


I Share With you,
The Years



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DEDICATION

To our wonderful friends, and to our families who all
love Sweetwater Valley and country life, and
especially to the dear, patient friends who
helped make this book possible.

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Mr. and Mrs. Esterbloom

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THE FOREWORD

I share with you the years of a true story of a way of life and progress here in San Diego County, California.

I, a native of this County with its historical, exciting and colorful background and fast growing future have lived here all of my life so far.

What I have to offer you here in this book has not been from research. I have left that to others. My story is non-fiction, historical, semi-biography and reminiscent of what I, myself, have observed, witnessed and experienced from the time of my earliest recollections which date back as far as the year 1902 (I was around six years of age at that time), up until the present date of 1959.

The story begins while we were living in the Boat House at Coronado, a wonderful and beautiful beach town. My father was in charge of the Coronado Boat House, the care of boats and fishing parties at that time. And incidentally Coronado is my birthplace also. Other interesting places I have lived in this county and which I have written about are namely: Telegraph Canyon, our first home in the country; Chula Vista, Early San Diego, Alpine and, last but by no means least, Bonita and Sunnyside in my beloved Sweetwater Valley, of which I wrote about lovingly in my first book, and where we now live and have lived these past forty years and over.

I had not planned especially on writing another book. Though I do enjoy writing about those I love dearly, the interesting places I have lived and the ever so many enjoyable things of life in general. And too our grandchildren are always asking me for stories on my past life. Also since I wrote "The Beloved Valley" story, I have been asked by my friends, family and readers again and again for another story. So in appreciation of these requests from you who enjoy what I write, I here present you with a second book on somewhat the same material as my first book.

Should you care to read "The Beloved Valley" story first to acquaint yourself of its contents, and of what you may expect to find in this, my second book, you will find "This Our Beloved Valley" in most of our local libraries.

This first book is just a fifty-eight page booklet and can be read in about a couple of hours. It is a true story of our way of life in the Sweetwater Valley. In this booklet you will find a few sketches of the old red barn, the Little Church of the Roses at Glen Abbey, our little hills, the Sweetwater Woman's Club and a few others.

And now as I share with you the years, shall we leave all popular reading of missiles, sputniks and other modern and scientific data aside for the time being. And shall we live again in this book a very simple, enjoyable and down-to-earth life. Our feet on solid ground; our thoughts and aims high. Finding therein nature's beauty; a love for one another, home, country and the things worth while.

And now, dear ones, may you find this happy reading.



Coronado Boat House

By G. Esterbloom

CORONADO

Coronado is San Diego County's wonderful and beautiful beach and Navy town, and has a most beautiful and "different" hotel where people from all over the world come for vacations (the famous Hotel del Coronado), owned by the John D. Spreckles Companies at the time we lived there.

I suppose most folks who live here in San Diego County, California, know where Coronado is located. For those of you who are strangers, I will explain here. Coronado is just across the bay west of San Diego; a peninsula, actually, though often called an island.

There are two regular ways to reach Coronado. One, by driving across the Silver Strand highway; the other, by ferry across the bay from San Diego. Other transportation could be by plane or boat.

If you wish to drive over the Silver Strand road, you take the 101 highway or freeway, from San Diego thru National City and Chula Vista and follow the signs on the highway. This highway goes on to the border to Mexico, so you will leave this highway and keep to the west or right. You will see the signs where to turn. One way goes through Palm City, the other is on the freeway which brings you on a very nice divided highway leading to Imperial Beach shopping center. Here the road divides. Left goes on to Imperial Beach residential town and beaches, right goes on to what is known as the Silver Strand road to Coronado.

Along this strand road, a beautiful divided highway actually, between ocean and bay and flowered sand dunes, you will find wonderful picnic grounds with many accommodations both on ocean and bay sides. You pay a small fee as you enter with car and passengers in this pleasant and well protected

area with life-guard etc. Beyond the picnic grounds about two miles you reach Coronado. This brings you on Coronado from the south side thru the amphibious base of the U.S. Navy.

In my yester-years, or in the early nineteen hundreds, you would have come thru a tented city instead, a most restful, exciting summer resort and play ground. Good old Tent City has been a thing of the past, now, for quite some time before World War II. To the north of Coronado is an adjoining island called North Island. This is along a part of San Diego's beautiful harbor. North Island is also a large naval and air base at present.

In my yester-years, North Island was a place for hunting, picnicing and gathering of wild flowers. Wild life there on this tiny island before all the dredging and enlarging took place, was: rabbits, dove, quail and other sea and coastal birds. The shrubbery and wild flowers that covered the island at that time was much the same as our native shrubbery and wild flowers elsewhere in our San Diego County.

In my day, once a year the Coronado school sponsored for certain classes a picnic on North Island. I was a pupil at the time. We were allowed to gather for our nature study one of every kind of flower we could find; after which we pressed in books and later made a special booklet of the pressed flowers mounted on pages, with their proper names, which we had learned from our teacher, below each flower. I kept my book for some years. Presenting it to our own children years later.

Times have changed as we know and so has North Island. This once flowery little island is now a most important naval air base. Much dredging has been done to enlarge the island and make it suited to the needs of our day's U.S.N.

All of Coronado, North Island and, of course, San Diego and County as well, were all a part of large Spanish grants in the earlier days. This was before my time, of course. Tho I do remember a very different Coronado from the one we have now.

Where I now live on a hilltop in Bonita which is a part of my beloved Sweetwater Valley, we are only about five miles, as the crow flies, from Coronado. Before this building boom here in our valley, we had clear and wonderful views on the west, of ocean, bay, Silver Strand, Coronado Islands, and Point Loma. Point Loma is just across from North Island and is also a part of the entrance to San Diego's wonderful harbor. Here on Point Loma is a lighthouse directing and assuring our ships and boats, and planes of a safe landing.

Tho we here in Bonita have lost this beautiful western view, we still have our eastern view of valley and mountains. And, of course, we will always be able to enjoy the beautiful sunsets on the west, even though we cannot see that great ball of sun go down into the ocean or beyond Point Loma, as we used to in the years gone by. On clear days in the fall of the year when our neighbors sycamore tree sheds its leaves, we can see a small part of the ocean and Coronado Island and I consider this a treat to be able to see again, even for a short time, our ocean and island view on the west. However, our eastern view from the porch of our hilltop home I speak of so often in my stories, is still an unobstructed view of beauty at most any time of the year.

Getting back to our Coronado story. I usually make a trip by way of the Silver Strand once a month, and on occasions oftener, especially during the

summer months. And as Coronado is my birthplace and where I lived for some years and went to school, I am naturally interested in its progress. I always take pleasure in pointing out the Boat House, which was my home as a child, and other familiar places to our family and friends who make this trip with me. Occasionally I have grandchildren with me who love getting out here at the Boat House. The caretakers have all been very friendly and have allowed me to take friends and the children up stairs where I was born.

I'll explain how my Dad had his office as do the present caretakers on the first floor. Our home or living quarters were on the second floor, and on the third floor we had a spare bedroom for company and a large playroom where we kids had our play place for the days we had to be indoors. Then we go on up past this third floor to the cupalo as we called it; a tower or porch-like place where my mother and father had an herb garden in boxes and where we and our family came to watch the boat races or fireworks on the Fourth of July night. I tell how on these nights we children took up in the cupalo our quilts and pillows for comfort, and pop corn and peanuts to munch on while we watched the wonderful and exciting sights of sky rockets going up into the air, at last coming down bursting into bright and different colored stars. The unusual herb garden we had in boxes up here in my early days I have described in the next chapter of this book.

What has always puzzled me about the Coronado Boat House is the way it has kept preserved. I know it has had some minor repair jobs, and most likely a paint job now and then, but otherwise it is much the same as when we lived there over fifty years ago.

I have two or three shut-in friends and some who do not have cars or drive, whom I take over to Coronado on occasions, mostly on nice sunny days. I tell them they are getting a good sun bath at the same time as the drive along thru Chula Vista, Palm City, Imperial Beach and along the Silver Strand highway, even tho it is thru the car windows. I believe the sunshine is beneficial, and oh how they enjoy this outing.

When my own children were small, I used to take them over this Strand road and let them out on the beach for a good sunbath also. We would have a picnic meal at the same time.

It was the custom in that day, when if your children had a communicable disease, which you know most all small or school children get sooner or later, to have a sign tacked on your house by the school nurse. This sign read, "Isolation, Keep Out," and the name of the disease your children had. This sign remained till all was well again at your home. Well, with several children it sometimes took weeks before we were thru with isolation. So it was on these occasions when the children got restless on so long being kept in that I put them in our sedan car, drove over to Silver Strand, all of us getting out at an isolated part of the beach and here we all enjoyed the good fresh salty air and sunshine, to say nothing of the good it did us all to be free once again. I believe these special picnics did our children more good than can be explained here. I know they always recovered without any bad after effects and I always believed it was because of our somewhat stolen outings. Now, in this day, there are no signs of isolation. You just expect the sickness to make its rounds. Of course, if it should be polio, smallpox, diphtheria, etc., I believe you would naturally be quarantined.

When we drive over to Coronado, if we are not stopping at the Boat House, we drive on past and around on Glorietta Boulevard. There is much

to see here now: a wonderful new golf course is in use here, so we stop awhile to watch. Then on we drive, crossing Orange Avenue at the ferry stop and on around passed North Island to the ocean front. We stop along here if we wish, if not, we drive on as far as beautiful and picturesque Hotel Del Coronado. Here I turn in and let my guest passengers have a look at the hotel from the front entrance. Then on we go back to Orange Avenue which is the main street of Coronado. We keep going as far as the ferry-slip for we are making a round trip this time. So we board the ferry and make the crossing to San Diego. My friends enjoying this interesting and pleasant ferry trip as there is so much to see while making the crossing, this is if your car is where you can; if not, one could go up on deck and look around. However, on these special occasions we have been quite lucky at having full view of our wonderful surroundings.

Off the ferry again we drive on Harbor Drive, the first highway to the right at the ferry stop going south. We drive on till we come to Eighth Street in National City. This street goes out east to Paradise Valley. Here at the bell-stop we turn right thru Paradise Hills then on Reo Drive thru a few hills and we are home again in our own little community. At times if my riders wish, we take a lunch or early supper along and eat near the ocean somewhere. So besides the good sunshine, we have had a most interesting and enjoyable drive which my friends consider a great treat and as for me, as you already can guess, it is my favorite close by drive.

Other favorite drives or trips that I am privileged to take, but much less often, are up the coast as far as Monterey where my brother and sister-in-law live. I love to stop here and there to visit at favorite places, such as: La Jolla, San Clemente, Laguna Beach, Santa Barbara and Carmel. I drive to La Jolla and Point Loma more often as we have relatives and friends there, and I do love to browse around La Jolla's interesting places and stores. But for a close and pleasant drive without too much traffic, and with such a wonderful divided highway, Silver Strand road to Coronado is our best and most often drive. Coronado is such a beautiful, clean and well kept place; it truly is a pleasure to drive around among the many lovely homes just sight-seeing. I explain the many changes to my fellow passengers, that have taken place since I lived here in the early nineteen hundreds.

In front of our Boat House home in my day, was our playground of flowery sand dunes besides along the shores of ocean and bay. A bathhouse or plunge was built here later between ocean and bay on a part of our sand dune playground. A board walk also was added which went from Hotel Del Coronado to this bathhouse and beyond. Anyone could rent a suit and swim in this plunge, tho I believe it was built mostly for the pleasure of the guests of the hotel. Near by the bathhouse in time was a sort of amusement center. Here a seal tank and monkey cage were erected. I am under the impression the seals that later entered the seal tank came from the Coronado Islands. However, I am not sure about this, tho I do know my father and other fishermen I knew supplied the seals regularly with their food of fish. It was such fun to watch the seals at these feeding times, flipping around on their tank pavement, mouths wide open, ow owing the while, waiting for a fish to be thrown to them which they seemed to swallow in one gulp. It was very interesting also to watch the older seals teach and train their young. The monkeys too were as of much fun and interest to watch as they ran around their cage, often upon the side shaking the cage violently as they held on screaming the while and seemingly making faces at whoever came near.

We watched with interest the baby monkeys as they also took training and instructions from the mama and papa monkeys. An orderly from the Hotel Del Coronado came regularly with their food which they too always enjoyed. I used to enjoy watching them peel a banana, letting the peelings drop to the floor of the cage and eating the banana much as a person would.

I recall also the friendly Chinaman, Quong Leon, at the bathhouse. He took care of the bathing suits after they had been used. He washed them out and hung them on lines to dry in an inclosure at the back of the bathhouse. We knew Quong Leon well and we were great friends. We kids often watched him at work while we played on the sand dunes near by. Quong was not only friendly, he was generous also. Every Christmas he came to the Boat House for a very special reason: to bring us presents of lychee nuts, candied ginger and cocoanut. And for mother, especially, he brought two blue china bowls with narcissus bulbs just started with small rocks around to hold them in place. He instructed my mother to keep a certain amount of water on them and soon our boathouse rooms would be filled with the sweet scent of narcissus flowers which we all enjoyed ever so much.

I also recall Mrs. Maconelly who had charge of the renting of the bathing suits and plunge. Anyone renting a suit could either swim in bay, ocean or plunge. If you went swimming in the bay or ocean, you had to shower before entering the plunge or returning your bathing suit. I enjoyed much going down the slide here in this bathhouse, and I recall too, the very nice particular smell as you entered this bathhouse. To me it smelled of ocean, clean laundry and sweet smelling flowers all in one. I just couldn't describe this odor any other way, and I always took good deep breaths as I came in here.

The monkeys and seals are there no more, neither is this enjoyable bathhouse.

A new and more modern plunge has been built on the sand up near the hotel on the west side. I remember in the year 1942 a son-in-law of ours graduated from San Diego High School. At the time, the graduates were given the honor of having their prom dance in the beautiful ballroom of Hotel Del Coronado. I chaperoned a group of young people; our son-in-law-to-be and our daughter, Katherine, were among the group. I remember looking down on the bathers in the new plunge thru the ballroom windows. That was the last time I was in the hotel altho I had been there on many occasions before this one.

In my childhood days at Coronado, I also remember the livery stable which is a garage now, of course. This too is especially for guests of the hotel Del. Remembering the livery stable of the horse and buggy and saddle age, a man by the name of Gus Thompson was in charge here. His daughter, Edith, and son, Walter, went to the Coronado elementary school when I did.

My father and mother occasionally rented a horse and carriage and we all took a drive on the Silver Strand road. The Strand at that time was just a narrow sandy strip covered with flowery sand dunes, a sandy narrow road in the middle. Be we thought it fun for a change to take this horse and buggy drive instead of going down the Glorietta Bay in a launch or sail boat on picnics; and, too, it was exciting to drive so close between ocean on one side and bay on the other.

Next to the livery stable was the Hotel Del laundry. It is still in existence today. When we were kids, there was an entrance on the west side of the

laundry, down some stairs which lead from the laundry to the hotel underground thru a sort of tunnel. You can be sure we children knew of this and became well acquainted with it as we were permitted often to go thru this passage on our way to school. I'm sure our parents did not know how often we wheedled permission to go thru this most interesting passageway or else we would have been stopped. My father and mother cautioned us often about becoming a nuisance to guests or workers of the hotel; and living near and among them, we were associated with some of them every day. Many of the hotel guests had private yachts at the boathouse.

Getting back to the tunnel route we took on our way to school. Going thru we came out near the linen rooms and pharmacy of the hotel. Mr. F. H. C. Furnald was in charge of the pharmacy at this time, and his daughter, Edna, was a school friend of ours also. At this drug store there were often many free sample of things; often a tablet with advertisement. If the samples were safe and suitable, we were given one each, also a stick of licorice or peppermint on occasion. Everyone at Coronado, as I can remember, was extra nice to us Dunne children whose father most everyone called "Capt. Jimmy Dunne of the Coronado Boathouse." Of course, there were times when we children misbehaved and had to be reprimanded, naturally. On our way out and past the drug store was a curio store. We always stopped and looked in the windows here at the bright colored rugs, baskets and pottery. Then on up the stairs and we were out on the hotel grounds again.

Quite often we decided to gather a few flowers for our teacher. They had such beautiful beds of flowers growing around the hotel grounds at this time. Now the grounds are kept more simple tho they are still attractive. The gardener who took care of the grounds in our day was always on the job when we were around, knowing we would be getting the flowers. He would appear suddenly and give us a good scolding. We would be repentant then and say we were sorry and promise not to pick them again. But I am afraid we did not always keep our promises tho we had truly intended doing so at the time of the scolding. The pansy beds, especially, were so pretty and inviting and there were so many of them I thought they would never be missed so I could not resist picking some once in a while.

The gardener was kind and sensible even tho he had to be strict about us picking the flowers. After all that was part of his job to protect them. But I remember he always let us keep the flowers we had picked adding one or two himself and telling us to tell our teacher they were sent with the compliments of the Hotel Del Coronado. No need to take the flowers from us he wisely thought; they would only go wasted. Our teacher always received them gladly not knowing exactly how we really got them.

About this time Tent City was being built. Much construction work went into this project; dunes had to be leveled off; streets laid out; and a street car track installed. A public swimming pool was added, also floats along the bay side for extra swimming or boating. A pavillion for concerts, etc., was built. Later, on Sundays and evenings, concerts of the very best were given with Henry Almyer directing the music. A bowling alley for those who enjoyed bowling; a dance pavillion with good floor and music for dancers; and a Japanese tea house which also had interesting articles from Japan for sale was built for the pleasure of the people. There was no end of amusements, as well as all kinds of stores and stands here at the Tent City. Besides the tents, palm cottages were built so one could either live in tent or cottage with

exchanges of fresh linen which was supplied every other day. Truly Tent City was a wonderful vacation and play ground and many people from all over the world have missed its passing.

The street car which usually made its last stop at Hotel Del, now came on down and thru to the end of Tent City. Double-decker street cars were used during the summer months to accommodate the crowds. At first we children were a little put-out at losing our sand dunes playground which was located in front and west of the boat house. Watching our wonderful sand dune flowers and sea apples plowed under and our nice high dunes lowered and levelled was really hard to take, as I remember. In time, however, we became interested in what was taking place around us as Tent City was in the making, and forgot our loss.

I will explain here about the sea apple that grew wild on the dunes in front of the boathouse and along on the Silver Strand. They grow on a vine which most of us know as ice-plant moss or mesembryanthemum, which I believe is their proper name. Not all of the varieties of mesembryanthemum bear the sea apple. It is a certain kind found mostly on dunes near the sea. We children and our mother enjoyed eating them. They are red in color when ripe with seeds much as you would find in a fig and have a sweet salt apple flavor. Their season is July and August usually.

Speaking of native plant life; Coronado in that early day had lots of wild shrubbery and wild flowers that grew on the many sandy vacant lots there at the time. As many vacant spots were of dune nature, the dune flowers and sea apples grew plentiful.

At that time Coronado had two dairys so there was grazing ground for the cows also. One dairy was on a portion of ground back of, much built up since, Glorietta Boulevard. This dairy was owned by the Jessops. Two of the girls were named after flowers, Violet and Pansy, and went to school with us. There was another family of Jessops living in Coronado at this time also who loved yachting and have the Jessop's jewelry store in San Diego. Another dairy was located on the north east side of Coronado. The Taves owned this dairy and here is where we got our milk. Max, Fritz, and Olga Taves were among our school acquaintances, also. So here was Coronado in the early nineteen hundreds.

A few years ago, certain old timers of Coronado School organized the old time Coronado School picnic. Oliver Lyons, who attended school while I was in the elementary grades, was one of them. He gave me my first invitation to an old time picnic. The first one I attended was four years ago. I persuaded my husband, John, to go with me. Our gathering place was in the patio of the Coronado High School. We had a wonderful time; and did I ever have surprises coming! I was extra happy at the prospects of meeting with my old time school friends and teachers. Mind you, I hadn't come across many of them since my last year of school there in the year 1910. I expected to find my teachers somewhat aged and wobbly in action. Well, to my surprise even the eldest of them were sportily dressed and looked and acted almost as young as we pupils. Thinking I was (and of course I meant it that way) flattering somewhat, I explained how surprised I was to find them in such good shape, so to speak.

"Well!" one of my teacher-friends spoke up rather sharply and in a sort of injured way, I thought, and said, "what did you expect? Did you expect to find us feeble and tottering on canes?"

"Oh, no!" I quickly assured her, "tho I had pictured in my mind that you would look and act much older than I found you."

I finally got it all straightened out without offense and went on with our wonderful day of meeting and eating lunch with old school friends. Most of us recognized each other; a few did not remember me at all until I brought certain incidences to their minds. We all shared each others lunch and the school organization furnished coffee.

After lunch we had a program. Slide pictures of old time school occasions and of Coronado in general with its changes and progress were shown. This took place in the school auditorium. Afterward we adjourned to the patio where certain outstanding old timers were publicly introduced. All of the teachers and some pupils were among those introduced. A short history of their lives and duties here and there were presented. Imagine my surprise when I was called forward and presented with "The Coronado Story" by J. R. Peterson, for having the most grandchildren of all the pupils present. And, just to let you in on this bit of information, I have eighteen grandchildren, to date, and three great-grandchildren.

I was very happy to receive "The Coronado Story" tho I found I was much older in Coronado experience than Mr. Peterson and some of the occasions that he mentioned. The younger generation of Petersons, I am very happy to say, are now residents of Bonita in the Sweetwater Valley. They have picked out a beautiful spot and built a lovely home on one of our native shrubbery covered hills, with beautiful views of mountains, valley, etc., all around them. I catch glimpses, now and then, of the darling little red-headed Peterson children here and there in our market center. Mrs. Peterson is an extra nice person, also. I look forward to baby-sitting at the Peterson's in the future.

There are six other families of my acquaintance who have come from Coronado to build their homes and live in our wonderful and beloved Sweetwater Valley, and, of course, we are glad to welcome them in our midst.

SOME EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF DEAR OLD DOWNTOWN SAN DIEGO

This day was in about the year 1904, just to give you a somewhat definite date. I was around the age of seven, my brother Ruddy a year younger.

We were living at this time in the Coronado boathouse. Dad had charge of the boathouse and the fishing excursions and boats there. The fishing excursions to the Coronado Islands, the boathouse, and most of the yachts, launches, etc., were maintained mostly for the pleasure of the guests of Hotel Del Coronado, and were owned by the John D. Spreckles Company at this time.

Our own family also enjoyed occasional boat rides with Dad. When my father needed supplies of rope, corking, twine, nails, paint or anything else for his boat business he made a trip by launch across the bay to San Diego. At the foot of Fifth Street was a supply building where Dad could get any and all the supplies he needed. This building is still standing, though it is now at this date of 1959 used as a warehouse, I am told.

My mother, brother and I often made this launch trip with Dad. Mother could do her shopping while Dad did his. We docked at the Star and Crescent boathouse in San Diego.

During these past years much dredging has been done and filling in of land between bay and buildings, so that now it is quite a distance between shore and store. Even in that early day Mother and we two children had to take a street car up town. We also went across from Coronado to San Diego with Mother by ferry on some occasions. And here was my first recollection of downtown San Diego.

Dad had plenty of time this day, so he called to Mother upstairs and asked her if she cared to go along. And you can be sure we children were always happy to go boat riding.

Dad always had someone to leave in charge while he was away. But not so with Mother. So she gave us many little chores to do before we left so all would be in order when we got home.

I remember well Mother had two large shopping bags with good stout handles that she always took along and in which my brother and I claimed a corner for our own special purpose. We often took our lunch along. At other times we were treated to dinner at a German restaurant where they served wonderful home-cooked meals. The folks who ran the restaurant were friends of our family. I cannot remember their names. This I do remember, that they were extra nice to my brother and me, and I remember that we kids would stuff our pockets with left-over oyster crackers that we had been served with our soup. These we munched in the boat on the way home.

The ride across and around Glorietta Bay to San Diego is nice and smooth usually, so we never got seasick on these trips. However, if we went with Dad on around San Diego Bay, past the harbor and out in mid-ocean or to the Islands we always got terribly seasick. Oh, those swells up and down over the waves. I can remember them yet. And years later whenever I was pregnant I noticed the similarity of these two sicknesses. Seasickness is just the same as morning sickness, as this nausea is sometimes called, during pregnancy.

My, what a different San Diego it was in that day from what it is today. Street cars, though not of the horse drawn kind, were the means of transportation. Also horse and buggy and horse and saddle. In addition to the flip-flop or trot-trot of the horse was the clapping of the large draft horses. Two and often four at a time pulling large loaded wagons like trucks would be used for hauling in these days. And too there were many bicycles among the traffic. No crowded highways. No hustle and bustle on street, road, or in stores. Just a quiet little town of few stores, ready to grow into the grand and glorious city it is now at this present date of 1959.

I liked San Diego in those early days, very much. Though I have no objections to its great progress. But please, you promoters, do not stretch out too far into our lovely little native wild shrubbery-covered hills. Please leave us some wide open spaces for wild flowers and the country life we enjoy so much here in Sweetwater Valley. And you know there has to be some spaces left for growing our daily fresh vegetables. Please keep that in mind also.

Enough said about this. So let's get back to this early day boat ride to downtown San Diego.

In the first place it was quite a chore in those days getting ready to go anywhere. Nowadays the process is more simple. Oh, the clothes they put on us children in those days—boys and girls alike. Flannel or wool knit "petticoats" they called them, for the girls, and long, heavy, black-ribbed stockings just to be sure we were nice and warm. We were nice and warm alright, and nice and scratchy too. Oh! how I hated those woollens, even in the winter time. And to this day I wear as few clothes as I possibly can get by with without exposing my anatomy too much.

And now at this date we are so fortunate as to have both cool and warm unscratchy materials such as nylons, orlons, all kinds of cottons, rayons, silks, etc., and I for one am truly thankful for these new materials.

And now, can any of you remember the good old reliable department stores in San Diego in those early days of the 1900's? Marston's store was first in line and the best as I remember. And now we have a very new, improved and glorious Marston store. And many folks believe Marston's store to be the best all-around department store to this day of 1959.

Going back now to the earlier days: other stores came into being gradually, of course, but we children had a definite purpose in mind when we visited at Marstons, and also at the Becker and Votes department store. Mother had very good friends among the clerks in both of these stores.

I cannot remember any of their names, but I do remember the people. They were so extra nice to us children. They would save for us in a box or bag empty spools, samples of this and that, empty bolts that ribbon and braid came on; in fact any and everything these friendly clerks thought we children could use in our play store at home.

This was our favorite indoor game, playing store. And this we did as soon as we returned from town, usually selling to our mother all the packages she had purchased that day, over and over again, before she had time to unwrap them. No wonder she spoke of being so tired on these shopping evenings.

And do any of you remember when the department stores put the money from the customer's hand into a small box, sending it down the line on a wire run by electricity, for change or receipt? Well, this gadget intrigued us

two kids no end. This was something we decided we would have in our play store. So we rigged up a contraption of fish line and match box that worked very well, a little down hill for clear sailing, I'd say. We used colored paper and buttons for money. And we did have such fun, taking our game of play store quite seriously.

I tried in after years to encourage my own children at this game of playing store. They would get everything down from the cupboard in the kitchen, for they seemed only interested in playing grocery store, but they soon tired of the game and left it for other outdoor games. And, as we lived in the country here, our children had chores to do also, such as feeding calves, staking, feeding or riding their horse, or whatever there was to do around the ranch. Times have changed also. Children do not care as a rule to play house or store as they used to in our day.

We also had much outdoor fun at the boathouse, swimming and playing on the sand dunes and beach, wading and gathering shells and going for rides in the different boats.

So, remembering our healthy and happy childhood and also our children's, and now our grandchildren's and soon our great-grandchildren's, I'm thankful and happy we live in sunny San Diego County, California, where life has much to offer of outdoor healthful living.

Our own children learned to swim in a pool. My brother and I learned in the bay at Coronado. Now we all enjoy a picnic on the beach, even if we only go wading or gather pretty stones, driftwood, shells, etc. We play with the sea-pumpkins, making jump-ropes of the long string of kelp fastened to them.

And now shall we go back and take another look at early downtown San Diego? This was a later day than in my childhood. This is about two years after the 1915 Exposition, somewhere in 1917.

I was married at this time, and we had one child and were expecting our second. We were living at the east end of Sweetwater Lake, near the north side of San Miguel Mountain at the time. John had charge of keeping the lake clear of brush and clearing the land around the edge of the lake. He went to work about seven A.M. and came home about five P.M. This made a long day for me.

We had just one neighbor at this time. Our traveling was done by horses and buggy, mostly, though John also had a motorcycle which the baby and I could not share, of course. We also had a team of bay horses, a little on the frisky side, I'd say. I knew very little about their habits or how to hitch them up properly. When we went somewhere John always got them ready. Our child rode in a clothes basket in the front of our one-seated rig, with her blanket, pillow and a few toys.

We usually did most of our shopping at La Mesa in those days. However, this day I decided to make a trip to San Diego. My husband had told me it was only a twelve mile trip to San Diego from where we lived, but I'll say it was the longest twelve miles I ever saw. To me it seemed more like a twenty mile trip. Anyway, from our place at Sweetwater Lake you took the Campo road route to Spring Valley, then on through Lemon Grove, on through Encanto and on down Imperial Avenue to Fifth street in downtown San Diego.

This day I myself hitched up the team, saying nothing to John before he left for work of my intentions of driving to town. For one thing I was sure he would not approve. And for another thing I wished to become a little more independent.

So about nine A.M. Baby and I and a friend, with the horses all hitched up by yours truly, started off for San Diego. I was intending to purchase some nice outing flannel and baby things for our expected child. And of course I was going to shop at Marston's as my mother before me had done.

True, I had been to San Diego many times since that first boat ride in the early 1900's. And San Diego had built up much during that time. And by now there were automobiles and trucks, though horse and buggies were still tolerated and used as transportation by some people. Along in front of some stores and along the side streets were some iron hitching posts. To this you tied your horse or horses while you did your shopping, etc.

It wasn't easy for us who drove a horse and buggy in those days. If your horse was at all frisky you sometimes had trouble when a car passed by. On this day our two horses acted up all the way to town. And when we arrived on Fifth Street they, being tired and irritated too, I suppose, bolted ahead on a dead run. I pulled on the reins but I could not get them stopped. If it hadn't been for a man who came running out from Marston's store, I believe we would have gone right on through the front door or window of the store.

He got the horses to slow down, caught them by the reins and led them over to the hitching post and tied them up firmly. My friend had the baby in her arms by this time and I was in tears I was so frightened.

Soon a crowd gathered around us and a police officer appeared also. He seemed to know all about horses and explained what the trouble was. I had put the harness on wrong and it pulled up the back strap annoyingly, he said, and added that I was lucky nothing more serious had happened to us on the way in. The officer then righted the harness and we had no further trouble on the way home.

We were then helped down from the buggy and ushered in to Marston's store by a friend there. But I was in no mood to shop at this point, nor even to have lunch, as far as that goes.

After we had rested a while and I calmed down, my friend and the baby not taking the experience as hard as I did, we went to a cafeteria nearby and had lunch. The waitress there was nice and heated up my child's bottle of milk for me.

I went back to Marston's afterwards and got my outing flannel and a few other things, after which we found our way out to the buggy and were soon on our way home, driving carefully and prayerfully.

We arrived safe and sound about one half hour before the master of the house came from work. And though I am always being accused of never being able to keep a secret this was one time I sure did. John had thought we had just gone as far as La Mesa and that I had learned to harness the horses—that is, unless he just kept what he really thought to himself.

I had learned my lesson, believe me. And I truly owe the officer and the man who got our team stopped much gratitude for they really saved the day.

for us. I never mentioned this experience, believe it or not, till a year or so ago, and this terrifying experience happened forty years ago.

The Pettits and also the Marstons, who live here in Bonita, Sweetwater Valley, and who are related to the late George W. Marston of the Marston's store in San Diego, gave a very large picnic at their country estates here, for all the old and new employees of the Marston's store.

I mentioned to Mrs. Pettit about the runaway we had that day long past, and wondered if the man who had come to our rescue would be at the picnic. And perhaps some of the clerks who had saved us the things for our play store years ago when I was just a child—and that was over fifty years ago. But I did not attend the picnic so I never found out if they were there or not, and besides I could not remember their names and wasn't too sure I would have been able to recognize them in the crowd either.

So it was not until this day over forty years later that I ever mentioned our hazardous experience even to John. So I felt safe now in telling him this day also. He said unmoved, "I figured as much a long time ago."

Speaking of the Marstons and Pettits, who live here in the Valley, as I mentioned before, not long after they had given this large picnic party Mary Pettit, a granddaughter of the Marstons, was given in marriage, the reception following here also. This took place in the beautiful garden setting of the Pettit's home here in Bonita. John and I were invited. John couldn't attend but I had the pleasure of doing so and meeting ever so many friends I hadn't seen in years. Lovely girls and boys I had nursed for or baby sat with, who had grown up into such healthy and wonderful young women and men. I did have a wonderful time, visiting with and seeing them again.

This lovely wedding will long be remembered. The ceremony itself took place under a flower and dove decorated arch at the back of the Pettits' extra large and lovely lily pool. Many extra large pink, yellow, blue, white and orchid lily blossoms were in bloom.

I was told by Mrs. Marston that her daughter Mrs. Pettit, mother of the young and sweet bride, had donned her bathing suit early that wedding morning and picked off all the blossoms that were faded or ready to fall so only the most beautiful ones would be in view for this wonderful occasion. (Just like Mrs. Pettit to do a thing like this for her daughter I'd say, knowing her sweet and thoughtful ways.)

The young bride and groom and their attendants, who included the sisters of the bride, walked down a path from the house to the lovely outdoor altar, made ready for this occasion, the very young and sweet sister of the bride scattering blossoms along the way, while the guests enjoyed looking on, greatly blessed by this very beautiful outdoor wedding service.

After the young couple were pronounced husband and wife they remained to greet the guests as we all passed on down the path through the arch, exchanging greetings with the happy young couple and on to where the reception was being served on large tables, also out on the grounds. Spanish and Mexican music was played by native Mexican musicians and by the bride's brother Arthur, and the strumming guitars added much to the gayety of this grand affair. It reminded me somewhat of some early California weddings I had read about in the early Spanish and Padre days at the haciendas.

Incidentally, perhaps some of you who have read Helen Hunt Jackson's story "Ramona" of those early days, have visited Ramona's marriage place. This you will find in Old Town, San Diego. A reminder of those very early days here in our colorful county of San Diego, California.

I do not go shopping at all now in downtown San Diego, though for years we enjoyed the services of The Marston Company, Montgomery Ward and other stores. But now that we are older and our wants much simpler, and also because we have convenient and satisfying shopping centers in our closer by towns, we shop there. However John does have to drive to Linda Vista to the extreme north of San Diego for his tractor parts or other farm equipment.

When I go to San Diego now I usually go to visit friends or relatives, who live in all parts of San Diego, from Point Loma to East San Diego. Or I drive through San Diego on Harbor Drive to La Jolla, or up north along the coast, most always timing myself so I may avoid the heavy traffic of the factories and plants at those certain times when the rush is on. And, too, I do enjoy driving as close as I can get to ocean and bay, and dear old San Diego county does have wonderful highways to drive on.

TELEGRAPH CANYON

It was about the end of spring in the year 1908 that we left our wonderful Coronado home, the Boat House. We were moving to a place in the country three miles east of Chula Vista called Telegraph Canyon.

I'm not sure whether or not Telegraph Canyon ever found its name on any of our local maps. The place was just a canyon road between open hills of open spaces covered with wild native shrubbery, cactus and wild flowers. Here you did not even find the regular little trading post store-with-Post-Office combination building that you so often find in most other little out of the way places. Nevertheless here is where we were going to live, for how long we hadn't the slightest idea.

My father accepted a job here as caretaker and pipe walker for the City of San Diego's pipe line. Through this pipe line San Diego, Coronado and other parts of South Bay district receives its water supply.

With this job came a house, barn and five acres of fenced land, and a pay check of course, and all the water we wished to use free. I suppose because of our growing family and other sensible reasons Dad thought the change would be good for all concerned. So, after being Captain at the Coronado Boat House for years Dad decided to make the change, accepting this new and very different job at this pipe line station house in Telegraph Canyon.

At the time Dad took this job this pipe line belonged to the John D. Spreckles Company, as did also the Coronado Boat House. Some time later however the pipe line became the property of the City of San Diego.

I suppose it may be of interest to you to know how Telegraph Canyon got its name. An old time resident of Telegraph Canyon told us this tale, and I believe it could very well be true.

It was the telephone company who had put their first poles along through this canyon road, starting from Chula Vista, on through to the Otay Lakes. And on through Proctor Valley till they met with another line at Jamul, along the Campo Road.

Remember the old-time ringer telephone that usually hung on the wall of the old-time ranch kitchen? This was the sort of telephone we had when we arrived at the pipe line station house in Telegraph Canyon. Instead of dialing a number as we do now we simply took the receiver off the hook, winding the number of rings we wished and our party would come on the line. That is, if they were home of course, and in those horse and buggy days folks were home more often than they are now.

I remember our own ring was one long and two short rings. We could reach my Dad's boss, the Otay Lakes and a few others via this wind-your-own ring system. After a year or so we had an improvement on our phone service. We could ring the operator and give her a number, to reach our party. Thus we found it was the telephone company who gave Telegraph Canyon its name, just as the old timer had said.

And now here we are back in the spring of 1908, moving from Coronado to this little country place in Telegraph Canyon. And as everyone can guess, this was in the days of horse and buggy. Few cars or trucks on the road as yet. So we moved by mule team and wagon. Dad rented the outfit, so they

had to be returned. We would have our own horse and buggy as soon as we could find and purchase a suitable one.

As it turned out, a horse and buggy was the very first thing besides food that we bought. Our new home was much too far from anywhere to walk the distance.

On this moving day my brother and I rode on the top of the loaded wagon where we could see everything in sight. Dad drove the team of course. Mother and the younger children would come out later, when some needed repairs and added rooms were completed on the old house.

We took the Silver Strand road from Coronado that day, through Tent City, along the narrow neck of land between ocean and bay and flowered sand dunes. I remember there were ships and fishing boats on the ocean that day, and we said goodbye to everything we left behind. "Goodby friends! Goodby Boathouse! Goodby monkeys, seals, Tent City, and goodbye boats and ships!"

You would think we would never come back this way, ever again. Well, we were children, and lived mostly in the now I suppose.

On we came through Imperial Beach and Palm City. All of this territory was known as South San Diego at this time.

Just scattered ranches, a few homes, a general store and one restaurant was all we passed till we reached Otay. Here we found a grocery store, blacksmith shop and watch factory. Otay was also a place of scattered homes and ranches.

The general store here at Otay was a sort of trading post at this time, having besides groceries, hardware, simple drugs, men's boots and hats, and a Post Office in one corner of the store. A man named Prawl owned the store at the time.

I remember later we won a Busy Bee phonograph from this store for buying so many groceries. As time passed we found Bonita handier and the road better, so we got our mail and groceries over there.

Here at Otay store we climbed down off the loaded wagon to stretch our legs, as Dad put it, and so we did, right up the store steps on in, making a beeline for the candy counter. We were allowed five cents each for candy, and you could get quite an assortment for the nickel in those days.

My brother and I decided to make different choices so we could trade each other later as we rode along. I remember especially the rock candy. It came in two colors, white and pink, and looked very much like crystal clear rock, in two inch lengths held together by a string down the middle. My choice was a pink and white piece of this rock candy, some chocolate chews and butterscotch rolls. My brother made his choice of chocolate candy cigars (with real cigar bands on, if you please!), some licorice, and suckers with licorice sticks. I am sure many of you readers remember those old fashioned penny, or two-for-a-penny candies we had in those days?

"Now get yourselves a drink of water and attend to your other wants, you two" warned my father. "We are making no more stops till we reach the canyon." Although we had a canteen of water on the wagon you had to make a stop to get a drink, or get your teeth knocked out, as we found on attempting our first drink with the wagon going.

We were soon back up on the load and on our way again. The time was about four in the afternoon and Dad wanted to reach our destination before dark.

Now we really left civilization we thought as we travelled on between the hills. Not a person or house did we pass for miles. On and on we travelled, winding through hills of open country, covered with wild native shrubbery—cactus, California holly and brown-eyed Susans (my favorite flower to this day).

At last we came to what Dad called the Telegraph Canyon road. This road we noticed was a more travelled road. Also this was the road we travelled on often afterwards, going to Chula Vista or other towns north.

Street cars were running in this day. So if we wished to go to San Diego, etc., we could board the street car at Chula Vista. We would drive from our place at Telegraph Canyon to Chula Vista with a horse and wagon, tie old Sanko, our horse, to a pepper tree, exchange halter for bridle, and pile the hay we had brought along in front of the horse so he could eat while we made the trip. A kind man living near always gave our horse water.

But let us continue our moving. So—back again on the loaded wagon. We had been driving along now for almost an hour on this canyon road. Dad finally spoke up from below, informing us that around the next turn would be our new home.

My brother and I had been talking it over, as to what we would find on reaching the place. So we were getting quite anxious to arrive. We hadn't been told much about the place except that it was a small ranch and the house needed repairs, and our nearest neighbors were three miles away.

Miles seemed so much farther then than they do now. I guess it was because travelling was so much slower.

"Well, kids, here we are!" called Dad as we rounded the corner and spotted the place. I'll never forget how my brother and I felt that day as we drove up the driveway of that lonely looking place. It was just sundown, making it look lonelier than it really was. Not even a dog or cat came to greet us. However we accumulated our own dogs and cats soon afterwards, along with some other animals.

It would be dark now in a moment or two, and we were tired from our long ride. We climbed solemnly down off the loaded wagon, knowing there was much to be done before we could eat or rest. It was nice to get our feet on solid ground again, even if we were not too happy about our lonely surroundings.

To me now at this time—1959—Telegraph Canyon is a beautiful, quiet spot, not too far from the necessary things, towns, etc. There are still many uninhabited hills on both sides, covered with wild native shrubbery, although there is some very recent and new housing on its way out this canyon road.

The house we lived in is now also gone, as well as the barn and all the other buildings that were there. No need for a caretaker at this station any more. One can live in town and drive out in car or truck, inspect and fix the pipe line perfectly. At this time of 1959 the pipe line is a steel line, and not the old wooden pipe line that my Dad used to walk over and repair with wooden wedges. Also just very recently there has been another improvement

on this line. The City is reinforcing and lining the steel line with cement, so you see how well San Diego takes care of its water line.

A man by the name of Birch bought, and has owned for some time now, many acres of land along the Telegraph Canyon Road. Also the Otay Lake property and other surrounding land. He has fenced most of it and has cattle pasturing much of the land. All of this Birch property is called the Otay Ranch, or Rancho del Otay. If you drive out Telegraph Canyon road from Chula Vista you will notice a cattle loading place, corrals and ranch house. This is also a part of the Otay ranch.

Just on ahead and around one more bend in the road is where the pipe line station was located—our first home in the country. You will now find here nothing but a few pepper and eucalyptus trees.

Getting back to us on this moving day. Dad lit our two kerosene lanterns and we followed him up to the house. Here we found a wood stove in the kitchen. So the first thing we did was gather some wood and soon Dad had a fire going.

We kids swept a place in one of the rooms clean enough to put up our beds, and then sat around warming ourselves, waiting for our bowls of clam chowder and crackers, a favorite supper with us.

"You two wash up the bowls, spoons and cups while I go down to the barn and attend to the mules," said Dad.

However, we kids had a different thought at this time. We were not too anxious to stay alone in a strange empty house. So we asked to go along down to the barn. We were also curious about what the barn was like and how Dad would attend to the mules. We had never had any of this experience before. So he gave his consent and we were allowed to follow him on down to the barn, unwashed bowls forgotten for the time being.

The mules seemed restless when we got to them. I guess they were tired out after pulling our load of household goods so many miles. Dad took off their harness and unhitched them from the now almost empty wagon, gave them water, and piled hay in front of them. They were hungry too, by the way they sailed into eating the hay.

We had both hay and grain on the wagon for them, so I asked Dad if he was going to feed the mules grain also.

"Nope. They will get their grain in the morning. That is when they most need it," my father explained, and added, "Before I return these two mules I am going to plow up a piece of ground for a garden with them. I may as well get my money's worth. And they are able for the job."

And that is just what he did.

We soon made our way up to the house again, so tired we jumped into our already made up beds with "Good-night Dad" and very short if any prayers. We dropped off to sleep almost immediately, and slept so soundly we never heard the coyotes howling around our place during the night. A good thing we slept sound I suppose, or else we would have been frightened, not knowing much of such animals just yet. Dad told us all about the coyotes the next morning.

However we awakened early to the baa-baa-ing of sheep. Hundreds of them. Grazing all around our place.

We soon had on our clothes and were out among them. On our way out, without stopping for an answer, we asked Dad, who was cooking the breakfast, who owned the sheep, and would they be there all the time?

You can't imagine how excited we were. We had never seen a herd of sheep before, except in pictures. There were baby lambs among them also.

"You kids come back here and have your breakfast and help clean up around here" called my Dad after us. "Those sheep will be around here for two or three days until they clean up the feed, and you kids will have plenty of time to watch them."

A herder was with the sheep, and a collie, or sheep dog. The herder also had a donkey to carry what he needed for his comfort and necessity, and to ride if he wished.

We kids asked the herder a million questions, but he could not understand much English, though he did make us understand we would be friends. He gave us each a baby lamb. This pleased us no end. We thanked him and ran back up to the house with our lambs in our arms.

We were allowed to keep them, and Dad soon fixed up some canned milk and warm water. We scouted around for suitable bottles and improvised nipples until we could get to the store and buy some.

The lambs caught on quickly and we had little trouble in raising them. We kept them on a light chain staked in the yard, and turned them loose occasionally when our garden wasn't in danger.

All we had to do was hold up the bottle, make a noise like the mother sheep, and our lambs would come running to us, their little tails wagging furiously.

They loved running loose, but we were always afraid they might get out and go back with the herd when they came around. The herd did come back regularly, cleaned up the feed and went on. Though we were always on the job, none of our lambs ever made any attempt to leave our yard.

When they were old enough to butcher and eat, our folks found a way to dispose of them. We never knew just where nor how. This I do know: we all refused to eat of the first one we raised when it was roasted and put on the table.

We understood we could not keep them around after they grew up as our place was not large enough to accommodate a herd of sheep. And after all we were not in the sheep business. We did have much enjoyment in raising them, however, and could get a baby lamb almost any time we wished. You see in these large herds of sheep a mother sheep often has two lambs and can only take care of one, so they have to be given away or disposed of in some way.

After a week or so we met the Etcheneques, the owners of the sheep. They were our nearest neighbors, and their ranch was three miles up the road. We soon became good friends. There were three children in this family. Two girls and one boy, all three around our age.

The Etcheneques were also generous neighbors. On butchering days they would come by with a leg of lamb, lamb chops, or lamb stew meat. We always welcomed any fresh meat, and lamb was a favorite with us.

Once in a while we would have some nice fresh pork. This came from our Aunt and Uncle Hahns' ranch, about six miles farther up the road, and past the Etcheneques place. They too butchered their own meat, making some into sausage. The hams and bacon they smoked in their own smokehouse on their ranch.

Occasionally Dad and my eldest brother went hunting at the Otay Lakes, which were also in this territory. Then we would have a wonderful meal of stuffed and roasted wild duck. To me there is nothing more delicious. And Mother surely knew how to fix them.

Dad and my brother also went fishing at the Otay Lakes, most always coming home with a good catch of perch and bass. Then we would enjoy a fresh water fried perch or bass breakfast next morning.

Incidentally, in the year 1908 and a year or so before this time, John Esterbloom, who is now my husband as you know, was employed at Sweetwater Lake in Sweetwater Valley. Sweetwater Lake had been extra low for years and had no fish in its waters except catfish in the mud holes. So John and other men employees were sent to the Otay Lakes to catch bass and perch to replenish Sweetwater Lake. John says some of the bass caught weighed four pounds, others smaller. And it was not too long afterward that Sweetwater Lake had good fishing also. This took place in 1908.

In those early days we lived pretty much off the land and country. Wild rabbits, doves and quail were plentiful also. But of course you could not shoot them out of season, even if they riddled your fruit and garden, and they sure did that, regularly.

Nevertheless I used to love to watch the doves and quail with their young, flitting in and out under our fence, and the rabbits too I enjoyed watching as they would run along cautiously, their heads up and when they were convinced no one was around would help themselves generously of our produce.

I have always loved these wild creatures just as they naturally live and are alive, so I have never learned to shoot and kill them. But you know how it is. Folks enjoy eating the wild game, and if you live out away from stores you are apt to eat from what is provided around you.

Dad and Mother sent away for all our garden seeds, after poring over the seed catalogues to be sure they made the best choice of what they wished to plant. And we did have a wonderful garden, even to strawberries, blackberries, and melons of several different kinds. I remember especially the white-skinned cucumbers we raised. They were long in shape just like the green ones, only their outside skin was white instead of green. And oh, how good they tasted! We often went out to the patch, salt shaker in hand and ate them right off the vine while they were young and tender. I had never seen any before we had them, nor since, and I have asked at different seed stores in our locality without success.

With our ground good and fertile, finally, and with no water bill to pay, Dad and Mother sure had all the vegetables growing that we could possibly take care of. I remember, too, we gave generously to all who came our way.

At first the ground took much fertilizing and working up to get it in shape for planting. How well I remember before we had a harrow to do the

job of smoothing the ground, Dad made some wooden mallets and we kids took turns breaking up the clods, a job we really hated.

It wasn't too long however before our folks caught on as to how to handle the ground. Then our biggest job was to keep the weeds out and do the irrigating. When we were off to school Mother had much of this to do.

When I think back, it was truly wonderful to go out in our own garden, come in with the ever so good, fresh vegetables we had growing, and Mother would toss up a salad fit for a king.

Our garden here in Telegraph Canyon was a far cry from the garden we had growing in boxes at Coronado. Oh yes, we always had vegetables growing for salads and soups. But oh! what a difference in the two gardens in quantity and abundance.

I will explain here briefly the box garden we had at Coronado. Our flower garden consisted of long boxes, painted dark green, that my father built himself and filled with a good soil mixture, and planted in them bright red geraniums. The boxes were placed on both sides of the board walk entrance to the boathouse. I remember how often people remarked how nice they looked there. We kept them neatly pruned and the dead flowers picked off. This was more of a hobby than a chore, even with Dad, who usually did the job.

Our vegetable garden, which was also in boxes, was upstairs at the very top floor of the boathouse in the place we called the cupalo. Here the sun could enter on all sides. Here we had growing tomatoes, large and small, and peppers—the hot chili and plain bell pepper and pimento kind. We also had an herb garden of different kinds of herbs. I do not remember all their names except sage, parsley, chives and green onions. When our mother made soup or salad she sent us upstairs for this or that, whatever was needed.

Now, here in Bonita, I often wish for a box garden, especially on an extra hot day when I must drag the hose around watering our very large and spread out garden.

Watering the family orchard too is quite a chore. And the pruning is sure a job also. And this must be done regularly or you would find yourself living in a regular jungle in no time.

So my advice to folks who come to build and live in the country where you have much ground is that unless you can keep a regular gardener, do not plant more than you care to handle later on. This seems to be what most of us do when we have much ground. Over plant. Then we find ourselves with a much bigger job than we can handle or enjoy doing as a hobby later.

This is what happened to me. So I'm trying every year to have less to care for as I grow older. I am usually the one who must care for our home ranch garden. John does the farming and growing of vegetables below, but he doesn't have the time to do much of our home place gardening. So you can well understand how even though I love the outdoors I wish often our garden was such as we had at Coronado, growing in boxes.

Oh, how I miss also our willing little wet back Mexican workers. They spoiled us much during the man shortage of World War Two and some years thereafter by working for us so cheaply and willingly. They did so many things to help us, both in the garden and in the house. We will most likely never have them coming around again. So it pays to keep our gardens simple, unless, as I said before, you can have a regular gardener, or you have an extra amount of time, patience and endurance.

Getting back to Telegraph Canyon and my childhood days there. At first we very much missed our friends at school, our sand dune playground, ocean and bay, our swims and boat rides and all that went with our daily life over in Coronado and our boathouse home. But you know how children are. They soon adapt themselves to whatever changes come their way, and we soon turned to country bumpkins for sure.

We did and do go to Coronado often, and some of our friends from there came to visit us here in the country at first. But we went our separate ways in time, and made new friends.

It was not until the old time Coronado school picnics were organized that I again met with many of my old school friends and teachers. No need to mention that it was truly a happy reunion for all of us. You probably read about this old time school picnic in the Coronado chapter of this book.

While Dad was still patrolling and caring for the city water line and living in Telegraph Canyon, he bought a three acre place in Sweetwater Valley. In time Dad and Mother and those of us who were still living at home moved over here to Bonita.

Dad built several houses on the land. Two of my sisters who had husbands in the Navy lived in them at this time. Now that Dad has gone, Mother and three of my sisters and their families live on the place. They have improved and repaired the old houses. My sister Polly, who is Mrs. E. Howard, has built a new home there. And our present ranch home here in Bonita is just above Dad's place on the top of the hill from my father's estate.

Folks often ask us how we all get along, living so close together. That is an easy question to answer. We all love each other dearly, and though we live close we have our own separate lives to live, and our own families to care for. We visit occasionally, have picnics and outdoor parties together often, celebrating one or another's birthday. If we need one or the other we all well know we can call upon each other any time.

Another sister lives in town. Also we have three brothers living elsewhere. And now, counting all of this next generation, we truly are a large family. And we do enjoy one another, so we manage to have get-togethers where some or all of us meet together occasionally. So I would say, counting our many, many friends and our families also, there are not many dull moments for us, you can be sure.

I was the first of our family to live here in Sweetwater Valley. I was invited to live with one of the Valley's best known and loved families, the D. N. Williams. It was while I was living with them that I fell in love with this beautiful and friendly little community.

And it was here in Sweetwater Valley, at a dancing party at the Sweetwater Woman's Club House that I met farmer John Esterbloom. A few years later we married, and our wedding party was also in the Sweetwater Club House.

About the time our children were four in number, and John changed jobs, we hunted everywhere for a house to rent. Not finding one here in Bonita where we wished to live (I, mostly), and where John's new job would be, we, with the help of a brother and my father, acquired this, our own present home here in Bonita, right here where we so wanted to live, and where we have lived now for thirty-eight years and over.

And I might say it was a good thing for us that we bought and built just then, as property here in Sweetwater Valley at this early date was much less expensive than it is now. And we do have such a beautiful spot for our home, overlooking the greater part of this beautiful little valley, that I mention so often.

As for my first home in this part of the country, it has been years now since there has been sheep grazing on the hills of Telegraph Canyon or on the hills here roundabout. And our friends the Etcheneques, who had owned and maintained a sheep ranch for years in those earlier days, have had many changes in their family life also.

Frank Etcheneque, who had married, and who took over the ranch after his father's time, himself passed away several years ago. His wife and daughter Mary and Mary's husband are now living on the old ranch. They have made many improvements on both houses, and are preserving as best they can the old original ranch house.

And though there will probably never again be large herds of sheep with tinkle bells grazing there, and there will be no more the hustle and bustle of cooking for the dipping and shearing hands, I wouldn't be surprised if the Etcheneque grandchildren have a lamb or two, with tinkle bells, just to keep in memory some very happy and busy days of the past, when their ranch, which is called Rancho de la Nacion, was in full bloom.

John and I, who for years have known and loved our friends the Etcheneques, are very happy there will be a new generation growing up here. They have come back on the ranch again.

I recall a few weeks ago when John and I drove through Telegraph Canyon, we stopped for a visit with Regina, Frank's wife, and their daughter Mary. We met Mary's husband, whom we like very much, and we talked much of the old, bygone days when Frank was still around.

I was ever so pleased that the folks who had leased this ranch for a few years after Frank's death did not destroy or paint over the murals that the young Etcheneques had painted of their sheep grazing on the fertile hills of Telegraph Canyon. You will find this picture painted across the living room beams of the young Etcheneques' home.

When Regina and Mary decided to take back the ranch and live there again they painted anew the buildings in and out, making many repairs and new improvements here and there. I'm sure they have also washed over the painted murals on the beams, for they still look bright and clear, much as if they had recently been painted there. We will visit them again soon I hope, as I wish to bring with me a wedding present for the young folks, and also a present for the new baby that is expected.

Aside from the Etcheneques' ranch, the Jim Shuttles' bean ranch, and my Aunt and Uncle Hohn's ranch (often called Cocatoo Grove) and my cousin Sidney Lansley's place, there are not many, if any, of the old time ranches left. And the ones that are left are much run down and changed.

Telegraph Canyon remains much the same. Wild native shrubbery, cactus and wild flowers still cover many of the hills in places, on both sides of the road, except for the hay land. And though the Otay ranch takes in much of the territory at this time, and they have their property fenced and cattle grazing on the land, the wild native shrubbery still remains.

However I have heard just lately that a building contractor has started surveying for much housing near Chula Vista, coming out on the Telegraph Canyon road, so I suppose it will not be long now before Telegraph Canyon will be a part of our bustling and new way of life.

I love to drive over this Telegraph Canyon road and reminisce of days gone by, when we first came here to live and would drive our horse and buggy or ride horseback, and take many walks over the hills gathering flowers, etc.

Our two family cows, turned loose with bells on in those early days, would graze over the unfenced hills, and toward evening Dad would call to them and they would come running home for their supper of bran mash, and to give us that luscious, creamy milk they had stored up since morning.

It was truly a very different but joyful life here in the country among the hills from what we had left behind us, living in a boathouse at Coronado, between ocean and bay. But we all now love this peaceful, free and country way of life. And more and more as the years go by I am happy and content here in Bonita.

I love the open spaces of country, our beautiful views of mountains, and native shrubbery covered hills, and beautiful Valley, and the peace, quiet and friendliness of this community, though at times I long for and miss somewhat the sight and sound of the pounding surf.

CHULA VISTA, OUR WONDERFUL NEAR-BY TOWN

Chula Vista is just three miles west of our Sweetwater Valley. Chula Vista is one of those extra clean, beautiful, and fast growing towns with wonderful shopping centers on both of its main streets. You will also find there wonderful Christian churches of most every denomination; also a wonderful library. And because of our very limited shopping center here in Bonita, at this time, we do much of our trading in Chula Vista.

The Chula Vista of today has some wonderful food markets and stores of all kinds that can supply most of the needs of most anyone. Now, shall we go back to an earlier day of 1908, and my first visit to Chula Vista?

At that time Chula Vista, tho always a clean and beautiful place, had few and scattered stores, a couple of churches, orchards, ranches, and some industry, such as; citrus packing plants and, near the bay, a salt works which is still there; also a potash plant. At this time we were living in Telegraph Canyon, a country place, four miles east of Chula Vista.

This was in the horse and buggy days, of course, and street cars were also a means of transportation. We, who lived out a way, drove our horse and buggy to Chula Vista to board the street car going into San Diego and other towns beyond. On these occasions our stopping place was at Third and G streets. There was a station there at this time called Melrose Station. Nearby were some nice shady pepper trees, and it was here under the pepper trees that we tied our horse (with permission, of course). If we were going to be gone long, say five or six hours as we often were, we took hay along so our horse could eat while we made the trip. However, we always took off the bridle and put on a halter with the rope. The neighbor nearby was kind and thoughtful and supplied our horse with water. On returning we always found the horse safe and sound and happy, and ready for our homeward drive again.

As I remember, there was only one grocery store in the main part of Chula Vista on Third Street at this time. We were surprised to find the Farrow's, who operated this grocery store were some old friends of ours from Coronado. Their son, Edgar, and we kids had attended Coronado elementary school together. It was quite some time afterward when the chain stores and other food markets came to Chula Vista. I believe Safeway was the first of them.

I recall, also, the Kindbergs who had a leather store in Chula Vista at this time. At first Mr. Kindberg made and repaired shoes, and made saddles, bridles, and harness. Later Mr. Kindberg's son joined him in the store, and they just sold and repaired shoes. Kindberg's always carried the very best kind of leather and brands of shoes, and had a large trade I know. I also remember Mr. Hayes who had the first men's clothing store in Chula Vista, and the three Hayes girls who attended the Congregational Church where I also attended. I recall, also, the beautiful wedding in this church uniting the youngest Hayes girl in marriage to Mr. Bert Randall, also of Chula Vista. Here are some more of Chula Vista's old timers, many of whom attended the Congregational Church also: The Dyers, the Austins, the Haines, the Barneses, the Albert Smiths, and the Skinners.

In time the Peters Feed Store came to Chula Vista, and we ranchers, for miles around, depended on this reliable store for the needed supply of seed, feed

grain, and hay. And, by the way, Peters Feed Store, tho somewhat enlarged, is still going strong at this present day of 1959, supplying many of the farmer's needs.

When I was sixteen years of age, I lived with the Mark Skinners as a mother's helper. I was happy to live there and help with the children. Harlan, the eldest, now with a family of his own, is a music teacher in our local schools and has been for some time. Barbara, who was the baby at that time, now is married also, and lives somewhere here in Sweetwater Valley. Harlan and his family are also living in the Sweetwater Valley, having built a beautiful adobe home on a hill overlooking the valley in general.

Mrs. Mark Skinner, who before her marriage was Miss Carrie Haines and the daughter of an old time Chula Vista family, taught at the little red one-room-one-teacher-for-all-grades school at San Miguel Mesa. My younger brothers and sisters attended there at the time. Miss Haines boarded with my aunt and uncle the Hahns who lived about three miles from the school house. Incidentally, my husband, his brother, and sisters attended this school at the same time, also. However, I did not make their acquaintance 'till some years later. Mr. Mark Skinner, who later married Miss Haines, had the first hardware store in Chula Vista where we enjoyed trading for many years.

While I was living in the Skinner home, my uncle Hahn, who had many horses in a mountain pasture, at this time, promised me a horse if I was able to get it broken to ride. Well, I somewhat put the horse before the cart, as it were, by engaging Mr. Kindberg at the leather store to make me a saddle. This, Mr. Kindberg did, and it was truly a beautiful saddle with bridle to match. It was then that I found my uncle had no intention of giving me a horse.

He most likely knew full well all the complications that went along with a young unbroken horse right off the range, and also the inconvenience of me, a working girl, keeping a horse at all. So I, a much wiser tho disappointed teen-ager, had to cancel my order from Mr. Kindberg, and my beautiful hoped for saddle and bridle was soon sold to someone else.

However, the disappointment faded in time as I became interested in preparing to go into nurses training. At this time The McNabb, the first hospital in Chula Vista, was built. One wing of the hospital was to be kept for ill old folks of the Fredricka Home. Mrs. Emma R. Saylor was in charge, or owner, of the Fredricka Home at this time, and had much to do with the hospital also. McNabb Hospital, tho small in comparison to some others in the county at that time was considered having the best equipped operating room on the coast. Consequently many doctors from other parts around brought their patients here. McNabb Hospital also conducted a training school for nurses. I considered myself very fortunate to be enrolled here at the time. There were some tests to pass, and I cannot tell you how happy I was to pass them and be taken in here. The girls in training, at this time, besides myself were a niece of Mrs. Saylor, Dorothy Fisher, Louise Walsh, Ann Rutherford, Kathleen Vaughn, Miss Conboy, and an older woman, Mrs. Beatty. Our house doctor was Dr. Prentice, and we had a wonderful matron, Miss Nichols. We also had one very patient, helpful, sweet, and tiny head-nurse whose name was Betty Bonser. This wonderful little nurse later became the bride of Albert Smith who owned a citrus grove in Chula Vista at the time.

Mr. Smith had an ill and aged mother and father. The two were both wonderfully cared for in their own home by this dear little nurse, and she made their last few years comfortable and happy.

As I mentioned before, I was living with the Mark Skinners when I decided to take nurses training. Across the street from the Skinner's home was a dressmaker, Mrs. Kendall. So it was Mrs. Kendall who made my uniforms, aprons, and later my caps. We had a three months probation period, in which time we were to either qualify or not qualify to go on with our training. Wasn't I the fortunate girl to qualify before my three months were up? I firmly believe, as I look back happily, it was because of the wonderful help and push I received from my fellow nurses, and our extra kind and understanding matron that I did so well. I believe all girls would do well to have, at least, some nurses training. This kind of instruction will help greatly in later married life, especially when the children come on. I can truly say that my training has helped me ever so much with my own family, as well as making it possible for me to nurse many others besides.

Dr. George B. Worthington, who was the main doctor in Chula Vista in those early days, brought many of his patients to McNabb Hospital. He also took, by turn, us student nurses on maternity cases in the home. This gave us much practical experience. And you know doctors did some delivering in the home in those days!

I recall my first experience of this kind with Dr. Worthington. It was in the home of the William Becketts. Mr. Beckett had a barber shop in Chula Vista at the time. And this was their first child, a lovely, healthy, dark-haired and eyed daughter that they named Carolyn. This being my first experience in obstetrics alone with the doctor, I well remember how nervously I awaited this baby's arrival. The Becketts later moved to Sweetwater Valley and went into the garden business, and raised lots of wonderful vegetables. Sons and daughters who came later went to school with our children.

Mrs. Worthington, herself a graduate nurse, was helpful, also. She had been a patient at McNabb at one time, having just had a serious abdominal operation. She insisted, instead of having the usual graduate special nurse, that we nurses in training be allowed to take turns in caring for her; she directing us the while. We loved taking care of her, and learned much about operative cases at the same time.

Among the babies born at McNabb while I was in training, was the Peters' first child, a daughter. This is the Peters family who have the feed store in Chula Vista. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Moise's first child, a daughter, was born at McNabb during my training period. Mr. Moise was associated with Bank of America for years. We nurses enjoyed taking care of the Peters' and Moise's babies and their mothers. I also recall another prominent first baby born at that time at McNabb Hospital—the Ellis Mark's baby. The Marks had a jewelry store in San Diego at that time. I especially recall the day that Mr. Marks came to take Mrs. Marks and baby home. He brought with him and presented to each of us student nurses, in fact to all the nurses, a gift of collar and cuff pins from their own jewelry store. I remember how pleased we nurses were and how we started to wear them almost immediately.

And now, please let me inform you also how friendly and accommodating were the cooks at the Fredricka Home where we nurses had all of our meals.

John, who is now my husband, and I were going together at this time. John was in charge of the hunting at Sweetwater Lake. On several occasions John brought ducks, cleaned and plucked, of course, to the hospital. The cook at Fredricka Home would stuff and roast them into a delicious meal. There

was always enough to go around for all the nurses, and we greatly enjoyed this treat.

When McNabb was first getting started, we nurses lived on the top floor of the hospital. Later there was need for our rooms so a cottage nearby was rented for us. Altho all our meals were provided at the Fredricka Home dining room, we could cook simple things in the cottage kitchen if we wished. Our laundry was also done at the Fredricka Home laundry.

On my days off, I often walked out the three miles to Sweetwater Valley to visit family and friends. I recall many happy times during my days in training at McNabb Hospital, Chula Vista, and at the Skinners' home also. Even tho I was the only one of the class who did not remain for my entire three year period of nurses training, I have always been happy and thankful for the training and knowledge I received at McNabb Hospital which, as I mentioned before, has helped me much in the care of not only my own family, but many others as well. So I am now classed as a practical nurse with hospital training.

Dear old McNabb Hospital where I had spent two happy and well spent years in nurses training, located north of the Bank of America in Chula Vista, is now a privately owned hospital kept going just for the ill old folks of the Fredricka Home for the aged.

Fredricka Home in this year of 1959 is greatly improved and enlarged. Many new, attractive, and comfortable cottages have been added. Fredricka Home has always been a very well kept and enjoyable place, as I remember it, even in my earlier years of association there.

Not long ago I found, to my very happy surprise, one of my childhood teachers had a cottage there. She was my kindergarten teacher at Coronado in about the year 1902. Her name was Miss Myers at that time. She is now Mrs. Outcault. Her husband, Mr. Irving E. Outcault, was superintendent of San Diego schools some years back.

I remember well and lovingly this loveable and beautiful golden haired kindergarten teacher; also the wonderful little morning prayer-song that she taught us to sing. We children sang our song while sitting around in a circle in our little red chairs at the Coronado kindergarten. (I believe this could have been the first kindergarten school Coronado had, tho I am not sure about this.)

I find myself singing our little morning prayer-song quite often:

"Father we thank Thee for the night,
And for the pleasant morning light,
For rest and food, and loving care,
And all that makes our world so fair.
Help us to do the things we should,
To be to others kind and good,
In all we do, in all we say
To grow more loving every day."

Then with a quick change of melody, we would all sing, "Good morning to you; good morning to you; good morning, Dear Teacher, we are glad to see you." Of course, our teacher sang, "Dear Children, I am glad to see you."

So it was a happy reunion I had with Mrs. Myers Outcault, and I hope to take her for a drive out here to our home in Bonita, and around over the Silver Strand to Coronado just for old times' sake. Incidentally, Mrs. Outcault presented me with a book of poems that her late husband wrote, which I have enjoyed reading and which I am very happy to have on hand in my bookcase.

And now still reminiscing on some other wonderful and happy days in Chula Vista, I think with very special memories of some very dear ladies at Rancho San Miguel. Our days at Rancho San Miguel started in the year 1925, when my husband, John, was employed as foreman of this ranch. Four ladies, at different times, were owners and John's bosses, if you could call them that. John loved his job there, though John usually resents women bosses. With these ladies, it was different. Their wonderful spirit of kindness and cooperation, as well as their consideration and helpfulness, erased any and all prejudice John ever had for women bosses.

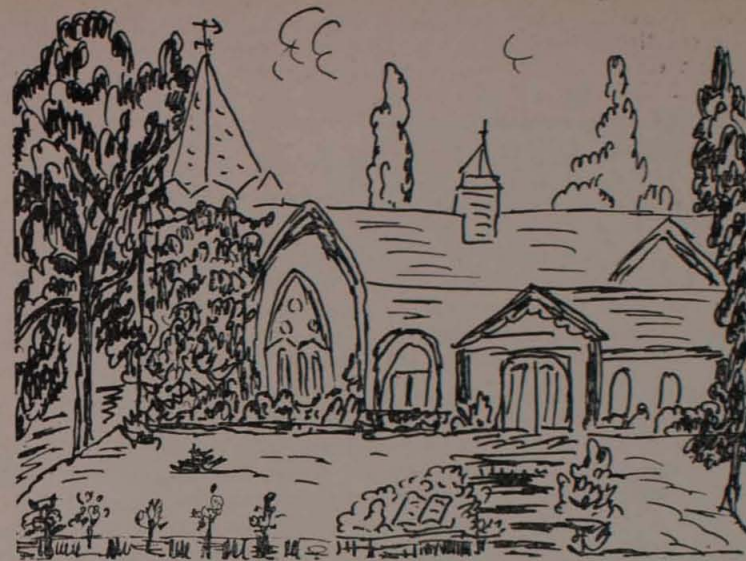
I could not mention or explain all the special blessings that came to all who worked on this ranch including the employee's families. We could take our children to enjoy a good swim in the lovely blue tiled plunge there, using their dressing rooms as well. Our children learned to swim there on these occasions. On the Fourth of July, the ladies gave a swimming party and we all received new bathing suits which we had a wonderful time displaying at the swimming party and later, also. It was here at this ranch that we also enjoyed many wonderful Christmas parties in the company of all the ladies, the employees, and their families. We eagerly looked forward to this time each year, when each one of us was presented with a useful and wonderful present; such as, the very best of blankets, jackets, sweaters, and ever so many lovely dresses, etc. Just before Christmas the ladies, themselves, asked the sizes of each one of us and took the trouble to shop for us, each one individually.

One year we received a car to replace our older one. This present was given to us from the grandmother in this group of women. And believe this or not, but all the employees had regular health check-ups, both from doctors and dentists; all services rendered being paid in full by these generous, kind, and thoughtful ladies of Rancho San Miguel. You will have to agree that there are not many, if any, such bosses that render such extravagances, I'm sure.

For years the enterprises on Rancho San Miguel were the raising and selling of avocados and citrus fruits. From their own packing plant came the Chula Cado avocado. I, myself, sorted and sold some of this fruit. Some of this fruit was packed carefully and shipped to the East. At one time I had a route on Coronado among many new and old acquaintances there. These folks enjoyed having me bring to their doors this wonderful, healthful salad food, fresh-picked from the ranch where it grew. At this time both Army and Navy officers had homes on North Island. I was given a pass from a Commanding Officer and was permitted to sell our avocados on this island. We also supplied the hospital and the general kitchen on North Island at this time. The Hotel Del Coronado used our wonderful avocados also.

The ladies took on another enterprise and Rancho San Miguel became noted for its best of breed dogs, the German Shepherd. They were bred, raised, and trained in modern kennels by special caretakers and trainers. I believe some of the dogs became seeing-eye dogs, and body-guards during World War II. We have snapshots reminding us of these very wonderful bygone days at this Chula Vista ranch, Rancho San Miguel. It may interest you to know that this Rancho San Miguel is still operating, tho it is now mostly all in citrus fruit; the kennels and avocados are no more a part of this ranch.

I am very sad to relate that two of our good friends, the ladies of the former days, have gone to rest. However, Miss Brundred, who we always felt was the back-bone or main-stay of Rancho San Miguel, is still the gracious lady and friend that she has always been, and she still spends much of her time at the ranch. Rancho San Miguel in Chula Vista is as always, a well-kept and beautiful place, tho it is no longer the busy place it was in earlier days.



BEHOLD LIFE'S RAINBOWS

We often hear folks say, somewhat with caution, "One should never live in the past."

I enjoy living in my past enough to write about it. And of course we only live in the past by reminiscence. One does not go back and actually live over one's past, and neither does one wish to, though history has been known to repeat itself. I believe it is up to the individual how each one has taken or looked upon their past experiences. Especially the sad or unpleasant times. And what person has not had some sad or unpleasant experiences at one time or another?

So I love to reminisce on past experiences, which is nothing more than thought memories after all. And I believe most folks would enjoy doing so if they took the time. And I find thinking back not only enjoyable, but beneficial and helpful as well. That is, if we look at our past experiences in the right light we recognize them as stepping stones, and find also that the sad and unpleasant things in our lives were just as necessary to our growth for the future as were the happy, pleasant times.

All mankind has a kinship in their past and present experiences. After all, though we may not have thought much about these things there is a power higher and above our own you know, who came to our rescue when we were sad or in trouble, sending us friends, comfort, healed our sad heart and wiped away our tears so that we could go on in peace. This higher and unseen power comes from none other than your Heavenly Father, yours and mine. He created us. Therefore he knows all about us and our needs. At all times. And in all circumstances.

It could be the loss of a loved one that we cannot forget, or understand the why. Remember, there had been happy times with this loved one also. And one usually has pictures around to remind one of them. So, though we cannot see them or actually come in contact with them in person again in this life, you will find they are still in thought or whatever you wish to call it—a part of your life as long as your own life lasts.

So with us, we speak of our lost loved ones much as if they are just away somewhere, and have not altogether left us. In explanation I might say it is like so many sympathy cards read: "They are just away." This is real trust and not just words. God's word. The Bible says he left us here on earth to go and prepare another place for us. And that other place is where our loved ones are. That is answer enough for me. The Bible also says that when we get to that place we will meet with our loved ones, face to face, and there will be no more trouble, sickness, death and no more parting. Here is another comforting message from that same good Book, the book of life really.

All things that happen to us will work out together for good to us if we love and trust God. Also that God our Father in Heaven is closer to us than our hands and feet, so he is the unseen part of our life. We cannot actually see that other place either, nor our departed loved ones from here, till we ourselves are changed and see with a different eye. But we can believe and be comforted. Because these things are all true. Our Heavenly Father creator is a part of us and so are those we love, whether they are here or there. We are all equally and at the same time in His love and care. So whether we accept or wish to believe these truths or whether we do not will make no change in them. They are truth and truth shall prevail.

And how about other hardships in our past life? Or mistakes some of us have made when we thought we knew it all? No siree, we wouldn't take advice from our elders, not us. We were past twenty-one and knew what we wanted, and knew what we were doing also. John and I often talk over our past experiences and find much to laugh about now, though at the time we were going through these times we felt very much abused.

I remember well one time when we lived on black-eyed peas for weeks. I cooked and fixed them every way I knew how so we could eat them at all. (And, by the way, I do have some good, tasty ways to fix them.) When the butcher came around to our house I had to tell him "Nothing today," when we would have given our eye teeth for a steak. Or even hamburger or a soup bone, for that matter. And meat was not as expensive as it is now.

This was before John had a job, or we owned a place of our own. John had leased one old run-down ranch after another. We would revive the trees if they were worth saving, improve the land by fertilizing, plowing and planting crops, and would also fix up the old houses so we could live in them. Needless to say we often came out at the shorter end. Very often we didn't even have black-eyed peas to show for all our hard work.

When the old run-down ranches or farms were in good shape again by our labors, our landlords would sell them and we would have to move. We were advised now and then. But as I mentioned before we would not take advice from anyone. We knew what we were doing. It took us quite a few years to wake up and listen to good advice.

And now, looking back at these hard times, I believe they were good for us. I believe they have helped us to appreciate more these better days we have

and still are enjoying here in Bonita, owning our own home and farm. Though we still live simple compared to some ways of life, but we do enjoy each day as it comes, looking back on our hardships and troubles as the needed experiences for our future good.

So this chapter is just a part of sharing the years and experiences with you as I am also sharing my childhood days at Coronado, Telegraph Canyon, Chula Vista, San Diego; my marriage to a rancher, our six wonderful children, and now our grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. I am also sharing with you our host of friends and our families. And these, our experiences of joy and sorrow and past hardships are shared with you so that if by chance you should recognize yourselves in any of them you will also find and recognize the rainbows of life also.

And of course all the way through the book you will have noticed Our Beloved Valley way of life, for that is where my heart and home is. And I can truthfully say life is wonderful. I am glad I was born and very happy to be alive. I enjoy what comes my way every day and, I should add, what I do not enjoy I leave in better hands than my own. This is a safe and wise thing to do, believe me.

And I will say again I do at times enjoy living in the memories of my past life, and it is all because I have found out these great truths of life. There are and always will be rainbows after our storms in life. A gift to us from our Heavenly Father who is all-wonderful and lovable, who directs our paths and opens our eyes to beauty and our hearts to our many blessings. I like to feel that I am not only a part of things here in our Beloved Valley, but as having a part in all things. So when my prayer time comes, I pray for our President and leaders, our friends and family and all the world in general. I pray the Lord to give them all the wisdom, health, strength, courage and inner joy they need to carry on all of their duties. I know the Lord will do this even if I do not ask him. But our prayers and interest in others give us a partnership with God and a share in all things. And I have found being a partner with God is to be in harmony with the best in life of everything.

There is one mistake I have made in life so far that I am sure I will never be making again. And why I am so sure I will never repeat this mistake is, first, because there would not be time left for me to do so. And secondly and my very best reason is because, while for years I have been trying to figure out what I thought in the first place could have been a mistake, was not in the least a mistake after all. That is, with a few exceptions now and then, when there is no earthly reason for non-cooperation, such as this. Boy! Oh, boy! I am so angry this moment at a certain John Esterbloom I am going straight into the house and not come near him till I have to at supper time. And it is at these unpredictable times that I believe somewhat I could have made a great mistake in marrying Farmer John.

You should see my lovely syringa vine, mowed to the ground. It took me three years of special and careful pruning and watering of this wonderful, fragrant, flowering vine to get it where it was. Growing over almost one-half side of our old ranch house and covering our west window which is over the sink and here I work quite often. And where the afternoon sun always shone in and bothered me so much.

I know I could have curtains or a shade up at this window, and will probably have to resort to something of the kind now that my vine is gone.

But I enjoy nature's curtains so much more, and besides some tiny birds had built their nest in a secluded place from the outside but where I could see from my kitchen window the birds flitting in and out, going after food, even though their nest was hidden from our window also. But I did know it was there, hidden among the greenery of this lovely vine.

John had surgery not many months ago. It was his doctor's orders for him to take it slow for a while. So he has been working at lighter jobs here and there and also here on our home ranch. Pruning seems to be his favorite job. When he gets the pruning shears in his hands, look out! You are liable to lose your ears.

You see, John is definitely a farmer. To his way of thinking everything growing must be cut down every year. He plows the ground and plants the seed for his different crops. When the crop is over it comes down completely, whatever it is, and is plowed under or taken care of otherwise. Then he starts all over again from the ground up.

For years now the children and I had kept up our home place, with once in a while the willing help of the little wet-back Mexican, which as you know we have no more. But now at this time our children are grown and married with homes of their own and John and I with no other help take care of our home grounds. Today, after the sad experience of finding my vine cut down I decided to keep close track of John when he goes out to prune, or our place would look like a piece of ground ready for planting the seed in no time at all.

I can say for him he sure does a thorough job by the way my lovely vine looks at this moment. But as this is just one of my experiences in life that I do not enjoy I'll skip over it, hang up some curtains for the time being, and guard the rest of the growing things he is liable to clip down. Hiding the pruning shears might help also, so I may resort to that if necessary.

John simply said, (always assuming that men know what is best in most everything), "Why make such a fuss about it? You ought to be glad I cut it down. I got tired of coming into the kitchen in broad daylight and finding you with the light on."

And here I was, practically in tears. I know my treasured vine did cut out both sun and light. And I am for sun and light also a hundred percent when it is in the right place. What was a little extra electricity, I only used the light when I needed extra light for my cooking or preparing of food. Besides, the vine did not really make our kitchen too dark on other occasions. Nevertheless, Farmer John, if I am going to live with you for the duration of time and not consider my marriage to you a mistake, I will surely watch you more carefully when you go out in the yard to prune.

When I was growing up as I remember I used to have my ideas as to what kind of man I would choose for a husband. I would change my ideas from time to time as I grew older. I guess that is what most girls do usually. And why we usually marry the very opposite when the time actually comes I'll never know.

The only man I would consider for a husband, said I at a very early age, would have to own a motor boat so we could go to San Diego shopping across the bay and not have to wait for street cars. Also my intended husband would have to promise to let me run the motor boat occasionally.

Then, some time later, after we had moved from Coronado and lived in the country in Telegraph Canyon where our nearest neighbors were three miles away and there was nothing but grazing hills all around you for miles, my dream of what my intended husband's qualifications would have to be became more definite.

He would have to buy or rent a houseboat in which we could live on the water, in the water, and could view the water from every window of our home all our lifetime.

"But where would you have your houseboat anchored?" I was often asked.

"Oh, in some nice place in the bay or on a river or lake somewhere. Anywhere but on the ocean," I would explain.

"I would love to live near the ocean but not on it as I always get seasick."

"And what about your children on a houseboat. You would sure have a time raising a family surrounded by water," I would be cautioned by my elders.

Then I would plan and tell in detail how I would have a place fixed so the children couldn't possibly fall overboard. Besides we would teach them how to swim early in life, just as we had to be taught living above the water in a boathouse.

Learning from experience caring for my younger brothers how children soon learn to climb fences, etc., I would provide for this also by not having anything in their play place for them to climb on till they really learned to swim well enough to come up and swim to the landing if they fell overboard.

Oh, I had wonderful ideas of a play place with sand box, and a dish pan like Mother had, and put just enough water in it to sail a tiny boat, or keep fish, pollywogs or turtles in.

I believe I was about fourteen or fifteen years of age when I next changed my dreams of the ideal husband. I'm sure this ideal this time was prompted by my three handsome English-descent cousins that I had not seen in years, and now we lived close enough to visit them quite often.

This time it was not what he would have to have as a home but what I desired about his looks. He would be a tall, blond good-looking Englishman with an English accent. I had really decided at this certain age.

Not more than a year later I changed my ideal completely, as I remember. I'd settle for a baggy-pants old salty like my father, only not so strict, and he would have to shave off his moustache in case he had one like Dad had. Just so he liked the things I liked. Outdoor life, travelling some, and camping out at least once a year, taking our children also wherever we went. Also agreeing to live at least part of the time by the ocean or bay where our children could play in the sand and sail tiny boats at the end of a ball of kite string, letting the tiny vessel sail out as far as it could go like my brother and I had done at Coronado a few years back.

And now as I look back reminiscing I remember I always included children. I guess that must have been Mother Nature knocking at my door. And too, I have always loved to take care of children even when I was only a child myself.

I am not quite sure why I changed my ideal to a man like my dad unless it could have been because I had heard so often at the time "It is better to be an old man's darling than a young man's slave." And as I remember at this time I was also disappointed in a certain someone who was young, blond and handsome and who was my boy friend at the time.

Shortly afterwards while I was in training for a nurse I changed my plans again. This time I really thought I meant business. Oh, me! Oh, my! What ideas we do get and what different things change our minds. This time I was most definite I thought. And this decision came to mind while experiencing my first obstetrical case, alone with a woman in labor.

I firmly decided I would not marry at all. I would finish my training post course in the care of infants and children. And then I would travel with people who could afford a traveling nurse for their children; like my mother before me. I knew I would want the fellowship of children. But I was not ready to experience what I had witnessed on this, my first obstetrical case.

Oh, Boy! What immature ideas we do get and what great changes we do make.

And then when the big moment comes and he actually appears in the flesh with the big question, mistake or your ideal doesn't really matter. You just take for granted he will be what you hoped he would be. And if he is not (and what man is altogether what an immature girl's ideal generally is) soon it is too late to change your mind, you are so well anchored with what you have got in the scramble, mistake or not. It doesn't make too much difference usually.

Funny it never occurred to me that I would marry a farmer. But here I was, married to a farmer, and even before I actually finished my nurse's training or received my diploma. And Farmer John, as you have read in my former book, doesn't like camping out, nor traveling of any kind except from ranch to ranch in a truck or plowing the soil on a tractor. And he would rather live in a cave in the mountain side than find himself living in a house boat. He also hates the beach and ocean, and I love it, so that is that. And John, though a rather good-looking blond, even up to date, is not of English descent with an English accent. John is of Swedish descent and the only time he has an accent is when he is riled up and then I do not know just what kind of accent you would call it. Good old Farmer John.

One thing in which John has measured up to my expectations is his love of children. And this is really the big thing that we have always had in common. We have always been real close to our children and grandchildren, and now we have three great-grandchildren to enjoy. And I am sure our love of children had much to do with our contentment and happiness in making our choice, years ago in the year 1915, the year of San Diego's first and wonderful exposition at Balboa Park.

As for Farmer John, he had a dream girl also, he has informed me more than once. And she was to have much different ideas than mine are he told me also.

"So if you think you have made a mistake or pulled a boo boo," using the teen-age slang of today, "what do you think I did?" says Farmer John.

Well, my answer is we both took our mistakes for what they were worth and made one grand life out of it.

One thing I've noticed, John is just as content as I. He is much like the bug in the rug. He never wants to leave home-port. And as I grow older I do not blame him as much as I used to, for I am getting to be somewhat of a bug in a rug myself. Only John started out that way, while I had to grow into this groove gradually.

And let me tell you right here and now, there is no place like home sweet home, where our children, family, friends and heart is all the time. Though I will not often turn down a chance to go camping in the summer time, nor a short trip up north along the coast with my sister and brother-in-law who always have such nice, comfortable and reliable cars, and they are such good sports about taking me with them. Of course John can go too, he is always invited also. But he always refuses.

So let the other bug stay in the rug if he wishes. I'll be back and join him when the trip is over. And now we are sure it was best for us not to have married our youthful ideals. For taking potluck as we did gave us some wonderful rainbows.



RANCHO PEQUENO

Rancho Pequeno has been our home now for thirty-eight years and over. We love our old place. It grows dearer to us Esterblooms every year. Our children enjoy their old home, and so do our grandchildren. And we have many happy family gatherings and outdoor picnic dinners.

John and I are Rancho Pequeno's sole occupants at this time. However it is not for long as we have visits from our grandchildren and other relatives and friends who love to come and stay with us occasionally.

Our house was built by the home talent method, relatives, friends and ourselves doing the job. It is built on the board and batten style with a flat roof. This was to please me mostly, as John cautioned me about flat roofs often becoming leaky. Ours has never leaked anywhere except along one rafter, when the fireplace was added, which was an after thought, long after the house was completed. So I would say our home talent board and batten ranch house has stood the years well and has much happy living in it still.

There are several very good reasons why we built by home talent. One was the lack of time. The other reason was, our funds were low.

You see at this particular time folks did not care to rent to anyone with children. And we had four at this time. John's ranch jobs usually furnished a house to live in besides a pay check. This was before we owned a farm of our own. So John changed jobs whenever he could better himself. He took a tractor job at this time and his employer did not furnish us with a house, though the wages were somewhat better.

This was long before these boom days in Sweetwater Valley. And I have always been very happy we were pushed into this position of owning our

home. Property here in Bonita was low in price at this time and easily obtainable. And as we did not have the needed cash my father and brother helped to finance this property for us. My brother also helped us get our house well started. We in time paid our folks back and Rancho Pequeno became our property completely.

I believe the happiest people are those who own homes of their own, no matter how grand or how simple your home may be. And this is about the first thing we have urged our children to purchase—a home of their own.

And I am happy to say I believe the era of not wanting to rent to folks with children has gone somewhat, for there will always be children, God bless them, and some folks do have to rent I suppose.

Rancho Pequeno started out with no other houses on the top of this hill but ours. It is now a well built up hill. Wonderful homes in all directions. Though ours is really the only ranch among them. At this time it is only one acre in size. Thus the name Rancho Pequeno, which means Small Ranch in Spanish.

We acquired our forty-five acre ranch below in the Valley later. Our farm land took much clearing of brush, willow and leveling before John and our two sons got it in shape to farm.

And now I thought you would like to know how Rancho Pequeno got its name and what we usually do here on this home place, and also down on the farm, at this time of year.

I will explain first how Rancho Pequeno got its name. A little old lady, eighty-some years old, suggested the name. This sweet, industrious, under five foot person was born in Spain and was of Spanish descent. She was also my own grandmother. We most always called her Granny.

When she was around twenty years of age she married an Englishman who was in the service, after which Granny lived in both England and Ireland. Later her husband passed away. Years passed. Granny's two children, a son and a daughter, came over here to live in our wonderful country of America. They decided to remain here and both became citizens.

In later years Granny also came to America. Her daughter sent for her and she lived happily here and there in the homes of her two children. She also visited her grandchildren, of whom I was one, as I mentioned before.

Granny was gifted in many kinds of arts and interesting works, and taught and interested us in her talents also. Granny could walk miles, even walking the five or six miles from my aunt's ranch in Telegraph Canyon to the top of our hill to our house here in Bonita, where she loved to visit.

She would first stop at Dad's place, which is just a stone's throw below our place, do all she could for her son, who was a widower at the time with two sons to care for, and after her visit there a week or so she would come up for a couple of weeks' visit at our house.

I never could figure out where Granny got her endurance. She was in her late seventies when she made these long walks and performed these ever so many strenuous duties. Of course we would have driven up for her, and we always took her home. But she would make up her mind to surprise us with a visit and here she was. We were always happy to have her visit us.

And one day I decided I wanted a name for our small place, which was in reality a ranch, even at this time. You see we had the whole hill to ourselves. So we had cows, chickens, ducks, turkeys and a horse for the children to ride. We had corrals and barn, and a place to house our poultry. We churned our own butter and of course had our own eggs. And there were grazing grounds all over the hill to stake out our animals on.

I wished to give our ranch a Spanish name, on account of our property's early history as it was part of the large Spanish grant, Rancho de la Nacion, which is still the title of our deeds. So I asked Granny for a suitable Spanish name.

She spoke up quickly. "Name your little place 'Rancho Pequeno'. That means 'Small Ranch' in Spanish."

So we all decided that Rancho Pequeno was truly the right name for our home place. This of course made Granny extra happy, and more so when I painted and put up the sign which is still today on our bamboo fence at the front of our place, with the name "Rancho Pequeno" and our name.

And now that we have a number of address, you will find this number added on this, our original sign also. I have to paint this sign now and then to keep it bright enough to read easily. And occasionally I also have to trim the cactus that grows extra fast along the bamboo fence that covers our little sign so it cannot be read by the passer by.

This somewhat cherished sign is just one of the memorials of my dear little Castilian Spanish Granny, who has gone to her well earned rest these many years now. And who loved America and our way of life, extra well. So in return we have lovingly laid her among the green pastures of beautiful Glen Abbey where many of our loved ones lie also, right across the hill from us here in Bonita.

And now would you care to know what usually goes on at Rancho Pequeno and down on the farm usually at this time of year? Today is Saturday, August the eleventh, nineteen hundred and fifty-eight. And just now our figs, guavas, grapes, sapotas and some avocados are nice and ripe begging to be picked and eaten. So I will soon go out in the yard and gather some fruit, and after I have washed them I will have them sitting in baskets on our large kitchen table so we may all have a share in eating them over the week end.

Down on the farm John and our son Sam and their helpers are just now, and have been for some time, harvesting the corn and melons to furnish our two roadside stands. We are all kept pretty busy during this season.

Up here on the home ranch the phone rings often, as besides selling at our stands we take orders for our local markets over the phone also. If they cannot reach anyone at our son's home they call us. And too, I baby-sit for our young folks who must keep the stands open from early morning to quite late in the evening. On account of the many cars that come to our stands it is not a good and safe place for the children to stay or play, so they must come to an Aunt or to Grandma (that's me), and we take turns caring for them.

John and son Sam are farming and working together with very little help this year. And often if I get an order it means that I myself must drive down the hill to the farm or stand with a message or orders for produce. We older women folks often deliver lunches or suppers and cold drinks when there is no time for those tending the stand to take time out.

Breakfast is usually quite early and there is not much time for talk. Supper or the evening meal often takes place here as late as eight-thirty P. M. at this time of year.

As the days are so warm many of the ranchers irrigate their crops and do much of their work in the cool of the evening, and with this new time the evenings are nice and long. So the rancher usually works till it is too dark to do so.

I eat at six and take advantage of the long evenings also. I irrigate up here on the home ranch at this time, as the sun does not take up the water as it does in the day time. And I believe watering in the evening not only saves water, soaking in so much better, but I find it enjoyable to do my out door work in the cool of the evening. Also I feel better in health when I eat my evening meal early.

Now in explanation of our roadside stands. Many of you have most likely bought at our stand or other roadside stands. And you have probably seen them and their advertising signs along the highways. Most all vegetables, fruits, honey, etc., can be had fresh-picked from the ranch and at a cheaper price as well at these roadside stands.

Our roadside stands are built mostly of the bamboo that grows wild on our farm, and in other places in the river bottom land. The men gather it, cutting it down with a long chopping knife or saw, in the lengths they want to use. Sam has cut quite a lot of this bamboo this year and has it stored in bundles ready for use or sale. This bamboo can be used for patios, fences, bean poles and many other things also. We have a fence here on Rancho Pequeno made of this bamboo that is over twenty years old, so you see it is long-wearing also.

Esterbloom stands have made quite a name for themselves. Our corn, melons and other produce seem to have the quality folks enjoy and can depend on. We guarantee every purchase. So if you are not happy or satisfied with what you have bought you may bring it back and receive better, or your money back, just as you wish.

We do not have this happen often. But you know even an expert picker can make a mistake once in a while. Picking too ripe or too green.

You will find our two stands along Sweetwater Road. Our oldest stand is a quarter of a mile beyond the Bonita bridge, going east. The other most recent and permanent stand is on the Bonita road on the other side of the Valley just beyond the dairy farm. The dairy is on the south or right side of the road, going east. Our stand is on the left, going east, under some pepper trees. A short driveway leaving the highway just beyond our sign will bring you to it.

At one time down on our farm we had cows, calves, pigs, rabbits, ducks, and of course horses. As our hill built up and this property became zoned we had to move most of our animals on our farm below. We raised much of the meat that went on our table. We also raised pure-bred cattle from calf to milk cows and sold them when grown to the dairies.

We also kept pure-bred bulls for service when many folks around here had their own milk cows. I sketched a picture of this enterprise in my first book. John with his truck and trailer, the bull's head in sight over the trailer gate. I sketched this just to show John had an improved and more modern

method than they did in former days, when the men on the ranch led their mother cow to visit the papa cow at the end of a rope or chain, walking with them often the distance of a mile. I just couldn't see that. Of course I had to learn for myself about ranching and such after marrying Farmer John Esterbloom.

We also raised calves and beef for the butcher.

About our horses, John and I started out with a team of horses for travel, as cars were scarce in those days. And later we kept a horse or two when our children were growing up, as they loved to ride over the hills with friends.

At this present time we have no livestock of any kind on our ranch. Once in a while a grandchild keeps a horse in our empty corrals up here on the home ranch, Rancho Pequeno, as they too love to ride with their many friends who have horses up here on the hill.

We are in the process of selling our farm land below at this time. We have talked it over with our children, and they too think it a wise thing to do. John and I are both at the age when we need to slow down. However we plan to keep and live our lives out at Rancho Pequeno.

Our son Sam, who knows and enjoys farming, will continue to do so, and will also have at least one roadside stand going. John will help Sam when he needs his help if I know John, as John loves farming also. But here on the hill we can live among ranching and country life, helping here and there occasionally, without taking part in the more strenuous part of farm work as we used to in days gone by.

Today has been a hot day here in Sweetwater Valley. On our porch here at Rancho Pequeno the thermometer went up to 90 degrees at 12 noon. I have been in and out of the house, watching and attending to the irrigating of our fruit trees. This takes much time and watching, as we wish the trees to get well watered without having any water wasted.

I also put out a big washing. And not with Tide clean, either. I prefer White King D. It does a better job for me with John's extra dirty ranch clothes. Hope the Tide people don't get me for this, but when I hear so much about Tide clean over the TV I often wish they could see my nice white wash with White King D.

After I put my wash on the line I cleaned out some cupboards and fixed lunch for John, who ordered two extra lunches packed to take down to the stand.

This afternoon, between phone calls, I did have two hours to write on my book. Then I straightened the whole house in general, dusting some, and went down to the Bonita Store and did my Saturday marketing and got the mail.

Now it is around six P. M. and all is quiet. And no company in sight. So I will write a few more pages then fix some Jello salad and bake a casserole of some kind for our Sunday dinner tomorrow.

We usually get home from church about twelve-thirty. And if I intend to go I do my cooking the day before, generally.

Occasionally I stay at home and sing my praises with my own accompaniment on our old worn, but wonderfully toned piano. You should hear the birds sing along with me just outside the window. When all is quiet and I

am here alone I can better meditate on the spiritual things. This keeps me both humble and thankful for my ever so many blessings.

I'm so glad and thankful I was taught as a child about our Heavenly Father who loves and cares for us all so lovingly each day. And when the shadows or troubles come, as they do in all of our lives, He makes them all right in time, heals our hearts and dries our tears. This helps us to understand. I know there are some things that some of us will never understand here. Though I believe we will understand all things in the land beyond. So, having great faith in a Heavenly Father I leave the things I do not understand with Him.

Would you believe it? It is almost time for John to come up for supper. I had mine long ago. So I will sit down with him and have a cup of coffee, just to keep him company. We will talk about the happenings of the day down at the stand and up here. And plan somewhat for next week.

Here he comes at last. I have ready cooked for him French toast, bacon and eggs and apple sauce. He will wash up first, leaving the bathroom in a dirty, splashy mess, with much of the dirt on a nice, clean towel. But he is John, the plain dirt farmer, lovable, dependable and good. And after forty-two years I have not been able to change his ways. (Remember John the Changeless of my first book?) Oh, well, who cares. I'll just clean up after him later on in the evening when I get time before I go to bed. And hang up another clean towel, and call it a day.

I wish I could talk John into coming up for supper around six. This would be so much easier on both of us. But he says if he once came up it would be to stay, as he gets in a restful mood when he gets home and wouldn't care to push himself to go back down the hill, so that's that.

I have had many busier days than this one. Especially when our children were home and growing up. I used to can lots of fruit and make jellies, jams, relishes and pickles. Now I put up only about a third as much. And much of this is to give away at Christmas. However, I do put some of our surplus home grown vegetables and fruit down in the deep freeze, such as corn, string beans and melons. This way is much easier than canning, and is very satisfactory.

In former years churning our own butter was a big chore. We ended up having a separator to wash and sterilize. But before we had a separator we used to put the milk in crocks and pans, let the cream rise, skim the cream off, adding each batch to the churn till there was enough to make butter. This meant having much clutter of pans, etc., in your cooler, ice box or refrigerator.

The separator way is much easier. You just put the fresh milk as it comes from the cow into the separator, morning and evening, saving the cream in the churn as before till you have enough for a churning. This way you could get rid of the skim milk after each milking and feed it to your pigs, cats, dogs and other farm animals.

When funds get low, as they very often do between harvest seasons on a farm, I went out here and there baby-sitting and nursing at night. I could be home with the children in the day time, and John was with them at night.

We have always had much company. Folks love to come to our place here in the country. And we love to have them. But that did mean much extra cooking for me and I could do very little visiting.

However I have learned many short cuts in both cooking and entertaining. And now I can visit and have fellowship with friends and family ever so much more than in former days when I spent hours cooking over our hot wood range.

We still have our old Majestic wood stove that I spoke of also in my first book. And I do cook on it, even though it is quite old and has been repaired. It bakes well and it is especially nice to cook on during the cold weather, when we wish to cook food that takes hours. I just put my soup, stew or beans at the back of old Majestic, where it can cook nice and slow. My oven gets hot by this time by keeping a steady fire, so I can bake something also if I wish. Also our water tank will now be filled with plenty of hot water for baths or washing clothes etc. as we heat our water by a coil in the fire box of old Majestic. Thus I can kill many birds with one stone.

However in summer I have a two-burner electric I cook on, also a large electric fry pan, and another large copper kettle, electric also, in which I cook pot roasts, French fries and many other things quite easily.

So when John had some extra money this summer, which he doesn't have often, he asked me if I wanted an electric stove. My answer was no, I would rather have new linoleum on my floors. You see I did without an electric stove when my house was full of family all the time. Now I manage very well without one. But we did need new linoleum on our floors. And now I have the new linoleum on several floors, and I hope to have all new floors before too long, which will raise my morale sky-high I know.

In the old days I did not call it a day till midnight very often as I remember. And, too, we brought up other children besides our own six. Oh, the washings and ironings I had then! I sometimes wonder how I ever managed when I think of those extra busy, though very happy days of the past when our children were all home and growing up.

But now that I am a grandmother I have slowed down much, and there is still much to keep one busy even on our small ranch, though now I have time for hobbies as well—writing, painting, crocheting pot holders, place mats and rugs.

I do love to work with the many wonderful assorted colors of rug yarn. I do not crochet with the finer threads or yarns. I would consider that too hard on my eyes, and a waste of time as well.

I do most of my crocheting while looking at TV. This does not sound right I know. You probably wonder how I can do both at the same time. Well, I can. And I just cannot sit for very long with nothing for my hands to do. So I keep my colorful balls of yarn and hook handy, and soon I have a full drawer of crocheted things to give away as presents for different occasions.

I can accomplish much if I do not have to hurry. I believe much of our stress and strain of nerves and body comes from too much rush and hurry. Seems none of us take the proper time to live. We just do this and that as if we were part of some fast moving machinery. Too much hurry and rush often gets us nowhere, gives us bad tempers and worn out bodies and nerves. And very often, instead of taking time to enjoy what we are doing, or finding time to say or do something kind, we often give instead unpleasant answers and no help.

Yes, I have learned somewhat by this time not to hurry. Life is so much more fun and seems to last longer, living this unhurried more simple way. So if you are young or along in years it doesn't matter, for I am sure you will find what I have learned and am passing on to you is all true.

I often feel sorry for the workers who must buck the heavy traffic morning and night. I notice the many that drive through our Valley, always in a mad rush it seems, going or coming. And I often wonder that there are not more accidents than there are.

I, myself, with no outside job just now, can arrange my trips in the car at such times when the traffic isn't so rushed. So my driving is not very often a strain, but a pleasure.

And as for shopping nowadays, most of us have shopping centers close by, and our driving out here in a country place is much easier than in the larger towns.

So I believe our home place, Rancho Pequeno, is just in the right spot for us, who love the slower, quieter and more simple way of life.



Rolling Hills, Bonita Cal.

HOME SWEET HOME

There is a slogan that reads something like this: "Your home is where your heart is." And though this could very well be true, there were times when my own particular and more true slogan would read like this: "Anywhere I hung my hat was home sweet home to me, especially when my body had to follow my heart in so many places."

That is the way it was with me for many years. During that busy time I never felt like I actually belonged, or came home to my own home completely.

Oh, I went in and out of the front, back and side doors of our house. Slept there. Cooked, did the laundry. Even enjoyed the ever so many things one usually does in one's home. But I had to be in so many other places besides my own home during the day or night, week after week, I wasn't sure just where my home really was.

I know many of you will understand what I mean. An outside job perhaps. Children always having to be taken here and there for lessons etc., or it could be too many social activities, or too many errands, rushing around here and there, keeping us on the go continuously. And most always with this longing in the back of our minds, "I do wish I could stay home today. There are so many things I would like to do right here at home."

And most of us do work extra hard to be able to buy a home of our own, and then fix it up just the way we wish to live. And then we haven't the time to stay home or enjoy our home life properly. So off and on we go, day after day.

Suddenly something happens to change all this hurry. You may and must stay home.

With me it was a pretty bad fall on our much enjoyed brick porch. Funny, how I called this accident "my home-coming." And for me it was just that. I was hurrying across the porch this morning after watering a few plants and putting feed and fresh water in the cage of parakeets belonging to our grandchildren. Besides I had my whole day planned. I would work away from home the hours I was expected to work, come home, put out my wash and write some letters I had thought.

Well, my plans were all changed. I ended up calling a friend on the phone. When I could get up on my feet, that is. No one was here on the place but myself at this time. I later decided this was a blessing in disguise, as I had to make an effort to do for myself, which I might not have done had someone been around to call on. My friend came immediately and took me to the doctor in Chula Vista.

When the doctor finally came around to me, though this was supposed to be an emergency, he looked me over and said "Well, Mrs. Esterbloom, what seems to be the trouble?" The X-rays showed later my right arm was broken at the elbow. And diagnosed that I was still in shock. Both knees injured some, and a bump on my head the size of an egg. I had broken my glasses in the fall, but no glass had entered my eyes, fortunately. Two black eyes appeared next morning, with more coloring of blues, blacks and purples finally reaching down as far as my neck line.

Oh, I was a sight, and felt like it too.

As I waited in the doctor's office for attention I thought how wonderful it was to have friends you could call on. Here she was at this moment waiting patiently. God bless her to take me back home again and to see before she left if there was anything she could do to make me more comfortable.

And, too, she had come to my rescue at a moment's notice. She hadn't even inquired why or if I should want her to call some of our own family. Of course the reason I hadn't called my own family was because I did not wish to unnecessarily alarm them. And I also knew it would be inconvenient for the ones near by to drive me to a doctor, which I knew I would be needing at this time.

Gradually, later, when I was over the shock of my fall somewhat, many thoughts kept coming to my mind. Who would do all the things I had been doing I thought, as I realized I was not in the best of shape to attend to any of my jobs just now.

My worries were short-lived however, as I lay there in my nice, clean and restful bed. I had been detained at the doctor's office for two solid hours. And of course I was in pain from my break and bruises also, making the time seem much longer than it really was. The doctor had sent me home with pills for pain if I needed them. And of course I did have some pain, naturally, after I got home and for two or three days afterwards.

But here I was content and happy to be home completely. Even in this banged up condition. The wish I had in the back of my mind had come true at last. And best of all I realized my accident as a blessing in disguise. Here at last I could just lie and rest with not a thing on my mind that I had to do. And no place I had to go. This was too good to be true I kept thinking as I dropped off into a restful and sound sleep.

Now and again, as I said, I realized some pain. The bitter with the sweet, you know, though I never fully awakened for hours, even at the painful moments.

My family, friends and even the doctor noticed my content and apparently happy spirit, and remarked, "I haven't seen anyone take a banging up like you have for a long time now." I suppose they could have thought the bump on my head had given me this slap-happy look I had on my face, just intending to encourage me some, when little did they know how I really felt.

It was six weeks and over before I drove the car, though I could have driven much sooner I am sure. The only times I left our home was on the necessary trips to the doctors—the physician and eye doctor. The jarring of riding in the car was painful at first even though John, who took me on these necessary trips mostly, drove as carefully as he could. And because John hates to shop for groceries I did the marketing on the way home from the doctor's.

However I soon decided differently and let my family and friends get our groceries, as everyone I met seemed very unhappy at seeing my face all colors. So I stayed out of sight for a time.

I got around our house and yard fairly well without my glasses. I had to do without them a couple of weeks as the eye doctor wanted to be sure of an accurate test for the new ones.

I was surprised how well I could see, especially in the distance, without them. I could not do much the first few days after my accident, so I enjoyed sitting around on our east side porch, looking over our beautiful view of valley and mountains. Everything had such a clean, washed look, from the wonderful rains we had been having. The hills close around were so nice and green. And I was so happy and content with just loafing and looking.

It was remarkable also how quickly I was healing. And now I believe in this Bible verse more than ever: "A cheerful heart doeth good like a medicine." For truly, I did have a cheerful heart. And oh! the wonderful lessons we learn at these times and under these circumstances.

And now that I am perfectly well again and able to drive the car myself I have vowed never to go back into that rushed and hurried way of living ever again. For I am still in that mood, there is no place like home, where body and heart can be together at their best.

I will now be just wife, mother, grandmother, friend and neighbor. And most of all home-maker. A privilege we women so often give up for an outside job. And often we gain so little by doing so. And besides we really miss our highest calling, the real wife, the real mother, the real home-maker. I do not in the least mean housekeeper. I definitely mean home-maker. This very special job takes in all we women can give to make our home life the heaven on earth it is supposed to be for all concerned, including ones self also.

So you will probably find me at home now most of the time. And you could find me writing on this, my second book. No matter if you disturb. I love visitors. We could have a cup of tea, coffee or juice while we visit.

And you may find me, instead of in the house, on our nice sheltered porch where I do much of my writing and many other things also. I do watch my step out here however, for this is where I tripped and fell in those past days of hurrying across it doing this and that.

It is always so quiet and peaceful out here. And as I look up from my writing from time to time to rest my eyes, I can feast on our surrounding view. All it lacks is an ocean I have often said, if it lacks anything, which it doesn't really.

Today, by the way, is April the fourteenth, nineteen hundred and fifty-eight, just to give you a definite date. This I do for you every once in a while as I ramble on.

We are having such nice, clear and close-up views and sun-shiney days. The old San Miguel mountains, so lovely to look upon at this time of year, are covered with green and yellow patches between the usual blues, greys and purples.

Our green hillsides are also covered here and there with wild flowers, among them my favorite wild brown-eyed Susans.

A crop of barley hay growing just across on the other side of our fence, tall and heading out, is almost ready to cut. Now it ripples and shimmers on down the hillside as wind and breeze blows through this tall green and wonderful crop of matured grain. Makes one feel prosperous and thankful to live out in the country.

I notice too just now the wild canaries and other wild birds happily splashing around in our bird baths. And a tiny rabbit who comes under our fence to feed on our bermuda-grass lawn is now in sitting position, ears straight up, listening cautiously for danger noises.

Our flower garden is extra bright and pretty this time of year, though it is planted mostly into geraniums, fortunately, though, of many colors. A special bed of dark lavender pansy-like pelargonium takes ones eyes first.

We also have tropical fruit trees in this sheltered spot and many other nice green shade trees. Our fruit trees consist of figs, bananas, avocados, sapota, loquat and cherimoya. Other trees are elm, pine, pepper and a lovely flowering tree I call the golden rod tree on account of its beautiful yellow-orangey colored blossoms, though this is not its proper name. I will ask about the name of this tree some time when I am at the nursery.

We also have a small family orchard, bearing apricots, seedless limes, several kinds of guavas, a peach, a nectarine, several lemon, grapefruit and naval orange. We also have two olive trees.

A brother of John's always picks and cures the olives from our two trees, we dividing the crop with him.

We also have concord grapes. The children in our neighborhood are usually very good about not getting at our fruit before it is ripe. We have persuaded them to come and ask and if the fruit is ripe we are glad to share with them. So we do not have to scold often.

The Chinese elm I spoke of on the sheltered side of our house helps to shade our unroofed porch. This elm is the kind that is dormant in winter so we have the nice warm sun when we need it and also the nice shade in summer.

This wonderful Chinese elm tree was a present to me from one of my very best friends, who not only gave me the tree as a present, she also planted it right where you will find it growing. This she did just a year before she passed away. It has just completed leafing out again, and as I think of her

lovingly as I do so often I reminisce on the wonderful times she and I had together, camping out, exchanging plants and painting together at the adult art class in the U.S.O. building of our nearby town Chula Vista. We also shared many other hobbies and homey pleasures common to us both.

I have many other like and living memorials from friends and relatives. Just now, along on the inside of our fence, is a rose bush in bloom with two different colored roses on the same bush, pink and red, and throwing off a delicate but sweet fragrance. This rose bush is also a memorial. And often my thoughts of our loved brother-in-law, are like this. "Thank you, Monroe, for your lovely roses. They come to us regularly year after year to enjoy in memory of you."

We also have an orange blossomed Tacoma vine that we call the Gramma Anderson vine, as she gave this vine to us years ago. She has gone to her well-earned rest also, God bless her. This, her memory vine, is dormant in winter, and comes out in late spring, showing clusters of beautiful orange colored blossoms. We have this vine on our garage and clothes yard fence, and here and there in our yard you will find many such loved and enjoyed memorials.

Being a native Californian I also have many beautiful flowering cactus and succulents which also belong to the cactus family. They range in colors of yellows, lavender, pink, light and dark reds and a wonderful assortment of white blooms.

Some are odorless, others are very fragrant. The night-blooming cactus that just lives for one night sends a wonderful and sweet fragrance through the open windows, so we always know when one is in bloom and often go outdoors to have a look at this short-lived but beautiful white bloom.

Succulents and cactus are easily started. Just put a leaf or piece in a box or other container, or just plant it anywhere in the ground where the condition of soil is somewhat loose, leaf moldy and sandy. Water sparingly but thoroughly. I will gladly give away cuttings of any kind that I have if you come to our place.

Oh how good one feels to be out in this warm California sunshine! And no wonder one feels like putting it down on paper and telling the rest of the world about it. We here in San Diego County have much to crow about, as the saying goes. And at the rate folks are coming and building here, this alone speaks for itself.

We have a daughter Betty living at Imperial Beach. Her husband has just finished building an out-board motor boat. They have four children, two girls and two boys. The boys go fishing with their dad occasionally, and the girls go rock hunting with their mother along the beach.

Once a year the whole family drives down to the Colorado river for a two weeks vacation. This year they will take their new boat along as they all love the out of doors. They also bring their camping equipment and camp out. This kind of vacation gives the children, mother and father a wonderful chance to get closer together. There are many other folks and their families camping out there also, so they too are among new and unfamiliar folks and surroundings, out amongst nature, and I believe this is one of the best opportunities that all families have of getting close together.

I am often invited to go along with our children, as they know how much I enjoy camping. John doesn't though, so I find this a good excuse for me to remain at home, giving them this wonderful time to be alone, together.

However, we do visit them often at their home in Imperial Beach. And as I, especially, love the shore and ocean, Betty and I and whoever of the children wishes to go along, drive the short distance to the beach. We swim or just wade, beach-combing the while for all sorts of pretty shells, stones, driftwood and other things that drift in with the tide.

You should see some of this junk, as John calls it, that I have on display here and there on our porch. A catch-all for most anything.

And how wonderful to have a home of ones own; a place where you can bring everything you have gathered and hoarded and not have to move it unless you wish to do so. And where family and friends may come and share with you whatever you have to offer them. And where you yourself have found precious shelter, peace and contentment. And there are many advantages for the ones who do not have to move often. Your friends and neighbors in your community become closer to you somehow. Oh, I know one can always make new friends. But I believe much in the old saying about old friends being the best after all.

We Esterblooms have truly realized how very much both our old and new friends meant to us when our eldest son passed away a couple of years ago. What love and comfort they presented to us at this time. We had never lost a child before. This truly was a great sorrow to us. And even though we had sympathized with our friends who had, it is a much sadder matter when it is your own. And there were many questions in our minds too at the time, as our son was only in his thirties.

But when your friends are so understanding and helpful it does take away much of the sharp edges, you can be sure. Now I know why our Lord left us word to love one another. Because we all need each other.

Our son passed away the very first day of the New Year. I had always looked forward to the New Year, especially, this very first day. A brand new year to start all over again. It was a sort of rededication day for me. I hoped and resolved to be a better person. To be kinder, more understanding, more loving. And now how would I look upon the rest of the New Years, I thought at this time.

And we had had such a wonderful Christmas. All our children and grandchildren home for Christmas Eve supper. Son Jack had played on his guitar, daughter Katherine on the piano and John on the violin. We all joined in singing Christmas carols, hymns and other good old songs. Just a very happy family gathering, never dreaming a tragedy was so near. We had also celebrated Jack's birthday the twentieth of December.

I remember well the first day of that next new year and the other two since then. Though now the tears and heartaches are somewhat gone, as I realize my Heavenly Father can make all things come out for the best. And that our son Jack is now just as close to us as he ever was even though we cannot see or touch him actually, and also that he is still in our Heavenly Father's love and care whether here or there.

It rained steadily that morning when the car came to take us to the Little Chapel of the Roses at Glen Abbey, where the services were to be held, and which is nearby—just across the hill from our home here in Sweetwater Valley.

Virginia, our son's wife, who is just like a daughter to us, and who was sitting next to me in the little church, spoke softly and suddenly in my ear.

"Mom Esterbloom, do you suppose this rain will keep up? Please pray with me that the rain stops and the sun shines so we can have the grave-side service also."

In the Little Chapel of the Roses every seat was taken with others standing at the back and entrance aisle. Dear little Mr. Gregory, the Minister from the Friends Church at Sunnyside had charge of the indoor service. And as Jack was a veteran of World War II, the grave-side service was to be military.

Well! A miracle did happen for us that day. Or you could call it a direct answer to prayer. The rain stopped suddenly, even though it had been coming down in torrents just before the end of the indoor service. But just at the right time, after the closing chapel prayer, the sun came out bright and warm; the rain stopped suddenly, and a most beautiful rainbow came into view across the sky in front of Old San Miguel on the east end of our Valley where it could be seen by all who came to the service. The sun stayed out through all of the grave-side service and for some time afterward.

Our son's coffin was covered with our beloved American flag of stars and stripes. This flag was given to Virginia, Jack's wife, after a most impressive military service and record of his time overseas, omitting the usual gun shot, at our request.

You should have seen the many friends who came that day even though the rain came down steadily. And the extra many beautiful wreaths and flowers. We sent a truck load of the flowers to several hospitals. It seemed such a shame to use them for such a short time. I guess they bloom often, though, for just such a purpose, and could be likened somewhat to us. We too are born for a certain purpose. When that purpose in life is accomplished we pass on over to a new land. And another takes our place.

I was so thankful for the love and sympathy of our family and friends and the ever so many others who came that day, I could hardly contain myself.

And long afterward we would come home from somewhere and find a freshly baked pie or cake on our kitchen table, a token of their love and lasting friendship.

I should mention here also the generous gift of some very dear old-time beloved family friends of Bonita. A gift not often given, but one we will always remember. This thoughtful gift was given to our daughter-in-law Virginia, supplying a tender need at this time. A family plot in the prettiest part of our Memorial Park, Glen Abbey. Right near the little Chapel of the Roses, the first of which was used for our son's grave.

So you see what I mean by living in a place long enough to take root thoroughly. Your old friends are ever so much closer and always seem to understand. And now I hope we too will understand even more the needs of others including our wonderful and loving friends.

And that is just what Christianity really is. Sharing what we have. Meeting another's needs, whether great or simple. The giving of ourselves, our love, understanding and kindness always.

I mentioned lightly one day to some of my family, "When my day comes, I hope it is during wild-flower season. I hope to have several bunches of brown-eyed Susans, and also to have tiny bunches of other wonderful wild

flowers gathered by our grandchildren or other children of our community: blue bells, shooting stars and wild violets, like we all used to gather when Esterbloom Hill was just a vast flowered hillside with many brown-eyed Susans and wild yellow violets.

"Please keep the store flowers for a wedding, or for the sick who will enjoy them. Wild flowers are best for me," I added specifically.

But now that all this housing has taken place here our wild violets and lovely brown-eyed Susans have been plowed up during the process of building. So I have decided we should not pick what is left of our wild flowers. For soon they would all be gone, having no blooms for seed and increase.

There had always been something especially attractive to me about the brown-eyed Susans that grow wild around here and look so lovely in a certain blue bean crock I have. So I usually picked one or two good sized bouquets during their season.

But today I have picked my last bouquet of this cherished flower. And I have decided to paint a picture of them. I will not pick them ever again. They are prettier where they are, growing on the hillsides along our highway here in Sweetwater Valley so all may see and enjoy them.

And as for me having brown-eyed Susans on my going away day, that will be another's deciding and not my own. While I am here I shall enjoy them where they are growing, coming out into bloom in early Spring year after year. And from my last picking of them there will be a picture on my living room wall to enjoy all the year around.



THE TIME WE CLIMBED OLD SAN MIGUEL

San Miguel mountain, by the way, is found at the east end of Sweetwater Valley, and is a landmark of direction to many people of San Diego County. And let me explain here and now, there are actually three Miguel mountains in one, instead of the seeming one mountain you see from this Valley or west side here.

Old San Miguel, the largest of the group, is in the background. Mother Miguel you will find nestled close, in front toward the left side of San Miguel, and Baby Miguel nicely placed almost in the middle and directly in front of both larger mountains.

I found this all out for myself while we were on the climb.

So closely related and placed is this group of mountains that they have the appearance, from this west side here in our Valley, of being just one mountain.

So far, on our side of San Miguel there are no homes, with the exception of a dairy ranch. Two or three houses are included—the owners' house, one for guests or relatives, and one for the help. There are barns, corrals, etc. This is on Baby Miguel.

Sam Williams, who is now deceased, built the first house and dairy barn on the mountain. After his death his widow sold out and she and a son and family bought a ranch and moved to Lawson Valley. The new owner is a Mr. Thompson, I believe, and we have heard rumors of his selling to a contractor or developing firm who expects to develop this side of San Miguel in the near future.

You so often hear folks refer to this group of San Miguel mountains as dear old San Miguel, so majestic and colorful. Some time before World War Two there was a beacon light erected on San Miguel. This was in use for some years, directing the air traffic to and from San Diego airports. This light came on every evening at sundown and was a friendly sight, as it turned around, giving off its shining light in all directions. We folks here in Sweetwater Valley missed this friendly beacon for some time after its discontinuance.

On a higher mountain farther southwest called Lyons Peak now shines the new beacon light. The new beacon is found to be a more direct and suitable guide I understand.

Many people both old and young have climbed San Miguel no doubt. And many have told me of their climbing more than once. And now I wish to tell you of the time we Esterblooms, all eight of us at the same time, climbed this mountain.

John, the husband and father of this clan, had climbed the Miguels before, many times, as a boy. He said he always invited his city friends on a climb when they came out on vacations to their ranch, which was at the foot of the San Miguel mountains. John also told the children and me of the times the children with their teacher, from the little red, one-room, one-teacher-for-all-grades school, at San Miguel Mesa where he and his brother and sisters attended at this time, took a picnic lunch and went on a climb to the very top of old San Miguel.

But now this is John and I and our six little Esterblooms years later on this climb. I myself had never climbed this mountain before this day.

We had at this time a little old Scotchman boarding with us who was our Valley's best landscape gardener and took care of and planted many of the Valley's prettiest gardens.

We Esterblooms had just gotten over a bad case of whooping cough. We were all still coughing badly at times. Strange as it may seem John and I always came down along with our children in all these childhood diseases. And though it was quite troublesome to be thus afflicted, none of us ever were left with any serious after effects as far as we knew.

I do believe this case of whooping cough was the worst on us of them all. Our isolation sign "Keep Out" that was tacked on our doors in those days had just been removed a couple of days before. We were just finishing our Sunday dinner. One of the children coughed, then one after the other and myself and so on. I'm sure it was annoying to anyone who appeared at our table, and it proved to be quite annoying to old Scotty, who spoke up suddenly this day at the table.

"Do you really want to get rid of that cough?"

"We sure do, Scotty," we all said in one breath.

And I, knowing Scotty believed in Christian Science and not drugs, was curious as to what he would prescribe as a remedy.

"Climb San Miguel, all of you, this very afternoon," he recommended seriously.

"Climb San Miguel? Why I couldn't climb a mole hill just now, to say nothing of climbing a mountain," I spoke up puzzled.

I thought Scotty was joking so I continued, "We are not in shape for a good walk on level ground, Scotty. You ought to know that. And besides you know you could never persuade old stick-at-home John," I offered hopefully, adding again, "I'm sure now you must be joking."

"Joking! Nothing of the kind!" said Scotty in answer. "I never was more serious in my life."

I almost dropped dead with shock and surprise when husband John sanctioned Scotty's idea a hundred per cent. And at this hour of the day? I was flabbergasted I can assure you.

But with much misgivings I got the children and myself ready. It was just two o'clock in the afternoon when we left the house. It took us almost an hour to reach the foot of the mountain. Scotty remained at home and did up our dinner dishes.

John drove our car as far as he could on what used to be his Grandfolks' ranch and where he himself grew up. We all got out of the car abruptly and started up the mountain as if someone had hypnotized us into doing so.

Sammy, our youngest, was about two years old, our other five children ranging in ages up to fourteen years. Jean, our next youngest, around four, held on tightly to my hand, belt or dress. No need to mention I suppose that our youngest had to be carried most every step of the way.

I am almost sure you do not believe one word of this story. Nor do I blame you either. I would not have believed it myself except that I actually took part in this unbelievable experience.

And if I believed in such things, which I do not, I could almost believe Scotty had some power or spell over us at the time.

To continue our climb. We are now up and over Baby and Mother Miguel, only to find to my dismay that we have to go down hill again and over a neck of mountain that connects Mother Miguel with San Miguel before our actual climb up on old San Miguel himself.

It was bad enough to find on the other side of Baby Miguel a long and steep climb lay ahead up Mother Miguel, but when I arrived here at this point of up and over Mother Miguel and found what we still had to climb, I gave out.

I suggested to John, who insisted on going to the very top of San Miguel, that I would keep the three younger children with me, thus to lighten the remainder of his continued climb. The three older children were determined to go on also. I know John was really thankful and happy with my idea, as he took off almost immediately after ridding himself of his young son whom he had carried all the way thus far.

The older children were tired, I could see that, but they insisted on going on with their father, so on they went.

I spread a light blanket I had taken along on a flat rock, and here we sat. I also had a box of graham crackers, a canteen of water and a quart of milk we had decided on taking at the last minute. I later passed out some graham crackers and milk and we all had a drink of water.

We fared pretty well for a while, until the sun started going down, and I realized more thoroughly that John and the children could not make it back

to us before dark. In fact I had spoken of this when we got out of the car as I did not see how we could possibly get back, the hour was so late. But John's only answer was to remind me we were in the midst of some nice bright moonlight nights, which did not console me in the least.

The moon did come out, nice and bright, true enough. And so did the coyotes come out with their mournful tunes, which frightened the daylights out of me and the children also. I dared not let the children know I was frightened, so I told them stories while my teeth chattered and goose pimples came out all over me. The children seemed to listen attentively, though I believe they were listening to outside noises and not to my stories, as they became extra restless.

John and I had agreed we would call to one another as long as we were within hearing distance. This we did, which helped some. They reached the top of San Miguel at sundown. They rested a while and started back down the mountain. It wasn't very long after the moon came out that we heard their call in the distance, after which I called back both loud and gladly, gaining much courage the while.

Just before we had heard their first call on the way down we said a little prayer asking the Dear Lord to take care of Daddy and the others and bring them back soon. This seemed to quiet my little ones, and by the time the others joined us the little ones were fast asleep.

On the downward climb we hardly spoke a word till we reached the car, John carrying sleeping Sammy, and I all but carrying Jean, our next youngest. I really felt sorry for the other kiddies, they were so tired out. But you should have heard their exchanged tales in the car on our way home!

Betty, the oldest of the ones who stayed with me, explained about the wolves she had heard that I had called coyotes. Loads of them she had heard howling she said, though she had to admit none of them came near us. And I heard her mention, "Wasn't Mother brave to stay here alone with us kids!" And of course I'll admit I did feel a little heroic, though it was a forced case of heroism with me at this particular time.

The others had heard noises too, but did not have time to worry about them or find out from what or where they came. They said it was fun to reach the top of the mountain and look out all over. They could still see all around, they said, and signed their names on something or other they had found up there that others before them had signed also. And of course their father being along with them they had nothing to fear. Also John urged them on by telling them of the many times he had made the climb as a kid. And now they could tell their friends and others how they had climbed San Miguel right to the very top.

I have heard them tell about this climb many times. And since that time our children have climbed it several times with friends. However they started out the first thing in the morning and took their lunch and something extra to munch on the way down.

On getting home this day of our climb though we were all tired out, we were hungry also. As it was late I just scrambled some eggs, made toast, and opened up some apple sauce.

It was not long before we were all in bed and sound asleep. And fantastic or unbelievable as it may seem to you, old Scotty's remedy worked. We never coughed again.

Scotty had gone to a meeting so we did not see him till next morning at the breakfast table. He did not seem surprised to find our cough missing. But he kept pretty quiet when I told him I felt like giving him the works for recommending such a kill-or-cure remedy, and for not stopping us when we were foolish enough to accept his advice and started carrying it out in earnest. I told him what a time we had and how late we got home.

Two weeks later we all had our pictures taken in our front yard. This was a treat from Scotty who paid a special photographer to come out. A sort of peace offering I always have thought. These pictures always remind me of dear old Scotty, and I always feel a little sad because he would not have his picture taken with us.

He has gone to his well earned rest these many years now. And as our thoughts turn often on him we usually mention our San Miguel adventure.

I myself would not recommend this sort of remedy to anyone, much less to a family with children who would have to be carried. And should any of you who read my book care to make this climb I will recommend that you start early in the morning, bringing along food and water, for you are going to get plenty hungry and thirsty also before you get back down the mountain. I can guarantee you that. And I might add I believe you will enjoy the climb. It is both enjoyable and inspiring, that is if you are in good health, which we were not on this particular day of our climb.

And for young people or others who are looking for romance, this climb, I agree, could add much to your pleasure if you should have to make the downward trek in the moonlight. And coyotes howling would only add more to your excitement.

As for me, who did not reach the top that day nor since, having not had the time to do so, I have decided that old San Miguel looks wonderful to me from here.

And as I mentioned at the beginning of this true experience, I found for the first time, to my surprise, that old San Miguel has a wife and child that he conceals so well, at least from the west side here in our Valley, that you would think him just one old bachelor mountain, San Miguel.

SOMETHING NEW HAS BEEN ADDED

No, it is not the room I had hoped for so long, on the top of our flat roof house where I could enjoy again our western view of ocean, bay, Point Loma, Coronado Islands, and Silver Strand. And where I could take my hobbies of painting, writing, and sewing machine, and where it would be nice and quiet and private. (Our house as most folks know is a Grand Central Station most of the time.)

No, it is not the new linoleum I needed so badly on some of our floors. Nor was it the new wood range I also was in need of, as our old Majestic has been patched about as much as it can take, even tho it is in use most of the time.

I had answered "No," over and over again when my friends had asked me over the phone what it was new that had been added to our home. They all knew it wasn't anything unusual to have a baby at our house. So no one had any idea it could be "Becky," a darling and sweet five months old baby who needed a home within a few hours notice.

Becky bubbling over with happiness and joy all the time she is awake, and who sleeps with a smile on her tiny little face during her day time naps, and is an all night sleeper as well. She is the best behaved baby I have ever taken care of including my own. Of course, it wasn't long before the news got out.

In such a community as ours in Sweetwater Valley, and we living here so many years everyone, almost, knows everything that comes our way, and in turn we know the same about them. Should either miss anything, it is not for long, things just have a way of getting around.

After my friends found the baby was not one of our grandchildren, and that this strange baby would be with us indefinitely, they started calling me, meaning well I know, that I would be terribly tied down with a baby that young. They offered to baby-sit for me free of charge in case I needed a day off or wanted to go somewhere. I thanked my over-worried and anxious friends, but I can assure you I wasn't the least bit worried about being tied down with this baby. Tho I did realize my friends all meant well and were really worried about me at the time.

Their worries were short lived, however, when they peeked in the window of our Ford sedan and spotted Becky happily playing with her toys, with a smile on her little face and the whole back seat to play on. You see, I had a mattress I had covered with water-proof material which I placed on the back seat of the car with apple boxes to balance the mattress, making Becky a wonderful play pen. I often gave her a sun bath here in the car also. I added a cotton sheet blanket and a nice clean fresh sheet over that, making the whole both clean and cool.

A few toys and other baby necessities and we could go for nice drives, spend the day here and there, or do my marketing without the least bit of trouble. It was truly a pleasure to care for this baby, she was so good. When we went riding, I could see her in the car mirror and I would call to her occasionally. This pleased her and she would make baby noises back to me. Our car is a two-door job so I had no fear of her opening a door or falling out.

Our friends and family soon found out how well we managed and would come over to the car windows and talk and play with her, and Becky soon won the hearts of all those who came near her. And John who was skeptical at my taking her at first; reminding me of my bad fall not too long before, breaking my right arm, came in every day trotting right on thru the house to where he could find Becky. She was always ready to have him pick her up and play with her.

Perhaps you will be interested in knowing how we acquired this darling of five months. Becky's mother who's name was Jean Abts before Becky's time and who was a Marine Sergeant in the World War II days, and we became great friends. Jean had a brother in the army in France. He was a buddy of our son-in-law, Ed. Ed wrote us a letter asking if we could find room in our hearts and home for his buddy's sister who was stationed, he informed us, at North Island at this time. Her home being in Wisconsin, she did not know many folks here in California. Of course, we could and did find room in both heart and home for this tiny, young and sweet girl Marine. We not only became good friends, but she adopted us as her California parents and thereafter called us Pop and Mom Esterbloom.

Sometime after the war was over, she left here and went back to Wisconsin and later married. Miss Jean Abts became Mrs. Robert Price. She then moved to South Carolina where Bob's folks lived. Later, to Jean's great delight, Bob sold out and came to California to live. They settled in Long Beach where they now live, about a hundred miles or so from here.

While Jean was in South Carolina she wrote us when her first child was born. Then again when the second one came not many months later. And then again when her third child was expected. In her last letter to us at the time, she mentioned the fact that she wasn't feeling at all well and had to spend most of the time in bed. Then we did not hear from her again for a couple of months.

Once in a while I buy a Los Angeles Times Sunday paper, though, of course, I also get our own Sunday morning San Diego Union paper as well. I enjoy the Home section of the Los Angeles Times very much so that's why I sometimes bring home this paper. I glanced over the front page of the news section of the Los Angeles Times and read of a woman who had just given birth to triplets, and they were in the picture by her side. I looked closer, reading the article as well and found to my great surprise that this was our little Marine friend, Jean, with her three-in-one third child.

We heard from her soon afterwards and found these last three were girls also. So now there were five little girls in the Jean and Bob Price family. The next we heard was that they had bought a home in Long Beach and all was going well. Then Jean wrote less and less. I figured she was most likely too busy to write, tho I wrote her occasionally myself.

When the triplets were around two years old, Jean and her two older girls came down to our home here in Bonita for a short vacation. We were extra happy to have this visit with them. The two little girls, Bethel and Robbin, were sweet well behaved children. Jean was doing a wonderful job as mother. Bob, Jean's husband, stayed home and took care of the triplets. My! What a husband, I thought and said and Jean agreed with me that he was truly a wonderful and unusual husband. And now after meeting him also, I well agree with her. But I assured her I felt she was as wonderful and unusual as he.

While she was here visiting us, she informed me she was expecting again. I could hardly believe it, tho not more than three months later Miss Becky, a sixth little girl, made her appearance.

Well, this did it! Life just got too much for our wonderful little friend. I'm sure I could not have held out either. I remember going away, myself, at one time for a rest period when my sixth was some months old, and mine were not triplets either. I often wondered how women with more than six ever managed. Tho John and I made a home for several children besides our own six, I am sure the women with many children are not all like the woman doctor who had twelve and wrote "Cheaper by the Dozen."

Getting back to Becky who, by the way, is now ready for her noon meal. One day a week or so ago the phone rang. It was a long distance call from Jean's husband, Bob. He said, "I had to take Jean to a rest home for a while, Gloria. Can you help with the children? Jean's mother and father and a sister live now in California near Long Beach also. So they took the triplets and the two older girls between them, but Becky, the baby, needs a temporary home too." I told Bob I would take her gladly.

So it was arranged that I should meet the eleven o'clock Greyhound bus in San Diego. This we did, finding Bob waiting with Becky in one arm and a suitcase with Becky's necessities in the other. I assured Bob I would take good care of his little girl and offered to help otherwise in any way I could. He said they could manage if I kept Becky. I had brought a friend along to hold the baby while I drove, as this was before I fixed the back seat for her a few days later.

It wasn't long before we were on our way home and Bob took the next bus back to Long Beach. And as I mentioned before, in a community such as ours where we all know pretty well what goes on with our neighbors and friends, it wasn't long before I had a buggy, high chair and play-pen to use for Becky as long as I needed them. I already had a crib which I keep for our grandchildren or company in our guest room. Now and then I do get a little weary if I have the children for long, but what would life be like without them?

It was a sad day when they took Becky home, we had grown so attached to her. But I was very happy Jean had rested and was back home again. My sister, May, who has a wonderful new car, drove up to Long Beach taking Becky and me. This was a good thing for me as I wept almost all the way home. I'm sure I could never have seen well enough to drive.

Even tho' we stopped here and there on the way back, visiting the pottery places and nurseries, and tho' the drive is my favorite as it is near the ocean and tho' I enjoyed a picnic lunch along the beach and could feel the good ocean breeze in my face, and even remembering that I have grandchildren and other children for company at home, I still could not get that certain little Becky girl out of my arms, somehow. I found all kinds of excuses why Becky should have stayed on with us longer till Jean was thoroughly rested, which she wasn't, we found out later.

My sister consoled me with, "Sis, if you had kept Becky any longer no one could have ever taken her from you. She got home just in time whether the time was right for Jean or not," said my Sis. Now Jean has help in her home and her mother and sister help her some, too, so I believe she will make it this time.

They were here, not long ago, for a short vacation. This time the triplets who are three years old and identically alike, and Becky came with them. They now have a station wagon so traveling isn't quite as big a job as it would be by bus. They will bring all six down with them next time, they said. This is if I don't mind. And I hope we can manage a visit with all of them before the summer is over.



THIS OUR BELOVED VALLEY

You are always welcome to come out here in the country and spend a wonderful spring day with us here in Sweetwater Valley, California.

Of course you would be welcome at any time, but an early spring day is a very special time to come, and today happens to be one of those days.

It is sunny and warm, with a nice, gentle breeze blowing. Above are scattered snowy white clouds, and clear blue sky showing here and there. Wild birds are singing gayly everywhere around from trees, and electric and telephone wires. And splashing happily in our bird bath are some wild canaries.

I have just filled the feeders also, so birds of many kinds will soon be having a gay old time there crowding each other out.

The mountains toward the east are clear shades of bluish purples today, with patches of green showing here and there. And our little hills closer by are all nice and green also.

The brown-eyed Susans, my favorite wild flower, are in bloom everywhere on the hillsides and along the highways, showing off bright colors of yellow, brown and green. We haven't many other wild flowers in bloom this year. I do not know whether we did not have the rains at the right time or what the reason could be. It could very well be, come to think of it, that we have lost much of our wild flower seed, and their plants have been destroyed because of the bulldozing and scraping off of land for building sites.

We here in Sweetwater Valley have always enjoyed our native wild flowers very much, and I do hope we have our usual crop of them again next year.

We usually have such lovely ones. Shooting stars, wild yellow violets, lovely blue hyacinths and lupins and many others, also the cherished golden poppies, our State flower.

In the past, before the Valley's building boom, we had wild ferns here too, though I haven't seen many native ferns here for years now.

On our hillsides besides the bright yellow patches of the brown-eyed Susan daisy, are the pale yellow patches of the wild mustard flower, which does let us know it is definitely springtime.

And now I wish you all a Very Happy Easter, as this coming Sunday will be Easter Sunday. There will be Easter services, and beautiful, fragrant Easter lilies to decorate and enjoy in both of our Valley's churches. Both grown-ups and children will be taking part in the programs. And I am sure the same will be taking place in all Christian churches all over the world. And we should take in this wonderful Easter message and service, that brings so close to our minds and hearts that life is eternal.

So let us all put on our Easter bonnets, so to speak, and take part in an Easter service somewhere.

And I suppose children, and also the grown-ups everywhere have been coloring eggs, and getting other candy ones on hand for the Easter egg hunts that usually take place after our Easter Sunday dinner, on that same afternoon.

I remember how much our own children and now our grandchildren look forward to and enjoy these Easter egg hunts. So happy Easter everyone, and a wonderful summer to you all. And I hope this wish reaches you at just the right time.

It has been four years now since I wrote and had published my first little story about Our Beloved Valley. And since then much change and progress has taken place here. And all for the good of our Valley in general, as far as I know.

A new elementary school has been added at Sunnyside, and we here in Sweetwater Valley are very pleased and happy to have this very nice new school, which we needed, you can be sure. Our Ella B. Allen School here in Bonita was getting pretty crowded, as is the case with so many other schools here in our county. On account of the many new children that have come to live in our Valley the Ella B. Allen School had to add new rooms and enlarge here and there several times since it was built in the year 1947. And this one elementary school here in Bonita has taken care of most all of our elementary school children in Sweetwater Valley since the date of their first admission, September, 1947. So now that we have this other school at Sunnyside dividing the children we should have plenty of room in both schools for a while anyway.

Many of us old-timers of this Valley can remember our one-room, one-teacher-for-all-grades schools we had here at Bonita, Sunnyside and also at San Miguel Mesa in the past. My! what different schools we have at this time, and how our wonderful and beautiful and also desirable little community has progressed.

A new building has been added to our Bonita shopping center. A replica of the Old Red Barn, only much smaller in size of course. In this new building you will find a real estate office and a barber shop and I believe a shoe shiner also.

And now we also have a very special fire department. We have had one for some time. However the one we have now is much better equipped to fight fires, and can get on the job much quicker than before with our "old wagon," as I called it, our first fire truck. But even our "old wagon" did some wonderful work. And put out many a fire also.

I remember well how hard many of our Valley citizens worked in getting our first fire truck and building. And how we named and dedicated it for one of the boys who lost their lives across the sea.

And too I remember how Scofield Bonnet and his crew came up with the old wagon and helped me get rid of some very bad fire hazards in our front yard. In those days the firemen seemed to have more time to help us get rid of our dry grass that dries out so quickly in early summer, and our trash piles also that accumulated so quickly and were much too large for our regular trash collector to take away.

This service was really a big help to me, for at that time John was too busy below on the farm land and I had to do much of the weed jobs up here on the home place myself. Once in a while a nice little willing Mexican would come along and cut our weeds, but we never let him do any of our burning. For one thing our rule here in the Valley would not have permitted it. We citizens burn with a burning permit at certain times of day. This does help to keep down fires I know, and it gives one a good feeling to know we have such good fire protection as we have now.

You will find Mr. Jim Jones, our Fire Chief, much on the job. And Mrs. Jones is just as much on her job also. Needless to say we all like and appreciate them both and their staff of young men who are equally on the job, you can be sure.

I may as well explain here that our fire department helps with other emergencies besides fires. A resuscitator is ready and on hand to be used also. This resuscitator was a present from the Arthur Marstons, and added to our fire department emergency equipment, in appreciation of the help the Marstons received from different interested ones when their son George was lost on a desert in Mexico some years ago.

I will never forget how we all felt when this boy was lost on that deserty place. We could not all go out on the hunt, though we wanted to ever so much. But I know the Marstons knew well how we here in Sweetwater Valley felt, and other folks in other places also. And they knew also that though we remained at home we were all waiting anxiously and prayerfully for the good news that George had been found and was safe and on his way home.

And oh! how thankful and happy we all were, not only that he was found, which of course was the big thing, but also for the relief it would bring to George's family who, I know, must have felt his being lost even much more than we. I meet with George every once in a while here around at our shopping center, grown tall and very handsome since his hazardous experience several years ago. And how I thrill inside at the sight of this very nice young lad being alive and among us again, when it could have been otherwise.

And here is something more and new that has been added to our shopping center here in the Valley. The Old Red Barn has now an antique shop at the west end corner of this old landmark. You will find some lovely things here. Most enjoyable for you of all will be the very sweet little person, Nona

Litchfield, who will greet you there and show you around. It was this busy little mother and lover of Sweetwater Valley who got this special and interesting enterprise going. She believed that many of our Valley folks and others who drive out our way and through our Valley would enjoy finding and browsing through such a place.

I had promised to help her get started. But a great-grandchild made his premature appearance, so needless to say I was needed elsewhere. I'm sure Nona understood and forgave me. At least it did not stop her in the least. She went right ahead with her plans. And before many of us realized what was taking place this rather large corner of the Old Red Barn was not only cleaned out and made ready but it was decked in and out with some wonderful old wares Nona had gathered here and there, and with this sign making its appearance over the front barn door: "Antiques for Sale." And there you will find her often during the day. Ready for business or just a friendly chat.

I bought a foot stool from her a couple of weeks ago and some wonderful marmalade. The marmalade was homemade, by another of my Sweetwater Womans Club sisters who was one of Nona's helpers. Carol Holt, who is also a very good friend and neighbor of ours, believed folks would enjoy her homemade marmalade. It is made entirely of orange, lemon, and comquat pulp and pure orange juice. No water added. And sugar, of course. And let me tell you, folks, including myself, sure do enjoy her marmalade. Carol just cannot provide enough to keep Nona supplied. It is the best marmalade I have ever tasted. Try some if you should come out our way. You'll love it. That is, if it is not all gone.

Another new addition that has added much convenience in Sweetwater Valley is our Union gas station, with added shop and equipment for making minor repairs to our cars. And I hear we will have a regular mechanic soon now who can take care of most any kind of car trouble. That nearby service will be very good for us as many of the ranchers have trucks and tractors, and old cars such as ours that will and do need overhauling and repairing. In the past we have had to go to other nearby towns to get fixed up so this fix-it garage in our own territory will be much appreciated, I'm sure.

At one time not too long ago our grocery store had to handle the gas pumps. Of course that is no specially hard job when customers are few, as they were at one time. But now it would be out of the question for our storekeepers to keep up with this extra and steady service.

We do like very much our jolly and helpful new attendants here at the gas station. And it takes all three, Mr. and Mrs. Emslie and son, and other helpers to keep things up and going at this time. And I know the Waters family, who was there just before the Emslies took over, were extra busy also, as well as very nice folks to have around.

Mrs. Waters clerked in our grocery store for a time while Katherine Stegall, our old stand-by, was away. I baby-sat also with the Waters children, and I must say they were good kids, and I enjoyed being with them.

And now I have come at last to the building of new homes here in the Valley. All of which you will find well built and beautiful in every way. They have been added here in almost every part of our Valley, on hillsides and level land.

But here again I can inform you happily that this building progress here has not yet taken away all of our open spaces or all of our native wild shrub-

bery-covered hills. Nor has it taken away all of our farm, ranch and garden land. Where orchards have gone out vegetables have gone in. God bless these humble folks, whoever they are, who will spend so much of their time from sun up to sun down, tilling the soil, and growing things for us to eat.

For after all not many of us take the time for our own vegetable patch any more. We depend on the markets or vegetable stands for them. Though I myself usually have a few green onions, chives, parsley and other herbs growing amongst my flowers, for flavorings.

I am remembering just now also how good an early home-grown cucumber used to taste. I used to have some growing every year in our garden spot. Once in a while I spend a fortune it seems for an early cucumber, only to find it was one held over from last year's crop, and doesn't have the right flavor somehow. But I do get cucumber hungry very early in the season.

Anyway I do wish you all to hear me crowing from the hilltop that our good old Sweetwater Valley gardens are producing some of San Diego County's extra good-flavored and best fresh vegetables. And I wish to send out from us all who enjoy them many, many heart-felt thanks to you plain dirt farmers who are performing this great work. Whether you are paid for it or not doesn't change the fact that you, day after day, in the hot weather or the cool, bent over your hoe, or clearing the ditches to keep the irrigating water running freely. Or planting the seed or plants in such nice, straight rows. And last but not least, picking your crops with steady, nimble hands, gently as not to bruise your wares. You all do deserve much appreciation and thanks. And many of us enjoy watching you as we drive by. So here again is a thousand thanks to you, from us all as I said before, who appreciate your efforts and wonderful fresh vegetables.

I believe it is time just now for a cup of coffee, tea or a nice cool glass of milk or juice. It is quiet and lovely out here on our porch this morning, and though this is my favorite and best time to write I love company and can always stop for coffee, etc., and visit a while.

After the school bus lands in the mid-afternoon this place is like a stamping ground. The children who live below come through here on the tear, race on down the hill, shrieking the while, and often come back up again after changing their clothes.

I have explained to them over and over again, for I do love them you know, that this particular part of our yard is our private playground, and that there is not room enough up here for a hide and seek or ball game. This very light scolding did very little good until one day their ball went through my window. That stopped the ball games up here. The children are willing now to play their ball games down below on their own place, where they have almost an acre of ground to play on. And hide and seek, if they must play that game up here, is to be played around on another side of our house where there is more space and trees and fences to hide behind.

One day after a hide and seek game had been played on forbidden ground while I was away doing my marketing, I, mainly to get my point over to the children, remembering I also was a child once and I am sure I was not altogether the angel type either, had to forbid these particular children from coming on our place at all.

I went out after I had put away my groceries to find pots knocked over and my nice bed of geraniums trampled, and tree-climbers had been hiding in our avocado trees. Well, that did it.

I know I was quite angry at the children, but I knew I had to get more stern in my correcting or this would happen again and again. And after all I had explained to them kindly why they could not hide in the fruit trees. They were also to be careful not to fall or break the branches in the allowed trees as well.

Not a child was in sight anywhere when I came out around on this side of the house. But you would have thought a cyclone had cut through this nice sheltered part of our yard. I called the mother of the most boisterous of the bunch on the phone, as I was sure it was very much their doing. I asked the mother to please send the children up here, not mentioning to her why I wanted them.

They came up almost in single file, heads sort of down, I'd say. I'm sure they all knew well what I wanted them for.

"Well," I said, "I guess you children have lost your good graces with me for a while. For I am now forbidding any of you to play up here at all."

I pointed to my very badly trampled flower garden, and broken and knocked over flower pots. Then I took them over and showed them the broken branches of our avocado trees and half-grown avocados scattered here and there, that they had picked and been throwing at one another I found out.

Well, you know how it is. Everyone blamed everyone else. And not one of them saying they were sorry till one little girl, the youngest of the lot, spoke up.

"Mrs. Esterbloom, you have always been real nice to us. Telling us stories and treating us to ice cream and cookies and punch, and letting us play up here. I really feel very bad about this. And I am going right down now and tell their mothers and my mother" (telling on herself, mind you) "what we have done. And our mothers will make us all play down in our own big yard after this."

By this time all of the other children had left. And this one little girl had to straighten things out by herself.

Since then we have had no more of that kind of happenings up here. The children now come through our yard again as usual, but things are different now. Our daughter Katherine has a Bible class on Mondays, with music and pictures, which the children love to attend. The younger class comes first, and the older ones later. This way there is no confusion. Katherine gives them all a cookie or two and punch before class begins, as children are always hungry when they get home from school. This settles them down some so they can give better attention to what goes on in the class.

They also visit me here on my quiet side of the house occasionally. I have checkers, dominoes, picture puzzles and books, and we have stories and treats on occasions. And I also have water color paints and crayons and good paper and color books on hand most all the time. This is much to encourage the quieter games or entertainment, which I believe does even the young children much good. And more my speed to contend with, at this time and in this place. And I must say I do have wonderful cooperation. And all this includes our own grandchildren also. For I am not a respecter of persons when it comes to too much noise, or destruction of any kind. There are still trees the children may climb, with their mothers' consent however, as they climb

pretty high sometimes, and I cannot have all of the responsibility just now, as I am not feeling up to par and I need to rest.

The only time since that last reckoning that I have had to scold somewhat severely is when the boys in the neighborhood come over here with B-B guns and even with twenty-two rifles, to shoot at and kill the birds in our trees, bird baths and feeders.

And here again, the rule of no guns of any kind being used on our place includes our grandchildren, old or young. And they all know how Grandpa and Grammie Esterbloom feel about this. Grandpa says shooting guns of any kind by children should be supervised by an older person, and is only practical where there is enough space to provide safe hunting, and certainly not on someone else's place, and then only by permission.

Grammie (that is me) explains how she loves them, and hates to scold and how she also loves the birds, that is why she feeds and waters them. And how interesting birds are in their habits, etc. And from the birds' way of thinking Grammie is sure it is just as serious to destroy their nest homes and shoot at and kill them as it is to us humans when our home is disturbed or destroyed or any of us are killed.

Besides, I know from experience of some bad accidents that have occurred even with the so-called safe and sane B-B gun. Also I know of many people who have been accidentally killed with real guns. So guns and I have absolutely nothing in common. I want no part of guns. I enjoy nature and its kind alive and free. I am not a pistol-packing mama. No, sir, not I.

So the children around about know pretty well how Grammie and Grandpa Esterbloom feel about guns, including the B-B guns. The newcomer children on our hill are informed by the former-comers that Mrs. Esterbloom will let them pick and eat her ripe grapes, loquats, guavas and figs, if we are nice and ask her and leave our guns at home.

Seems guns have been somewhat of a problem elsewhere in the Valley. Folks have discussed this problem with me, explaining that they moved out here in the country just so their boys could hunt. And you will find very often that these boys are under fourteen years old, and very inexperienced in the handling of a gun also. And when I give them my opinion on guns and hunting and explain to them how things really are out here they definitely resent my advice. That is, some of the newcomers, who come out just for that purpose, so their small sons can hunt and shoot, not realizing what the outcome could be. So I just leave them to learn the hard way if they wish, hoping no real disaster has to be their teacher.

Maybe I am somewhat prejudiced against guns, but I find what I believe has often proved out to be the best advice in the long run. Once in a while a sheriff has to be called, though not by any of us. A neighbor's cat or dog has been shot or killed, or someone shot at someone, almost hitting their mark.

I am writing all this here as I am sharing with you the years, which have their problems as well as their joys, their troubles as well as their happy times. And too, I want my story of Our Beloved Valley to ring as true as it really is. So you can see how we cooperate and get problems straightened out and go on happily and neighborly again. And as I am, as you can read, extra fond of Sweetwater Valley and the folks living within its boundaries, I am very apt to paint our picture much more flowery than it really is. So, in giving

you the real picture of every day life as it is lived here, actually, I feel you might find a solution, if in your community you are confronted with these same problems, which I believe are apt to happen anywhere.

And just one more problem I might as well mention here also is rock throwing, which can become serious also. For instance some boys (and girls also, I suppose) just love to throw rocks at the girls on horse back as they ride by. Of course (and I hope I am right) the boys do this without thinking, just intending to tease the girls or just to get their attention. However folks have often had to report to parents and even higher authority about this rock throwing, the boys asking innocently, "Why did you have to squeal on us?"

Most parents realize that this kind of teasing or rock throwing can endanger both horse and rider so they should do something to prevent it happening again. Other just pass it off lightly, till a rock comes through or hits their front window, learning the hard way, as I said. And they themselves call the sheriff.

However, as I mentioned before, most folks in our Valley, I am happy to relate, understand these problems of their children, and all is soon straightened out, all the wiser for the experience.

And now I guess I will change the subject all the way around and tell you of our very nice first of the new season day at our Sweetwater Woman's Club. After greeting one another and visiting as we always do, we sat down to our usual very bountiful pot luck luncheon.

Our membership at this date of September, 1958 is in the neighborhood of one hundred.

We had a wonderful visit across the tables during the meal. I cannot recall just now who of my club sisters were hostesses that day nor who said the Blessing of Thanks at the table. This I do remember: we had a full house and a wonderful time visiting and eating at least a taste of all the good and wholesome dishes that were passed around and that our Valley's good cooks provide on club days. And it is so good to eat another's cooking for a change.

After our lunch we had the birthday march. All of us, except our guests, who have had birthdays during our vacation and other months contribute a penny for every year old we are. We all take part in singing the Happy Birthday song, while the birthday march goes on, and the members march up to the front table and deposit their birthday money. All this with the accompaniment of the piano played by one of our talented members.

I was in the march this time as my birthday came during the summer vacation, August the twenty-fifth, and this was my sixty-second birthday. You see I am not shy about telling my age, not in the least. I flatter myself by telling others that I am a great-grandmother! which I am, really! just so they can give me the compliment of "Why, Gloria, you sure are a young looking great-grandmother!"

Our business meeting was next. And Eleanor Tyce is our President at this time. We all love her very much. Next, as we always do at this time, soon after lunch, we all take part in the salute of our wonderful country America's flag, knowing in all of our hearts what it stands for. Then we have a short pledge prayer, read by a member who has been chosen for this contribution.

And now, after all of our new and old business has been brought up and settled we are ready for our entertainment, which is always beneficial as well as enjoyable. Today is to be a picture travelogue. A trip to Africa, with Betty Hillier, one of our club members. (Club sisters, I call them.)

Betty and her husband Jack had made this very interesting and worthy trip recently, as missionaries, Betty teaching and Jack building. We all enjoy the travelogues so much, especially those of us who do not have this privilege of distant traveling—or we old stick-at-homes, whose traveling is mostly done in our own territory. Such familiar scenes don't warrant pictures, and we are too much in a hurry to take pictures anyway.

We did enjoy this trip to Africa with Betty. We learned much of the good work that is going on there, some of which Betty and Jack had part in.

As I mentioned, we have a wonderful president this year. She is so extra thoughtful of our new members. Though we have always had wonderful and suitable presidents, I am quite sure all of the members would agree with me that Eleanor Tyce has taken much more time in this special part of very cordially inviting, accepting and welcoming our new members, and in making them feel they are immediately a part of our wonderful organization. Seems we are all born with a certain gift or talent to give out to others in one way or another.

Our Club, which has now been in session since it first began in the year 1914, has many interesting tales to tell, which we speak of and bring to mind especially on our Club's birthdays. By our old time members usually. And though we are considered a prosperous and very worthy little club, we also have had some very trying times. Getting started in the first place, and also getting over the loss of our first club building that went down the Sweetwater river to bay in the 1916 flood. I have written about this flood in my first book "The Beloved Valley," so I shall not go into details again here.

Our new and present club house is a Cliff May ranch style creation which is typical of early California. This we all enjoy very much, and also the fact that it is built on much higher ground, so it is not likely to be ever again washed away by a flood.

Our Club meets on the second Thursday of every month, beginning with September and ending in June. Once in a great while we make a change in the day for some important reason.

The men have their meetings on the fourth Thursday of the month, in the evening. Though the Men's Club members are made up mostly of the husbands of our Women's Club members, they insist on paying us for the use of our club rooms on their club night.

My husband, who is a member, told me the reason the men pay us is that they realize the cost of the club's expense and upkeep and they wish to help on this, and also because they want their club to be a strictly men's organization. However, we consider our club building a community affair.

Every year our husbands treat us to a delicious Thanksgiving meal, served to us by their own committee. We do not cook the meal nor do we even know what the menu is till we sit down to the table to eat. We have pictures later and usually new and old time dancing and singing. Once in a while just before the dance begins we have a grand march around our large club room. We always have a wonderful time and look forward to this treat every year at Thanksgiving time.

Our clubhouse is not only used for our men's and women's meetings. Our young people enjoy parties and dancing here also. And we do for them all we can to keep them happy in their own community.

We also rent our clubhouse to outside parties, wedding and other receptions and dances. And here at our clubhouse is where most of our civic affairs take place also. So it is in use most of the time.

We have wonderful caretakers just now who do so much to make our meetings both pleasant and restful. Our hostesses do not have to do the dishes as in former years. The caretakers do all the dishes for our meetings and for all other occasions usually also.

Our regular club day meetings start at eleven-thirty A.M. and adjourn around three-thirty P.M. During our social hour we may take in a thrift table if we wish. Our name tags on our person keeps us all informed as to who we are just in case we forget names. This we find very helpful since we have so many newcomers and so large a membership. I myself am a lifetime member. There are four of us old time members left. John is also a lifetime member. We are both happy and thankful they hang on to us older members. And we contribute in our small way what we can of our abilities.

John loves to play his violin for entertainment and dancing. He also plays wonderful hymns for our Church services on Sundays, our daughter Katherine or a friend, Barbara, accompanying him on the piano.

I mentioned before we have pot-luck meals on our club day meetings. Not so with the men. They prefer a well planned meal. And they have it too. With ham, turkey, fried chicken or roast beef for their meat course. Even the Quaker men have a well planned meal at their suppers also, while we have a pot luck meal on Family night, which turn out extra well we women think. I have often cooked the fried chicken, the ham, and roasted the turkey for both the men's church and club suppers, or evening meal. This is my way of contribution. I can cook good enough to suit the men, so they tell me.

Among other projects here in our Valley is our 4-H Club affairs. This is a sort of miniature fair, I would say. It is held in one section of the Old Red Barn. Many other rural districts besides Sweetwater Valley enter their animals here also.

After the animals are shown and judged prizes are given. And later you will find many of the better grades from this miniature fair in the regular yearly County Fair at Del Mar, San Diego County, California, where these animals are taken in the hopes of selling them there.

We also have here in connection with part of the Old Red Barn and grounds a riding stable. Many of the horse corrals are used by the 4-H Club animals at the time of their fair, which usually takes place just as school is out. The riding stable also takes horses in to board. And we have horses for rent here also, though many Valley children have horses of their own. There is also a riding ring close by where riding lessons are given.

We also have horse shows, as we have many horseback riding enthusiasts here. Our horse shows take place in the riding ring. The judging goes on and the prizes given are the regular trophies and ribbons that are given in the larger horse shows in other parts of our county. Eating booths, etc., are in the Old Red Barn and the grounds around.

The Old Red Barn I speak of so often is a discontinued citrus fruit packing house and plant. This was in full use at one time before so many orchards were taken out. This picturesque old landmark has been for years now, the attraction of many artists who love to paint pictures of it. You will find many oil paintings of this Old Red Barn in homes, art marts, banks and other prominent places. You may also purchase stationery with a sketch of the Old Red Barn. They come in packages of the plain sketch or in water color, done by one of our local artists, Mrs. Gladys Day. You will find this lovely stationery at our antique shop in the Old Red Barn itself, or at Cornell's Book Store in Chula Vista.

I just came in from a last look outside, around and over the Valley. I most always do this if the weather permits. And I probably sound a bit romantic as I speak of the wonderful moon we have tonight. It has been up about two hours now shedding its wonderful light over the Valley. Yet all that I can see clearly is the outline of our Valley mountains and hills and the many lights representing our many homes here, and the car lights on our two highways.

And to think some folks are really in earnest about going to that great light, the moon. I guess I'm born a bit too soon to comprehend such progress. Besides I am of the humble class who believe the Bible chapter of creation where it says, the Lord created the moon for light by night and the sun by day. I find no message saying we will some day occupy or even reach the moon. Nevertheless perhaps there is much for us all to learn that we have not comprehended as yet. So time will tell.

Occasionally a friend who visits me will say, "Gloria, I wish I could enjoy the more simple every day things of life as you do. You speak so often about your wonderful view here, your golden sunsets, your wonderful moonlight nights, your nice neighbors, and the wild things around you here. For instance, how you hushed our conversation on the porch the other day when you spotted a mother quail and her young about to come under your fence for water, then again when the baby rabbit made its appearance on your lawn, and the distant call of the dove you spoke of enjoying so much. And here you are trying to make me believe that when you pray for something special that you are worried about, a dove comes down suddenly in front of you somewhere, either on post, tree or wire, or if you are driving along in your car a dove often is seen at some distance, as if it is waiting to assure you not to worry—be at peace—put your trust in Him who knows and cares. Why, Gloria, I never hear of you wanting or needing anything!"

I assured her I have needs and desires much as anyone else, though they may be in a different category. And I do speak of them occasionally. But I do not let myself get too disappointed if they do not materialize just when I want them, or if I never get them. It just doesn't make for peace of mind and heart, and that means the most to me.

As for loving the simple, natural and beautiful things of life around me here, that is very true, and the reason is much because I have become a part of it all for years now. How could I be otherwise? I love our way of life here in the country.

This friend of ours is thinking very much of selling their place in San Diego and moving out here in the Valley. She would like to buy an old place and fix it up, she says. She loves to re-do old furniture, etc., and fixing up

old houses is a favorite hobby of them all. And she is clever. I have never known her to turn down even the most battered old couch or chair if something can be done to fix it up, especially if the wood is of special or antique nature.

Her husband will soon retire from the Navy and he wants a place to raise minks, he said. So I will try and help them to find just what they are looking for, though I am not a real estate agent, nor do I wish to be one just now either.

There are not too many old houses out our way to remodel, or even old ranches for sale that I know of. But there are plenty of new ones coming into being all the time. Over the hill from us here at Rancho Pequeno, which is our home place as you know by now, appeared not too long ago, a surprising array of housing. From the distance or from here I should say it looks like a tent city. The houses look quite small and have steep roofs. Some are a story and a half, just like the one that was built across the road from us.

Where for years we looked upon hay fields, we now hear and see the bulldozers busily getting shelves up the hill and down dale ready for more houses. This project is on the north side of Sweetwater Valley, just a hill or two in back of us. This property is called Paradise Hills, and is really in the city limits of San Diego. And I have been told a new freeway is to make it appearance in that direction also, coming over the hills from the north to join our Valley road, which is just off Sweetwater road.

So it will not be long now, and we too, may be in the city limits of San Diego. Though we hope very much that the nearby beautiful and growing town of Paradise Hills will keep in mind that we here in Sweetwater Valley wish to keep our own little Valley much as it is—a rural community.

Besides, we are expecting a new improvement at our shopping center—of the Village type of architecture I am told, and I believe it will suit us all very well here.

Most of our Valley's population agree on ideals and plans for its type of progress. We feel, "Let us keep our beautiful little Valley unincorporated and individual as long as we can." We do so love our open spaces, native shrubbery-covered hills, ranches and farms and the enjoyable country life one can have with such things instead of too much clutter of housing, etc.

We who have belonged here for years help to make our newcomers feel at home, and I find most of them appreciative of space enough for good country living. And even if prices have gone up sky high here, you will find folks who will go to all ends to live out here.

We just bid goodby to some friends with four children who are also looking for a place in the country. A reasonable place, they added. Reasonable or not, they will be happy to pay the price I know, for where they live now is all crowded traffic and no place to play that is safe with four children. And I know just the right place for them, and also the real estate office that will help them get it. Three of their children will be going to Ella B. Allen school and I know both parents and children will enjoy the fellowship and learning at this school.

As John usually wants his hearty meal at noon time, and I had it all prepared, I asked our friends to our mid-day meal which we call lunch. We

are old fashioned and have what we call breakfast, lunch and supper. When we speak of a dinner, it means we are having a family-gathering meal.

This day, though, it was really a dinner in quantity. I called it lunch, but my friends corrected me with, "You call steaming hot corn on the cob, fried chicken, macaroni and cheese and green beans a lunch!" And we also had home grown watermelon for our dessert later in the afternoon. Watermelon is just too filling to eat right after a good sized meal. So I had to explain that anything we have to eat at noon time is a lunch.

Incidentally most everything I served this day was a Sweetwater Valley product. The vegetables came from son Sammy's stand, and the fryers I had gotten the day before at Bonita Store for thirty-three cents a pound, all cut up nicely. You can't beat that anywhere, because they are freshly bought by our store keeper from a local chicken ranch, thus helping our fellow ranchers to sell their products also, which in turn helps the store to make their living.

Our friends had just their youngest child with them. As she was asleep, we slipped her into our little blue baby bed which is home made, and which we have kept over from our own children for whoever comes our way needing a sleeping place for a baby or small child. I keep the bed in the spare room where I also have a double bed for adult guests, or for grandchildren who enjoy visiting us overnight occasionally.

Little Martha slept for two hours while her parents and we had a very wonderful visit, Joe and John ending up in front of the TV taking in a ball game, while I took Margaret outside for a look around our yard. We ended up, as I most generally do with guests, giving Margaret an all around idea of how much I really enjoy this east and sheltered side of our house.

We sat a while on the porch, she explaining why and how much she and Joe wanted to get their children out into the country. But I, knowing how fussy and particular she is about her house and the children, and also the way she nags Joe into keeping up their yards both front and back, knew she had a lot to learn. Especially when I made excuses for our uncut lawn and messy yard. This was just one of those times when the wind had blown everything loose around in my yard. And we hadn't got around to mowing our rather large Bermuda lawn at the right time. I excused further, saying that I was letting things go back somewhat to their natural state, for more reasons than one.

She said, "Oh, Gloria, I couldn't stand our lawn not to be mowed regularly, or the hedges clipped properly, and something done about the edges of the lawn and overgrown shrubbery!" Oh yes, I'm afraid my little friend Margaret has a lot to learn. Either that or poor old Joe will wish he hadn't moved out in the country where there is much more space to keep up than in the city usually.

Margaret also asked me about a high school out here. I explained we did not have one in Sweetwater Valley yet, and told her of the very good ones we have in our nearby town of Chula Vista. The Valley children are taken to and from the high school in a bus. And a bus is used here in the Valley for our elementary children also. This seemed O.K. with her. And after all, none of her four children would need a high school for at least three years.

While we were doing up the dishes, Martha woke up and found she was in a strange bed, and came running into the kitchen to find her Mommy, all

excited and in tears. That is the only fault I have to find with this little homemade blue bed. The sides are low and unmoveable. So one should be on the job when the child awakens, if it is old enough to fall or climb out. Miss Martha must have climbed out over the rail safely as we heard no sound of a fall before she made her tearful appearance.

After feeding her out of the cans her mother had brought along, they left. They had to pick up their other three children at a neighbor's where they had left them enjoying a visit and birthday party. I let Margaret and Joe take home a copy of "My Beloved Valley" as they seemed so anxious to know more about the Valley and I felt they would find most of what they wanted to know reading my first little book.

It is almost supper time again. I just do not know where the time goes. And here I am once more out on my favorite porch on the east side for that quiet hour I enjoy so much at this time of day.

Some wild birds are getting ready to nestle in their favorite tree nearby. I can hear their rustle and twitter as they find just the right place to spend the night. The traffic below on our two highways is quite heavy this Sunday evening. Folks are coming home from an outing or picnic in the back country or from a fishing trip at some lake farther out from here. As I sit quietly here I always hope they have had a good time, out where the air is somewhat fresher and life is not so crowded as it is in the towns.

Our supper on Sunday evenings is very light usually, and somewhat later than on week days. I serve it in the living room if we wish to take in a TV program. Tonight we will have a bowl of some kind of box cereal and fruit, crackers and cheese and coffee. A grandchild or so may join us. They love to watch TV with us occasionally. And Lassie will be on soon, a picture most all of our young grandchildren enjoy. John and I enjoy this picture also. It is so much like our own country life. Zoorama and Sea Hunt, the cowboy stuff and travelogues are the favorites and the ones we most often watch, though John loves the ball games and fights also. They are a little too noisy for me.

Once in a while we eat lunch before the TV also, watching Queen For A Day. John usually ends up on the couch falling asleep during the program. He is working much too hard for his own good these days. He is hauling up all the things he wishes to keep on hand from our farm below, which we now have sold as I mentioned before.

At times I get to feeling a little sad because we sold the farm, especially now that our son Sam has decided to make his living by farming and has to lease property elsewhere, besides his own place, which hasn't enough ground to raise vegetables for his stand. But this seems to have been the best thing we could do at the time. And we know the folks who own this farm land now and their plans for a golf course which will keep this part of the Valley looking nice and green always.

But sometimes I drive by and notice the pretty pink, fragrant wild roses that grow along our former property fence, and think about all the good times our children had down there, owning and caring for their own live stock. And we Esterbloom seniors, selling over our now deserted stand, the corn and melons that John and our boys and sometimes the girls helped to raise on this land. And I think of the hayrides in the fall of the year in our old corn wagon, using a truck to pull it in these later years, though in former years it was pulled by a team of horses.

The hay rides were made up mostly of young people, though older ones were welcome also. John, or a son-in-law, or one of our sons took turns in driving the wagon on these wonderful moonlight hay rides, which always ended up with an outdoor meal, often cooked out where the party was to be.

I had planned on keeping our old corn wagon that was used on these hayrides. Bring it up here, paint it white and fill the wagon bed with good soil and plant climbing geraniums in it. I thought it would lend atmosphere to our old time home ranch. But John doesn't see things like I do, so without asking me, or thinking, he gave the wagon to one of my brothers, and there I found it in his front yard, painted white and planted into geraniums. Such is life and that is that.

While I am on the subject of old time things, perhaps you would enjoy some of our Valley's old time history, that I had not mentioned in The Beloved Valley story.

New friends always ask us how long we have lived here on this hill. So I start in by telling them that we have lived in this home talent, board-and-batten house which we built ourselves for thirty-eight years. And how happy we are and content to have such a nice place to retire in. Actually I have my doubts if either one of us ever retire, unless we have to.

Then we go on explaining some ideals and plans we Valley folks take part in for our community's good progress, etc. And I go on with my first recollections of Sweetwater Valley in about the year 1912.

I used then to ride over the hill with my father to get groceries in a mule drawn cart, from Telegraph Canyon where we were living at the time. There were few cars at this time and we were among the ones who did not own one yet.

At this time there were only two stores in Sweetwater Valley, one at Sunnyside and one here at Bonita. Our store here at Bonita was a sort of trading post, I'd say, with many other things besides groceries for sale, such as hardware, hay, feed, grain, men's clothing, boots and hats, and a Post Office in one corner of the store. The store at this time was a rather small wood frame building situated on the north side of where the grocery store is now. Folks by the name of Bushnell were our storekeepers. And of course, Sweetwater Valley was at this time definitely a rural ranch and farming community. There were many citrus groves here, and the Old Red Barn, I have mentioned quite often, was a citrus packing plant, going full tilt with a large crew of workers, box makers and packers included.

Getting back to the Bushnells who were our storekeepers at this time, the family consisted of a widowed mother, son Ralph and daughter Nell. The three in turn helped at the store. But of course Ralph took all on the main and heavy responsibilities of service.

There was also an older daughter. I cannot recall her name just now, though I knew her as Mrs. George B. Worthington, wife of Dr. Worthington, one of Chula Vista's best physicians at this time. I nursed under both Dr. and Mrs. Worthington, who herself was a graduate nurse, and I spoke of this in my Chula Vista chapter. I understood the Bushnells later moved to Petrero, California, after leaving Bonita, and Ralph went into the business of raising pure bred horses.

Our little country store got moved, after the 1916 flood, to across the road and just beyond and east of the Old Red Barn. The Berkey brothers, Wood and Howard and their wives took charge of Bonita store next. Later the Howard Berkeys moved to Sunnyside and were in charge of the Sunnyside store.

After the Wood Berkeys left Bonita store, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Haffley took over the store. Some years later a new Bonita store building was built on the property where it is now at this present time, and the Haffleys rented the old store building for a residence, fixing the old place in and out into a comfortable and pleasant home. Mrs. Haffley was a music teacher and gave our children piano lessons. Mrs. Haffley also gave freely of her talent in our little Friends Church at Sunnyside. The Haffleys, all of them, were well loved here in the Valley, and we all have missed them since they have gone.

We have had many different storekeepers in the past, our store improving with each one, and we have most always enjoyed them as a part of our family. They have been so friendly and accommodating. Just now Glenn and George Dull are the storekeepers. And we are happy to have our old stand-by Katherine Stegall, who has been with us for quite some time. And young Rodrigous, we like him too.

I believe that at this present date of 1959, we have as good a grocery store as can be found anywhere in the county for its size. And our Post Office is now in a separate building. Not as handy as in former years, perhaps, when it was a part of our grocery store, but surely easier on our storekeepers.

This next bit of our Valley's early history I came upon by word of mouth from the one who experienced this. Mrs. Mary Rockwood Peet herself told me. She was the first white child born in Bonita.

Mrs. Peet exchanged her story of the San Pasqual Valley for my Beloved Valley story. She also invited me to visit her at her home in Escondido. My sister May and I drove up there one morning. We found Mrs. Peet a very sweet person and up to date on almost everything worth while. She has surely lived a long and happy life. And she does not in the least look her age, which I know must be around eighty, though I am not exactly sure just how old she is.

She told us of having been born in Sweetwater Valley in an old adobe ranch house that is now the property of the Rohr Aircraft Company. Although Mrs. Peet invited my sister and me to stay for lunch, we did not stay, as she spoke of an engagement to speak at her club at one o'clock and we did not want to detain her.

However, we spent a most pleasant and informative morning with her and her scrap books, of which she has many. Incidentally, scrap books are one of my hobbies also. And I, too, have much to pass on through them to friends in our own locality.

We were privileged to see pictures of the adobe where Mary Rockwood (this is Mrs. Peet's maiden name) was born. Also pictures of herself standing in front of this adobe ranch building which was her childhood home.

As I mentioned before this old time ranch is now the property of the Rohr Aircraft Company. It is used for a recreation center.

This lovely old place has had many owners since Mrs. Peet's time. One of its owners of whom I will speak now is Dr. and Mrs. Franklin Dunbar, who owned and lived on this place when I came to Sweetwater Valley to live.

The Dunbars were a lovely, retiring couple. Lovers of beauty and nature and the outdoor life. The doctor himself practiced some at the time they lived here, so I called him once or twice after I had married and had two children, and found him a good doctor also. Mrs. Dunbar, a gracious lady, belonged to our Sweetwater Woman's Club for years.

I had met the Dunbars at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Lorini at Coronado some years before I came to live in Bonita myself, and I was happy to find the Dunbars living here also.

Dr. Dunbar passed away some years later, and Mrs. Dunbar moved to San Diego. Their place was sold to a Mr. Rube Harrison. Then from Harrison's to the George Campbells, and next to Mrs. Fessler who raised pure bred horses on the place, after building fences and barns and planting nice green pastures for the horses to run in.

We here in the Valley enjoyed having Mrs. Fessler's lovely horses grazing in the fields, and while they were being trained it was interesting to watch them. Once in a while a baby colt would make its appearance, and the children all enjoyed stopping along the road near the fence to watch it running along with its mother.

Mrs. Fessler also belonged to our Sweetwater Woman's Club, and we all felt sad when she passed away after quite a long illness.

So this property changed hands again. And this time the Rohr Aircraft Company is the new owner.

Not much of the old charm of the Dunbars' time is left on this place, except some trees and shrubbery. The buildings are new and many more have been added with the different owners. The old adobe of Mary Rockwood's time is still a part of this old time ranch. It has been repaired from time to time however, and is in pretty good shape at this present time.

I recall just now a paragraph on the back page of My Beloved Valley book cover, where my publisher mentioned that Sweetwater Valley at one time could scarcely have been called peaceful. This fact I had never known, as I have not written a research story, as I mentioned before. And this unpeaceful time must have been in a much earlier time than my own. So I inquired of Mr. Freeman as to the what and why of what he wrote. And this is what he said. He could not remember, but it must have been something he had researched and forgotten. So we decided to leave it that way.

Perhaps some day when I have more time than I have now I may look into the matter more thoroughly, as I would really like to know what made our Valley unpeaceful. Some of our friends suggested that the early Spanish American and Mexican battle was fought here. While others, in fun I suppose, suggested it could have been at the time of one of our zoning meetings, which got pretty heated up before all was settled satisfactorily.

I do not remember about the Spanish American troubles, but I do remember our zoning meetings. Though there were always some differences of opinion they always turned out well for all of us with no one too badly hurt. And I may add, this beautiful and wonderful little Valley has always been a very

peaceful community as far as I know. And if at some time or in some places our peace has been disturbed, it is not our Valley-in-general's fault. The fault is strictly a personal matter, and soon blows over I am sure.

Even we Esterblooms have our somewhat heated differences, but I can assure you no one else is to blame but us, surely not our Valley. And our differences are settled soon and with forgiveness, understanding and love, and are soon forgotten, but a passerby might think we are quite unpeaceful at the time.

Well, so much for that. Though I will not leave a stone unturned until I have convinced everyone I know how very beloved and peaceful our little valley really is at this present time, and especially at certain times of day.

And you should hear the many folks who live here, on returning home from trips or summer vacations, who say with great sincerity, "My, it is good to get home! Oh, yes, it was sort of nice to get away for a change and see new and different scenes. But oh, how much nicer it is to get home!"

And that is just the half of it. I myself, who hardly ever leaves the Valley vicinity very far, am always extra happy to see the familiar faces of those who have been away, around again. I am much like the old mother hen when all of her chicks are under her wings. I count every single person here a loved friend, whether I know them very well or not. And as I so often use a line or two of this good old song written by S. B. Silverwood in the year 1913 entitled, "I Love You, California," I will use the same line here at this time.

"I know when I die I shall breathe my last sigh in my own Beloved Valley."

The song read "in my sunny California." And as our beloved Valley is in sunny California I guess it doesn't matter if I change a few words for my own pleasure.

But here again this is my own idea, as no one really knows where they will breathe their last sigh. But come to think of it, since my husband John has purchased some new property for us it could be that I do end up here after all, in one of the lots he bought not too long ago in our beautiful memorial park, Glen Abbey, which is just across the hill from our home and right here in our own Beloved Valley.

Though I tell my friends and I will tell you here, when this old tree (that is me) has outgrown its purpose and is tired and worn out and falls (though I am by no means in that shape now I hope?), do not expect the part that is really me to stay put, just because a little dirt has been put on top of the old remains. For I shall spring up like a mushroom or an early spring flower most anywhere hereabouts, where I can still be a part of and keep track of my beloved ones, their children and their children's children, all of whom I love so much I could never be separated from, ever.

You see, I believe the Bible story of the resurrected eternal life, where love never separates itself from those they love. "Because I live," says the Lord, "you shall live also." And we all know how very much our Lord loved us, and that our Lord actually died, as we know death, and rose again. That is even in history, just in case you do not happen to have the faith you should have in the seemingly impossible things of the Bible, which I believe with all my mind and heart to be truth.

And though the old house, which is our natural body that we need for our life on this earth, is through here, we take on the new unseen spiritual body that lives on forever and ever, even though it is unseen by our natural eye. Just as if a smog or fog was between the two. That is, until we search for truth and understand more clearly.

It's very much like this. A few days ago I had invited some friends out for lunch. We had planned a nice patio luncheon, as I especially wanted my friends not only to feed their face, so to speak, but to feast their eye also on our beautiful view of valley and mountains, which I do love to show off every chance I get.

Well, you know how it is sometimes. Our plans are not always just our plans. Someone higher than us has plans also. And the day appeared a smoggy, foggy mass the first thing in the morning of that day.

I must say I was truly disappointed, though while I was busy tidying things up and preparing for my guests, I was hoping and praying for the nice clear usually beautiful picture we have here on our patio porch.

But sad to say, the weather remained the same. So we ate on our inside porch, while I apologized and made excuses for our very *unusual* weather. (I somewhat fibbed.)

One of my friends spoke up and said, "Never you mind the excuses, Gloria. The way you have always described your precious view that we are missing today has inspired us all the more to come again soon, when our luck is better and our picture clear."

So you see what I mean. Until we have faith enough in what we are told in the Bible of the eternal and spiritual life and are inspired enough to come again and again searching—that is, desiring with all our hearts to see what is beyond the clouds or whatever obstructs our view at first, we will never know or see clearly how eternal life is possible.

And I do not mean in the least that anyone, including our most learned, can explain all their is to know about such things. I can only pass on to you what I have the faith and desire to believe, which to my way of thinking is just what a loveable God, Heavenly Father and Lord would actually have as His wonderful and superior plans for all of His creation.

Well, here goes the phone again, so I'd better go in and answer it quickly. It may be the important call John was expecting this morning, though I would love to spend every minute of this morning out here in this wonderful sunshine. John had asked me to stay near the phone so I would be sure and not miss hearing it. I could not run the vacuum either, as it does make too much noise if I am in the other end of the house to hear the phone. So I had decided about the only thing I could do, besides washing up the dishes and sweeping out the kitchen, which is where our one and only phone is hooked up, was to go out on my favorite place and write. So that's just what this phone call caught me doing.

Next week will be an extra busy one, so I will not be able to take my pencils out for even an hour or two. Folks often ask me how I find the time to write at all. So I explain it this way, which is really and actually the truth. It is my recreation. I love to write. It quiets my hustling, bustling, sometimes overtaxed nervous system. Also I love all the things I write about and wish so

much to share them with you and my family, friends and everyone who cares to read about the simple, natural and everyday beautiful things of life in general, so I just take the time to write, which is at times a very difficult and inconvenient thing to do, so here you have it. I do not find the time, I just take the time.

I have been taking care of two crippled ladies one day each a week, Monday and Friday. But I do not know how long I can keep this up as I now have a very lame back and lifting a patient does not help it any.

You should see our patio yard this morning. Our Bermuda lawn that grows all over and around all of our trees here in this favorite east side and sheltered part of our yard has just had a nice, neat mowing job. An old friend of our from Mexico did the job. He came over with a visiting permit and is so anxious to help in any way he can while he is here on a visit, so we let him do whatever he sees that needs doing and that he wishes to do.

The first thing he went after was our neglected near the house grounds. Then he painted our porch furniture. He found some left over cans of paint in our storeroom, mixed them together with a little paint thinner, oil or whatever he found suitable, resulting in a sort of lavenderish-fawn color paint, which looks very well on what he has painted.

He first fixed all the broken chairs. He then painted them, along with a barrel or two holding plants, my home made tea wagon which I had made with a baby buggy chassis, an out-door table or two and the bird cage in which are seven parakeets belonging to our grandchildren. Their parents do not wish to be bothered with them so Gramma fell heir to the job. I myself do not care for caged birds. But the children enjoy watching and feeding them on their visits here so I keep them just for their pleasure.

I asked Hernon (that is our little Mexican friend's name) how he made the paint go so far. His answer was, "No mind, me fix. Kerosene me put, not too much, but some. Oil too, and other. I empty all cans, put together. Storeroom clean now, no more can around. Plenty room on shelf." You would almost take his lingo to be Chinese.

With my left over black stove enamel he painted our two steel outdoor folding chairs. They look wonderful. I also have a serving table I made from an old sewing machine chassis, with a plywood top. He also painted black the bottom of this table, the sewing machine part. So this looks wonderful also. You see, many of our things we have around are of antique or junk nature, that we have kept around for one thing or another. So a paint job does wonders for these old things.

Hernon is a wonderful little person to have around, I must say. He started coming here to our country wet-back fashion. This is what we Californians call it when a Mexican, etc., comes under the fence, and not legally or by permission. But Hernon now comes over with a visiting permit, and has done so now for some time. Hernon is very conscientious and wishes to do everything in the legal proper manner.

Some time ago he worked on our son Jack's ranch in Barona, which is in the Lakeside territory. He stayed almost a year with them at this time. And since our son Jack has passed away, Hernon now comes to our place here in Bonita. Only his visits are shorter and always with a visiting permit, as I said before. And as Hernon and Jack were great friends, Hernon often speaks of the

good times they had together on the Barona ranch. And says over and over, "Mr. Jack," (that is what he calls our son), "Mr. Jack he teach me many good things. Yes, many good things Mr. Jack teach me." This makes us very happy to have Hernon bring back our son to us in this way.

Hernon also kept our old Ford car cleaned and looking very much like new. And as we keep it parked in the car port or shelter it gets terribly dusty. Also I have come home from a job of nursing or marketing, often tired out, to find good little Hernon had mopped my kitchen and also given it a wax job. So you can be sure I, for the most part, miss Hernon very, very much.

We are now trying to help him become a citizen, for that is what he wishes very much to do. And as he is such a very trustworthy person, I do hope he can make it. So far, we haven't been able to get all the needed cash and requirements, so we haven't had a visit from Hernon for many months now. While he was here the last time he mentioned that he most likely would be sent to Yucatan, the place of his birth, for some sort of reference that Tijuana, his temporary home could not supply. So I hope we will hear from him soon.

Well, who is this coming up our driveway just behind my husband's little old green 1949 Ford truck, both of them just in time for lunch, which I hadn't given a thought to as yet! I just do not know where the time goes.

The extra car produced something very unexpected and appreciated. It was our daughter Jean Ames, who lives three miles up the Valley Road. She had brought us a platter of freshly cooked fish, still hot and ready to eat. What a treat! And just in time! God bless her.

One of their friends, Jim Williams, who had gone fishing, shared his luck with them. And Jean in turn is sharing her gift with us. She had to get right back as her husband Ed would be home by this time wanting his meal also.

Our ranch men come home three times a day for meals, and often between times for different reasons, taking on a cup of coffee or some sort of snack at the same time.

Jean is a good cook. And I do enjoy the fish the way she prepares and cooks it. She dips the pieces of cut up fish, with the skin on, unless it is suitable for fillet, into beaten eggs first, then rolls it in cracker meal, cornmeal and flour mixed into which has been added salt and pepper to taste, and fries in deep Crisco or bacon fat. We like the skin left on the fish always, as there is where much of the good flavor comes from.

I served also fresh sliced tomatoes from Sam's stand and warmed up some left over macaroni and cheese, and our son-in-law, who came just in time on some sort of business with John, stayed for lunch and said the dinner was fit for a king. A far cry it was, too, from what I had planned to have for John's lunch this busy morning. We also had apple pie for dessert. I almost forgot to mention this. Another donation, and just in time.

Barbara Drew, who accompanies John and his violin on the piano at our Friends' Church services, had baked John this nice fresh apple pie for his birthday, which was today, October 10th, only we were not going to celebrate till in the evening. However, we decided to have the pie for lunch as we had a nice big cake that our daughter Edla had baked and decorated for the evening and birthday occasion.

The Drews, Kenny and Barbara, have a chicken ranch in Sunnyside and here is where we get our nice fresh eggs. They also have three wonderful and talented children, two boys and a daughter. Barbara's parents, the Briggs, are oldtime Valley folks, though not as oldtime as we are by any means.

They bought Auntie Webber's old place on the hill in Sunnyside, and remodeled the old house quite a bit. They may even have torn it down and built a new one. I'm not sure which it was of the two—remodel or build new.

Auntie Webber's place was a favorite place to go for Sunday dinners (being invited first, of course). This was when I was around sixteen years of age and living with the D. N. Williams family. Uncle and Auntie Webber were no relation to the Williams folks either. They were just very good friends and were always known in the Valley lovingly as Auntie and Uncle Webber.

The Williams family are also old time Valley folks and are well known and loved by the ever so many who have become acquainted with them through the years. The Williams' ranch is well known for its citrus groves and also for its nice fresh vegetables which they grow in quantity at this present time.

John just came into the house to tell me he noticed a pile of new lumber, cement and what have you on the lot just across the road from us. And what a surprise. There is to be a house built there at last. Though I do feel a little sad about this, as it will cut one of my good and friendly neighbor's east view off completely. This lot had been vacant and up for sale now for a couple of years. Different ones had bought it. But no one seemed to be able to get a permit or contractor to build the kind of house they wished on such a small lot.

It has been three weeks now since I have had an opportunity to take out my paper and pen and write. Today I am across the Valley from our home. I am staying with Mrs. Judge Burch's father, Mr. Diffin, for the morning while the household is away. Mr. Diffin hasn't been well for some time now, so it is best that someone stays here in the house with him just in case he needs something.

It is quiet and beautiful over here among the oaks and pines. This property was at one time, years ago, the property of Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Allen and family. Mrs. Allen was the late Ella B. Allen, for whom Bonita's new elementary school was named. This very dear little person, Mrs. Allen, loved our Valley and its people. It was she, with the help of a gardener, who planted the oaks and pines and other wonderful shrubs and trees that are on this property now owned and lived on by the Judge Burches.

The Burches, who have built a new home here, have also added a nice patio in their private yard where I may sit if I wish and write undisturbed. That is unless Mr. Diffin should need me and ring. I can hear his ring very well from here, as I leave a door open from the house so I shall not miss hearing it. It was Mr. Diffin and Mrs. Burch who gave me so much help getting out my Beloved Valley story. They did all my typing for me. And also helped me to get buyers for my book. You see I do all my writing in longhand, and do not type at all. And before I can turn in a manuscript, it must be typed. This is a big job for anyone who has to read my writing. But I am one of the fortunate ones who have wonderful friends who do ever so many kind, thoughtful, and wonderful things for me and for our family also.

The new home I spoke of some time ago that was being built on the small lot across the street or road, rather, from us, is now completed. As most

of the houses around here are of the low, ranch-type of architecture, some of are not too pleased with this story and a half job. And the Klickas, our friends, are now almost hidden behind the new house. And all the Klickas have to say is that the newcomers seem like very nice friendly people.

They have been in the new house now for about a week. I learned that they have three small children. I myself will go over when I find they are well settled. Also I will welcome them to our Valley with a set of bright pot holders that I crocheted out of rug yarn and that I wish on most everyone I can.

While I was over at the Burches the other day, taking care of Mr. Diffin, I looked through the Burches' interesting magazines. Among them on the table was the latest copy of *The American Heritage*. I glanced through this interesting and informative book, coming to a page explaining what went on during the days of the fight for women's rights. As I read further I was somewhat surprised at the pictures, and also some of the methods the women took of convincing the male public of a woman's rights.

I wish I had been old enough at that time to have taken part in this campaigning process. For it would not have taken me long to explain in detail that God himself, who created all mankind equal, gave us females our first women's right when the world was first created.

You will find this in the Holy Bible, the Book of Life, the Book we sometimes place our hands on in court as being all truth and nothing but the truth. And in that Book you will find where God himself, who created everything that has been created, including man and woman, or male and female, gave all things a cooperative purpose. It was God who said there was to be no respecter of persons, not even with Him, for He said neither male nor female, nor black nor white, neither rich or poor, etc.

So if our government, which to my way of thinking is the very best of governments, went through and stood for all that monkey business just to give us women what was our legal rights in the first place, I am both pleased and thankful they woke up to the fact that she who gives birth to the nations should surely have a say in her own government. So that is that.

I had never paid much attention as to how, when or why we acquired equal rights, except for the fact that I was born with that idea in my soul and mind. And that it was a gift from my Creator who said He himself was no respecter of persons, giving to women equal rights as a birthright in the first place, as I said before.

I myself will admit right here though, that I am somewhat of a respecter of persons myself, though I do not mean to be, always. But when it comes to my own family, special friends and all Sweetwater Valley folks I'm liable to have favorites among these loved ones, even though I know I should not. Of course, I believe certain things would alter the case too, somewhat.

I have a pile of scrapbooks of many Valley and other events that I have kept for years, as scrapbooks are really a hobby with me. But what my scrapbooks hold has more to do with me keeping them than anything else. In explanation I might say a matter of love and sweet and happy memories. Come and look at them some time if you wish. They will tell you much about our Valley's past and present doings.

We Esterblooms, and I might add, I usually speak mostly for myself, have thoroughly taken root here. We had not intended to sell all of our farm

land at the time we sold it. But the man that bought it wanted all or none. And as I mentioned before, it seemed the best thing to do at the time, as we do and did need the money. And now, oh happy day! our land is back into the hands of our own Valley's promoters. So we here in Sweetwater Valley look forward to some very wonderful progress and changes here in the not too far off future.

I guess I will take my cup of coffee and dish of cereal out on our nice east side porch this nice sunny morning. Our view is clear and beautiful of both Valley and surrounding mountains and hills. And I can hear you say—"Here she goes again—birds in the bird bath!"

Well, this time someone new has come on the horizon, though the wild canaries have taken over just now. Our newcomer, a clumsy old road-runner, sits on a post, awaiting his turn at the feeders and water dish. Strange it is, too. Road-runners usually chase away all smaller birds, but this one, believe it or not, has manners. He is just sitting there on the post making an odd bird noise. It could be that he is complaining and trying to hurry the procedure of the other birds. I am not yet familiar with all the habits and languages of my fellow nature creatures, though I do enjoy their goings-on very much. These outdoor noises I call my theme song, while I do my writing.

We have just received a letter from our little Mexican friend Hernon. He is not having much luck yet with his papers of admission. Seems he can get a permit to work or visit, but he wishes to live over here as a citizen, so he will still keep trying he says. He gets someone to write his letters for him as he cannot read, write or speak very much English. Though he studies all the time, he says. So perhaps this is one and the main reason why he is not able to qualify for that particular kind of admission just yet. Knowing Hernon and how patient and persevering he is, I am sure he will win out in the end. I hope so.

He brought his father to visit us last year when he himself was here on a visit, and though we could not understand Hernon's father, as he also speaks very little English, we did have a nice visit via the sign language, and also what little each understood from the other.

Hernon spoke of bringing his mother over here for a visit also, though he has not done so yet.

Hernon is now down in Yucatan, his birthplace, still trying to get the papers he is so fondly and anxiously hoping for. We also found out while Hernon was here on his last visit that he is not a Mexican at all, though we all had thought he was. He is half Mia Indian and half Spanish. His mother is Spanish and his father Mia Indian. His father is quite light of complexion and looks much like an American. Hernon favors his mother and is the rather dark complexion, though he is quiet and quick of action like the Indian.

Well, here we are again out on our favorite porch, John and I and some very dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Brown. We will have supper out here and sit till the sun goes down and the moon comes up, for another nice bright full-moonlight night. We will sit here, that is, if it doesn't get too chilly, as we older folks have to watch out somewhat that we do not get chilled and start our old aches and pains going. Though I guess we could put our sweaters on.

Just now the whole sky and Valley is one golden glow. The atmosphere is extra clear. Everything in sight seems much nearer than it actually is. I could hardly do justice this evening explaining how wonderful and colorful our east view is just now, as the sun is dropping low and down on the west.

Truly our God is a most ardent and glorious artist. For none other could ever paint a picture to equal this one in front of us. And God our father is so generous, sharing His art with us. I take these beautiful and wonderful pictures as His valentines to us here on earth. His token of love that, though unnoticed by many, surrounds us all of the time.

We have just finished eating. Our supper was light. I had opened a couple of cans of Snow's clam chowder, which is, by the way, the only canned clam chowder we like. It has just the right clam flavor for us. The Browns enjoyed it too. I just add three full cups of milk and a lump of butter and heat. That's all there is to it. We have crackers, hot biscuits and jelly, cinnamon rolls or toast with it. Tonight we had crackers, and cinnamon rolls with our coffee later. We also had a dish of stewed dried prunes just because I had enough for the four of us and I believed they are good for what might ail us.

Here I am a week later. I just got home from our Sweetwater Woman's Club fashion show. And what a good time we had. Yes, believe it or not, we have some very beautiful and stream-lined women in our club, some of whom were our models. And what an audience we had, besides our members.

You see, our club puts on these fashion shows once a year. The proceeds go into our scholarship fund, which we feel is very worth while. This year the theme of our show was "Oriental Overture." Our clubroom was decorated throughout in oriental fashion, including oriental wall murals. A brunch was served on our brick patio at eleven A.M., just before our show which was to take place at one o'clock.

Delicious and dainty sandwiches were served with a fruit cup made with watermelon and cantaloupe balls, and a very nice cup cake and coffee, tea or punch for beverage.

The melon balls were locally raised on our son's land and came from our son's fruit stand. I suppose others supplied melons also.

Some time ago, Molly Gassaway called me on the phone. "Gloria, do you suppose we could get some of Sam's melons? I need both cantaloupe and watermelon. They are to be used for our fashion show brunch."

Said I, "Why Molly, I thought the fashion show was not to be for a month or so yet. But of course you are welcome to depend on us for melons, and I hope they will be good by that time. You know it will be a little late in the season."

But our Molly knew her business. She said, "I'll fix that, and soon. Can you get me the melons tomorrow?"

"Sure," I said, "but . . ." and before I could say more she informed me that she was going to spoon them in balls, put them in cartons and keep them in her deep freeze till needed.

And I want to tell you they were delicious. I truly enjoyed my cup of them. (And put some in my deep freeze for us also.) And it seemed nice

to have some of our home grown melons to offer, not only our Valley folks, but our out of town guests as well. And Arline and Sammy, our young folks who have the stand at this time were more than happy to supply the melons. Perhaps the Wiessers and Williams provided melons from their patches also.

Our very charming President, Lila Knibbs, started the display by introducing the chairman, Mrs. Charles Smith, who did a beautiful job of directing the fashion show. You yourself would have to attend our fashion show or display of lovely clothes to really appreciate the show as a whole, decorations, entertainment and introduction to some very lovely and new creations in women's clothing. I am not good at describing a fashion show myself.

The meeting with friends and the fellowship we have is enjoyable to me. And as many of us see each other on week days in our every day assortment of clothes suitable for country life such as Capri slacks, Bermuda shorts, pedal pushers, overalls, with smocks or blouses, it is always nice to see our friends in their best clothes. And it takes an affair such as a fashion show to really give one the whatever you call it to dress up especially.

Even I made some sort of effort to look my best, though my simple linen from Mode O'Day in Chula Vista was a far cry from my fairer club sisters' clothes. Some came in oriental costume, though this was optional. And though it was October 15th, the day was almost like a day in July. And I was not the only one who noticed the heat by the way the fans were going.

We had a door prize and a raffle as we usually do on such occasions. And delicious home made cookies were sold at the door for twenty-five cents a dozen. I bought four dozen mixed from the very nicest of them and took them home to my family, who enjoyed them no end. Imagine making even the plainest kind of cookies for twenty-five cents a dozen. Oh, well, I guess this was bargain day for the lucky ones who came out our way that day.

Today I am making watermelon rind pickles, spiced and preserves. We enjoy them and they make nice Christmas gifts. The only difficulty is to find neighbors who have time to come for the hearts of the watermelon. I know it sounds silly. You would think anyone would enjoy watermelon hearts. But you would be surprised how few care to come after it. And I haven't the time myself to deliver it.

I made up my own recipe this year and instead of using lime to crisp the rind I used salt and water. And instead of stick cinnamon I used red hots. That gives my watermelon rind a nice red color without using artificial coloring. Everyone who tastes them says they are delicious. So I am real pleased with my adventure.

This afternoon I am going to visit some children here in the Valley that I have baby sat with in past years. I am looking forward to this visit very much as they will not be among us here in Sweetwater Valley for at least two years, during which time they will be living in Imperial Valley, California.

I arrived at the Lyons' home just before Vicky, the youngest, came home from school. Their dog wasn't too happy at my intrusion so I jumped back into my car till the child got off the bus and came along-side my car. After which all three of us got along fine while we looked over their lovely woodsey yard and wonderful grape stake fence that Mr. Lyons and son Bruce had put up around their patio for privacy.

I hadn't been over this way for some time, and their trees and shrubbery had grown to immense height, sheltering their home and grounds beautifully. Bruce and Charlotte, the older two, came home soon afterwards, and we all had a nice visit.

I went over again a few days later and stayed with the children a couple of hours in the evening. And again we had an enjoyable time. Mr. and Mrs. Lyons came home then, and we all visited over bowls of chocolate ice cream. Our visit was more than just a lot of small talk. Underneath, each knew the other would be missed among the familiar faces here in the Valley for at least two years.

It was nice to know they were not leaving our Valley for good and that they are not selling their home. They hope to rent it to folks who will enjoy and appreciate such a nice house and woodsy surroundings.

Today is October 28th. Halloween is just around the corner. So as usual we will be getting the trick-or-treat stuff on hand to pass out as the goblin children come along.

Since our hill is so built up we have quite a few of these nice young visitors on trick-or-treat night. And often a group of goblins from other parts of our Valley find their way to our house also.

I usually ask the goblin children to sing us a song. This they always do gladly. I love to hear their sweet young voices singing on different levels of untrained melody.

Last year when I ran out of cookies, fruit and candy, I had a jar of pennies I passed out. This year the pennies will go to a milk fund in connection with the United Fund I am told. Just imagine a child going without milk when we have such a surplus around here. So I wish I had a million pennies to give this worthy cause. Though I am told that even one penny goes quite a way towards the milk fund. I am sure the children will enjoy giving up their pennies as they have been taught both at home and at school to share with others.

Yesterday Gloria, a granddaughter, came for anything I had in canned goods. I am not sure where they were going, but I know how happy one feels when we have something we can share with someone else.

Well, look who is here! My husband's brother, Arvid. He had phoned yesterday and asked me when I was coming for the olives. We had company most of the day so I did not go for them. Now here he is with a crock and also a large jar full.

You see, we have two large olive trees on our small ranch that give us a good crop of olives every year. I used to cure them myself, using the recipe that is in our Sweetwater Woman's Club cook book, given and written therein by the late Ella B. Allen, who at that time was here, alive and with us at club meeting. She used this recipe herself and cured the olives from their ranch every year herself. She also made wonderful preserves from the pineapple guava—"fajoea"—(I guess I spelled it right). This fruit also came from the Allen ranch.

And now on our own place, as our children are not home to do the picking, our brother Arvid both picks and cures our olives, for half. I am sure thankful he does as this job is quite a chore. Olives do well here and we have enough to share with our family and some friends who enjoy having them for the Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

And speaking of Christmas and holiday food, I have been busy making more watermelon rind pickles. So far I have put up about forty-five pints. These I pass around among our family and friends who enjoy watermelon rind pickles.

At this time of year the watermelon seems to have a thicker rind than earlier in the season. So at this time I find it just the right time to make the pickles. I have had a few orders for them also. So I have sold some. But usually I make them just for ourselves and gifts for holiday dinners.

Here is my recipe in case you wish to make some yourself. Cut melon rind in desired pieces, leaving just a little of the red part. Soak in salt and water to cover eight hours or over night. Solution one tablespoon salt to one quart water. Drain next morning and wash well under faucet. Then sprinkle this mixture over them: three cups sugar to three teaspoons powdered ginger. Mix around gently with wood spoon. Let stand till syrup is ready. To eight pints of rind, measured after salting process, use one quart vinegar, four cups sugar or honey, two teaspoons whole cloves and three quarters to one cup cinnamon red hots. Bring this to a boil and boil twenty minutes. Add rind and liquid that has formed from the ginger sugar process, boil fifteen minutes more. Take off and set away for eight hours or over night. Then boil again till melon rind is tender and clear but not squashy. Put in sterile jars and seal at once. Pint jars are best for this I find, and the wide mouth ones are preferred, or any jar of pint size that is nice shaped for gifts can be used if it can be sealed. These pickles are rich in flavor, so not everyone likes them. However, I never have any of ours left over after the holidays.

Last evening John and I attended a reception given in honor of our Valley neighbors, the Whelans. Mr. Whelan, who had been one of San Diego's prominent lawyers for many years, has now been appointed Judge.

The reception took place at our Sweetwater Woman's Clubhouse here in Sweetwater Valley, and was well attended. It was nice to meet and visit with folks we do not have the privilege of seeing often. So we did have a nice time. The food was wonderful, the beverage according to your own taste.

I have noticed now for some time that with parties such as these when there is a full house, our club parking grounds are much too small. Folks have to park down the road a ways in two different directions. So as much as we will hate to cut down some of our Eucalyptus trees, I suppose there is nothing else we can do. We do need more parking space, that is for sure. However, this will be a decision for our club as a whole, and not for me alone to decide.

By the way, you will remember I had a petition to have signed by our Valley citizens about a week ago. That is, for the ones who do not wish to have a sand and gravel pit project here in Sweetwater Valley, this beloved community you have been reading about here in my book.

Most of us here know that we have had ideals and plans for our growing community for years. And we feel this sort of enterprise would disturb our country life, health, peace of mind and safety on our roads, as well as disrupt the ideals and plans we now have for the good of our Valley as a whole. After all, we are just protecting our home, so to speak, when we protect our Valley's interests in general. So I say, though I am only a very small voice in the matter, it is not strange that we here in Sweetwater Valley should object to this sort of disturbance, nuisance or whatever you could call it.

Tonight we had a meeting at the Ella B. Allen school in the auditorium. Many of the petition signers were there and also those who objected to the petition. But you would never have known who they were. There was no bickering nor argument. Just a few questions asked and answered and a few comments. And the real problem presented with the help of an outlined map of the Valley and situation of the proposed gravel and sand pits.

We were instructed to appear at the Civic Center in San Diego to present our case, which we hope will help us to win the fight or struggle we are now having to protect our Beloved Valley's best interests. Most of all I am sure we all hope not to offend anyone. Just hope to win them over to a right decision, as I see it. So here is hoping we do.

And soon now will be a plan to organize a definite Board to represent us and inform us of any future disturbing enterprises that would spoil instead of preserve our ideals and plans and way of life here in the country, without having to have any long, drawn out argumentative meetings, which as yet we have had very few of in the past. But our Valley population is growing fast, and as it grows there are more voices and differences of opinion to be heard. So a definite Planning Board would help much, I believe.

Some say just the men should deal in these matters. But I feel it should be the interest of the family as a whole. Even our children should be informed as to what goes on, for after all, they will in time take over where we will have to leave off.

And now I must end this last and extra long chapter, although it is hard for me not to keep writing about all the things that will be taking place here in the future.

And I could go on and on writing of the wonderful changes in nature at this time of year. Our view of mountains, hills and Valley is extra clear these autumn days. And right here on our porch the Virginia-creeper vine that covers our fireplace chimney is now turning wonderful soft shades of yellows, pinks and reds. And our California holly berries too, that grow here on our small ranch, are all red and Christmasy, letting us all know how very close Thanksgiving and Christmas really are.

I just love this time of year. Especially now that I have learned to simplify and enjoy all of our holidays in a more satisfactory way. Not too much fuss and rush. And not too much extra preparation of meals. We just have a wonderful time with family and friends around much of the time.

Oh, yes, we do have very good and very large family dinners, but I have learned to prepare them easier than I used to in years gone by. And I find we all have more time for fellowship, and the food is just as much enjoyed as ever.

As for presents and Christmas buying, I start shopping a couple of months in advance, and as our house is old fashioned, we have window seats in three bedrooms, so here is my place to store the gifts I have to give.

Also I plan for the gifts I owe to the world in general, that I should give too, and lay aside funds for this and that even though it may be a small donation, I feel it all helps. The Christmas seals and other gifts. You know what I mean.

Also I make preserves, pot holders and other home made gifts when I have time. So Christmas can be a most wonderful time if we learn its true and

wonderful meaning. Or it can be one mad rush as it sometimes was for me in the past. Now I plan for Christmas all the year around with a little extra when Christmas actually is here.

And now as I end my chapter, it is with an invitation to our Golden Wedding party, six years in advance, just to give you time to decide whether or not you care to attend such a party, in such a place or community, and with such folks as you have read about in and throughout this book.

And as John and I grew up here in Sweetwater Valley, met and married here, and our wedding party was held in the former Sweetwater Woman's Clubhouse, and our many friends and most of our family live in this part of California, is it not fitting that we should have our Golden Wedding party here in our Beloved Sweetwater Valley and in our clubhouse also?

And incidentally, our prayers, petitions and hopes were realized today when a crowded room of Valley citizens heard the final and good news of our Valley's many years of ideals and plans. There will be no gravel pit operations here in this beloved and protected home of ours, Sweetwater Valley — Bonita and Sunnyside inclusive.

And here is your invitation:

You are cordially invited to attend the Golden Wedding of John and Gloria Esterbloom of 3509 Willow Road, Bonita, California, on March the 12th, 1965. This celebration will be held in our Sweetwater Woman's Community Clubhouse here in Sweetwater Valley.

Yes, I know lots of changes could affect our Golden Wedding party. But just to let you know I have great faith, and as I have shared with you the years, I wish to share with you also our Golden Wedding. That is, unless the One whose plans are far above and greater than our own should plan it otherwise.

Be seeing you.

Old Red Barn, Bonita Cal.



OLD RED BARN

Sing to the square dance tune "Turkey in the Straw."

I

Old Sweetwater Valley is a nice little place.
And its now getting ready for a change of face.
So the Old Red Barn used and loved so long
Must now come down, so we sing this song.

(Chorus)

Sad it will be when we cannot see,
The Old Red Barn where it used to be.
So we'll sing and dance, and all be gay
In remembrance of our former day.

II

Yes, the new for the old is always good,
And we must have the ground where the old barn stood.
And the Old Red Barn will be missed of course,
But a new Shopping Center we will all endorse.

(Chorus)

THE END

