

Reid Brothers

By Martha Hungerford Reid

The Reid family's American history began in Scotland on a farm near the city of Aberdeen. In the early 1900s, Alexander P. Reid and six of his brothers and sisters began immigrating to the United States.

They settled mostly in Montana and in western Canada. By 1905, Alex had found work in Kalispell, Montana. He took his meals at a boarding house. There he met Wilma Thompson, granddaughter of the owner of the establishment. Wilma's English ancestors dated back to the early 1600s on the East Coast, near Boston.

Alex married Wilma in 1905.

In 1909, the Reids filed on a homestead near Chester, Montana.

They built a homestead cabin and began wresting a living from the unbroken sod of the western prairie. Nine children were born to them.

At the height of the Depression, work was hard to find for many, including the younger Reid generation.

Two young men, who were friends of the Reid brothers, had traveled to Petersburg, Alaska. They found good jobs at Martinsen's Dairy and came home with silver dollars in their pocket. Hearing of this, John and Gordon Reid left Montana and came to Petersburg in 1937. They worked at Olaf Arness' sawmill. In 1938, they bought the boat *Neptune* from Bert and Erling Espeseth to try fishing.

In 1939, Glenn joined them as soon as he graduated from high school. The brothers did some logging in Duncan Canal for the Arness sawmill. Stanley and Alex Reid moved to Petersburg, in 1940, and Stan worked at the sawmill with Glenn.

Alex graduated from Petersburg High School in 1941, while working part-time at Fryer Machine Shop.

In the meantime, older brother Robert Reid and his family also joined the group. He worked at Fryer's helping to keep the engines of the Petersburg fishing boats in repair.

Since the majority of their family was in Petersburg, Alexander and Wilma Reid left the farm in Montana and came to Petersburg by steamship from Seattle in 1940.

The elder Reids started a chicken ranch in Scow



Glen, Gordon, John, Alex, Robert and Stanley Reid

Bay and sold fresh eggs and fresh chicken. These were immensely popular items and a real novelty in Petersburg. There was very little fresh food at the time. Fruit and vegetables came in a can, and frozen food was not available. There was plenty of fish, venison, and clams, of course.

The big family was soon separated. World War II interrupted. By 1942, all except Robert were serving in various branches of the armed services for the duration of the war.

Alexander and Wilma Reid stayed on in Petersburg during the war. They returned to Montana shortly after peace was declared and after all their sons had come safely home.

Robert, Gordon, Glenn, Stanley and Alex remained in Petersburg after the war. John settled in the Seattle area.