



Michael and Mary Doherty Kenny

Address:

Milk Canyon, most easterly branch of the head of Sand Hollow Canyon

Land Coordinates:

Approximately 12 miles (as the crow flies) from Heppner

Legal Description:

Original Homestead located in Section 31, Township 1 South, Range 28 East of the Willamette Meridian

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Section 31, Township 1 South, Range 28 East of the Willamette Meridian

Homestead Claim/Original Acquisition:

Michael Kenny filed Homestead rights in the early 1880s; Settled in 1883

Current Land Owner:

Brian D (Butch) Knowles and Mary Lynn Healy Knowles (4th Generation)

Homestead Building:

The House and the horse barn are the only buildings left standing.

Land Holdings:

All land acquired in the 1880s thru their lifetime is owned by family members

Century Farm:

Yes, Designated a Century Farm circa 1983

Ranching and Farming:

They raised Cattle, Sheep & Horses, and plowed acres for Wheat and crops.

The founders of the Circle K Sheep paint brand, KNY horse and KY cattle brands.



Mike Kenny
1859-1940



Mary Doherty Kenny
1865-1940



1920 Family Photo:

Back L to R: John F, Sarah,
James T, Roseanne,
Joseph B.

Front L to R: Mary,
Cecelia, Mike.

Continued on back

Michael and Mary Doherty Kenny

Continued from front

Mary Doherty Kenny was born on May 15, 1865 to Catherine (Grant) and Francis Doherty, natives of County Donegal, Ireland. After her Father's passing, Mary, her Mother, and her 2 brothers (James G. & Bernard F) decided to leave Ireland and go to America to join her sister Sarah who had preceded them to Eastern Oregon. With hopes and a vision for a better life in America, they departed their beloved homeland Ireland. October 8, 1883 they arrived in the United States aboard the steamship Encoria, and traveled to Big Butter Creek to the ranch house of Catherine Doherty Nelson (her Mother's first cousin). Her life was set to change.

A few months before she arrived, her sister Sarah was married to Charlie Cunningham, May 30, 1883. It wasn't long before Mary met a handsome ambitious Irishman, Michael Kenny who was born March 2, 1859, in Carrigallen, County Leitrim, Ireland. They were married in Pendleton at the house of Sisters of Mercy, December 16, 1884. Their trip back to the Kenny Homestead in Milk Canyon by team and buggy took 2 days. It was here that Mike and Mary built their life and fulfilled their American dreams.

Their 8 children were, John Francis, Sarah (Farley), Rosanne (Healy), James Thomas, Michael Edward, Emmett, Joseph Bernard, and Cecelia (Bucknum). During their lifetime they experienced trials and tribulations as well as success. They lost their son Emmett as an infant at the age of 6 1/2 months. In 1907 Michael Edward lost his life at the age of twelve in an accident on a hay rake. About 1912, James Thomas's health began to fail from diabetes. At that time, there was no known remedy for diabetes and Jimmie died November 2, 1922. I can only imagine that these hardships were their greatest challenges. Their home was a well-known site for many festive wedding receptions, and family gatherings. It was beloved by many and especially all the cousins' favorite place.

The Kenny Ranch began with raising horses and cattle, with the horses outnumbering the cattle. During World War 1, many of these horses were sold to the US Army. The KNY brand on the left hip was seen in Europe and used for artillery and Cavalry horses. The horses were a base of the Morgan breed crossed with the Percheron and later crossed with Clydesdales. Due to the farming on the ranch (no tractors), the horses were essential for survival. It took 12 horses for a three bottom plow with many times 2 outfits in operation at the same time, 2-4 horses for a hay wagon, and 21 head were used to pull a Rumley Combine. The Kenny ranch grew in size throughout their lives as they ran 2-3 bands of sheep and harvested many acres of wheat. They grazed allotments in the Blue Mountains and beyond. Mike and Mary's holdings stretched from Little Butter Creek across all the tributaries of Sand Hollow to its most westerly tributary, encompassing nearly 7000 acres.

Mary passed away March 23, 1940, and Michael joined her in everlasting peace November 25, 1940. To this day, all acres acquired by the Kenny Ranch are owned by descendants of Mike and Mary. Throughout the 140 years, many have played an essential part to keeping their legacy alive, including the 5th generation that will hold the reins into the future. The KY Brand has made its mark for 140 years. Our beloved Irish family will not soon be forgotten. As the saying goes, "Don't ever forget who brought you to the Dance."

Written by Mary Lynn Healy Knowles/ 4th generation descendent

Original Homestead

