and I had a hard time accepting there weren't mail and female planes. Just because I thought I'd heard them referred to when I was small.

I remember Warren telling about jumping from trees into the deep snow in Island Park about the time recess was over and then it would take more time to get to the school house. <sup>which irked the teacher,</sup> I heard something about someone being chased down the isle at school and Marj, sticking a ruler out and tripping the teacher. That doesn't sound very likely now that I've grown up, either.

Well I'm sure you will remember others. Many more and much more clearly than I do just trying to remember them second hand.

I remember mother's disgust over how Charley Martin was so cruel to his dogs in his dog team.

Now there is another time in Island Park and other people that I figure came later, Charlie Simmons, The Jensen family to Moon meadow. The railroad ranch built the stockyards later. I can still remember the fallen down roof and theremains of things like hoops of wagon wheels at the blacksmith shop.

When I first went to Island Park the cabin called the Munsen cabin may have been just a name for the cabin given for the people then living there, in fact it may have been Arch's relatives. But anyway, the blacksmith shop was just behind and to the north of it. Later I lived in ~~it~~ <sup>this cabin</sup>. Also Dad and I and it was the closest cabin to the Island Park Siding sign. I remember where the old planks of the floor to the company barn was. The road passing it could take you up to the moon meadow. Some times after the springtime and the roads dried up you could go fishing to Tom's Creek by driving up that road. There was a well near the road just as you entered the small clearing leaving the camp. Claudia's cabin which was across the railroad tracks from the ranger station was the next cabin north of these old barns that I can remember. Some where near there must have been the commissary. I remember Al Smith's cabin and the place behind it where the school house was. The foundation was visible for a long time after it was burned down. There was a well east toward Trail Canyon about a quarter of a mile from the railroad crossing. They used to water horses there and I can remember Marj hauling water from it in the old Oldsmobile after the well next to South's cabin caved in. Then there was the bunk house and Ren and Ruth's cabin. It had to be the newest one when I first went there. Then there was the cabin that mother stayed in the summer that she saw the moose in her flashlight beam. <sup>the old barn a cabin called the Jack Jones cabin.</sup> I can remember seeing where props and ties were shipped in the Buffalo River from Ed Ryberg's place. I remember too along the river there were small posts sticking up in the river. They had been used to guide floating timber down the river. Also at one place there was a foot bridge used by a tie hack to cross the river to work on the other sidehill. And the story about Barrow if that was his name, crossing that bridge and pushing a bear off with his measuring pole. <sup>into the river</sup> Charley Snyder, Sam Trude, some of these names probably were not there earlier. Slim Oldfield and Andy Seelander also.