

## Middle Fork 'Dude' Ranch Attracts Many Idahoans

Found: Utopia.

Not in Tibet, but in the primitive area of the Salmon river country is the "Shangri-La" founded by Mr. and Mrs. Tom McCall.

It consists of an attractive, modern home and "dude ranch" development that places the McCalls and their two children on a practically self-sufficient basis despite the fact that they are far removed from civilization with the airplane and radio their only immediate means of contact with the "outside world."

The McCall place, located at the edge of the middle fork of the Salmon river in a region noted for its game and fish, is about 40 miles from Meyers Cove, an outpost consisting of two dude ranches about 100 miles from Salmon, the seat of Lemhi county. Their nearest neighbors are 12 miles away.

A forest service air strip is located about a mile from the McCall place, providing them with transportation in event of an emergency as well as a means of inlet for supplies.

The "dudes" who visit the McCall place come in by plane as well as by pack train up Pistol creek from Landmark, a distance of 36 miles. Plane is the more practical, of course, reducing to a matter of minutes a trip that otherwise means at least two days.

Fishing is a year-around sport in that region, of course, inasmuch as the middle fork is never closed. The steelhead run is just starting and from now until September the McCalls will entertain visiting fishermen.

Hunting season starts in the fall and extends well into winter.

The "dudes" provide the McCalls with their financial income, but money has little part in their Utopian existence.

For example, the Salmon river

provides them with fresh fish the year around.

Their meat supply consists of game as well as beef cattle from their ranch and hogs which they produce on their own place. They have a cow for fresh milk and butter, and chickens for eggs.

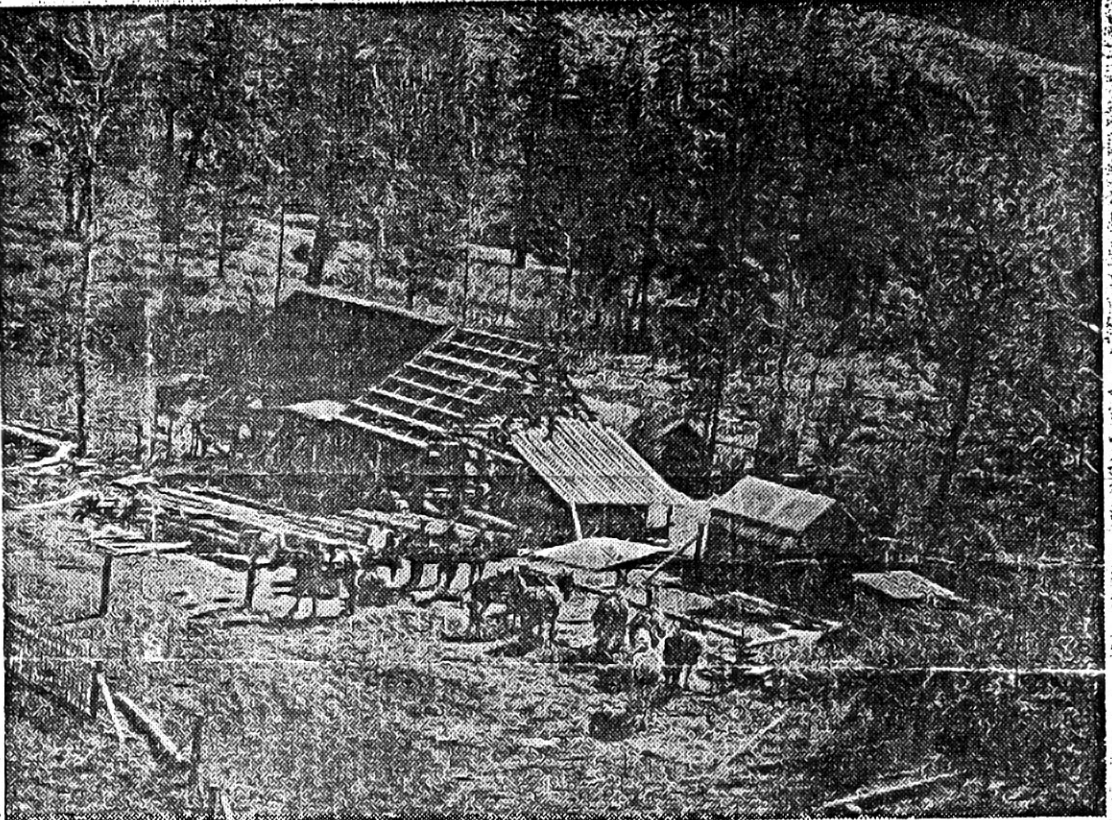
Their garden provides them with fresh vegetables and Mrs. McCall cans a goodly portion for winter consumption.

The wood for their kitchen and living room stoves comes from the nearby forests.

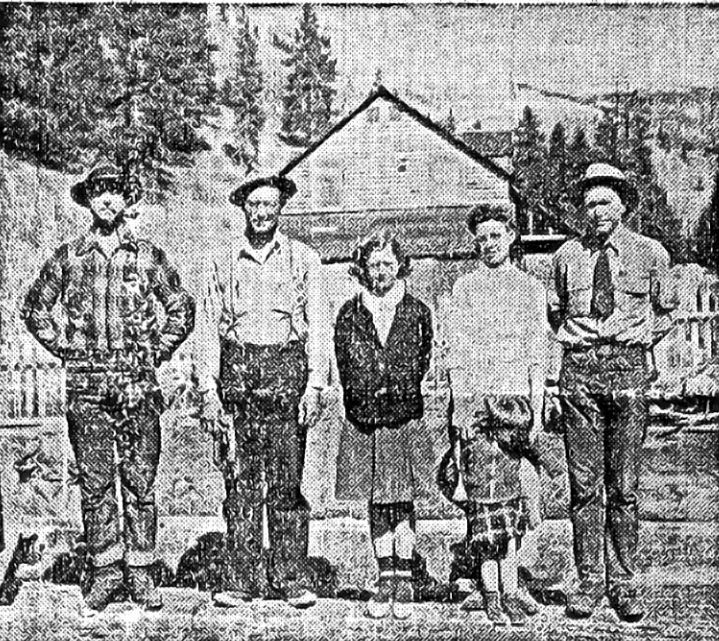
Mountain streams provide their drinking water.

Electric lights are made possible by McCall's tiny home-made power plant which consists of a water wheel. He derives enough power, too, for the operation of his own sawmill which provides him with the lumber for his house and buildings during the off-season for tourists. He buys the timber from the forest service, cuts it himself and floats it downstream to his sawmill.

Mr. and Mrs. McCall, in love with the vast open spaces and unmindful of the solitude, have re-



THIS IS Tom McCall's sawmill on the middle fork of the Salmon river, where he produces his own lumber for buildings on his dude ranch. He floats logs downstream and then puts them through the mill. Horses at the hitching post are those of a party of forest service officials who recently made a game count in that region.



THIS IS THE TOM McCALL family at their dude ranch on the middle fork of the Salmon river on one of those rare occasions when visitors drop in during the off-season for dudes. Left to right are: W. W. Dresskell, range examiner for the Boise national forest; McCall, his daughter, Bonita, 12, and his wife, Nell, and E. Lavelle Thompson, forest ranger. Standing in front of Mrs. McCall is her youngest daughter, Anna Kaye, 3. The forest service officials visited the McCall dude ranch during a game count. The McCall place can be seen in the background, on the edge of the middle fork.

ained in the interior for 14 months at a time.

Their daughters, Bonita, 12, and Anna Kaye, 3, also like their life. Mrs. McCall conducts school classes five days a week for Bonita to keep up her education. Textbooks are obtained on the occasional trips to town.

Illness is the one threat, of course, but the couple and their children rarely come down with colds or other ailments associated with populated places.

McCall, formerly an oil distributor at McCall and Cascade, came down with appendicitis last winter and was flown out for an operation in Boise. He was back in the wilderness kingdom in about a month.

The McCall residence, which includes four upstairs bedrooms for the accommodation of the hunting and fishing "dudes" brought in by such fliers as Bill Wood and Penn Stoht, was built by McCall with the lumber from his sawmill. Mrs. McCall's kitchen is as modern as any in Boise, thanks to the hydroelectric power. Refrigerators, davenport and chair, dining room buffet and other heavy furniture was flown in by plane, and other household goods were brought in by pack train.

A natural hot springs provides the household with constant hot water, by means of a pipeline built by McCall.