



## Henry Sparks

1871 - 1972

Henry Sparks was born in Boone County Missouri, January 26, 1871 and moved to Ventura County in 1874. He eventually acquired a house a few blocks from the Ventura River where he lived until his death on December 13, 1972 at the age of 101.

During his long residence he was a stableboy, varmint trapper, wagoner, and a ranch foreman. From 1924 to 1936 Sparks wrote a regular column for the *Ventura Star* chronicling local politics.

An inveterate record keeper, Sparks maintained a daily diary all of his adult life, and compiled detailed weather records which were used by agriculturalists and governmental agencies.

Sparks was also an avid fisherman who spent over fifty years trout fishing on the Ventura River. He notes in a small red diary that "... in the fall of '91 I purchased a new Pole and I have kept a Record of Trout caught with it by years". In a 23 year period from 1892 to 1914 Sparks recorded catching over 10,000 trout from the lower six miles of the Ventura River! An early conservationist, Sparks returned many of these fish to mature and spawn as adult Steelhead. In his diary entry for 1910, a year he recorded catching 1,521 trout, Sparks wrote "... have taken oath never to use anything but flies".

Sparks' split bamboo flyrod and red diary, along with other memorabilia from his fishing days on the Ventura River, are displayed in the accompanying cases.