The following story was printed in 8 articles in the Aberdeen Daily World in 1968.

The Daily World, Friday, December 20, 1968

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Reviewed By Ade Fredericksen

Family Moved To Wilderness When She Was Baby

(Editor's note – This is the first of a series of 8 articles reviewing "My Queets Story", a 200-page handwritten labor of love by retired school teacher Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley of Wesley Terrace, Des Moines, Wash. A simple, moving and at times poetic account of the life of a young child in one of America's last and wildest frontiers 70 to 76 years ago, it was written three years ago at the request of a daughter. It later was hand-printed, photostatically copied and distributed to relatives in notebook-bound loose-leaf volumes.)

"When my daughter was small, she used to ask me to tell her about living on the Queets and then she began to say she wished I would write it all down, and that is what I have just done."

These words, written by Mrs. Clara Dooley of Des Moines, Wash., form the first sentence of her introduction to "My Queets Story," a nostalgic narrative of the experiences of a little girl and her family in one of America's most remote frontiers three quarters of a century ago.

Mrs. Dooley then was Clara Knack, daughter of Frederick and Wilhelmina Knack, who moved from Seattle to a 160-acre homestead on the wild Olympic Peninsula river in June 1892. She was the "baby" of a family which also included her brother, Henry, now dead, and two sisters, Freida, and now Mrs. George McIntosh of Elma, to whom the book was dedicated, and Kate, who was Mrs. Kate Valerio of Hoquiam when she died a few years ago. Another brother, Roy, of Hoquiam, was born after the family had moved to Hoquiam.

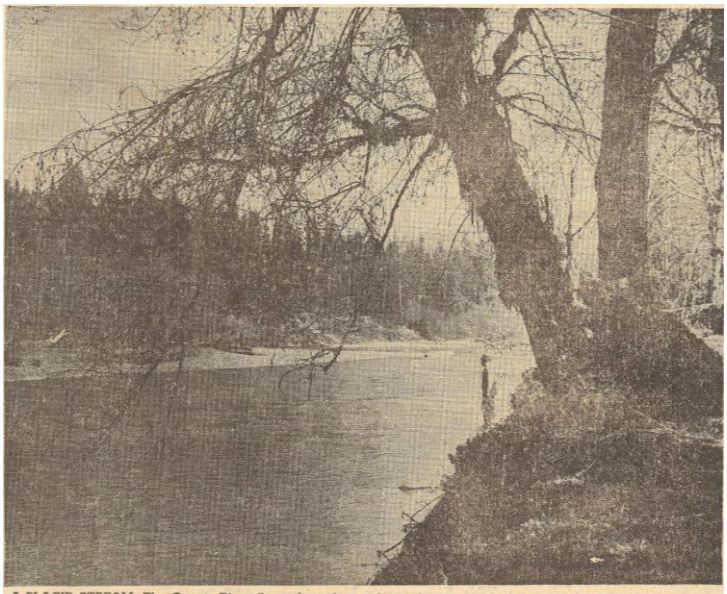
ONE-ROOM CABIN

The father was 37, the mother 30. Henry was 8 ½, Katie 6 ½, Frieda was to be 3 in July and Clara was 6 months old. Their home was a one-room cabin with a loft, shake roof and three windows. It was on the north shore of the river, about seven miles east of the Pacific Ocean and on land now in the Olympic National Park.

"The door on the side of the cabin facing the river had a glass panel and this was quite a distinction since it was the only one in the whole area," wrote Mrs. Dooley, explaining that the older members of her family had to fill her in on details of the first three years. The back door led to the woodshed and to a barn and chicken house closer to the hill, commonly called the "first bench."

The Queets, at the time of which Mrs. Dooley writes, wound its way through a lush wilderness nearly 100 miles from the nearest civilization. It could be reached then only by

boat, dugout canoe and trail. Its waters, fed by an average annual rainfall of more than 120 inches, were some times placid in summer but frequently turbulent in the winter and spring.



A PLACID STREAM: The Queets River flows through a rich, verdant country, the setting for My Queets Story, by Clara Knack Dooley, being reviewed in a series of articles starting in today's Aberdeen Daily World. (Mulkey Photo)

FLOOD THREATENED

"Most people who settled there built their cabins on the bottom lands, and if they had known that the Queets has the habit of flooding in the springtime, they would have built on a higher level but would have stayed close to the river in any case, since it and the Indian trail along its banks were the only way of travel," Mrs. Dooley wrote. "The rest was a great wilderness of hills and trees, inhabited only by bears, cougars, wildcats, wolves, deer and elk, rabbits and many little animals." Like many a pioneer before him, Mr. Knack built most of the furniture – an armchair with springs in the seat... a desk... dresser... beds... chairs and a bench. The stove came by ship and canoe, as did a few staples and other goods which the almost self-sufficient family purchased. Boxes in which the goods were carried doubled as furniture.

"One, an apple box, was supposed to be mine, and I called it an 'Appel Beck,' thinking I was speaking German," wrote Mrs. Dooley, whose parents were German.

Contents of the Knack home, as well as those of other Queets cabins of that era could be placed in the Fort Nisqually museum in Pt. Defiance Park and be right at home, according to Mrs. Dooley.

But the Knack cabin, in addition to the glass in the door, had another almost unique feature – a stair with a landing which led to the loft. Most of the cabins had only a ladder nailed to the wall.

"This of course saved space," Mrs. Dooley acknowledges, "but it must have been quite a feat to climb with a lighted lamp. We used to climb these ladders without any hesitation. I never heard of anyone having an accident by falling from the ladder or through the opening in the floor."

CRACKS IN LOFT FLOOR

"In our house the floor upstairs was made of split boards, quite rough, and spaces of an inch or so between, due to the shrinkage. We were never allowed to play with scissors or knives upstairs, and these cracks provided good peep holes to watch what was going on downstairs, what Indians were there and were they about ready to leave. Also, to see the beautiful Christmas tree on Christmas morning which Santa Claus had set up during the night."

The beds were straw-filled ticks laid on cross boards. Three beds, 'Mamma's hump-backed trunk' and a big wooden box for clothing, bedding and hiding things the children were not supposed to see, took up most of the floor space.

There were many things in the small cabin to interest the young child, Clara. There were the dark coats and other clothing hung in the corner of the attic loft. Clara was a bit

afraid of them and associated them with some kind of bogey man. There was her mother's sewing machine, which the children were never allowed to use, a big shelf on the stair landing containing her mother's best dishes and glassware and a fancy decorated kerosene lamp, all also verboten. The lamp was never used because it burned too much oil.

Perhaps others might have thought of the remote rain-forest wilderness as a place of loneliness and hardship but to the young child, Clara, it was a fairyland that has lost none of its beauty in the 75 years since.

"The outdoors was really the best part of the homestead," she recalls. "I think I always knew that I lived in a very wonderful and beautiful world. The swiftly flowing river with our island right out in front and on our side of the river, the snow-capped mountain which could often be seen toward the head of the river, the clearing always green with growing things, the salmonberries near the log piles at the edge, the fungus growth under the trees, the little spring which tumbled down from the first bench into a lovely pool where we could catch bullheads and minnows and give them to the cat, thinking we were very kind. The water from this spring finally disappeared in a low swampy place which we avoided because it seemed so dark and gloomy."

Like most young children, Clara wanted to work with the older members of the family.

"I remember one occasion when the whole family was gathering potatoes in the fall. They wouldn't let me dig, which is what I wanted to do, but I was allowed to pick them up and put them in the sacks. I never will forget what a fine day it was. The weather, when I was a child, never seemed bad to me, but this day was especially balmy and the air was fragrant with lovely autumn smells. Of course, we lived in the Rain Forest, but since that term was not in use then, there was nothing romantic about it. I just remember that there was plenty of rain, lots of water everywhere, some snow and ice – but it was always dry and warm in the house. Weather and seasons of the year meant nothing to me."

The Daily World, Saturday-Sunday, December 21-22, 1968

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Scores Of Settlers Pour Into Primitive Valley In 1890's

Despite winter downpours, area remoteness and the enormity of trying to carve farms from a thick, giant forest, scores of settlers fought their way into the Queets Valley in the 1890's. They came on foot and by dugout canoe, lured by cheap "government claim" land and the advertising in Puget Sound papers of such visionaries as J.J. Banta and S.P. Sharp.

Banta and Sharp walked, north to south, through the trackless Olympic Peninsula wilderness during the winter of 1889, reaching then booming Grays Harbor City, 3 miles west of Hoquiam on January 1, 1890. Later that year they organized groups of "colonists" for the remote Queets area. It was only two years later that Frederick and Wilhelmina Knack and their four children, moved to a claim located for them by Banta for a $50 fee. They lived in a cabin constructed earlier by the father.

Although she was only six months old when the family reached the Queets, Clara, now Mrs. Clara Dooley of Des Moines, Wash., remembers much first hand. The family lived there for seven years and she also drew upon the conversations and recollections of her parents and her older sisters and brother.

"I must have been close to three years old before I remembered very much," wrote Mrs. Dooley in her account, "My Queets Story."

REMEMBERS A BIRTH

"I do remember the birth of Helen Schaupp in the August before I was three in December. I think I remember it mostly because Mamma went to stay with Lena (Mrs. Schaupp) and left us to Papa's tender mercies. He was a good story teller but not as good a cook."

A year later, also in August, a second Schaupp daughter, Elsie, was born, and later than that, a third girl, Marie, Mrs. Dooley recalls. She also remembers a card which Mrs. Hartzell gave her for Sunday School attendance at the end of the first quarter in 1895. Mrs. Dooley has treasured it ever since.

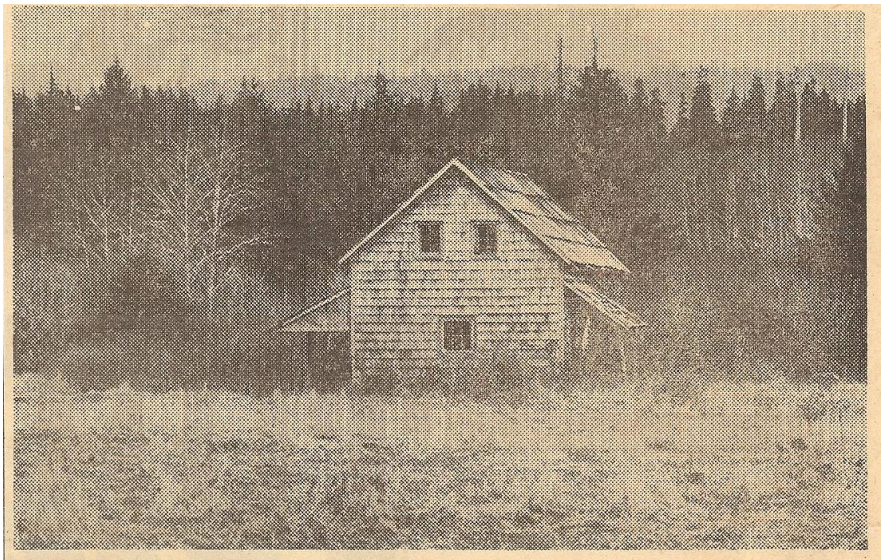
"I remember my fifth birthday very distinctly, thinking at the time that this birthday was something quite different from the many I had had before," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "For one thing, it was distinctly mine and not the family's and that five years is a pretty good age and one's baby days were left far behind. This seemed to be my chief concern, not to be considered a baby who had to be helped and led along by the hand. I was greatly humiliated whenever Mr. Hartzell would take my hand to lead me across a footlog."

"A footlog was only a tree cut to fall across a stream, the limbs were lopped off and the foliage cut away, leaving rough places which one had to step around. I always welcomed a footlog as an interesting break in a journey. Whenever we went to the Schaupp's I welcomed the stepstile which we climbed over to enter their clearing. How nice a turnstile would have been!"

The nearest neighbor "as the bird flies" was the Olson family right across the river and whose house could be seen. They had one child, younger than Clara, and Mrs. Olson was a neat housekeeper and "always kept her house clean and smelling of Swedish cooking."

The Knacks didn't visit the Olsons often because a canoe had to be used to cross the Queets, filled with big boulders and water which was icy cold and swift even in summer.

Downstream were the MacKinnons, a childless couple. Mr. MacKinnon built a trail on his place which came out so smooth and pleasant to the feet that he called it the Nickel Plate, after the railroad which was much in the news at that time.



RELIC OF A PAST LIFE: The long-abandoned house above, on the old Streater place, on the north side of the Queets River, outlived the barn and other outbuildings. But it, too, is gone now. The photograph was taken in 1942. The place was several miles upriver from the Knack cabin, mentioned in Mrs. Clara Dooley's book, My Queets Story. The area is now part of Olympic National Park. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

JACK THE RIPPER

There was also a man called Jack the Ripper because his clothes were torn and sloppy. Whenever he went by the Knack place he would leave the trail and go along the river bank, ducking in and out among the alders and willows.

"The reason for this strange conduct was that he had quarreled with Papa...and was afraid or ashamed," Mrs. Dooley recalls.

Mr. MacKinnon, the author remembers, loved dogs and always had three or four of them with her. She fondled them and talked baby talk to them. The smallest was "Tippy Noodles," which Mrs. MacKinnon always carried in her arms.

"Mrs. MacKinnon liked to paint pictures," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "I remember she painted on a gray graniteware pan or pie plate a picture of a big rose which was climbing up the side of their cabin. This was the cabin where I started to school and the last time I was there in later years I found the rose bush still growing but all signs of the cabin were gone."

Among others Mrs. Dooley remembers, either in person or by hearing of them through her parents, was Mr. Hibberd, who had the claim next to the Knacks, upriver, and his two sons. One of them was George who once did some plowing for the Knacks with MacKinnon's beautifully matched yoke of oxen, 'Tom and Jerry.'

FROM OBERKOCHEN

Frank Schaupp and Mrs. Knack had been children in Oberkochen, Germany (now East Germany).

"This must have been a kind of fairy-tale village where a forester had charge of the trees and picked up every twig and branch that fell to the ground," observes Mrs. Dooley. "What a contrast to the moss-hung trees of the Queets Rain Forest!"

Next to the Schaupps was the R.C. Hopkins place. The Hopkins had sons Bryant and Gordon. Across the river from the Hopkins were the Donaldsons, a Scotch family, which included children Jim, Margaret, Jean and Bell (Isabel). The Hartzells were between the Donaldsons and the Olsons.

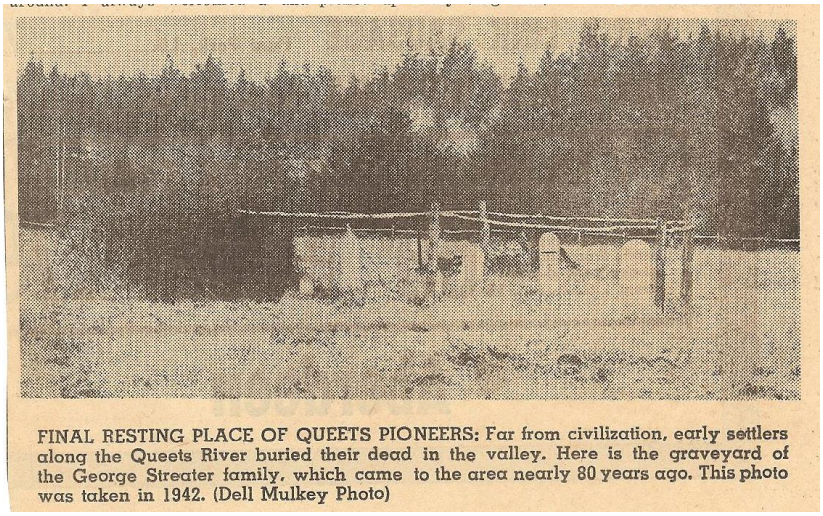
"There were other families outside the scope of my travel whom I knew because they would come to our house, but the little ones my size all had to stay at home, too, so I never knew them," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "There were the Kings who lived on the south side of the river farther up from the Donaldsons. Their children were Merle, Bessie and Selma."

"The Streaters were another family who lived way up the river on our side and there was a big family of them – Charlie, Roy, Johnny, Pearl and Ruby and the little ones at home whom I only heard about. There was a little girl, Ethel Newman, whom I saw only when they were coming in or going out. Lillian Fitch, who lived down the river on the other side, I saw occasionally. The Charles Glovers lived somewhere upriver and there was Angela or maybe Angelia whom we called 'Jilly' (she liked snakes), her sister Cynthalee, with big round brown eyes, for whom we named a hen, a brother Ed, whom we ignored, since he was only a boy. There was also Clarence Reid, a boy about Henry's age. He had a stepfather whose name was Mr. Banta. Mrs. Banta was ill and died of TB. They held her funeral one Sunday and Mamma went. We felt sad for this was our first experience with death."

A 'LONG' WAY

"Mrs. Banta's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson came there to live. I remember we visited them just before we left in 1899. It was the farthest I had been from home.

"One other family I should mention were the Seth Glovers (Seth was a brother of Charles) a family which moved in some years after us. Mrs. Glover was a teacher and taught our school in the summer of 1898. Their children were Florence, about Henry's age, Charley, about Kate's age, Fred, somewhat younger, Freda or Moss or Mossie, as we called her, a year or so younger than I, and a little brother, Glenn, who stayed at home."



FINAL RESTING PLACE OF QUEETS PIONEERS: Far from civilization, early settlers along the Queets River buried their dead in the valley. Here is the graveyard of the George Streater family, which came to the area nearly 80 years ago. This photo was taken in 1942. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

That was a list of most of the pioneer Queets settlers of that time. The next article will tell, in the words of Mrs. Dooley, about school days, good friends who move away, Indians and Christmas.

The Daily World, Monday, December 23, 1968

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Of Schools And Yules In Rugged Land

School days, first friends and the Christmases of childhood provide some of life's most pleasant memories.

Writing of her early years in the Queets Valley some 70 years ago, Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley reveals that this, too, was true for her. In "My Queets Story," written three years ago, she recounts with loving nostalgia her recollections of the beautiful Olympic Peninsula wilderness of the 1890s. They were her first memories. She was only six months old when she arrived with her parents in 1892.

The young girl had an advantage over older pioneers. She could remember nothing of civilization. Unaware of any world other than forests, mountains, streams, simple cabins, Indians and a few settlers, she had no longings to return to a more comfortable life. Nor did she realize that she was experiencing hardships. There was no boredom from a surfeit of toys, playmates and recreation. In the magic of childhood the future became the present and she looked with eagerness and enthusiasm on almost every new experience. One of these was school.

BIG AREA, FEW PEOPLE

"Our school district had a large area, I suppose, but there were so few people living in it that there was never money enough to support a full year of school," Mrs. Dooley explained. "So we had school only in the summer. Never more than three months."

"The district owned no real property and for schoolhouses, the empty cabins of people who had moved away, or who were gone for the time were used. The furniture was loaded in canoes and taken to the school."

"My father had made the furniture, consisting of a teacher's desk and seats with desks attached, enough to fill the little school. There was a blackboard about the size of an ordinary small table."

In the summer of 1897 when Clara was 5 ½ years old, the first part of the school term was far up the river and Henry and Kate had stayed with the Glovers. The school then was moved to the old MacKinnon place (the MacKinnons were gone that summer).

"This old cabin was small and right near the river," Mrs. Dooley wrote. "Jilly and Cynthalee Glover, and Miss Carrie Ausby, the teacher, and her nephew, Merle King, stayed with us. This school house was only about a quarter of a mile from us."

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

"I remember how happily I went to school that first day, walking on the path among the trees, the wild flowers, bluebells that grew along the way and a yellow flower whose name I do not now remember, and how wonderful it all seemed that I was big enough to go along with the older children; and then what a blow it was when Miss Ausby told me I couldn't come anymore because there was no seat for me. When I went home that afternoon, I cried and cried

and could not be consoled, so my father made a little bench with no back, just big enough for Belle Donaldson and me."

"This, I think now, was one of the sweetest things my father ever did for me."

"Belle lived until she was 19 and of all the children in the school the following summer," Mrs. Dooley said, "only three of the Seth Glover's, Jean Donaldson, my sister Frieda and I are left."

The first lesson in the primer introduced the word, "man" which seemed to the child, Clara, like a good word with which to start one's learning.

She also liked "Anthropology" and "Arctic, Mediterranean, Tropic of Cancer," and all the names of places on the earth.

Mrs. Dooley's "whole schooling in the woods was this part term and then the next summer I went the whole term at the Schaupp's house with Mrs. Seth (Jeannette) Glover as teacher. This too was a very pleasant time."

The memory of a parting of friends was especially poignant to a child who had never before experienced it. The "good friends" who moved away were Mr. and Mrs. Hartzell and the Schaupp family. The Hartzells, a childless couple, were always very kind to the Knack children and did many things for them. Mr. Hartzell would cross the river in his canoe to take the children to Sunday school which Mrs. Hartzell conducted in her own home. His wife, planned little school and Sunday school programs, always appeared as Santa Claus in the Christmas festival and joined Mrs. Knack in cooking sessions.

SQUARE PIES

"I remember one session which she and my mother had in which they baked delicious pumpkin pies in square-cornered pans," Mrs. Dooley wrote. "They taste just as good in one shape as in another."

"Sometimes they would stop and talk about sewing clothes, and all the problems created by no patterns, no new materials and no fashion books to help. Quite a job for a little woman who had to contrive to feed her family. This problem of feeding her family in a place where there were no stores except a little one which was not always open, where one could buy Arbuckle's coffee and such items, was probably the hardest task of the housewife. This was made more difficult when there was no oil to burn for lights."

The Schaupps were a young couple. Frank Schaupp had come from the same village in Germany as Mrs. Knack but they hadn't known each other well in the old country where religious differences were more of a gulf.

His wife, Magdelena, who also came from Southern Germany, was congenial, full of fun and "never seemed to be annoyed by us children," as some other people were. This was in the spring or early summer of 1897 when Helen was 3, Elsie, 2 and Marie, under a year. They were leaving for Tacoma, while the Hartzells were headed for Tacoma or Seattle.

A PACKED HOUSE

"The two families stayed at our house before they left. Where they all slept I do not know, but I do remember all the excitement and bustling around that took place. And in the morning, everybody got up early and after a good breakfast got their possessions into the Indian canoes with the Indians and the three children. I remember that Helen was wearing a pair of red home knit stockings over her shoes and stockings, which I thought was queer, but

my mother told me later that the old stockings would be discarded when the day grew warmer."

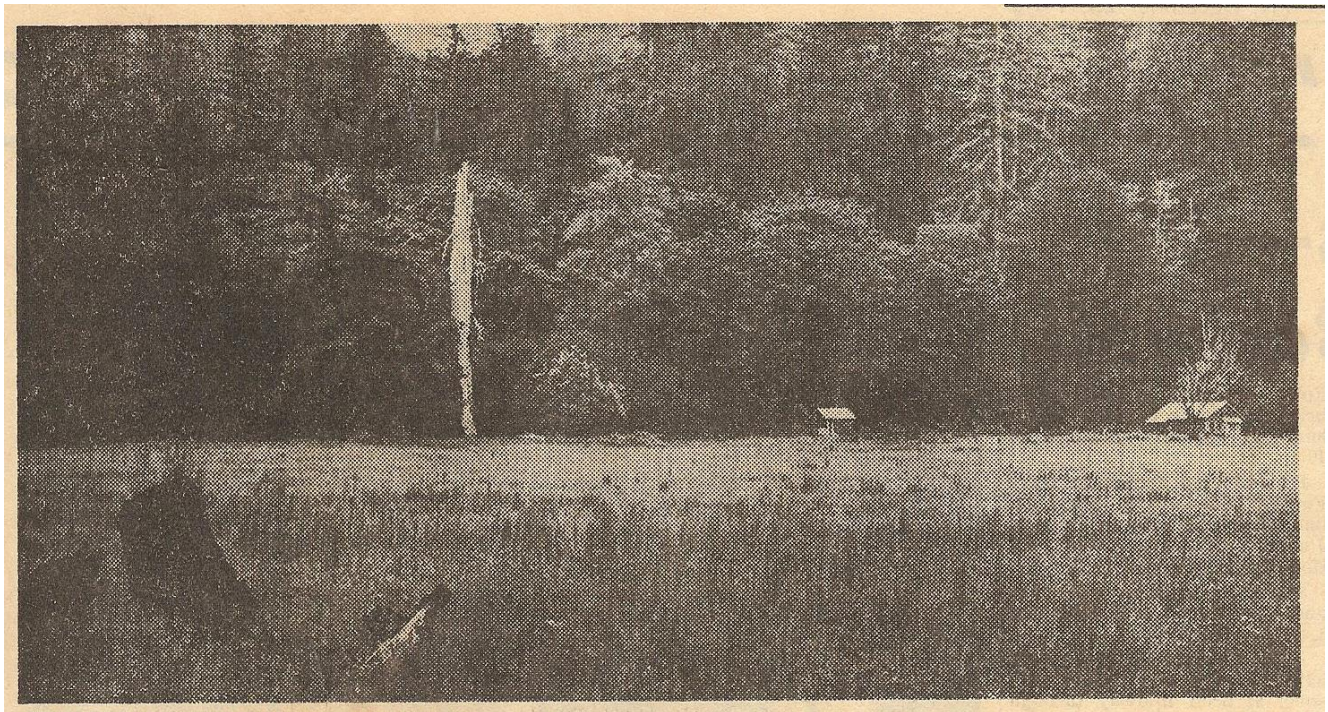
"Then they all went down the river in the canoes and that is all I remember of their going. We did not see either family again until 12 years later when the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition was held in Seattle."

Other families remained. There was the Fox family with children Tom, Maude and some younger ones, including Dolly "who grew up to be very tall and good looking whom I first saw many years later at one of the Hoquiam picnics we still hold yearly at Priest Point Park near Olympia."

Mrs. Dooley's second term at school started soon after the departure of the Hartzells and the Schaupps.

"I remember that the summer days in this school were pleasant and warm and there was a nice cool shady place in among a clump of trees near the river where we girls used to gather to talk," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "From this spot we could see a bluff that was somewhat higher than the surrounding banks on the other side. This cast an interesting reflection in the river. And sometimes farther upriver we could see the mountain peak."

"While we were doing this the boys would be playing ball, climbing trees or doing some other boy-like things. Then Mrs. Glover would ring a little hand bell and we would all go back into the school house for another session. All this was very pleasant to remember..."



TYPICAL QUEETS HOMESTEAD: The George Anderson ranch, shown in a 1942 photograph, was typical of the remaining homesteads in the Queets Valley 50 years after they were carved from the wilderness. Many of the homesteads were swallowed up at about this time by an enlargement of Olympic National Park. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

MOVES TO HOQUIAM

"The next summer I was in Hoquiam and when I looked at the big school where I would go, I wondered if I would find my way around in it. This building was later called the McKinley school after the President was assassinated."

Mrs. Dooley learned, perhaps earlier in her life, the theme so eloquently expressed by the late great novelist, Thomas Wolfe that "you can't go back again."

"The removal of the Schaupps and the Hartzells," Mrs. Dooley recalls, "was the first demonstration to me of the fact that all life is constantly changing, either in a small way or a large way and that things can never be brought back to the way they were at first."

But you can go back in memory, as Mrs. Dooley reveals in her recollections of Christmas, "such a glorious and wonderful day that shone through the whole year." She remembers the time she saw her father making two doll beds and he told her they were for an Indian friend's little girls for Christmas.

"We wondered why he would make doll beds for those girls when his own two girls didn't have any, but we didn't ask him why. We just accepted it as a peculiarity of parents to do things like that and talked no more about it. But when Christmas came there were the two beds all decked out with new mattresses, sheets and quilted covers, and a pillow with a case that had a lace edging. They looked fine. We felt that it was just a little maneuver between him and Santa Claus who really wanted us to have those beds. Good reasoning did not enter into this transaction."

CHRISTMAS MAGIC

"There was always the quality of magic and religion about Christmas. It was an important holiday in our family and the magic was due to the most beautiful Christmas tree ornaments, the tree all trimmed which appeared on Christmas morning and almost filled the little house," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "The tales of Santa Claus and his wonderful concern for little children, and all the pleasant happenings and surprises of the day. The religion was due to the stories, mostly from the Bible, which were told to us...."

"The splendor of Christmas was in no way due to the amount of excellent quality of the gifts we received. For they were few in number and mostly homemade and the few gifts bought were inexpensive. They had all acquired a rosy hue because they came from Santa Claus. We did not see any Christmas displays in stores, but toward the end of our stay we had a Montgomery Ward catalogue (one had to send to Chicago then). There were pictures of all sorts of things which one could buy."

The two older children were able by then to make things for the day. Henry made tiny cedar boxes with cloth hinges and joints, "nice to hold a little doll and the scraps of cloth for its dresses." Kate, artistic, made picture frames of cedar bark and spagnum moss, the kind later collected by the Red Cross during the First World War to be used in bandages because of its absorbent qualities.

"How I would like to see one of those boxes or one of Kate's picture frames now!" wrote Mrs. Dooley. "And I wish, too, that I might have a few of the big blue glass beads which the Indians carried around with them."

She remembers also how her mother repaired old dolls, fitting a head with a body, hair and clothes. She also remembers many of the books that she believed came from a collection made by a Congregational Church in Seattle. And one of her earliest memories was of a

community Christmas tree, quite common in earliest days of their stay, and the stuffed rag dog and cat beneath the Christmas tree.

"I remember looking at the two, admiring them and wondering who would be lucky enough to get them... And when I received not only one, but both the dog and the cat, I was completely overcome. I couldn't speak but carried them home. I don't remember ever playing with them or doing anything at all with them. But I did get them and that was triumph enough."

But most of the presents arrived at home.

GREAT DAY ARRIVES

"One Christmas morning which I remember particularly was one when I woke up and realized the great day had at last arrived. I got up and dressed in as few clothes as necessary, in the meantime looking through the cracks at the beautiful sparkling Christmas tree. This birds-eye view, I realize now, was quite unusual. At the top of the tree were the two little Christmas angels, die Kleine Weihnachts Engel, which were always hung on two opposite small branches next to the top. Then lower down the big silver and gold balls, smaller ones in red and green and blue, the paper ornaments, some with pictures and the many little novelty ornaments, and on the end of every branch was a Christmas tree candle. Underneath on the floor were all the presents."

"Then on Christmas there was always a mound of hard, decorated candy for each of us, which we could nibble on all day which never hurt us or made us sick because it was Christmas candy. This, with the wonderful homemade German Springerlies, with their charming pictures which my mother had made, and fine dark brown cookies which always appeared at Christmas time, provided a wonderful day in the eating line. This in itself was quite unusual in those frugal days."

"I wish I could remember more of the gifts, beside the home-refurbished dolls and picture books and the few little bought items, but they were all wonderful."

The Daily World, Friday, December 27, 1968

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Indian Rights And Beliefs Always Considered

Indians, as they did for many other white pioneers in the west, loomed large in the life of the settlers on the Queets in the early 1890's. But not for the same reason, according to Mrs. Clara Dooley of Des Moines, reminiscing in her book, "My Queets story." The Indians of the Queets area were friendly, rather than hostile, and got along well with their white neighbors.

"The Indians were there long before we were and all life seemed to touch on them in one direction or another," writes Mrs. Dooley, the former Clara Knack who moved to the area with her parents, brother and sisters in 1892. "I think one reason that we always considered the Indians was because my father always thought about how the things he was planning to do might affect them, and the rights and privileges granted to them in the treaties. If my parents were ever afraid of them, they never expressed any such thought, always assuring us that the Indians would not hurt us and that we must not be afraid of them. I never did hear of an incident which might have made anyone fear them, and I have heard it said that the Indian men were more to be trusted with white women than the white men were."

HUMAN BONES FOUND

Mrs. Dooley told how her father, clearing land, came across human bones. Thinking they were from an old grave that had been dug up by animals, he covered the bones with dirt. The next time he went to work on the place he found the bones uncovered again. He decided that no animal had done it and that Indian beliefs were at work. Later he learned that the bones were of two men who had had a fight in which both were fatally wounded. And according to the Indian belief they did not deserve burial.

Their bones were left exposed, reposing on some inscribed slabs, right where they fell.

There was one Indian whom the young girl, Clara, always recognized as an individual, George Yakima, "who lived with his family in the Indian settlement at the mouth of the river. He had two little girls who I imagined were the same age and Frieda and I."

GAY AND CAREFREE

"Sometimes we would see George Yakima coming along the trail carrying nothing and with his hands in his pockets, looking very gay and carefree. He would be wearing a pair of old trousers with the legs cut shorter, leaving a ragged fringe from which his broad, brown bare feet protruded. He may also have had a string of buttons on the outside of his trousers, buttons made of the same material as inexpensive dishes, with little figures of stars or dots stamped on them."

"And coming along behind him would be three or four women at short intervals. Each would be carrying a load something like this; a quarter of a deer or a bear across her shoulder, a rifle or two on her back, baskets of food and berries and blue glass beads hanging in front and maybe a little child hanging somewhere on her back."

KNEW A GOOD THING

Clara learned later that the custom of the women carrying the burdens while the men traveled empty-handed was established years before when it was necessary for the men to be free to fight off an attack by a band of enemy Indians. Knowing a good thing when they had it, Indian men kept the custom alive, although it hadn't been necessary for decades.

"Whenever such a party came along in front of our place, perhaps going home, they would come to the house and open the door without knocking, come in and set their things down. If they had anything to say to my mother they would say it, and if they had not, they would say nothing."

"After a few moments of silence or talk among themselves in their language, some," Mrs. Dooley recalls, "might get up and go out by the back door and gather in a group in the back yard. The women wore layers of full calico skirts with different patterned over-blouses. They wore bandanas, with a knot in each corner, on their heads. Their feet were bare."

PRIMITIVE PASTURE: Indian trails used to wind through timber like that in the background along the Queets River. Early white settlers in the area, 70 to 80 years ago, cut timber but didn't bother with stumps as they carved cattle pastureland. Above scene was on the "old Rawley Place" in 1942. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

WOMEN CURIOUS

"I was fascinated by their appearance and wanted to watch them," says Mrs. Dooley. "But it was impossible to keep them at a distance for they seemed to be as curious about us as we were about them. Each one fingered my hair and unbuttoned my clothes to see how they were made." All of them talked together in Indian language and the young girls were unable to tell whether it was complimentary or uncomplimentary. Clara, to avoid the incidents, later used to flee when she saw Indians coming to the upstairs loft, from where she could watch without being observed. Although the Indians were perfectly free in the rest of the house and could pick up and examine anything they wished without apology, they never came upstairs.

Sometimes Kate, Clara's oldest sister, with small things from Mamma's collection, would trade with the Indians for baskets and the blue glass beads which they had reputedly obtained from the Hudson's Bay Co. and carried around as if they were money.

One of the things about the Indians which interested the young Clara was the results, still evident then in the older men, of the one-time Quinault tribal custom of binding the heads of babies to boards.

EYES 'ON TOP'

"The forehead would be turned sharply backward to meet the back of the head in a tight ridge," Mrs. Dooley wrote. "This, I understand, was considered a point of beauty. They no longer were doing it to the babies, but one could see the results in the older men. They had faces with the eyes right on top of them like a frog, and I thought they should be able to see the ceiling or what was overhead at all times. Perhaps they could."

The names of the Indians also fascinated the young girl. In addition to George Yakima, she remembers a boy named Johnny Shale, "evidently named for Shale Creek. Another creek, Harlow, had a family named for it." There also was a Charley Moses.

She was never able to conjecture how George Yakima and Charley Moses got their names. "Did they select their own names or were they given to them by the white men with whom they traded?"

MRS. CLARA K. DOOLEY

The Daily World, Monday, December 30, 1968

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Hardships, Dangers Numerous In Pioneer Days

The land was beautiful.

The clear, cold river, sparkling when the sun shone, flowed from the snow-capped mountains toward the sea through a valley of moss-festooned maples, cottonwoods and alders. And on each side the giant evergreens – spruce, hemlock, fir and cedar – carpeted the benches and hills with one of the lushest forests in the world. There were no man-made hazards. The Indians were friendly neighbors.

This was the Queets River Valley of the 1890's, described by Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley of Des Moines, Wash., in her book, "My Queets Story," an account of her experiences as a young girl, her family and the other early white settlers of the area.

Despite the remote region's beauty, and nostalgia's gilding brush when it paints the memories of childhood, Mrs. Dooley's narrative reveals that there were hardships and dangers on the Queets 75 years ago.

There were floods, canoe accidents, sickness and the ever-continuing problem of providing clothing, food and shelter. And though as a child she may have been unaware that times were hard and life austere, she has been able to recognize it in retrospect.

WEATHER WAS GOOD

"As I think about it now," she wrote, "the weather was always good. But I do remember some rainy days when we stayed in the house all day long – my mother and we four children cooped up for hours in that one little room. Mamma was trying to do her endless lot of work and we children would try all sorts of things in the way of play. My father would stay in the barn and work."

"Of course, he had no fire to keep himself warm, but he could smoke his pipe and be at peace. But what a life for my mother! She must have loved us a lot, far beyond the call of duty, and I think she deserves a crown of roses on her head and the very best favors which Heaven affords to a faithful and good mother."

Among the lesser dangers of the area were the devils club plants. The child, Clara, recalls she always had difficulty telling plants, bushes and other vegetation apart, particularly the harmless salmon berry brush and the devils club. She had heard of men, including government surveyors, who had been poisoned by devils club briars and who had been very sick before recovering.

"I would get salmon berry briars in my fingers and I would take a needle and go to my mother and ask her to take them out for me. I know now that it was the reassurance of her word that they were only salmonberry briars, which I wanted more than having the briars removed."

WARNED ON RIVER

Drowning was an ever-present danger in a community which depended upon canoes and the river for much of its transportation and the children were warned of the river's danger.

"Although we never saw the victims," writes Mrs. Dooley, "it was enough to scare us into being careful around the river."

A SIGHT FOR SETTLERS' EYES: This is how the Queets River, and its mother, snow-capped Mt. Olympus, appeared to early white settlers more than 70 years ago. It looks the same today to hikers and others visiting Olympic National Park. Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley described the scene in her book, "My Queets Story" about her life as a child in the Queets Valley in the 1890s. In this photo camera is 'looking' upstream, or northwest. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

The Knacks, like other settlers, had cattle and other farm animals and some men and women raised gardens. The Knacks had strawberries, raspberries, cabbage for sauerkraut, onions, rutabagas, turnips, carrots, beets, cucumbers, "which grew to enormous size," tomatoes, lettuce, radishes and a large potato patch.

"My father was proud of the good vegetables which seemed to respond so willingly to his work and he introduced some vegetables and grains which were new to that part of the country," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "He raised a new feed for cattle, called Sperry Grass, which is still being grown there."

Despite the natural beauty of the region, pioneer women liked to add the colors of domesticated flowers. So it was with Mrs. Knack.

"I have a vague remembrance of beds of pansies and some old-fashioned flowers, such as sweet Williams, perhaps a rose bush or two," Mrs. Dooley recalls, "but I just barely remember these. I suppose that my mother was always glad to receive anything of the sort which she could plant, and treasured every bit of beauty which came her way in the garden line. Of course, she would never think of buying plants and flower seeds. Money was much too scarce and much too useful in other ways to spend it on flowers."

"Some might argue that the country was beautiful enough in itself without the addition of domesticated flowers. The women who lived on the river liked to share their flowers with other women and spread them around as far as possible.

"The part of the garden which I remember was Mamma's two rose bushes. One was a big pink rose which seemed to love to grow and bloom, and the other was a smaller beautifully-formed rose, dark red, with a name something like Jackminot (that spelling is probably wrong). And the wonderful part of the story is that they were given to her by one of the old-timers who had settled there on the Queets."

"Once when he returned from a trip outside, he gave every woman who lived on the river two rose bushes. I wish I remembered the man's name, for this was a deed worthy of remembrance. Some other gift might have given more pleasure at the start, but who would remember it after all these years?"

Frederick Knack, credited with introducing Sperry Grass to the Queets, also introduced a more unlikely crop.

The head of the Knack clan was an inveterate pipe smoker and in an attempt to alleviate a supply problem in the remote area tried, with some success, to grow tobacco.

With no market or demand for timber, the dense forest posed a major problem to Queets settlers seeking to clear land for pasture, crop-growing and gardening. According to an account heard by Roy Knack, a group of the pioneers got together and when the wind was right attempted to set a forest fire. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the forest refused to burn.

Among the hardships along the Queets, Mrs. Dooley recalls were floods.

"I do not know if the river flooded every year or everywhere in its length...but I do remember that it flooded several times...There was no public assistance in those days and everyone had to look out for himself. There was no help even if one lost all his wood. The floods took place in the spring when the weather suddenly became very warm and melted a lot of snow in the mountains. This would fill the river and cause it to overflow into its narrow valley and since it was a swift stream this huge volume of water would go sweeping down to the sea, uprooting big trees along its banks and carrying everything before it. It was truly a terrifying sight. How easily some big log, torn out by the roots and plunging along, could have knocked our little house to pieces. This is what my parents were afraid of."

"On one occasion I remember my father had taken the bedsteads down and had the nails ready to turn them into a raft and make for the little two-room cabin he had built along the beach for just such an event. As a matter of fact we never used it for that purpose but it proved to be a good place to store vegetables."

"In this 1897 flood (Mrs. Dooley was 5 years old at the time) we stayed upstairs all day and watched the river, but even that became tiresome. I don't remember anything to eat that day, but I am sure we must have eaten. I do remember I began looking around for something to eat, and all I could find was a box of dried onions, about the least appropriate thing I can think of now. Along toward evening, the river seemed to be going down so we went to bed and the next morning there was a layer of black mud all over the floor, and all over everything outdoors too."

"I think that is the year the water came to the top of the cookstove."

Because the parents kept their anxieties to themselves, the children, or at least Clara, were unworried...

"I wished at the time," she recalled, "that my father would decide to use the raft. I had seen a picture of a raft in a copy of Robinson Crusoe and I thought it would be an interesting adventure.

"....I can still see those waves of muddy water come rolling down the river valley."

The Daily World, Saturday-Sunday, January 4-5 1969

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Queets Area: An 'Unimproved' Playground

Although differences undoubtedly existed even then between parents and offspring, Queets Valley settlers of the 1890's never had experienced or heard of the "generation gap," so often lamented today.

There was little chance of apartness or rebellion. Travel was limited. Recreation was usually a family participation. A harsh environment forced individuals into tightly knit groups. Survival hinged on togetherness. Parents, responsible for taking care of the young, in so doing imparted their philosophy, insights and knowledge without the distractions of movies, magazines, television and rock 'n roll singers.

One of the simple childhood pastimes recalled by Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley in her book, "My Queets Story" was going with Mama to milk the family's two cows, Rosie and Susie.

"I remember in the long summer evenings when my mother would take the milk pails and we would go to the barn for the delightful job of milking," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "Frieda and I would milk Susie, both at the same time, Frieda at one side and I at the other. We would milk right into our drinking mugs and would drink it as soon as we had a mugful."

SPOILED THE COWS

Mrs. Knack, even then, imparted wisdom – though partly in jest – to her children when she revealed that she had spoiled the cows by milking them, so that they objected to being milked by men or boys.

"She said if we were wise, we would never learn to milk seriously, which is a piece of advice we took."

Later Mr. Knack, in order to obtain a lot in Hoquiam for building a house, traded the two cows to Ivar Sorenson, a farmer and trader who with his wife and young son spent some time on the Queets. Sorenson was to sell the cows to a butcher and during the Knack family's first summer in Hoquiam "whenever we had a piece of beef to eat, someone would say, 'do you suppose we are eating a part of Rosie or Susie?'" Mrs. Knack would assure the children that the meat was shipped out in the other direction.

On the Queets the family also had a yoke of oxen, Duke and Star.

"They were not as beautifully matched as Mr. McKinnon's Tom and Jerry who looked so much alike, I couldn't tell one from the other."

Mrs. Dooley remembers the vocabulary, "gee, haw and whoa" for extending and also recalls her interest when her father made a yoke for the two big animals.

CHOSE MAPLE TREE

"The first step was to select and cut out a main piece for the yoke. For this he chose the maple tree which has the broad yellow leaves that fall in thick layers to lie on the ground and are nice to walk in barefoot," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "He cut the yoke to fit over the necks of the two oxen and he smoothed and polished it so that there was not a snag or a splinter or a sharp

corner anywhere on it. Then he had Henry cut limbs from the vine maple, whose leaves turn a beautiful gold and red, orange and brown in the fall. These were for the bows and they had to be straight and even sized for the whole length and have no knots."

Making the bows seemed to me a long, hard process. Every evening my father would fill the wash boiler with water and heat it on the kitchen stove, and when it was boiling hard and producing plenty of steam, he would take the maple lengths, peel them, tie the two ends of each together until it was a gentle bow and hang them over the steam."

"As the wood was steamed and softened he would bend the sticks a little after each steaming until finally they were bent into more than half a circle in degrees...When he had the bows all bent, they were like two immense letter U's with the two ends straightened out to be parallel to each other. Then he had to bore holes of the right size in the yoke in the right places to fit the ends of the bows." Small holes were bored in each end of the bows and little pegs inserted to hold the yoke in place. The last step was to fasten a round iron ring to the center of the back of the yoke. An iron chain was fastened to this and to the plow or whatever the oxen were to pull.

DEEP INTEREST

"With this yoke finished and being used, I felt as much interest in it as if I had made it myself," Mrs. Dooley commented. "I suppose my real share in its making was to stand around in the way and ask questions, although that was something I did not indulge in too often. Needless questions were discouraged. My parents believed strongly in 'Children should be seen and not heard' maxim."

The young girl also learned a lesson as a result of some of the family's many pets, which included a great number of cats, kept to control a large crop of mice, the cows, 2 dogs, one of them their favorite, a small black and tan of uncertain ancestry which they named "Topsy," and chickens.

"We had a chicken named Cynthalie after Cynthalie Glover because her eyes resembled the girl's and when we told the real Cynthalie about it, she did not feel complimented. I learned a lesson from this incident.

She also learned, early in life, about the passage of time.

"In talking to Mamma I used the expression of having waited a greatly exaggerated length of time for something to happen. My mother told me that I knew nothing about the length of time, that it all depended on what one was doing and what one's wishes were.

"She said if I would sit still in a chair for half an hour, saying nothing, she would give me a dime."

TIME MADE REAL

This sounded easy and young Clara sat still for what seemed to her well over 30 minutes. It turned out to be not more than five.

"I was greatly surprised and felt I could never sit there half an hour. I shall never forget this incident. I am glad it happened when I was so young."

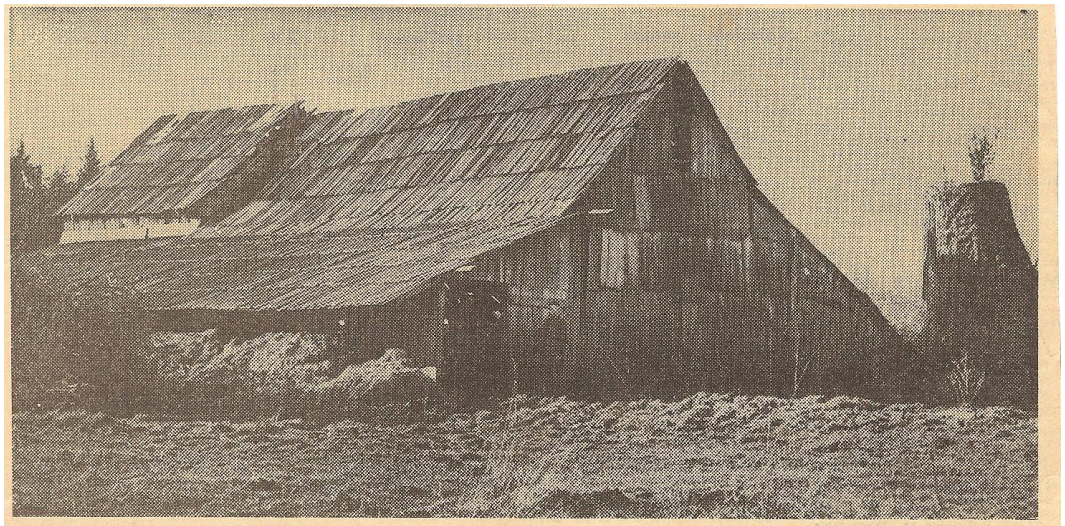
She was glad, too, that her parents were always truthful and that they instilled this quality in their children.

She wasn't as happy about her father's attempt to impart religious training to the children after Mrs. Hartzell had left the area and there was no more Sunday School. To make

up for this Mr. Knack started a session each Sunday evening, in German, to teach the children the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

"It was all beyond me and I used to dread that Sunday evening, which seemed to last through endless hours and began to spoil the whole day for me," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "He would read from Luther's translation of the Bible and his introductory notes and closing notes, which in some cases were quite long...The Old Testament from which he was reading was old and the black leather cover was badly worn and I thought that was the reason for its being called the "Old" Testament. The New Testament had a bright new cover." Although sometimes Mrs. Knack would "beg off for" Clara so that she could go to bed, it didn't work too often.

"I respect and honor my father for his desires but not for his methods," Mrs. Dooley wrote.



TYPICAL BARN ON THE QUEETS: This aged barn, blending almost naturally with the landscape, stood on the old Streater place on the Queets River when this picture was taken in 1942. The barn was upriver from the Frederick Knack homestead, locale for "My Queets Story," Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley's story about her childhood on the Queets in the 1890s. Both homesteads were on the river's north side. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

UNDERSTOOD EASTER

The children, or at least Clara, understood some of the religious meanings of Easter but they enjoyed that holiday much for its other trappings. They believed, says Mrs. Dooley, in the Easter Rabbit as much as they did Santa Claus only his day was not as important.

"Our observance of this holiday was only making nests of straw on the evening before Easter and then the next morning finding the nest full of eggs laid by the Easter Rabbit. How pretty they looked in their nests and what beautiful colors they had and how they all shone!"

"This holiday, coming in the spring of the year, is associated in my mind with good weather, the trees all sprouting new leaves and buds, a pleasant spring-like scent in the air and a general promise of loveliness in everything. For a few days before Easter we would keep our eyes open to see if we could find the Easter Rabbit among the rabbits which came out of the woods. And if we saw an especially large, healthy looking one, we would designate it as the Easter Rabbit."

"We had found that the Easter eggs were not only prettier but tasted much better than ordinary hard-cooked hens' eggs. They were larger too and had a wonderful shine which hens' eggs lacked."

Just another little fable to make life happy for little children.

ISLAND IN RIVER

Something else which made life happier for the Knack children was their little island in the river. This paradise started out, Mrs. Dooley explained, as a bit of gravel bar which had become separated form the rest of the gravel by two or three large trees washed during a flood from some bank upriver. The earth had collected around the trees in a shallow place in the river. The huge roots stood up on the upriver end.

"It really was an island – a body of land entirely surrounded by water – the shallow passage on our side and the main river on the other," she wrote. "It could be used only in the summer time, which made it an even more desirable location than if we could have gone there at any time. As time went on, other trees, smaller ones, came to rest on the island and little clumps of alders and willows grew here and there with grass between."

The girls had their mud pie factory in an area where many trees had a host of little green toads, which the girls caught and tried to keep opened up until they could return in the afternoon. But the toads always escaped. The girls had their "kitchen" and dining room on the upriver end of the big logs, using worn out teakettles, coffee pots and other utensils discarded by discouraged settlers who had moved out.

Each winter the girls could hardly wait until spring when they could return to their island and learn what had happened to it and the household goods they had left the fall before.

But it was not to be long until they would have to leave the beautiful Queets Valley. They would return years later for visits but they would never again see their island paradise, which was born for them while they were there and ceased to exist during a flood after they were gone.

The Daily World, Wednesday, January 8, 1969

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Preparations Made To Quit The Wilderness

Dissatisfied by the limited educational facilities and the complete lack of Sunday School training for the children, Frederick and Wilhelmina Knack, after 7 years, decided to give up their homestead in the remote Queets Valley and move to Hoquiam.

Planning ahead, Knack traded livestock for a lot in Hoquiam and went there in the fall of 1898 to build a home for his brood, which he left for the winter back in the little wilderness cabin. The mother and children were not to come out until June of the next year, according to Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley in her book, "My Queets Story."

In the meantime, the indomitable pioneer woman made her preparations for the move. Most of the cows and pigs had been traded off and the family, during the winter and spring, ate most of the chickens, saving the last for lunches on the way and even bringing some pieces, fried in butter, to Mr. Knack in Hoquiam.

NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS

Among the families and friends the Knacks would leave behind or who had left before them were the Robinsons, who lived, not on the Queets, but on the "Little River," the Clearwater. "After the Robinsons left they moved to Aberdeen where Mr. Robinson had a paint store," Mrs. Dooley recalled. "There were two boys, a girl, Mattie, and a younger girl, named Queetsie, after the river... Dave Kerr, from Ireland, was another person we saw quite often and who used to visit us in Hoquiam. He had a brother who was drowned at the mouth of the Raft River. He, himself, with his new wife, lost their lives in a bad storm which blew down the Indian hotel at Taholah where they were stopping in the winter of 1902 or 1903.

There also was the Northup family, several members of which moved, like the Knacks, to Hoquiam in later years.

"Mr. Northup, I think, had been an elementary school principal in Seattle and also had been in newspaper work. The two older sons were married at the time they came to the Queets and the oldest had children...

HANDSOME FAMILY

"They were a handsome family with good manners and always pleasant and agreeable and people one enjoyed being around. There were six boys and two girls, Ruth and Agnes."

Among people Mrs. Dooley remembers was Mr. Krautkramer, "one of our most faithful friends," Mr. Lyman, for whom she believes the falls were named, and Mrs. Hollenbeck, men by the name of Mayew, Matheny (Matheny Creek), Turner, Tisdale; Mrs. Mayhew, who wore a veil, the sisters Rose and Bertha Wartmen and also a Mrs. Pool. Remembering the women and children also reminded Mrs. Dooley of how the feminine sex dressed in that remote, back-woods area.

"We girls always wore our hair in braids and always wore dresses," she explained. "The women all wore long dresses almost touching the floor. If they went into the woods and

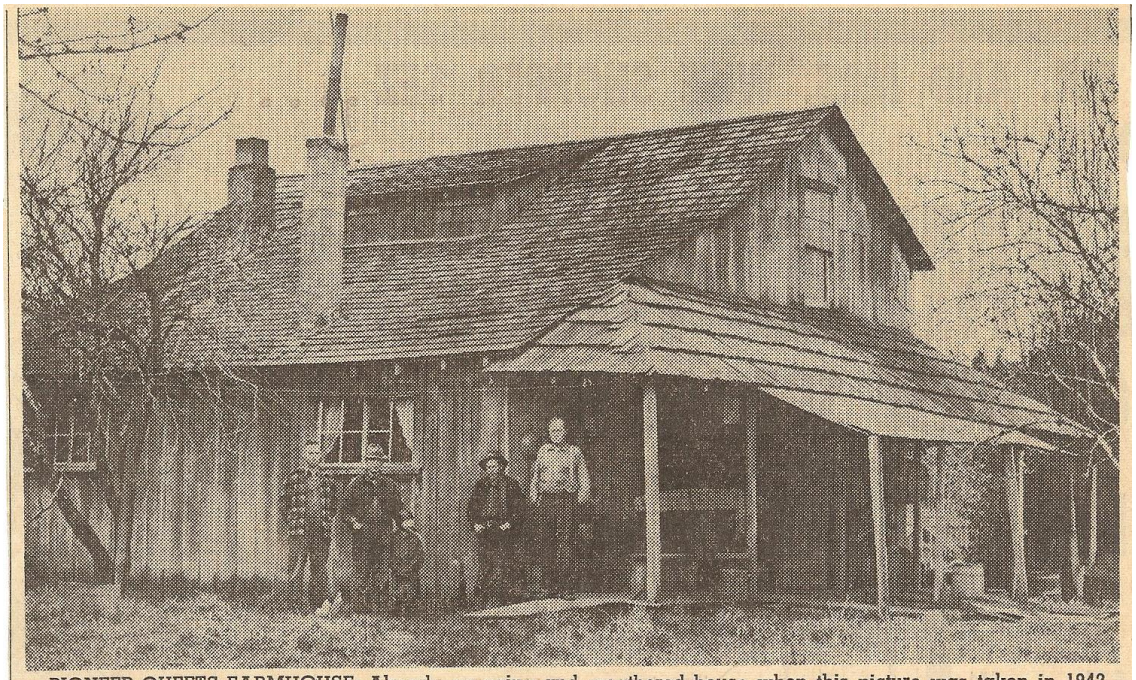
walked along the trails, they would pin up their skirts with a row of safety pins. I never saw women and girls on the Queets dress as men and boys.

OTHERS REMEMBERED

Others Mrs. Dooley remembers were a Mrs. McGee, Tom Killea and his two brothers. Killea dressed sleekly in snug-fitting suits and it was rumored that he was a gambler by profession.

"It is queer, isn't it, how these early pictures stay in one's mind?" wrote Mrs. Dooley. "Whenever I hear the word 'Mountain' I think of the white crowned peak (Mt. Olympus) we could sometimes see up in the mountains where the river came from. When I hear the word 'river' I think of the place where Salmon Creek entered the Queets."

"When I read in stories of cattle being driven across a river I see a picture of several cows splashing along across the Queets River going home to be milked. A pioneer home anywhere calls up a picture of our cabin with smoke curling from the tin smoke stack. And thus it is with all the things that were known to me at the time."



PIONEER QUEETS FARMHOUSE: Already an aging and weathered house when this picture was taken in 1942, the Ridgeway home had many of the basic ingredients of pioneer establishments. On the porch, or nearby can be seen grindstone, hand pump, wash tub, saw filing stand, wash bench and basins, water buckets and barrels. People in photograph include George Streater and members of the Ridgeway family. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

WOMEN HAD CLAIMS

Some of the others Mrs. Dooley remembers were the Phelan brothers, who had claims up-river, and Mr. Knorr, a man who lived alone and was one of "a number of old appearing men because of their long gray beards but who probably were not so very old in years." There were also a Mr. Ballard, who, Mrs. Dooley believes, was a mail carrier, small groups of government surveyors and several women who had claims and would come occasionally. Among them were Miss Head and Miss Elsie Dickey.

And there was Captain Hanks. "I remember a few occasions when no matter how careful my mother was about saving kerosene, we would run out of it, and would have to wait

in darkness at night for the coming of Capt. Hanks, the man who ran the boat to Hoquiam and brought our supplies of staples, such as flour, soap, sugar, salt, and all the other things we could not produce, as well as kerosene, and delivered them at the mouth of the river, where the settlers would get them... He later, after we had moved to Hoquiam, lost his life and his boat in a winter storm on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. He was performing a useful service to the settlers, where everything brought in otherwise, had to be carried by horse or on someone's back."

When the family was out of kerosene the mother filled her time sitting in front of the good fire in the stove and knitting by the light from the little isinglass panes. The children went to bed. But when Capt. Hanks delivered the oil it was much brighter on the Queets.

"Here is a little picture which comes to my mind which I won't forget," wrote Mrs. Dooley, as she painted a scene typical, probably of most of the pioneers in the early west.

"The little lamp, with the glass ring on the side of its glass bowl, would be lighted and set on a 10-pound lard tin, turned upside-down on the table, so that its light would be spread over a larger area. And all the family would be sitting there all engaged in some form of reading. My father and mother with their German paper, Kate with a story book if she had been able to borrow one. She was a great reader. Henry looking at pictures perhaps and Frieda engaged with a school book or something of the sort."

WANTED TO READ

"But I could see what a pleasure reading was for most people and decided then and there that it was something I would learn to do as fast as I could, which I did."

"I would look around the room and I could see the reflection of the family group in the window facing the river, and they looked so natural that I would open the door and go out to catch them before they disappeared. But I never did. Of course, I knew it was only a reflection, but it looked so very real."

"It was at these moments when I was out in the dark by myself, that I discovered how very dark the night can be. It is something one never sees in a small town or village, and it must be like being totally blind, when everything is black."

RECITE WHOLE BOOK

Mrs. Dooley can remember wishing for and getting one Christmas a Franklin Second Reader, which she and Frieda read so often that they could recite all of the book from memory.

The family's last winter on the river was a cold one, with snow on the ground and the bushes and the trees in the woods covered. There was a thin layer of ice along the river close to the banks.

In addition to getting rid of what livestock Mr. Knack had not already sold or traded off, Mrs. Knack in her winter of preparation for the trip out ordered from Montgomery Ward, material which she used in making the children new dresses, underwear and coats on her American Sewing Machine. She also had to decide which of the family's personal possessions were worth transporting, nearly 100 miles by slow and laborious freight. She took, for example, a small granite kettle (in which she packed the fried chicken for Mr. Knack). But she left behind among other things, an old three-legged iron kettle and a cast iron teakettle with a cover that turned sideways on a pin. She took with her, however, her carved wooden butter mould with the picture of a swan on it, and the hand-powered churn.

HAD CHICKEN POX

To top off the many preparations, she had to nurse the children through the chicken pox (believed caught from a party of Indians who camped in the barn) and appear, along with Mrs. Donaldson, as witness in a trial at the home of Judge Whittaker, "who lived many miles up the river."

I am not too sure where it was but it was a walk of two days to get there," says Mrs. Dooley.

Although it was January and cold, the mother, for the first time, left the children alone overnight – in fact for three night and five days. She charged Henry with looking after the animals and the cutting and carrying of the wood, Kate to do the cooking and, with Frieda, the dishwashing and general housework. Clara was told to mind the older children.

"We missed Mamma while she was gone to the trial and how happy we were to see her little figure coming into the clearing on her way home, which made everything all right again. I don't know anything about the trial but calling my mother and Mrs. Donaldson as witnesses seems like a miscarriage of justice."

The Daily World, Friday, January 10, 1969

Clara Knack Dooley

MY QUEETS STORY

Preparations Made to Quit the Wilderness

Now a jaunt of less than two hours by auto, the trip from the Queets to Hoquiam in 1899 took the Frederick Knack family more than two days by dugout canoe, foot, wagon and tugboat.

For a 7-year-old Clara Knack, who had spent all but the first six months of her life there, the family excursion from a remote river valley to a comparative metropolis, Hoquiam, was as memorable as a journey into outer space today.

"All the preparations for leaving were thrilling to me and I looked forward to the canoe ride down the river," Clara, now Mrs. Clara Knack Dooley, retired teacher living at Des Moines, Wash., wrote in her book, 'My Queets Story.' "And I wondered about all the interesting sights of the outside world I should see and what new things I should learn to do."

DETAILS STILL CLEAR

Although they happened almost 70 years ago, details of the canoe trip to the mouth of the river, the hike along the beach to Taholah, the tragic loss of their pet dog, Topsy, the wagon trip from Taholah to Oyehut and the ride up Grays Harbor on a tugboat, are still etched in Mrs. Dooley's mind.

By the time the trip was to start, Mrs. Knack, alone with the children during the winter while Mr. Knack worked on constructing a new home in Hoquiam, had completed packing, disposing of farm animals and fowls and other preparations. Most of the cats were able to fend for themselves but Frieda and Clara gave their favorite kitten, Letty, to their friend and neighbor, Belle Donaldson. The children took their little dog with them.

At last the great day had arrived, and the group of travelers, including a Clara who had never been before even as far as the Queets Indian village, 7 miles away, embarked.

INDIANS AS GUIDES

"In our party were Mrs. Sorenson and her little son, my mother and we four children, and several Indians who had been hired to guide and to carry our luggage."

"As we neared the Indian village close to the mouth, there were some rather high hills on the north or right-hand bank on top of which were a row of little log houses with a door in each facing the river. We were told that this is where the dead Indians were laid to rest. This interested me the most of anything I had seen along the river, although it was all new and exciting to me."

When the party neared the mouth of the river and canoes went ashore and all disembarked, Clara ran to the beach and had her first view of the Pacific Ocean.

"I was impressed with the great expanse of it. I knew it touched China on the other side, and I know that China was a great distance away," she wrote. "But I did not forget to do what I had planned – to taste it and see if the water was as salty as I had imagined."

The party then walked along the beach to Taholah, another memorable day for the young girl.

"Walking along the beach close to where the water met the shore, watching the waves, great and small, come breaking on the sand, (We had often heard them from the homestead) looking at the restless, ever-changing ocean on the right and the huge piles of driftwood and other relics of the sea."

"All along the beach we saw occasional towers with a little platform on top where a man could wait with a gun to shoot a sea otter coming in on the tide... We crossed many little streams flowing into the ocean, and each one was a wonderful place to play."

Too much play by the children, for whom the adults slowed their pace, made them a bit late to avoid the tide at Cape Elizabeth. The party walked through a natural tunnel in the rocks there and Mrs. Sorenson, stopping to pick up a star fish, was soaked by a wave.

After traveling all day and crossing the Quinault River in canoes, the party stayed all night in the hotel at Taholah. It was here that tragedy befell, Topsy disappeared.

NEVER SEEN AGAIN

"Frieda and I hunted all over the little town for her, but she was not to be found," wrote Mrs. Dooley. "We cried bitterly over our loss and it still makes me unhappy. We were told that some Indians were seen with a dog like Topsy going up the Quinault River in a canoe. We never heard anything more about her."

The next afternoon the Knack party caught the mail wagon, driven by Mr. Grigsby, who had equipped it for hauling passengers by installing two seats.

"We drove straight out to the beach and for a moment I thought of the story of the Children of Israel walking into the Red Sea, but after both horses were out in the water he turned south, driving on the wet sand.

"We rode all afternoon and it began to rain, not hard, but there was no cover on the wagon so Frieda and I crawled under the seats."

They reached the Grigsby home just north of Copalis before dark and met his wife, a daughter, Irene, and a group of older sons. Clara was impressed by a black kitchen sink, the first she had ever seen.

Mr. Grigsby took the family, the next day, to Oyehut where it caught a tugboat to Hoquiam in the afternoon.

ON A LITTLE BAY

"At that time Oyehut was on the bay, a little village with a long dock running out into the water. We walked to the end of it and boarded the tugboat, (actually a passenger launch) the Thistle."

The tired girl lay down, went to sleep and didn't awaken until the boat landed at the North Western Lumber Co. dock on the Hoquiam River, across the street from the firm's general store. There Mr. Knack met them.

"And so we arrived in Hoquiam and I began a way of life entirely new to me."

WENT BACK IN 1920

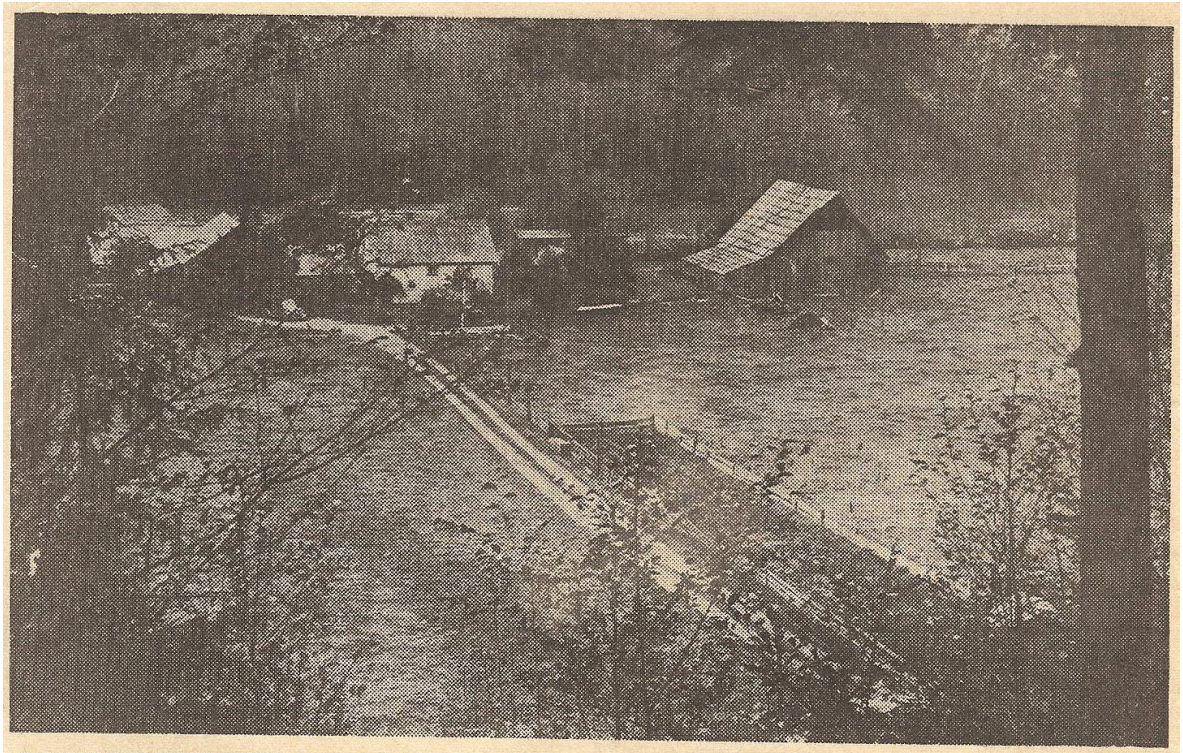
This was in June of 1899. Twenty one years later, in August of 1920, Clara, her sister, Frieda and their younger brother, Roy, born after the family had moved to Hoquiam, returned to the Queets for the first time since the family's departure. The road had not been built at the

time and the three walked from the west shore of Lake Quinault to the old homestead. They camped overnight in the woods at Raft River, started out early the next morning, breakfasted on fish which Roy caught in Salmon Creek, which used to enter the Queets just across the river from the homestead.

After breakfast they started on the trail which crossed and re-crossed the creek 30 times before coming to its mouth.

"In spite of what the geography books say about the long rivers of the earth, we know one that isn't even mentioned," Mrs. Dooley wrote. "By evening of that long summer day we could see the Queets at a distance."

At this time they found themselves on someone's place with some wild-looking cows and a big black bull across a gully from them. They retreated upstream and camped overnight again. The next morning the cattle were gone.



RANCH ON THE QUEETS: This is the Ransom Higley ranch, on the south bank of the Queets River, as it appeared in 1942. The farm dated back to early settlement of the valley around the turn of the century. River appears to be running almost bank full. (Dell Mulkey Photo)

A DISAPPOINTMENT

"We crossed the river in a canoe," she wrote. "At last we were on our old place. I was somewhat disappointed. We found that things really were different and the distances which I had always thought of as long were really so short that I could not see how they had held everything which I remembered."

They crossed the river and walked up to the Donaldson place, where they found their old neighbor and his second wife, who made them feel welcome.

They used the Donaldson home as a base of operations on their visits to the old homestead and also were helped in their searches by George and Theodore Anderson who had come to the Queets a few years after the Knacks had left and were living on the old Olson

place. The Andersons still live on the Queets, Mrs. Dooley reports, as "they were lucky enough to find some land near where the Clearwater enters the Queets which was not shown on the map of the park, as all the other homesteads are."

On one of their trips to the old home, Frieda cut some slips of the old pink rose and took them to their mother in Hoquiam. She was pleased and planted them there.

No one ever lived on the old place after the Knacks left. Wild cattle roamed the land. Vegetation had changed. There were, for example, huge clumps of blackberries introduced after the Knacks had gone. Although an old apple tree, one of those planted by Mr. Knack, was leaning and its trunk was covered with woodpecker holes, it was still alive. But the dark red rose had disappeared.

"Even our dear island in the river was long since gone," wrote Mrs. Dooley. I think now that it was truly our island for it came while we were there and disappeared shortly after we had gone. And I know that no one else ever enjoyed it the way Frieda and I did. And that is one piece of the old homestead which I can always treasure in my memory."

Mrs. Dooley recalls that in "the long days of summer when it was dry outdoors, I would lie on the ground and curl myself up and look up at the beautiful world all around me. I would look at the blue sky with the white clouds drifting by and the tall trees and listen to the birds singing all around. I might look up the river and see the snow-capped mountain in the far-distance."

"I would always feel that the beauty of the world was far beyond my powers to express. I would think, too, of the big world outside which I would someday come to know. I wondered when I should see Seattle, the magic city, which to me was the greatest metropolis of all. But in the meantime, the wonderful outdoors with its beauty and warmth and comfort and security of our little log cabin were enough for me. Through all the years which have passed since then, I have kept my memory of our life on the Queets as a little treasure in my heart."

Conclusion