

THE BOB AND BETTE MCLAUGHLIN RANCH A CENTURY FARM

The history of the McLaughlin Ranch began when John and Catherine (Doherty) Mullally came from Ireland and took up a 160-acre homestead in Dixie Canyon in Morrow County, on Highway 74 near Vinson. The homestead Certificate No. 1509 was recorded on January 29, 1889, in the General Land Office in La Grande, Oregon. This gave John "rights to water for mining, agricultural, manufacturing or other purposes and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights as recognized and acknowledged by the local custom, laws and decisions of courts and also subject to the right of the proprietor of the vein or lode to extract and remove this ore there from."

Over the years, John and Kate Mullally increased the acreage to 678 acres. In 1906, they sold the land to Dan Hirl (a nephew of Kate's). Cornelious, "Cor," and Mary Doherty McLaughlin bought the property in 1915. Mary was a grand niece of Kate Mullally, and Cornelious was a brother-in-law of Pat Doherty. Cornelious was born in 1884 to Daniel and Mary (Barr) McLaughlin in Ballylosky County of Denegal in Ireland.

Cornelious and Mary were married July 6, 1915, in Heppner, Oregon, and set up housekeeping in a three-room house on the farm in Dixie Canyon. In 1935, they built a new house a short distance from the old house. Cornelious and Mary had fourteen children. (Pictured in *The History of Morrow County*, p. 258; printed in 1985.)

As the children grew older, the boys helped with the farm tending sheep and other livestock. The girls learned to cook and raised bumper lambs and turkeys. It was a hard life but a rewarding one. Mary died in 1944, and it was a sad time

for the family. After Mary's death, Cor stayed on the farm and worked it with the help of various children. After the older boys left home, Bob (a great-great nephew of John Mullally) became his father's right-hand man. In 1955, Bob started buying out his father's interest. Cor died in 1961, and Bob bought out his brothers and sisters' interests and thus became sole owner.

Today Bob and Bette (Scharn) McLaughlin are the owners. Over the years Cornelious and Bob bought additional land so that the total acreage is now 2,122 acres.

