

Trail's End Is Product Of Determination

By RUTH KING

Like the fabled pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, Trail's End Ranch in Swan Lake Valley in the deep timber is worth looking for. And it takes a bit of searching. There are no clanging trolleys at Trail's End, nor shrieking sirens, no maddening rush of the work-a-day world, no beckoning

neon signs nor theater marquees . . . but there is primitive woodland beauty and quiet, crackling wood fires, crickets in the meadow, flowers and trees and bees, an owner-built home, old Gypsy who is half coyote and half shepherd, a tiger striped kitten, and friendly folks who open the door wide to welcome guests across the

threshold. Owners of Trail's End Ranch are Mr. and Mrs. Richard von Berthelsdorf, who came to Klamath Falls from the East in 1913 and built a home, the first house in the Hot Springs addition. Richard von Berthelsdorf built much of this structure himself. It later was sold to Dr. and Mrs. M. E. Cooper.

In earlier life he had been a mining engineer and a newspaper man, getting his education in both Germany and Italy.

Mr. and Mrs. von Berthelsdorf were born abroad, he in Germany, his wife Molly (Amelia) in Hungary, to which neither, under the present Communist regime can return. Neither has ever been back since they arrived in America. Both are naturalized citizens of this country. Both came to New York in their youth, three years apart, Molly arriving first, at the age of 15.

They met and were married more than half a century ago and celebrated their golden wedding anniversary at Trail's End last August to allow all members of their family to be present for the big festivities when hundreds of friends crowded the home and grounds to wish them well. Actual date of their marriage was April 17. Today, the head of the family is past 80, his wife is 79.

They have three children, Dr. Siegfried von Berthelsdorf, a practicing psychiatrist in Portland, a daughter, Lydia Colopy in Akron, Ohio and a daughter Gertrude (Gretchen) a teacher in the Portland city schools.

Times were beginning "to look like there might be trouble ahead in 1928," Von Berthelsdorf remembers, and he decided to go back to the land. The family had been landholders in Germany and he well knew the benefits of living elsewhere than in a city when world economy took a dip.

He traded two lots in Klamath Falls to Alfred D. Collier for 1,000 acres of timber and brush-covered land in upper Swan Lake Valley, and in 1930 loaded his automobile with necessities and drove away to his new acres. His wife Molly remained in Klamath Falls.

He drove, he says, until he went as far as his car could take him without tangling with the timber, to a place where his land rose sharply toward the hills, and there he decided, was the spot upon which to build their new home.

He had a wheelbarrow, shovels, a pick ax and determination. Mrs. B. remained in Klamath Falls for two years, working, while her husband started to clear the land and to build the first unit of their present home.

His next effort after shelter was put up, was to build a telephone line to permit him to keep in touch with his family for the next two years while his wife continued to work. He was then 53 years old.

None of the family friends believed the venture would be a suc-



ONLY THOSE HOMEMAKERS who have simmered soup on the back of a wood stove or have taken golden brown baking powder biscuits from a generous-sized oven baked without benefit of a thermometer, will understand Mrs. B's attachment to this malleable iron range. There is no electricity at Trail's End. It is just a mile away to a power line, but wood is available for the cutting and there is no cheery popping of fir sparks from an electric stove. Tender jelly roll and toothsome poppy seed cakes, baked for guests, were served during the photographer's visit with coffee freshly ground from whole coffee beans.



KEROSENE LAMPS
Light The Home . . .

cess, some predicted failure, but the mettle of the Von Berthelsdorf family was an unknown quantity to outsiders. The gloomcasters erred.

The new landowner sent for lumber, leveled the ground with thousands of wheelbarrows of dirt and raised the walls of their dwelling.

The couple hustled to get up in the morning, and worked far into the night, piling and burning brush, building, and hauling rock for walls and foundations. They worked side by side. They say there is still much work to be done and the routine, though at a slower pace, continues.

They have during the years completed a comfortable guest house, a garage and woodhouse, farm buildings, have built rock and concrete steps from level to level and planted shrubbery about the surrounding grounds. They cut their wood together with a cross-cut saw and have built a terraced rock garden, 10 feet high and 80 feet long with rock retaining wall. Huge rocks have been rolled, shoved and boosted up planks into position without aid of any mechanical help. Some of the rocks used have been brought in the trunk of their car from Pacific beaches.

A native rock fireplace with rock chimney warms the den and the library when winter snow drifts down. Snow frequently piles from two to 10 feet deep but snow plows now keep the winding road of Trail's End clear for traffic.

There is no hot or cold water in the house and no electricity. Water is pumped by hand from a 165-foot well. Not so long ago it was brought to the surface with a bucket and windlass.

Molly von Berthelsdorf grinds wheat bought from neighbors in a small hand grinder to feed her young chickens who come crowding about when they hear the mesh of gears at feeding time. For several years the owners of Trail's End raised and dressed hundreds of birds a season and kept a flock of 1,000 laying hens, selling chickens and eggs to repeat customers in town.

And from this income, at the end of World War II, hundreds of German people, left destitute after the conflict, were helped by the Von Berthelsdorfs.

A daughter Lydia, owner of the largest magazine publishing company in Germany, was caught in Germany while there on business. The plight of the city's citizens haunted her and she set up a soup kitchen in a basement, feeding hundreds of hungry men, women and



THIRTY YEARS AGO when Richard von Berthelsdorf, then living in Klamath Falls, sought a new home site for his family, he drove his car as far as it would go through the timber in the Upper Swan Lake Valley, reached the rim of the hills and there decided "this is the spot." There was not enough room between the forest trees to pitch a tent, but in the years since, equipped with the barest necessities in hand tools, Mr. and Mrs. Von Berthelsdorf have created this delightful spot, a mecca for many friends who

enjoy the quiet of the forest, rain that falls without lashing by the wind, the whiteness of snow, unmarred by civilization. Pink honeysuckle, white lilacs and snowballs bloom in the yard and rhubarb and strawberries this spring have been irrigated with rain water from the roof, caught in buckets by Mrs. Von Berthelsdorf. Berthelsdorf is still leveling the land, using only a wheelbarrow and a pick and shovel.

(Continued on Page 3-D)