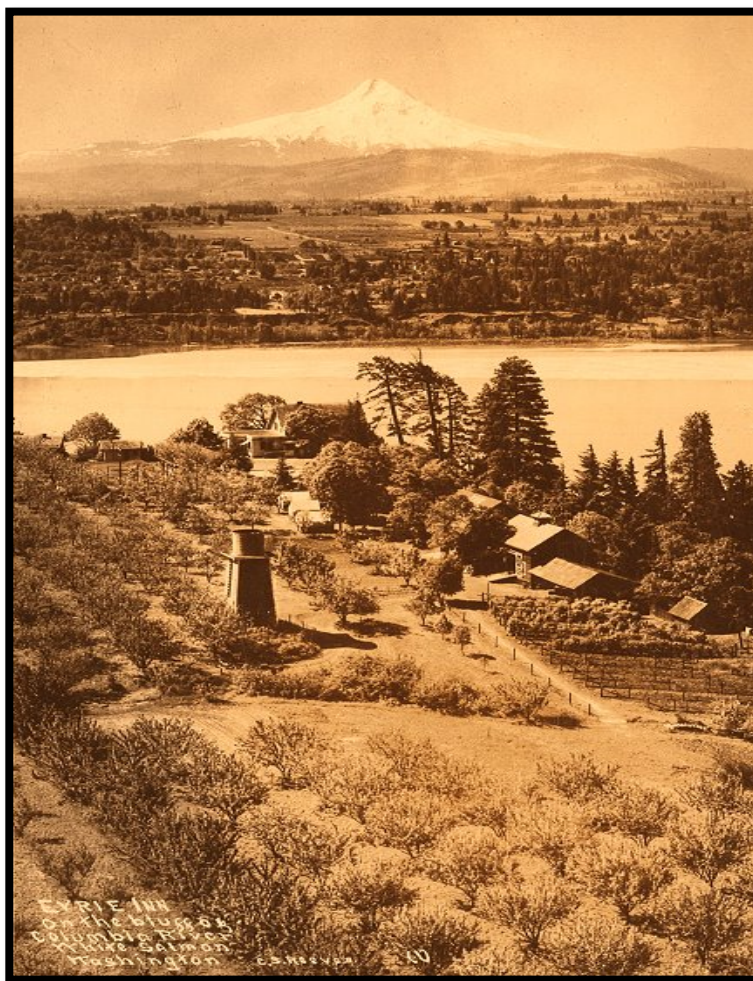




# WEBFOOTER EXTRA

May-June 2021

## The Eyrie Inn – on the Bluffs of the Columbia



Real photo view of the Eyrie Inn by C.S. Reeves courtesy Steve Kenney

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# The Eyrie Inn – on the Bluffs of the Columbia

## by Ben Carscallen



The Eyrie Inn was located on the bluffs above the Columbia River at White Salmon, Washington. Real photo postcard view from Charles S. Reeves of White Salmon, Washington courtesy of Steve Kenney.

In 1910, C.W.J. Reckers who was a Seattle hardware merchant, purchased 23 acres about a mile and a half west of White Salmon, Washington. The property was located on the bluffs above the mouth of the White Salmon and Columbia rivers. Reckers soon named it The Eyrie - The Eagles Nest. On July 1, 1910, *The Enterprise* of White Salmon reported that Reckers had plans to build a \$3,000 two story home that would be situated on a point called The Eyrie. "...from which point is a most beautiful view, commanding both reaches of the Columbia, the White Salmon River, Underwood flat with its developing orchards, Hood River, seemingly within a stone's throw, and the North Bank road straight down from the flag staff".

A wanted ad in *The Oregonian* from May 14, 1910 states "Strawberry pickers wanted at White Salmon; women and girls preferred; good wages; ideal camping location; free transportation from steamboat landing. Address C.W.J. Reckers, "The Eyrie." White Salmon, Wash."



Two years later on January 11, 1912, the *Hood River Glacier* mentions a little more on the progress of The Eyrie property. "Perched upon a high point and overlooking the Columbia and the White Salmon rivers, like some chateau in the Alps or the Pyrenees, is the home of C.W.J. Reckers. It is appropriately called "The Eyrie." To further make it more unique, the owner is building a trail around the bluff side, cutting out or trestling as the case may demand. Two or three caves in the bluff side are reached thereby. It will be a delightful little mountain trail, for you will have all the thrills or precipice, and the view hard to surpass."

After five years of hard work, Reckers invited some North Bank Railroad officials as guests of The Eyrie which would end up promoting the place to tourists traveling by rail. From *The Oregon Journal* on May 23, 1915, "Railroad Officials will be guests. North Bank Railroad officials will visit White Salmon today as guests of C.W.J. Reckers who has an estate nearby called the Eyrie. This will be opened June 1st as a cottage resort and the railroad men will inspect the resort and its surroundings so they may tell tourists about it later. The cottage stands on the cliffs overlooking the river. Those in the party will be W.C. Wilkes, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Pearson, Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Fowler, Dorsey B. Smith, L.F. Knowlton, R.H. Crozler, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur E. Comen."

Another newspaper clipping by *The Oregon Journal* from May 23, 1915 also talks about the grounds, and guests checking out the place. "Majestic View is Gained From High Cliffs Over River - Portland guests at Eyrie resort near White Salmon on Washington shore - On the verge of a dizzy cliff that drops almost sheer for 1,500 feet to the river, ten Portlanders stood yesterday and cried out in ecstasy at the panorama of mountain and sky and the great sweep of the Columbia that may be seen for miles to the westward and far to the eastward. The Portland folk had been invited by C.W.J Reckers to inspect his Eyrie, a resort he has carved out of the forest near White Salmon on the Washington shore.

The Eyrie stands on the high point above the confluence of the White Salmon and the Columbia rivers. Six years ago the primeval forest covered it. Now there is a garden, a vineyard, an orchard, a rose bower, a three story modern cottage, a sweep of lawn leading to the loose stone wall around the edge of the precipice, and two new smaller cottages.

# THE EYRIE

"On the Bluffs of the Columbia"  
The Most Beautiful and Unique Summer R-  
sort in the Entire Columbia  
River Country.

**SEND FOR ILLUSTRATED BOOKLE**

C. W. J. Reckers, Prop., White Salmon, Was

Advertisement for The Eyrie from June 28, 1916 courtesy of Steve Kenney.



**Interior of the Lone Pine Cottage at the Eyrie Inn at White Salmon, Washington. Real photo postcard view courtesy of the author.**

An automobile and a bus were waiting for the Portland visitors when they alighted from the North Bank limited yesterday noon and all were taken over the picturesque mountain road leading up from the station. Higher and higher it wound among the hills and finally passed through a great rustic gate along a driveway up to the door. "I'm Mrs. Reckers" cried a sprightly little woman who darted out from the house. "You're all welcome". And welcome they were, if the abundant chicken dinner was the sole criterion. Before anyone was permitted to do anything else, a visit to the observation tower was insisted upon. "Reckers' Roost" so dubbed by one of the party, is built on a Boulder 40 feet high. Directly opposite, across the river, is the Hood River valley, at whose head, when clouds do not lower, Mount Hood stands guard in towering majesty. Then came the dinner, and the formalities were carried off with minute attention to details.

After dinner the party was shown over the "Ranch." Some climbed down along a dizzy trail carved out of the rock along the face of the cliff. Others sat on the wide veranda and gazed out over the river. Others gathered flowers that grew in profusion along the wall of declivity.





**Author's photo of the New England and Columbia Cottages at the Eyrie Inn at White Salmon, Washington. Real photo postcard view from Eugene Lavalleur for Patton Photo Co. Salem, Oregon.**

*The Oregonian* had published a short description of The Eyrie Inn on May 30, 1915. "The Eyrie - On the Bluffs of the Columbia - The charming new resort among the cascades. Opens June 1st. Conducted along lines. Most inviting to men and women of refined tastes. Bracing air, magnificent mountain scenery. Excellent table. Illustrated booklet free. C.W.J. Reckers, Proprietor. White Salmon Wash."

A year later in August, *The Oregonian* published another article on the resort. "Flower seeds produced - Specialty of sweet peas made by White Salmon grower - White Salmon, Wash, August 12. A valuable experiment in commercial seed culture has been tried by C.W.J. Reckers of the Eyrie resort at White Salmon, and proved practical as an added source of revenue for growers of this district. About an acre of sweet pea seed of the Spencer variety was planted in rows eight feet wide and from 100 to 300 feet long; white, lavender, and crimson colors have been produced with each color in separated beds; any mixture of color is seeded out to keep the strain perfect. They are grown commercially for one of the leading Portland seed houses and have added much to the interest of the Eyrie gardens. Growing of other floral seeds is contemplated for next season."



Play Grounds at the Eyrie Inn at White Salmon, Washington, circa 1916. Real photo postcard view from Eugene Lavalleur for Patton Photo Co. Salem, Oregon. Photo courtesy of Steve Kenney.

On March 21, 1919, *The Oregonian* reported "...C.W.J. Reckers, proprietor of the Eyrie resort at White Salmon and well known in Portland and Seattle business circles, was stricken with paralysis recently and lies critically ill at his White Salmon residence. Dr. William House, nerve specialist of Portland, was in consultation with the local physician, Dr. Zener, the day of the attack. While the body from the waist line down was at first totally paralyzed, some improvement has taken place since, but fears are entertained concerning his heart action, which is quite weak. Mr. Reckers had recently returned from a tour of California and had been feeling in his usual good health."

On the evening of September 11, 1919. Mr. Reckers had died. The *Hood River Glacier* noted "Mr. Reckers by experiments conducted along gorge sides of the two rivers demonstrated that grape growing could be successfully conducted there. He had made his summer resort one of the most popular in the northwest. Mr. Reckers came to the White Salmon country from Seattle, where for a number of years he had been in the hardware business.



After Reckers death in 1919, The Eyrie was operated for a handful of years by his wife before it eventually closed down. A for sale ad in *The Oregonian* from August 4th, 1924 describes it "with 8 cottages and 8 tents, completely furnished, some with fireplaces, 30 acres, 20 in cultivation, fine orchard, recreation grounds, all equipment, barns, garage, located on North Bank Railroad near White Salmon, opposite Hood River. Bridge will soon be completed which will bring it within 30 minutes' ride. A resort fascinating, ideal for convalescent or a hospital, near the highway, good roads. \$13,000 to handle. All information given: "BE1478. Mrs. Berry."

Over a year later the Eyrie was still for sale and no one had purchased the property. By this time the price had dropped to almost half of what they were asking. A second for sale ad was put out in *The Oregonian* with another description.

"The Eyrie Inn - Located near White Salmon, Wash. just across the river from Hood River. The interstate bridge brings them in 35 min. drive. Think of a home and life income for so small amount. 30 acres, 20 in cultivation. The inn and 8 cottages (a la bungalow) furnished place ready equipped to move in; also 8 tent houses for overnight tourists; fruits undisputed and scenery unsurpassed. Nothing like it. Not excelled by anything in the west; \$7500 will handle this. Know all about it by calling Berry & Harris. BE1478."

The author, Ben Carscallen, thanks Ralph Brown for compiling all of the information for this article. He has put together an extremely extensive compilation of information on White Salmon that is unparalleled.



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