

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY
and
ORANGE COUNTY PIONEER COUNCIL

Helen Smith Collection

Volume 1

Edited by
Kathleen R. Frazee

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HELEN SMITH COLLECTION



“For nearly twenty years Helen C. Smith (1905–1984) was editor, co-editor and contributor to the Pacific Coast Archaeological Society *Quarterly*. Growing and sharing plants was an important part of her life and for years she compiled the plant lists for the PCAS site reports. Her superb knowledge of English grammar and usage as well as scientific terminology set and maintained the scholarly tone of the *Quarterly*.

“A near lifelong resident of Orange County, Helen was a graduate of Pomona College, class of 1926. In the 1934 depression years she was instrumental in establishing the State Emergency Relief Administration Anthropological Projects (later taken over by the Works Progress Administration) that surveyed and excavated archaeological sites in Orange County.

“Through the years she interviewed and taped members of pioneer families in California and Baja California. Her research gained her widespread respect in both Mexico and the United States. Although she never wrote a book, Helen Smith was recognized as a major Orange County historian. She was a prime source of archaeological and historical information to those who wrote books and reports. Besides collecting information she gathered historical books, documents and other articles and placed them in libraries and museums where they would be accessible to researchers.” – PCAS *Quarterly*

Helen Smith died on June 5, 1984 of a heart attack at her home in Costa Mesa, California. Her daughter donated her papers to California State University, Fullerton. They eventually came to the Center for Oral and Public History (COPH) where they were stored but unused for over a decade. Though the inventory for the papers and tapes listed some very early county settlers as narrators, it was only in 2009 that funding and technical skills dovetailed at last making publication of this information a feasible project. The Orange County Pioneer Council appreciated the value of the material and decided to help make its contents available to a wider audience. This is very much in keeping with its mission and goals.

When the material arrived at COPH, several of the interviews had been transcribed into print, so the nature and amount of editing done by Smith served as a guide for editing the remaining interviews after they were transcribed. Some of the recordings had parts that were difficult to understand, so a blank line was used when the exact words could not be deciphered. A question mark in parentheses means the correct spelling of the name could not be verified. Items added by either Helen Smith or COPH editor are indicated by brackets or placed in footnotes.

We thank volunteers Jenise Tim, Matt Payan, and Susan Berumen who assisted with the transcription phase of the project. In the absence of both individuals who were present at the interviews, name verification and photographs whenever possible were obtained from modern existing resources. Special thanks to Phil Brigandi, local historian; Jane and Stuart Gothold, Pacific Coast Archaeological Society; Mary Ellen Goddard, Costa Mesa Historical Society; Sharon Perry, CSUF Library Special Collections; and Jane Newell, Anaheim Public Library. Thank you also to Kevin DeMera and Daniel George for audio transfer and digital imaging support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	iii
List of Illustrations	vi
Louie Carisoza, <i>O.H. 3627 and 3966</i>	1
William Floyd Croddy, <i>O.H. 3632</i>	45
Eleanor Darrough, <i>O.H. 3631</i>	63
Donald Dodge, <i>O.H. 3633.1 and 3633.2</i>	81
Hazel Greenleaf Flaherty, <i>O.H. 3637</i>	113
Rose Ford, <i>O.H. 3634</i>	159
Dr. Percy Gaskill, <i>O.H. 3636.1 to O.H. 3636.6</i>	175
Vernie Graser, <i>O.H. 3635</i>	271
George Fiske Hammond, <i>O.H. 3952</i>	277
Index	297

ILLUSTRATIONS

Courtesy of:

- Figure 1 Center for Oral and Public History photo archive (fumigation)
- Figure 2 Anaheim Public Library, Heritage Center (Indian laborer)
- Figure 3 From the Collections of the Costa Mesa Historical Society (flyer, map)
- Figure 4 CSUF Library, Special Collections (work party)
- Figure 5 CSUF Library, Special Collections (beaches)
- Figure 6 Center for Oral and Public History photo archive (Mrs. Irvine)
- Figure 7 Center for Oral and Public History photo archive (composite)
- Figure 8 CSUF Library, Special Collections (Kraemer rancho)

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: LOUIE CARISOZA
INTERVIEWER: Charles Irwin and Helen Smith
DATE: June 17, 1973
SUBJECT: Diet and culture of Indians

CI: Well, did the early Indians, as far as you know, did they visit the beach at certain times in the year? Winter?

LC: They used to go down, no, in the summertime, they spent summer down there. They used to spend all summer down at the beach. They believed in that water, in the salt water that was really a good medicine. And they'd go down there. Before, they had all these camps along the roadways, different tribes of them. Each tribe had a certain place they stopped and they, and therefore they had all these barrels, these rock barrels, you know, to grind corn and all that stuff, and certain waterholes. 'Cause they came clear from way up, San Jacinto and all through there and they had to walk with everything. Probably took them quite a while to get over Saddleback, over there.

CI: Where did they spend winters, as far as you know?

LC: They'd go back to the mountains. They'd go back to their old home in the mountains.

HS: Which mountains?

LC: Up around San Jacinto, Pala and in through those areas there. They're quite a ways off of the beach, you know.

CI: As far as you know, were there any Indians that lived down at the beach all year?

LC: No, I don't think they—of course the tribes, you know, later on they got civilized, sure, and quite a few of them lived down there. But I mean as far as I know when the tribes lived like they do in them tepees and all that stuff—you know, the Indians were just like wild, they claim they used to go from here to the beach and spend (inaudible) all along the beach someplace. I guess they used to go, a lot of them go deer hunting, too, way up in the mountains.

CI: Would that be in the summer too, or—

LC: Yeah, some in the summer.

(pauses for testing)

CI: Do you recognize this wavy turban shell? Did you ever—

LC: I seen them along the beach.

CI: Did you ever eat them at all, or do you think the Indians ever did? That came from a campsite, too. That's from an Indian campsite.

LC: You know the Indians used to pick a lot of that shells up. They used to pick a lot of them shells because they used them to make paint out of.

CI: Oh, I didn't know that. Paint?

LC: Oh, yeah, the enamel of it. They used to take that thing off there [periostracum], you know the shell part and there's the enamel in there, and they used to take that and they used to grind that like they did the corn, you know, in them rock things, and then they'd mix that with the clay plant or that berry juice or whatever the heck they'd use to cure their paint. Of course, you know, they made beautiful paint; it never wore off. What they mixed in it we don't know but they know that they used to pick shells to make some kind of a painting with them.

HS: What color?

LC: Well, they would make the color out of the clay or else make the color out of the berry juices.

HS: I didn't know they used sea shells.

CI: The silvery part.

HS: Oh, the mother-of-pearl part.

CI: That was body paint wasn't it? To put on face and body.

LC: Yes. You know years ago they used to do that when they used to whitewash. They had lime and mixed it with burnt shell and then they put it on the old barns. Remember the old barns? By God, it would last longer than the darn fifteen-dollar a gallon paint we buy now. That's the way they cured the adobes, you know. Adobes were painted white on the outside. Their houses were always white. Oh, and they used that cactus, that slime off of that cactus, too.

CI: For paint?

HS: For part of the paint, part of the formula.

LC: Yeah.

- CI: Did they ever grind up the seashells and mix it with water?
- LC: And then drink it? No, I don't think so. I know they used to use it for color.
- CI: Here's another shell that's kind of common. Did you ever collect these and eat them? It's a cockle shell, or *Chione*. That's from an Indian campsite too.
- LC: There's a few of them along the beach; of course sometimes there's so many of them, and they look alike.
- CI: Sure. Newport Bay has them, I think, too.
- HS: Down in Mexico they call all clams *almejas*. It's a generic word, clam; they call them all that. Spirals and univalves they call *conchas*.
- CI: When you used to collect seashells or seafood—do any of those shells in there mean anything to you? For example here's a sea snail, right down there. (stirs through shell collection) Were you ever interested in collecting those and eating those?
- LC: We used to pick them along the beach where they were, but we never did eat them. Well, they claim these little blue or black—there's a whole bunch of them along the beach all the time, [*tegula?*] loose, like a little snail, black and you touch them and they roll over. They claim they used to make good soup out of them things. That's a fact, I know, but I never did taste it.
- CI: They would just boil the shell and the animal all together?
- LC: Yes, they'd just boil them and the meat would naturally work itself out and they would pick it out with a little stick. They're little black—some of them are pretty good size, big as the end of my thumb.
- CI: That's the shell that has the hermit crab in it sometimes, but before the hermit gets in it, it has the snail.
- LC: Yeah. Soon as you don't bother them anymore, pretty soon they start rolling around, a whole bunch of them, sometimes they're going up a rock and you touch one and the one hit the other one and the other one hit the other one, just like a billiard ball, and pretty soon everything falls down.
- HS: I wonder if they ever used anything like sea anemones? You know what those are—those daisy-like things that are always under water and when they're out of the water then they're closed. They have tentacles that open like a flower.
- CI: Kind of a blue-green color.
- LC: I think I heard somebody say people used to eat them. They just look like a big flower sitting there and the minute you stick your finger in or put a stick in they draw up to nothing and you just don't even see them.

- HS: I used to stick my finger in them and then walk on them when they were out of the water and they always squirt.
- LC: That's right. I don't think they'll sting. Of course I did the same thing like you did, put my hand in it.
- CI: It feels like suction.
- LC: Yeah. You'd be on an abalone hunt sometimes down there and you'd always wear gloves, you know, on account of these darn snakes—eels. You know they bite and when they bite they don't let go and they really give you a dirty cut.
- CI: I wonder what the Indians wore on their hands?
- LC: They probably wore like rawhide, maybe.
- CI: People seem to think this is part of an old Indian game, this fish backbone. Do you think, do you ever remember seeing anything like that? They call it a ring-and-pin game, but I'm skeptical. It's a hollowed out fish backbone.
- LC: I don't know. They could maybe make like beads out of them or something. They used to make a lot of beads out of mostly shells or something like that. Of course they didn't have no silver or like that because they didn't know what silver or gold was.
- CI: Do you ever remember seeing a necklace with these strung on it?
- LC: No, I don't remember seeing one old, but they used to use acorns, you know, and things like that and they'd make their own beads of little rocks and stuff like that, and sure, after a while they got to where they were making beads. But the Indians in them days, how could they make their little holes and glaze them?
- HS: They did. They took little olive shells.
- CI: There's a hole in that piece of rock. It's thought that that was used by the Indian doctors.
- LC: Might be a sinker of some kind. They had different ways to make things that we don't believe in, can't believe how they did it, either. Don't know how they did it even, or how long it took them.
- CI: Have you ever seen one of these before, Louie?
- LC: No, I haven't seen any before. You remember these *morteros*, don't you? You know them rocks are real hard. How long did it take them to make that thing that deep?
- HS: Well, partly they made it by use _____. (inaudible)
- CI: Do you think the Indians ate much seaweed? I've taken bites of seaweed. Never heard of Indians doing it.

LC: I don't think they ever—they might have. They might have taken some because they believe in a lot of this stuff for medicine. Everything that was at the beach, practically everything was medicine to them. That's why they always used to go down there and bathe in the summer months.

HS: Didn't you live with your grandmother quite a while?

LC: I lived all my life with her.

HS: You remember the things that she did that people don't do any more? Some of the food she fixed or some of the plants she used?

LC: She used to fix so many things that I finally forgot what they were. Like that snake weed I was telling you. Another thing, too, she used to fix some kind of a—well, she went out one day when I first went to work for Knott's Berry Farm and we was doing some berry tipping in the month of October, and of course, the ground is damp and you had to be on your knees all day tipping the berries on the damp ground. Of course, now they have them pads you put on; then if you had pads you wouldn't put them on anyway. I was young and not afraid of hurting. By God the second year I got a pain in my legs, same, not like I got now—no, it was worse. It was continuous pain, pain, pain, pain, day and night. You moved and it hurt, and if you stay still it hurt just the same. So one day she got out there (gesturing at near hills) and picked a whole bunch of weeds out there. What she had in it I don't know. She walked up through here some place; I know she grabbed everything I guess she could find in there. She had eucalyptus and some other weeds in there and brought it in. Remember them little tubs that had that little handle on it?

HS: Buckets?

LC: No, tubs, little tiny tubs. They used to use a lot of them when women had kids, you know, and they used to soak their diapers in that, boil them. She took that and boiled it on the stove there and when she got it real boiling hot, she got me out of bed and set me beside the bed and took one of these heavy army blankets and just steamed. I didn't get my foot in it, just the steam. By God, she only did that three times and by God my pain went, never bothered me anymore.

HS: That could be one reason why you have trouble with your knees now.

LC: That's what I say. I should have paid attention what she was using.

CI: And you think it was eucalyptus?

LC: It was everything, eucalyptus and a lot of other weeds. She wasn't gone very long, just around in this area here. Just like my father-in-law the time he went after that weed up on the hill there someplace, after that rattlesnake bit that heifer. She was like she was gone, she was dragging her head like that—(unclear) ___ went down to Ed McFadden to see if they had any medicine for her. They had nothing to help, and they

- came up to see the calf. It was a pretty good size calf. My father-in-law was preparing that medicine he went up there and got.
- CI: Can you describe that plant?
- LC: That's what I say, I got some that looks just like it but they claim it still isn't the one. Near as I can remember it had a white big tassel on top, very few little leaves. They were gray. I've been up there and got some. Well, I asked Blackjack one time and he said he didn't know what it was. I brought some from the top of the (inaudible) trail to Saddleback, and every weed I see with that white thing I always pick to see if it's the right one. Lot of them say it is and lot of them—one say yes, that's what it is and other one say no it isn't, so there I am.
- HS: The only thing you can do is go get bitten by a rattlesnake and make some tea—was it tea they made of it or did they use the leaves?
- LC: He took the whole thing and just boiled it, you know, and bottled that stuff and poured down her throat and poured it, he lanced it where the fangs had bitten, after he cut it, and the rest of it he took and bathed it. By God, you could see that yellow, that poison, drawing it out.
- CI: Who did that? Was it your uncle?
- LC: No, my father-in-law, Adolph [Sepulveda]. Next day the calf was still alive when I went out there. I thought the way she was she wouldn't have been able to live through the night.
- CI: Was your father-in-law, could he have been an Indian doctor?
- LC: No. He was nothing like that, but he had been around so long he had more experience, he knew a lot of stuff that people had used in the Indian days. . . . (inaudible) Very few tablets and stuff like that, medicine was in bottles. They used to make their medicines, one for diarrhea, one for something else, one for high blood pressure. Of course, I don't think they ever had high blood pressure.
- HS: They didn't have so many quarrels with their neighbors.
- LC: No, they used to bleed themselves every year, you know. We used to go every year up to Pechanga—you know where Pechanga is? Near Temecula. There was an old Indian doctor up there.
- HS: What was his name?
- LC: Celestino was his name. That's how I knew him.
- HS: Did he have a last name?
- LC: I guess so, but I don't remember. I was so small when we used to go up there.

- CI: What did he do to make you bleed?
- LC: Cut you right here (indicates inside of elbow) and let it bleed just so much.
- CI: How would that help you?
- LC: Well it takes the relief—that's the trouble. If people would do that, like me, I wouldn't have had that stroke neither.
- HS: How did they stop the bleeding? By holding it?
- LC: Oh, he stopped it all right. He put something on it. Of course, he didn't make a big hole there, either, you know.
- CI: Did he say anything to you while he did it?
- LC: No, he didn't say nothing. He'd watch it, watch the time, the clock and then when it was a half hour or whatever it was, he'd close it up.
- HS: Did he put a leaf over it? Or did he do it by pressing?
- LC: He put something over it, and then he wrapped it around and it stopped. Of course you couldn't use your arm like you would right away, hang on a tree or something, for at least a couple of days or so and then it would seal over.
- CI: Was there any certain time of the year you'd all go back to have this done?
- LC: It used to be mostly in the summertime. Because in the wintertime the blood is thicker than it is in the summertime, and you build up so much blood. Of course if you'd get hurt you could lose a lot of it, but some of them don't. . . . (inaudible) I never heard of anybody having high blood pressure among the Indians.
- HS: But it's partly a disease that's connected with civilization, too much activity, people quarreling with each other, boundary disputes.
- LC: Yes, and they eat food that they shouldn't either.
- CI: Do you recognize this, Louie? (Shell of wild gourd) As far as you know did the Indians use that for anything?
- LC: They used to use that for washing. They got a lot of foam in it. Rub it on the hands and it foams like soap.
- HS: On the outside, you mean?
- LC: The inside, where the seed is. There was a gourd; that's why they call them a gourd.
- HS: There's another one that has stickers on the outside.

- LC: This one here's got them little beans in it.
- CI: Wild cucumber, I suppose.
- LC: They claim they used to use them to play with, gambling, like we use chips.
- CI: You mean the whole thing or just the seeds?
- LC: No, no, the seeds. They got lots of seeds in there.
- HS: How big are the seeds?
- LC: Some of them are big as horse beans.
- CI: There's two seeds in here. They're not very big.
- LC: They're not mature yet. Of course that ball is pretty small, too. Some of them get pretty big. They get great big, and they're round and they're about that size (indicating large orange). And they've got a lot of oil inside.
- CI: What kind of game was it, Louie?
- LC: Like the way we play penny ante, something like that.
- HS: They threw them, like in craps?
- LC: No, they liked to keep a record of them, like, like we do our money, but only our money is ten cents or a dollar or a quarter or whatever.
- HS: What were they betting on?
- LC: They were betting on whatever they wanted to play on.
- HS: Something that might happen, you mean?
- LC: Yeah, like "I'll bet you my horse'll beat yours." Of course you've got the horse to bet on, but whoever wins that pot he's the one that takes the horse or whatever they're betting on.
- HS: Oh, they were like chips.
- LC: Like chips. That's what I mean. ____ (inaudible) —no dollar in the bucket, no goat goes out. That's the best way to keep a record.
- CI: Speaking of games, Louie, have you ever heard of *paon* being played?
- LC: No, I never have. I know they played; they do it on the reservation, yeah. ____ There's a lot of politics on the Indian reservation, too, now. Money grabbing is—

- CI: Seems to be sweeping the country.
- LC: I've sure never seen so damn many chiefs in my life as I did now. There's more chiefs now than there is goddam Indians.
- HS: Do you know Clarence Lobo?
- LC: Yeah, he got kicked out of the country.
- HS: He did? Is he gone still?
- LC: I guess he's—he's at someplace but I don't know where, but I know he's not around here anymore.
- HS: The last I heard he was on one of the campgrounds up on the Ortega ____ (inaudible)
- LC: Yeah, that's when he got in trouble. He's going around here like John Romero, you know John Romero, don't you?
- HS: Oh, I should say I do. He's still alive; his brother died. The younger brother, the ornery one.
- LC: That was Steve, I think.
- HS: I don't remember his name, but he was about ten years younger than John. John is still alive and one of his nieces, I guess, is coming to stay with him.
- LC: Where's he living?
- HS: Just over on the west side of Santa Ana, north of First Street, I believe. I can't think of the name of the street. He was so full of arthritis he couldn't even write his name the last time I saw him.
- LC: He never did write; he always printed. He did printing; he never wrote.
- HS: Did you ever know William Pablo from Morango?
- LC: No.
- HS: He was a medicine man. He was the father of Mrs. Cant (sp?), Jane Cant, she lives over at Morango now, and she always said that John Romero stole that book that he wrote. You know, he wrote a book about how the Indians used plants? Have you seen that?
- LC: No.
- HS: Well, anyway, he had it printed and she said that he didn't write it at all. He stole it from her father.

LC: I think Ellie read the book, but I never did.

HS: I read it. And, I've got a copy of the manuscript that Mr. Romero gave me. Well, Jane Cant said, "We always thought he was a Mexican. We never considered him an Indian."

CI: I met his niece by accident in Santa Ana and she said he was born in the Santa Ynez Mountains.

HS: He said Santa Barbara. I've got a lot of tapes with him.

CI: And she seemed to think he was part Chumash.

HS: Yeah, that's what he said. He called it "Ku-mash."

LC: (inaudible)____he was a friend of my grandfather years ago.

HS: He lived down in El Toro for a while.

LC: Yeah, after he got all that money, you know.

(sound adjustment)

LC: —he was in that WPA working in road construction.

CI: And he has a brother that's quite old, too.

LC: That's the one that she's talking about; he died.

HS: He died recently. He was a good cook. He used to cure olives. I used to take them some of my olives that I'd cured and he would—Stanley was his name—and he would bring out a little dish of the olives that he'd cured. He was a good cook.

LC: John never let him talk when he was around.

HS: No, only when he was drunk, and Stanley was drunk half the time. Then, you just couldn't get rid of him. I shouldn't be taping this.

LC: I mean, when him and John got together, they was always together—

HS: Well, you know what John said, he said, "He doesn't know anything. I'm the one that knows.

LC: Well, this fellow used to work for the Villa Park packinghouse, the Santiago packinghouse here in Villa Park, and he said that during the Depression they were all in the WPA down there on the SERA or whatever it was, relief business you know, and John was out there working just like any other guy in the WPA. And then I guess he got the idea of this business like Lobo did, going up to the reservation and collecting a dollar or two here and a dollar here and here, and a dollar here and here

- and more. And my god, he collected quite a bit. Then one day they sent him—and after that he got a job working for the packinghouse, you know, Villa Park. He was running a test on the sugar contents on the oranges to see whether they were ready to pick. So he was sent out here to El Toro to John Romero's orchard to inspect it for the sugar content. So by God, he says, "John Romero? I think I know John Romero but no, it couldn't have been that guy, the guy that was working in the WPA. And by God I got there and sure enough the first one I seen, there he was, John Romero." Had bought twenty-five acres of orange groves here in El Toro; I don't know who he bought it from, but anyway he bought it from someone for \$15,000 or \$20,000 at that time. It was cheap, oranges was cheap in El Toro. Used to be an acre of three-year-old bearing trees for \$1,000 an acre, and that was a lot of money. Now you go down there and buy \$1,000 worth of property and you can't even put that recorder on it. (laughter)
- CI: It costs that much for rent now.
- LC: So they started talking and talking, and of course, he never did tell him how he got the money, how he ever managed to buy that place there. And I knew this guy was working, and one day we got to talking and I told him what happened. I said he got over there and got this Indian business and collecting and making the Indians believe that he was really going to make something for them.
- HS: It was just tribute.
- LC: Sure! And he was going to Washington, like Lobo here, going to Washington, D.C. to see the president. Hell, I bet he didn't even go out to Arizona; he went out there someplace and set and drank wine and whiskey, and then made them believe, "Well, I just about got there but I run out of money. I'll have to start all over again." So they'd start another collection. Ever since that business started on the Indian reservation, it was always done dirty crook work, even from the beginning and the Forsters. I remember when they started it, way, way back in 1926-27, that Indian federation down in San Juan Capistrano. My grandmother had here a cigar box plumb full of receipts. They'd give you a receipt, sure.
- CI: A receipt for what?
- LC: For the donations, you know, what you gave. They used to have a meeting every two weeks.
- CI: Where did the money go?
- LC: Some of those guys built new homes, buy a new car every year—
- HS: Or buy an orange grove.
- LC: Buy an orange grove. That's what happened here.
- HS: Isn't that terrible?

LC: And pretty soon the Indians over there on the reservation, boy, if he'd went in the reservation he'd have never come back. They'd have killed him and ground him to powder.

CI: Was it white men who were getting the money or other Indians?

LC: No, the Indian himself. It was just like you and I, we'd get a bunch of fools, you know, and we got a chance here and we can get money for nothing. We'll give you a receipt. We're going to go to Washington and get you that land with that money. They would do anything for that.

CI: Did your grandmother ever try to do anything about it?

LC: Well, when all that started, she was dead and gone. She took all her receipts and threw them away.

HS: Did you get any Indian money?

LC: Yeah, I got some, \$658.

CI: That's not much money.

LC: No, but they ought to see what a mess-up they made. I don't know, everybody and their grandmother got money. You could have got some money, if you just put in your claim.

HS: You had to be at least an eighth or a sixteenth—

LC: Lot of them was nothing. Nothing.

HS: Did your children get some? Your boy and Arlene?

LC: My parents got some, but Arthur didn't want any. Arlene got hers. But they're at least one-third.

CI: What tribe are you registered as, Louie?

LC: Mission. Now, we're just darn near three-quarters. But some of these fellows here, like this one over here, hell, she's nothing but her grandmother is the only one that was three-quarter Indian.

HS: Who?

LC: Nola's granddaughter. And she got a check. And her kid was born from a Mexican, I don't know where from, and by God he got \$660. There were some that I don't think were even Indians that got \$600.

HS: Dirty work is still going on.

- LC: Sure. Dethridge, Bill Dethridge and his kids in Garden Grove, all the kids got money, \$658. That's what they got, every one of them. Why, they better cut that out. We would have got a bigger check.
- CI: The government should have been more careful.
- HS: Well, the Indians hired the lawyers.
- LC: And it took them how many years to even get what we got. We ought to be glad we got some of this. But I told Ellie, "If we get a dollar, we're still ahead because, after all, that was all lost anyway." And then they wanted to charge us income tax on it.
- CI: That doesn't seem right, does it? It's a settlement.
- LC: I think one of my cousins down there at Capistrano, they wanted to charge her. But they wanted relief, you know. When they found out they had gotten this money, they had to pay all that money back according to what the law said.
- CI: There was something I wanted to ask. Did you ever see your grandmother or anyone use a piece of deer bone like that as a scraper or whatever? That's from Santiago Cave.
- HS: Over by Irvine Lake.
- LC: Oh, the ones down there.
- CI: That was dug by the WPA in the 1930s, and they found these interesting bone tools used by Indians. I have some of them here.
- LC: Oh, there was quite a bit of them—
- CI: Now, here's one that looks more like a knife, but what do you think it could have been used for? Do you have any opinion?
- LC: (considers artifact) This thing could have been used for a lot of things, as far as that's concerned. You could even use it for a toothpick. You know, a thing like that could be used for quite a few things, like punching holes through leather or punching something or in fishing or something. It's kind of funny.
- CI: Do you think this could have been used fishing?
- LC: Well, it could've, punching holes or something like that because it's not a knife.
- CI: If it was used in fishing, how do you think they would have used it, the one that's shaped more like a knife?
- LC: (considers artifact) They sure decorated it, too—oh, that's the inside of it.
- CI: I think that's a deer bone, a piece of deer bone that's been ground down—

LC: They must have used it for something, punch holes or something, in the buckskin, you know, making clothes or something.

CI: What do you think of this one?

LC: That one there, that's the one—

CI: The one that has the wider edge on it, a handle and a wide edge.

LC: A spoon or something. They wore off the ends here, that's worn right here, see, like they used it this way.

CI: Here's two more bone things found in that same cave: one is a deer rib—

LC: This is just a regular deer rib.

CI: And the other is just a piece of long bone from a deer. And somebody thinks that this one was used to scrape the sweat off of men while they were in the sweat houses, the steam houses. Have you ever heard about the sweat houses at all?

LC: No. They had hot houses in the springs, you know, like they got over in Segova (?) There's another spring up here, of course, Capistrano Hot Springs. They had a heck of a time getting the hippies out of there. There's another spring up here in Murietta and Glen Ivy and the one down here near the coast, the nearest one, up in Carbon Canyon, what is it, La Vida?

HS: Oh, I don't know the name of it. Was that hot water?

LC: Yeah.

HS: Well, there was one down on the Bastanchury property, when Old Man Bastanchury owned a lot of land. I think there was some hot water there. They still sell Bastanchury water.

LC: Yeah, I know where the Bastanchury water—

HS: That's down below Carbon Canyon.

LC: Yeah, that's quite a ways down there. It's pretty near where the water situation is just a little bit, well, it's closer to Fullerton than it is to La Habra.

HS: Yeah, below Brea Canyon.

LC: Well, Brea Canyon comes out this way, then you go like you're going toward Los Angeles that way a little bit, called the Coyote Hills. Yes, up there between there and Buena Park. They had a big place in there. Well, now I don't know; I haven't been there in quite a number of years. But I bet now they got a wonderful, big, water plant. I know the well that the Bastanchurys have been getting water in. It's just a dug well, you know, but it was pure water. I used to have a friend down in El Toro used to

- work there; he used to take care of that water situation for them. I think they just bottled it like anyplace else. They wasn't so particular like they are now, you know, there has to be sanitation and all this, and clean. Back then, they just pumped it up and filled the bottles and take them to wherever they were [needed]. And I bet you the water was more pure than what we're drinking now. With all that Colorado water, with ten thousand pounds of chlorine. With it, every time you want to drink water out of the faucet you have to hold your nose. It tastes good though. The more you drink, the more you want.
- HS: It tastes better than it smells. Louie, did you ever hear anything about boats that the people used to use? Do you think they ever went out in boats in the old days along the coast to get the fish that they couldn't get close to the shore?
- LC: Well, I imagine they used boats.
- HS: I mean in the old, old days. Do you know anything about that? Did you ever hear anything?
- LC: I think they used canoes, but I don't think they ever had any big boats.
- CI: Did they ever talk about going to Catalina?
- LC: Oh, no. They wouldn't have had a boat that big to cross that far. Where would they get a boat then?
- HS: Well, they'd have to make them.
- LC: They'd have to make them, but I guess they wouldn't have the engineering how to make one that big, like they did in the Europe country where they, the knights and all them made them big boats.
- CI: Speaking of boats, when you used to do fishing, and as far as you know the way the Indians used to do it, did they just fish from the shore on the rocks or how did they go about it? Did they ever use nets or anything?
- LC: Well, I guess they never used nets because there was nothing to make nets unless they made nets out of—their favorite clothes were mostly buckskin. There was no such a thing as broadcloth and cotton, you know.
- CI: How did you do your fishing, and what kind of fish did you like the best?
- LC: Well, the only fish they'd get mostly was the mackerel along the beach there. And of course, you'd get a lot of carp in the water, sweet water fish. Of course, that's more easy to catch. Down on the beach I imagine in them days there were a lot of fish pretty close to shore, like—what do they call that big flat fish?
- CI: Halibut.

- LC: Halibut, you could see them out there. . . (inaudible). Lobster and all the stuff like that, abalones.
- CI: Speaking of lobsters, you mentioned a three-pronged harpoon that you used. How long was that?
- LC: Well, it was just like a regular harpoon that we use nowadays.
- CI: Was it hooked onto a string?
- LC: No, it was—well, it's got a string, but it's got a stick, you know, with the metal three prongs. You throw it and the stick will guide it and the rope or whatever it is, a quarter-inch rope, maybe not that much, to pull it back. But you might harpoon something bigger than a lobster, then by God, there goes everything!
- CI: Did you ever hear of Indians using hooks made out of seashells?
- LC: I think they used to fish in the sweet water with some kind of a hook. They got that hook, I think, from some kind of a bird, a real sharp hook.
- CI: From a bird?
- LC: A bone, yeah. (taping paused and started)—catch their fish where the water was pretty deep.
- CI: By sweet water you mean the river?
- HS: Elsinore Lake. There weren't very many sweet water lakes—
- LC: Well, around this area there wasn't but in the northern part of the state, sure, they get that big salmon and all that stuff. Salmon, some of those salmon are twenty-five pounds, a pretty good-size salmon. And nowadays, you can't catch salmon no less than a pound and a half anymore. It's all gone. (pause for lunch and conversation)
- CI: There's a lot of them around, and it's good food, actually. If you dry them out, they're good eating.
- LC: Maybe because they ate a lot of stuff that we never think of eating nowadays. Like eating raw meat, they preferred their meat raw more than they did cooked.
- CI: That's interesting. Would that even be true with deer meat and rabbit and so on?
- LC: Well, part of some of them kind of meats, you know. They claimed that raw meat was better—which it is—better for you if you can get immune to it, your stomach gets immune to it. Sure.
- CI: Do you think they bled the meat or just ate the meat with the blood in it?
- LC: Well, they used to drink the blood. It was some real delicacy, you know.

- CI: Yes, there would be vitamin value in it.
- LC: Yeah, well, they would kill a deer or kill a cow or whatever they could kill, and first thing, they would drink the blood warm, right out of the animal.
- CI: Did your dad and grandfather ever teach you how to hunt deer and rabbit the Indian way?
- LC: No. When we was born, all that was more like modern, you know. We had these guns with the shells and everything. All you had to do is aim and shoot, that's all. There wasn't like the old muzzle-loaders or bow and arrow in them days. There was a lot of difference between that kind of hunting and with a muzzle-loader. If you missed, well by God, by the time you got the other loaded, why, your game was gone.
- CI: Speaking of bows and arrows, do you think this would have anything to do with bow making or arrow making? Those are pieces of cane from Santiago Cave—left there by the Indians.
- LC: I don't know. I don't think they used them—let's see. No, I think they used most of their flint and a heavier piece of wood, you know, some of that greasewood up in the mountains, some of that hard, hard—
- HS: Well, that wouldn't be used for shafts. Isn't there any arrow weed around here? I guess not. It grows in northern California.
- LC: No, I suppose they made them bows out of some kind of a, maybe oak or something pretty heavy, so in order for them to put pressure on them. (inaudible) . . . by the dozen of them.
- CI: Soft, isn't it. They think it was used for body paint. What do you think?
- HS: Is it local?
- CI: Um-hmm.
- HS: Looks almost like a piece of brick.
- LC: It looks like a piece of brick, don't it.
- CI: No, that's paint over it. I believe it's from Alver Hill (?) originally. I have to check on that.
- LC: Alver Hill, I think that's right because there's all different types of clay out there.
- CI: No, this came from an Indian campsite. They could well have gotten a lot of their clays from Alver Hill.
- LC: It used to be, but I don't know now, all different kinds of clay there in that area of Alver Hill and Elsinore.

- HS: There was a clay pit right over here.
- LC: They used to use it for china clay.
- CI: Did your grandmother ever speak of making baskets or pottery?
- LC: No, she didn't have much time to do that stuff. She had a bunch of kids she had to take care of, and when she got through raising her own kids, she had to raise part of her grandchildren.
- CI: Do you recall any legends at all about the stars, the sun, the moon? Did that ever come up in discussion at all?
- LC: Well, if they did, they talked amongst themselves, they never told the kids or talk to the kids about it, unless you happened to hear it. If you had a chance, they wouldn't let you hear it anyway.
- CI: Did your grandmother speak Indian?
- LC: No. In the early days it was a lot different than it is nowadays. In the early days, like at that age, as soon as they had company, the kids weren't in like they are nowadays, right in there and listening to what the old folks are saying. Hell, they'd throw them out of the house. "Go outside and do your playing outside. Leave us alone." Sometimes they wouldn't even feed them. They'd eat the food and then the kids would be hungry. They'd come in and then they'd give them the leftovers. Some of them did; some of the families, the kids ate first and then they'd turn them loose outside. They'd let them fight out there for awhile, or whatever they wanted.
- CI: Did your grandmother ever fix dishes with milk in them? Did she drink milk?
- LC: Oh yeah, oh yeah. We used to use a lot of milk—both cow milk and goat milk, and butter and cheese.
- CI: Did your grandmother ever make acorn mush?
- LC: No, there wasn't acorns here. The acorns here were no good for that.
- CI: How come?
- LC: They're not as good as the ones up in the mountains. They're too bitter. The one they make—it's a real great big acorn. The caps sometimes are about the size of a fifty-cent piece.
- HS: Those are the trees that lose their leaves in winter.
- LC: Yeah. There are some up in Saddleback, but who's going to go up there and pick things? Acorns, they're too far up in the canyon.
- CI: Do you think the Indians used to go up there?

LC: Oh, yes. They used to go in the mountains all the time. That's why I say they used to move up here in the wintertime and gather all the stuff they needed, and plant their corn up in here. Then they'd gather a lot of them acorns; it wouldn't take much to gather many. Some of the trees are pretty good size trees. It won't take long to fill three or four or five bags and then ____ (inaudible)

END OF INTERVIEW

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: LOUIE CARISOZA
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: August 24, 1969
LOCATION: His home off Santiago Road

HS: Now it's going. This is Helen Smith. I am talking with Mr. Louie Carisoza, descendent of Jose Serrano, at his home off Santiago Road. You were going to tell me one time about your ancestors and I think I stopped you because I wanted to bring the tape recorder and talk about it later. Who was your father?

LC: My father was Louie Carisoza, married to one of the Serrano daughters.

HS: Where did your father come from?

LC: Well, he originally came from—his folks came from Arizona.

HS: What part of Arizona?

LC: I imagine it was either Yuma or Mesa someplace.

HS: You don't know?

LC: No.

HS: They probably came there from Mexico?

LC: Probably they did. Well, I think my father and grandfather might have, but my mother and grandmother—I think my mother she was—Well, I guess they were natives of Arizona, you know. They were there way before, even before, when California and Arizona belonged to Mexico. Just like the Mexican Indians down there in the Lower California and all through there; you know there are a lot of Indians down through there. But they just stayed on that side and my mother stayed on this side and made them, one's American citizen, the other is just like the (inaudible).

HS: When did they come to California?

LC: Well, I don't know.

HS: Well, who came, your father or your grandfather?

LC: You mean my father's side?

HS: Yeah.

LC: They had practically all of the kids over here, so they must have—

HS: You were born here?

LC: Oh, yeah.

HS: In Capistrano?

LC: I was born in El Toro.

HS: Oh.

LC: Well, all of the kids, all of my uncles and my dad, they were all born here in California.

HS: Yeah, they were and your grandparents came—

LC: Yeah, my grandparents came from there.

HS: Did your grandparents settle around El Toro?

LC: No, no. They owned a place in Tustin.

HS: Where was that?

LC: Right there in—Well, right behind where that church is there in—Tustin Grammar School, right behind there someplace.

HS: Oh, that would be right downtown between C and D Streets or B and C Streets, around there, north of Main Street.

LC: Yeah, somewhere in there. Of course, there wasn't so many people as there are now, you see. There was just a little—maybe an acre in there.

HS: I know; it runs up to First Street.

LC: Yeah. The kids bought them—When the kids were working, they bought that little place practically for nothing, I guess, in them days.

HS: It wasn't nothing then, though.

- LC: Yeah, of course. I had another uncle that had another—(speaks to his pet in Spanish) Another uncle that is—I guess he's the one that kept the house when my grandfather and grandmother died.
- HS: Was the school building there, then?
- LC: Well, I don't remember. There must have been a school there, but—
- HS: I went to the old Tustin school. It was a two-story plain building.
- LC: Which is now—(speaks to his pet in Spanish) Get off of there!
- HS: Do you know what they did? Were they ranchers?
- LC: Well, they boys were ranchers. They first, yeah, they used to farm around Tustin there, you know.
- HS: They worked for Irvine?
- LC: No, they didn't work for Irvine. They worked for themselves.
- HS: What were their names, your uncles' names?
- LC: Well, there was—
- HS: Well, first, we'd better have your grandfather's and your grandmother's names.
- LC: Well, that was a—let's see. His name was "Nacho" Carisoza.
- HS: That's a nickname, isn't it?
- LC: Well, I guess it was a nickname.
- HS: What's that nickname for, do you—
- LC: I have no idea.
- HS: Oh, never mind.
- LC: And then Susanna was his wife.
- HS: You don't know what her maiden name was?
- LC: No.
- HS: And their children—start with the oldest one.
- LC: Well, let's see, the oldest one is, I think, was Benny's father; his name was Ben. And then was my dad; his name was Louie. And then there was the one on the—

HS: Did they call him Louie or Luis?

LC: Luis. Yeah. And then they had another one named—they called him Al, but I guess his name was Albert, to start out with. And then there was one called Frank, and then my uncle, Joe.

HS: No girls?

LC: No, there was no girls.

HS: Oh.

LC: No girls at all. I think you have that, let's see. Oh, there was one named George, too, but I think he died pretty young.

HS: Are there any of them still around here?

LC: No, they all died now, every one of 'em.

HS: They didn't leave any children?

LC: Oh, yeah. They got some children, there're some children. Well, Al Carisoza, he's got, I don't know, three or four kids there, maybe more in Santa Ana there.

HS: Oh, probably in the phone book.

LC: Sure. There's Adolph Carisoza, and then there was two or three girls, but I don't remember the names of the girls, you know, because they got married. Of course, there was Adolph Carisoza and there's Clarence Carisoza. Clarence Carisoza lived in (inaudible).

HS: Oh, that's why you named your boy Clarence?

LC: No, I don't know how my wife picked the name.

HS: They are cousins?

LC: Yeah, they are cousins.

HS: That could be confusing.

LC: And then Benny—you know Benny—

HS: Well, I've met Benny but—

LC: He was Ben's son. Yeah.

HS: Where does he live?

LC: He lives in Santa Ana someplace.

HS: Well, how come he has a piece of this Serrano land? He must have bought it then.

LC: No, no. My granddad gave him a piece when he gave me the, you know, gave us fifteen acres between both of us, together.

HS: I see.

LC: And then when he went to the service, why, John O'Mara and them got the whole land, you know. Then, they made him divide because they were going to take the piece of land, I guess, from him in the first place—

HS: Oh. How did it happen that your grandfather only left this to you two and not to a lot of others, too?

LC: No. Well, they left three acres to all the rest of them, and some to Lola. Lola got twenty-one acres; Mike, fifteen acres; and all the rest of them was to have three acres. And each one, you know, divided their places up. And then he gave us these seven and a half acres a piece because, the reason why, it was because we was taking care of him at that time, you see. Of course, he didn't have to give us nothing if he didn't want to. It was up to him and—

HS: Well, yeah. But I just wondered why he didn't make an even division. He didn't give all of the grandchildren land, did he?

LC: No.

HS: Maybe some of them didn't want it.

LC: Well, because a lot of the daughters were still—a lot of the daughters were still living, you see. They didn't really have the—well, Benny was the only one that was really an orphan. He didn't have no mother or father, you see.

HS: Now, this was—which grandfather was this?

LC: That was Frank, Frank Serrano. No, from the other grandfather we never got nothing. Of course, they never got nothing. Well, they had just that house—

HS: One place in Tustin—

LC: But I think that other fellow, Phil that I recall, Phil, he kept the place up for them in Tustin—

HS: Then your father Louie married—what was your mother's name?

LC: Oh, Regina.

HS: And she was Frank's daughter?

LC: Yeah.

HS: And I talked to John Romero about Frank's family, and he gave me names of some of them, but he didn't know about all of them. Do you want to go through all of that?

LC: Sure, I would love to, but I think he—

HS: Now Frank, who did Frank marry?

LC: She (sic) married Juana, Jenny, from Capistrano—Olivarez.

HS: Oh, that's Aunt Jenny who lived here at one time.

LC: Yeah.

HS: What was her last name?

LC: Olivarez.

HS: Oh, John couldn't remember her last name.

LC: Olivarez, you know, her father was one of the oldest chiefs in Capistrano, Juan Olivarez.

HS: From the Lobos, you mean, the Lobo tribe or whatever they called it?

LC: Yeah, that's a Mission Indian.

HS: Did she have many brothers and sisters?

LC: You mean the Serrano?

HS: Aunt Jenny.

LC: Yeah, Jenny had two brothers. One, this Juan, the one they call Juan. And there was another one named Joe.

HS: Juan was named for his father?

LC: Uh-huh. There was another one named, let's see, Joseph, another brother—

HS: Jose and Joseph?

LC: No, no, not Jose; this one was Juan.

HS: Oh. Oh, yes.

LC: Juan and Joseph. He used to be a big writer there for Santa Margarita. He worked for Santa Margarita for years and years.

HS: So which one was that?

LC: Not Jose, but Joseph, whatever it is.

HS: Oh. So there were just three in her family, and she married Carisoza? I am getting mixed up.

LC: No, no. Jenny married Frank Serrano.

HS: Oh, yes. Yes, that's right. And how many children did they have, starting with the oldest? They had a lot of boys, too.

LC: Oh, they had Mike, Reyes—Let's see, Mike, Reyes, Frank, and, I think that's all the boys. And they had girls. They had more girls than they had boys.

HS: Oh, they did?

LC: Oh, yeah. They had, let's see—

HS: Start with the oldest.

LC: Isabel, then my mother, and then Carnation, then Lola, and then the one that just died here in Capistrano, Josie. They had five.

HS: Josie Serrano? Who did she marry?

LC: She married "Barney" Bargari (sic) from—he was a French Basque.

HS: Basque? Bargari? I don't know that name. How do you spell that?

LC: It's a funny name. (laughs)

HS: All those French names are—

LC: Yeah, my wife has got it written down someplace. Oh, he was Ebargaray¹ He came from France. I don't remember. It was way in 19, I think it was 192-, in 1925, '26, something like that.

HS: He came to herd sheep?

LC: No. First, I guess, he first came to work with Echenique down there.

HS: Also Basque, too.

LC: Yeah, they are Basques, and Echenique is a brother-in-law of the Forster family.² And he owned part of that land, you know, at the back end of the Forster's over there.

¹ Juan "Barney" Ebargaray worked for Marco Forster at the garage on the Forster ranch and got his nickname from the popular race car driver Barney Oldfield.

HS: That's in the valley?

LC: Well, right up in the valley but towards the hills, towards San Clemente, you know, up towards the hills in San Clemente. Of course, they didn't get along. The two brothers-in-law, they didn't get along very good with the Forsters, after they found out what kind of guy he was.

HS: Who? Eche—

LC: Echenique.

HS: And now, where were we?

LC: Then about that time, I guess this John—his name was John Ebargaray—then, I guess, he met my aunt down there at Capistrano when they used to go walnut picking down there. They used to go every year, you know, and pick walnuts down there for Moatley. Moatley used have an orchard down there near Capistrano. They've got the airport there now, you know. And we used to go there—in fact, all of us used to go down there to spend the month, you know, September whenever the walnut season come in, and pick a few walnuts.

HS: I remember the walnut picking. We used to have them on our little ranch. We had ten acres in Tustin. And every September they'd come and camp, and we always had a lot of fun. And we played with the children. We picked walnuts. We got our hands all black.

LC: Well, look at the Irvine how they used to—The people used to come from miles and miles from all different—They had contractors and they'd come and pick walnuts, and now there ain't no walnut tree in Irvine anywhere.

HS: No. They closed the walnut house years ago.

LC: Well, they knocked all the old groves out. There ain't no walnut trees.

HS: My father pulled his walnut groves out years ago and planted the Valencia oranges because they paid better. For the walnut crop, they can apparently raise walnuts cheaper in Europe, in France, in Spain and Portugal, and it just doesn't pay to compete with them. You have to pay too much.

LC: The only orchard I see now left, the little orchard out here going to Silverado, led by Roy Gabridge(?). And then another few orchards I've seen over in Hemet, out east.

HS: Well, yes, the land is cheaper over there—

² Cornelio Echenique married Ysidora Forster.

- LC: Yeah, but down here at Capistrano, you know, Dr. Erstlinger every year used to buy thirty or forty pounds of these walnuts from here and send them to some friends of his back east some place.
- HS: You mean black walnuts?
- LC: No, they are regular New English, New English or whatever you call them.
- HS: English, yes.
- LC: And by God last year or this year, he had a heck of time finding the walnut—Also, I guess walnuts are not ready to pick yet, but maybe they're just starting.
- HS: We've got a little walnut tree on the place where we live now but it never gets sprayed and the moths always get—
- LC: I have these big, big walnuts here. They grow that big, but it's the same like yours. It never bears; it bears but they fall off.
- HS: And the nuts dry up inside the husk. I don't bother with them. Some of them I give to friends. They like to make pickled green walnuts, and they're all right for that.
- LC: We don't even pick these black walnuts.
- HS: Well, they are too hard to crack. (laughs)
- LC: But, you know, you would be surprised how many people come here and want them. They take them for—They take sacks for them. They say they got all the time, especially old-timers, you know. They sit there, and they start taking them and breaking them to make the candies.
- HS: Oh, they are delicious.
- LC: Oh, I love it. They are better walnuts, but who's got time to pick them?
- HS: I don't.
- LC: You've got to have this special instrument to get the thing out.
- HS: Yeah. They make wonderful flavoring; they make black walnut ice cream.
- LC: I think that you can crush them—
- HS: Right back to your family—then, you have to pick them out.
- LC: Then you got this, the hard skin that is so darn hard.
- HS: Now where were we? We were talking about—

- LC: We were talking about, about the daughters.
- HS: About Jenny and she married—
- LC: Francisco Serrano.
- HS: Francisco. Now was he the one that was born in 1844? He died a long time ago, didn't he?
- LC: Well, he was born in—I don't have any idea of—He was seventy-two or seventy-four when he died. And he died just before Clarence was born. And Clarence is over thirty years old.
- HS: Clarence was seventy-two, in, we'll say 193___. (Louie whispers in Spanish to his pet) How old is Clarence, still in his thirties?
- LC: Yeah.
- HS: Then he was born in 1939, then. Is that right?
- LC: Uh-huh.
- HS: And he was seventy-two then, so that's forty. It takes him back. Let me get a pencil. About 1870. It would it have been about 1870, I guess. Do you know who his father was?
- LC: Oh, his father was Jose Serrano, too. He was the one that lived there in El Toro.
- HS: *The Jose?*
- LC: Yeah, the Jose—
- HS: The one that built the house there?
- LC: Yeah, the one that built the house.
- HS: The one that lost the land for your family?
- LC: Sure, sure.
- HS: Borrowed too much money.
- LC: I think really they sold a part of it, but—they were in the horse business, you know. They liked to race horses.
- HS: The same old story: they didn't realize that they couldn't go on forever living in style without—
- LC: Yeah, they figured, Well, we would just go up there and get some more.

HS: Well, they did, not nearly as much as they had down there.

LC: Oh, he sold all of that place or claimed they sold it, but if they did sell, where would the money last at fifteen, twenty cents an acre? And they probably spent that money right away, you know, because they thought they had good racing horses. With all these people from England, they'd bring in all these high bred horses from England and—

HS: Thoroughbreds—

LC: Sure, and put them against them. And sure, they let them win three or four pots because they had already—

HS: Yeah, I suppose their horses are like quarter horses? Short-legged, would last a long time, but in a sprint, why, they—

LC: Sure, if they would run them and put them against now, against their cattle horses, you know, running cattle and sorting cattle in there, and then they would've never had no chance. Some of them did have real fast horses all right, but they come pretty close to beating them, that's what they wanted to do. They really come close, you know.

HS: I am going to talk about racing. Where did they race?

LC: I think there were race tracks. They had certain places to go, from certain place to places, you see. No, they never had no [permanent] race track.

HS: And they'd bet everything!

LC: Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

HS: Like that race between Black Swan and Sarco—

LC: Sure, because they—Last time maybe he won, you see? Maybe the last time he won, maybe they let him win. So then the next time he puts up a piece of ground or something like that—he had no more money—or “Well, I will give you a section of the land here” or so much. And then, and then he put out one of these high-power, high-powered horses, and then they just beat him just by a neck.

HS: Wouldn't matter.

LC: No, no. Just so they was legal.

HS: How far did they run? Do you know? There were long races, weren't there?

LC: Well, they used to run, I guess—I understand they used to run sometimes from wherever they had, I guess, was down at, someplace down there around the Irvine. I don't know where they were staying, but they went a long ways.

- HS: Miles. I don't remember how long that race between Black Swan and Sarco was, but I think it was about fourteen miles. I think it was seven miles down Alameda Street in Los Angeles and then back to the starting point. And boy, everybody was certainly surprised at that; that was an Australian mare that beat Black Swan. Nobody thought he'd be beaten. (sighs) Yeah.
- LC: Sure. Well, just like today—Well, today now, of course, in them days everything was legal. The horses were legal. But nowadays, but nowadays, you can't (background noise) say, There is a good horse, I know a horse you can beat. Today you might, but tomorrow you won't beat [that horse]. The one that you're really more interested to beat is the jockey.
- HS: That's right. They pay a lot more attention to the jockeys now.
- LC: Sure. You remember how many races that Donny Longden won? Even the last race that he run, he won the two races, see. And plus, he had—they weren't any faster than a dog, but he won.
- HS: Well, he seems to be a good trainer, too.
- LC: Now it's Shoemaker. Whenever Shoemaker is on, we can put in the bet that he is going to win the big races.
- HS: There are a lot of good Mexican jockeys now.
- LC: Yeah, there's quite a few. One real famous jockey, jockey—
- HS: What is his name? I can't remember. He won—No, he didn't. He just lost one of those big races back east, and he thought he should have won. Well, this is an interesting subject. (chuckles)
- LC: Horses and racing. (laughs)
- HS: Yeah, but we are not—Now, let's see. Francisco and his family, I think you named Mike, Miguel.
- LC: Yeah, yeah, he is sick in the hospital now.
- HS: He's still living?
- LC: Yeah, he's living.
- HS: He's your uncle?
- LC: Yeah.
- HS: Where does he live?

- LC: He lives in El Modena. Yeah, he'd been sick for quite a while, a long time. You know, they didn't expect him to live. About a month ago they said he only had two weeks to live, and he's still at it.
- HS: I know that. Is he a brother of your Aunt Jenny?
- LC: No, he is a brother of my mother. No, let's see. Aunt Jenny's oldest son.
- HS: I told you I get mixed up.
- LC: Yeah, he is the oldest son of Aunt Jenny and Frank, Francisco.
- HS: How old is he?
- LC: Well, he must be around seventy-two, seventy-three.
- HS: Not very old. Is he Lola's brother?
- LC: Yeah, yeah, because Reyes, you know, is next to him. He was born in 1900, and he is sixty-nine, so—
- HS: He's the one that used to work for—
- LC: For the Irvine—
- HS: Irvine. Oh. Who was the one that worked for Moulton?
- LC: That was Frank.
- HS: Oh. But he is—let's see. Reyes is the second son. Now who is the third one?
- LC: Frank. Mike, Reyes, and Frank.
- HS: Frank. They are both living, aren't they?
- LC: Well, just Mike and Reyes. Frank died. The youngest one died in—
- HS: Oh, that's right. Now he wasn't very old.
- LC: He was only fifty-four, I guess, or fifty-five.
- HS: He must have been still working.
- LC: Well, he was working up to when he got sick, pretty sick, you know. Well, he had this, he had this—what it really started out was piles and he never took care of it. He had fifteen years of, you know, bleeding piles. He never went to the doctor to see what they could do.
- HS: That doesn't kill people.

LC: Why, they could've just, well, operated on him, got them out, and burned him out— He would have been living now. I know he let them go, let them go. When he went to the doctor, it was just too late.

HS: What did he get? Cancer?

LC: It was cancer set in there already. So what could they do? They just said, Just nurse him along until his time came.

HS: Who was the next one? The next son, the next child.

LC: Well, there was the girls in between.

HS: Who were they? Now, they count, too.

LC: No, they were the oldest ones, you know. The boys were the youngest ones. In fact, the son was the youngest . . .

HS: Oh, we are not taking them in order though. We'd better start at the beginning. Who was the oldest child of Frank and Jenny?

LC: Well, Isabel was the oldest one.

HS: Who did she marry?

LC: She married Benny's brother, uh, Benny's father.

HS: Carisoza.

LC: Yeah, Benny Carisoza.

HS: The next one?

LC: And then, Carnation is the next, next to her. She married Emil Staffel.

HS: Staffel?

LC: Staffel, a German.

HS: Oh. Are they living?

LC: Well, she is living, but he's dead.

HS: Where does she live?

LC: She lives in Oceanside—not Oceanside but in Vista.

HS: Was her name Encarnation?

LC: Yeah.

HS: Um-hm. Staffel. How do you spell it? S-T-A—

LC: Something like that. She was divorced. She was divorced between and married another guy and—I guess she is now running for Mrs. Brown. But she divorced Emil, Emil, you know, Staffel after they had six or seven or eight kids or something. Then she married this Brown. Brown used to be, he's an old Californian, too.

HS: She goes by the name of Brown?

LC: Yeah, because I guess still one of the Browns lives in Capistrano. Ralph Brown used to be the foreman at Santa Margarita and the cattle.

HS: Ralph Brown?

LC: Yeah, Ralph Brown.

HS: Did he have Mexican blood?

LC: Yeah. He's half and half.

HS: What was her husband's name? He was a brother of Ralph Brown.

LC: Yeah, that was Philip Brown.

HS: But he's not living?

LC: No, he's dead. He's been dead for six, seven years. She's in pretty bad shape, too, now. I guess she is not going to get married anymore. She's got rheumatism or arthritis so bad that she can't hardly walk.

HS: Oh, Vista is a pretty damp place to live, you know. It's a lot wetter than it is here down there. They get the sea fog and they do too much irrigating. It's nice and dry here and that's better for arthritis.

LC: But then where she lives in, you know, Vista is quite a ways from the beach, of course, but still there is the irrigation.

HS: It's wet. I know because I took my thing that registers humidity. And I got up at four o'clock one morning. I was staying down there, and I looked at this thing, and the humidity was ninety. So it's a pretty wet place.

LC: Yeah. Well, Escondido, Escondido is a little bit hotter.

HS: Hotter and dry. Who was the next child after Carnation then?

LC: Well then, there was Mike.

HS: Oh. Is he living?

LC: Yeah, Mike is living.

HS: Who did he marry?

LC: He married this Lobo, an Indian from the Pala, the reservation—

HS: You know her name?

LC: Yeah, Lupe Omos.

HS: Omos?

LC: Yeah.

HS: Olmos? (sp?)

LC: Yeah.

HS: I suppose her family came from Warners. They were moved over to Pala.

LC: I suppose so, yeah. They were—her dad used to farm right down there by San Luis Rey on the garden, working as a truck garden, vegetables and stuff like that. Then some of her brothers worked for the state highway in the road department for a number of years. And, I think, there's one brother still lives here in Santa Anna, George Olmos. Of course, he's crippled, you know, got crippled during the war, shot his legs off or something.

HS: Where do they live? Mike and Lupe.

LC: Oh, they live in El Modena.

HS: And the next one.

LC: And then comes Reyes. No, wait a minute. (searches his files) Yeah, I think it's Reyes. Yeah, Ray is still living. He lives over here by Anne Robinson's now.

HS: You mean by her ranch?

LC: Yeah, lives right here on her place, on the old place.

HS: Are you sure he does? The gate's locked.

LC: Yeah, they keep the gate locked.

HS: Does she still own that place? I thought she'd sold it.

LC: No, no, she's still got it. No, she won't sell it.

- HS: I don't know why she would sell it; she gets a beautiful income.
- LC: Well, she got—That's the only place she can make a living, you know.
- HS: Well, the last time I tried to get in it was locked. I think I met Clarence over there that day and I wanted to pick olives. I couldn't get in.
- LC: No, they keep the gate—I don't know they—
- HS: Well, it's a good thing to prevent people running all over—
- LC: Yeah. See now, they got that big—You know where you used to go into their gate, that on the hill on the left-hand side? And then you go up and make the circle. You know, turn around and come back?
- HS: Yes.
- LC: You ought to see this place!
- HS: I want to.
- LC: Since they brought in that club—you know, that big, \$17 million, \$17,000-dollar club, it took the mesa and the Bryant and the Star ranch. They got a great, big clubhouse right there.
- HS: Oh, that's the new thing! You mean that Coto de Casa that has—
- LC: Yeah, yeah. Yes, yeah.
- HS: I have to go look at that. I haven't seen that though. But that's outside of Anne Robinson's place.
- LC: Yeah, it's part on the Bryant ranch—
- HS: Yes, five thousand acres they were going to develop, I think, to start with. I wanted to get in there and look for Indian sites, old sites, but we haven't—
- LC: Oh, there may be, they probably could run into some right down in the, right there at the Gobernadora. That's called the Gobernadora all through that area.
- HS: Right south of the—
- LC: That's right, over the top of the hill. Yeah. Of course, that was called the Gobernadora years and years ago. That's all I knew, the Gobernadora, but now they change hands so much. Still, when Bryant had it, it still was the Gobernadora.
- HS: Well, it's still called that, but that was part of the route when Portola came up, you know, from Lower California, the first people in, two hundred years ago. They came up Gobernadora Canyon.

LC: And then, of course, the Star was always named the Joplin ranch; but since the Star bought it, it's called Star ranch.

HS: You mean the part where the San Juan Hot Spring is?

LC: Yeah.

HS: I didn't know that was—

LC: Well, that was bound to Santa Margarita. But, you see, when the Santa Margarita sold that land, sold this down here for the—yeah, Walker's in it, but Marshman(?) from El Modena. Of course, the old man died and now the young kid's got it, the new orchards going down the road here where they used to farm beans along the highway.

HS: Along the south side of the road.

LC: Yeah, sure. There used to be nothing but bean ground through there, _____ used to plant that—

HS: All over the hill.

LC: And then I don't know when they got that short of money, you know, when Santa Margarita was short and couldn't pay the taxes, so they sold that piece right here. They sold that nine thousand acres to Star, and then they sold these four or five thousand acres to the Bryants. And then naturally that took—

HS: How long ago was that?

LC: Well, that was in the 1930s, something like that.

HS: It must have been a long time ago.

LC: Yeah, it was. I think it was later than 1930 because I remember 1930. I used to help down at bean flats, helped _____ plant beans, you know, all down through that, still it must have been Mission Viejo. So it must have been around '33 or something, during the Depression, you know.

HS: Yes. Oh, we got off the subject again.

LC: Each new subject brings up something. (laughs)

HS: Well, it's all interesting, but I want to get the family down.

LC: They, they sold, I think, five hundred acres over there by Hot Springs. I think it's five hundred acres across the road.

HS: I wonder what they sold that for, not much I suppose.

- LC: I think I heard that they—somebody said it was eight or nine dollars an acre. All that piece of land back in there. I don't know if they had that road frontage. Of course, in them days they wouldn't worry about the road frontage.
- HS: No, no.
- LC: You know, the Depression was on and what the heck—
- HS: They would worry about ocean frontage.
- LC: Well, look at the stuff we sold down here for a road-frontage, fifteen dollars an acre! And the same acre right now selling for the road frontage is ten thousand an acre.
- HS: Well, that was eighty years ago.
- LC: It wasn't that long. We sold that stuff in '37.
- HS: Oh. I was thinking when they put this road through, it was about the time that Orange County became a county. That was 1889.
- LC: Well, the macadamized road wasn't built till 1930, you know, the blacktop.
- HS: The route though, this was—
- LC: Well, this road has been—I bet this road is a hundred some years old.
- HS: No, I think it's about eighty. I believe it was about the time Orange County became a county. And I know that was 1889; that's eighty years ago.
- LC: Well, let me see. No, I think it could have been a little bit more because when Madame Modjeska lived there, I think, that's when they—
- HS: Well, that was in the 1880s, and they went to the railroad station down the road.
- LC: Yeah, and there was a little road up there then. When she moved up here, you know, she was the only one that had that telephone line come from El Toro clear up to here, of course that was after she got a little bit more money for that. I guess when she first moved up here, she moved up here for health according to their story, you know.
- HS: Well, she just liked the place, too.
- LC: And they moved up here. Then, she went to work back in San Francisco.
- HS: She had to support the family.
- LC: Sure. Well, they was always down in Anaheim making wine, drinking wine.
(laughs)

- HS: Well, her husband was of nobility or something. He didn't know how to make a living.
- LC: It was just like the old-timers here. All their worry was just to raise a few little stocks of corn. And I tell you the truth, Miss Smith, in them days, we had better living than we've got now. Sure, to go to the store, if you've got three or four dollars or five dollars a week, that's enough. The only thing we couldn't raise was coffee and salt and pepper.
- HS: What about sugar?
- LC: And sugar, too.
- HS: Yeah, not many things. You could raise corn and make tortillas.
- LC: Yeah, but as far as the rest of the stuff, like meat and all of the vegetables and canned stuff—You canned beans and all of the stuff that you needed to make a living. Now if you are going to buy stuff like that, you'd have to buy a bunch, you know, a case. We used to go down there where things are cheaper. You buy a case for \$1 or a \$1.25.
- HS: I remember—
- LC: This pair of Levi's, I got it in El Toro for \$1.25. This blue shirt and duffle bags, I mean, I got them for fifty cents. Now you go buy one of these cheap things at, \$3 or \$2.50, and you put them on two or three times and go like that, they break.
- HS: Well, you have to admit that you're making more money now.
- LC: Yeah. Well, it's really—You are making more money, but you are not saving any because everything is just right up to where it was when things were cheap.
- HS: That's right. (laughs) And furthermore, you don't have time to enjoy your leisure as you did when you raised things. You didn't have to work for other people six days a week.
- LC: If you can't spend it one way, you had to pay it the other way.
- HS: Taxes
- LC: Taxes. Sure.
- HS: Now let's get back to the family. I have forgotten where we stopped. Was it Ray? It was the one—
- LC: Well, I was just telling you the name of all, right down the rotation that—
- HS: Yes, but which one did we finish up on?

LC: We finished up on—

HS: Lupe.

LC: Lupe, yeah.

HS: And what was her husband's name?

LC: Mike.

HS: And they lived in El Toro.

LC: Oh, Mike. Oh, it was Reyes. We were talking about Reyes. Reyes was the one that lives over at Anne's.

HS: Oh, yes. That's right. That's right.

LC: Now he is still living.

HS: Is he related to the man that she married? She did marry him? Anne Robinson. You know she had this boy, Tony (sic)? Well, who is his father?

LC: Well, that was Martin Olivarez.

HS: Was he related to the Serranos?

LC: Oh, no. He was a different Olivarez altogether.

HS: Not related to the Capistrano—

LC: No, no, no, no. He was from another place. I don't know where he come from.

HS: He was a workman, I heard.

LC: Yeah, he came here as a hobo. Well, I guess, his folks live around—He come over here from up north around the northern part of Los Angeles, around Ventura or some place around in that area.

HS: Oh, that was a pretty sad story.

LC: Because he first came here—How he got to come here was with my father one time. He came here and he was a very well-liked guy, you know. He's a real tall, skinny guy. And he'd do anything to help you. And then, my granddad was living here. Of course, they stayed here with him. He had an old Model-T Ford, you know. Then he would call the old man, my granddad, grandpa, too. Whatever he wanted, he'd go do for him, take him anywhere and do a lot of work around here for nothing, you know, just for being here.

HS: Well, he fed him, didn't he? That's all he needed.

LC: That's more than the rest of them did, more than the rest of the guys who used to come. My dad, why, all he did was stay in the bunkhouse. He was half drunk anyway. Of course, this Olivarez used to drink quite a little bit, too. But when there was work to be done, he would do it. And then my grandfather was the one that got that job over there for him. But Anne wanted a fellow up there first to prune that vineyard that she had up there. She had that back end all full of vineyard. He knew all about the vineyard business, you know. So he went up there and went to work with her, and stayed there three or four months, and later stayed a little bit more, a little bit more. Finally end up, I guess, they got married. She was already about forty, forty-five. And then she had this boy Joseph, Joe. His name was Joe Olivarez, too.

HS: Was his name Joe? I thought it was Tom.

LC: Yeah. And then, I don't know—He quit drinking, you know, there for a while. For quite a while he quit drinking, and then by God he started in again. And then pretty soon, she had to finally get rid of him because, if she wouldn't, he would end up selling the whole ranch. He sold everything he could get ahold on there to drink with.

HS: Surely she didn't give him any interest in the ranch? She had two brothers to tell her not to do that.

LC: Yeah, sure, sure. They finally ended up, he sold up what he could—

HS: Anything that was loose.

LC: Sure. I know they had three or four hundred turkeys up there, you know, when she took sick to go have the baby. By God, by the time when she come back—she was seeing all chickens and turkeys pay for all that kind of medicine and doctors and all that—and by God, when she come back there was no turkey left. The ones he didn't sell, he gave them away! (laughs) I guess she finally got rid of him.

HS: Well, she uses the name Robinson now.

LC: And then poor kid, he got killed in that plane, you know.

HS: I know, right in front of all the relatives, all his cousins. It's so tragic.

LC: Well, you know, just like that Jackie Robinson that was his cousin, too. They take too many chances.

HS: Well, they didn't have any reason for living, I guess. They didn't have to make a living.

LC: He didn't have no business going up there trying to turn around in them hills there because anytime that he's taking a license to pilot the plane, they are giving a lot of instructions: Don't do this and don't do that, and don't this, and the readings. And the first thing he tried to fly up in those small draws in there. He hit an air pocket, and down it went! How could he get it straight? There wasn't enough altitude to

- pick it up again. They had to hit the mountain. That's what happens half of the time these guys are flying nowadays, having so many wrecks, you know. Look at the poor guys they found here, just thirty-five from Long Beach, where they hit the top of that mountain, Mount Wilson, whatever it is.
- HS: Four thousand feet below the top.
- LC: Yeah, well, they should have went up at least farther . . . he could have missed the whole thing.
- HS: Well, I guess Joe left a problem for Anne. She told me that he got married, and he had a little girl, and this little girl lives with her mother and grandmother and all they are doing is waiting for Anne to die so they can grab her property. That's what Anne says. She told me that she doesn't see the little girl, I guess.
- LC: Oh, she left the ranch to her?
- HS: Well, I don't know. She just said they are waiting, that they are going to grab it. They are trying to get support from her. Oh, I don't know. Anyway, go on about your relatives. (flips through papers) We are just gossiping.
- LC: Well, anyway, what's the deal with it? If she is dead, who is taking it? The girl? Sure.
- HS: I suppose Louie's boys think they should get it.
- LC: Well, they bought Louie, you know. The kids bought Louie.
- HS: His sons?
- LC: Yeah, they bought Louie back. Yes, they might have bought him—They paid a million and a half for the whole ranch.
- HS: I thought it was sold to some corporations.
- LC: No, no. Oh, no. It was one of the boys that bought it.
- HS: I didn't know that.
- LC: Jimmy, Jimmy, the one that has a big construction outfit, you know. They pay the old man so much every, every so often that he—
- HS: So he doesn't live there anymore?
- LC: No, he lives in town, I guess, since he had that hungry strike, you know. They found him over there, half dead from lack of nutrition and all that stuff.
- HS: Oh, he didn't eat right.

- LC: Sure. Well, he couldn't feel like eating.
- HS: You know, when he built that dam for us, he was living on carrot juice.
- LC: Yeah, and watermelon. Of course, you know how an older guy like that, he don't care for—he don't feel hungry.
- HS: That's right, the less you eat the less you want.
- LC: Yes. And he used to cook a big pot of beans and make them hot. And sometime if he feels like, he warmed them up, and if he didn't he'd just eat them raw. I mean, not raw but cold. That didn't help him any. He'd eat a lot of deer meat, but he'd eat the deer meat raw. I mean, of course, that's the only way to keep him going.
- HS: Well, back to your uncles.
- LC: We were still on Reyes(?).
- HS: Let's see. We finished Reyes?
- LC: No, we didn't finish Reyes. He married this girl from El Modena, too.
- HS: Who was she?
- LC: She is some relation to the Encinas down there. Her name is Valenzuela. Not the Valenzuela from Capistrano. This is a different Valenzuela altogether.
- HS: She's living? Are they both living?
- LC: Yeah, they are both living.
- HS: I ought to go see him sometime.
- LC: And, of course, Frank, the youngest one. He was the youngest one in the whole family, Frank, the one that died. Of course, he married one of her sisters, too. They were married just like my mother and Benny's mother. They were sisters married brothers. Then Reyes had two girls. And then Frank only had the one boy. And I think his wife is living in Tustin someplace, in one of them homes, trailer ranch, you know. As soon as he died, they threw her out of ranch.
- HS: The Moultons?
- LC: The Moultons, yeah. Just like they did with Juan Serrano, you know.
- HS: What happened to him?
- LC: After he got so old, they threw him out of the ranch, too.
- HS: Which one is he?

LC: He was one of my granddad's brothers.

HS: Didn't make any provisions for them at all?

LC: No, in them days they didn't worry about the social security. (speaks Spanish to his pet)

HS: I am going to shut the—

END OF INTERVIEW

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: WILLIAM FLOYD CRODDY

INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith

DATE: August 5, 1970

LOCATION: Santa Ana, California

HS: This is Helen Smith. Today is August fifth. I'm talking with Mr. William Floyd Croddy of Santa Ana, in his office. Mr. Croddy, we were just discussing—or rather you were discussing the history of the United States and the fact that the country has never been exploited. I would say probably you're in a good position to know about this, having traveled around the world and having done considerable developing in Orange County, and observed the development. Let's go back to your beginnings here. Where were you born?

WC: Born in Mckeen, Illinois, about twelve miles across the Wabash River, June 13, 1903.

HS: When did you come to California?

WC: In 1914. We arrived here on Easter Sunday in 1914, in Tustin; and we had a little apartment in the old Leck property. They had an apartment over there on Main Street and A Street when they had the big old house there.

HS: Was that on the corner where the Ferry's built a house later?

WC: That's right. They tore the old house down and put the new house up. We lived there for about a month until we could find a house, and then we moved out on Mitchell Avenue in a house that belonged to Glen Martin's father. We lived there, I think, about a year and a half as I remember; then we moved into Tustin and lived in the city of Tustin in the house that was owned by Sam Tustin across from the school, the old school that was there in the beginning.

HS: Locate it. Was it on A Street?

WC: No, it was on B and—I can't remember.

HS: We need a map. By the old school you mean the old frame building? Did you go to school there?

WC: Yes, the old frame building. I went to school there. We went from Illinois to Texas and my father and his cousin took farm machinery and stock to farm rice in Texas down near the Gulf. That year was the one year that they couldn't get any water in, so they got no crops. Nineteen-thirteen. Then we left there and my father's cousin went back to Illinois and we came on to California. There were a number of families in the Tustin area that came from the same place in Clark County, Illinois, that we came from, that my folks were well acquainted with. That's why we came to Tustin. The Pages and the Sears, those people all came from the same area that we did, and Harold Taylor. The Sears and the Pages were mainly the ones. The Sears family all moved out here.

Then my Father went to work for the Smart and Final Wholesale Grocery, and he worked there from 1914 to 1916. Then he left there and went to work for San Joaquin Fruit Company and ran their pumps. If you recall, they had a system of pumps that ran from—they had three wells, close to what is now the Lighter-than-air Base, and they pumped water from there into a reservoir there near Culver Corner and what is now the Santa Ana Freeway. And then they had a booster pump that pumped it on up to the highest point on the northeast corner of the San Joaquin Fruit Company property. Then from there they irrigated the ranch by gravity from there on back.

HS: The whole of the flat area?

WC: That's right. My father worked for the fruit company and I worked for the fruit company too. The four years that I went to high school I was in Santa Ana. The only high school in that time was Santa Ana High School. There were no high schools in the southern part of the county. At that time there were Santa Ana, Orange, Huntington Beach, Anaheim, and Fullerton were the only high schools in the county. In my graduating class we had a little over 400 students graduating, you remember, in our class; and they still have about 400 graduating from the Santa Ana High School.

HS: They've reduced the territory. I can remember when Lucana Forster used to drive in from Capistrano, and Effie Jessup from Garden Grove.

WC: That's right. And Harold Knight from Balboa, and all the people from Garden Grove. During the four years I went to high school I worked for the San Joaquin Fruit Company, a great deal of that time. It was a very good place to work.

HS: You know, I can remember you in grammar school very clearly, but when we got to high school, and we both got there the same year, 1922, I don't remember you in high school. I guess you weren't out playing football, were you?

WC: I was president of the junior class, and I was also commissioner of publications. I had a room that I rented down here in the south end of town; it was kind of hard to get into town, you remember, they didn't have any transportation.

HS: We used to ride a bus driven by Jim Green.

WC: Yes, from Tustin in, but then there was still another three and a half miles on out to where we lived.

HS: Where were you living then?

WC: We were living in a house just this side of Culver Corner. It's still there. That's where my family lived. So I rented a room there for three dollars a week. One year I worked for the old Peerless Cafeteria. Remember that? I worked there for my board and room, or for my board, and I got twelve dollars a week plus tips. The tips would amount to about one dollar a week. If you got a ten cent tip, you were doing pretty good.

HS: The reason I said that I didn't remember you in high school was that I was implying that you were busy with many other things besides high school.

WC: Well, I worked all the time and supported myself; but I was very fortunate. You remember Mr. [C. E.] Utt—in 1919, he offered prizes for the boy or girl who earned the most money in the summer vacation, and the one who wrote the best essay about how he earned it. Remember that?

HS: No, I don't remember. The only thing I ever did was pit apricots, the only paying job I had.

WC: I won both, I won first in the earning and second in the essay, so I picked up fifty dollars out of that deal. I earned six-hundred dollars that summer.

HS: I'd say that was an omen of things to come, wasn't it?

WC: Yes—I never thought much about it, but now that it's over—of course there was lots of work to be done, and I was a big husky boy. I can hardly remember when I didn't weigh 175 pounds. And I could fumigate; at fifteen years of age I could pull a fumigating tent, and that was different.

HS: Did you? Did you work for Gravers and Howley?

WC: No, I worked for San Joaquin Fruit Company. They had their own fumigating crew out there. You see they started fumigating in the latter part of July, and we'd cover the ranch by the time school started in the middle of September. From then on they would just do spot work. They'd go through the orange groves and any place that needed further attention, they would just spot it. Weekends, Friday and Saturday night, I would work on that crew.

I was very lucky, as I say. It was the highest wages that laborers were paid; we got eighty-five cents an hour and we would put in as much as thirteen hours a night. In addition to that, I had a car, and we didn't work Sunday nights, so Sunday mornings, with my car, I would take the other men on the crew, take them into the old Palace, Frank Musselman's place, where they would—

HS: Coffee shop, you mean?

WC: (Laughter) Well, it was hardly a coffee shop.

HS: Later it was a coffee shop.

WC: Yes. Well, it's still over there, running as a restaurant, but Frank Musselman supplied most of the big bulk of the laborers to the farmers; and they'd go in there and have breakfast and then from there Frank Musselman provided, well from there they'd either go into Los Angeles and he would provide the means for them to entertain themselves over the weekend, either women or liquor or whatever they wanted, or gambling or anything. By Monday night, then he'd send them back Monday night. Monday night was always a nightmare, because they had spent the weekend two-thirds drunk or all drunk, and then arrived out there Monday night and oh, I used to dread it because I'd be the only sober man. And I'd have all of the swearing and groaning and we'd finally get through Monday night. Then Tuesday they'd get a good day's sleep and then Tuesday night we could get back into the routine.

HS: What kind of people were they? Were they itinerant workers? They weren't Mexicans?

WC: No, we didn't use any Mexicans on the fumigating crew. They were mostly single men. There were one or two that were married and lived on the ranch but most of them were itinerant workers. Itinerant workers came through there. Most all of the labor was furnished by itinerant labor, you know, like bean pilers and threshing machine crews. All of that was largely itinerant works. There were hundreds and hundreds of men that we think of as hippies today. They were hoboes then, although they didn't bother anybody. If they could earn as much as one-hundred and fifty dollars they could cross the continent and back and live for a year on that. They would just work enough to keep alive. They followed the sun, and most of them, when they left here in the fall, would go south and maybe end up in Florida or somewhere where they could sleep outdoors.

HS: They didn't have the habit of going to Mexico for the winter. They do now. Many of the people from Canada, for instance lumberjacks who can't work in the winter, now go to Mexico. I was talking about that business of working until you had enough money to have a good time; I knew several educated young men who did that back in the twenties; and people were horrified at them. They were also forerunners.

WC: Well, I think boys like men—you think at the time—I never thought much about it. Just like now—you're always hearing young men say that they're going to do what they like to do, that they don't like this job. I don't think it ever occurred to me whether I liked what I was doing or not. I just didn't think about it. You just did what there was to do. Of course I think I was very fortunate in that the timing was good for me, which is an important element in people's lives. I'm sure of that. It's just like, in 1918, there was a shortage of labor. The war was going on and the workers weren't back, and any boy who wanted to work could find a job, particularly in the

summertime, in the harvesting. In those days, like thrashing beans, in order to thrash 1200 sacks of beans, it would take seventy-five to eighty men and that many mules; and thirty wagons plus all of the other equipment that went along, the tank wagon, the cook shack, and all of these things, whereas now they'll thrash that many beans in one day with one man, one man on the thrashing machine and one man running the power unit. In addition to that, you'd take four mules on a bean cutter, and that bean cutter would be followed by eight men putting these beans in piles, and now one man on a tractor will not only cut the beans but he will windrow them as he goes. He'll do more than thirty-five or forty men did in that time at the end of a day; and he does that with a piece of equipment that's getting very expensive now, but when they first [came out] you could buy a Farmall and total equipment for, say, less than \$2500. It took the place of around thirty men. That has been one of the things that made it possible to continue to farm beans; you couldn't farm beans today if you didn't have that.

HS: That and the fact that the farms are consolidated into large acreages.

WC: Small farmers can't make it any more. Then, a man with a team could farm. Now, for instance, when you work up the ground for beans we use a DC-6 and the equipment that goes with it. That one piece of machinery is around \$50,000; but one man with that equipment can do more than the equivalent of investment in men were doing at that time—even if you could get them.

HS: It would be very difficult to find farm workers now, wouldn't it?

WC: You can't do it. Nobody is going to do it, just like you can't get men to pick tomatoes, or pick fruit of any kind, the harvesting of fruit. It is becoming impossible to secure anyone who will do menial work. The importation of Mexican labor was about the only way you could do it. I don't think there's anything wrong about that. Knowing farmers like I have for many years, a farmer can do almost anything he has to do but he will not change until he is forced into it. They'd still be thrashing beans with men and teams if they could have gotten them, but when they couldn't get them then they did the thing that they had to do. Farmers have always been a very interesting group of people; and now it has changed to where farming is hardly an agricultural business. It's an industrial business. If you're not a good mechanic, you can't be a farmer. When I farmed, when I ran my own operation out there, we maintained practically a full time mechanic. We had our own shop with all the facilities in it; we had all the tools in there. We could tear down a tractor and put it back together in a day's time, simply because if we didn't have it that way you had to go to town and the loss would have been too great. Everything stopped.

HS: To get back to you, I was thinking also when you were speaking of timing, another thing was that you were between wars, weren't you?

WC: That's right. I was too young for the First World War and too old for the second, although I was classified 1A for a while in World War II, but then I was a farmer.

HS: So, we are now up to high school, I guess. We both graduated in 1922. You were telling me the other day about the job you got selling advertising.

WC: In 1921-22, that year I was in school I was commissioner of publications. And so when the week school started I went down to the *Register*. My job was to get publicity for the school, and I talked to them and we made an arrangement for a certain amount of publicity. Then there was the *Daily News* which was a competing paper, and when I went over there, they offered me a job. My economic situation wasn't so secure that I could avoid that so I took the job, and that's how I made my living during that year, '21 and '22. As you remember, Santa Ana won the All-Southern Championship in 1921, football champions, which was one of the biggest things that happened in the area. There were 2500 people that went over the Ridge Route in Model T Fords and any equipment.

HS: We drove a Saxon.

WC: You drove a Saxon. Well, I was very lucky. You remember Dr. Flood?³ He had a Cadillac and he took me. We left at 2:00 o'clock in the morning and I went with him in his Cadillac. They didn't have any television or radio at the time, didn't even have radio you remember, in '21, and the newspaper arranged for telephone communication. So I would telephone to a man in the building there on the corner of Sycamore and Fifth; the crowd of people that weren't fortunate enough to go to the game had congregated on the old library grounds across the street. I'd telephone to him what was going on in the game and with a megaphone he would announce to the crowd over there what progress was being made. A play by play description; I kept the phone open all the time. I would tell him what was going on and he'd relay it to the crowd. It was quite a thing for the paper. The Santa Ana High School football team that year didn't have any competition, and there wasn't anything else going on; that was the main thing. Santa Ana was then a city of about thirteen or fourteen thousand. From my standpoint I couldn't have had a better job. I got to go to all the games and the newspaper not only paid me a salary but paid my expenses and it worked out very well. I was very lucky.

HS: Did you do this broadcasting for any game except the Bakersfield-Santa Ana one?

WC: Yes, we did it for all out of town games. Not for Fullerton, but we played in Los Angeles and we played in San Diego. Three games we did that. As I say, from my standpoint it couldn't have been better. As we progressed some of the [reporters] who later became famous, like Sid Ziff—he was covering the games for the Los Angeles *Herald*. There were several others, Harold Graham who later wrote several books, and Harlan Hall, who was the editor, and he was probably one of the leading newspapermen in Southern California as time went on. It was quite an experience for a boy my age. But I didn't have any talent particularly as a writer; I knew that. My main ability was getting the news and getting the job done, then somebody else would dress it up. At that part of it I did all right.

³ Dr. Flood is perhaps dentist William A. Flood, found in 1918 directory.—Ed.

I got the news for them and I'd bring it in and I'd type it out the best I could and then they'd take it and put it into form. It worked out very well for me but as I say I knew I didn't have the talent; and anyway they didn't pay newspapermen any money. The highest paid man on the staff was Mr. Hall and he got \$60 a week and then it dropped down to \$30 from there. Some of these men who were well known in the newspaper field worked for \$30 a week; but in the advertising and the business end of it they paid much more. Mr. Conklin, the manager of the business department who also handled the advertising, got \$125 a week.

HS: You're not talking about the *Register*?

WC: No, the *Daily News*. So I wanted to get in the advertising end of it because I felt that that was where the future lay, if you were going to get any better pay than you would—he gave me a job *finally* on a percentage basis and when I got to earning more money than his older men, why, he wanted to put me on the payroll, and so I quit and went to work for the real estate firm of Buxton-Steever, and sold lots down in Corona del Mar for Sims Goodell. They had the contract for selling those lots. And I sold almost half of the original sales made in Corona del Mar. The lots were 30 by 122 feet to an alley, in most cases, and they sold for from \$130 to \$170, \$12.50 down and \$12.50 a month. And they were easy to sell; I don't think I ever made a trip down there that I didn't sell at least two lots. I got a commission of \$12.50 a lot.

HS: It was a well subdivided place then, wasn't it, curbs and gutters and sidewalks?

WC: No, all it had was just stakes around, there weren't any streets or anything. It just had stakes where the corners were, and they were pretty flimsy. They didn't do anything. There was just an oiled road around the bay. You'd go down Palisades Road and they had a little oiled road that followed the bluff around; that's the only way you could get there. There wasn't any bridge across the channel then. Somewhere, it isn't exactly there, but somewhere along what is now Jamboree Road, over along that side.

HS: Someone that I know recently sold one of those lots twenty-five feet wide on Poppy Street for \$25,000.

WC: Well, they put the improvements all in under the 1911 Bond Act, and many of the lots sold later for taxes; but the people who really made the money out of them were the ones who bought them at the tax sales. By that time they were improved and you could build on them, all the utilities were in and from that time on they began to—it was like Lido Isle. The Lido Isle improvements were put in by the Griffith Company under the 1911 Bond Act and within two years afterwards the Griffith Company, who owned the bonds, owned practically all of Lido Isle. And they made a fortune out of that later on.

HS: There wasn't the danger of losing your property because you couldn't pay the bonds, was there? This was what happened in Dana Point. So many people didn't pay the taxes, \$1.25 a half year, very low bonds. Well, they just didn't regard the property as worth saving.

WC: Same thing. Well, or they didn't have the money in the thirties. The 1911 Bonds, we've handled some of them. We've often thought we'd better get into it if we ever get on any scale again; but now most of all the 1911 Bond Acts are in the desert area, and, I don't know, I don't think much of it. You know at Salton Sea there's thousands of dollars worth of bonds down there yet unsold. We've looked at them and although it's rather interesting that there weren't any of them delinquent, which I was amazed at, and we could pick them up on a very good deal. The 1911 and 1913 Bond Acts provided most of the street work in the thirties.

HS: In the communities that were already established?

WC: That's right.

HS: Did you ever go back into agricultural work until you had your own land?

WC: No, no. After I got out of high school, I did work on the fruit company, in the summers through 19—well, until I graduated from high school [1922]. At that time it paid the best wages. There were jobs like fumigating and dusting, if you recall the early days when they used to dust walnut trees. They paid more money to the men who used to dust walnut trees because it was Nicodust and a lot of people couldn't stand it; and you had to be at work by 4:00 o'clock in the morning because that's when it was damp enough for the dust to adhere to the leaves on the trees. There was a lot of that kind of work to be done; it did pay more than standard wages, like in the San Joaquin Fruit Company, which was one of the highest paying. They paid about as high farm wages as any other, anyone else in the area, and they paid \$2 a day and board. They had a big bunkhouse out there. And they had a lot of houses, as you recall, and married men would maybe get \$125 to \$150 a month and a house. Then of course, the average farm laborer was at work no later than 7:00 o'clock and he worked until 5:00 or 5:30.

HS: That was steady work, whereas the work you did was seasonal.

WC: Yes, seasonal, and most of it was contract work.

HS: Did you ever work in smudging?

WC: No, that's one thing I never did do. They didn't smudge on the Fruit Company. You know there was always the argument about whether it was cheaper to smudge or cheaper to lose fruit, so which was the more economical. But they didn't smudge out there. In Tustin, where they did smudge—I was out there most of the time, and one fall I worked in the walnut house. They had to have somebody sleep in the walnut house in order to get fire insurance, so I did that, and then I'd load cars at night after school. I'd get out there at 5:30 when the crew left and I'd stay there until 6:30 the next morning. If they had some cars to load, I would load the cars at night.

HS: By yourself?

- WC: Yes. Gee, that's a weird place to be, to stay in a walnut house at night where the walnuts move all the time and it makes the creakiest [noise].
- HS: Those great big buildings with the high ceilings were kind of creepy.
- WC: Yes, and the wind was blowing through there. That was out on Culver Road north of the railroad tracks. It was a good job. I got \$12 a week for sleeping there and then I'd get \$1.50 for every car I loaded and frequently I could load two cars at night.
- HS: Were they sacked?
- WC: Sacks and barrels. They loaded some with barrels. It was hard work but I knew how to do it, and as I say I was always a pretty husky boy. I always had good health. I started playing football at high school one year. The second game we played was with Long Beach and I sprained my shoulder and couldn't play anymore, so I quit it. Anyway, I couldn't afford to take the time.
- HS: Do you remember the Culver family?
- WC: Yes. "Humpy" Culver.⁴
- HS: Nobody seems to know much about them.
- WC: Yes, he had a great big car. Lived there on the corner of Culver Road and what is now the freeway. Mabel Culver came to high school with us. She married later on; I don't know what's happened to Mabel lately. I haven't seen or heard of her for a long time. She was more the age of my brother; he knew her. I really don't know how they—at the time, in the early days they seemed to be well off. They had that big house and he drove one of the best automobiles. He was a little bitty man with a hump.
- HS: Hunchback, yes.
- WC: They owned quite a little land out there. I just can't recall the details of it, but they owned the corner; I think he owned about a hundred acres in there. I don't know how they lost it or what happened.
- HS: Did they lose it?
- WC: Well, apparently, because Mabel ended up without anything.
- HS: We always thought of them as one of the better fixed families of the day.
- WC: That's right. There were other families through there, like Sam Tustin; I remember him very well. We lived in a house he owned, there on that corner. Charlie Artz ran the grocery store. It was a lot of fun; I think about it. Remember when they formed the first fire department, the first volunteer fire department? They didn't have any

⁴ Fred "Humpy" Culver had a brother, William "Gimpy" Culver whose leg was shot by the Tomato Springs Bandit.—Ed.

kind of a fire department until they formed that volunteer fire department. They took an old Pierce Arrow and put a pump on it and one thing another, and then whenever they had a fire they'd always have a big argument about who got to drive the truck. (laughter)

HS: My father would have remembered that. I never asked him about those days.

WC: I don't know that they ever put out very many fires but they had a lot of fun running to the fires. Of course in that time there'd be an average of maybe one family to every twenty acres out there, something like that, and now there's twenty families to every acre; so it's a different story. I remember we had one of the finest schools in the country, and that was the reason we could, they had a high assessed valuation, oranges were good, and they had a low population. But now it's reversed and they have a high population and their assessed valuation is mostly residential in the Tustin area and it makes a pretty big burden on them.

HS: Well, of course Tustin itself is a very small area, the incorporated part, and takes in (sic) all that land that was zoned R3 around the edges of it.

WC: I think they made a big mistake. Of course it was a matter of opinion again, a matter of community pride but they should have gone in with Santa Ana. They had a lot of troubles out there. You know, there are so many of those little houses out there on large pieces of ground, and when you ran sewer you had a long frontage and the assessments were high, and it's been quite a problem.

HS: I don't remember the installation of sewers there. We always lived outside the city limits.

WC: They just put the sewers in in the last ten years.

HS: Speaking of our grammar school days, do you remember the Los Angeles to Phoenix Road Race? I have a recollection of being let out of school to go down to the corner where D Street turned onto Laguna Road to watch them go around that curve. Can you remember that?

WC: Yes, I remember that; and then in 1917—you know they ran a stage line from Los Angeles to San Diego, and it was all Packard, nine-passenger cars. And they'd go through Tustin sixty miles an hour. And they had one red-headed woman that drove one of the cars, and when she went through there her hair would be flying. Don't you remember that? Around that curve you'd see her red hair. They didn't have any tops on the cars most of the time and she'd go around there going about sixty miles an hour and that red hair flowing back there. She was quite a sight.

HS: What was the stage line called?

WC: I don't remember the name of the stage line but they ran it for quite a long time.

HS: Do you remember Glen Martin being around when your family lived there?

WC: No. I just faintly remember him, but he left here shortly after we got here. He was here, I guess, prior to 1914 is when he started working. And I didn't remember him very much. I remember his father quite well, but I don't remember him because he left. He and his father didn't get along; his father didn't believe in these contraptions that he was building.

HS: I suppose that's why his father never took a ride but his mother did.

WC: Yes, and you know his mother separated from his father and they lived apart for many years. His mother lived with Glen; Glen never married and his mother lived with him all those years.

HS: Yes, she lived a lot longer than he did. Do you remember Eddie Beisel? He told me that he and his brothers went up to Red Hill with Glen Martin one day. He had built a glider from junk; you know his father had a junkyard or secondhand yard in Santa Ana and kept the overflow on the ranch. And he built a glider there and took it up on Red Hill, up on the top of the hill and the little Beisel boys were down below on a rope and they ran and dragged and pulled the glider off of Red Hill with Martin in it and it came out beautifully and it gradually settled down in the orange trees down around Browning Avenue, I suppose.

C: I don't remember much about him. In the airplane, my contact in that area was with Eddie Martin and the Martin boys, and it didn't start until about 1923, '24. They started early, around '21, '22. There was a sheet metal building in the middle of the block between Second and Third, and they worked for George Calhoun, mostly auto parts and that sort of stuff, on Broadway. They worked for George and then they built the airplanes. And then of course they acquired some of these old X5 Jennies from the war and they started flying those. Then Mr. Irvine let Eddie have land down there at the end of Main Street, and they started taking up passengers. Then Eddie had a Nieuport which he used to fly around and do stunts with, a French plane. I used to fly with them quite a little. Joe Skidmore, from Laguna, had a plane down there. Johnny taught me how to fly; I never landed or took off one but I learned to fly them in the air.

HS: I understand that's the easy part.

WC: Oh, I could have landed one if I'd really had to. But I was starting in the building business, and Mr. Bry Williams [First National Bank] decided that I was a better credit risk if I kept my feet on the ground, and that's what stopped my [flying].

HS: Can you describe the setup of the San Joaquin Fruit Company? Was that a subsidiary of Irvine or what?

WC: No—Mr. Sherm Stevens was the heaviest stockholder in it, and Mr. Irvine had a substantial interest in it, and Mr. Utt, I think of the three, he had the smallest interest in it. But he managed it. It was his idea and he put it together and he was the one in charge of it. Mr. Stevens used to come out there once in a while, but not very often, and the management of it was left almost entirely in the hands of Mr. Utt.

HS: Did Stevens and Utt own part of the land?

WC: Yes, they owned the land. The San Joaquin Fruit Company, Mr. Irvine sold the fruit company a thousand acres out there.

HS: How did he get it back?

WC: He didn't get it back.

HS: It's still privately owned? By whom, I wonder?

WC: Oh, there's hundreds of property owners out there, not hundreds but many, many property owners. It's cut up into the—The San Joaquin Fruit Company was all north of Trabuco Road [Irvine Boulevard], all of it. There's a large area in there that runs over as far as, well, it goes the other side of Valencia. There were large, a lot of pieces in there that the Irvine Company never did own.

HS: I know Ray Lambert lives there now, has quite a lot of property.

WC: I have a map of it because we worked up—if it had come about sooner, I would have gone out there and gone to work on it [developing]. But I always try to handle what I can easily here at home; and I didn't want to get involved financially because I've spent the major part of my life having creditors look down my throat all the time. That was one part of my life I was trying to get out of. A lot of that land could have been bought very cheap.

HS: What's the western line of it?

WC: The western line is Culver Road. There's one or two pieces south of that. And then the eastern line is, where the oranges stop, is about where the eastern line is, and the southern line was Valencia Street and the north line was the north line of the San Joaquin Fruit Company, which was about a mile the other side of Irvine Boulevard.

HS: Mr. McFadden's piece had nothing to do with that, did it?

WC: He bought one of the old pieces, see, from the original—he'd owned that for years. He owned that in 1917, 1918, when we first were working out there. He had a fence.

HS: He was always very proud of being a landowner surrounded by Irvine. Four hundred acres, I think they had there. He told me at the time he sold it. It's caused problems in the county, hasn't it? They didn't want that spot zoned out there.

WC: Well, it caused problems in the Irvine Company. I don't think it ever bothered Mr. Irvine. I don't think he ever bothered with it, but later, when they started the development program the Irvine Company was very reluctant to let those people develop their land out there unless they would come in under the master plan. You see, they didn't even have a sewer district out there until just recently. District 7 was divided into two districts, District 7 and District 7A, and that part in 7A did not have

- any sewer facilities. And it's only been just now that they've got the sewer and now it's developing very rapidly.
- HS: I went up Jeffrey Road the other day to see what was going on. There's a trailer park in there.
- WC: Oh, they're building hundreds of houses in there.
- HS: This business of trailer parks is interesting, this recreational area that Macco hopes to do up at the Hollister Ranch; it's very interesting.
- WC: Yes, only I don't think Macco's going to do it. He *did* hope to do.
- HS: Well, to get back to the 1920s, the newspaper business. When did you start buying property? Was it along in those times?
- WC: In 1922, in the fall, I worked on the Corona del Mar deal, and then in 1923 I started building houses. The first house I built was on Maple Street. I formed a partnership with a contractor who came down from Montana; it didn't work out. He and I built quite a few houses together as a partnership, under the name of a corporation called the Santa Ana Improvement Company. But I was young and I was willing to work and he wasn't young and he wasn't willing to work, so at the end of 1923, the summer of '23, I just told him that either he'd buy me or I'd buy him. Well, he liked the setup the way it was because I was doing all the selling of the houses, and he had a foreman that did the building. He'd get down there about 9:00 o'clock and quit about 4:00 and take long weekends, where on the weekends I was out showing houses and at night I was talking to customers. So finally one morning I just said, "Now look, I've had all I want to take of this. You either buy me or I'll buy you." He said he wouldn't do either one. I said, "Okay, then we'll stop this thing right now and I'll sign no more checks." Every check had to be signed by both of us. "So I'll talk to the bank and tell them what the situation is." So by the end of the third day—I thought he was going to buy me, because he didn't have anything else to do. I'd made enough money and I thought I'd go back to SC.
- HS: You were only twenty.
- WC: I'd already gone up to USC and I thought I'd go back to school because I'd always wanted to go to college. I went up there and began checking out my course and was getting ready. I thought sure he was going to buy me, but by the end of the week he sold out to me and so I stayed in the building business. So I built on my own then, from the fall of 1923 through 1926. If you'll remember, we had the typhoid epidemic here in Santa Ana. I had sixteen houses that I couldn't sell and it broke me. I finally settled up with my creditors. On July 1, 1927 I settled up with them; they took everything I owned including my car. I didn't have a thing and I still owed over \$14,000. All I had was an old desk and an old beat-up typewriter.
- HS: I didn't know it put that much of a blight. I graduated from college that year and I went to New York and was gone almost two years; so all this happened while I was

- away. I do remember my friends who died in that epidemic. The shame of that poor man—what was his name, the water engineer? He was blamed for it.
- WC: Oh, yes, [J. L.] McBride. People left this town like flies. Anyway the Depression had already started in '27, though people didn't realize it. Sales of real estate were very good up to about the fall of 1926 and then it stopped.
- HS: I don't understand—did you buy land and subdivide it and then build houses on it, or did you pick up lots?
- WC: Picked up lots mostly.
- HS: How did you work it? Where did you get the money?
- WC: Oh, I borrowed it and on credit. You know, they put on this Wilshire Square down here. Do you remember that tract? They subdivided that, put in all the improvements. There was ninety acres down there. It was bounded by Main and what is now Wilshire; it went down as far as Edinger and went through over to Flower. Leo Borchard put up the money and a man named D. E. Ford did the work on it. They put in all the improvements, they paved the streets and started selling lots. They sold the lots for \$1,200, fully improved. Mr. Ford had been over in Huntington Beach where the oil workers were and he sold lots over there to oil workers. Of course oil workers were very affluent at that time. Huntington Beach was in its heyday. They got 25 percent down and 25 percent a year. That's where he made his mistake. If he'd had monthly payments they might have kept them up, but at the end of the year they didn't have another \$250 so they just let him take the lots back. So at the beginning of 1925 they did not even have one house built down there; so I made a deal with them. I took sixty lots and I paid them \$100 down on each lot. They took back a third trust deed for the \$1000. Then I built houses and sold them and I put on a first mortgage, in those days, and a second trust deed and then they'd have the third, which they got at \$10 a month. I could sell a house for \$100 down. The houses sold for around \$4,500—\$3,500 to \$4,500. And I built the first new house that was built south of what is now McFadden. I built sixty of them in there that year, and I was the biggest builder. (laughter) Why, I was the biggest builder in this whole country. I built sixty houses in one year and sold them. And it turned out very well. The interesting thing about it was that those third trust deeds that they took, they collected better than fifty cents on the dollar. Later on, if they'd kept the lots, you could have bought the lots down there for \$250. They really came out better by doing that, and we did get houses in there and we did get some activity started. And I go by there and I can still see those houses that I built. There's about six or eight of them on Flower Street; they were scattered through the tract. Most of them were two, some of them three bedrooms, frame, stucco—mostly stucco.
- I had a crew. Oh, I worked. I went two years one time and didn't take one day off, not Christmas or—I did my own building. I had a little shop down here on First and Bristol, where we made our built-ins. You know they put in a mantel and a buffet. We did all that down there and the window frames and everything were built down there

and hauled to the job. And I had my own plastering crew. But it was quite a trick to sell. I'd be on the job at 6:00 o'clock in the morning and by 10:30 I'd have my work lined up and everything going. And then from 10:00 most of the rest of the day I'd be working with my banker and getting the financing set up. Of course the people that loaned the money were available in the daytime. Then at night I'd see the people that were going to buy the houses. So I was never one of the unemployed. I think I averaged probably fourteen hours a day, but I never thought much about it. It was interesting. Huntington Beach was going good and I could sell houses. You know, they were moving houses out and drilling wells over there, so lots of times in the mornings when I wasn't busy doing anything else I'd head for Huntington Beach and just go from door to door. And I'd say, "Do you want to buy a house in Santa Ana," and that's the way I sold them.

HS: I think you told me the other day when you got your real estate license.

WC: I got that in 1922, and all I needed to do was send in five dollars. There wasn't any examination or anything. If you had five dollars you could get a real estate license, that was all there was to it.

HS: I take it you never let it lapse.

WC: I still have it. Now it is extremely difficult to get one. You've got to spend two years as an apprentice before you can even apply for a broker's license.

HS: So, that brings us up to '27. Was it those places that you lost on?

WC: No, I came out all right on that; but I built some scattered around town. I had some out on Third Street, odd lots that I could pick up. At the time I thought it was pretty bad: I didn't have any money, I didn't have a car even, and I owed all this money. But I didn't go through bankruptcy. I made up my mind that I was going to pay this. You know, I had eighty-five creditors. It was an interesting thing the way it worked out. Finally I decided—the credit bureau was willing to handle it but they wanted 25 percent of what I paid in. They'd handle it and pay the creditors as I could pay them. I said, "No, I'll either pay it all or I won't pay anything." You know, I wasn't going to compromise. I could see no value in that. So I drew up an agreement, that if I would pay these people 25 percent of what I owed them each year, nobody would sue me. You see, the trouble I had was that every time I'd get a buck somebody would, as I was afraid they'd grab it. So they all signed it.

So I started working. You can always find something to do. State Mutual Savings & Loan had 138 houses that they'd foreclosed on in this area, around Santa Ana, Orange. So I got the job. I got \$150 a month for looking after those houses for them, keeping them rented and looking after them. They had a four-man crew they sent down and these men would, if a house was vacant, they'd go through it and clean it up and paint it and put it up in shape. Then I would sell the house; and I could sell it for \$100 down, or anything I could get down on it. The houses sold for \$2,500 to \$3,750, was the highest price. Well, I always was able to sell them and so I got a

living out of that. There again, I would get up early in the morning and look after the houses that weren't [sold] and by 10:00 o'clock if I'd have a house for sale, I'd just start knocking on doors and just go right around the block and keep on. Pretty soon I'd see the milkman on the route and delivery people, and say, "I've got this house for sale over here. Do you want to buy it?" In low-cost housing—and that's one reason why I've always favored it—the people you sell it to will help you sell other houses. You can take low-cost—they like to have their friends and family around them. But in the high-priced they don't want any relatives near them or anything, and they won't recommend anybody, they won't help you at all. As a matter of fact they're a detriment. A house that sells for, say, \$35,000, they're really hard to sell and they're hard to please people. What that woman who buys a \$35,000 house really wanted was a \$60,000 house and she's had to compromise anyway. So they're very difficult. But the people that bought these houses for \$100 down, they weren't very finicky. They were very easy to please and we got no complaints out of them. So that's how I got back into the business; finally I got my creditors paid off.

HS: How long did it take?

WC: Took me seven years; but I paid every dime of it, by '34. Then I finally saved \$1,000. I just lived up here at the Y and paid \$2 a week for a room.

HS: You weren't married.

WC: No, I didn't get married until 1934. There was a restaurant down here on Main Street and I made a—on Fourth Street—and I made a deal with him. You remember they used to have meal tickets? I don't know whether they [still do]. I made a deal with that fellow. I can't remember what I did for him; anyway, I got a meal ticket that ran me for six months, so I could go down there and eat. So I didn't have any problem about that. I made a deal and bought me a car for one \$100, so then I got transportation. I just kept working it until I got back into the [business]. But it was very interesting about the money I owed. I paid it back during a period, now like one man that I owed about \$285. One day his wife came in and said that he had a disability policy that he was going to lose if he didn't pay the premium of \$70 within a week. He was getting old and they were all upset over it; they were at the end of their rope. I finally dug up and paid them \$70 on what I owed them and they paid it and in thirty days that man had a stroke and never worked another day in his life! If I hadn't owed them the money—if I'd paid it when I owed it, they'd have lost it, it would have been gone. There were many cases like that. There was one thing it did for me: when I got it all paid off, I never had any credit problems. My reputation was made. I owed the First National Bank \$1,200, and I always managed to keep the interest up in one way or another. I never let the interest go delinquent, and finally I made a deal for them and got the \$1,200 paid off; and I never asked the bank for a loan that I didn't get.

HS: So in a way it was a good thing.

WC: Yes, it really was. You think it's awful, but it turned out to be a real good thing, a real benefit.

HS: Of course it might not have happened at all if it hadn't been for the Depression, but that money that you were paying back was probably very welcome during the Depression too.

WC: Oh, no. Today, paying anybody \$200 wouldn't mean anything, but then—

HS: Well, that's the end of this tape.

END OF INTERVIEW



Figure 1: Tenting trees for fumigation

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: ELEANOR DARROUGH
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: May 21, 1969
SUBJECT: Life in Ramona and on the Rancho Santa Teresa

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm talking with Mrs. Eleanor Darrough in her home at 1021 B Street in Ramona. I'm not sure what the date is—what is today, Mrs. Darrough? Is it May twenty-first?

ED: Yes, my grandson goes today.

HS: This is the twenty-first of May and I'm going to ask Mrs. Darrough about what she remembers about life around Ramona and on the Rancho Santa Teresa in early days. Mrs. Darrough, you were just starting to tell me that your grandparents—

ED: My grandfather, William Warnock, and his wife, Ellen Warnock, brought the two half orphans and their mother home with them after my father was laid to rest on the ranch above our home near the Rotansey (sp?) ranch. And I lived there until I went into San Diego State Normal. I was six years old in June and this was in February that my father died there.

HS: What happened? Was he accidentally killed?

ED: No, we never knew what killed him. He came home with his team and with his oil slickers in the rain. And he lived that night and the next day, the next morning he was gone at five o'clock in the morning. My uncle, Austin Warnock, took a letter from my mother down to an old doctor who lived on the old Julian Highway, and the doctor told my uncle that my father would be gone at five o'clock in the morning, which he was.

HS: Was he a doctor or a soothsayer?

ED: He was just an old-fashioned doctor. He didn't go out at night, you see, so he didn't come to see my father.

HS: Do you remember the doctor's name?

ED: No, I don't think I do. —Whitney, I believe. I believe it was Whitney. But, he told the truth. It was an awful blow to my mother I can see her just walking back and forth, back and forth. She was just beside herself. She wasn't very well, either, my mother wasn't. She had always a pain in her side, as I remember her.

HS: Who were the other children?

ED: Just one child, my sister, four years younger than I. Clara Mabel was her name.

HS: Is she living?

ED: Oh, no. She has been gone since a good many years ago. So long, it was in the twenties sometime.

HS: Then that left you with your mother.

ED: We lived with my grandparents until I went into State Normal. And my sister and my mother were living there at the old ranch at the time my grandfather and my grandmother both passed away in '96 and '97. And my grandfather died of cancer of the arm from an accident that had happened out fixing the fence. And the chain broke loose and the post hit him on the shoulder and from that on, he did not have one minute's peace. He was in pain most of the time until he passed away. So then my uncle took over the ranch; it was left to him.

HS: What was his name?

ED: Austin Warnock.

HS: Yes, I heard that name the other day.

ED: He is also gone now, quite a long time ago. And so we finally moved away from the ranch. After I was in San Diego State Normal, my mother and sister moved down to San Diego. When I graduated from the San Diego State Normal in 1908 after five years in the college, I came out and I taught school in this county at Imperial Valley—in Imperial Valley for four years and on Mesa Grande for four years. And that's the end of my teaching experience.

HS: Mary was telling me that you were teaching in the valley at the same time that she and Toddy were right after they got out of college.

ED: Yes, I was teaching at Sealy, and I probably would have been there much longer, but my husband never had good eyes, and his eyes were bothering him. The doctor insisted that he move away from the valley. It was too dry and it was not a good place for him. So we moved back to Ramona, and that's when I went to Mesa Grande to teach for four years. (tape interrupted) My mother was born in what is San Diego today when there were two little shacks there. Old Town was the main town then. And, my mother, my grandmother carried her in her arms beside the wagon which my grandfather drove with a jerk line up through the old road which is Highland Valley today. That was called a toll

road at that time. And so it was not traveled very much, but how they ever made that up to Santa Teresa—

HS: Is that the road that comes into the San Pasqual?

ED: Yes. No, I think it joins the—I think the road is in the San—(pause) I don't know where it joins in, but it doesn't come through San Pasqual. It joins in the old toll road.

HS: I don't know.

ED: I wonder why that isn't established so that people could know it was there.

HS: It may be, but I've never heard it mentioned.

ED: It's the only road into Ramona.

HS: Into the back country, and therefore, into Julian, too.

ED: Yes. Of course, I suppose there were trail roads. The road into Banner was always a terrible road. So that people hesitated about going down there; unless they had business they didn't go because it was such a bad road.

HS: Well, gold was certainly a business enough to make them go over a very bad road.

ED: Gold was a drawing card in Julian, and Julian was the center of attraction, and it is today. There is something about Julian that draws people.

HS: Mary and I were saying the same thing: What a strange place, Julian, and what strange people live there, whose ancestors have lived there. It's very odd. Have you any idea when this was?

ED: My mother was born in San Diego in '58—

HS: And she was still a baby.

ED: And when she was brought up to live in—they lived in a ramada built of willows, I imagine. First they located on the banks of the old Wash Hollow Road until my grandfather would look around and see where he wanted to settle. There was nothing here but wild Indians and wild horses. And the Indians had reservations near the bank of the Wash Hollow and that's why they put their ramada there by, near the Indian encampment.

HS: Where is Wash Hollow?

ED: It is right out of Vyena⁵ on the south side, if you know where Vyena is.

⁵ Pronounced (Vī . een. a)

- HS: The old road to Ramona?
- ED: On the old Julian Highway.
- HS: Well, that's near the old stage station, then.
- ED: Yes, it is. Where the Swycuffers used to live. Well, you turn to the left on that road that bears off to the south, and that is Wash Hollow over that hill. There's quite a little bit of land in there.
- HS: It's below the Charlie Sawday place then?
- ED: Oh, it's right back of the Charlie Sawday place. Yes, it is.
- HS: Okay, that locates it for me. There were Indians in there then?
- ED: There was an Indian reservation there, and there's quite a few stories I could tell you there.
- HS: Please do.
- ED: There's a very interesting story about my uncle. Sam Warnock was my grandfather's brother. He was responsible for bringing them here in the sailing vessel. He kept writing, Come to California, William. It's wonderful things ahead here. And so that is why my grandfather came around the horn in a sailing vessel with a wife and a baby in her arms and two small children.
- HS: I wonder how long it took them. Months?
- ED: Months and months! And when they got to the equator, there they struck the calm and there they were for days and days 'til the wind would come and take them on.
- HS: That was in the Pacific coming north?
- ED: Yes. And no women on the vessel but my grandmother, and my grandfather and the sailors visited and had a great time.
- HS: She probably had babysitters among the sailors, I bet you.
- ED: But they had no fresh vegetables and no refrigeration on that vessel. It's a miracle they lived.
- HS: No milk. Imagine even coping with things like diapers for a baby. Oh dear! We're pretty soft these days, aren't we?
- ED: My grandmother was a very energetic person, and oh, she just nearly died of homesickness.
- HS: What year was that?

ED: That's what we don't know; we have no record of it. And I didn't listen to my grandfather and my grandmother, so—She was so homesick, my grandfather “ to her, Ellen, why don't you learn to smoke a pipe?” A clay pipe, and she learned to smoke that pipe to save her reason, I guess. And she smoked that pipe up to the day of her death.

HS: Do you know where they came from on the East Coast?

ED: Yes, I do know. Pennsylvania. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She had been employed by a very wealthy Quaker woman there who was very fond of my grandmother. And she begged her not to go: Stay with me and I'll leave you all my money when I go. But did my grandmother care? She went with him—

HS: To the Wild West.

ED: So that is the story of the beginning of the trip, anyway, and they arrived in San Francisco eventually, and came down on the old side-wheeler to San Diego. That is all in the archives in Marston's Building on the hills outside of San Diego.

HS: Yes, the Serra Museum.

ED: It's all there. My oldest grandson went to see that and to find out for sure where my grandfather came from. He came from the north of Ireland on the Scotch border—

HS: This is a Warnock?

ED: Yes, Warnock, and the name is there, W-A-R-N-O-C-K.

HS: It sounds more Scottish to me.

ED: Well, 'tis, you see, it's on the Scotch border. And so they were all, not many in the family, just my grandfather and his brother Sam and the old mother who was very very old and very frail. And of course, my mother just worshipped her old grandmother.

HS: These people came from the British Isles to Pennsylvania?

ED: Yes, we will say they were immigrants into—

HS: Yes. That would have been in the 1840s, do you think?

ED: Oh yes, at least there.

HS: Before the gold strike.

ED: Yes, because my mother was born in '38. Of course, my aunt, Mary Ann Dye, that was the oldest Dye—she married Bruce Dye's father. Years after, her son was a neighbor of Mrs. Sawday for many years. So she was ten years old at the time my mother was born. And the older boy was twelve years old, and he was dragged to death by a horse at the ranch. You see, in those days San Bernardino was the nearest place for supplies, and my

grandfather went every year and would be gone a whole month over the deserts by way of Warner ranch to San Bernardino, alone in a wagon.

HS: Was that better than San Diego?

ED: There was no San Diego.

HS: No supplies there, I see what you mean.

ED: What was shipped from San Diego was the hides from cattle and the tallow that was rendered and things like that. But there was no shipping from San Diego, so San Bernardino was the nearest supply center. That's where he went. And so, while he was there on this particular time, he brought back a man with him. He was very hungry and had nothing, hardly any clothes on his back, and my grandfather was a very kindly person. So he brought this man home with him, and the man stayed with them for several years. On the next trip, my grandfather went back to San Bernardino a year later, and left his family. This is when Harry was dragged to death by the horse. And he was just getting back to Witch Creek where the Sawday house stands today, and Mrs. Dye, Mary Warnock her name was then, met her father to tell him that Harry was dead. And so my grandfather had to come home and pick up what lumber he could find. And you know, there was no lumber, only what was brought down from Palomar Mountain or Volcan, and make a way to bury that boy.

HS: Was he buried on the ranch?

ED: Yes, he was buried on the hill above the ranch. Later on he was taken up and buried in the Old Town cemetery.

HS: Is there a marker down there?

ED: We don't know.

HS: I don't know either, because that cemetery is a lot smaller than it used to be.

ED: I don't think—it is. My grandfather is buried and so is my grandmother in the cemetery in Mission Hills, and that is cement, the lot has been cemented over and the two stones there, the lettering is just perfect. It's been there since 1912. My grandfather died in '97 and my grandmother in '96. My uncle had those stones placed there. So I don't know just how long, but soon after they were laid to rest he had the stones put there. The lettering is perfect on them. But the three Dye children who died in the old Dye Valley, one with diphtheria, and one with worms—I guess he had worms and when they put him into the tub with the hot water and didn't put a cloth on his head, he died immediately. So there were three of the Dye children and they were taken up and they are buried in the same plot. They were buried there many years after my grandparents were buried. The lettering is very indistinct on their stone. I have been there to visit the grave.

HS: What is the name of that cemetery?

ED: It's the old Mission Hills. And I think they're, I think they are going to do something about the people who are buried there. And I thought maybe a letter would come to me or maybe to Gene Warnock. He is alive here; he is Uncle Austin Warnock's son. He is my first cousin and Arthur Warnock is also living here. So maybe they will get the letter. So I should ask them and see if one comes. Because otherwise, I don't think they'd know who else to write to. They wouldn't know to write to me because my name is not the same—

HS: No, not unless you tell them.

ED: And I wouldn't know what to write.

HS: They're going to move them, you think?

ED: I think they are. I think they are going to move them and if anybody doesn't come to do something about it, they will just take over.

HS: They have to move them because this is a proper cemetery. They can't throw them away

ED: They will move them then?

HS: Well, I would imagine what's going to happen is that they are in the path of progress and they want that land to develop. But if they do that, they must provide another place to put these people.

ED: You see, there are priests buried in there. Our much beloved old priest is in there.

HS: Which one?

ED: Father Ubach is buried there. And I think he had quite a bit of wealth behind him, you know. So he must have somebody that will be interested.

HS: Yes. You just can't wipe out a cemetery.

ED: No, and then the McCoys are in there. That was the first sheriff of this county. He and his wife are buried there, and she married a man by the name of Mertha (sp?) and I see their stone was there, too, in very good shape. I feel that if nothing is done, that our stones will last there as long as the world lasts. And that cement, someone, it must have been Mrs. Austin Warnock who had that cemented, all cemented over so that there was no chance of anything happening to the graves, because so many of the stones are thrown down and—I suppose the vandals have done that.

(pause in recording)

HS: We were discussing, before we got on the subject of cemeteries, the fact that your grandfather used to go to San Bernardino with a team to bring the needed supplies that they couldn't produce. Do you remember what kind of supplies they brought?

ED: He brought home enough flour to do the family for a year. He brought matches, those little wooden matches, old-fashioned matches, in a can, a tin can. They came in a five-gallon tin can. He brought those. He brought beans—he usually raised his own beans, but any supplies that he did not raise he had to bring from San Bernardino. And on one of his trips, he needed to shoe his brake block. So he got down, he saw a boot on the desert, and he got down to use it for that purpose, and in it he found the skeleton of a foot. So he went on without shoeing the brake block.

HS: Heaven knows whose boot that was.

ED: No, he had no way to know. Those are one of the things that happened in that wasteland between Warner and San Bernardino at that time.

HS: I wonder if the route they followed was somewhat as the Palms to Pines Highway goes.

ED: I think probably, and nobody knows exactly where it was. And probably they just used the route that they could travel. If there was any big storm in the mountains and the route was full of water, then they would have to go round about.

HS: Usually, though, there are a few routes that start with Indian trails. They take the easiest way, which isn't always very easy.

ED: And there were so many Indians in the country then, and wild horses. That was about all there was here then. And then, of course, I don't know exactly, people sewed by hand. They didn't have sewing machines, and so he would bring home cloth for my grandmother to make clothes for the children.

HS: Calico and muslin?

ED: Yes, and things like that. It wouldn't be the same as ours today, of course. It would be very coarse material, blue denims perhaps and real heavy material. I know I wore denim dresses to school until I was quite a big girl.

HS: Overall material?

ED: Yes.

HS: Did it come in different colors?

ED: No, it was the same blue.

HS: Navy blue but faded.

ED: And I'd wear that dress one week to school and then it would be washed and I'd wear the other one the next week. That was the way it went. And at one time, after, my grandfather raised quite a, with Indian labor, mind you too, he raised quite a bit of grain and had it stored in one of the rooms of the ranch house. There are three main rooms in that ranch house, and the one that is at the east end had a shingle roof on it by that time.

And so my grandmother was frying bacon over the fire in the morning, over a fire place, they didn't have cooking stoves. Stoves had not come out at that time. A spark from the frying bacon caught the tule roof which covered two rooms of the house, and this old man that my grandfather had brought home with him, he was a one-legged man, and he got up on that roof and saved the grain. But, they lost everything else. My mother said that grandmother took mattresses off the bed and made dresses for the girls and shirts for the boys. But, think of the hours of sewing by hand!

HS: Yes, and mending too, because you couldn't throw a garment away.

ED: No, so I think then—above the old Santa Teresa ranch there are two very large rocks which we always called Cloudy's Rocks, and I think that is where they went up there. Why, I don't know, maybe for shelter after the home was burned. And my mother was so proud of her dress made out of the mattress cover, the old ticking. Of course, she was a little girl then and she was quite a hand for sewing and making pretty things. So I often was amused to think how she was so proud of it.

HS: Maybe it made her feel like a heroine, she had been through an experience. Well, I suppose they went back to living under a ramada until they could get the house repaired.

ED: I think so. Then after this, the younger boy—they had, my grandfather was a doctor most of the time, and they had three little boys who came to join their circle after they came here. One was Billy Warnock and the other was Austin and Jimmy. And Jimmy was unfortunate enough to pick up scarlet fever somewhere, and there was no doctor so my grandmother saw him die in her arms. And for a long time—she always sang at her work—but Mother doesn't sing anymore, the children said to each other. And one day, my mother said Grandmother was singing again. "Did you hear that, Sarah?" she said to her sister. "Yes, Mother is singing again!" So she had recovered from it. But you know, she never forgot Jimmy, her baby, you know.

HS: She didn't have any more children?

ED: No. No, she had seven as it was; she had done her part. And so, there's two laid to rest. And Jimmy was laid beside his brother on the hill above the ranch house and then his body was taken to the cemetery in Old Town later, when Harry was taken there. But, it left a very bad scar—

HS: Oh, this happened so many times in our backgrounds, didn't it? People would have twelve children and perhaps three would grow up. All that effort and labor.

ED: I mentioned that because the pioneer days were hard. I marvel at the courage of my grandmother. So homesick! And my grandfather, when he would go to San Bernardino he would always bring something back for her, usually a picture. And you know, she would cry when she saw that because she knew that he would never leave.

HS: What kind of mail communication did she have with the East?

ED: Oh, I don't know. Sam Warnock drove the stage, the old stage, you know, the old stage line for years—

HS: The Butterfield, from down in the valley?

ED: Yes, and so with this means he had sent for his mother and his sister. And then his old friend through the war days, George Bradley's mother and sister, he sent for the brother and the sister to come and join his folks.

HS: From Ireland or from the eastern United States?

ED: From Scotland, the Scotch border, these all came.

HS: I suppose they came by ship to New York—

ED: I imagine so, yes.

HS: To Ellis Island and then—

ED: They must have come overland in a covered wagon because I don't think they came around the horn like my grandparents did.

HS: Well, my grandfather didn't do that. My grandfather came before he was married. Like all young men, he wanted to kick up his heels a little, so he came to Nevada to do some silver mining. I have a teaspoon, so do all his grandchildren, teaspoons that were made of the silver that was mined there. He got it out of his system and went back, but he went down—he was living in New York state, went by ship to Panama and took the little train across to Aspinwall⁶ and then got on another ship and went to San Francisco. That would have been somewhat later, I guess.

ED: Yes, I would imagine, because I don't think there was anything like that—

HS: No railroad across the isthmus.

ED: No, I don't think so.

HS: Well, it certainly saved them a lot of miles and suffering.

ED: Well now, the Panama Canal is not feasible anymore.

HS: No! It's obsolete. (chuckles) Well, they probably came by covered wagon, I suppose. Sometime when I think of those days—the women walking beside the oxen carrying a baby, and at night getting the wood together and boil the beans and make the bread and make up the beds—

ED: And sour bread, too! They made good bread. And so then I wanted to tell you—then perhaps, I don't know what year they began to come in. The Swycaffers came; my

⁶ The city is now Colón.

grandmother's first neighbor was Mrs. Swycaffer. The Swycaffers came in, the little Pages began to come.

HS: Could you give anything on their background? I remember Lloyd Swycaffer; he was very handsome when he was a boy.

ED: That's Jeff's children. You see, that's the oldest Swycaffer boy's children you're talking about. They were handsome and they had such wonderful personalities. Well, they had such a wonderful mother, Mary. She could fill any position; that was a wonderful woman. And her father was a white man, you know, MacIntyre. He kept the post office in Vyena for years. So he must have been pretty well educated, you see. And he was rather an unusual old man in many ways. My mother always went to him for advice about her business, because my father left without a will, you see. He had paid for this place that he had worked so hard for us to have security, and then he didn't live to enjoy it with us. We always felt we were cheated when we didn't have our father you know, although we had a good grandfather, a *wonderful* grandfather. And an uncle, too, was very kind to us. And all that, but we didn't have our father, and that was the one thing, for me especially, I was especially devoted to my father. I guess he was fond of me, too. He would always tell my mother, You'll be proud of her someday. He loved me very much and so, I guess, I loved him, too. I missed him and I always will. I always will.

HS: More than if he had lived out his life, probably.

ED: Oh, yes, maybe that is true too, because maybe we would have had conflicts.

HS: Yes, and you'd have been used to him. It's quite different; it makes people look more heroic, I think.

ED: I know, and he had one book that he kept with him. And so, I've given that to my son-in-law who is very fond of Shakespeare. He had this old volume of Shakespeare; it probably is very valuable today. I don't know, but my son-in-law has it. So maybe he will never do anything about it, maybe he will sell it. That's up to him. I was glad to let him have it because he loves Shakespeare. And it was falling apart it was so worn from being drifting. Then I have an old schoolbook of my father's that I have kept. In it, he had his name and his age and where he came from. So I treasured that; I just keep it for that. It's just about broken in two, and oh, what print they had for children to read. Oh, I just, I couldn't read that print today!

HS: Well, children's eyes are better—Where did he go to school?

ED: In New York. They came from New York, the Graves. The two brothers came from New York and left their folks behind them there. And so he had another brother that was left there, and this brother had twin daughters, Helen and Ellen Graves, and that's all I know about them. We just have not kept in touch with them. And my mother was so busy that she didn't have time to write to many people, and so in that way we have not kept in touch. It's too bad; I wish we had.

HS: This was your grandmother's family?

ED: My grandmother, my mother when she came to live with my grandmother she took over the house and did most of the work. My grandmother was not too well at that time. She had very bad varicose veins. And so she got a fall on the back porch, it was slippery. They had been washing the porch and it was quite slippery and she slipped and fell. And from that time on, she was in bed most of the time. And my uncle brought the doctor from San Diego—that was a long way to bring the doctor. And he also brought the priest from San Diego, too, because she was a very devout Catholic. Although, when she married the Protestant, she was excommunicated from her church. But, she was not excommunicated in her spirit. She always lived up to the faith. That's why I have any religion today, is due to my grandmother. She instilled it into us. She was a very good woman. And my grandfather was one of the best old men. I just loved him so much. That's his picture up there; you can see he's a very fine man.

HS: The upper one, yes. He looks very dignified.

ED: Oh, he was very—he never once gave us a cross word in all the lifetime that I had at the ranch with him. Never did he look at us cross-eyed even. And he would sing to us at night when I know he was mortally tired. He'd take one of us on each arm and in the rocking chair he would sing, and he couldn't sing, you know, but he did the best he could. (chuckles) We thought it was wonderful singing. And so, because he wanted to help the little orphans. It shows us how kind he was. And he worked very hard.

HS: Did he have Indian workmen on the ranch to help him?

ED: Oh, that's the only kind of work, that's all he had to help him.

HS: Did they live there on the ranch?

ED: I don't know about that. I think maybe some of them would camp there. They were very timid, those Indians. And they didn't presume to eat with you or anything like that.

HS: Well, their food was so different, too.

ED: And you know, they'd come—the Indians loved my grandmother, and she always said she never feared the Indians. But she had cause to fear the white man, and so she never let an Indian leave her house without giving him something to eat or to wear. No matter if she had to take it from some of her own family who needed it. She never let them go from her house without some gift or other. And after she went, they would come weeping, you know.

HS: Well, we all have a great debt to the Indians. The awful things we've done to them; she was partly repaying it.

ED: She just felt that the Indian didn't get the treatment he deserved.

HS: He didn't get the land that he deserved.

ED: I would like to tell you what she had to fear from this white man that my grandfather had befriended. After he had lived with them a whole year—

HS: This is the man with the one leg?

ED: No, this is not that man, this is another man. That man was named Smith and I think he was related to the Smiths from the old Smith Mountain. They used to call Palomar Smith Mountain. And he was a one-legged man and he saved the whole room of grain for them which was a great thing in those days because they had the seed to plant for the next year.

But this man, my grandfather had brought him home. He had never seen him before in his life, so he took an awful chance. But you know, in those days you didn't take the chance—today there *is* danger. There wasn't danger in those days. You know, it was a different time. People were kind; they didn't do awful deeds. You never heard of any awful deed being done. So, he comes home with my grandfather and he lives there a whole year with them. I don't know how he helped them or a thing about it or whether he did his part, but I imagine he did. So my grandfather, my grandmother kept—and I have the old red chest out on the back porch yet—an old chest that she kept this paper money that was worthless from the Civil War. So he [my grandfather] said, "Ellen, you better give me some of that money now," when he was going to San Bernardino for supplies. So she went to the chest and opened it and took out a big bunch of it, you know. It wasn't worth much but it could be traded. So this man was looking on; he saw the money. And that was very foolish of my grandmother to do that. But my grandfather left and that evening after they were all asleep, the baby was asleep—my mother was the baby then—and so he waked up and he came in and he stood over my grandmother and he said, "I'm going to kill you!" She said—my grandmother was a good talker and she said, "Why would you kill me? What will you do with my little baby here and my children? Will you leave them here at the mercy of animals and no one to care for them?" And she talked to him until he began to cry. But he went outside along the ramada and he was asleep in five minutes. So she knew that he'd be back. So she said, "Mary Ann, take care of the baby for me. I'm going out and sit among the Indians for the rest of the night." So she went out and sat among the Indians, and just about daybreak—if you didn't know Sam Warnock, and people that do know him will agree with me that there was no sentiment in his whole makeup. He was very fond of my mother; he admired her very much, but that was all. He came at daybreak and threw himself off the horse where my grandmother was sitting, he says, "Thank God, Ellen. You're safe. Where is that man?" "Sam," she said, "he's asleep over there beside the ramada." He had a black snake in his hand and he said, "I'll teach him that he will not bother people." He said, "I had an awful dream last night. I thought he was about to kill you." She said, "Sam, he was going to kill me but I talked him out of it. But I know he'll be back again tonight, because he was asleep in five minutes after he left me." And so he went and waked that man up and he drove him ahead of him on the horse down over the old stone grade. That was the last time he was seen. But my grandfather saw him a year later sneaking out of the restaurant when he went in. So he made it to San Bernardino; he got back to San Bernardino over that desert!

HS: Alone.

- ED: He must have found somebody to help him. So that is a dream that came true from a man that you'd never think would pay any attention to a dream.
- HS: I was going to ask you about Sam Warnock. What brought him here?
- ED: He came here from the Civil War.
- HS: He came before his brother, though, to the states.
- ED: Yes, he and George Bradley came together from, I think it must have been that Mexican part of the war that they came through in Texas.
- HS: In 1840?
- ED: They must have come through from that, because George Bradley and he met in the Civil War. So they were fast friends until their dying day.
- HS: Civil War? You mean the Mexican war. The Civil War wasn't until 1860.
- ED: The Civil War was ahead of them, but this part of the war they had been in together, and so they were fast friends for all the rest of their lives.
- HS: George Bradley was not from the British Isles?
- ED: No, he was from Ireland.
- HS: Oh, he was? Did they come together from Ireland?
- ED: No, they met at the war in Texas, and that's where they formed a lasting friendship.
- HS: Did Sam marry?
- ED: Sam married Mariah Bradley.
- HS: Who was she? Was that a sister?
- ED: That was George Bradley's sister. And Bob Bradley was here; he was very deaf. Sam had him brought out here with the rest of them. After he had driven the stage for years, he saved his money and sent back for them to come. He was always a man—Sam Warnock was a man that was honest as the day was long. That was the only thing that was very fine about him. But he was a very hard man. He wasn't at all like my grandfather. He was the exact opposite, as two brothers always are. They never seemed to get along in this country, and that's why I marveled at why my grandfather would come. He must not have always got along with his brother either and they didn't here. They didn't ever visit that I ever remember. I can remember Sam Warnock bringing his wife *once* to the ranch house, and I think that was because of my mother that he brought—he was always fond of my grandmother. He admired her very much. Well, he should have. She was a fine person.

- HS: Did I understand that your grandfather homesteaded?
- ED: Yes, he did.
- HS: Where did the name come from? Was it a part of an earlier grant?
- ED: The Indians named that valley Santa Teresa.
- HS: But that was after they were supposedly converted to Catholicism.
- ED: When my grandfather took it up, they had already named that.
- HS: I thought perhaps it had something to do with a Spanish grant, like Santa Margarita.
- ED: I don't think it did, but I wouldn't know. But I tell you, I can tell you who would know, Rotanseys might know because they had owned—no, the Rotanseys have never owned that. It's the Peppers who bought that ranch first. Melvin Pepper and his father bought the ranch from Uncle Austin Warnock for fifty thousand dollars. And then—Melvin never was well, some way; he had something that was not good that was bothering him. And so I guess when Mr. Crouch came and offered them a price for it, they took it. They were glad to do it.
- HS: Was this the land where the Peppers are now? Bud?
- ED: No, that was the old Warnock ranch that Sam Warnock homesteaded in the early years. I think they're going to sell it now, I heard yesterday.
- HS: Peppers are?
- ED: They were trying to sell the big, old, home ranch.
- HS: How much land did your father get, a section or a quarter section?
- ED: My father must have had a whole section because he owned that land back of Rotanseys and the hill that is north of Rotanseys where they live now; up to the Springhill Schoolhouse belonged to my father. He had bought that from a man named Pleasanton (sp?).
- HS: Well, your grandfather homesteaded.
- ED: My grandfather homestead at Santa Teresa, and then Uncle Austin Warnock had taken up some land that joined in with it so eventually when Uncle Austin took over the old ranch from my grandfather and his own ranches that he had bought in the meantime, he owned all of that clear down into the canyon. He owned that canyon and the old Santa Teresa. Then he sold some of it off. So the two boys that are left don't have any claim on any of that land now, either Arthur or Gene, because they didn't want—my uncle would not have sold the ranch if they had wanted it. But they, they had no intention of ever trying to make it on the ranch.

- HS: I understand Mr. Crouch bought that place in 1943. Did he buy it direct from your family?
- ED: Yes, from Melvin and his father and Mrs. Pepper, of course. Daisy was alive at that time. She's gone now, you know, with cancer.
- HS: Recently?
- ED: Yes, she's dead more than a year; she finally died with cancer.
- HS: Well, I think we've done enough talking for one morning.
- ED: Would there be anything else you'd want to know?
- HS: Oh, lots of things. I'd like to come back some other time and talk about Mesa Grande and about the Indians and some more about the neighbors, oh, lots of things.
- ED: Well, there used to be Indians that used to live back of Rotanseys. They would work for my grandfather, you know. Tom and Santocuro (sp?)—
- HS: They were from Mesa Grande, weren't they?
- ED: They were very nice Indians, you know. And their wives would come and wash for my grandmother. So that was a great help for her.
- HS: It was a beautiful place to wash there, under the big tree.
- ED: Oh, and the water is so good, too.
- HS: Is it? I didn't taste it. I should have.
- ED: Oh, there used to be the boiling spring down by the—we wouldn't think of disturbing that spring for fear we would check that flow of water. But Mr. Cox did and he got enough water there to supply everything on that ranch.
- HS: You called it boiling, not because it was hot, because it boiled out.
- ED: Oh, it was ice cold water coming up, and that's where we would get the cold water for the men when they were harvesting. We'd always get the water from that spring and bring it up when they'd be coming in for dinner so they'd have a nice cold drink, because we didn't have refrigerators.
- HS: No, but you had a spring house.
- ED: Oh, yes. We had this big old, we called it the cellar, but it was built, my uncle built that on top of the cellar because we needed room for men to sleep. We hadn't room in the main house. The house was only the three rooms: one was the kitchen, the middle room was for the living room, and the big bedroom and then one that was built on, there were a

couple of bedrooms there. But it wasn't for company; there was no room. When any company happened in—

HS: Not really big enough for a family.

ED: No, we didn't have room, so he built that up, you see, and put a story on top of the cellar. And that had several rooms. It was plenty big enough for men to bunk in there, and they used to stay there. And so it made it quite a nice place for people to come. And my mother was so busy; she cooked for seven—we had a family there all the time of ten people at the table, so you know that there was lots—she'd bake the bread, she'd parch the coffee, and she raised a lot of the vegetables, too. We were busy people, and we two girls had our work that we always did. We took care of the housework, we washed the dishes, and we had to take care of the beds, make the beds and all of that. But my mother took the brunt of it on her shoulders and she was not well. She had asthma. From the time my father died, she always had that pain in her side. And she'd go around with a hot compress on her side most of the time until she happened to take some treatments from an osteopath who was there at the time, and she never had that pain anymore. I don't know why it left.

HS: But she still had asthma?

ED: She still had asthma. But the peculiar thing was she died when she was eighty-one and I think that asthma left her when she was seventy-five. And I hoped it would do the same with me, but I haven't been that fortunate. She would say to me—I would put extra cover over her feet at night because sometime your feet don't stay warm when the rest of you is quite warm, and she'd say, "You don't need to cover my feet. I won't get the asthma." She never did, you know. I was always afraid of it.

HS: Sometimes young people grow out of it, but I never heard of anyone outgrowing it at seventy-five.

ED: She certainly didn't have it, and I'm so glad she didn't, because I'll tell you, it's not funny to have it.

HS: I know. I'll turn this off.

END OF INTERVIEW



Figure 2: Unidentified Indian Laborer working in a bean field in Santa Ana or Irvine area

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
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Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: DONALD J. DODGE
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: February 15, 1968
SUBJECT: Early Settlement of Costa Mesa and Newport Beach

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm interviewing Donald J. Dodge in his home in Tustin. Mr. Dodge, when did you come to California?

DD: Nineteen eleven.

HS: That was the same year you came to Costa Mesa then? What did they call it then?

DD: Harper.

HS: Where were you born?

DD: Chicago, Illinois.

HS: Did you live there until you came to California?

DD: No, I only lived there about a month after I was born, and I'm not sure where the family went to then. We lived in St. Louis part of the time and went out to Helena, Montana. I had my fifth birthday in Helena, Montana. I remember that.

HS: Did you come of a city family or a country family?

DD: Well, city—no, my father was born in New Hampshire, and my mother was born in St. Louis, Missouri, and her parents came from Scotland. My father was a ninth generation New England Yankee. So I've got Scotch and Yankee.

HS: So have I. That's a good ancestry to choose. You were not married when you came to Costa Mesa. Did you buy a house immediately?

- DD: No, I met some people in Los Angeles that had bought some acreage at Harper. They'd just laid out some tracts in Harper. I came out first; my mother came out later, and we got interested in the Harper layout and we bought some acreage there.
- HS: How much did you buy?
- DD: We bought, first we bought ten acres and then we acquired another five acres.
- HS: You added that to the other?
- DD: Yes.
- HS: Would you like to say what you paid for the land?
- DD: Three-fifty an acre.
- HS: Three hundred and fifty dollars? That was on the west side?
- DD: That was on the west side. My mother and I built the—I think it was the second house on the west side of Newport Boulevard.
- HS: Could you locate it as Costa Mesa lies now? Many people know where it is, but—
- DD: Well, it was right west of the park.
- HS: The present park [between Center and Eighteenth, the Costa Mesa City Park]?
- DD: The present park. Of course, it wasn't a park then. It was just acreage. And we were just—when, well, it was laid out in streets, at least right-of-way for streets.
- HS: Before or after you bought?
- DD: Well, it was before. The tract was laid out before I bought.
- HS: Was it on Center Street, or Nineteenth?
- DD: Well, Center Street hadn't been opened through. We were on Anaheim Avenue; that was the north and south street. And it was some time later that Center Street, what is now Center Street, was laid out.
- HS: What was your address? Where did you tell people you lived?
- DD: On Anaheim Avenue.
- HS: And it ran between what, Nineteenth and Eighteenth? I'm not too clear about it.
- DD: Yes. We were between Eighteenth and Nineteenth streets. And Anaheim Avenue continued south onto where Newport Avenue comes along at an angle. I could show you on a map, if you have one of that area.

HS: Yes, I do. Just a minute. (pause to locate property on map)

You had said that you and your mother bought ten acres and then five acres more. Now you tell me that you at one time owned thirty acres of the forty acre block between Nineteenth and Eighteenth and Anaheim and Pomona. Was it all in that block?

DD: Yes, all. I don't recall that we owned anything outside of that block.

HS: You sold parts of that off gradually?

DD: Oh, every time they had a little oil boom and somebody got an oil boom price, why, we sold a piece of it.

HS: That's been the history of Costa Mesa. Every time something happened, prices would all go up and usually people would have to sit on their property until the values caught up with the prices they'd put on it.

DD: We wound up with the five acres clear.

HS: That was where your home was?

DD: Yes, that was where we lived. We kept that.

HS: Were you an only child?

DD: No, I had one sister who died before I was born, and the other sister died in 1928. She was seven years older than I.

HS: That was the reason your mother came to California with you, that you were the surviving child? (sic)

DD: Well, my sister was married when we came to California.

HS: Did your mother make her home with you? All her life—I mean, after you came out here.

DD: No, after I was married, why, she went and lived with my sister.

HS: You must have been married in 1913?

DD: Yes.

HS: Where did you meet your wife?

DD: St. Louis. We'd known each other for about eight years before we were married.

HS: She came out to join you, then, after you were settled in Harper. What were you doing then? Were you working at something, farming, making a living?

- DD: Well, we were farming there and managed to get along. Had a little capital.
- HS: What do you remember about that whole west side of Costa Mesa when you came there?
- DD: Well, it had just been laid out. There was this Stephen Townsend and Vandewater Company.
- HS: Will you repeat that? Stephen Townsend and Vandewater?
- DD: Townsend-Vandewater Company laid out the tract on the east side of Newport Boulevard. They had bought two square miles from the Irvine Company and laid out—this was before I came—what they called the Newport Heights tract. That tract extended from Fifteenth Street, when it was laid out, to Twenty-third Street.
- HS: And what were the east-west boundaries?
- DD: The east boundary was what is now Irvine Avenue, and Newport Avenue. That made two square miles. I think the Townsend-Vandewater Company also bought some acreage south of that, which was laid out in building lots.
- HS: This is why both Costa Mesa and Newport have areas called Newport Heights. It was originally all called Newport Heights but later divided when Newport incorporated, I guess.
- DD: Townsend, Stephen Townsend individually, he and his wife laid out this tract on the west side of Newport Boulevard, and they called that the Newport Mesa tract, and there was about—it was a triangular-shape tract and there was approximately seven hundred acres in that tract.
- HS: Did that include the bluff area?
- DD: That didn't go clear down to the bluff.
- HS: Down to what, Sixteenth Street?
- DD: Well, it went down to Fifteenth Street
- HS: Fifteenth doesn't go through to the west side. Sixteenth does; it crosses Superior and Placentia.
- DD: Well, we've got some—the streets don't line up on the two sides of Newport
- HS: He [Townsend] and his wife, were they Los Angeles people?
- DD: I think they came from Long Beach. Townsend had been active in developing in Long Beach and in Pasadena. I don't know just what exactly these were there, but I understood he was an old-timer.
- HS: When they bought that property from Irvine, would it have been around 1910?

- DD: I think so. Well, the first property on the east side I think they acquired about 1908.
- HS: Irvine also owned across the boulevard on the west side?
- DD: No, the property on the west side belonged to the Banning family. Townsend bought that from the Banning people.
- HS: Have you any idea what prices were paid for those properties?
- DD: No, I don't know what they paid. I did hear that the Townsend-Vandewater Company acquired more than the two square miles from Irvine; I think maybe it was three square miles on the east side of Newport Avenue and then there was a rumor that the Pacific Electric [Railway] was going to build a line down to San Diego, and it would have come from Santa Ana, somewhere on a route that would have brought them through this tract to the north of the Newport Heights tract.
- HS: It would have been parallel to Newport Avenue.
- DD: Well, I suppose. Mr. Irvine wanted to get the property back and—these are from just rumors—the Townsend-Vandewater Company were having difficulty in selling their land, and so they let this one area go back to Irvine. But as I remember, when I came here they had street signs up on that area.
- HS: What part would that be, the north part? From Nineteenth or Twentieth?
- DD: That would be the north—no, it would be north of Twenty-third Street, up in there. I could show you on maps.
- HS: That section north of Twenty-third was later sold to McCoy, wasn't it, in the early twenties?
- DD: Yes, they bought that later. But Townsend—but Irvine wanted that land back when it looked like the Pacific Electric was going to run a line down to San Diego.
- HS: It would have come from Santa Ana to Newport and then down the coast?
- DD: Yes, somewhere down there. So they [Townsend-Vandewater] hung onto the other and developed it. That was laid out in five-acre tracts and Townsend planted walnut trees on part of it. So friends from Los Angeles—their name was Allen—had bought a five-acre piece at Eighteenth and Pomona and we bought some of our land, came up cornerwise to their five acres and that was in the days when some of these developers were holding out the bait that you could buy five acres and plant some fruit trees and raise some chickens and live happily ever after.
- HS: That was the story of Costa Mesa right up to 1940.
- DD: Yes, that was the way. So my mother and I had a little capital and we tried it out.

HS: You told me before we turned the tape recorder on that you paid \$350 an acre for the land there. You paid the same price as you bought at different times. Is that right?

DD: No, we didn't—let me see. Well, it was pretty close to that. I think one piece we got for \$300 an acre. The Townsend people had just two or three pieces left and they wanted to dispose of it. I had one five-acre at Nineteenth and Pomona, I think that was. Townsend agents came along and said, "We've just got to get rid of this property. If you want to buy it, we'll sell it to you on your own terms." And I think that piece, the selling price was only \$300 an acre.

HS: Fifteen hundred dollars for five acres.

DD: Fifteen hundred dollars for the five acres and they said, "You can just have any terms you want." I said, "Well, I don't have much cash on hand right now. What'll you take down?" "Oh, a \$100 down." "All right," I said, "we'll try it." So I put up the \$100 and shortly after that some oil company came in and started drilling a well across Nineteenth Street and somebody wanted to gamble on it and I sold that for \$1,000 an acre, the five acres, and got cash for it. I think it went to clear some other—I used it for payment on some other property. We had thirty acres at one time in that tract, and every time they had an oil boom we sold some off.

HS: Did Townsend do any developing? Did he do anything besides laying out theoretical streets?

DD: Well, on the first tract, the Newport Heights tract on the east side, he had planted some walnut trees.

HS: Did they pave streets?

DD: No, they didn't pave.

HS: And there was no such thing as curbs or gutters or street lights or utilities?

DD: No. The streets were laid out as sixty-foot right-of-ways, except in the Heights tract when he laid out Santa Ana Avenue. That was laid out for a hundred-foot right-of-way. And later on, I think Howard Woodrough couldn't see any reason why they should have that hundred-foot right-of-way down there and the other streets were sixty-foot; so they got the—they had that dedicated for a street. They had it changed. I don't remember just what the procedure was, but that was made a sixty-foot street like the others. But the Townsend Company figured that would be the main street through that tract.

HS: It happened that when we first came from Laguna to Newport we bought three lots on the corner of Broad Street and Santa Ana Avenue, and Broad Street was eighty (?) feet wide at that time, but it was not being used so that twenty (?) feet on the front of everybody's lot belonged to the city and you could use it without paying taxes on it. That's still the case there. I think it's still the case with Santa Ana Avenue. It still has a hundred-foot right-of-way but it's not used for street. [Note: this is in Newport Heights, Newport Beach.]

- DD: Did I say that was a hundred feet?
- HS: Santa Ana Avenue is a hundred-foot easement but part of it is on people's front yards. [CHECK THIS] – note from Smith
- DD: I didn't know that they still had it. I thought they'd killed the easement.
- HS: We lived there for nine years, and Santa Ana Avenue is right around the corner.
- DD: I remember it was originally laid out—let's see, an extra twenty feet on each side.
- HS: They didn't build any buildings or any business buildings?
- DD: No, I don't recall that they did. I think they'd sold everything off by that time.
- HS: It was already called Harper? Is that true? At the time they bought?
- DD: There had been a rancher before this land was subdivided, a rancher by the name of Harper, farming it for barley, I think it was, and maybe some beets.
- HS: Do you know anything about him?
- DD: No, I never met him.
- HS: Do you know what his first name was?
- DD: No, I don't know. I don't know anything about him. But, you see, there was a railroad through there and they had a freight platform.
- HS: That's not the one at Thurin?
- DD: No, they also had one at Thurin, but this one at—well, it was just south of Eighteenth Street. It was right near the old TeWinkel Store, just a little bit south of the TeWinkle Store.
- HS: Do you remember where the Thurin unloading platform was?
- DD: Well, it was near Twenty-third Street and Newport Avenue.
- HS: It would have been on the east side also?
- DD: No, I think it was, I think the platform was on the west side.
- HS: There is a street called Thurin, a short street that runs between Victoria and Hamilton [actually Bay]. Was that named for people, do you know?
- DD: I don't know where the name came from. Never heard of anybody by that name or how it got its name. I don't remember. Did you know the Woodroughs?

HS: No.

DD: Howard Woodrough was there when I came. He and his wife had a house on Santa Ana Avenue just north of Twenty-first Street, I think it was.

HS: Was he a businessman in the area?

DD: No, he was farming. They had planted an apple orchard on their property.

HS: By the time you got there, the grain farming was over, wasn't it?

DD: No, it wasn't. They were still farming—what later became the Fairview Farms tract was being farmed to grain. Henry Meyer farmed that. The Banning family owned it and I think he just raised barley on it. And then around the outside of the Newport Mesa tract they had barley. There was a Boyd family that farmed. The Boyds were farming the Townsend land, the land the Townsends still owned, on the west side. I think they farmed some land outside of the Mesa tract that still belonged to the Banning people. I think maybe they farmed that—I didn't pay too much attention to it at the time.

HS: I talked with Claude Huntzinger who married into one of the Santa Ana families, one of the Selvidges. They were connected with Santa Ana although they lived up by the Greenville bean house. They didn't have much to do with the south part. But he was telling about how Mrs. Ellis and her son Henley leased land on the bluffs—that would be the west bluff of Newport Bay—and they raised grain there. They had a combine with forty horses that pulled it.

DD: They rented that from the Irvine.

HS: Were they there at the time that you came?

DD: Yes, I remember them.

HS: Do you remember Mrs. Ellis?

DD: Yes.

HS: I think the younger son, Boyd, is still alive. I'd like to talk to him.

DD: I don't know. But I knew Henley Ellis. I don't think that Boyd Ellis and Henley, now, wait a minute—

HS: Henley had more to do with the Costa Mesa area; Boyd was further inland.

DD: Those two families weren't related, were they? The Ellises and the Boyds.

HS: No, the Boyds and Boyd Ellis. I don't know the Boyds.

DD: Well, there were three boys and a girl in the family.

HS: Do you remember the father's first name?

DD: No, I don't.

HS: Well, to get back to your personal story—You planted trees very soon after you arrived. Did you build a house or buy it?

DD: Built a house.

HS: That was the house that you lived in until you sold the property? Then you planted an orchard?

DD: We planted apple trees.

HS: On how many acres?

DD: Well, first ten acres and then—ten acres I bought, and then my mother bought another five acres. Altogether it was fifteen acres together. First we planted apples on ten acres and then planted the other five acres.

HS: Did you know about apple raising? You weren't farmers, were you?

DD: No, I lived in the city all my life.

HS: What kind of apples did you plant?

DD: We planted Pearmains and Bellflower and later—my wife's sister bought a five-acre piece in the Fairview Farms tract that Bryan and Bradford laid out. We planted winter banana apples in there.

HS: Aren't Pearmains something like them?

DD: Pearmains are more like a Pippin; it was a winter apple. But they're a very good apple they're good cooking and a good eating apple.

HS: Did they thrive there?

DD: They did for a few years when we had wet years, when we had lots of rainfall; but the climate seemed to change in '21 and we had hot spells in February that damaged the trees.

HS: Do you think that was the reason? Did the trees die?

DD: Well, they didn't die, but we had very hot weather in February when the trees were dormant and then the blossoming didn't come out right. The trees didn't all bloom at the same time; the blossoming strung out and made it practically impossible to control the worms, because the codling moth worm, to get control you had to spray them when the calyx on the blossom was open. They didn't all open at the same time.

- HS: Did that affect them the next year? Were they still off?
- DD: Well, yes, we didn't get as high a percentage of wormless apples. But there from '14 up into '21 we had almost ideal rainfall.
- HS: Those particular apples that you named don't have to have cold weather in the winter, do they? They're temperate climate—
- DD: They don't have to have frost, but they won't stand hot dry [weather]. I guess I was the first one in the county that really went into the spraying and we found that we could raise apples that were practically wormless. We sold all our apples right at the orchard. We advertised wormless apples and a lot of people wouldn't believe that they could raise wormless apples.
- HS: What happened? Did you pick them and deliver them picked or did people come and pick them?
- DD: They came to the—well, at first we sold them right at the orchard. People would come down when we advertised.
- HS: You sold them in boxes already picked?
- DD: We sold the—the first three years we didn't have very big crops, just starting and we sold them in bulk. Then later people wanted—Pearmain apples were very popular for it was an all-purpose apple—and we made arrangements with Taylor's Cannery in Santa Ana. They had some cold storage rooms.
- HS: I remember. We used to store our persimmons there.
- DD: Well, we rented a room up there and we put the apples, packed in boxes, and sold orders on the cannery. We had customers buy as many as twenty boxes of apples and they'd take them out of storage as they used them. We did pretty well there.
- HS: You never had to ship any of them?
- DD: No, we never shipped any of them.
- HS: And you never had to make cider out of wormy apples?
- DD: Well, we made cider.
- HS: Wormy apples are supposed to make the best cider.
- DD: We didn't say anything about that.
- HS: I've heard that all my life.

DD: From 1921 on, in fact, in '21 the first Santa Ana wind came, before we started to pick our Pearmains. Our principal crop was the Pearmains, and that wind just almost ruined that '21 crop and the apples didn't do well after that.

HS: Did it blow them off, bruise them?

DD: Blew them off and battered them together. We had about a three-day very bad Santa Ana wind. That lasted for three days.

HS: Well, there must have been other people in the same boat then. Were there many people raising apples on the mesa at that time?

DD: Well, let's see. I figured that there was about 200 acres in apples at the peak. Some of them never really came into commercial bearing. Most of them didn't.

HS: I was going to ask you: where did you get your nursery stock?

DD: We bought ours from Salem nursery in Salem, Oregon.

HS: Shipped down for you? Were they just little trees?

DD: Yes, they were just—Tops were a year old on a two-year root.

HS: There were also apricots orchards there, weren't there? Some of those were left up to fairly recently.

DD: I don't remember any apricot orchards on the Townsend land [west side] but some of the land on the east side had some apricots but not like in Tustin. There weren't any big acreages that I recall.

HS: I have heard for years, and I thought it was so, that the reason the fruit orchards failed in Costa Mesa was that there is hard pan so close under the good soil that the trees reached their maximum growth early and then they just pined away. But this wasn't the case with you, was it? You feel those trees could have gone on?

DD: We dynamited all the holes when I planted.

HS: You went through the hard pan?

DD: Well, we didn't get through it; it was a clay soil, but—

HS: That's a heavy soil out there, isn't it? Dark clay.

DD: It's dark clay soil, and of course, when we planted the trees, we didn't know much about soil conditions.

HS: In those days you didn't have the soil analyzed.

DD: No, but—

- HS: It seems like a crazy idea now to think of planting apples so close to the ocean in a warm climate.
- DD: Well, up around Watsonville, there was more fog, but still they didn't get much freezing weather up there. But anyway, most of the people that settled there didn't know too much about it. We were happier than if we did.
- HS: I think they knew more about orange raising. Of course, that was a newer thing. People have been raising apples in the east for two hundred years, but oranges were really something new.
- DD: Well, they planted lemons on the Bryan and Bradford land, what they called Fairview Farms, and they planted avocados but they didn't do well at all.
- HS: It was Bryan, Bradford and McCoy who bought that 1200 acres on the east side from Mesa Drive south, but they also bought on the other side of, west, between Newport Boulevard and Fairview Road which is now Harbor.
- DD: Well, this small acreage in fruit and chickens idea was booming along about the time that Bryan and Bradford bought that tract, bought the tract on the west side.
- HS: Did they develop Fairview Hot Springs? They didn't, did they?
- DD: No.
- HS: Did they buy all of theirs on both sides of Newport Road at the same time?
- DD: No, they bought the west side first, and they sold most of that off before they bought the other tract.
- HS: It must have been around 1920 that they bought on the east side, from Mesa Drive down.
- DD: I think so. Apparently Cotton was the one that really had the money, Ham [Hamilton] Cotton. He went in with Bryan and Bradford—and H. H. Cotton was the name. When they bought the land on the west side, they bought it from the Banning family. I think it was in the name of Banning. Mrs. Banning was a—or, Mrs. Norris was a Banning. What was her first name? [Mary?—owned this property on the west side, north of Nineteenth Street to about Wilson Street. But there was a big—what do you call them—gulch, ran across the property. I don't know just how to describe it. But anyway, when they bought this property from this Mrs. Norris, who was in the east, she lived somewhere in the east, Cotton and I guess Bryan and Bradford went out to look at the property. There weren't any streets on it, or roads, and they walked back maybe half a mile on the property and looked it over, and it all looked like nice level land. They didn't see the gully and they didn't know that gully was there.
- HS: Where was it?

- DD: Well, it went at right angles to Victoria Street and Wilson Street and the south end of it came onto the west portion of the Newport Mesa tract.
- HS: There's still a gully; is it out at the end of Eighteenth Street?
- DD: Eighteenth Street. That gully went up and cut across. But they didn't know it was there. It was their own fault. I don't know if Mrs. Norris even knew it was there. Nothing was said about it.
- HS: Mrs. Norris was a Banning? That land was referred to, in the thirties anyway, as the Banning-Norris tract. I often wondered where the Norris came from.
- DD: I think she stayed in Europe part of the time. You see, the Bannings owned Catalina Island at the time.
- HS: They inherited from their ancestor.
- DD: Yes, wasn't it Hancock Banning?
- HS: What did they do with this? Did they fill it in?
- DD: No, it was too big to fill in; but when they opened Victoria Street they filled in, graded so the street could cross. But it was too big to fill the whole thing in.
- HS: It's still not filled in. I was down there not long ago. The people who live on Canyon Drive, their properties go down into this gully at the back. It makes it nice for them, because they've got privacy down there and nobody is going to build down in there, but there must be a drainage problem, I would think.
- DD: Well, it drained out through the gully down toward the riverbed. But Ham Cotton or Bryan and Bradford didn't know the gully was there. They couldn't fly over it then, you know
- HS: Anyway, they divided that up in the same way?
- DD: They didn't do as good a job of laying out a subdivision as Townsend had done. The lots, some of them were ten-acre tracts, and odd-size, and where Townsend had put in at least sixty-foot street rights-of-way on his property, Cotton and Bryan and Bradford put forty-foot [streets].
- HS: The county accepted them?
- DD: County accepted them at that time. The county didn't take much interest in that land down there anyway. So their streets were laid out as forty-foot streets, which were too narrow soon as automobiles came along. In fact, automobiles were just—they were still in the old Model T stage, you know. Most of the people that bought in the Fairview tract were like the rest of us. We hadn't farmed for a living and didn't know too much about it. There was a retired doctor, Dr. [J. W.] Wherry, who was a—he had about five acres

and he planted peaches and pears on his. I used to spray for him. I had the only power sprayer there at first. A single-cylinder gasoline motor, hauled by horses. Boy, that was hard work. That's the hardest work I ever did, was the spraying.

HS: Then you pulled out your trees?

DD: We pulled out the trees, when? Oh, I think it was in the late twenties.

HS: Were most of the groves disappearing by that time?

DD: Disappearing or abandoned. Must have been around 1930, I guess, when we pulled the last of the trees out, and I didn't farm the land after that. I was interested in other things. Did some real estate and some insurance.

HS: When were you appointed to be justice of the peace there? Temporarily, you said.

DD: It was '29. It was an elective office. I was appointed to an unexpired term. Andy Wilson of East Newport had been the justice of the peace. He had a garage down there and he went into some other business. I think he had a job with some oil company. So he had to resign and the judicial district includes all of the city of Newport Beach and most of the incorporated land in Costa Mesa. That was the township at that time.

HS: Costa Mesa wasn't incorporated at that time.

DD: Newport was incorporated. They were incorporated when I came, along about 1910, I think it was. So the justice court was just a little one-hand job. Fifty dollars a month was the salary.

HS: Well, it was part-time work, wasn't it?

DD: Yes, there was only work when there was any business to be transacted.

HS: Who brought in the culprits, the Newport Police Department or the sheriff?

DD: Newport had their own police court, but the justice court was a county court. We didn't handle any of what they call the Police Court business, such as the drunks and the traffic in the city of Newport. I handled the drunk cases and the traffic in the unincorporated area.

HS: Who made the arrests in the unincorporated area?

DD: The sheriffs or the constable. We had a constable. [Also California Highway Patrol and California Fish and Game]

HS: Oh, yes, Mr. [Frank] Vaughn was constable for a long time.

DD: He was constable and who was constable before Vaughn? Oh, I guess he was at the time I was [presiding]. I'd have to stop and think. But if the district attorney's office filed a complaint against anybody, why, it was filed in the justice court and I'd issue a warrant

of arrest on that complaint. And the constable or the sheriff's deputies executed it. But Newport handled their own traffic. They had the police court. That was up until 1950, I think, when the court system was reorganized and they did away with all these city police courts. And after that there were only three trial courts. There was the justice court and the superior court. There were two classes of justice courts. There was a Class A and a Class B Justice Court and then the Superior Court. Those were all the criminal courts, and also they handled civil suits. The Justice court handled civil suits up to, originally, \$300, and after reorganization, the Class A court was \$500 and the Class B court was \$1,000. Vice versa, I mean.

HS: Then there was no jury?

DD: Oh, yes, we had a jury.

HS: Municipal Court now meets in Costa Mesa on Eighteenth Street and covers the whole harbor area, doesn't it?

DD: Yes. That was built while I was judge. And we had the higher jurisdiction at that time. Originally, I didn't have a clerk. I did all the clerical work myself. The court was made a Class A court when we moved into that new building. That was a \$50,000 building, \$52,000 I believe it was. I had a clerk then, and I had the same jurisdiction as the Santa Ana Justice Court had. But the salary—at that time the salary of an elective office could not be raised during a term of office. If there was any change in salary, it had to be done before the new term began; in fact, it had to be done three or four months before the new court. When we moved into that new court, the janitor got more salary than I did, because it was the end of an old term. I think I was getting \$100 a month; you couldn't get a janitor for \$100 a month. So I had to tip my hat to the janitor every morning when I came to work.

HS: Well, 1950—When did you retire?

DD: I retired in—I'll have to stop and think. I'm getting old and my memory's not very good anymore. I've been retired about seven years now. Sixty-two, I think it was. But the salary when it finally got up—first they raised it to \$500—and then, what did I say it was?

HS: Eight hundred and fifty dollars. Once it got going, it made rapid jumps, didn't it?

DD: Yes. You remember Gavvy Cravath, the justice [of Laguna Beach]? Well, he died after I had retired and the board of supervisors wanted to appoint one of the district attorney deputies. J. Parley Smith they appointed. And he had some vacation time coming and so he didn't want the appointment until after he'd used up his vacation, because they couldn't give him vacation money for one job and salary for another. So he didn't want to take the office over for a while, so the judicial council had the power to appoint a retired judge in the interim. So they appointed me—I was retired then—to fill the court until Parley Smith took over. By that time the salary in the justice courts in all the county were all the same. I got about \$1,200 a month by that time. I served for about two

months down there. Yes, I sat down there for two months. So we bought ourselves a color TV. (pause)

HS: Mr. Dodge has just mentioned that he thinks he had a guardian angel because he was able to weather the Great Depression as it's called, of the 1930s, without too much trouble.

DD: Well, I remember the banks had closed in 1933. I didn't know where we were going from there, because money was just, there wasn't any.

HS: You had taken your trees out and weren't raising anything.

DD: No. So I went over to the post office and I got a letter from a lawyer in Chicago informing me that I was one of the heirs of—what was her name? Amy Atwood, whose parents had been friends of my father; and she was engaged to be married to a cousin of mine and she died in a flu epidemic. Her father had made a pretty fair fortune out of real estate in the Chicago area. So under this Amy Atwood's will—I don't know how that worked out, but anyway, this Amy was the only child in her family and somehow she had left a will that her fortune was to be divided among relatives and friends. This informed me that I was an heir to the extent of \$2,000. After the expenses were paid, I got \$1,800. There wasn't any inheritance tax then; but \$1,800 was like gold in those days. We got that out of a clear blue sky; and it kept us alive, anyway. And then I had a bachelor uncle in St. Louis who died. He had, I think it was, two or three stocks that he had invested in, came to life at various times. One was the Ellis Adding Machine Company. This company had apparently gone flooey, but they had some basic patents that I think the Burroughs Adding Machine wanted, so we got two or three thousand out of that; and an old mining stock that came to life, the mine that owned the adjoining property wanted this particular property and we got several thousand dollars out of that. These all happened at extremely critical stages. So we always got along, and we never missed a meal all the time we lived in Costa Mesa.

HS: Well, there were a lot of people who almost did. I happened to be with the Relief Administration, doing social service work. I went to work for them in 1934, and a great deal of the work that I did was around Costa Mesa because it was full of, as you said, people who thought they could support themselves on an acre of land with chickens and rabbits and a few fruit trees—and they couldn't.

DD: We never had to ask for any relief. We always got along all right; but it just seemed like—Well, there was an aunt and uncle of my wife's, who used to come out from Hartford, Connecticut. They'd go to the Riverside Inn every winter; we had an automobile at the time and we took them around. When they came out here we were pretty well equipped. And they left us \$1000. So we used that for our first trip up to Owens Valley. We had a '26 Dodge, four-door sedan and we went up Owens Valley—this was in '29—and over the Tioga Pass into Yosemite. Believe me, that was a trip. Well, this isn't a history of Costa Mesa; this is just my stuff.

HS: I was going to ask you what you remembered about those days. One person I remember was the Communist of Costa Mesa, Charles McLaughlin. Do you remember him?

- DD: I don't think I knew him. The name sounds familiar.
- HS: He was involved with the relief administration. This is the only reason I remember; the name just came into my head.
- DD: In the north end of Costa Mesa, up around Twenty-third Street—
- HS: I can't remember the location now, but I remember how terrified people were of him. He was really a rather harmless fellow, I think, but in those days nobody understood.
- DD: We had some radicals up there. Did you ever know Fred Opp?
- HS: He still lives on Elden Avenue, doesn't he? I've met him.
- DD: He was a character. He had been badly injured in some kind of an accident, and he'd lost an eye and one arm was crippled. A likeable fellow but he was—he had a service station on Newport Avenue and Twenty-second Street. He finally made some money. He hung onto real estate. He had this filling station and that was in the days—when was it—anyway it was before the days of credit cards and all this sort of thing, and there was some man, a neighbor of his, that lived in that area, and he went into Opp's filling station to pump up his tires. He had Sears, Roebuck tires on all four wheels of his car and never bought anything from Fred but he'd always go in there and pump up his tires. So one day when he went in there, Fred went out and he walked around the car a couple of times and said, "Say, why don't you go down to the post office and pump up them tires?" That's when Sears, Roebuck only sold by mail, you know. Oh, yes, we had quite a few characters around.
- HS: I wanted to ask you about the Spencers. I never met either of them, but every once in a while when I would be calling on people in Costa Mesa they would refer to them during the 1930s.
- DD: We knew the Spencers quite well.
- HS: They did a lot for a lot of people and for the town, didn't they?
- DD: Mrs. Spencer was a Bixby. She was a radical [quite liberal] and her husband was, too. But they did a lot of good. One thing we did, my wife and I kept the water company alive, the irrigation district in our area—that would be the Newport Mesa district. Mrs. Spencer used to pay their water bill there and she made out a check one time and she put her bank balance instead of the amount of the bill. My wife looked at the check and it was quite startling. She [Mrs. Spencer] was a person who was always trying to do something for people, but her actions weren't always popular with the general public. They were quite critical because she didn't do anything for the ones who happened to be critical.
- HS: As I remember, they had adopted children. One was Japanese. I don't know whether they were legally adopted or just informally. They took in lots of people, didn't they? Do you remember anything about that?

- DD: Yes. We knew the Japanese family that lived in the Mesa tract. In fact, the Spencers bought some property out on the western extremity of the Mesa tract.
- HS: Didn't they live there, on Monrovia? [Whittier Avenue]
- DD: Yes, on Monrovia. [Whittier Avenue].
- HS: Next to the white house that sits back among the trees. It's still there, at least it was the last time I looked. I've forgotten who owned that house. I have some pictures of it at home. [Earl Winterbourne made this white house from a garage building; two story into its present state in the 1930s.] It was a white two-story house with high windows and it was just to the north of the house that I was told the Spencers had lived in. Would you remember that? Spencers had a brown bungalow-type house.
- DD: Yes. Oh, what was the name of that family? I think I remember them. The Spencers bought a five-acre piece on the boulevard there that they intended to make into a little park and a site for a library. They supported the library in Costa Mesa for a time. Mrs. Spencer finally died of cancer. She was an invalid for quite a time. Mr. Spencer got tangled up with a woman. I think they were married; he married some woman who was more interested in the Spencer fortune than in Mr. Spencer.
- HS: Was Mr. Spencer wealthy or was his all Bixby money?
- DD: No, it was all Bixby money. He'd been a printer, I think. He inherited from her. But he lost his five acres over this other woman. That was at Nineteenth and Newport Boulevard, a square on the east side where the Mesa Theatre is now. What was her name? She had lived in Costa Mesa with her brother, I think. What was her name? [Katherine McKenzie] Had her work in a filling station for a number of years. She was an odd character, but she was after the money and—
- HS: Carl Spencer's dead now, isn't he? I wonder who got the money.
- DD: Yes, he's been dead for a number of years. The money was divided. She left quite a sum to these Japanese, the Japanese girl that she was interested in. She divided it up. They didn't have any children.
- HS: There are still some of her books in the Costa Mesa Library.
- DD: That was another windfall. Her estate when she died amounted to, oh, a million and a half or something. I remember it was the largest estate that had been probated in Orange County up to that time and because of the size of the estate three appraisers—there was one, I think, John Anderson was the state inheritance tax appraiser in Orange County. Because of the size of the estate they appointed two others as assistants and I was one of them, so I got a \$2000 fee out of that which was welcome. We had to appraise her estate's value, I think, as of 1930-1932. She died in '32, I think it was. We worked all summer on that. We had to—well, we're getting off the track here.

END OF SESSION

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: DONALD J. DODGE

INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith

DATE: April 26, 1968

SUBJECT: Costa Mesa water supply, oil exploration, and school district

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm talking with Mr. Donald J. Dodge in his home in Tustin. This is April 25 (sic), 1968. We are continuing conversations that we started last month. Mr. Dodge, you were just telling me about the jitney bus service on Newport Boulevard. Do you remember when that started?

DD: No. It must have been in the early twenties.

HS: Oh, that late? After all there were Model Ts in 1915.

DD: Yes, but they—I don't know just what to tie a date to.

HS: Do you think that there wasn't enough demand before that?

DD: I think probably there wasn't. Most of the—well, as far as Costa Mesa was concerned I don't think there was demand for it before then.

HS: What about Newport?

DD: Well, the buses went down to Newport.

HS: Do you remember where they went? Would they go down, say, where the Pavilion is down on the peninsula?

DD: I think they did but I'm not sure. I never had occasion to use them myself because I had a car.

HS: But it went up to Santa Ana?

DD: It went to Santa An.

HS: We never did talk about the City of Newport, except in relation to the justice court.

DD: You know Newport had been incorporated before I came. I think it was 1910. There were only about five hundred permanent residents here at that time.

HS: I wonder how they happened to incorporate so early.

DD: I don't know what the reason for it was. They were still unloading ships on the pier there. I think that was about the end of it. A railroad went out onto the pier.

HS: I remember that railroad. It went down—paralleled Newport Road, didn't it? And there was a ditch beside it, between the road and the railroad full of cattails for a long, long time. Your daughter suggested that we talk about the organization of the water company.

DD: The water situation was not good because the pipelines that had been put in were not adequate.

HS: They were put in by the developers?

DD: They were put in on the Newport Heights tract first, when the tract was laid out. In fact, they agreed that the water would be piped to each lot. The real estate company put in the cheapest kind of pipe, what they called riveted steel pipe, and there was quite a lot of difficulty with it leaking. Then when the Newport Mesa tract was put on, they made the same agreement that they would pipe water to each lot, there'd be a four-inch hydrant on each lot.

HS: That was one the west side?

DD: That was on the west side. And of course, the people buying there, including myself, didn't know much of anything about the water business. They now pipe from the Newport Heights water system across the boulevard to supply water to this seven hundred acres in the Newport Mesa tract.

HS: They didn't have any of their own supply?

DD: Well, yes. The Townsend-Vandewater Company had acquired twenty acres from Townsend up at Santa Ana Avenue and Palisades Road and they had wells there with plenty of water and soft water, colored like the water they had at Long Beach at that time. But the pipe—well, our trouble in the Mesa tract was that we just didn't get enough water. The pipelines weren't big enough.

HS: You got it after the Newport Heights people were supplied?

DD: The water came through their system.

HS: Where were the tanks? Up on Palisades? Or did the water come right out of the wells?

DD: Water came from the wells. They had a small reservoir that they pumped from the wells into—let's see now. They had to have one pump to pump the water out of the wells and

then another to pump out of the small reservoir to get enough pressure to supply the water.

HS: This was when, before 1920?

DD: Oh, yes. This was when—they had to put in pipelines for the Newport Heights tract when they laid out the tract.

HS: Before 1910, then. Did that company also supply what is now supplied by the Santa Ana Heights Water Company? That supplies, I believe the east.

DD: No, that was put in later.

HS: Well, we get our water from the Santa Ana Heights Water Company, but it doesn't only supply Santa Ana Heights. We live between Montevista and Santa Ysabel and between Orange and Santa Ana, and all that area I believe clear down to 21st Street is supplied by what's called Santa Ana Heights Water Company.

DD: I think it's down to 23rd Street. That's where the dividing line was. That company was a mutual water company, separate from the other.

HS: Well, I was just wondering who supplied the water to the area where I live now?

DD: Well, I don't know. I think they would probably get some Metropolitan water.

HS: They do, but we still have some of the nice brown water. We're the only ones left who do. Excuse me, I diverted you.

DD: The Mesa tract, when we began irrigating over there, we found that we couldn't always get water when we needed it and that the pipelines really weren't big enough to supply the whole tract at one time.

HS: How big were they?

DD: The main line was a twelve-inch line and then the laterals were six and four inches. Started out from the main line with a six-inch and then out near the end we used a four-inch. But the pipe was of poor quality. It wasn't welded, it was riveted and dipped in asphalt, hot asphalt.

HS: It must have leaked all the time. How close together were the rivets?

DD: We had plenty of leaks. The rivets were pretty close, about an inch or an inch and a quarter. It finally became apparent—let's see, we got some legal advice on it. I'm kind of hazy on it. But it became apparent that the system just wouldn't supply water to the whole tract. So the legal advice we had advised—better stop this thing until I think it out.

The situation in the Mesa tract on the west side of Newport Boulevard was really getting acute. What trees there were were getting big and taking more water; it became apparent

we were going to have to do something. So we were advised, and I don't know where the first advice came from, that the landowners had better make some arrangements to take over the water system. Well, there was a lot of negotiating and conferences. There wasn't any good regulation of subdividing and distribution of water, and it became apparent—I can't give you all the details—that the landowners, if they were going to stay on the land and use it, they were going to have to eventually take over the water system. The situation was more acute in the Mesa tract and we also found that Townsend-Vandewater Company only had a water right to supply—the Irvine Company put a restriction on the water rights, and they couldn't develop more than—if they furnished any water outside of the land that had come from Irvine, the Irvine Company, they would be restricted to two hundred inches of water from the source. When they supplied water to us across the boulevard, it limited the amount of water to be taken from them. So the landowners realized that we really didn't have any good water rights. The Townsend Company said they couldn't finance a water system, and we'd already learned too that if they did put in a water system they'd be allowed to charge a rate that would give them a return of, I think, 6 percent on their money. So we didn't know just what to do, and finally in consultation with attorneys, I think the firm was A. W. Rutan at that time, advised us that about the only way we landowners could take over the system would be to form an irrigation district, and then they would have the right to tax the land for acquiring different water and putting in adequate pipe line. It's a long rigmarole, but anyway, the Heights area did go ahead and formed an irrigation district. Did I say the Heights? The *Mesa* district did go ahead, and we tried to get the Heights district to go in with us, make it all one big district, but there was so much dissension and the situation wasn't so acute in the Heights district, so they wouldn't go with us. We had to form this little one; I think it was the smallest in the state. So we had to form this district.

HS: Did that still mean that you had to get your water through Newport Heights?

DD: No, we found we could get water from a closer source, down in the Santa Ana riverbed, so that cut us loose from Irvine. With that restriction, if it had been enforced, there wouldn't have been enough water to go around. It's a pretty long story and it's largely technical.

HS: But it is interesting that such a small area, comparatively speaking, had four different water districts, and the water came from different sources.

DD: Well, when Bryan and Bradford laid out their tract, they got water down in the Santa Ana riverbed. That's where they got their water and they had wells down there.

HS: Did they own property down there?

DD: They had to buy some. I don't remember who owned that property, but they bought, I think it was ten acres.

HS: Do you know where Newport was getting its water then?

DD: They had wells in the riverbed down there. Our wells finally went salty.

HS: Pump all the fresh water out and then there's no barrier to keep the salt water out. That's the story all along the coast. Now they're pumping in Metropolitan water to hold it back.

DD: If they hadn't brought that Metropolitan water into Orange County this place would have reverted to a desert. Because—I served a four-year term on the Orange County Water District Board, so I learned quite a lot about it. And also, in 1928 I think it was, the board of supervisors of Orange County employed an engineer, Paul Bailey, to make a survey of the water supply and flood control in Orange County. I was a member of the Citizens' Advisory Committee that sat in with the board of supervisors when Bailey was working on this. At that time, Bailey gave his opinion that if all the rainfall, all the natural water, were conserved, there still wouldn't be enough water to supply all of Orange County. Water would have to be obtained from some other source, outside source. He gave that as an opinion, and that was before the Metropolitan Water District was formed. Is this something that you care to get in?

HS: Yes.

DD: As I remember the situation that developed, the water table was going down at that time. Originally the water table around Anaheim and Fullerton and that area stood at about a hundred feet above sea level in the underground basin, and it was apparent that early that if the water table was pumped down below sea level there was a danger of infiltration from the ocean.

HS: That was in 1928?

DD: I think that was '28, forty years ago. Paul Bailey's still alive, I believe. He's retired.

HS: I'm not sure. He was a friend of my father, who was also involved in the water situation.

DD: We used to exchange Christmas cards but the last couple of years we didn't get one. I wrote on the last card I sent him that I'd like to see him. My wife and I—Paul Bailey told us one time that we were the first persons he became acquainted with in Orange County. He was in the state engineer's office and he came down to make some kind of report on our irrigation district. He was an engineer also for the Orange County Water District so I got very well acquainted with him, and I wrote on my Christmas card I would like to see him, but I never heard. He was a very tall, big man and somebody said that he'd gotten quite a stoop. He wasn't well. We're getting off the track again. That's a long story in itself, talking about water. But eventually the Costa Mesa water companies had to put in new pipelines.

HS: I think most of the lines are replaced now. In our water district [Santa Ana Heights], I think they're all new.

DD: The Heights had to vote a bond issue for new pipelines. I don't remember how long ago that was.

HS: I don't either. Since 1950, I think. Quite a lot of work was done at the time that whole area was paved, when we had the improvement district on the east side.

- DD: Water is the prime necessity in any area. If you don't have water, you don't have anything.
- HS: I think you told me the last time I was here that you and your wife managed the Newport Mesa Irrigation District. This is after it became its own district. You did the billing and—
- DD: My wife was the collector, treasurer and collector, and the bonds—we voted forty-year bonds.
- HS: How much did it take? Do you remember?
- DD: What was that bond issue? I think it was about \$50,000. But my wife held that office until those bonds were paid off. Forty years. In the irrigation district act, the only period you could vote bonds for were forty years.
- HS: What was the interest rate?
- DD: Six percent. And I think during the Depression we only missed one—we got a reduction on one payment to the bondholders in the depths of the Depression. Some of the bond owners agreed to accept a cut, but it wasn't a very big cut. We finally paid off all the bonds. We had to struggle. We still had some of the old pipes. We put in some new main lines
- HS: Were you responsible for managing this part of it, the mechanical part, too?
- DD: Well, I didn't have any official title of manager but actually—
- HS: Did you have a maintenance crew, or did you just hire people?
- DD: Well, we had one man, John Purtteman, who was a genius at keeping water in pipes that weren't any good. Oh, it was quite a struggle.
- HS: How much did the water cost?
- DD: I forget what the rates were. The domestic water started out at a dollar a month. No meter. They didn't put in any meters while I had charge. Well, they started putting meters while I was still secretary of the district. That was a one-hand job and what salary I got out of it didn't pay expenses.
- HS: There was an article in last night's paper [*Pilot*] that the Costa Mesa County Water District has raised its rates from \$4.40 every two months to \$6.00 every two months. That's still very reasonable for an individual unit. (pause) The last time I was here, we discussed the marketing of apples. You said you sold most of your apples right from your ranch, but your daughter was telling me that there was an apple cooperative there.

- DD: Well, they formed a little company and they built a packinghouse shed, but they got that going about the time the weather changed and the apple business just went to pieces from then on. That year we had the terrific Santa Ana winds in October 1921.
- HS: Do you remember what that was called, that little cooperative association?
- DD: I'm not sure. You see, that was about the time they changed the name of Costa Mesa from Harper to Costa Mesa. I'm not sure what it was.
- HS: I wonder if it was incorporated.
- DD: I think it was. Howard Woodrough was the moving spirit in forming the apple growers' association.
- HS: What was his last name? Woodward?
- DD: Woodrough, W-double O-D-R-O-U-G-H
- HS: Was he an apple grower?
- DD: He planted some of the first trees. He had apples on his place on the east side.
- HS: Do you remember where his place was?
- DD: Santa Ana Avenue between 20th and 21st. He was a very fine man, very well educated.
- HS: Was he an apple grower by profession or by avocation?
- DD: I don't know just why or how they happened to. He and I got pretty friendly. We were very good friends, worked together.
- HS: Worked together on what, these civic projects?
- DD: Yes. And we had a crop lease from—who owned that land? Anyway, we organized what we called the Fairview Farms. It was at the time they started planting trees on the Bryan and Bradford tract, and we farmed some of that land. Fairview Farms Company, it was—Fairview Farming Company I think was the name we adopted for it. We got a small size Caterpillar tractor and farmed some of that land before they got it ready for [dividing].
- HS: Truck crops?
- DD: No, we farmed barley and beans on that land, and then we planted quite a few acres of lemon trees. They're all gone. They weren't a success at all.
- HS: There are a few apples and a few apricots still around.
- DD: I had a strange coincidence happen. Woodrough and I were very friendly and we were working together on a lot of things. I happened to mention one day that I had an uncle in

New York City, and Howard said, "Oh?"—there being five or six million people in New York City at that time. So I said, "My uncle is an export broker. He sells farm machinery all over the world." "Well," he said, "I have an uncle in New York City that does the same thing." And do you know that they had offices together in the same building? They were good friends in New York City, and both had offices in the Produce Exchange Building. I've had several strange things happen to me, but that was the most [unusual]. A man named Charles MacAlary came into my office when I was justice of the peace. I'd known him causally for some time and my wife knew his wife on PTA or something, and he came to the house to file a small claim suit. He had a boat-building shop down at Newport, and he said, "I just became a citizen of the United States today." I said, "Mac, what were you? Canadian?" He said, "Yes." I said, "What part of Canada are you from?" "Oh," he said, "a little town north of Toronto." I told him I had been up in that area and asked what town it was. He said, "Orillia." I said, "My gosh, I was in Orillia before I came to California."

HS: I've been in Orillia, too, on the way to Muskoka.

DD: Well, when I lived in St. Louis I had hay fever, the worst of anybody I ever saw with hay fever. We went up there a time or two in the hay fever season and stayed up there. I pretty nearly died with it one year. So I stayed up there a whole year to see if I'd shake it off in that cold climate. So I said, "I've got some pictures I took up there. Maybe you'd like to see them." And I had pictures of a house that he lived in. I used to go with a girl who lived there at a different time.

HS: These things still happen. No matter how many people there are in the world, you still have coincidences. (pause) Another suggestion your daughter made was that we discuss oil exploration.

DD: Well, one thing that held the Mesa tract back was some oil lease hound, as we used to call them, got a community lease. This was before the Huntington Beach field was brought in, but there had been prospecting around there before any of this land was subdivided, drilling for oil on the mesa. Pretty near every place they'd drill they'd get a showing.

HS: On the Banning property?

DD: Yes, there was some on the east, too. There was a well drilled just north of 23rd Street and just east of Newport Boulevard. The Standard Oil Company drilled a well there and they went down about 2,000 feet which at that time was a very deep hole. They didn't get anything that looked like production and they pulled that rig out of there and moved it over to Huntington Beach and brought in the discovery well at Huntington Beach with that rig.

HS: That was around 1914?

DD: No, that Standard well was what started the Huntington Beach field. It must have been in the twenties. That Huntington Beach has been one of the most productive fields in California and it's still going strong. They drilled all around us. I guess for twenty years or more there was a prospect well drilling somewhere on the mesa in sight of our house.

That is, within seeing distance of the house. They did a lot of prospecting but they never got any production. They'd get a showing everywhere but where they did have some oil they weren't able to shut off the water. The formation was not stable enough.

HS: Apparently only on the west bluff, where the Banning wells are still pumping.

DD: Yes. They got a little production out there but not very much. But that was one of the things that kept up our hopes, that someday they'd strike oil.

HS: What did you do? When you sold property, did you keep half the oil and mineral rights?

DD: By that time they'd given up any prospects. Did I tell you what we got for our five acres?

HS: I think I read it in the paper. I think there was a headline about it.

DD: I sold our five acres for \$125,000. Net.

HS: Net? What about the Internal Revenue Service?

DD: No, I mean they paid the commission and costs.

HS: That wasn't a bad increase.

DD: No, it was seventy-five times what we paid for it. I was in the last two or three years of the court and I was getting a pretty good salary out of the court by that time. We owned the five acres clear. My wife inherited a little money from her mother and we paid off the indebtedness, and we had that five acres clear. We'd sold off the rest of it.

HS: Well, I think everybody was delighted that somebody like you who had been a pillar of the city since 1911 made this money rather than some of the speculators who come in and never even live in the town.

DD: Did we go into the high school business at all?

HS: We didn't last time, no.

DD: I was one of the trustees. We had a seven-year battle with Santa Ana. It's a long story. The state legislature passed a law in, I think it was 1921, that amended the school code to require all school districts, elementary districts, that were within ten miles of a going high school district to become part of the high school district. The Costa Mesa area had its own elementary school and it forced us to go into a high school district. We could have gone into either Huntington Beach or Santa Ana, and it seemed that because of transportation—

HS: What about Tustin?

DD: They already had their high school. They built a high school as a result of that act rather than go into Santa Ana. That's the way that worked. So we decided to go into Santa Ana. There was no Coast Highway at that time. Some of the Newport children were

going to Huntington Beach, but they went on the Pacific Electric. The Pacific Electric was still running then. It seemed advisable for us to go into Santa Ana. So, the Santa Ana service to Costa Mesa and Newport wasn't very satisfactory. They did have bus service, but no discipline on the buses and it was a riot from the time they left home until they got back.

HS: I used to ride on one of those buses from Tustin to Santa Ana High School.

DD: I think it was Lew Wallace—I don't know who first suggested the idea that maybe we could form a high school district, and Lew Wallace who was president of the First National Bank at Newport looked into the assessed valuation to see if we had enough assessed valuation to support a high school and how many kids there were. He found out that Newport Beach had about three times the assessed valuation of the Costa Mesa School District. But anyway, it was costing Newport Beach about \$1,000 a year in high school taxes for each student to go into Santa Ana and Costa Mesa about \$250 or \$300, but the service for Newport—they were that much further away—was very unsatisfactory. So somebody said, Well, let's form our own high school district and have our own high school.

HS: Do you remember who said that?

DD: I don't remember who. I think maybe Wallace suggested it. So we decided to look into it and see what could be done.

HS: That must have been about 1922. You said it was a seven-year struggle.

DD: Well, yes, it was about 1922. So we talked with the county superintendent of schools, whose name was R. P. Mitchell. He was a very fine man.

HS: Gerald Mitchell's father.

DD: I don't know who did the legal work on it at that stage, but anyway they found that we'd have to start with a petition, petitioning the board of supervisors to call an election. First, you had to get a petition signed by the heads of families. This was to get out of a union high school district, to set up your own. I can't remember all the details, but it developed that Santa Ana wasn't a union high school district. It was a city high school district, of which at that time there were only about two or three in the whole state, but it developed that there was no means provided for a district having joined a city high school district for getting out of it again. So that the law apparently would have to be amended before you could do it. We had a young attorney then, LeRoy Anderson, who had just opened offices in Costa Mesa and he undertook to look into the legal aspects of the situation. So, in examining the law, there didn't appear to be any means for getting out. So we tried to have a bill drawn to amend the law.

HS: Who was the representative to Sacramento? Do you remember?

DD: I don't remember who the assemblyman was, but Nels Edwards of Orange was the state senator. Anyway, we first had to—we tried to get a bill through the legislature to change

the law, to permit us to get out under the provisions for a union high school district. The legislative committee said, Well, how do you know you can't? You'll have to test it out in the courts before a bill can be introduced. So we had to prepare a suit. We had to circulate a petition, petitioning the board of supervisors to call an election, and we presented that to the superintendent of schools. He had to refuse to call the election. I don't remember the exact details, but anyway the court ruled—we had to try it out in the courts. We had to file suit because we couldn't get a bill through the legislature unless we tried it out to show that that was the only means by which we could get out of the Santa Ana district. So that killed it for the '22 legislature. So we finally got another bill—oh, the courts did hold that we couldn't get out under the proceedings for getting out of a union high school district. Well, that was clear so then we could go ahead with the procedure of—we had to get a bill to amend the procedure. I'm sorry I'm so hazy; that was forty years ago.

HS: That's all right. It is complicated.

DD: But anyway, we got up this petition for a bill through the state legislature, and Santa Ana was opposed to the thing. We got the bill introduced, got it into the legislative hopper, and Santa Ana was opposed to it. The rest of the area in the county except for Newport and Costa Mesa wasn't interested. It so happened that Newport was trying to get a bill through the legislature to set up a harbor district. They were trying to get a county harbor district, to get some county support for developing and making a harbor out of Newport Bay. We had a meeting with Nels Edwards. How was it--who was the assemblyman, anyway? The assemblyman for our district was willing to help us—I guess he was not from Santa Ana—but Nels Edwards who was the state senator was president of the First National Bank of Orange and we had a meeting. We had some kind of a chamber of commerce meeting down at Newport, and we had Nels Edwards there and quite a few representatives. They were trying to put pressure on Nels Edwards, the Newport people particularly. Our people at that stage weren't too much interested in our bill. It was more Costa Mesa that was pushing it then. But Edwards finally said, "I just can't back your harbor bill. I'm from Orange, the orange-growing section and those people are dead against being taxed for harbor work at Newport. But, I'll do what I can for you in your school bill." You know, that's perfect politics, so really Nels practically traded his shirt off because he figured he had to get one of those bills through if he wanted to be reelected. So anyway, that's the way we got our bill through the legislature.

HS: I'm wondering, maybe you know nothing about this, but when I went to Santa Ana High School from 1918 to 1922, pupils came from Huntington Beach, Garden Grove, Capistrano, Laguna, Newport and Costa Mesa to Santa Ana High School. Did they all have to get out of this city school district?

DD: Tustin set up their high school before that became a law, so they had their high school district.

HS: But you established a precedent. You got your bill passed.

DD: We got our bill passed, and that bill became a law on the fifteenth of August 1929, and we had a petition ready to circulate the minute that became law. In fact, we got a few names on it before it passed. We got our petitions signed in a hurry. We had to get them signed by a majority of the heads of families in the district and we presented it. Mitchell, the county superintendent of schools, was sympathetic to us; he gave us a lot of cooperation. That bill became a law on the fifteenth of August 1929. We had to have an election. The county superintendent of schools I think at that time could call an election, or recommend the calling of an election. Anyway, he acted as quickly as could be and we had to have an election to vote on whether or not to form the district. That carried by better than 90 percent. Then the next step had to be to have another election to elect the board of trustees; we had a board of five trustees. I was one of the original ones, elected at that election

HS: Who were the others?

DD: LeRoy Anderson; the Ford dealer, still Ford dealer at Newport, Theodore Robbins; Mrs. A. P. Nelson whose husband was district attorney at that time; and Dr. Francis Ferrey who was president of the bank at Balboa. So that election carried.

HS: That was still 1929?

DD: I think we got that far in 1929. Then we had to organize the board. We didn't have anything to start with. We didn't start from the grass roots, we started from the weed roots. Then we had to, I think I was the one who said, Now none of us has had any experience in school work and the first thing we're going to have to do is find a school man to be superintendent for the district, because we've got to organize a school district. So we let it be known that we were—we had applications from twenty-five or thirty who wanted to come down and help us organize the district. I had gotten pretty well acquainted with Mitchell, the county superintendent of schools. I went up to see him one day and I said, We've got to organize a district. I think this was even before the election but I knew by that time what we were going to have to do, and I asked him if he knew of somebody who'd be competent for the job of what we had to do. He said, I think I know the man if he's interested. He'd fill the bill. That was Sidney Davidson, who was at that time assistant superintendent of Huntington Beach. I had friends over in Huntington Beach and I asked them what they knew about him and everything I could learn about him was good. In fact, it was A-1. Their superintendent of schools at that time was taking a year's leave of absence, sabbatical leave, isn't that what they call it? And Davidson was actually running the school, and several people whispered in my ear that he was doing a better job.

So we contacted him and found that he was interested. He said yes, he was and he'd been keeping his eye on the situation. And do you know that we got him—we didn't have any money until after the thirtieth of June 1930. The board finally settled on Davidson. To make a long story short, he undertook the organization of the district, setting up the school district. We had to employ architects, we had to do everything and we had no money! We couldn't even pay him any salary. He couldn't work for two districts, and he worked nights, Sundays and nights, and we organized that district. We had to hire

architects. We had all the architects that ever built a little red schoolhouse anywhere in our area come in and apply for it. We finally employed the firm of Marsh, Smith and Powell. There's a long story behind that, how we did it.

HS: We're just about out of tape. It's also almost 12:00 o'clock.

DD: I can tell you what we did anyway. We got the architects to go ahead. We had to vote bonds; we had to have a bond election. They made preliminary estimates. They made preliminary drawings of a proposed school, and we induced them to go ahead and do that. And after that was done, when we voted the bonds the bond buyers still had thirty days in which to examine the bonds and test the legality of the bonds. Thirty days was a long time, and we induced the architects to go ahead with their detailed working drawings pending that thirty days. Business was kind of slow at the time. We carried the bond issue. We built a reinforced concrete building after having considered the possibility of earthquakes for the area. We built the school at \$4.00 a square foot. We opened school in that concrete building—the auditorium wasn't completed and the tower wasn't quite completed, but we actually opened school on the twenty-sixth of September 1930.

HS: What enthusiasm you had.

DD: And we had to create a faculty. Well, we didn't provide for the seniors. The senior class we let go for that first year. Our older daughter was one of them; she went to Huntington Beach. But we set up a record for organizing.

END OF INTERVIEW

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: HAZEL GREENLEAF FLAHERTY
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: February 17, 1967
SUBJECT: Early Santa Ana doctors, nurse's training, beach camping

HF: I'm Mrs. Hazel Greenleaf Flaherty, a registered nurse, and I'm being interviewed by Helen Smith. And, she wants me to tell about some of the early California, as far back as I can remember—and, she can remember.

HS: Today is the seventeenth, isn't it?

HF: Yes, it is.

HS: Of February 1967. Mrs. Flaherty, you showed me a little while ago a floral card that you said was used by your parents in announcing their wedding. I didn't read the thing carefully, but wasn't that what you said?

HF: Yes, I didn't read it, either. (laughs)

HS: You don't remember the date; it was 1890, but I don't remember the date.

HF: I believe it was September 1890.

HS: Where was your mother born?

HF: My mother was born in Hopland, Mendocino County, California—in fact, in the same house where I was born.

HS: Oh? And, where were her parents from?

HF: Well, her mother was born in Indiana, and her father in Georgia.

HS: Her maiden name was Dawe, you said?

HF: Her maiden name was Dawe.

HS: What was her father's name?

HF: My mother married Mr. Dawe.

HS: Really?

HF: My mother's maiden name was Amanda Everett Dawe.

HS: Oh.

HF: And, her father's name was Jesse Wayne Dawe, and her mother was Telitha Twynum Dawe.

HS: Where did your father's people come from?

HF: Well, my grandfather was born in Maine, but went south at the age of eighteen to college. He had a touch of TB [tuberculosis], and they thought he'd better go to a Southern college and see if he could get well. And, he did.

HS: Where did he go?

HF: He went to Virginia. And he married a widow there who had lived on a plantation. And, when they were married they were given two Negro servants to start their household; one was a houseman and one was a housewoman.

HS: What was his name?

HF: My grandfather's name?

HS: Yes.

HF: Eli Franklin Greenleaf. And, he pursued his doctor's course in the South after being started in the North, and finished in the South.

HS: Was that at the University of Virginia?

HF: Yes.

HS: Oh. Did he practice there?

HF: He practiced there, yes, but, he didn't stay there. They moved to Missouri, and they had a plantation of their own in Missouri.

HS: Did they take the slaves with them?

HF: Well, they—his wife's parents died, and they owned this plantation in Missouri. And, they moved on this plantation, and he still pursued his medical practice there. But, after the Civil War things were in quite a turmoil, so they sold their ranch and they started to California.

- HS: That would've been what, 1865 or '66, or after that?
- HF: Well, it was a little before that. Because, they—they went first to Northern California. They were up there for six years before they came to Southern California.
- HS: Was that in Mendocino County?
- HF: No, they went to Grass Valley to the mining camp. And, he was the mining doctor; they enjoyed it there. But, Mr. [William] Spurgeon let him know that he was laying off—laying off a new city in Santa Ana, naming it Santa Ana, and he needed a doctor in his little town. So, he told him about the land prospects in Orange County. And, my grandfather came south.
- HS: How did he happen to know Mr. Spurgeon? Or, was Mr. Spurgeon—
- HF: He knew them in the South, before he came to California.
- HS: Oh, they were family friends. I see, yes.
- HF: He also contacted Dr. Rowen, who arrived about three months after my grandfather did in the City of Santa Ana. So, there's always been a little rivalry (laughs) between the Rowens and the Greenleafs.
- HS: Well, I must say I've heard of the Greenleafs, but I haven't heard of the Rowens.
- HF: Well, he didn't stay in Santa Ana—after he found out that *he wasn't* the first doctor, and he wasn't accepted as the first doctor. I believe he moved to the beach.
- HS: Oh, Orange County beach? Newport, I suppose.
- HF: Yes.
- HS: There may be still some of his family around. Your grandparents, all their children were born in California, is that right? I don't know how many they had.
- HF: Well, no. My grandfather had four children by—no, six children—by his first wife.
- HS: He had stepchildren, too, didn't he?
- HF: No.
- HS: Or, did his widow have any children?
- HF: No, no. She had no children when she married him, but she had six children for him. But, they lost three of them in infancy. And, I believe now that it must've been diphtheria that they had.
- HS: That was in the South?

HF: That was in the South. And, those children were—well, pretty good sized children by the time she married my grandfather. See, because my—it was my grandfather's children by the first wife, you see?

HS: Oh.

HF: And, she married him after he was a widower. My grandmother was his second wife. And, she had *ten children* for him.

HS: Oh, my. No wonder the name Greenleaf still persists. (laughs)

HF: Yes. But, it's strange, it's only one of his grandchildren on our side to carry on the family name through *his* children, and that is my oldest brother's only son, Errol Francis Greenleaf.

HS: Where does he live?

HF: He lives in Long Beach.

HS: Oh. What was your brother's name?

HF: Errol Francis Greenleaf.

HS: Oh, this is junior then?

HF: Yes, this is junior.

HS: And, what was your father's name?

HF: Sterling Price Greenleaf. He said they never had anything to give him, as far as finances were concerned, so they gave him a name to live up to.

HS: I should say they did! (laughs) Should've gone into Wall Street. (laughs) Where was he born?

HF: He was born in Missouri.

HS: Oh.

HF: But, they started to California in the covered wagon when he was very small.

HS: You don't know when that would've been?

HF: Well, when they arrived, he was two years old. But, that was up in Grass Valley when he arrived and was two years old.

HS: What year was he born?

HF: I can't even tell you—

- HS: I'd have to figure out what year *my* father was born.
- HF: I can find it in a second, if you turn this off until I go—[recording pauses]
- HS: Your father, you said, was born in 1863, and came to Northern California—
- HF: In 1865.
- HS: In 1865, yes.
- HF: [And], to Santa Ana six years later, in 1871 in Santa Ana.
- HS: Oh.
- HF: Yes. And, he had a—a little office in a little building downtown, well, not very far from Fourth and Sycamore.
- HS: I was going to say, I suppose Fourth and Main was downtown then—as it still is.
- HF: (laughs) Yes, it was. And Mr. Spurgeon himself had his home right in that area—close in. And, my father bought land out—farther out, which, at that time, was bordered by, Baker Street on the west, Seventeenth Street on the south, Santa Clara Avenue on the north, and, it went as far as what is now Greenleaf Street. There were no streets through, at that time.
- HS: No. How much acreage did he have?
- HF: A hundred and fifty acres.
- HS: Oh. And, he farmed it?
- HF: With the help of the—well, tribe.
- HS: Well, it was farmed, yes. He built a house there, I suppose.
- HF: Oh, yes.
- HS: There wasn't any house.
- HF: He built the house and he left about three acres for yard around the house and put a picket fence—
- HS: Around the three acres or around the yard?
- HF: Around the yard, to help to keep the cattle out. Cattle roamed free (laughs) in those days. And also, hogs; you don't want wild hogs coming into your yard.
- HS: Not into the garden. I suppose that this was not inside the actual City of Santa Ana, at that time.

- HF: No. It was out in the country; just south of them was the Ross family. They came—the previous family to our family.
- HS: That's Jacob Ross?
- HF: Yes.
- HS: Yes, I met Mrs. Edwards, his granddaughter, not long ago. She told me an interesting thing that her grandmother had told her about feeding the poor Indians who came into town looking for food—who lived out in the country. Did your grandmother ever tell you—
- HF: Yes, she did. And not only that, she used to employ them sometimes to do her washing for her.
- HS: Do you remember where they lived?
- HF: No, but there were Orange County Indians, I understand.
- HS: Mrs. Edwards said that there were three springs on their property which ran west over as far as Bristol Street—what is now Bristol Street—and, that the Indians had evidently lived around there in the old days.
- HF: Oh, yes. I think they camped along the creek and along the river—
- HS: The Santiago Creek—and, where it runs into the river, yes.
- HF: A great deal. Of course, I don't—as far back as I can remember there was an old Mr. [Jacob] Crowninshield that owned the land between our property on the north and the creek. Jake Crowninshield.
- HS: Do you know anything about him? I don't—
- HF: He was a very wealthy man, but he lived like a hermit. And, he looked like a tramp.
- HS: Maybe that's why he was wealthy. (laughs)
- HF: He owned, I think, two city blocks in San Francisco—with buildings on them, which he rented. And still, he lived like a tramp.
- HS: Did he have a family or live alone?
- HF: No, he was a single man.
- HS: Nobody to make him spend his money.
- HF: He left it all to his nieces. He's buried in my oldest uncle's family plot because he didn't even have a funeral plot; and he'd been good friends to my uncle, so he was buried in the family plot.

- HS: Was that in Fairhaven Cemetery?
- HF: Yes, on the south side near the opening.
- HS: His name was Jake—
- HF: Jake Crowninshield.
- HS: Do you remember what other neighbors there were around that property? Of course, you don't have very close neighbors if you have 150 acres.
- HF: Well, of course, the Rosses were our *nearest* neighbors and they were on the south. But I don't remember who the neighbors would be, at the time. Dad, of course—
- HS: Was your father educated in Santa Ana?
- HF: Yes. But, you know, Dad was a good, strong boy, and he was put out to work in the fields. He only went to school when there wasn't anything to be done on the ranch.
- HS: How did he get his medical education?
- HF: My father was *not* a doctor.
- HS: Oh, he wasn't? I thought he was.
- HF: No, he was a farmer. His oldest brother was educated to be a doctor.
- HS: Oh.
- HF: He's the one that was. E. F. Greenleaf, Edward Franklin Greenleaf.
- HS: He's not the one that was born in 1837?
- HF: Yes. He's the one that was born in 1837. He was born in Virginia.
- HS: Did he practice in Orange County?
- HF: Yes, he did. He practiced after his father died.
- HS: Oh.
- HF: He practiced—was practicing with his father, I think, a couple of years, before he died.
- HS: Is he the one you say is the only one that has a descendent bearing the name of Greenleaf?
- HF: Well, he has one grandson that bears the name of Greenleaf, but this grandson of his has a daughter who is married and has a daughter. So, there's nobody to carry on the Greenleaf name in that family. And then, my father's next oldest brother, Mel Greenleaf,

has one son that carries on the name; his name is George Greenleaf and he lives in San Diego. And, whether he has sons or not, I don't know. But, I have one brother that is married and has only daughters. Another brother is married and had one son. And, this son has been married three times—no, twice, beg your pardon—and, with the second wife he has two sons.

HS: Oh, at last.

HF: Yes. But, we never see them.

HS: Oh. What do you know about your grandfather's medical practice? You started to tell me that he had a little office on Sycamore?

HF: I believe it was on Sycamore south of Fourth.

HS: Oh. Can you remember him when he was a practicing physician?

HF: I never knew my grandfather. He died long before I was born.

HS: Oh, he did?

HF: In fact, he died when my father was nineteen. Let's see how old he was. (moves away from microphone) He died in 1882.

HS: Your grandfather?

HF: My grandfather, Eli Franklin Greenleaf, died in 1882. And, my father was nineteen, at that time. In those days, a boy, until he was twenty-one years of age, belonged to his family. And, all the work that he did was for the family's good. When he was twenty-one, then he could go out and make his own way. In between time, whatever he made, he had to at least give a major part of it to the family. So, my father used to go out and work with welding crews and threshing crews. And, until he was twenty-one he lived at home, and a major part of his earnings went into the family.

HS: You said he wasn't married until he was twenty-seven.

HF: He went north after he was twenty-one and he worked in first one place and then another. He went into the lumber camps and worked with the lumber—with the lumber men.

HS: Where was that? Up in Humboldt County?

HF: Yes, up in the northern area. And then, he went to Ukiah—well, he worked in some well-drilling companies, too, up there. He worked on farms, he worked at various places. But, he went to one place to work in Ukiah, to work as a hired man and to live in the place and stay there as their hired man. And, my mother was the hired girl, at that time.

HS: Oh. She was—

HF: Her mother had died and her family had gotten scattered. And, her brother was on the old family ranch and he was single and baching, [a bachelor]. And so, after my father and my mother were married, they went back to help him run the ranch, at first. And, they decided they would sell the ranch—

HS: Help whom?

HF: This uncle who was running the old family ranch.

HS: Oh, yes.

HF: So, it was sold, at that time. And, the government later bought it and made an Indian reservation out of the old family home.

HS: What is the name of the reservation?

HF: Mendocino County Reservation.

HS: Oh, it's still there?

HF: The Indians now are permitted to sell their property.

HS: Yes, they have been releasing them—

HF: The reservation was divided among the people that were—the Indians that had their homes there. And, they each were allowed a certain part of it. And then, they were allowed to sell it in the last year or so.

I had a strange experience this summer. I had an automobile accident and was—my car burned up on the hillside, practically, run out of oil on a hillside, on a grade. And, I had to be towed into Santa Maria. While I was there I went into a park on Sunday because I was stranded over Sunday and I was alone. And, there I saw some people picking up some *piñon* nuts. And, I walked over and I said, “Are these *piñon* nuts you’re picking up?” And she said, “Yes.” She says, “We like them.” And I said, “It’s strange, my mother told about a tribe of Indians up in Mendocino County that used to go harvesting *piñon* nuts, and they’d bring great big bags of them. And, each one had their own little container. And, they hauled in all they could carry from the mountains for their winter supplies.” She says, “Where did you say your mother was from?” And I said, “Mendocino County.” “Well, where in Mendocino County?” I said, “Hopland.” “Oh,” she says, “that’s where I was born.” She said, “I’m a thir—I’m a full-blooded Indian.” “Oh,” I said, “you are?” She said, “Yes, and, I was raised on the reservation there.” And I said, “That reservation was my mother’s old home.”

HS: (laughs) This was Santa Maria?

HF: This is Santa Maria. This woman lives there now.

HS: I wouldn’t know there were any *piñon* trees around Santa Maria.

- HF: In the park, there are two great big *piñon* trees there. Very large.
- HS: For heaven's sake. They were planted there then?
- HF: Oh, yes. Oh, no, they're not normally growing in a place like that.
- HS: I should say not. They're much higher, usually.
- HF: But, they were quite large *piñon* nuts; they would really be worthwhile harvesting. (laughs) I've always wondered how they get at those tiny, tiny ones—enough to sell in all the markets.
- HS: By the fifty-pound sack, you see them out on the reservation.
- HF: It's surprising, isn't it?
- HS: Yes. Maybe somebody should plant a *piñon* orchard, and go into the business.
- HF: (laughs) Yes, they should if they could.
- HS: Wouldn't be nearly so romantic as buying them when they are picked by the Indians from the wild trees—
- HF: No, it wouldn't. This woman, I said to her, "Did you by any chance go to the Indian school?" She said, "Yes, I went to school at Riverside and, graduated from the Riverside Indian school."
- HS: Oh, the Sherman Institute.
- HF: The Sherman Institute. I said, "Well, that's a wonderful college." I said, "I hope you sent your children there, too." She said, "They wouldn't let us!" And I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "They told us that all of our children had to go up to Oregon to school, and we didn't want our family to go into a more severe climate than what they were accustomed to. So, we kept them home and [they] went to public school.
- HS: Well, that's probably better. There was quite a long time that Sherman Institute was *only* for the Navajo, because, the Navajo are the most numerous tribe, and they had to send them somewhere. And, I suppose that's crowded the—
- HF: Well, she said they crowded all the California Indians and sent them up north, and let all the Arizona Indians come to California. That just doesn't seem right!
- HS: No, it doesn't.
- HF: She said she wanted her children to graduate from where she went. But, they weren't allowed to have any choice in the matter.
- HS: Well, don't you think it was better to send them to a public school and make them feel more like a part of the country?

HF: She said they didn't have as full an education as she got.

HS: Oh.

HF: Because, they didn't have the trade schools. [adjusts microphone] She said the old homestead home was torn down before it was made into an Indian reservation. But, this old homestead home, my grandfather built by hand. He cut down the oak trees himself and hand hewed it and made an oak tree house, a two-story house.

HS: Have you any pictures of it?

HF: No. They didn't take pictures, in those days. I was born in the same house as my mother, though.

HS: Not that house.

HF: Yes!

HS: How many brothers and sisters do or did you have?

HF: Well, there were six of us.

HS: Oh, were they all born there?

HF: No, I was the only one born in that house. My sister was born in another house that they lived in before they moved back into the place. And we moved up on a claim in Northern California, up at—we lived at Shasta.

HS: Gold?

HF: Gold mining. Dad did placer mining for a year.

HS: Did he own the property or just the claim?

HF: He laid out the claim; that was all he owned.

HS: Build a house?

HF: No, well, he built a camp house. It was tent at the top and wood at the bottom, wood about halfway up [with] an outdoor fireplace for fire—washing and boiling the clothes.

HS: And, an outside toilet, I suppose.

HF: Outside toilet.

HS: Where'd they get the water? From the river?

HF: The creek. And, they carried it in buckets.

HS: Where was that?

HF: There was a spring nearby, though; they could get good drinking water, fresh from the springs.

HS: Now, this was in Shasta County?

HF: Shasta County.

HS: Near any particular town?

HF: Well, I don't even know. Red Bluff is not too far from there, I think.

HS: Do you remember anything about that?

HF: I can remember that we had awfully good neighbors. And, that I found a gold nugget on the neighbor's claim and had to give it to the neighbors. (laughs)

HS: Oh, you *would* remember that.

HF: See, I had picked it up where they had thrown it away, out of their pans. And, I always felt that that was just a little bit unjust that they wouldn't let me keep that when I found it in their discards.

HS: Maybe you shouldn't have told them about it.

HF: (laughs) Well, my father made me take it back to them. I carried it home and my father said, "Where did you get this?" I said, "I picked it up where they empty their pans." "Oh," he said, "if it's on their place, you'll have to take it back." So, I took it back, and they thanked me profusely because it was a good one.

HS: How long did your father work at his claim?

HF: Just one year.

HS: Oh. Did it pay?

HF: Not too well. But, it wasn't—my brother was born in this camp house. Errol, he was a blue baby. The doctor said he wasn't going to live, didn't have a chance to live. The doctor didn't get there until after he was born. Maybe if he'd had been there right on time he might have—maybe his valve in his heart would close right. Who knows? But anyway, when he did arrive, he said, "I'm awfully sorry, Mrs. Greenleaf, you wanted a boy and you got one, but he will not live." She says, "Oh, is there nothing I can do?" "Not a thing," he says, "not a thing. Not a thing you can do. There's no hope for these cases like this." So she said, "Push the bed up close to my—push the crib up close to my bed. I'll do what I can." He hadn't given her even a hint of what to do! But, whenever she heard that he didn't breathe, she picked him up and worked him like an accordion and blew her own breath into his mouth and kept reviving him. And then, he would come out

of it, and then she would nurse him, and he would sleep a while good, and then he would come into it, again. And, over and over, night after night, she did that listening for every breath that baby gave. And, he lived to be in his sixties. (laughs)

HS: Did he ever have any trouble?

HF: Oh, yes. His ears would turn blue, his lips would turn blue, clear up until he joined the navy at the age of seventeen. But, my mother taught him from the time he was able to stand up that when he felt very tired, no matter where he was or who he was with, to either lie down right then and there, or sit down and lean against something. And he would say, "Sorry, kids, I've got to stop." And, there he was, just sitting or leaning against a tree or a bush or something, or a rock, or just lying down flat for a little while. Then, he'd say after a while, "Well I feel all right now. Let's go." But, he died of a heart attack finally.

HS: Oh, he did?

HF: He had a number of heart attacks toward the last before he died. But, at that age, many a person dies that's never had heart trouble all their lives. (laughs) And, he qualified as a deep sea diver in the navy.

HS: He did! So, your mother's treatment worked.

HF: My mother was an unusual nurse; her mother taught her what she knew. And, her mother was a community nurse for about a fifty-mile area out there in Grass Valley.

HS: What do you mean, people called her in?

HF: In this old mining claim, old mining claim in eighteen—the forty-niners that came up there, you see, they came—they started in '49, my mother's parents.

HS: Oh.

HF: They arrived in '51. They came across the plains in a covered wagon.

HS: In Northern California.

HF: They came straight through to Grass Valley. They came with a group that were going to Oregon, but they wanted to stop in California. So, they did.

HS: And, they never left.

HF: They never left California. But, my grandmother had been taught nursing by her mother, and her mother had been taught by *her* mother. And, they had no specific training like we have nowadays at all. It's merely that they knew how to take care of everything.

HS: They were practical people and, sensible, common sense nurses. My grandmother was a nurse in the Civil War. I think she nursed in Libby Prison, at one time. She was one of those without training. She was the same sort of person.

HF: Yes, yes. Isn't that interesting?

HS: As a matter of fact, she received a \$5-a-month pension from Congress all the rest of her life for the nursing work she did in the Civil War. She was probably the same kind of person, just an all around real housewife—she made cheese, and she ran the little post office in South Dakota, and could do almost anything, besides being called out to help people in distress when they were ill. But, I don't mean to be talking about my grandmother—

HF: Oh, I think that's *very* interesting.

HS: Sounds like the same kind of person as your mother and your grandmother.

HF: Yes. Well, my grandmother taught my mother all she knew because she realized wherever she went it would be useful to her. She taught all of her daughters the same. And, she taught all the women in the households where she nursed to carry on after she had to leave because she had to go back to her family in between her cases. She took care of patients that were brought in with gunshot wounds, broken legs, broken arms.

HS: There were a lot of injuries, in those days.

HF: Because, they had to send to San Francisco for the doctor, at that time. And, Grandma took care of them until the doctor could get there. I don't know—I guess she brought more babies into the world than the doctors did, during the time they lived there.

HS: Did she ever use any native plants in her work? Do you know anything about that?

HF: Yes, she did.

HS: Do you know anything about any of those things?

HF: There's what they call *yerba buena*—

HS: *Yerba buena*, yes.

HF: *Yerba buena* they used. And, they also used anise.

HS: What did they use that for?

HF: Sweet anise? They used that as a mild sedative; they made a tea out of it.

HS: How did they use the *yerba buena*? It's a shrub.

HF: I think they crushed that, used it like a poultice.

- HS: Oh, for bruises and things of that sort. Do you remember any other plants that they used?
- HF: No, I can't remember. All I know is what my mother's told me. Because, I was too young when we came down from up north to be aware of too much. I was only five when we came to Santa Ana.
- HS: And, you've lived in Santa Ana ever since?
- HF: No, I lived in Orange as much as I did in Santa Ana. I lived in Olive for four years. I rode my bicycle eight miles a day coming to high school.
- HS: What year were you born?
- HF: Eighteen ninety-three.
- HS: Oh. Your father was thirty years old then.
- HF: Yes. My older sister was born just a year-and-a-half before I.
- HS: In 1898, then, you came to Orange County?
- HF: Yes. And then—see, my brother was born in 1897 at the mine in Shasta.
- HS: Which one is that?
- HF: Errol. And then, my sister, Genevieve, was born in 1900 in West Orange. Dad farmed a ranch.
- HS: Was that a part of the original Greenleaf property?
- HF: No. No, he rented some property. It had a house on it and a barn, a little house and a big barn, as usual.
- HS: Yes.
- HF: But, sheds for hogs. And also a chicken house.
- HS: Where was it?
- HF: Right where the county hospital now sits. (laughs)
- HS: Oh, near the river then?
- HF: Yes. Yes, it was quite a—we went just across the railroad track. We walked across the railroad track and down LaVeta Street to go to school. And, LaVeta Street School was right where the freeway is now. (laughs)
- HS: Poor Orange County. It's not the way it used to be. How far did you have to walk to school?

HF: About a mile.

HS: About a mile. You never had a bicycle?

HF: No, not in those days. I can remember my feet got so tired. And, I was used to going barefoot at home when school first started. So, I'd take my shoes off and carry them across my shoulder and walk home, down the dusty road, with the dust between your toes.

HS: What kind of school was it? An old frame building?

HF: Yes, it was just a one-room school.

HS: Oh.

HF: And, all the grades in one room the first year. Then, they sent the upper grades into Santa Ana and Orange, according to where they lived. My sister rode a bicycle into Orange, and I walked back and forth. Went there for three years.

HS: Was it called the LaVeta School?

HF: No. It was West Orange School, in those days.

HS: Oh. You don't remember your teacher's name?

HF: Yeah, my first teacher was Miss McCoy. She afterwards became Mr. Watson's wife, Keller E. Watson's wife.

HS: Oh, that name sounds familiar.

HF: Well, their son is also Keller E. Watson.

HS: Are they still here?

HF: I think they're still in Orange. I think they still own the drugstore there.

HS: And, what school did you go to next?

HF: Well, we moved to the west end of what was called Hickey Street then. It was right down next to the river; it's now Eighth Street.

HS: Oh. I remember Hickey Street, but I couldn't have said where it was.

HF: And, in between us and any other neighbors was whole fields in vegetables. There was three Chinese families—well, three Chinese groups. There was two men in one house, and a man and his wife and son in another house, and then there was another man further over that lived alone. And the orchard—the place around our property—Dad had rented about ten acres. But, between us and the Chinese farms was acres and acres of—of asparagus. We didn't even know what asparagus was, in those days.

HS: That was all beautiful, sandy loam, wasn't it? Riverbed.

HF: Yes, it was lovely. And, this man came to my father and he said, "Mr. Greenleaf," he says, "your children have been awfully good not to step on the—on the furrows." And he says, "I'd like to have them continue to be just as careful because on the top of all of those furrows are going to come little sprouts of asparagus through. And, if they're stepped on, why, they're ruined." And he said, "Uh, you will try to keep your children out?" And Dad says, "My children don't go on anybody else's property and tramp around." "Well, thank you," he said. He says, "Well, I want to tell you something. They have been so good so far that I want to tell you that you're welcome to go in and take your knife and cut all the asparagus you want to eat." And, we'd never eaten asparagus before.

HS: You started then, I hope.

HF: And, we started then. But, we went out and picked it. And, Mama didn't know how to cook it even. So, on my way to school, I'd made a friend of an old lady who let me play underneath her weeping willow tree. My girlfriend and I would stop and pause under this weeping willow tree and make-believe like it was a house. And, she was friendly with us. And, she was out talking to me one day and I said, "You know, a man has given us some asparagus and we don't know how to cook it. Do you know how to cook asparagus?" She says, "Oh, you mean sparrow grass?" (both laugh) I said, "I don't know. Is that what you call it?" She said, "Yes, we call it sparrow grass. (both laugh) "Well," she says, "you just cover it—use just the soft tips," she said. "You cut it down until a little white shows and you cook the whole thing, but you just eat the green part at the end. And, you just lie it in plenty of water and cook it. And, salt the water. And, when it gets done, butter it." And she says, "You can make a sauce for it if you want to, but I like it just with butter." So, I went home and told my mother how to cook asparagus. (laughs) We did learn to love it.

HS: I should think so; fresh asparagus is a real treat.

HF: Yeah! And, right out of the garden it tastes best of all.

HS: Do you remember the old lady's name—

HF: No.

HS: —who gave you the cooking lesson?

HF: I think the name was Baker. But, I—I couldn't tell you. We lived there just one year. That's the trouble we always had; somebody was always selling the property out from over our heads.

HS: Yeah, yeah. Did you have to change schools then?

HF: Had to change schools, yes.

HS: Where did you move to then?

HF: Moved back to Orange then.

HS: Oh. Then, you finished your grammar schooling in Orange?

HF: In Orange.

HS: Did you go to Orange High School, or was there one?

HF: We moved, one year to Garden Grove. My uncle had some land, and he wanted to take a year's vacation from farming. So, my father farmed his land for a year. Supposed to be on shares, and my uncle got the biggest shares. So, we didn't stay but a year.

HS: What was your uncle raising?

HF: Well, he had—we had all sorts of corn, oodles of corn, acres and acres and acres of corn. And, beans, lots of beans because it was down near the river.

HS: Was it field corn?

HF: Field corn and sweet corn and also, cracked corn for the chickens.

HS: And, what kind of beans did they raise? Lima beans?

HF: They raised lima beans and black-eye beans. And then, of course, we had lots of string beans. But, we didn't sell those; we used those for our own family. And, relatives.

HS: Were there any trees planted over there then?

HF: Yes, there were a few, but they were deciduous. They weren't citrus, at that time.

HS: Oh, I see. Walnuts, perhaps?

HF: There were some walnuts, yes. And, there was family fruit. There was every kind of peach tree and apricots and plums.

HS: Same kind that we all used to have for our family.

HF: Yeah. Satsuma plums, as a rule, and Santa Rosa plums, and little Damson plums.

HS: Yes.

HF: And, I'll never forget the lovely Saucer peaches. They had the best Saucer peach tree there.

HS: Nobody raises Saucer peaches anymore.

HF: And, I'd like to have one.

- HS: So would I, but they don't taste as good as they used to.
- HF: Nothing does that way. (laughs)
- HS: Well, they seem to be a little bitter. I think, really, it may be disease or something.
- HF: Maybe so.
- HS: Of course, they were fragile like Babcock peaches.
- HF: Yes, they were.
- HS: They weren't practical to raise, but they were fun, weren't they?
- HF: Well, I have a friend who bought one for her backyard, and it's the first thing that bears, and has the best flavor. It's good. So, maybe if you try, again, you might be able to get a good one.
- HS: Only none of us has any room to plant them anymore. (laughs)
- HF: That's right. We don't have here even. David doesn't want any fruit trees out in the back, this section. And, the other is too shaded, in a way.
- HS: That really does take lots of sun and proper care, of course. Well, let's see. I know that there was no high school in Garden Grove.
- HF: I went to grammar school there, you see, that one year.
- HS: Oh.
- HF: No, I didn't. My sister and my brother went there. But, I was rather fragile. I'd been very ill, and so they decided I could stay at Grandma's and ride my cousin's handlebars to school for a year.
- HS: In Santa Ana?
- HF: And, my cousin—half-cousin—lived with my grandmother. So, I stayed at Grandma's that year. And, Dad used to go and pick me up Friday evenings. And, oh, was I glad to get home.
- HS: What school did you go to?
- HF: I went to Third Street School.
- HS: That's quite a long way.
- HF: And, I went to Fifth Street School, too. The year that we lived on Hickey Street, I went to Third Street. The year I lived with Grandma, I went to Fifth Street. It was quite a ways, you see?

HS: Was it West Third?

HF: Yes.

HS: And, West Fifth?

HF: It's right where that dog hospital is, on West Third now.

HS: That's on Fifth.

HF: West Fifth.

HS: Yes, West Fifth, by the sycamore trees.

HF: Yes, that's Fifth Street.

HS: Were those sycamore trees there?

HF: The big sycamore with the great big mended place on the side?

HS: Yes.

HF: Well, that was a hollow when I went to school there, and we played Hide-and-Seek in it.

HS: Oh? That's an old tree.

HF: Yes, it is.

HS: Of course, it was a—a natural tree. We used to have all that row of sycamores following the streambed down.

HF: And, of course, that one was there from time immemorial. Nobody knows how long. 'Cause, it was an old tree when I went to school there.

HS: Where did you go to high school?

HF: Orange High School. We lived on Grand Street, right back of the high school in Orange.

HS: Grand Avenue, you mean?

HF: Grand Avenue in Orange.

HS: Oh.

HF: When I was in freshman year.

HS: Was the high school then where Chapman College is now?

HF: Yes. When I first started—when my sister first started—in my freshman year, there were only three buildings. When my sister first started, there was only one building. But, by the time I was in school—see, she was four years ahead of me. I was retarded because I was sick and was out so much every year. I was put back instead of forward every time we moved.

HS: Oh.

HF: Because, I was the size of a six-year-old when I was ten, and I never got any bigger than a ten-year-old. (laughs) But, I was in high school later than she; she's only a year-and-a-half older than I. She graduated in 1910 and I graduated in 1913. So, she was in high school one year when I was there. I went one year postgraduate, but that made four years. We moved from there to Olive, to the top of the hill, to the highest house in Olive.

HS: Oh, did you? Did you know the—

HF: The old Shorn house.

HS: Shorn? Don't know it. It's not there now, I suppose.

HF: I don't know. Pat said she thought it still was there. They had built all around it, they sold the land down below. At that time, we had five acres of olives around the house.

HS: Did you own that property?

HF: No. More rentals.

HS: Who harvested the olives?

HF: Anybody who was entitled to them that wanted them.

HS: Oh, they weren't used commercially?

HF: They weren't used commercially, no. But, we had olives to eat by the barrels. And, my mother and dad got great big hogsheads, and my mother cured the olives and kept them in barrels underneath the back stairs. The house was two levels; there were sixteen steps up to the back porch.

HS: Was it one of those houses with the lower—the underneath area enclosed with latticework?

HF: It was supposed to be, but this lattice was torn out, so it was just an open place underneath. But, there was an old wine cellar back in there. (laughs)

HS: Stone?

HF: Well, no, it was just a—

HS: Dug in the earth?

- HF: He'd built it in like a sort of a section, the man that built the house.
- HS: Do you know anything about him? Was he your landlord?
- HF: No, he died long before we lived there.
- HS: I don't know that name.
- HF: He haunted that house. (laughs) He fell down those back stairs when he got too much to drink in his wine cellar one day and broke his neck. And, his two daughters wouldn't stay and live there after he died, so they moved out and they tried to rent it. But, it was a haunted house; nobody wanted to live in a haunted house. So, tramps took it over. And, when Dad found this big, beautiful house was empty, he said, "Well, how about me renting this?" And they said, "You won't want to live there. There's ghosts in that house." And he said, "Ghosts never bothered me, and I never bothered ghosts. I'll move in." "Oh, you wouldn't dare!" And he said, "Yes, I would dare." So, we moved in.
- HS: Did you have to pay rent?
- HF: We had to pay rent, yes, but it was quite reasonable.
- HS: You don't remember what it was?
- HF: I think it was \$15 a month.
- HS: Oh. For a house with a ghost?
- HF: For a house with a ghost. And, we had lots of room. There was, in fact, two rooms that could be used in the tank house outside with a beautiful big tank and water that came from a well up above. A windmill—
- HS: With a well on the property?
- HF: —a windmill right there. Right there, yes. And, the house itself had an upstairs with one big, finished room and another unfinished room at the back. And, it had four bedrooms downstairs.
- HS: How long did you live there?
- HF: Lived there four years and were very happy. Except, we had some neighbors that were sticky-fingered, and they made things pretty unpleasant, in a way. So, Dad had a chance to rent quite a bit of acreage over at Placentia. So, he moved to Placentia.
- HS: Did he always raise garden truck?
- HF: No, he did lots of citrus work.
- HS: Oh, he did?

HF: He always had his own team, and he did citrus work for anybody in the neighborhood who needed extra help. And, he did hauling in his big wagons.

HS: Did he have horses or mules?

HF: He always had horses, a nice team. We generally had a horse or a good, fast mule for driving animal.

HS: Mules are excellent, aren't they? They're good for riding, too.

HF: Yes! Yeah, we used to ride them once in a while. We lived in Pala one year, foot of Mt. Palomar.

HS: When was that?

HF: Nineteen-fifteen.

HS: Oh, that was much later.

HF: Yes. At that time, I was working in the orange packinghouse in Olive, staying with a friend that lived there. I lived with a schoolteacher while the family lived in Pala.

HS: Oh, I see.

HF: I went down and visited a couple of times. But, they had that terrible storm that year when about ten acres of land that my father had already put in was washed clear to the ocean.

HS: That was in Pala?

HF: Yes, in 1915. Every bridge down the San Luis Rey River was washed out.

HS: Was that in the Palma Valley?

HF: Yes.

HS: Where they raise lots of avocado and citrus now.

HF: Yes, yes.

HS: Beautiful valley.

HF: And, it was very rich, good soil. But, Dad had this old adobe house. It had a barn and sheds for chickens. It was on about three levels. And, the lower level of that ground was just washed clear off, down to bedrock.

HS: Oh, my. What—whose ranch was it, do you know?

HF: Can't think of it now. The people still live in Oceanside.

- HS: The owners. Was it a Spanish rancher?
- HF: No.
- HS: It had an adobe house.
- HF: Well, it had been part of an old Spanish ranch. But, these people that bought it—oh, I ought to remember that name. The girl was a friend of my sister's.
- HS: Well, it doesn't matter. Anyhow, you weren't living there then.
- HF: No, I didn't stay there because there was no work for me there. While I was there that one time, they were doing some—putting in the irrigation ditches, which should've been in before my father went there. The reason we moved away was because we couldn't get the water to the land, and couldn't make a living on soil without irrigation.
- HS: The water was from the San Luis Rey River?
- HF: I don't know just where—
- HS: The Santa Margarita, perhaps.
- HF: Yeah.
- HS: I—I'm not sure.
- HF: The San Luis Rey River went right by the house. But, there was sort of a pump affair up above, I believe, where they were supposed to—to have a dam and have it come down to them. They were putting in the ditches for this irrigation project. So, my brother and my uncle and my father all worked on this irrigation ditch digging. And, I guess Dad did some of the hauling with his team—of the dirt (inaudible). And I saw that my brother and my father all needed haircuts, and I said, "I'm gonna cut your hair." They said, You wanna cut our hair? And I said, "Yes, I do." So, I sat 'em down and I cut their hair. When they went back to work the next time, the other men working on the project said, Where did you find a barber up here?
- HS: (laughs)
- HF: And they said, You like our barber? He did a wonderful job. Where'd you find a barber? Dad says, "My daughter did it." Well, can she cut our hair, too? And, Dad wouldn't let me. He says, "My daughter is not a barber for everybody." (laughs)
- HS: I can't say that I blame him.
- HF: Now, I could have been a barber if I'd wanted to, instead of a nurse. (laughs)
- HS: You would probably have had to stand on a stool.

HF: But, all that time I was trying to get in training as a nurse, and nobody would accept me because I was physically not supposed to be able to do it. But, in 1918, 1917 we moved to family property because my uncle got tired of running the old family ranch and he asked my father to take over, at least for a year.

HS: In Santa Ana?

HF: In Santa Ana, the old home property. So, we moved in with Grandma and he moved out.

HS: Was she living alone, then, when—

HF: No, he was living with her all these years. And, he always had a housekeeper for her. So, we just moved in and we took care of Grandma then. And, Dad made enough from the proceeds of his portion of it to buy a little ranch up in San Luis Obispo County, about a hundred acres up there.

HS: Was that after you were in Pala?

HF: Yeah, 1915. We moved to Grandma's in 1916.

HS: Oh. Did you go north with them?

HF: I just, we just visited up there.

HS: Oh, I see. You stayed with your grandma?

HF: I stayed with my, uh—well, my grandmother died.

HS: Oh. What year?

HF: She died while we were living there.

HS: Oh, I see.

HF: She had a stroke and never came out of it.

HS: Oh.

HF: So, we inherited our portion of the property, at that time. A couple of years before that they had had Grandma deed the property to her children, instead of waiting until she was dead and having to fight over it. So, she had to deed each portion to the person she wanted to have it, see? We just automatically came into our property then. So, Dad moved the old house that we lived in for forty years. It stood on what I think is now Sycamore, right where Sycamore went through to Tenth.

HS: They stopped it.

HF: The house was right—standing right in the middle, so they had to move the house. So, they were trying to sell it. Nobody had lived in it for about five years because it, too, was a haunted house.

HS: Well, who lived in that house for forty years? Who—who is this you're speaking of?

HF: I did.

HS: You—did you? When?

HF: Except for a year—less than a year when I lived in Redlands, when I was married and Leo was living with me.

HS: Oh, you lived in it after, after you were married.

HF: We lived—yes, I moved back to my mother after my husband died.

HS: Oh, I see. We haven't come to that yet.

HF: No.

HS: Can we stop and rest for a little while? You want to?

HF: I don't care. We can stop. [tape pauses]

Dad hired a house mover to move the house out. He had to tear the kitchen off because it was only a lean-to, the kitchen and the bathroom. So, he had to tear those off and take the main part of the building—it was a two-story building—down the old driveway, all the way from Seventeenth Street to our portion of the property, which was the north section, three acres.

HS: Of the Greenleaf—

HF: My grandmother's, the Greenleaf estate.

HS: Now, there wasn't 150 acres left at the time your grandmother died, was there?

HF: No, at the time my grandmother died, the property that was still listed as her property was only—well, Dad and Aunt Sue and Aunt Kate each got three acres, and Uncle Bob and Aunt Grace each got two-and-a-half acres facing on Seventeenth Street. And the only outlet was a easement across all these lots clear out to Seventeenth Street for us.

HS: From where?

HF: From our property, the north section of the property. It was inside of the property. The only way out was clear, like an alley, all the way out to Seventeenth Street. And then, later on when the streets went through, when Flower Street went through and Nineteenth Street went up to it, they opened Nineteenth Street clear up to Aunt Kate's property, which was across the city lot there.

- HS: Where would that be now?
- HF: Facing Flower Street on Nineteenth.
- HS: Oh, on Nineteenth.
- HF: On Nineteenth and Flower. And so, we moved our mailbox down to Nineteenth Street then because that was still our outlet.
- HS: Then, you moved the old house to your father's—
- HF: My father's portion of the property. He inherited the big old barn on his portion of the property—
- HS: And, lots of trees, didn't he?
- HF: Right. The old tank house was left. The windmill had been taken down, but we got the tank house on ours, too.
- HS: Do you remember who built the house that your father moved there?
- HF: We never knew. But, it's one of the *old* houses in Santa Ana.
- HS: It's not there anymore.
- HF: Oh, no. They made us destroy it. The City sent the firemen out to burn it down.
- HS: Oh.
- HF: They sent a bulldozer out first, bulldozed it down, then burned it out in the middle of the property. But, the old barn was also torn down and burned up. And, it's too bad about that old barn; it was all redwood.
- HS: Should've been torn down and the lumber used—
- HF: And, the lumber saved. There's no reason for burning up anything as good as that, 'cause, it never wears out, you know?
- HS: That's right. It just weathers beautifully.
- HF: Weathers beautifully. And, it was weathered clear out, thoroughly. That old barn was so large that at one time it held forty tons of hay.
- HS: I don't know how much room forty tons of hay extended.
- HF: I can remember it from my childhood. Uncle Walter had bales of hay, baled hay, on a section of it. Half of the barn had concrete floor, and on that section he had his baled hay, and the other section he had his loose hay, alfalfa hay.

HS: Was there a haymow up above?

HF: They had their own alfalfa field out, at that time, in between the trees, which were rather small, at that time. And so, they cut their own alfalfa and piled it in there for the cow. We always had a cow, and two horses. And, there was a shed built on the barn for them with a manger all along the front and walls around it to keep 'em warm and dry. But, it was a shed-like building.

HS: You said you lived there for forty years. When did you move out of that place? It wasn't very long ago, was it?

HF: No, I moved in with the youngsters in 1948.

HS: In '48?

HF: Yes.

HS: Oh. And, the property was sold then?

HF: Forty-seven, I guess it was. Oh, yes, the property was sold. It was put in the hands of a subdivider, and they took bids for who would get it. And, my family thought they would accept about \$35,000 for that. And I said, "Now, that's utterly ridiculous. The lots sell for none less than \$10,000 a piece." And I said, "The corner lots are from \$14-16,000 apiece. And Olive Street goes through, and (clears throat) Twenty-second Street goes up through the middle, so that makes how many corners?" And I said, "It's perfectly ridiculous to think that you would accept \$35,000 for that."

HS: That was twenty years ago, wasn't it?

HF: Yes.

HS: Well, that wasn't a very good price, even twenty years ago in Santa Ana. I hope they didn't sell it for that.

HF: Well, no. I told Mrs. Cowan of Cowan Heights about it—she's a friend of our family—and, they're selling their property up there for pretty good price for every acre of it. And, they themselves are doing the building and selling the buildings. So, I told her what my problem was, and she says, "I'll put a bee in somebody's bonnet and there'll be some bids in that'll be at least \$70,000. And, if anybody asks you about any bids, you tell them there will be a bid in that will be over \$70,000."

HS: Well, good for her.

HF: And, you know, I didn't have to tell but one person; he happened to be an agent for Hohner. And, Hohner was the one that thought he could get the whole thing for \$35,000. In fact, he offered \$15,000 for the whole property to my mother.

HS: (laughs) There was no harm in trying. That's what they figure.

- HF: And, my mother thought he was her enemy, that he was trying to cheat her out of her home. Anyway, when she wasn't quite so well she got those (inaudible). But I think it was \$73,500 it sold for.
- HS: For three acres?
- HF: Yes.
- HS: That's more like it. How many lots? They could make *at least* twelve lots out of it.
- HF: And, good lots. And I said, "I don't want cheap, little, ugly-looking, homes on it, either. If you're gonna build any houses on this property, I want 'em to be nice." I said, "This is an elite section in here, and I don't want any box-like contraptions put up in here."
- HS: Well, they couldn't very well build little boxes on such expensive land, could they?
- HF: Yeah. They built nice homes in there.
- HS: Yes, they certainly did.
- HF: But, it happened that Mr. Hohner and—oh, what was the other man's name now? Russell. They made a bid together then; they each had a bid in. So, they formed a sort of a corporation between the two of 'em and put the bid in together. And, they are the ones that got it. So then, they divided it; each one took half of it, or took a portion of it, anyway. They divided the way they wanted to. But anyway, they got it. Each one wanted it, and each one got the part they wanted the most. So, I hope they're happy.
- HS: They did all the developing then? I don't remember—
- HF: Mr. Hohner already had the streets right up to our property on the back, on the both—two sides of us. And then, Mr. Russell had the part that was south of us, all right up to the property—water and lights and gas and roads and everything. Sewers and everything. So, all he had to do was just push 'em on through. I was only sorry that I couldn't afford to keep a lot and live there.
- HS: Oh, well, think what the taxes are now.
- HF: Yes.
- HS: I was going to ask you if you remember—you were speaking of the flood of 1915—if you remembered, wasn't there a flood here in 1919? I can remember it was around 1920. I can remember that we drove out to the east bank of the Santa Ana River, out Fifth Street, and we saw this terrible flood of water.
- HF: There was one in 1930, around 1930-some.
- HS: There was one in '30—uh, '38. But, this was about 1920. It was before, 1918 or '19. That was a bad flood. The whole river—

HF: Yes, it didn't flood any of our property, though. It didn't come in far enough for that.

HS: No, no, it didn't.

HF: But, I can remember when I was a little child, when I lived at West Orange, that there was a flood that came, at that time, so high that it washed into the back end of the ten acres that my dad was farming.

HS: That was up on Tustin Avenue?

HF: Right back of where the county hospital is now.

HS: Oh, oh, yes. That was quite a way.

HF: The river really overran its banks, at that time. But, in 1932, you say this other flood was?

HS: No, it was about 1920 or 1918. There was one in '38.

HF: The one in '38's the one I remember the most. Because, I walked the railroad tracks to get to a patient over the flood.

HS: Oh? Where?

HF: Out there by the county hospital.

HS: Oh.

HF: I had a patient that was a cancer case in a home, and I drove my car and parked it on a—on a hill across from what was then the Sees Service Station, just across this railroad track from Orange—from the county hospital. And Mr. Sees came out and he says, "If you'll drive me back to town, I'll find you a place to park where the car will be safe." And I said, "All right." So, I drove him back to town and he got supplies for his family. He had hip boots on. They were living in the upper part of their—their building in back of this service station. And he said, "Now, I'll help you get across." And, he said, "Well, you can't get across here." And I said, "Well, I think—I see cars going up *to* the railroad track, and I can walk the rails across.

HS: You wanted to cross the river to the west side?

HF: Yes. He said, "Would you walk the rails when you see the breakers breaking up between 'em?" I said, "Well, yes. I can walk rails." He says, "You're not gonna walk it alone." At that time, there was a lumberyard that had been washed out. And, all of the great big planks were washing down against the banks in there. So, he went down and got planks and laid 'em across the ties beside the rails. And he says, "Now I feel like we're safe." And so, he walked across with me to get me across there. And, the people were supposed to meet me on the other side. I'd parked my car and I'd gone over on the county trucks

because they had high wheels—about this high—to get across the water to the railroad track, and boats to meet ‘em on the other side to take supplies to the county hospital.

So, I walked across and carried my little valise and he walked with me. And, on the other side, the people didn’t come. And, there I was, stranded on the other side. And, here came a car from the other side; people wanted to get across to Orange to get some supplies. Well, they couldn’t get back to Anaheim from where they lived. So, they saw they couldn’t go, and they started to turn around and go back. And I said, “Are you by chance going down this road, down Placentia highway?” And they said, “Yes.” “Well, could I ride with you as far as the Walton Ranch?” “Well—well, yes. Is that where you’re going?” And I said, “Yes.” “But, how will you get in from there?” she said.

HS: (inaudible) the water.

HF: Oh, they said, “But, how will you get in when you get there?” I said, “Well, I guess maybe somebody’ll come out with boots and get me.” So, all right, we can take you, they said. So, they took me up there. And, the man had hip boots on, and he said, “Well, I’ll carry you in. You’re just a little thing.” (laughs) So, he carried me in.

HS: Was the water high there?

HF: Clear up almost to the level of the floor of the house.

HS: Well, that’s devotion. (laughs)

HF: Yeah.

HS: I didn’t ask you where you had your nurse’s training.

HF: Santa Ana Community—I started in the old Clara Barton in Los Angeles because they didn’t require a physical examination. I had applied time and time again—for five years I tried to get in training as a nurse. And, the doctors in this county wouldn’t give me any satisfaction. They all said I would be a good nurse, but I couldn’t stand it; I wasn’t physically strong enough. And, I didn’t believe ‘em. I said, “After all, in the 1918 epidemic I nursed one case after another, very severe cases. And, I know that I can; I can do nursing.” And, my sister had an abscess in her side, my mother had brain—my sister had brain fever—baby sister had brain fever, my mother had a touch of typhoid with it, and I had three very sick patients all with temperatures over 104 at once. And then, when they got well, I got it myself. And, I was very sick for awhile. But, I got over it quite rapidly. And, my aunt came over and says that a cousin was there, my uncle’s adopted boy—and, my uncle is a widower—and he didn’t know what to do for him, so he brought him to Aunt Sue’s house. And, Aunt Sue said, “I can’t take care of him. I don’t know what to do for him.”

HS: He had the flu?

HF: He had the flu. So, I went over and took care of him. And, I was still getting pretty tired, you know, by that time.

HS: I should think so. (laughs)

HF: And so I said, "Well, Mama," I said, "I believe that I'll go up to visit our friends in San Bernardino. They've *always* invited me to come, anytime I could come. They've been so cordial, and I believe the thing to do is to get clear away from people that know me and go up to San Bernardino and rest a while." When I got up there I found the lady in bed with the flu. But, she was Christian Scientist and wouldn't say that she had anything wrong with her at all, but she was taking a rest.

But the next day, the daughter had it, and she had a real high fever. And, I went in and saw the mother and I said, "Now, I won't take care of you and Grace unless you have a doctor because I don't know what to do, myself." "Well, there's an old doctor that lives just two blocks down here. He's mostly retired, but does come out and visit a Christian Scientist when they have to have someone." I said, "Fine." So, I called him. And she said, "Now, don't let him even know that I'm here." So, he came in and looked at Grace and gave me a prescription for her to bring her temperature down because it was very high. But, she just had a normal case; she wasn't too bad at all. But, he says, "Where's her mother?" And, I didn't answer. He said to Grace, "Is your mother in that room in there?" And, Grace nodded her head. He says, "I'm going in." And, she had a very, very bad heart condition with it. He said if she hadn't had a doctor that day, she would've died within twenty-four hours. So, I had a *very* sick patient then. And, I really was tired by the time I got through with that case.

I got home and I hadn't been home but two or three days, my cousin came down from Los Angeles and said his wife had pneumonia in all four lobes of her lungs. She had gotten over the flu and she just had to have someone stay with her. And, he needed to get back to his work; he'd been taking care of her. So, I went to Los Angeles and nursed his pneumonia case. (laughs)

HS: When did you get the flu? After all of these?

HF: No, I got it in between times.

HS: Oh, I see. Oh, my. Well, did you tell him this story?

HF: And, I told the superintendent that—when I went into Los Angeles when these others wouldn't accept me, even with the verification that I had, why—then, I went with my sister to Los Angeles; she went to apply for a teaching job. I said, "I'm going with you." "You are?" she said. I said, "Yes. I'm going to apply at first one hospital and then another until I get in training." So, I went to the old Clara Barton, which was right in the center of town. You could look out the windows of it right through Pershing Square, at the time. And, the superintendent said, "Well, what makes you think you could be a nurse?" She said, "You're rather small and not too strong looking." I told her about my experience, and she said, "Well, that sounds like you could nurse all right." But she says, "We don't require a physical examination, but we work our girls hard." I said, "That's very well. I've always worked hard." And I said, "And, I don't feel like working in an orange packinghouse is the thing for me. That's just mechanical, and you need to use

your mind more than that. I want to get into something that I can learn as I go along.” I said, “In fact, what I’d like to be is a doctor, instead of a nurse, but I can’t afford that. But, I will go in training as a nurse, if I can do so.” So she says, “When can you come?” And I said, “When do you want me?” She says, “Next Monday.” I said, “Fine.” She gave me three days to get ready.

HS: It’s what you wanted.

HF: And, I was there!

HS: How many years training did you have?

HF: I stayed seven months there, and they wouldn’t give me time to come home, and my mother and father were both ill. And so, I wrote up to Sacramento and asked for a transfer. I had written to Santa Ana and asked if I could be transferred, if they would accept me after seven months up there. So, they said, yes, they would accept me if they known I’d already gone through that much training, they knew I could stand it.

HS: That was the Santa Ana Valley—

HF: Santa Ana—well, yes, the Santa Ana Community or Valley. They called it the Valley—

HS: They called it the Valley Hospital then. The old, wooden, two-story building?

HF: Yes. It was first just the Santa Ana Hospital, then it was known as Santa Ana Valley Hospital, then Santa Ana Community Hospital, then it was back to Santa Ana Valley for a while, again, then to Santa Ana Community, again, now.

HS: I think it is, yes.

HF: Anyway, they’ve changed the name over and over.

HS: Yes.

HF: But, they accepted me, and I went in there. And, I was very happy because they type of girls that were in there were very, very congenial type. And, they were—a good many of them were as old as I because they had had difficulties and had had to take their training—any training they got slowly. One girl had had tuberculosis, and was an arrested case. Another girl had had surgery, which had put her back when she was just a girl. So, they were a little bit older than the average girl that goes in training.

HS: Excuse me just a minute. [adjusts microphone]

HF: By transferring, they made me lose four months of my seven! So, I had three years and four months training.

HS: Oh? Then, did you work in the hospital after you graduated?

- HF: No, I went—I did private duty only. I worked just until they could get somebody to replace me on the floor. But occasionally I would do general duty to help them out when they needed somebody for a few days.
- HS: What year did you finish your training?
- HF: Nineteen twenty-three.
- HS: When were you married?
- HF: Nineteen twenty-five. No, 1929. Nineteen twenty-five I went to San Diego and nursed for three months when there was a kind of slump in the nursing here. I stayed there three months. I worked at a tubercular hospital, general duty, and loved it! I would've stayed on there indefinitely, but my mother was afraid that I'd contract TB again.
- HS: Had you had it?
- HF: I had tubercular meningitis when I was three-and-a-half. So, I went through all the stages of tuberculosis. That's one reason I was slower in getting out of school than others, because I was in poor health always. I never knew a well year until I was eighteen.
- HS: My goodness, if you hadn't had those troubles—
- HF: Look what I might've been! (laughs)
- HS: Yes, lived to be 150.
- HF: Yeah, who knows? (laughs)
- HS: Let's talk about the beaches. You said your family always liked to go and camp at the beaches.
- HF: Well, we went to the beaches at—just for daily visits many times before that because our whole family loved the beach. But—
- HS: Where did you go?
- HF: We went to the nearer beaches, Newport Beach and Huntington Beach. We went to Huntington Beach when we wanted to go swimming in the plunge 'cause they had a plunge there, in those days. And when we were in our teens, we used to camp at my grandmother's and work in the apricots in the summertime.
- HS: Where was that?
- HF: Pitting apricots. On the old home place where we finally inherited it, a portion of it.
- HS: Oh, yes.

HF: We would put a tent up underneath a big walnut tree, and we would work in the apricot pitting camp. A cousin came out from Arizona and camped with us. We had a wonderful time. On Sundays, we would get on our bicycles and go to—after we would finish up the fruit the people had left the day before, if there was anything left over the family had to finish it on the Sunday morning. After that was done, then we were free for the day. We would get on our bicycles and go to Huntington Beach to swim in the plunge.

HS: How would you go to Huntington Beach?

HF: On our bicycles.

HS: No, I mean what route would you take?

HF: Well, almost the same as they do now.

HS: Did you go clear over to what they now call Beach Boulevard?

HF: We went by way of Wintersburg, out that direction.

HS: Oh, you went down a street they call—that used—now, let's see, the one they call Brookhurst now?

HF: Yes.

HS: It comes out on the coast and then, you go west to Huntington Beach, past the salt flats.

HF: We took that little side road with a road on each side of the row of trees. It was that way even then.

HS: I don't know what street you mean.

HF: It went in toward where the school is now.

HS: Oh, in Huntington Beach.

HF: Yes, in Huntington Beach.

HS: Well, that would be Huntington Beach Boulevard. Maybe you went out Bolsa Avenue, First Street—

HF: Yes, we did.

HS: To what is now Midway City.

HF: And, of course, the roads were all just dirt roads then, except where they sprayed them with oil and had a hard top that way. (laughs)

HS: Yes.

- HF: And then, put gravel on top.
- HS: And, when you went to Newport, you probably just went down Newport Road down Main Street to Newport Road. I remember that.
- HF: Yes, dirt roads, all of them.
- HS: There was a railroad track along Newport Boulevard.
- HF: Yes. But, when we went to Laguna Beach, it was not 'til we were in our teens, and this cousin always came and went with us. We always waited 'til apricot season was over, and we'd go down to camp for two to four weeks.
- HS: Where did you camp?
- HF: We camped in various places at the—when we first began to camp down there, there was no restrictions, whatever. And I believe one of the first places we camped was right down below the hill on which now is a art gallery, just down at the foot of that, right on the sand.
- HS: On the main beach?
- HF: On the main beach, just down below the hill.
- HS: There was a pier still there, ran out to what they call Seal Rock or Bird Rock.
- HF: Yes, there was a pier. Yes. And, we didn't camp there as long a time. But, we camped there for two weeks one year. Then, we camped two different years up on the bluff above where the—we always chose a place down near the waterfront where we could look right out of our tent and see the ocean—right up on the bluff above, on the bluff where the art gallery stands.
- HS: That would be where the Victor Hugo restaurant is now.
- HF: Yes.
- HS: Was Mr. Griffith living there then? William Griffith, the artist. His house was there for some time.
- HF: Yeah, the artist. Oh, yes. We admired his paintings so much. We used to go and visit all the artists' place up and down the streets. We'd always stop in, always loved them.
- HS: Did you ever camp down at Aliso Beach?
- HF: Yes, we camped at Aliso Beach several years. Dad would put up the tent and we'd make our own little toilets, and—
- HS: Were you on the beach or back in the canyon?

HF: On the beach.

HS: I suppose the Thurstons were living there then.

HF: Yes, and Mr. Thurston used to peddle his vegetables around. Dad used to go up sometimes to his place and buy vegetables, too, and melons, watermelons, casabas, and honey dews, cantaloupe.

HS: They had a lovely place in there.

HF: Oh, wonderful. And, the best sweet corn and fresh string beans. Always lovely, luscious tomatoes. And, fruit, too. He had a nice fruit orchard. If you wanted fruit, you could get it. But, he didn't peddle much fruit because he said that was more perishable and didn't carry as well as the vegetables. But, he had his vegetable wagon that he went clear into Laguna Beach with, and all up and down where everybody camped—to every camp in Laguna.

HS: Did people camp on the little beaches, like Diver's Cove and down at the beach at the end of Diamond Street?

HF: They didn't at Diver's Cove because the water came clear up to the bluff in there; they couldn't camp there. But, at that time, they used to sometimes camp right up, just above. There was a sort of a little cove place up in there where they could camp, at that time. But, that was soon fenced off; they didn't let people go down in there. But we camped I think two different years up on the bluff north—northeast of Laguna. It was a big eucalyptus grove up in there. And, we camped on the edge of that eucalyptus grove.

HS: You mean, on the top of the hill, before you go south to Sleepy Hollow?

HF: Yes.

HS: Yes, just last week I was talking with an old lady who lives on Ramona Street.

HF: It was in the place where we were camping on the edge of the eucalyptus grove that my father tied a great big piece of tenting that they put over trees for fertilizing—spraying—

HS: For fumigating.

HF: Fumigating the trees. He made the main tent out of that. And, he had one real tent, and he had some shelter tents. But, this main tent was for the main family room. And, we could play bingo and games at night, and we could be sheltered from the cold.

HS: Did you have lamps?

HF: We had lanterns. And it was that year that we had the pet chicken along with us.

HS: Oh!

HF: And, the little chicken got frightened when we went down to the beach the first time. He followed us down—we called it he, at that time—followed us down to the beach and was scared to death of the big water! And, Mama was coming right after us. It turned and ran back to Mama and got under her skirts. You know, in those days, we wore our skirts clear down to the floor nearly. (laughs)

HS: Yes.

HF: And, Coy followed Mama under the edge of her skirt clear down to where she sat down on the edge of the beach.

HS: Where would you go to the beach there? To the main beach in Laguna, or down the Sleepy Hollow?

HF: Down the Sleepy Hollow.

HS: Oh. There was nothing in there then, was there?

HF: No, nothing. Not a thing. There was a nice little path down from the hill. And, we went down this little path. And, as we passed by one house—there were two or three houses right along the edge there.

HS: On the oceanfront?

HF: On the oceanfront there. And, one woman says, “Well, if that isn’t a funny-looking tribe, I never saw it.” Because, we wore old-fashioned wool dresses for our first swim of the day, and kept our regular bathing suits to take with us on our daily trip up and down the beach. We’d take a trip every day one way or the other for our picnic for the day. So, early morning dip we always wore these old wool dresses. Those were our bathing suits.

HS: Blue serge, weren’t they?

HF: For the first swim of the day we wore these old dresses. And, this woman said to the other woman, “If that isn’t a funny-looking tribe, I never saw it.” And the other woman said, “Yes, but don’t they look happy?” And, Mama heard—was coming down the hill and she heard it all, and she said, “Yes, and they are happy! That’s my tribe,” she says. (laughs) So, we were poor but happy. (laughs)

HS: Where else did you camp along the beaches?

HF: Goff Island and Treasure Island.

HS: Well, that’s the same place.

HF: Well, really, the island section was—Well, at that time, that whole section was just wild. The only place you could camp at first was right, really, on the island part, the highest part of it.

HS: Was there enough room to put up tents there?

HF: Yes.

HS: It's not very big.

HF: Oh, we didn't climb way out on the island, I mean on the point out there.

HS: The point?

HF: The point that went out to it. There was only enough room for about one or two tents, at that time.

HS: Wasn't it being farmed then?

HF: No, they did later on. They did—

HS: I think they had farmed it before, too, hadn't they?

HF: I think it had been farmed, at one time. But anyway, there was just mostly brush in there at that time, the first time.

HS: Did you ever find any Indian relics around there?

HF: No, we never did.

HS: There was a great Indian camp—

HF: We found shells.

HS: Old shells?

HF: A lot of old shells there, but we didn't find any—any Indian artifacts at all. But, we camped there for, oh, I don't know, year after year because my sister, after she was married, she and her husband come out from Imperial Valley and camped there all summer.

HS: Did other people camp there, too?

HF: Oh, yes. The camps kept getting bigger and bigger there, until it got to be—

HS: Did the Goffs charge people anything?

HF: Oh, yes.

HS: Oh, they did?

HF: After—well, I think the first time we went there we weren't charged. But, I think every time after that we were. But, it was inexpensive. It wasn't like most places. The only

thing is that they had to charge something because they had to keep up restrooms. When they really did let more than one or two camps in there, they would have to build restrooms. See, Dad built his own. He built two, in fact, for every time we went down; he'd have one for the girls and one for the boys. (laughs) But the water supply we had to haul in.

HS: Well, the people who lived there in Laguna had to do that.

HF: At that time, Mr. Foote had a tank that he—it was just like one of these old sprinkling tanks, only he had it fixed with a faucet on the end instead of sprinklers.

HS: It was on a wagon, you mean?

HF: On a wagon.

HS: Oh, he brought it around?

HF: Brought it around and sold the water, so much a bucket.

HS: Who is Mr. Foote?

HF: Well, he lived right there in Laguna where the art association had their—it's a women's club there now, I believe it is.

HS: Back against the hill?

HF: Yes.

HS: Near the police station.

HF: Yes.

HS: City hall. Where did he get his water? From up the canyon?

HF: He had a well right there. Oh, he had a lovely well.

HS: Oh, he did? In the days that I first remember Laguna, you had to haul your water from up in the canyon, way up at the curve where Niguel Road takes off.

HF: Well, he had a very good well, at that time.

HS: And, horses to haul the wagon, I suppose.

HF: Yes, a team.

HS: Do you remember his first name?

HF: No, I don't. But, he married one of the Ross girls. I could find out from Ethel Ross his name, if you want it.

HS: Jacob Ross', uh—

HF: Daughter, youngest daughter. She's still living. Ethel Ross Wilson. It's her daughter that you talked to.

HS: Oh, is it?

HF: I think.

HS: What's her name, uh—Elsa Edwards.

HF: Yeah. I'm quite sure that's her daughter. She has a daughter. I believe she's in the historical society.

HS: (inaudible) Did you ever camp at Huntington Beach?

HF: No. Well, I went with encampments from the church to Huntington Beach. They had a Huntington Beach church encampment there. They had—several years that my sister Genevieve and I went to these Methodist encampments there.

HS: Somehow Huntington Beach wasn't as much fun as Laguna, though, was it?

HF: Well, no. Of course, we had a good time there because we were with a crowd of young people that we all knew and we had activities. We did them all together, and it was fun. But, we were more on our own, of course, at Laguna Beach. We camped—we were family camps there.

HS: Yeah.

HF: My cousin, Frank Greenleaf, which was my oldest half-uncle's oldest son, he was more my father's contemporary than his children's because my grandmother was just a year older than her oldest stepson.

HS: Oh.

HF: So, Grandma's younger children, see, would be more like—

HS: That's quite a gap.

HF: Yeah. So, Frank was the oldest son. He was more Dad's contemporary than if he was his nephew. So, he and his wife used to go camping with us, nearly every summer. He liked that chance of getting away from his farm for a while. And, sometimes he would go up and see about the farm in between time, but he generally left it in the charge of somebody that could take care of it.

HS: Where was his farm?

HF: Well, he inherited the portion that's on Greenleaf Street.

HS: Oh.

HF: He owned all the way from Santa Clara to Seventeenth on Green—well, no, because another family bought—the Greenwalls bought a section from my grandfather. Theirs was from Seventeenth Street to Nineteenth. And, it was clear over to our fenced property. Then, they sold to Hohner the section that would be west of Flower when they put Flower Street through. It was just wide enough for houses to be built on without any room for an alley behind them.

HS: I know. So, they have to put their garbage out on the street. It's a great tract. Oh, to return to the beach. Did you ever camp down at Salt Creek Beach?

HF: No.

HS: There was no road, I guess, down there.

HF: Dad camped there when he was just a boy.

HS: Did he? Was there a road that ran from Laguna to Dana Point.

HF: Yeah, there was a sort of a trail down there. I think you could take it and go in with a buggy. Dad often talked about when he was a boy, they used to go camp down there. And, he got washed off the rocks down there fishing when he was about nineteen. Complete near drowning. And, old Mr. Bridgeford stuck his fish pole down and Dad grabbed it when he was going down the third time.

HS: Oh. This was off the point, I suppose?

HF: Off of one of those points out there.

HS: Another nice beach would have been Three Arch Bay.

HF: Oh, yes.

HS: Did you ever camp there?

HF: We used to go there. As a rule, they were cultivating the ground up above, instead of allowing people to camp there. But, we used to go and take our daily trips down there and spend the day there. Lots of our daily picnics were down at—

HS: Where that Arch Rock is.

HF: Three Arch Bay. And, we loved it there. That was a *lovely* place to swim and find shells and play in the pools. Just—everything was nice.

HS: Do you think you have any of the shells left that you picked up when you were a girl?

HF: Oh, I know I have.

HS: Have you saved them?

HF: I saved them all these years. I have quite a shell collection. Very proud of it. I have divided up with people time and time, again, but I still kept a lot.

HS: Well, your collection is interesting because you've saved miniature shells. They're not so bulky as—

HF: That's really been my hobby, to try to find the smallest that I could of each kind so that I could have more of them and not be so bulky. [tape turns off] This is a theater.

HS: Oh. Explain for the tape, because it wasn't on at first.

HF: Oh. Yes, I've been to practically every theater that's ever been in this county, I guess. (laughs) No, not in this county. I mean, the ones that were here in the early days. I used to go, but not very often because we were kind of limited as to finances, so we just—and, when we did earn some money, why, we always had so many places to put it. If we went to a show, it was a real treat. And, we didn't have TV to give us any treat, so we made up our own program a lot of time and had our own plays.

HS: What church did you belong to?

HF: Well, when I first started church, there were some neighbors that knew that we little girls were not going to Sunday school, so they came over and asked if they could come and pick us up every Sunday and take us to Sunday school. So Mama said, "Why, yes." What church did they go to? They went to the Baptist. So, Mama said, "That's quite all right," she'd let her children go to the Baptist Sunday School. So, we went to the Baptist Sunday School with these neighbor people in their surrey with the fringe on top.

HS: Who were they?

HF: I think the name was White. And, they had to come quite a ways. They must have come at least a mile to pick us up before they went back. The church, at that time, stood on Sixth Street, and, it was a very small little place, at that time.

HS: What was it near?

HF: Not far from Broadway. But, it was just a little, one-room building, at that time. But, I went, and my mother told me, "Now, you watch the way this lady acts in church, and you do just what she does and you'll be all right." We had to stay for church, as well as Sunday school because these older people would, you know? And, I found out afterwards that this woman told my mother that it was the most comical thing to see me even trying to hold my hand like she did on the book. (laughs)

HS: How long did you go to the Baptist Sunday School?

HF: Well, until we moved away from that place. And then, my grandmother wanted us to go with her to her church whenever we were visiting her. And, she had changed from

Spurgeon Memorial Methodist Church to the Holiness Church. I didn't really like that because they were—they would get all worked up and yelling, screaming around, you know?

HS: Like one of those fundamentalist—

HF: Oh, holy rollers type, like that.

HS: Goodness. How did she get involved with them?

HF: Well, she thought that the Methodists were not holy enough. She thought that she would live more like Christ if she was with the poor people and could help them more.

HS: Oh.

HF: So, I went with her to her camp meetings—at a camp meeting over at Garden Grove in a big eucalyptus grove, and she had me stay with her for two or three days. And, I'd never hated anything so in my life! And, I'd come back home just scared to death because this old man was screaming about hellfire and damnation all the time. (laughs)

HS: Were you just a little girl?

HF: And, I was just a little girl. And, they set us on benches with no backs to them even, just old planks laid across sawhorses. And, my feet wouldn't touch the floor. And, I sat there hunched up on this old plank, and this man screaming at me.

HS: Did your sisters go?

HF: I was *miserable*. (laughs) No, they thought I was going to die and I needed to be—to have my soul saved. So, Grandma's the one—I was the one Grandma picked on, but that really turned me against religion, in a way. When Grandma wanted me to come, again, and go with her, I said, "No," I would stay and go to the other church. And, this cousin that lived across on Greenleaf Street, you see, they went to the Spurgeon Memorial Church. Their father and mother always stayed in the Spurgeon Memorial Methodist Church. So, I went with them, whenever we were close enough to do it.

HS: Well, that's where your daughter was married, wasn't it?

HF: Yes. In fact, that's where my mother and father both joined. That's the church that my grandfather helped to found. And, why Grandma felt she was too religious to live with them any longer, remain with them, I can't understand it. I never could understand it because I couldn't see how she was any better than anyone else. She was considered a very holy person, but there's other people I love better.

HS: Was she a widow for a long time?

HF: Yes. See, Grandpa died when my father was only nineteen. But, I put that down, didn't I?

HS: Yes. Well, that would've been—

HF: He died in 1882.

HS: Yes. And, when did your grandmother die?

HF: Nineteen twenty—no, 1916. So, you see, 1916—she was a widow for a long time.

HS: Thirty-four years.

HF: Thirty-two years.

HS: Well, that might have made her a little sterner.

HF: Thirty-two years a widow. But, Grandpa never went to any other church except the Spurgeon Memorial Methodist Church in Santa Ana. And, as I say, he helped to found it. Mr. Spurgeon was really one of the founders of it. And, Mrs.—yeah, Mrs. Stella Elliott, [Stella] Kitchnel Elliott was—her mother was really a founder of it. She founded it in her own home as a Sunday school church. And then, the people that—Mr. Spurgeon gave them the ground to build a building and part of the money to put into the building. And, they all pooled their interests and built a little building on the corner of Church Street and Broadway. And then, later it was taken down and a bigger one put up. It was one that stood—

HS: It's still there, but not as a church.

HF: I hate that, too.

HS: Yes, it seems better to tear it down if it's not going to be a church anymore.

HF: That's the way I feel it should've been.

HS: The Congregational Church was taken down.

HF: I think it should've been. I really just don't think a church should be made into something else.

END OF INTERVIEW



Figure 4: Apricot drying work party in Tustin, Calif.



Figure 5: (above) Goff's Arch Beach Hotel in the 1880s
(below) Swimmers in Laguna and campers at Newport in 1891



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: MRS. ROSE FORD

INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith

DATE: July 22, 1971

SUBJECT: Property exchanges and families in Ballena, near Ramona

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm talking with Mrs. Rose Ford in her home at 320 West Second Street in Santa Ana. I'll let Mrs. Ford talk. Today is July 22, 1971. (incidental conversation) I wanted you to start, if you would, by telling where you were born.

RF: I was born at Ballena (spelled). That was about nine miles north, or east rather, of Ramona.

HS: Did your father have a ranch?

RF: Yes, he had. My father passed away when I was just a very young girl, but we had, I think it was 160 acres, what at that time they used to call "taking up claims."

HS: Homesteading.

RF: Yes, homesteading. It was government land.

HS: Yes. Was it near Mr. Crouch's land?

RF: Crouch? No, Mr. Crouch lived down at Oceanside.

HS: But he owned land there.

RS: Maybe he did. He and Mr. Sawday were partners. And Mr. Sawday, when I was a little girl, he was, he had a market, you know, a store, at Witch Creek.

HS: Do you remember Wash Hollow?

RF: Wash Hollow? Yes, I do.

HS: What does that mean to you?

- RF: Well, it just means Wash Hollow. There's nothing there, except there was a kind of a creek or stream of water running down, and then there were trees, it kind of went down, but it wasn't much. They called that Wash Hollow.
- HS: Why? Do you know?
- RF: No.
- HS: Were there any Indians there that you remember?
- RF: No, there weren't any Indians then. The Indians all lived on this reservation at Santa Ysabel.
- HS: Do you remember any adobe houses around there?
- RF: Yes. My grandfather, John McIntyre, had an adobe house.
- HS: Did he have it built?
- RF: I think so. And the Swycuffers had theirs built, Joe Swycuffer. I think there're still walls there.
- HS: Do you remember the stage station that was built of adobe at Ballena? It was out in the meadow at Ballena, the old Butterfield stage station. I think Sam Warnock used to stop there with the stage, when he drove the stage.
- RF: I don't remember Sam Warnock ever driving the stage. That was before my time. Was it an adobe house?
- HS: It was an adobe building, yes.
- RF: Well, I'll tell you, there was across the creek—a kind of a wash, where I lived—was an old adobe house, and that was Sam Warnock's house when he first came there, I guess before he married. Then he sent to Ireland and his wife came out there.
- HS: And his brother, I think.
- RF: And his brother, Bill Warnock. But the two of them never had anything to do with each other. One was a Republican and the other was a Democrat and—how else were they different? Anyway, they never listened or spoke to each other.
- HS: I think that Bill was a religious man and Sam was a profane man. They were just different.
- RF: Yes, maybe Bill was more—he was a Catholic. Did you know anything about my grandfather, John L. MacIntyre?
- HS: I don't, no. Where did he come from?

RF: He came from Pennsylvania much before my time; because he lived in this—with an old lady—her name was Brunner. Her husband had been Pete Brunner, and he lived there at her house and he had this mailbox, and he used to transport the mail on his back from there. Early in the morning he'd start out and he'd go over to Ballena and then the people from around there would come and get their mail. And then in the evening, he'd go back and stay with Mrs. Brunner. And then the people from around there would come in and get their mail when he came back.

HS: Where was that? Where did she live?

RF: What did they call that? It was between, after you got up the canyon going from Ramona up to Ballena, there was a kind of an open space there, kind of valley and she lived there.

HS: Not the Santa Teresa Valley?

RF: I never knew it by that name.

HS: There is such a valley there. (incidental conversation) Did you know any of the Indians around there? Did they work for your family?

RF: No. No, I didn't know any of the Indians. They lived all on this reservation.

HS: Where did you go to school first?

RF: Ballena School.

HS: Who was your teacher?

RF: My first teacher? Let me see. Oh, I think it was, what was the name of that man? I've forgotten his name but I know he was a cripple. There was something the matter with one leg. He had to have a crutch. And then I had this Mrs. Maud Thayer, who came from San Francisco, and she boarded at Witch Creek and rode on horseback from Witch Creek down to Ballena, because there wasn't any hotel or any place for her to stay there. She boarded at Witch Creek.

HS: Well, there was a school at Witch Creek, too.

RF: There wasn't at that time. Not at that time. The district was formed later, much later. The Sawday children all came to Ballena. George Sawday, the oldest of the Sawday children—His father's name was Fred Sawday; he was the one that had the store. George and I were about the same age, and I know we were always arguing. I always liked to argue, so I could always get an argument with George. He liked to argue with me.

HS: What was he like as a boy?

RF: He was a nice boy. They were nice children. Oh, he was very nice. We were about the same age.

- HS: He was also quite smart, bright. He made lots of money in his life.
- RF: Oh, yes. The Sawdays had a lot of land holdings, because he had this store. And they [customers] would buy their groceries, you know, and charge it. And then sometimes when they couldn't get it paid, they'd deed him a part of their land. He'd take it in land.
- HS: Can you remember anyone that did that?
- RF: Let me see, who was it? Well, not in particular.
- HS: You told me yesterday about how you happened to go to Julian High School. Would you tell that story again?
- RF: Yes. I graduated from grammar school. I was in the first graduating class. They just sent out the examination from San Diego and we took them. Then they were sent in and corrected there, and you had to get 75 percent, I think, to pass. And of course, I passed; I was ready for high school then. So they thought I should become a teacher. So I went down to San Diego to investigate about attending normal school. That was the first year that they had normal school at San Diego. They had just finished the building.
- HS: What year was that?
- RF: Let me see, what year was it?
- HS: You were born in '76? You must have been twelve years old.
- RF: I was about fifteen, I think.
- HS: That would be about 1891. Does that sound right?
- RF: I guess so. This was when I was born. When was I married? I was married in, was it 1904? It was '04 or '05.
- HS: Well, that was much later, anyhow.
- RF: Yes, much later. My husband lived at Wynola. Do you know Wynola?
- HS: Yes.
- RF: My stepfather had a boy by the name of Jim Putman working for him, and he came from Wynola. He told them up there what a good time we had at the dances. The whole family would go and then at midnight, why, they'd have a regular banquet: turkey and beef and pork and everything imaginable at Ballena in the schoolhouse. That was before they had that school at Witch Creek.
- HS: You said you went to San Diego and got a job.
- RF: After I graduated from grammar school, then they thought I should become a teacher and so I went down there to see about attending school. And normal school was just opening,

the first year of normal school. While I was waiting for the normal school to open, I thought I'd look through the paper about the ads and see if there was any work I could get to do. And I saw this opening, that they needed a cook at this hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, I think it was called. I believe it's called St. Mary's now. So I went over and I got the job and that's where I was when Dr. King came to see me. Through my mother—you see, that was all a high school district up there, Julian and Banner connected. Some of the Juliann people thought they should have the high school up there instead of having it down at Banner, but the Banner people wouldn't send their children up there, so that left them short of students. They had to have an average of, I believe it was nine daily, in order to keep it running. So they were looking for students and Dr. King came down to the convention that they had, you know, once a year. And through my mother or something, they found out that I was eligible for high school, and so he came and looked me up. I know one of the sisters came in one day and said that there was a gentleman at the office who wanted to talk to me. I went in and it was Dr. King, and he was the new principal of the high school, and also he was a doctor. They concluded up there that they needed a doctor as well as a principal, and they would combine the two.

HS: What was his first name?

RF: I always knew him as Doctor. Seems as though it was J. W. King. His name was John, I guess.

HS: Do you have any pictures from those days?

RF: I did have one, but I'd have to look them up.

HS: Then you went four years to Julian High School?

RF: Just two years. I went two years and then I went down and took the teacher's examination.

HS: You said that you were in the first graduating class.

RF: I was; it was only three of us in that class.

HS: Was it called Cuyamaco High School then? You said yesterday that it was.

RF: I guess it was.

HS: Three people. Who were the other two?

RF: There was a Maud McCain and then there was a boy, Claude McGee. Claude McGee came from San Diego and he was up there because he had asthma and the climate didn't agree with him at San Diego. So, he went up there and attended school. That night on the stage there was Maud McCain, she belonged to one of those families there in Julian, and Claude McGee and I. Claude McGee gave the salutation and I gave the—what else do they have?

- HS: The history, the class history and the—
- RF: Valedictorian. I was the valedictorian and he was the historian. I gave the address. I remember I committed it to memory, wrote it and then I committed it to memory.
- HS: Then you went to the normal school?
- RF: I never did attend normal school. I went down and took the teacher's examination and passed.
- HS: You were seventeen, weren't you? Two years.
- RF: Yes, but I was about twenty-three when I taught school, I think. No, I was twenty-three when I was married, wasn't I?
- HS: You must have been seventeen or eighteen, if you went two years to school and you were fifteen when you started. Where did you teach?
- RF: Well, I taught at a place up there called Oberland School. That was named for a family of Obars. Obar. It was kind of at the foot of the Volcan Mountains. It was, it was 'way down in a canyon there. It was in open territory.
- HS: It wasn't on the San Felipe?
- RF: Oh, no, not that far.
- HS: Was it on the other side? The west side?
- RF: Yes, it was on this side. It was north of the Obars. That's where I taught school.
- HS: It wasn't an Indian school, was it?
- RF: No, no. I think I had one Indian child or Mexican or something. No, they were all white students. It wasn't a large school, but we had all the grades.
- HS: Do you remember who the pupils were?
- RF: The Gunns, I had some of the Gunns. I had Charlie Gunn and George Gunn. Florence Gunn—did I mention her?
- HS: No.

- RF: She was one of my schoolmates in high school. We were very friendly. She was George Marston's—you know who George Marston⁷ was?
- HS: Yes.
- RF: George Marston's wife was her aunt, was her father's sister. Chester Gunn was her father and he was the brother of Mrs. George Marston. Florence and I were great pals all the time. Of course, I stayed right with the Kings and she came, she used to come in and we went to the dances together and that sort of thing. She was my most constant pal all the time I was in high school.
- HS: You know, they still have dances in the Julian Town Hall. Wild times.
- RF: I guess they do. That isn't the old town hall; it burned down.
- HS: The one at the corner where you come into town.
- RF: Yes, I know. That's a new one. It's been built quite a while, but that isn't the one that was there when I was there.
- HS: That's where they have the wild flower show now. Have you been to that? I was up there in April or May. Beautiful flowers. They have it every year.
- RF: I thought they had it in the fall.
- HS: That's the weed show, I think.
- RF: And they have Apple Day.
- HS: They also have a weed show; they have pretty weeds, and then in the spring they have the wild flower show. I noticed that you have this history that they put out for Apple Day [fall 1969]. (conversation)
- RF: Oh, yes, my son and his wife took a trip down there and it was just about a week afterward, so they picked up these books.
- HS: Do you remember any of your other pupils besides the Gunns that went to school to you? That you taught?
- RF: Oh, that I taught. Let me see. There were some of the Gunn children came to my school, Charlie Gunn and George Gunn attended my school. They lived over in _____ and instead of going into Julian they came to my school. And what was the name of—Danny, where I boarded. His name was Dan Price; I think that's the name, Price.

⁷ George White Marston (October 22, 1850 – May 31, 1946) was an American politician, department store owner and philanthropist. Marston was involved with establishing Balboa Park, the San Diego Public Library System, and the Serra Museum. He married Anna Lee Gunn. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Marston

- HS: I just can't visualize where this school was. Was it near Julian?
- RF: Oh yes, it was only about two or three miles out.
- HS: But it was not down towards Banner?
- RF: No, it was the other way.
- HS: It was down towards Wynola?
- RF: No, here's Julian (gesturing); this way you go to Banner and this way is where you went to this school of mine, Oberland School.
- HS: Was it toward Cuyamaca and Descanso?
- RF: No, not that way.
- HS: Was it down in the Kelly country—Pine Hills?
- RF: Well, it wasn't quite that far down. No, that was in a different direction. Pine Hills, let's see, there were some people that had a kind of a hotel and they kept summer boarders there. Pine Hills.
- HS: It's still there. They have tree houses, houses up in the trees. Do you remember anything about the San Felipe Valley?
- RF: No, I never knew anything about the San Felipe Valley. That's quite a place now, isn't it? I tell you, it belonged to one man then, I think.
- HS: Belongs to the Sawdays now.
- RF: Oh, it does? George Sawday bought up a lot of—that is, he inherited or he bought it up, and he owned most of California (sic). He was just about my age, George, and I remember the last time I saw George. I loved to argue and so I could always get an argument with George.
- HS: Did you know Bessie, his wife?
- RF: Oh, very well. She was Bessie Crouch.
- HS: I taped her. I interviewed her about a year or two before she died. She died right after she passed her ninetieth birthday, about two years ago.
- RF: Yes, it was just a short time ago. When I was on the parade up there, she wasn't there, but we stopped on our way back and talked to Bessie. George was gone then. George had passed away.
- HS: In 1949, he died—a long time ago, twenty-two years ago. Doesn't seem possible.

RF: He was gone then, she was a widow that day when I was up there, when I was the queen of the Apple Day. I rode in a covered wagon—not a covered wagon, but a horse-drawn wagon.

HS: Have you been married more than once?

RF: No. No, I've always been Ford.

HS: Where did you meet your husband?

RF: I met him at a dance down at Ballena. One of the boys from Wynola worked for my stepfather, Jim Putman, and he told the boys up there what a good time he had at the dances. So we were having a dance—we had dances at the holidays at the schoolhouse. And so there were four or five of them came down, boys. I asked my [future] husband, I said, "Why didn't you bring some girls?" He said, "Well, we don't need any girls. There're plenty of girls here." And that's where I met him. And so then right after that, I started going to high school up at Julian, and so then he used to come and take me everywhere I wanted to go. I went with him quite a while before we were married.

HS: In a buggy? Horse and buggy? Or did you ride horseback?

RF: Well, I rode horseback. I had this Shelby horse of mine up there that I rode to school on. My folks had moved up and took over the Julian Hotel.

HS: Which one, the one they still call the Julian Hotel?

RF: Yes, they took that on. And then it burned down.

HS: Do you mean the Washington Hotel?

RF: No, the hotel right on the corner. It burned down but it was rebuilt afterwards. It burned down while they were there so then they moved into the Washington Hotel.

HS: And it was torn down later.

RF: The Washington Hotel? Of course, it was an old place. Nothing built in its place.

HS: No, there's nothing there. They don't need very many hotels in Julian. People just come for the day. Did they operate it—you mean your mother when she was married to Mr. Swycaffer?

RF: Yes, she was married to Swycaffer. They had a lot of children, the Swycaffers. Let me see, who was the first of the Swycaffer children? I can't remember my half-brothers! Charlie was my own brother, was a Trask. Charlie and I and then Annie and then Bella and Josie and Bertha. Those are all Trasks. And then she married Swycaffer, and the Swycaffer children—I guess Claude was the oldest Swycaffer child, and Alonzo and Joe—Oh, I can't remember.

- HS: My goodness, how many children did your mother have?
- RF: I think there were six of us and I guess it was five of the others. That's a lot of children, about eleven or twelve children.
- HS: Was your mother a school teacher?
- RF: No. She was married very young, I think.
- HS: What did your stepfather do?
- RF: He farmed, and they had cattle, mostly cattle raising. They'd sell the fat cattle, you know, in the springtime or the summertime. Then he farmed, of course. They raised corn (?) in Ballena.
- HS: Were the Peppers there then?
- RF: The Peppers came later. I know one of the Peppers married Daisy Warnock. I remember Daisy's mother. Her name was Maria (long I), Maria Warnock. Of course, I could cook when I was just a kid, thirteen or fourteen years old, so I used to go and help her when she had the threshing people. When the threshers would come, the extra men, I'd go and help her.
- HS: They had big appetites, didn't they?
- RF: Yes. And you had to get up real early.
- HS: Do you remember the Witch Creek Hotel?
- RF: Yes.
- HS: Did you ever have anything to do with that?
- RF: I never operated it or anything, except I did work there one summer for the people who were running it. I think their name was Fisher, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher. His wife came out here from England with Tom Wood; Tom Wood was a minister.
- HS: He came to teach the Sawday children. But he wasn't a very good teacher. That's what Mrs. Sawday told me. He wasn't a good teacher, so he kind of left and had to find something else to do. I think he was the postmaster at Witch Creek.
- RF: No, he wasn't any postmaster. That was his brother, that wasn't the minister. The minister had his wife—she came out with Mrs. Fisher. Now, Fisher had been a friend of Sawday over in England. He roamed around, went off on a jaunt, and finally came back and landed at Sawdays and stayed there. And he about ran the place, because he was a good bookkeeper and he could cook and he about straightened them up.
- HS: You mean the store?

RF: Yes, the store. They had the market.

HS: What did they sell?

RF: Oh, everything that you could buy in a market: sugar and flour.

HS: It was where the house is now? Mrs. Sawday's house, the green house?

RF: Yes. I think they remodeled that house, though.

HS: They've added to it and changed it. Mrs. Sawday said the only part that was part of the original was the dining room. That was part of the old house, but the rest of it was new, not new but newer.

RF: I don't think that was a part—I guess the store building was torn down.

HS: She said the store was west of the house. She said, "It's out where my bulb garden is, out under the trees west of the house."

RF: Oh, I guess it was.

HS: Closer to the road.

RF: That's right. Did you know her?

HS: Yes, for fifty years.

RF: Did you know her down at Oceanside?

HS: No. Let me turn this off. (pause)

RF: We stayed for two years down there at Ballena at my mother's place. They had gone to Julian. This was after we were married. Then my husband was kind of tired of it there. He wanted to come back to Santa Ana; his brothers were all here, George Ford and Thee Ford and Crit Ford.

HS: Were they old-timers in Santa Ana?

RF: Oh, yes. When George Ford came to Santa Ana he said it was just a mustard field, just all mustard. I know he must have had something to do with the bank; he was one of the managers of the bank, because all I had to do if I wanted or needed any more was to go there and ask for the money. I didn't have to give a note or anything. They just handed me out the money.

HS: That was your brother-in-law?

RF: Yes, my brother-in-law, George Ford. He was the oldest of that family. They came from Illinois.

HS: Right after Mr. Spurgeon subdivided the town?

RF: I suppose it was, not too long afterwards. Was that who Spurgeon Street is named for?

HS: Yes.

RF: Oh, I knew that man who passed away that lived on the corner of Ninth and Spurgeon, Liebig. He was a hundred years old. But he just passed away a little while ago. He was such a nice man. I lived in the house right next to him, when I lived there.

HS: We keep getting off the subject. Now, let's see—you said that you and your husband farmed at Ballena on your mother's land.

RF: On my mother's land for two years. Jeff, my stepfather, would only give him two years. He only wanted to rent it to him for a year and my husband said it would take him a year to get the thing fixed, and so he wouldn't take it for less than two years. So we took the old house and we fixed up the old house, put a new roof on it.

HS: Is that the one at the corner, with cypress trees around it?

RF: No, that's a new house. I think there's a part of the old house on that, but that isn't the house that we lived in.

HS: But that was the location, near the vineyard?

RF: Yes. The house was nearer the street. So when we came there we put a new roof on it and we got this heavy building paper—it was pink, and you put it in with tacks, you know, and tacked it on. Then there was a—they had moved from the Trask place, there was a part of that building left and they had moved it over and attached it there. Then they bought another place and moved it; there were about three houses, I think, that they put together to make that. So, when we went there, we put on new roofing, and then we put on this heavy paper on the inside. We were there for two years, and we fenced it all out so that the cattle couldn't roam around. I remember when we went there, oh, these cockleburs—you know what cockleburs are? I remember that you could hardly walk through the back yard on account of them. So my husband, he wasn't a bit lazy, and he got these tramps that would go along the road and he'd get them to come and work for him, by feeding them, you know. So we were there but my stepfather would only let him have the place for two years. He only wanted to let him have it for one year, but he said it would take him a year to clean it up, which we did. And we did the fencing, fenced with wire across the front yard so the cattle couldn't roam all around over us.

HS: I would think Jeff got a good deal.

RF: Yes, and then at the end of the two years, they wanted to come back, and they came back. While we were there, there was a man who dealt in real estate, Johnny Sutherland. Do you know anything about him?

HS: Well, I suppose the Sutherland Reservoir is named for them. That's all I know.

RF: I think it is. Yes, because it's over there near the Sutherlands. And Johnny Sutherland called me and he said that there was an awful good deal down there that somebody wanted to sell a piece of property. It didn't have any house on it, but it was all fenced in and it had water on it. They only wanted—what was it they wanted, \$500 was it? Oh, it was such a little bit. Hardy didn't much want it and I said, "Hardy, land will never be any cheaper," and so, well, we bought it.

HS: How many acres?

RF: It was forty acres, and it was all fenced in but no house on it. When we got ready and we were moving back down here [Santa Ana] because he kept wanting to come back to Santa Ana, because his other brothers were here. So then when we started coming back down here after we lived the two years at Ballena, we went to Ramona. He thought he'd like to farm it, but there wasn't any house on the place. We knew the lady that had the Kenilworth [Inn], the hotel, Mrs. Kearney. We went to dinner and he asked Mrs. Kearney if she knew of any house near this property that we had that we could rent and move to—that was when we were moving from Ballena. She said, "Well, Jake Pepper has"—I think it was—"ten acres, right there in town; it's opposite the high school." I don't know where the high school is now, but it was opposite the high school then—and he said that he would take \$1,000, I think, and it was a new house. He said the house wasn't quite finished. It looked finished on the outside; it was painted, green and white, I think it was, and had trimming of dark green. It was all fenced in, it had a barn; his wife wanted to go back to Texas. I think she went back, and so Mrs. Kearney said that he would take \$1,000 and sell the place so that he could go back to Texas. So my husband went to see about it. I think he had \$500 of his own, and so then he asked George if he would lend him the other \$500, so George did. Several times we borrowed money from George Ford; that's the oldest of the Ford brothers.

HS: That was the First National Bank here? Mr. Crookshank's bank?

RF: Yes, First National Bank. So then we lived there five years. Oh, I had an awful good time there. There was Dr. Scott—you know Dr. Scott:

HS: No.

RF: Dr. Scott, he was a wonderful doctor, and Bruce Dye and Lucy Dye. I'd gone to school with Bruce, and I knew his wife. She was a San Diego girl, Lucy. And so we—let me see, how did that happen? Anyway, we bought that ten acres and moved there and we were there for five years. So then he still wanted to come back to Santa Ana and he wanted to sell out. I said, "Hardy, you can do much better on a trade. Let's go up there and see if we can't make a trade, find some property." Because property up here was so much higher than that, and I said, "I think we could do better if we moved up to Santa Ana and then made a trade and rent this property. We had a chance to rent it. We drove down to San Diego and then we took the train and came on up here and visited George, and George said, he invited us to come back. I thought if we were up here we could do much better by being right up here, you know, and finding these people that wanted to change. George said that he had several places that we could move to, pieces of property

that he had taken in on money deals, you know. One of them was down here at the corner of Edinger and Bristol. It was an old house. So we moved up there. Then my husband loaded in all his farm equipment—of course, everything was horse-drawn. But we came, the furniture and I and the children, came a week later with some boys or some men that had a big truck, run by a motor.

HS: What year was that, do you remember?

RF: That we moved up here? Let me see. What year was that?

HS: Would it have been before World War I? Maybe 1910?

RF: Oh, yes. What year was it we came up? (pause) Anyway, we came up to visit George, ask him his ideas. He said that we could move into one of his buildings, then we could trade our property there in Ramona for something up here. So we found a man that wanted to get back from the ocean and he had this new place at Paularino. The house down there was practically finished, all painted and everything, and all fenced in, had running water on it.

HS: That was on Baker Street?

RF: That was on Baker Street, because my husband named it Baker. I told you he was the one that asked Mr. Baker if he'd mind if he named the street for him. Now, you'd have to go through a lot of rigamarole, in order to get a street named. But he was very proud to have it named for him. So he put up a post and put Baker on it.

HS: Did you live there long?

RF: No, he passed away while we were there at Paularino.

HS: Your husband?

RF: Yes. He passed away. I've been a widow a long time. I've been here since '42. I wasn't happy there anymore, so I moved in and bought a place here on Wellington. There isn't any Wellington anymore—

HS: I know where it was, over by the Ebell Club.

RF: Well, yes. I guess it branched off from that. What street is the Ebell Club on?

HS: I don't know. That's a whole mess of little crooked streets that run into each other.
(conversation)

RF: What did you say your name is?

HS: My maiden name was Stanley. My parents lived in Tustin for many years, forty years.

RF: What was your father's given name?

HS: Samuel, and my mother's was Florence. She was president of Ebell for two terms.

RF: Oh. Then I moved in and bought that place and I had one of the doctors, I can't remember his name, came over and rented my upstairs—I had three bedrooms upstairs. He wanted it for the nurse's home and so I rented it to this doctor's nurse.

HS: You were always in business, weren't you?

RF: Yes. I was always figuring. I was always a good mathematician. It really pays to be a mathematician, if you're in business in any way.

HS: Just getting along in life it helps, too.

RF: Yes, it does. So then in '42, my daughter in Los Angeles—she had married Harry Richman. She met Harry Richman—she was a telephone operator. She got a job at the telephone company, and she said that she noticed this, there were some boys that rented a home, a well-furnished home up on North Main Street. Listening in, she being an operator, she said she noticed that there were a lot of girls calling in there all the time. So she listened and she said that she noticed this man that had such a nice voice, and she found out his name was Harry. We went up there—had met somebody up there. I've forgotten who it was. I didn't drive, but I went with somebody and we went up there and we met Harry Richman. She wanted Harry to, she wanted to meet Harry, the one that had the nice voice, so we met Harry. Then, oh, he just fell right in love with Lucille, so he took her home to his mother, lived in Pasadena, and he took her to Pasadena and introduced her to his mother. He had twin sisters, I remember; and then the next thing I knew, they went to Riverside and were married at the Mission Inn. I guess there was a minister or a priest or something there, and so they were married there, got the license and everything, I think, right there. Harry was still working in the post office department and did as long as he lived. Harry was such a nice fellow.

HS: Then you bought this place in '42?

RF: Then I bought this place in '42. I remember Lucille came down, and they had bought a place, a duplex, and she wanted me to go up and take half of that duplex. So I went up and I was up there during the war. When the war came on in '42, I was standing at the telephone, talking to Lucille, and I heard this voice, and I heard them say that, about the ships being attacked. So I rushed over and I told them to listen in, that we were being attacked by the enemy. Then my folks down here thought I should come back down here. I kind of wanted to come back down here anyway; so I came back and we, Marge, my daughter-in-law, went all around looking for places to rent, and there wasn't anything to rent. So we came here and I remember it [a sign] said it was for sale for \$6,000. But there was a bush grew up over the sale mark, so I said to the realtor, "Oh, I wouldn't give \$6,000 for it, but I'll give \$4500." I had inherited from some property down there at Ramona, down at Ballena, and had \$600. So I said, "I'll give them \$500 down and then so much a month." So they called me the next morning and said, "They've accepted your rent [means 'offer']." When we came looking at it first, it didn't appeal to us very much because there was tenants in every room, two tenants. The landlady'd been here for ten

years and she told me the first time I saw her that all the furnishing belonged to her; so then I came and took a pencil and took it down and she would have to study a while about whether this belonged to her or not. Anyway, she remembered that—the people who owned it said that she'd better have some furniture in there because it was well furnished when she took it over. So that's how I bought it, in '42, I guess it was.

HS: You've lived here ever since?

RF: Yes, I've lived here ever since. There were tenants just piled in here, so then I got it down so there were only, just put one tenant in each room instead of two because it made it too much crowding.

HS: Can they cook here?

RF: Oh, yes. There's kitchen privileges up there. Now somebody has bought that new stove [in the hall] and is going to take it up there.

HS: That wasn't there yesterday. (conversation)

END OF INTERVIEW

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
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Helen Smith Oral History Collection

NARRATOR: DR. PERCY D. GASKILL
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: December 5, 1969
SUBJECT: John Muir, James Irvine, San Francisco earthquake

Dr. Gaskill is 91 and was born in Oakland, California on November 22, 1878.

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm talking with Dr. Percy Gaskill in his home on West Fifth Street in Santa Ana. Today is December 5, 1969. Dr. Gaskill, why don't we start at the beginning? You mentioned that your parents were New Englanders, or that your mother was a New Englander. Do you know about their background?

PG: Very much so. Yes, it wouldn't be a bad idea to outline some of my parents' background.

HS: Yes, I wish you would.

PG: Well, I'm rather interested in genealogy and with good reason. I belong to the Sons of the American Revolution, for one thing. On my mother's side they were Scotch. They lived in North Ireland and during the time of the English Kings they were persecuting the Protestants in North of Ireland. They immigrated to this country and landed in—Salem or somewhere, and went up into New Hampshire.

HS: Do you know about when that was?

PG: In 1700 and something.

HS: The Battle of Culloden in Scotland was in 1742 and that was the last gasp of the Scots.

PG: It must have been. I have some interesting letters that I got just yesterday. But they settled at a place called Londonderry in New Hampshire. The leader of the expedition was John Duncan. They settled there and he became quite a prominent person in the locality.

HS: Was John Duncan your ancestor?

PG: Yes, on my mother's side. Edwin Gaskill was the emigrant on my father's side.

HS: He also went to New England?

PG: He went to New England. The first evidence we have of his coming to this country was in 1637 when he was granted twenty acres of land. That's in the papers, you know.

HS: Oh, you have the papers?

PG: Yeah. His family went up to Vermont, near Rutland, a place called Clarendon. An odd thing about it is that my mother's people were from New Hampshire and father's people from Vermont. They weren't very close together, but my mother and father met in Forbestown, Butte County, in California in 1850. (pause)

HS: Yes, you had jumped from your ancestors in the 1700s to your parents' meeting in 1850.

PG: Yes. My father, as I said, came to California in 1849 and he landed in San Francisco on August 14, 1849.

HS: How did he come, across the isthmus by train or—

PG: By foot over the hill. And caught the ship at Panama City. They were ninety-four days from Panama to Monterey, where they made their second landfall.

HS: That was before the days of steam, wasn't it?

PG: Oh, yes, it was all sailing ships. His letters are very interesting. He wrote very intelligently. He had more of [than] an average education. He went to a little college there in Rutland, Vermont, and he wrote very intelligent letters. He left his home in Clarendon and went to Boston in 1846 to learn something about business. He was practical along those lines, and he apprenticed himself to an importing house in Boston that handled shipping from France and England, bringing supplies into Boston Harbor. He worked there as an apprentice for six months and he received no salary, but he was given board and room. At the end of six months he was given \$2 a week spending money, which made him a capitalist. (pause while narrator looks for a book) Can you see that?

HS: Yes. I need my glasses. Mrs. Gray was telling me that someone had done a thesis from your father's letters. Dr. Gaskill has shown me a thesis dated March 1951 by Kenneth B. O'Brien Jr., a thesis on his father's letters, DeWitt Clinton Gaskill, of 1849. Do you still have these letters?

PG: They're up in the Bancroft Library.

HS: Oh, good, good. This is very interesting. What did your father do between, that would have been 1847 and '49?

PG: He worked part time for this importing house, and then [had] trips back one and one thing and another. And when the gold rush started and the stories came out of California about

the discovery of gold in '48, he went back to and organized a little group called the Rutland Company, about ten or twelve boys, young men like himself.

HS: How old was he then?

PG: Twenty-three, I think, twenty-three or twenty-four. They came down to Boston and they took ship out of Boston in February of '49, and finally made it down to Aspinwall on the Atlantic side and went up the Chagres River as far as they could by pirogue and then walked over down to Panama on the Pacific side. They waited there a month or more before a ship that came around the Horn came in there. They finally got passage on that ship.

HS: So I suppose the names of the ships are in his letters?

PG: Yes. And they put to sea and they made their first landfall at Acapulco. The story of Acapulco is very interesting here. (indicates book) He wrote very intelligently about Acapulco. It was just a small village in those days, a fishing village.

HS: But it was still an important port for Mexico. The galleons came in there, too.

PG: Yes. Then they went to sea again to make the next landfall up north, but they were becalmed in the ocean and they had to go way out to get trade winds that would carry them north. They finally made Monterey; that was their next landfall. They were ninety-four days on that ship before they made their second landfall.

HS: It must have been miserable.

PG: The stories—I could tell you some interesting stories about it. Not in these letters, but in talking with my father, you see, because my father died in 1910 and I was in my thirties when he passed away. He told me from the time I was a child—the stories that he told me about his experiences were very interesting.

HS: Why don't you tell some of them? Well, I could ask you a question. I did a study on early bees brought to California. The first bees, I think, came in 1852, the first bee hives. And I remember clearly that they—Mr. Harbison of San Diego was able to persuade the ship's master to let him take the bees ashore and open the hives so they could get some exercise, which kept many of them alive. But that was before the days of bees, I guess. I think the town of Aspinwall is gone now, completely. It's not even on maps anymore.

PG: I don't know what it's called now. It was at the mouth of the Chagres River.

HS: It was a famous port in those days; everybody stopped at Aspinwall. You mentioned the stories your father told you about the trip.

PG: Oh, yes. As I say, they had to go way out into the Pacific to pick up trade winds to carry them further north, and they were oftentimes becalmed out there for days. They got short of food and water, and he told one experience that wasn't very nice. After they had put into Acapulco they loaded up with dried beef, slabs of beef that had dried and been put

down in the hold. When that was brought up to make stews out of it, they had to hang it up and beat it to kill the bugs out of it.

HS: I wonder if it got moldy down in the hold.

PG: I don't remember that, but he said it was almost sickening to see the stuff they had to eat. But they finally made Monterey and most of the people on the ship took off. They'd had enough and they took off and went overland, but my father stayed with the boat and they landed in San Francisco on August 14, 1849. He'd about run out of money. He didn't have money enough to get a grubstake to go up into the mines, so he went to work as a carpenter's helper, building houses, and he got enough money to buy his equipment and supplies to go to the mines. One of the original Rutland Company, a pal of his by the name of Cooperthwaite, they teamed up together and they got on a boat and went up to Stockton. They started out from Stockton in wagons, I guess it was, and they finally landed at a place called Rich Gulch. They were working along in the canyon there for placer gold. That was the way they got the gold out in those days, digging along the creek. And they were given a space of fifteen square feet along the creek. The two of them worked it and dug down through the gravel and down to bedrock. That winter they got about \$1,500 worth of placer gold out of there. Well, they'd heard about the gold strikes further north and in the spring they took off. They bought horses and mules and got enough equipment together to travel and they went further north along the foothills and finally made it to a place called Tolles' diggings, T-O-L-L-E-S' diggings, which was later called Forbestown, the same place called Forbestown.

They didn't do any mining there, but my father said that he was sick and tired of travelling over the hills for every prospect and all, and he decided with his mercantile training that he would go into the store business. So they went down to Marysville which at that time sailing schooners could get up the Sacramento River as far as Marysville with supplies for the mines. They hired an outfit of oxen and a big wagon and bought—they had plenty of gold at that time, finally, that they had made—they bought a wagonload of supplies and hauled it up through the hills to Forbestown. Flour, bacon, beans, just the miners' staples. All food practically. He said that they finally made it to Forbestown on a Saturday night, and they let down the tailgate of the wagon and they sold the wagonload of supplies off the tailgate for gold. He said practically all of it was in little chamois bags. They had their scales and they'd weigh it out. They completely sold out the wagon that night.

They had planned to open a store, eventually. So they naturally went right back to Marysville to get another load. His partner, Cooperthwaite, his father had been a butcher in Rutland, Vermont, and knew something about cattle and the butcher business, so Cooperthwaite bought some cattle, Mexican cattle, which he drove back up to Forbestown and my father got another load of freight. They had a tent outfit there and finally they built a small building. And he stayed in Forbestown and became a merchant, very well known in that area, until 1876 when he left Forbestown and moved to Oakland, California. My mother and father—my brother and sister were ten and twelve years older than I, were born in Forbestown, and I was born in Oakland after they'd landed in Oakland.

- HS: Do you know anything about the cattle drive that he did? Do you know who he bought the cattle from? Had they been brought up from Southern California?
- PG: He bought them from the Mexicans. At that time in California, there were great land grants given to the Spanish dons, and they had Mexican cattle. They bought the cattle from some of those Spanish people.
- HS: Living in this area? But you don't know from whom?
- PG: No, I don't know from whom. My father had an older brother and two younger brothers and a sister, and in 1852 he sent for his brother, Rollin Gaskill, and his sister, Lois Gaskill. And they came out by way of Panama and finally landed in Forbestown, and Rollin and he— (pause to look for photo of Forbestown) That's the store in Forbestown that they finally built.
- HS: That's a large store, with a false front. This was a grocery store?
- PG: General merchandise. They handled everything, mining supplies, general merchandise, they carried everything. In fact, he had a large safe there; he became the town banker.
- HS: It was not incorporated, I suppose. Somebody always had to be the head of the town.
- PG: He was known in that country as "Old Man Gaskill."
- HS: That was in the 1850s. Did he tell you any stories about the town?
- PG: Oh, Lord, yes!
- HS: How was law enforcement, for instance?
- PG: Well, there's a good story about that. Here in this picture you see my father here and my Uncle Rollin, the taller of the two, standing here with their top hats. He built the second story on here so that they could have a Masonic Lodge. That Masonic Lodge, my Uncle Rollin was Master of the Lodge for two years in the fifties. When my father built the store, he put a second story on it so that they could have lodge rooms upstairs. That lodge is still in existence today. It's Lodge #50 in California. Do you know anything about Masonry?
- HS: I don't.
- PG: Well, it doesn't make any difference. Now there are hundreds of Masonic Lodges all over the country, you know. That was Lodge #50, which is still in operation.
- HS: Where is it? Still in Forbestown?
- PG: No. The old town is completely gone.
- HS: Did you ever see these buildings? They were built almost thirty years, probably, before you were born.

PG: Oh, yes. My wife and myself drove up there in the early fifties. The only way we found where the old town was was the hole where they had the basement for this building. You notice these little sapling trees here with the fence around them so the deer wouldn't eat the bark off. Well, those trees when we were there were big trees like that. (indicates large trunks) They are locust trees. He told me many stories about the early days in Forbestown. Our home, part of the time, was in this hotel. (shows photo) The house is built around here further. That is how they became acquainted with John Muir. John Muir came up to Forbestown. He was a mountain lover, you know. (pauses to get a copy of *The Mountains*)

HS: Oh, yes, 1902. Too bad he didn't sign it—he says, “With the author's compliments,” to your mother.

PG: That's good enough. That's in his writing. Mother told me many times about Muir coming up there. One winter night when the wind was blowing, he left the house and went up on the side hill and climbed up into one of these pine trees and spent the night there, listening to the wind. He was almost a poet; and in his book he speaks of that, of visiting with friends up at Forbestown, in that book.

HS: He didn't mention their names?

PG: Not in the book, no. Just friends, he spoke of them.

HS: Could date that, when he was there? Have you any idea when it was?

PG: Yes, early in the spring of 1859. We went over to visit John Muir in his home at Martinez in 1889. At that time he told my parents about the wonders of Alaska and he said that knowing my dad loved to travel, he recommended they take that trip to Alaska. So he gave my father a letter to the captain of a ship a freight boat that used to sail out of Tacoma with supplies for the canneries up in Alaska. And we took off and went to Tacoma and we boarded this boat, the *George W. Elder*. It was a freight boat but had a few cabins for passengers on it. They went to Victoria and then up the Inland Passage, and the first place they landed was a place called Metlakatla. An English minister by the name of Duncan, oddly enough, had a mission for the Indians, to take care of the Indians in British Columbia. For some reason they didn't like it there, so they moved into that tongue of Alaska that comes down, you know the narrow [strip] and settled in a place called Metlakatla. I remember that so well because the Indians—they'd built a nice little town there, very clean and they had a band when the boat landed there. The band came down to visit and we spent the day there, and we became very well acquainted with Duncan because it happened that his name was Duncan, too, with my mother. She was a Duncan and they got together trying to figure out if there was any tie, you know.

HS: What year was that?

PG: Eighteen eighty-nine.

HS: Oh, you were just eleven years old.

PG: So we went on up north, stopped at every cannery, just carried supplies, cans and supplies for the canneries, and load up the canned salmon. We stopped at Wrangell and loaded there and then went on to the different canneries and finally made Juneau. Juneau was the biggest town in Alaska at that time, and not very big at that. And then there was Sitka a little further north where they had a Russian church, a mission there. You see, the Russians originally owned Alaska. Well, we visited Juneau and went across to Douglas Island where the Treadwell mine was. It was a huge mining operation there; it was an open-pit mine. They had just installed a 250-stamp mill there. I remember that so well. We went through the mill and watched the operation of the mine there. Then we went to Sitka and we visited in the old Russian church. There were two Russian priests at that time that supervised the church.

HS: That was not many years after we purchased Alaska.

PG: No. So there were remnants of the old Russian occupation there, like Fort Ross in California. The fad at that time was collecting the spoons, souvenir spoons. And in Mexico and every place we travelled, my mother had spoons. She had a big collection of them. She got a spoon made by a native there in Sitka, hammered out of silver.

So the passengers on the ship prevailed upon the captain, Captain Hunter, to go up into Glacier Bay because they had heard about Muir Glacier. You have heard about Muir Glacier?

HS: Yes, I've seen many pictures of it.

PG: As a boy I was rather active and very curious, very curious, and the ship pulled up near the front of the glacier, far enough away where it was safe. The bay was filled with icebergs that had broken off the glacier. There were two men on the boat that were anxious to land there, and so the captain lowered a boat and I persuaded my parents to allow me to go with them. The three of us, with two men of the crew, rowed the boat ashore. We landed on the beach; it would be down in here somewhere (indicates right side of glacier front in photo) and we climbed up to the broken rock and down onto the surface of the glacier. We walked back for a little ways and these men wanted to go further back, so they said, "You'd better stay here," so I waited on the ice there. The ice as I remember it was rather smooth; there weren't any crevasses there right where we were. They went back quite a little way. It was a warm day in June and they had heavy coats on, so they took them off and left them with me, and I got tired of standing up on the ice so I laid the coats down on the ice and sat down on the coats. Finally the whistle blew on the ship in the afternoon because the captain wanted to get out of the bay before dark. They hurried back and we finally came back down onto the beach and they picked us up and brought us back to the boat. I've been told by the author of this book—I have letters from him in here, too—that as far as we know, I was the first white child on Muir Glacier. That's just an interesting bit. Dave Bohun, the man that wrote that book, I have had quite a lot of correspondence with him. In fact, there are a couple of his letters in here.

HS: Yes, I noticed them.

- PG: That was my first trip to Alaska. I love to hunt, I was always a hunter, and in 1912 in Oakland the members of the Athenian Club, a social club there in Oakland, one of my friends was Bud Havens, son of Frank Havens who was a partner of F. M. Smith, the borax king—I could tell you some interesting stories about him—Death Valley borax. We went up to Fort Wrangell which is at the mouth of the Stikine River. We had corresponded with a little town way up on the Stikine River called Telegraph Creek; it was on the telegraph line that was built in the early days to connect Russia with—you know that story?
- HS: No, I don't. I don't know much about Alaska. It's never interested me; it's a man's country.
- PG: Yes, entirely. Well, this Telegraph Creek happened to be a telegraph station on the telegraph line running up way into Alaska, and there was a Hudson's Bay Post there, a store. At the time of the Gold Rush in '98 it was a very busy town. So we had corresponded with the trader there in Telegraph Creek and they had horses and pack outfits which we arranged by letter previously. So they met us there at the Stikine and we outfitted, bought our supplies and equipment and we had two native Indians and a guide, three natives that took care of the horse outfit. We had quite a few horses, pack animals. And we started out and went away up into the Cassiar in British Columbia, and we killed moose. I have books of pictures of that trip, photographs. I killed moose, caribou, two grizzly bears, sheep and goats. I could take a day, the story of that trip is very interesting.
- HS: Let's not do that today.
- PG: No, no, plenty more. So that was my first experience with John Muir, as a boy of eleven. In 1902—I was thirty-two years old at that time—I went with my parents over to Muir's home in Martinez. That's when he gave Mother that book.
- HS: Yes, and referred to the old days in Forbestown. Was he married at that time?
- PG: Yes, he was married. There were a couple of children, I think
- HS: How do you remember him?
- PG: He had a beard, not too big a man. He was fairly slight, but very energetic.
- HS: Was he agreeable?
- PG: Oh, yes, very. Mother used to tell me some stories about him, particularly the time when he left that night and climbed up into the tree and spent the night in the tree. He speaks of that in his book. As I say, that was my first trip to Alaska. The second trip was the time when we went for a hunting trip. I graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1901.
- HS: Where did you take your dental training? You mean you got your dental degree at that time?

- PG: Berkeley, yes. Well, the college was in San Francisco, that is the medical school and the dental school were in San Francisco, but they were part of the University. Parnassus Heights, they had a big building out there.
- HS: You were living in Oakland at the time?
- PG: I was living in Oakland, used to commute across the bay every day. I entered dental school in 1898 and graduated in 1901—I've got another story that I want to tell you, but now we've gotten on this one. My brother-in-law who married my sister was a dentist, [Dr. Harry Carlton], and he was connected with the college. He was one of the professors in the college; he talked me into taking up dentistry. I wanted to be a mining engineer. I loved minerals and mines and geology, but he talked me into dentistry, which turned out to be okay. So when I graduated, for the summer vacation a classmate of mine from Berkeley by the name of Roy Wolsey and a boy from Independence, Inyo County, who was another classmate of ours and knew the Sierras, the mountains, very well decided on taking a vacation. The object was the climbing of Mt. Whitney—you've heard of it? So we took off in June after graduating, went to Visalia where Roy Wolsey had a girlfriend in college by the name of—he was a superior court judge in Visalia. So we went to their home and he told us where to go to buy stock so we bought two burrows and a horse and pack outfits and started out on foot from Visalia for Mt. Whitney which ultimately we climbed. We got to the top and came back. That's another story, that's a very interesting story in itself. It would take an hour to tell that trip. That tied in a little bit with the Sierra Club, which I know very well.
- HS: Are you a member?
- PG: No, I'm not a member, oddly enough. I know why I'm not a member. I can tell you why, but I respect the Sierra Club, most everything they do. I haven't much use for some of their later men in the Sierra Club.
- HS: I understand a lot of the members themselves are split about the management recently. In those days you had to pass the state examination before you could practice? Had you already taken your examination before you went on your vacation? It was all settled?
- PG: Oh, yes, it was all settled. And I opened up an office in San Francisco. Do you know the city?
- HS: Not too well. I've been there many times.
- PG: Well, you know Market Street, the big street? Well, I can tell you some interesting stories about the earthquake and the fire [1906].
- HS: Were you there?
- PG: I was burned out there.

- HS: Your office —All these things are going on the tape and can be picked up later, many of these stories—But it would be nice as we're doing, to hit the high spots this morning and develop some other later.
- PG: That's all that I wanted to do and I hope I can see you again, because I've got lots more to tell you. I could speak of this [earthquake] at our home. (pause to find photos) That's the house that I was born in in Oakland.
- HS: It's gone, I suppose. It's a good-looking house. Is it frame? It isn't really too gingerbread, as so many of them were.
- PG: Wood frame. You notice on the roof, you see that chimney in the roof there? I'll tell you a story about that chimney. That's a flat deck [on the roof] with what they call a mansard roof. It's a three-story house, a big attic in here, steps up and that was a flat deck with a little iron railing around it. That chimney was a three compartment chimney, six feet high, right out of the center of the deck, above the flat roof. When I get to telling you stories about San Francisco I want to speak of that, because I've got a letter here that I'm writing to Dr. Richter at Pasadena now on earthquakes. I've had several correspondences with him, a fine man. I want to tell him what happened to that chimney the morning of the earthquake. But, we're getting away from—

When I was fifteen, going to Oakland High School, my next door neighbor was a man by the name of Bailey, Charles A. Bailey. He was a real estate man in Berkeley. He had a son about my age, Raymond Bailey; and he had been to Yosemite a number of times to prowl around. He was a kind of a mountain climber and a mountain man, and that summer he wanted to take his boy to Yosemite [1893], so they invited me to go along with them. So my dad drove out to Emeryville with a team to a gypsy camp out there and bought me a small horse to ride. And he purchased a big heavy sort of a workhorse and a light wagon, flatbed wagon that he put his supplies on. When we got all organized we went over to San Francisco with the wagon and my horse, all of us on the ferryboat, and took a sternwheel steamer to Stockton where we started out from Stockton over what we called the Big Oak Flat Road into Yosemite, I riding the horse and Bailey and his son on the light wagon. We took the Big Oak Flat Road and finally—crossed many of the rivers and all—and finally landed at a place called Crockers. It was known in the early state days as Crocker's Square Meals, where they served wonderful food.

- HS: Was it in the valley?
- PG: No, this is before you get to the valley. There we left the wagon and packed up the horse and my horse with supplies and went off north to go into the Hetch Hetchy Valley. You've heard of Hetch Hetchy Valley?
- HS: Yes.
- PG: Well, Hetch Hetchy Valley was a beautiful—they call it Little Yosemite. It's a valley somewhat similar to the Yosemite with big cliffs on both sides and a big granite dome and all that sort of thing.

HS: That was later dammed, wasn't it, for San Francisco water?

PG: Later dammed, yes, but at that time it was just virgin. But it was used by cattle and sheep men to drive up in the summer to feed in the valley, on the grass in the valley. Bailey's idea was—he loved to climb mountains—and we climbed up on what was called the Sugar Loaf on the right-hand side. It's a big sugarloaf granite dome a good deal like Half Dome. We left a canister there, with names and addresses. We finally made that. That was the year that the Sierra Club was formed; 1892 was the year the Sierra Club was formed. Bailey was one of the original members of the Sierra Club himself. We tried to go up the Tuolumne River that came down through the valley, but we couldn't make it. There wasn't any trail out there so we had to come back to where the Tioga Road was built in the seventies to go to the Tioga mines.

HS: That runs north, doesn't it?

PG: It ran east up into the Tioga mines, way up in the high Sierras, above Tuolumne Meadows. Have you been to the Tuolumne Meadows?

HS: Yes, we went out north through Tioga Pass to Mono, I believe. I can't remember. It's been years since I was there.

PG: Well, the old Tioga Road you know was built by an English syndicate to go to these mines. When we came down we had to backtrack on Tioga Road back to where it crossed Yosemite Creek, where it poured over into the valley. Then we took a trail down into the valley, the Eagle Peak Trail, down into the valley. We landed down in the floor of the valley on Saturday night and made our camp. Bailey, who had been in the valley several times before that, he went down into the little village there and he met Professor Joe LeConte and the custodian of the valley at that time, Galen Clark. Galen Clark was the representative of the State of California; California at that time owned Yosemite Valley.

HS: That was before Theodore Roosevelt's time.

PG: Yes. I could tell you stories about that, too. So on Sunday morning Bailey took us down into the village. Bailey had heard from the native Indians that there were caves up in the—under the granite, where the Indians had artifacts and stuff of that kind, and he was asked to collect stuff of that kind. So he'd been hunting for these caves and in his travels around hunting he found a place where he could see all the great waterfalls of the valley from one spot. Have you been to Yosemite? Sierra Point, do you remember it?

HS: I don't remember it well. I haven't been there for years and there are too many people there now. I don't want to go.

PG: Oh, yes. At that time there was nobody there. So Sunday morning Bailey told Professor LeConte—he was professor of geology at Berkeley at that time, very well known geologist. And old Galen Clark, a white-haired man like my dad, long whiskers, he was a pioneer, one of the first white men that came into Yosemite. We walked up the Merced River to a point where we started to climb up through the broken granite. I want to go

into more details of this later because it has a bearing on the Sierra Club. That was the year that the Sierra Club was formed; John Muir was the first president of the Sierra Club. So we climbed up through the granite blocks, not too difficult a climb, tiresome climb, pushing the old men. They were old men at that time. We got up to a point on Grizzly Peak where you could look up Merced Canyon and see the waterfalls of—what do they call those two waterfalls? The two great waterfalls there, and then look over here to Illilouette and over here on this side were Upper and Lower Yosemite Falls. And we sat under a big slab of rock there and Professor LeConte gave us a lecture. We kids asked him about the geology of the valley and he gave us his thoughts of the origin of the valley, of the glacial age. This country at one time was covered with ice, the ice age, and the glaciers, grinding down, polishing the granite just like polished tombstones. He told us about the geology of the Yosemite Valley and how it was formed, which impressed us kids very much.

HS: I think I learned it at about the same time. I remember being so impressed with the fact that the valley would have been a deep cleft but it was all filled in with silt that made the floor of the valley. That was one of my early geology lessons.

PG: Here's the point that I want to bring out. Bailey said, "Now on this point, I think that eventually there's going to be a great viewpoint for people that come here to climb around." He said, "I'm going to call it Sierra Point." At that time Galen Clark, the custodian of the valley, John Muir and Professor LeConte, Bailey and the two boys were all sitting there together on this great slab of rock. And he said, "We're going to name it Sierra Point."

So we finally climbed down through the rocks and back to camp. That was the episode of the discovery of Sierra Point in Yosemite Valley in 1892. That was the year the Sierra Club was formed, with John Muir the head of it. Professor LeConte was one of the first directors. Philip Barnays was another director. Warren Olney was another director. The old Warren Olney was my father's attorney. He's got a grandson who is with one of the TV companies. I knew the Olney family very well in Oakland; that's where they originated. That's the story of Sierra Point.

HS: It was named before the club was started, is that right?

PG: Yes. But what provoked me with the Sierra Club was that when they finally built the trail up Sierra Point, they took the credit for the discovery of Sierra Point!

HS: But you know different.

PG: I know different, damn well different. In fact, they made a point in one of their books. (looks for a book) You see, I follow the Sierra Club.

HS: This is the way history is made and this is the way the mistakes are perpetuated. It's nice to know the truth.—Dr. Gaskill has handed me a Sierra Club pamphlet, an early one, isn't it? Nineteen forty-seven. Yes, I see. I see your name where you've written it in, but I don't see it in the text.

- PG: No, naturally not. I'll tell you why, because in this book they made a great howdy-do when they made their first trip to the top of Mt. Whitney in 1904. That was three [nine] years after we'd climbed it, see?
- HS: Do they call it the first ascent?
- PG: No, but they made a big powwow about it. I've had quite a lot of correspondence with the Sierra Club at one time or another, a lot of it not too happy because I haven't liked some of their managers. And yet I respect very much their conservation, and I'm for them 100 percent. I'm at loggerheads with them right now over a situation. Have you heard of Mineral King? Do you know that story?
- HS: Oh, I read about it in the paper. I read something yesterday of the Sierra Club's injunction. They're trying to overturn it but it's still holding. They have an injunction against the development of Mineral King. And apparently it's still in effect and it's making the state pretty restive.
- PG: I'm very much in favor of the Disney Company taking that over, 100 percent so. I'll tell you why. I know Mineral King. I've been there a couple of times. In fact, on our trip to Mt. Whitney we walked up over the old road to Mineral King and down to the headwaters of the Kern and up to Mt. Whitney. I know that story very well and I'm for the Sierra Club 95 percent and 5 percent against them because they're absolutely wrong on this. If you're interested in that subject, I know it well.
- HS: Well, I'm not going to fight either way. I won't go into this now, but I'd like to ask you why you are against the Sierra Club and for Disney. Do you think it will be preserved better if it's developed by Disney?
- PG: Absolutely.
- HS: And preserved for the use of the most people?
- PG: Absolutely. Every move that Disney made before he died was for the benefit of people. It was true that he did it with the idea of making money, too. They had to make money to build Disneyland. If you'd read the letters that are in there (indicates a file of correspondence with Disney Co.) and what the Disney people planned on doing and how they planned on doing it.
- HS: I saw a television program about the controversy and it showed all of the plans that Disney had for developing it, all the places for people to stay, of different grades, inexpensive up to the luxurious, and all the parking areas. I believe the program that I saw was slanted toward the Sierra Club and against Disney. It pointed out that it would be commercialized, of course, the bad word.
- PG: Those letters that I have in here are from the Disney people. I have no—I don't know any of these Disney people personally, but knowing what Disney's done and their objectives as to how they were to preserve the natural resources. That program that you saw with the high rise office buildings, that's a damn lie! Disney never had any idea of

that kind. His idea was for the hotel business to be low, one-story Swiss Chalet type of stuff, to preserve the natural resources. (pause in recording) We lived in Bishop, California, for some time.

HS: This is after you were married?

PG: Yes. And we associated with the Paiute Indians quite a lot. There was an Indian reservation there at Bishop, out back of town. I know the native Indians pretty well. The California Indian was not a high class Indian, that is, they were not like the Sioux, the Arapahoes, the Cheyenne.

HS: They were not as warlike.

PG: No, they were not the rugged, warlike type of people. They were fish eaters mostly; they lived close to the ocean and the streams, where they lived off of fish and grubs and one thing and another.

HS: They lived close to nature, too. And I judge from the things I have read about the early explorers coming up the coast that they were friendly. Their inclination was to trust the white man. Of course, they got fooled by doing so, and they were slaughtered by the Russians and had their problems, but at first they were very receptive and friendly and asked some of the early Spanish explorers to stay with them. They're not the same people as the central and the eastern tribes. You remember the book that was written about the Indian from northern California, *Ishi*? Did you know Dr. Kroeber, Alfred Kroeber, at Berkeley?

PG: Kroeber? That was after my time.

HS: He was an anthropologist and this Indian was apparently the last member of his band. He escaped and hid in a corral in a town north of San Francisco and was eventually brought to the university. I wondered if you knew anything about him.

PG: I read that story and enjoyed it very much. I was very much interested in *Ishi*, too, at that time. He was the last of a certain tribe. I would like one day, if you think of ever coming back here again—

HS: I do.

PG: You mean that, do you? Because I have so many interesting stories to tell. I could spend a day talking about the San Francisco earthquake and fire. Would you be interested in that?

HS: Yes, it would be a good idea, because this would be of great interest to many people. There are several things that I want to explore with you also. One of them is what you remember about the Channel Islands. You remember I told you I had been to Santa Barbara interviewing a woman who lived on San Miguel Island and you said you had hunted on the island.

- PG: The Vaile family—was that San Miguel?
- HS: No, that was Santa Cruz or Santa Rosa. I get the Caires and the Vaile family confused. I believe the Vailes were on Santa Cruz and the Caires on Santa Rose. [NO]
- PG: We went over there [Santa Cruz] for wild boar hunting. At that time there was a big house on the island, the old house, ornamental house, you know. I think that was the property the Vailes owned. [NO]
- HS: Was that the island where wine was made? Do you remember anything about vineyards and a winery?
- PG: No, there was no winery that I remember there.
- HS: That was on the other island then. [NO] You were on Santa Cruz, then, the biggest island? It's just out from Santa Barbara. Just north of it is Santa Rosa and that's not so large but it is also a big island. Where did you go out from?
- PG: From Santa Barbara. We hired a speed boat, a cabin cruiser, to go over there.
- HS: That couldn't have been too long ago.
- PG: Not too many years ago. Twenty-five years ago, when I was down to Lancaster. That's another story. When I left the rat race in the cities—
- HS: You practiced in Lancaster?
- PG: But I didn't go down there to practice. I went there to develop a ranch. My father bought a section of railroad land in the Antelope Valley. He never saw it. Some friends in Oakland, old-timers, told him about the railroad land that was being sold and he bought a section of land—paid \$2.50 an acre for it. In the time of the Panama Fair in San Francisco, 1915, at that time I had been practicing in San Francisco until the earthquake and then moved to Oakland and practiced dentistry in Oakland. I was a bachelor. I think two-thirds of every night I was either in tails or dinner jacket in social life.
- HS: In other words, you were an eligible bachelor.
- PG: Yes, an eligible bachelor, playing the field. I had a good time. I didn't abuse myself physically and I don't think mentally, too much.
- HS: Obviously not.
- PG: So I decided to get away from the rat race because I realized that as I was growing older, that if I was going to keep on hunting and fishing and enjoying the mountains, I'd have to get away from the city. I belonged to the Bohemian Club of San Francisco, the Athenian Club of Oakland, the Claremont Country Club, Berkeley—a golf club. I used to golf a great deal. And so in the fall of 1915 my brother and I were over, just about the time that the fair was going to close. I had told my brother that I was going to quit the city and go

down there and develop a ranch in the desert, because earlier that year we drove from Oakland down to San Diego. They had a fair down there at that time, a small fair. On the way back we stopped at Lancaster, and we found a man that knew where this land was out in the desert and he took us out there. I have the pictures to show it, this section of land. I said, "I'm going to come down here and develop a ranch here." Bert said, "That's okay with me." My father had left a little money when he passed away and it was divided up among us and I got my share. So I came down on my own.

HS: Were you not married then?

PG: Not married. I drove my old Franklin automobile, the old air-cooled Franklin, 1913 Franklin. And I went out among the homesteaders that had homesteaded out in the valley and talked to them to get an idea of whether I wanted to come down here or not. Because I had been used to the easy-living life in the city, and although I'd hunted and fished and camped out a great deal, I didn't know whether I could take it for several years to live in a tent down in the desert. So in the fall, my brother and I were over there [the Fair] one Saturday and we walked out among the state buildings, out on the lawns. They built their own state houses, all through the grounds of the Panama Fair in San Francisco. We were walking along there and we noticed an outfit of a five-roomed house, a three-roomed house and a garage sitting out on the lawn, with people going in and out of it. I said to Bert, "If I move down onto the desert, I want a house something like that one there to live in, to have a decent abode." "Well," Bert said, "I can understand that. Let's go in and talk to them." So we went in there and the manager met us at the door. The house was fully furnished.

HS: Which one was this, the big one or the small one?

PG: The big one. It wasn't so big at that, just a five-roomed house. Bert, who was a good businessman, better than I—I never was a good businessman, but my brother was—so he talked to the manager and he said, "What are you going to do with this house when the fair closes?" It was a house built by an outfit in Los Angeles called the Pacific Factory-built House Company. It was built with the whole side of a room with a window and all in it, eight foot ceiling, the size of a room. They put them together and bolted them together, like dominoes you could say. The roof would be in sections, the floor would be in sections. I get a kick out of it because today they're doing the same damn thing here now.

HS: Prefabricated houses.

PG: Yes, this was a prefabricated house over fifty years ago.

HS: They were not successful at that time probably, were they?

PG: They could have been. I don't know why they folded up but eventually they did. But let me finish this story. The manager said, "We don't want to ship this house back to L.A." Bert said, "We're interested in a house down in the desert, down in the Antelope Valley." He said, "That's just exactly what we'd like to do. We'd like to advertise one of our homes in the Antelope Valley. I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll dismantle this house,

unbolt it into sections, and the three-roomed house and the garage. We'll put it all in a big furniture car and we'll ship it down to Rosamond on the railroad, and if you will supply a helper, carpenter, we'll send up a man from the factory and we'll set the houses up out in the desert for you at our expense, as an advertisement." We paid \$500 for the whole outfit.

HS: Your brother was a good businessman.

PG: I can show you the pictures of that house. Do you know where it is today?

HS: Did they move it again?

PG: Hell, no. It's just as good as new out in the desert today, fifty years later.

HS: Redwood?

PG: Yes, redwood. That house is the old ranch; of course, I sold it years ago. I was up there last year, all through the old house and out on the grounds and the ranch. It's still operating and now a very prosperous outfit. That's another story. I could wear you out with stories on California till you'd never want to see me again. That house (indicates family home) was right in the center of Oakland.

HS: It's not standing now?

PG: Oh, no, they tore it down to make a big building.

HS: It was not harmed by the earthquake seriously, only the chimney?

PG: Only the chimney. Here's the story. That chimney was six feet high, that wide, three compartments, must have weighed a ton. The earthquake broke it off even with the roof. It was thrown completely over the side of the house, believe it or not, and landed in this cement sidewalk down here.

HS: Did it land in separate bricks?

PG: No, a solid chunk, broke off as a solid chunk. I had a hell of a time breaking it up later on. It didn't hurt the side of the house; and to show the enormous force it threw that that far. (illustrates with picture) The city of Oakland wasn't damaged too much in the earthquake and it didn't burn, no fires. I can prove, I think to Dr. Richter's satisfaction, in a letter that I'm writing—I've written most of it now—you'd like to read it someday—that with modern construction, properly engineered, and honestly built—I use the words honestly built and I'll tell you why. An earthquake of eight magnitude like San Francisco was, would not damage buildings. I could prove to him that wood frame residences in the cities would not be damaged in an earthquake, a major earthquake. I can prove that in pictures. I've got a book here; you see that book there? It's got three hundred pictures of the city [San Francisco at the time of the earthquake]. I was in San Francisco the day of the earthquake and I was over there every day afterwards during the fire. One day I'd like to devote to you, my story of that earthquake, because with all the books that I've

read about the city I've never had the earthquake analyzed. Not the cause of the earthquake, I don't give a damn about the earthquake or the cause of it. I know the cause of earthquakes and so do you—geology.

HS: Not the cause but the results.

PG: The results. My hobby in the last five years has been fire after earthquakes. I've tried to interest people here locally, the fire department chief, the disaster relief people, to warn people what to do and what not to do in case of an earthquake, after an earthquake. I'm kind of a nut on that subject, so much so that people have got me known as that damn fool, he's nuts about earthquakes. I'm not interested in earthquakes but I am interested in fire after earthquakes. Now, San Francisco was built after the great fire of 1851. The town was burned out and it was rebuilt with the gold that was pouring in from the mines. It was quickly built. In those days, there were no building codes. Residences were built with redwood, and well-built for those days. Business houses were built with brick fronts on them to make them look stable, but they had wood interiors. They were built of brick up in front, and do you know what they used for plaster? They used what they call lime mortar. The city was rebuilt without cement! Do you get my point?

HS: I don't know much about how to make cement.

PG: Well, you know concrete today, which includes cement and sand and lime all mixed together to make concrete. Well, the city was rebuilt with lime mortar. Out in the residential district they built chimneys because they didn't have central heat in those days. They had to have fireplaces in all the rooms, so they had lots of chimneys and the bricks were laid with lime mortar like they plaster houses—that's lime mortar. When it dries out it doesn't bind to the bricks. So that when the earthquake came, those old chimneys were shaken in the homes, and people built fires in their fireplaces because it was cold, and they set the city afire. The people carelessly burned San Francisco; it wasn't the earthquake that burned the city out, it was the people themselves building fires in their fireplaces. I've never read that story by anybody, but I know that it's a fact because I was there. I was twenty-eight years old, think of it, twenty-eight years old at the time of the earthquake.—Let's see, we've covered my first trip to Alaska with John Muir. We've covered my trip to Yosemite Valley.

HS: The second trip to Alaska also, the hunting trip.

PG: The hunting trip. We've covered the second trip to John Muir's home.

HS: We didn't do much about that.

PG: We'll do that another time. I would like to talk to you another time about the San Francisco earthquake and fire because I want to get it out into publicity, for the good of the people. In other words, I want to reassure rather than scare people. I can prove with this book and the pictures, my statements. After the city was burned in '51, it was rebuilt hastily. Hotels were built with the brick fronts, with brick laid in lime mortar, and the interiors were all wood. But the interiors were not tied into the brick on the outside. So when the earthquake came, these bricks fell out but the buildings didn't collapse.

- HS: Exposing the inside of the building. There were so many pictures of rooms all in front of you with the front wall off.
- PG: Yes. Yet the earthquake didn't knock those buildings down.
- HS: I never thought of that.
- PG: Nobody else did either. The first cement came to this country around the Horn from England; it was called Portland Cement. It was in two-hundred-pound wood stave barrels, shipped in wood stave barrels. The first of it that came here landed in the late fifties. Some of it was used in the rebuilding of the city, but sand was cheaper than cement. I knew chiseling contractors, they'd do it today if it wasn't for the building codes and inspections. My next door neighbor is a retired building inspector and his job was inspecting school buildings. And he's told me how they had to watch the contractors because they'd chisel on the cement, make it brittle. (pause) You're interested in somebody in the Irvine Land Company, James Irvine's second wife, Katie Brown White. Did you ever hear of her?
- HS: Yes.
- PG: Do you know that I was her first husband's best man?
- HS: No, I didn't know. In San Francisco?
- PG: Isn't that an odd thing? In Oakland, in Linda Vista. Katie Brown married Buzz White, a very close friend of mine. They had one son. They lived together for some years. She divorced Buzz or Buzz divorced her, I don't know which it was, after I left Oakland to come down here. She was playing around in San Francisco. I knew Katie Brown very well, not too well. Don't get me wrong. Socially I knew her well. James Irvine met her up in San Francisco as a widow, and ultimately married her. She was a big woman; she must have been five eight or nine, broad-shouldered like a man, big chest. If you knew her at all you knew her size. She moved down here and he built her a home, of course, down there at Newport, and they lived out on the ranch. Irvine had such vast interests, land interests, cattle interests, ranch interests and everything, and was way over his head. I mean, he couldn't take care of it, but he had a group of men managing the properties for him. Some of them were stealing him blind.
- HS: Was she Myford's mother? She was the wife of the second James Irvine?
- PG: No, no. No, Myford's mother was James Irvine's first wife. Katie Brown had no children by Irvine, but she had her son, young White, down here too. He was a playboy. He never amounted to anything. After she moved down here and took over the social side of the Irvine family, entertaining the Assistance League and all that sort of stuff, I had moved down here in the meantime to Antelope Valley, Lancaster, and I raised saddle horses just as a hobby for people to ride, saddle clubs and one thing and another. We organized the Antelope Valley Desert Riders twenty-five years ago, which is still going strong, like the riders up at Santa Barbara. Katie knew Irvine's problems and some of the people that were doing the chiseling. I won't mention any names. She told Irvine,

“You’ve got to have somebody to come down here and put a stop to this stuff.” I know a man in Oakland very well by the name of Paul Dinsmore. I don’t know whether you remember that name. Was your husband anything to do with Irvine Company?

HS: Never. No.

PG: Paul Dinsmore was a banker in Oakland. He was a friend of mine; in fact, I stood up with him at his wedding when he was married; fiftieth anniversary. Irvine said, “You get him to come down here to stand between me and my managers, as a trouble-shooter.” Well, he was the most unpopular man down here. He was a graduate of West Point.

HS: Was he here long?

PG: Yes, he was here until he retired.

HS: His name never seems to come up in the stories about the Irvine Ranch.

PG: Well, he was the—I won’t say the detective—but he stood between Irvine and the chisellers, and as I say, he was very unpopular. Yet he did many of the business transactions for Irvine. El Toro base, Paul Dinsmore took care of that in Washington.

HS: Reluctantly.

PG: No, he was glad to do it.

HS: I don’t think Irvine wanted to dispose of all that beautiful bean land.

PG: Yes. Paul Dinsmore bought a lot of lands for Irvine. He bought a big ranch up in Montana for Irvine. In fact, Irvine died up there on the ranch. I knew Paul Dinsmore, of course, very well when he moved down here. We’ve had many talks together. Paul Dinsmore told me an awful lot about the Irvine Company after he retired in Santa Ana here. In fact, he died here in Santa Ana. He’s buried out here in this cemetery in Santa Ana. I was at his funeral, naturally. He bought many properties in San Francisco, bought a railroad out of Vallejo up into the mountains that Irvine owned. He’d put Myford in charge of that railroad up there. Myford Irvine was a nice fellow, not bright. He was not too bright and he bollixed up that railroad. The situation up there was so bad that Paul Dinsmore had to go up there and he worked a year up there straightening it out. He [Myford] was a harmless and very nice man. I never met him but I’m told that socially he was very agreeable and very pleasant.

HS: I never met him, but I have friends who were friends of his. He puzzled people because they expected more of him than he could give.

PG: He didn’t have too much on the ball, and he was a great disappointment to his dad.

HS: Did he die after Mr. Dinsmore did?

PG: No, he died before Dinsmore died.

HS: Did you ever hear his theories on why Myford killed himself?

PG: Well, not too much except that Myford apparently realized that he was—that something was wrong. I don't know what it was. Whether it was family troubles or not, I don't know. I don't think that Paul knew it well. Paul knew Myford very well, naturally, and this Mrs. [Joan Irvine] Smith, the granddaughter.

HS: Myford's niece.

PG: Yes. You know, she's the biggest holder of stock in the company. Paul lived out on the ranch, near El Toro, the old ranch property out there with his wife Marietta Havens. Sunday mornings the old man would get the little girl and Paul would hold her in his lap and they'd drive around the ranch there, inspecting this and that. The girl is now grown up to be the woman that she is today, and Paul knew her all the way up. He liked her very much. She was very loyal to Paul and Paul was very loyal to her and he knew the story of the management of the Irvine Company today, the one that she's fighting.

HS: He probably told her what was going on?

PG: Oh, definitely.

HS: She certainly has been influenced by somebody and she certainly has a love of the property, of the ranch. It may be his influence that's caused her to try to fight the bureaucrats.

PG: Definitely. Right after he became hospitalized, he lived in a rest home out by St. Joseph Hospital. I used to go out there every week to see him in bed. She always came out here to see him, out at the hospital. They were very close. They could have gone to court. The reason that Paul Dinsmore never said anything publicly was because if he had, they'd have cut his throat with his pension. He had a big pension. But he told her privately how to operate. He told her to go up to San Francisco and get the best damned attorney in the state to represent her in the fight with Irvine's Foundation. Paul's told me many things of what chiseling deals he uncovered.

HS: Well, she took on quite a lot of people, like A. J. MacFadden, the MacLarens.

PG: The old man was a peculiar man himself, according to Paul. He had no faith in doctors. His doctor was a chiropractor that wasn't even licensed; he was more like an Indian medicine man. But Irvine had absolute faith in that man. That man would prescribe to Irvine when he had any trouble. Paul said it was pathetic the way this man had an almost hypnotic influence over the old man. He said if Irvine had gone to proper medical men, he would have lived very many years longer than he did. He wasn't an old man when he died.

HS: No, he wasn't. Around seventy? That's not old.

PG: I hope that we can get together again soon because I have so much more to talk to you about. I'll think of other things.

- HS: I will type this and get it to you to read, and you can see what you have committed yourself for. There is one thing I would like to ask you about. I have a friend who's become a historian, who's always been interested in history. His name is Don Meadows. Do you know him? He lives in Panorama Heights now. When I have an appointment to talk with some person that I've never talked with before, I often ask him, "Would you like me to ask this person anything?" He often has things and this is what he said. "Ask him if he had relatives in Campo, if the Gaskill brothers in Campo, down near the Mexican border in San Diego County, were related to him." In 1879 and '80 three Gaskill brothers were living at Campo and had a store. Are you related to these people?
- PG: Apparently so.
- HS: The store was raided by some of the Mexican desperadoes who had been raiding in California and were on their way down to Real Del Castillo which was the capital of Lower California at that time. And he said, "Ask him if he knows anything about that."
- PG: I've been interested in family genealogy and I wrote an article in the *Desert Magazine*. Did you ever take the *Desert*?
- HS: We used to, yes.
- PG: I take it. I spoke of the Gaskills at Campo. Silas was one of the brothers. Silas happens to be an old Gaskill family name. So I wrote to the postmaster of Campo, evidently an old man. I have his letter that he sent. I don't know whether it's in here or not (indicates portfolio and discusses other papers) I have his letter, this old man's letter. He wrote me a long letter and gave me the history of the family.
- HS: Was the name spelled the same as yours, with an *i*?
- PG: Yes, *k-i-double l*, not *e* but *i*. In one of the old magazines of the *Desert* writers, it spoke of a Silas Gaskill that at one time had been a kind of compadre of Pegleg Smith, of the old stories. That name Silas being an odd name and in my family genealogy it speaks of one of the Gaskills, Silas, that went to California. He went evidently to southern California and my dad went up to northern California.
- HS: Were they cousins?
- PG: Not that I know of. I don't know that my dad ever heard of Silas except through the family connections.
- HS: And this was Silas and his two brothers who were at Campo?
- PG: Yes. The postmaster tells me that the one living has moved up to Fullerton or somewhere up in here now. It's an odd name, Gaskill is, and it's interesting genealogy. This man, I'd like to meet him sometime.

END OF SESSION

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: DR. PERCY D. GASKILL
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: December 22, 1969
SUBJECT: John Muir, James Irvine, San Francisco earthquake, Lancaster ranch

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm interviewing Dr. Gaskill. This is December 22, 1969. We are continuing a conversation we started two weeks ago. Dr. Gaskill, were you going to discuss what you know about the Irvine ranch, what you learned from your friend Paul Dinsmore?

PG: Well, I remember one particular instance when he moved down from Oakland to Santa Ana and lived out on the ranch with his wife.

HS: Do you remember when that was?

PG: Let me see. I would say around 1915 and from there on.

HS: Oh, then it lasted a long time.

PG: Oh, yes, he was with Irvine until he retired.

HS: And that would have been when?

PG: Oh, about five years ago.

HS: After 1960, then? That would be about 1964, a long time.

PG: Yes. He died here in Santa Ana.

HS: Fifty years.

PG: No, he wasn't with them for that many years. He told me so many stories about Irvine himself, about the old man. He had no faith in doctors.

HS: We discussed that on the other tape, about his chiropractor.

- PG: Irvine wanted Paul Dinsmore to run the community hospital here that Irvine financed, the backing of it.
- HS: Do you mean the Santa Ana Valley Hospital?
- PG: Yes, here in town. That was financed by the Irvine Company. Irvine wanted Dinsmore to head it. He wouldn't have any part of it because of the charlatan doctor, the chiropractor that had apparently almost a hypnotic effect on Irvine himself.
- HS: Do you remember his name? There were several early chiropractors. I can't remember but one or two names and they wouldn't have been the one.
- PG: No, I don't remember. Did I mention the Irvine niece? What's her name?
- HS: Yes, Joan Smith. Yes, you did.
- PG: He used to hold her in his lap on Sunday morning when they'd ride around the ranch.
- HS: Yes. As we said, it explained her great interest in the ranch now, its management.
- PG: After Paul was down in bed in the hospital here in Santa Ana, I used to go up and visit him every week, and on two different occasions she came. When she lived here, she was very close to Paul. In fact, Paul told her about the chisellers in the Irvine outfit, and he advised her to get the best attorney out of San Francisco that she could get to defend her interest, because they were going to crucify her if they could in the outfit. And they have done so, so far.
- HS: Yes, she hasn't got very far. Do you remember any specific stories that Mr. Dinsmore told you?
- PG: Well, of course I remember when we came down from Lancaster to a horse show here in Santa Ana. And Mrs. Irvine, Katie Brown White Irvine—I told you about being groomsman at her first husband's wedding. I got a great kick out of that because we had some friends from Lancaster that had a couple of stallions, Palomino stallions that they wanted to show down here. They had a horse show in this park here in Santa Ana. It's now a football field. What did they call it?
- HS: I think it's on Eighth Street. I remember those horse shows. Didn't the Assistance League put them on?
- PG: Yes. She was at the head of the Assistance League at that time. We came down for the horse show and we were sitting way back up on the bleachers and Katie Brown Irvine was down in a box right out in front. Did I tell you this story? I always got a kick out of this. During the show, I was very interested. The Irvine Company brought in several of their cow horses from the ranch and the cowboys did stunts and all. Then they had a parade of all the horses around there and then—the parade was led by Leo Carrillo. You've heard of him?

HS: Oh, yes. He used to love to lead parades.

PG: Oh, yes. I knew Leo very well personally. We belonged to the same duck club up in the Antelope Valley. And I never will forget this. I got a kick out of it because—it had a little to do with my wife, too, because I guess she was a little jealous at some of my old friends and all. So during the show, Leo rode his horse over to the edge of the grandstand where Mrs. Irvine was sitting alone in her box. She was a big, broad-shouldered woman, tall, husky and very active. I came down from our seats to the box and when I came to the edge of the box, Katie looked around and saw me and she jumped up, you know, and put her arms around me. She hadn't seen me for years. And Leo on his horse rode up and she was talking with him at the edge of the grandstand. They were talking and when Leo came up I spoke to him. I said, "Hello, Leo" and Mrs. Irvine looked at me and she said it startled her to think that I knew him. Well, we had quite a little talk and we had a lot of fun. She invited us down for the breakfast next day at the ranch but my wife wouldn't have any part of it. (laughter) That was just one little instance.

But he told me so many things. He bought a ranch up in Montana or Wyoming for Irvine. He went up there and managed that ranch, that is, bought it for Irvine. And he [Irvine] died up there. Paul tried to get him to get good doctors to examine him and find out what his trouble was, but he wouldn't have any part of it. He told me about Myford. The old man owned a railroad that came down into Vallejo, down to the navy yard. Myford was running the railroad and got it all bollixed up and Paul went up there and spent a year straightening that deal out for Irvine and getting Myford out of the deal, because Myford wasn't mentally capable of assuming responsibility. A nice fellow, apparently, socially—I never knew him, never met him, but Paul said he was unstable.

HS: Did they keep the railroad?

PG: Well, I don't know whether they sold it, whether the government bought it or not. That I don't know. Paul used to say it got his goat to see the way some of the underlings there in the outfit were stealing and chiseling and grafting and one thing and another. (pause)

HS: Why don't you start on the first thing you remember about the great earthquake in April 1906?

PG: The morning of the earthquake I was living in Oakland in that house in the picture [family home] and when the shake came my bed moved out from the wall. I put my hand out; I could feel the bed moving out into the room, and my bureau moved out and kind of twisted around. It didn't tip over. In a couple of minutes it was all quiet again.

HS: This was early in the morning, wasn't it?

PG: Five-eighteen in the morning. And I came out into the hallway. Our house had bedrooms on both sides of the main passageway clear through the house, on the second floor. Mother had one bedroom and Dad next to her; they were together there. We all got out into the hall about the same time and Dad said, the first thing he said was, "This beats '72." That was when they had the big earthquake before; he was up in the mines at that time. We talked for awhile, didn't think much about it, and pretty soon we went

back to bed. I pushed my bed back, and there was nothing tipped over. We didn't think too much about it, except that we knew we had a damn good shake. So along about seven o'clock—there was a back stairs going down to the back door onto the street. Mother had dressed in the meantime and gone downstairs and my brother who was living out about ten blocks away from us, rushed down to see if we were all right. I was lying in bed there and I could hear them talking down at the foot of the stairs. Bert asked if everything was okay and Mother said yes. She said, "We haven't had any trouble here in the house." "Well," he said, "why don't you go to the window and look out? You won't see a chimney anywhere. The top of your chimney is down on the sidewalk." So with that I, of course, got up and dressed. First thing I did, I went up on the roof, and my God, here was that chimney that stuck out of the center of the deck, flat deck, six feet high above the deck, a three-compartment chimney for fireplaces down below. It must have been six or seven feet by two, with a coping on the top and it must have weighed half a ton, that chunk of concrete and brick. Well, it had broken off even with the deck and was thrown completely over the side of the house. It didn't even hit the roof; and it was buried in the cement sidewalk about that far, like a pulpit sitting in the sidewalk.

HS: It went into the sidewalk what, a foot and a half?

PG: Something like that, and it was just like a pulpit sitting there in the sidewalk. I had a hell of a time breaking it up to get rid of it. Well, my brother-in-law, Dr. Harry Carlton, and I, after breakfast, we went down to the ferry and, on the broad gauge train down to the ferry, and took a ferryboat over to—we landed around by North Beach. The fires by that time were burning down near the waterfront.

HS: Is North Beach on the ocean?

PG: No, on the bay. You know, it's a peninsula there and North Beach is around here. The ocean comes in here, around into the bay. We landed around there where the Tiburon ferry used to run. We walked over the hills down into the city. We went through what we called Nob Hill and I think it was probably Powell Street that we walked down, the better residence part of the city on the side hills. We saw very little evidence of earthquake damage to the homes, very little. We noticed chimneys were gone. Once in a while we'd see a building maybe tipped a little bit, but we saw very little evidence of earthquake. We got down into town; our first effort was to get to the Shreve Building. I think I mentioned probably that we moved from the Crocker Building down on Market Street up to the Shreve Building, our dental offices. We finally got down to the Shreve Building which was at Sutter and Grand Avenue, which is about two blocks from Market Street. Shreve & Company, the big jewelry firm, had the whole ground floor on this corner; it was a brand new building, just finished.

HS: What was it made of?

PG: Concrete and steel. It was one of the buildings that's still standing today. We looked in the front windows and we could see the clerks there. The big vaults in the back were open and they were loading the silver and stuff of every kind and putting it into the vaults, packing the hallway in the faults, filled with the stuff. Of course, the more

valuable stuff had already gone in. We watched them there for a few minutes; they'd crowded the vault so full of silver stuff and bric-a-brac that they had little time to get the door closed. They swung the door several times to bang it, so they finally got it locked up. Then we went into the lobby, and the superintendent of the building was there in the lobby and our first question was: What is the damage to the building? He said, "I haven't been able to see any except this over here." He pointed to the elevator cages. There were three elevators there. Of course, the cages were at the bottom because there was no power. We noticed on top of the cages there was some of this thin white tile that had been stuck on the inside of the elevator shaft to make it light, white, porcelain tile, just thin stuff stuck on. Some of that had flaked off and fallen down on top of the cages and he said, "That's the only thing that I've seen that's been damaged in the building at all." Can you imagine that?

Well, we walked up to the seventh floor where we had our offices—it was a fourteen-story building—and he came up with us and we went in. My office was just like I'd left it the night before; on my bracket table in front of my dental chair there was a little vase and my nurse had put two carnations in it, one on each side, because otherwise if they were on one side it would tip over. That thing was not tipped over, believe it or not! Well, we looked around and couldn't see and damage anywhere, so the superintendent said, "Let's go up on the roof." So we walked up to the attic and up the trap into the flat deck. By that time it was about 1:30 in the afternoon, and we looked down to Market Street. All the fires were on south of Market.

HS: How early did they start?

PG: Well, most of the fires started on the south side of Market Street. They started right after the earthquake. All the fires that were burning were south of Market; but Market Street is a very broad avenue and the fire hadn't gotten across. The north side of Market Street was intact; there were no fires.

HS: What else did you see from the roof? What about traffic? What about people?

PG: Oh, people were milling around down on the streets. They seemed to be stunned; they couldn't comprehend what was going on or what had happened. They weren't panicky, there was no apparent panic among the people.

HS: And there was apparently no looting?

PG: No, no. Not at that time, no. Out at the presidio General Funston, Fred Funston, was the commander of the presidio army and that morning he sent the soldiers and the artillery caissons. They usually had the guns in the back, you know, and they loaded the compartments on the caissons with dynamite and we saw them when we passed Portsmouth Square, the four horses pulling these caissons with the monkey boy sitting up on the boxes filled with dynamite on these cobblestone streets. They were not smooth, they were just cobblestones, with the iron wheels. And there was absolute silence when those wagons went by. Even I felt, My God, if that thing would go off now! That was

just one instance. We did see people dragging trunks with a piece of rope, pulling them down the sidewalk.

HS: Was the smoke bad, or could you still see?

PG: No, there wasn't any smoke at all on our side of the street.

HS: On the other side, did it obscure the view?

PG: We could see, of course, the smoke and flame on the other side of Market Street. We looked down to Market Street and we watched the Call Building on the corner of Kearney and Market. On one corner was the Call Building; it was an eighteen-story square building. On the other corner was the Chronicle Building, the newspaper *Chronicle*, and the other corner was the Examiner Building. That was the press district, you see; all of the newspapers were concentrated right there. Well, we watched that Call Building burn. I can show you the pictures. That building was standing, no damage to it at all as we could see it. But the fire got in from the old wooden buildings on the side, got in through the windows and it was just like a chimney. We watched that burn out floor by floor. We could see the flame when it would break through the doors from the inside and push a solid column of smoke and flame out. We were that close, we could see the wooden window casings burning and the glass as it blew out.

HS: Where were you? Were you still on the roof?

PG: Oh, yes, we stayed there. I must have spent an hour up there, I guess, half an hour anyhow. There was quite a little shake when we were up on the roof. We could feel the swaying of the building but it didn't alarm us. We watched that building burn out. The Examiner Building across the street on the other corner, the soldiers tried to dynamite that building. They thought, foolishly—they did more harm than good with their dynamiting because they didn't know how to use it. You see, the fires had come up to—you might shut this off for a minute and let me— (pause looking for photos)

It was up this way, to Market Street. If you'll look carefully, there's the Examiner Building here, across the street. The Chronicle Building was on the other corner. And we watched that Call Building burn out floor by floor. It was eighteen stories. That building's still standing today. Now, here's the picture of one of the streets, on filled land. See what I mean? There was the old Crocker Building that I opened up my office in in the fall of 1906 and we moved from there up into the new Shreve Building. Across the street was the Palace Hotel, the old Palace Hotel.

HS: It must have been in the fall of 1905, because the earthquake was in 1906.

PG: Yes, it was. We moved in in, I think, January or February of 1906, into the new building, from this building here [Crocker]. This building here, all these buildings, the Chronicle Building here, the Palace Hotel across the street, none of those—these are pictures before the earthquake. Does that look like all those buildings were wrecked?

HS: It certainly doesn't.

PG: Here's the Examiner Building here, across the street here. That picture was taken when the building was burning; and the fires had come up from the Mission and got into the buildings from behind through these lower windows and away she went. (looks at photos)

HS: Let's go on with what you remember.

PG: I just wanted to show you these [pictures]. There's so much that I could prove in my statements of why the city was wrecked, because of poor building construction and dishonest contracting. Now the city hall was built on the model of the Capitol in Washington, a beautiful building. It took about fifteen years to build, during the corrupt administrations, and the contractors got by, as I say, with murder then. That city hall was wrecked; it didn't burn.

HS: Did the dome fall?

PG: No, there was a steel interior, but the brick and stone fell off and left the—you'll see the pictures of that. The columns out in front, believe it or not, what cement was used—cement was much more expensive than sand, consequently there wasn't much cement put in the sand to make concrete. You see what I mean? Well, they took these empty cement barrels, piled one above the other, stuck cement on the outside of them, for the piers!

HS: They did? You mean the barrels that came from England?

PG: I'll show you the pictures. Yes, the barrels that came from England.

HS: They were probably stout oak barrels, I suppose.

PG: Well, they were oak barrels. The point is that you'll see pictures in here of these pillars fallen down, showing the empty shell, like a piece of pipe. And the hall of records was next to it, had all the records of the land titles of the City of San Francisco and San Francisco County. That burned; that collapsed too and burned. But the city hall didn't burn; it just disintegrated because there wasn't any cement to hold it together. The trouble was that the records of the land titles of San Francisco County were all destroyed. MacInerney, who was a prominent attorney in San Francisco—the governor called a special session of the legislature in Sacramento and they passed the MacInerney Act which enabled the owners of property in San Francisco that had any records, like tax bills and mortgage papers and anything to prove their ownership—we had to go before the superior court, which I happened to do representing my dad, because my father owned quite a little property in San Francisco at that time. There's a very interesting story in connection with that.

Abe Ruef—you've heard of him—he was the boss of the city, like Tammany in New York. The mayor was Schmitz, Mayor Schmitz; he was the head fiddler in the Columbia Theater orchestra. He was the mayor; he was just a tool of Abe Ruef. Abe Ruef controlled the city; all the different businesses and all paid tribute to him. You might say he was the czar; he was like Boss Tweed in New York, Mayor Daley in Chicago, and all that stuff. We had to prove ownership of all our land in the city by the use of tax bills. I appeared in superior court, Judge Graham's court. Superior court Judge Graham was

appointed by Abe Ruef. Our attorney went with me. “Now,” he said, “you’ll want to confess, because they’ll ask you questions about your property. Tell the truth, but talk very low.” The judge was sitting back there all day long, listening to this stuff, half asleep. The attorney representing the city asked me, “Have you any knowledge of any holds or any blanks on your property, any easements or anything at all?” Our attorney said, “Tell him yes.” Because we’d had some inquiries about buying some of it before the earthquake and we had the titles all searched. It was a very interesting experience because the attorney representing the city asked me if we had any clouds on the title, that was the word that I wanted to use, and I said, “Yes. We had our property searched and we found that there was a hold on this property by a man named Abe Ruef.” Well, there was Judge Graham sitting there (pantomimes judge’s sudden awakening), he heard the name. I said Abe Ruef had a quitclaim from the owner of the property when my father had to foreclose. Abe Ruef happened to be—there’s an interesting story there—he was a graduate of the University of California in the law, a Jewish boy—I should delete that, maybe; and he went to work in a law office in San Francisco for my father’s attorney.

HS: Olney, you mean?

PG: Not Olney, no. I can’t think of the man’s name. But Abe Ruef as a boy just out of college went into this law office there as a junior clerk and handled a lot of these mortgages and foreclosures and routine stuff. He was dishonest; he was a crook even when he was in college. And when he had to foreclose on these people who didn’t pay their dues, when my father foreclosed on them, he [Ruef] didn’t file certain papers. He took a quitclaim from the old owner, thinking that maybe in ten years from now that thing would be uncovered and they’d have to pay him off to clean title. So I had to say yes, that Abe Ruef had quitclaims to some of this property. Well, Judge Graham, of course, was wide awake because Judge Graham was in the racket too. He said, “You’ll have to clear this matter up with Mr. Ruef”—which I later on did. I’m very happy to say that I went to prison after they convicted him. They put him in jail finally and I had the pleasure of going into the jail and talking to Abe Ruef and getting him to sign a release for a hundred dollars, of his claims against this property. He was down and out by that time. They’d stripped him and cut his throat. That story of Abe Ruef is a very interesting one. My first experience with him—

HS: I think we’d better turn this tape over. It’s come to the end.

PG: When we had title searches on the property and Abe Ruef’s name was mentioned as having a quitclaim on this property, I went down to his office. He was then czar of San Francisco and he had his office down on Montgomery and California Street on the corner, big bay window. He had his big desk in the front there and a couple of his strong arm men sitting over on the side. Bodyguards, you know. I went in to see him, and I never will forget his sitting back in his chair at this big table, and I introduced myself and he said, “What is it you want?” I said, “I don’t understand how you have title to some property that my father owns here in San Francisco.” This was before the earthquake. And he said, “What was that?” “Well,” I said, I mentioned the names of a couple of people that lived out by Hunter’s Point there that my father’d loaned money to and we had to foreclose. “Oh,” he said, “yes, I remember that.” It was a remarkable thing, his

mind, years before. But he said, “Yes, I felt sorry for those people and I took a quitclaim on their property, thinking that someday I could get some money back from them.” It was a blackmail proposition. So I said, “What can I do about it?” He said, “You can’t do a damn thing about it.” I said okay and left. That was my first experience with him. The second was when I went to the jail right after they’d put him in jail and [I] paid him a hundred dollars to get a release on the property.

HS: How many pieces of property were involved?

PG: Oh, there were—it would be out in the residential district, out by Hunter’s Point. At that time the property had no particular value, just residential property.

HS: Was it built up or vacant lots?

PG: Vacant lots, I guess, probably. There may have been some buildings but mostly vacant lots. My father, after he came down here and built his home here [Oakland], he had a nervous breakdown and my mother looked after the affairs. She had a real estate man in San Francisco that somebody recommended. He was the one that got my father all mixed up in a lot of these mortgages in San Francisco. He took advantage of her; and that’s another long story.

It’s a funny thing. Schmitz, who was the mayor of San Francisco at that time, after they convicted Abe Ruef, Schmitz disappeared and nobody knew where he was. My brother was a salesman for the Hercules Powder Company, the dynamite people manufacturing dynamite, and part of his job as a traveling salesman was to go up through the mining district to visit all the different mines and sell Hercules powder to these mine companies. He went to Forbestown with his wife; they had to drive in those days, horse and buggy. He drove up to Forbestown—you see that picture there—he was born in Forbestown so he was naturally interested in seeing Forbestown again. The town had more or less deteriorated in the meantime, but it was still functioning. It hadn’t been destroyed.

HS: Was this before 1900, before the earthquake? It must have been.

PG: Yes, oh yes, before the earthquake. So they drove up to the house where he was born; he and my sister were born in Forbestown. They knocked on the door of the old house and here came a man that my brother recognized immediately, ex-Mayor Schmitz, hiding out in Forbestown. Can you imagine that? Isn’t that a coincidence?

HS: Yes. But that was after the earthquake.

PG: Yes, that was after the earthquake.

HS: What did your brother do?

PG: Oh, nothing. They never convicted him of anything; he was just a sucker, you know. They made a monkey out of him, you know.

HS: When you saw Ruef in jail, did he remember you?

PG: I don't remember that he did. I don't remember that. But he realized that he was all through, and settling for a hundred dollars was a kind of a joke, in a way.

HS: Were you able to prove all your ownership?

PG: Oh, yes, after we got the release from Abe Ruef we went to another court and they just signed the papers and that was all. But they had a hell of a time in San Francisco in land titles because down in the southern part of the city and down in San Mateo County, down towards Stanford University, at the time of the earthquake there was a sideslip as far as ten feet. Well, you can imagine land titles, fences. All that property had to be resurveyed.

HS: I never thought of that. I knew there was a great land slippage, but I never thought of property boundaries being ruined by it.

PG: Yes. If you had a stake here on the one corner, well it would be over here, you see. They had to resurvey all that property and it took years to fix out the land titles. Of course, today that wouldn't happen because all land titles, property deeds and mortgages and everything is all on microfilm and put in safe vaults today. But at that time, the books were open to the public. And in the hall of records they had the gas lights burning at night for a watchman to look around, you know, and when the roofs fell in, the gas burned for a while and that set the building afire, and that started many of the fires on the south side of Market Street.

HS: I was going to ask you whether your mother used gas to cook with in Oakland. How did she get breakfast that morning, a wood fire?

PG: A wood fire. The kitchen chimney was on the outside of the house and we could see that the top fell off, but it didn't do any harm. No, we had a wood and coal-burning stove. How well I know it! We had a Chinese cook; I was a little devil as a kid, like kids are, and I used to play a lot of pranks on Sing, our Chinese cook. One day, I guess it was probably around the Fourth of July—he always laid the fire in the kitchen stove the night before and got it all ready to light in the morning. I put a big redhead in the firebox. When he lit the fire in the morning, boy, the lid went up to the ceiling. I was very much in disgrace in that kitchen because it made quite a mess—didn't damage the stove particularly.

The Chinese were the servants and they did all the laundry work in Oakland in early days, and the vegetable men used to come around. They had these big baskets with a pole in between, and they'd go to the houses, the back door to the houses, and the lady of the house would go out and select her vegetables from these vegetable men.

HS: He raised them himself, I suppose?

PG: Well, I don't know whether they raised them or they had wholesale markets. These baskets, when they were filled, must have weighed about three hundred pounds, these big poles, U-poles with a pad on the back. You could see this Chinaman, when he'd pick it up when it was full, he'd stagger until he'd get up.

- HS: This business of the Chinese in the western United States is very interesting, the Chinese who came to work in the gold fields and then came to work on the railroads and then the ones who settled San Francisco, who were different from the other ones. Very interesting.
- PG: Yes, they were good people, those Chinese, honest people, very hard workers. They built the Southern Pacific, practically, the California part of it. Of course, the Irish did it back further east. Then when the labor unions began to get strong, the Chinese must go, and you know the politicians drove the Chinese out.
- HS: Even I can remember the talk about the “Yellow Peril.” Most of them, I suppose, were not citizens, didn’t want to be citizens, wanted to go back to China to die or be buried there. We had a Chinese gardener; my grandparents lived in Gardena, outside of Los Angeles, and we had a Chinese gardener who always brought me presents, lichee nuts and little dolls.
- PG: Yes. Oakland, of course was—I grew up there and I go up once a year, I have until this year. If I had been feeling right, I’d be gone up to Oakland for the Christmas holidays, to my old club, the old Athenian Club in Oakland. I’m the oldest member of the club and they always want me up there when they have their jinks, but I’m not going this year. It’s too much for me. With my shortness of breath and my emphysema I don’t think I’d do so well going up ten thousand feet, flying up there.
- HS: The planes are pressurized, and jets only take fifty-five minutes to get there.
- PG: Yes, that’s all. (pause) I don’t think I told you the story of when we went up to Mt. Lassen, at the time of the earthquake. [meant eruption] There’s a picture of the top of Mt. Lassen at the time of the earthquake—that is, the blowout in the volcano. What is the date of that [picture]?
- HS: There’s no date.
- PG: That was about ’14, well after the earthquake. That was the last volcano in California. I had quite a few pictures of that which the Smithsonian Institute, which heard about these pictures we took. They sent a man out and I gave them the negatives of the pictures that we took of the volcano.
- HS: How did you get this picture from above? Is it from another peak?
- PG: No, from the side of the hill. The quake had broken out a big chasm on almost the top of the mountain. It was early in the spring. There was no snow on the mountain at all; the mountain was so hot that the snow melted immediately when it fell. With two of my friends in Oakland, in 1914 it was, we took off at the first report of the volcano at Mt. Lassen. I was always interested in the early geology. We finally made it up there. The snow was down in the valley. We hired horses in Susanville and rode up to the base of the mountain and climbed it on foot. It was not a hard climb, just a tiresome climb that was all. We took a lot of pictures. I wish I had them now. Moving around, I’ve lost a lot of pictures.

HS: Wouldn't the Smithsonian give you prints of your negatives?

PG: No, they didn't. I never heard anything more about it; but there was quite an article about it in one of the Smithsonian geological magazines. Later on it did blow its top and there were ashes, fire and ashes. But at this time when we climbed, right after the first episode, there was no fire. This smoke was very sulfurous.

HS: So you say on the back of this picture, "Dust and ashes. Smoke and dust and a strong sulfur smell."

PG: Yes, but no fire.

HS: And no rocks shooting up.

PG: They had been blown up; it did later on. I have articles here telling the story. I have another story to tell you about the location of Edwards Air Force Base in the Antelope Valley. Did I tell you that story?

HS: No, you didn't.

PG: Well, that's a very interesting story. You've heard of "Hap" Arnold, "Tooe" Spaatz, Major Tinker. Arnold and Spaatz were the supreme commanders of the air force, located in England at the time of the Second World War. They had their headquarters at March Field out east of Riverside. On the ranch at Lancaster, I had leased the ranch to a wealthy man from Los Angeles by the name of Walter Wallace and I'd sold the idea of duck clubs up in the Antelope Valley—that's another story. Wallace had a nephew who was a lieutenant out at March Field, flying around out there. Wallace used to entertain the big brass out at March Field at parties and one thing and another. He was a wealthy man and they made him a major in the air force, a complimentary major, you know.

HS: Like the Kentucky colonels?

PG: Yes, a Kentucky colonel. So Walter Wallace invited these big shots from March Field to fly over and shoot ducks on this property, mine, that I'd leased to him. We'd made some duck ponds on the ranch. That was in 1930, I think it was. "Hap" Arnold, "Tooe" Spaatz, Major Tinker—Major Spaatz and Colonel Arnold, he was a colonel at that time, of the air force at March Field. They used to fly over Saturday, spend the night and shoot ducks Sunday and then fly back home again. While he leased the ranch we lived on a second house on the ranch, and Saturday night they'd invite me over there and we'd play penny ante poker and shoot the breeze—shoot crap on the floor. These big shot generals, officers, you know, would have a good time, not get drunk or anything, just a good time. In flying over, they flew over a great dry lake which was called Muroc Dry Lake, over to the ranch. One Saturday night we were sitting around there and Colonel Arnold asked me, "Do you know a big, dry lake, over here east of Lancaster out in the desert?" I said, "I know it very well. I've driven my old 1913 Franklin over it many times. It's just as smooth as a billiard table and as dry and hard as concrete. It would make the biggest air field in the world." It was a lake that was about ten miles long, three or four miles wide, and completely flat and dry and hard. I said, "It would make a wonderful air field."

Well, there wasn't much said about it, and in a later trip over in talking with him he said, "I wrote a letter in to Washington, recommending that they send out a group from the air force to examine this property and see . . ." (pause for narrator to get old guest book from the ranch) When I make statements of this kind, I like to be—(reads from guest registry) Major Tinker, Stanley Anderson, Lieutenant Reynolds

HS: What was the log book for?

PG: The duck club at my ranch.

HS: What are those figures?

PG: The numbers of the ducks they killed. Charlie Christie, Dr. Cochran, Major Spaatz, Lieutenant Dawson, Walter Wallace, LeRoy Edwards, Dr. Morse.

HS: Was this a membership duck club?

PG: No, they were just guests. (looks through book) The opening shoot, 1930, October 26, 1930. LeRoy Edwards; Stanley Anderson; Charles Christie, the movie man; Major Tinker; Colonel Arnold; Captain Hunter; Lt. Reynolds; Roy Hull.

HS: They all came over from March Field?

PG: March Field. They'd fly over. I think that I'm responsible for the start of that big airfield.

HS: Who is it named for?

PG: A lieutenant in the army, in the air force. I don't know the history of why it was named. The second year I had to take the property back. It was a kind of a lease with option to buy, the quarter section. At that time the land wasn't worth particularly much. (still reading) Hal Roach—you've heard of him? Charles Bronson, de la Rosa, Seabury, Bert McKee, Bob Rowan, quite a horseman. A year or two after, I had to foreclose the property, got it back from Wallace, and we went and moved into the main house again. We entertained the Rowan boys; they're very prominent in Los Angeles. Lew Rowan is quite a horseman; he runs horses out there at Santa Anita.

HS: This was foreclosed during the early part of the Depression then?

PG: Yes, it was during the Depression. That's when Wallace lost his money, during the Depression and I had to take the property back.

HS: What did you do with it then?

PG: We lived on it until '46. I had been practicing dentistry for forty-five years and I was getting tired of it and living in Lancaster and all.

HS: Where were you practicing? Where was your office?

PG: I had an office in Lancaster. In those days Lancaster was just more or less of a whistle stop town on the railroad, dirty streets, no pavements, just a windblown town, more saloons than anything else—really a cattle town. I married—you see, I was forty when I married and moved my wife up there and we lived very happily together up there. She was a great outdoors girl. Like myself, she loved the out-of-doors. I raised saddle horses on the side and I organized the Antelope Valley Desert Riders. They had their twenty-fifth anniversary here just last year and I went up there for the celebration. I was responsible for that group; they're very strong now today. They had a big party up there last night; I called up and talked to the people there at the party, wishing them a happy new year. We used to ride every Sunday out into the open, up to Rawley Dudley's up in the Tehachapis and ride all over the desert. We had lots of fun on horseback. I loved horses. My wife did, too, and dogs. We loved dogs; we raised dogs, hunting dogs, English setters, Llewellyn setters, not as a business but just as a kind of hobby. I practiced in town, and we had enough of the ranch in alfalfa just to pay the expenses, that's about all. Sometimes it didn't even do that

HS: Your father didn't leave an estate when he died, then?

PG: Well, he left an estate. It was about \$75,000 or \$80,000, divided between my sister and my brother and myself, and I took my share and developed the ranch down in the Antelope Valley to get away from the city. I wanted to get away from the city. I'd had too good a time in the city and I knew I'd burn out if I stayed there. That's one reason why I don't like to go home because all my old friends have died; there's nobody there who knows me anymore.

HS: They stayed in the city?

PG: Yes, they stayed in the city, and I'd have been buried up there too if I'd stayed in the city.

HS: Not necessarily.

PG: Well, yes, I would.

HS: Part of it is heredity, as you know.

PG: That's true too.

HS: I was wondering as I was driving over here: Do you sleep well? Have you always been a heavy sleeper?

PG: It's a funny thing. Lately I have no trouble going to sleep when I go to bed, but I wake up about four or five in the morning and then I lie in bed for two or three hours and I can't get back to sleep again.

HS: But you do sleep until then?

PG: Yes, and along about six o'clock, six-thirty, I begin to get sleepy again. At eight o'clock when I usually get up I have a hard time getting up because I'm very sleepy then. But in the middle of the night, if I wake up, I don't get back to sleep.

HS: When do you go to sleep?

PG: I usually stay up until the 11:00 o'clock news broadcast.

HS: Then you're getting plenty of sleep.

PG: I get eight or nine hours sleep, that's enough, you know.

END OF SESSION

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
 CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: DR. PERCY D. GASKILL
 INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
 DATE: January 13, 1970
 SUBJECT: San Francisco earthquake, early automobiles, bicycle trips

HS: This is Helen Smith. I'm talking with Dr. Gaskill in his home. This is Tuesday, January 13, [1970]. Dr. Gaskill, you were going to go on with your recollections of the San Francisco earthquake and fire. I think we carried it up to the afternoon of the first day.

PG: I told about walking up to our offices on the seventh floor, and up to the roof, and seeing the Call Building burn. There was quite a heavy shock at that time, when we were up on the roof but it didn't seem to worry us too much. We finally came down and back to the offices. In the, not excitement but tension—I think tension is a better word than shock—we figured—Well, we could see all the fires burning south of Market Street and it seemed to us that they had the situation under control and that the fires wouldn't get across Market Street on the other side, so we decided that we'd take our books home, the appointment books, and it would probably be about a week before we'd get back in the office again. My brother-in-law had a suitcase there and he put his books and my books and a few little odds and ends, I don't remember what they all were, in this suitcase. It was quite a heavy little load; so we walked down to the street. I remember looking into the Shreve Store, the jewelry store, and they were just about ready to close the vaults. We came down onto the street and we didn't notice any particular emotion there among the people. Those that we saw were just strolling round. We walked down to Post Street and Harry, my brother-in-law, said, "Let's go back to the Crocker Building," the old Crocker Building where we used to have our offices. And we did and went in there, and the elevator starter that we knew so well for many years was there in the lobby, and we talked with him and he said the building was okay and there was nothing wrong with it, and that the Palace Hotel across the street was—there was no trouble over there. People had moved out because they were panic-stricken. They got out.

HS: The Palace was on the south side of Market?

PG: Yes. About three or four o'clock we walked down Montgomery Street, with the idea of going home, and we walked down Montgomery Street until we came to California and Montgomery. On that corner was a large building, an old building, the San Francisco

Safe Deposit and Trust Company, and they had their vaults down below. At that time many of the buildings in the city were built, I don't know why, but you'd go up steps from the street into a bank or into any store or anything of the kind, and then there was a kind of a sub-basement—

HS: Half basement? Were there windows showing above the sidewalk?

PG: Yes, half basement. As I remember there was very little debris on the sidewalks and we had no trouble walking down there. There was nothing piled up in the streets, wreckers' stuff, you know. And as we came to the side of the bank where the steps went down to the vaults underneath, why, there was a man standing there at the head of the steps and he called out to my brother-in-law. "Doc," he said, "what the hell are you doing here with a suitcase?" His name was Jack MacGinity; he was the trust officer for the vaults down below. And he said, "We're just about ready to close the vaults. We're filling up the aisles in the vaults with books and stuff of that kind, records that people had brought in. You might as well leave your suitcase here and not have to pack it home because you've a long walk back to the North Beach." So we did. We left the suitcase there, and it was two or three weeks later before they could open those vaults because the building burned and fell down on the concrete floor above the vaults, you know, and it just cooked the vaults. I remember my book that I kept the dates in; I used an indelible pencil and the heat was so great that the writing on this side of the page would be imprinted on the opposite, you know. And the rubber bands around my cards were cooked right to them, but the stuff was all legible.

HS: It was? The paper wasn't charred?

PG: No, it browned it some but not charred. It didn't get that hot.

HS: Was there money in there, too?

PG: I don't seem to remember whether there was.

HS: They were not a money institution really, were they?

PG: No—well, the bank was. The vaults were for the general public to keep their possessions in. At that time that was one of the few big vaults in the city. Of course, all of that part of the city was completely destroyed in the fire that came later. As I remember now, there was no evidence of destruction of the building from the earthquake. Then we finally made it over through Nob Hill down to the ferry and took the ferry back to Oakland.

HS: The same way you had come over?

PG: In the morning, yes. You see, in the morning when the ferry approached the Ferry Building, they could see the fires burning on that [area] south of Market so they decided to go around and land at North Beach. About a week later when things had cooled down after the fire, a friend of mine, a Mr. Burnham from Oakland, and I went over in the morning.

HS: In the meantime, had you not gone back to San Francisco?

PG: We didn't go back until that, about three or four days later. Naturally, I was very curious to know what had happened to our building. It was a week, I guess, later. I don't remember just how long, but everything had cooled down and there was no evidence of fires anywhere. We went into the shell of our building. I speak of it as a shell because it was burned out inside. It was like the inside of a furnace, as you look in after the fires have cooled, you know. And we walked up to our offices. We had a little trouble doing so because on the stairways the marble treads were broken in places, and we had to kind of get hold of the railing and work up. We finally got up to our offices. I never will forget going into them. Of course, there were no doors, there was no wood, everything was—in fact, there was no wood ashes. The suction of the fire had pulled all that stuff out. But we had no trouble locating my office room because the hollow tile partitions were intact. Some plaster'd fallen down. My dental chair was sitting in front in its regular place and there was nothing left but just the ironwork of the chair. In the back there were cupboards. One cupboard was a wash basin, and then there was a clothes closet with a shelf up at the top. At that time manufacturers sent you tooth pastes and mouth washes and stuff to advertise, you know, in packages. I remember at that time Glycothymoline was a very well advertised mouthwash, and you'd always have these little packages with small bottles, and I'd put them up on the shelf in there and the whole shelf was covered with these bottles. Down below I had what they call a jeweler's bench; it was a bench a good deal like this here, with drawers on both sides and a roll top that came down over the top to close it up. I had all of my tools for making plates and crowns. Down on the floor was a pile of glass, molten glass, filled with dental instruments and wrenches and pliers and stuff that I used in the mechanical dentistry part. I broke off a chunk of this solid, molten glass and took it home as a souvenir. I wish I had it now because the instruments were all melted right into this pile of molten glass.

A few days after that, I had a friend, Buzz White, whose father—they had a big, their business in San Francisco was the importing of hardwoods, teak from India and mahogany from South America. It was a hardwood lumber yard. And across the street was the Folger Company's big building, of the Folger coffee people. Buzz White happened to be the husband of Irvine's second wife. I remember my friend and I took quite a big lunch with us because we figured on spending the day. The fires were still burning in the city at that time, but the ferry boats had gotten so they could land at the Ferry Building. The Embarcadero down there was so wide that the buildings on the bay side were not burned, and the Ferry Building didn't burn. It wasn't destroyed, as a matter of fact. Some of the masonry on the big clock tower had fallen down on the roofs and you could see the open grillwork inside, but the Ferry Building itself wasn't damaged particularly in the earthquake. When we went up into the building and saw the result of the fire, we came down, and at that time on our way back we walked down Market Street. At that time from Montgomery Street to the Ferry Building originally was in a cove, and that had all been filled in years before and the wholesale houses and small stores and all down on lower part of Market Street were built on filled land over the mud. They'd pumped water [mud] in there and they'd built the city out to the Ferry Building. That part of the city was pretty badly wrecked in the earthquake because the buildings themselves hadn't been—they hadn't dug down to bedrock down below and they'd put

the buildings on this dry land which they thought was oaky. That's all part of the story that I want to tell about, why there was so much destruction of property and what caused it—because of poor construction.

HS: And unstable land.

PG: And unstable land. Well, in coming back down the street I never will forget this. This Mr. Burnham was a retired businessman from back east that had come out here with his family to live. As we walked down to Market Street the bricks from the buildings on both sides of Market Street had fallen out into the street and the street wasn't passable, and the authorities had crews throwing the bricks away so they could open up a passageway for the cars, you know, out in the center. As we came down there we'd have to stop every block; the men would stop us there and force us to pick up bricks and throw them over on the side, you know, and then we'd go on. We finally made it down to the Ferry Building and got a ride home. I remember, too, to prove my contention about the lack of cement, the bricks didn't really need any cleaning. The plaster that was used in cementing them originally, it wasn't stuck to the bricks. We finally got home.

HS: I think—did we finish—you said you decided to go to the Crocker Building. I don't believe that was described.

PG: Oh, yes, we went to the Crocker Building and talked to Jim Gray, the elevator starter there. We didn't go up into the building. We just asked him and he said that as far as he could discover there wasn't any damage to the building, like our new building that we were in. The Crocker Building was a good deal older than our building, but that was steel and concrete, properly built. I remember him mentioning about the Palace Hotel and he motioned over to the Palace Hotel and he said, "The Palace Hotel as far as I can see was okay." Now this was early in the afternoon. Along late in the afternoon, the fires had burned up from the Mission and gotten into the buildings on the south side of Market Street, and they got into the back of the Palace Hotel through the windows from the old buildings down below. The Call Building burned the same way, and the Examiner Building. I never will forget the—I told you, I think, as we came by Portsmouth Square and the artillery wagons bringing the dynamite. Well, the soldiers didn't know how to use dynamite. They went into the Examiner Building; they had a big lobby there, very large lobby with big piers supporting the roof. They had put dynamite sticks around the piers and gone out in the street and shot it, you know. Instead of going half a block behind there and blowing up the old wooden buildings, they tried to destroy the Examiner Building. Well, they couldn't. It was a modern building and they couldn't knock it down. They did so much damage that they had to pull it down later on, but it was the dynamite that did it. If you're interested in the story of San Francisco, I'd like to have you take this book and look at it.

HS: I'd like to borrow it, yes.

PG: It's tremendously interesting. This book comes the nearest to being a true story of the city. I've read many books about the city written by people that—well, that's just a joke. Most of the stories about the city—(need name of book)

- HS: Well, there was a great deal of emotion, of course, at the time, but I find it very interesting to be sitting here sixty-four years later and listening to what you remember about it. It's amazing what you do remember, isn't it?
- PG: It's a funny thing. I have a very keen memory of past events.
- HS: I think that's normal, isn't it?
- PG: I suppose it is. (shows picture from the book of cove at the foot of Market Street) You see here? Later on it was filled in across here.
- HS: Yes. I'll take those home and digest them. I was going to ask you about the Palace Hotel. Did you ever spend much time in the old Palace Hotel? You must have dined there.
- PG: Maybe ever other day I had lunch in the hotel.
- HS: It was a very grand hotel, wasn't it?
- PG: Oh, beautiful hotel. (pause for photography from book) There's a picture of the Call Building burning.
- HS: I've heard stories about the Palace Hotel and the central courtyard. It was built on the style of European buildings with a carriage entrance, wasn't it?
- PG: Yes. It was built on three sides.
- HS: Was it planted or was it all paved inside the courtyard?
- PG: It was planted in the center, as I remember, but the driveway for the carriage trade was on the side street and the carriages would drive in and unload the passengers inside. It had a glass dome over the top.
- HS: I thought I remembered a glass dome, in the style of the Crystal Palace in London.
- PG: You'll see a picture of the old Palace in this book, before the fire. Oh, I've had many a luncheon and dinner in the Palace Hotel and danced many a night in the old Fortnightly Club. At that time I happened to be in the social swim—you know what I mean—and I think I had soup-and-fish or tails on two or three nights a week for parties.
- HS: I gather the food was good, in the San Francisco tradition.
- PG: Oh, yes, it was, and they had wonderful shops in there, too, right on the street.
- HS: What's the Fortnightly Club?
- PG: It was a social, dancing club. They had their dances at the Palace.
- HS: Who provided the music?

PG: Oh, big bands, you know. Fred Greenway, and I can't think of the woman that was the social czar of the city. What the devil was her name? Saulsberry, Mrs. Saulsberry, she was the social czar in the city and handled all the debutante parties and all that sort of thing. Of course, I was always dancing with them, too.

HS: How were you at attending the theater? Do you remember theatrical productions?

PG: Well, the old Columbia Theater at the corner of Powell and Market, that's where the head of the orchestra, Schmitz was the head player in the orchestra.

HS: Oh, yes, the mayor.

PG: Oh, yes, I attended many shows there.

HS: Do you remember any of them? The people, the stars you saw?

PG: Of course, the grand opera—that's another story. I'd forgotten about that. The opera house was on Mission Street a block away from Market Street. It was a beautiful big building, and the opera troupes from New York would come out there every winter and put on big shows. Emma Eames and [Enrico] Caruso.

HS: Caruso was in San Francisco during the earthquake, wasn't he?

PG: Yes.

HS: I had forgotten that.

PG: He was staying at the Palace. And there was Schumann Heink and Calve, Tettrazini, and Walter Damrosch was the conductor at our club in Oakland, the Athenian Club where we had membership. I used to sing in the Oakland Orpheus Club, a sixty-man chorus club that still is in existence, by the way, up there now. The leader of the Orpheus Club was a member of the Athenian Club, and we had a quartet in the Athenian Club that used to go around and sing at parties and one thing another, for the fun of it. This particular year, we were very much interested in the opera because we did a lot of singing, and a group of us went over there and got a job in the chorus of the operas. We paid fifty cents for the privilege of packing a spear. They dressed us up, you know, and we sang in several of the operas.

HS: Do you remember what they were, or who the stars were?

PG: Well, let me see. I'll try to think. There was Caruso and the baritone, what was his name? It'll come to me. He sang later at one of the Bohemian Club parties up at the Grove, the Bohemian Grove. I took part in some of the plays up at the Bohemian Grove, too, in the choruses and all.

HS: Under whose auspices were they given? The concerts that they gave in the Bohemian Grove.

- PG: Every year some member of the club that was a writer would write a score, you know, and another man would write the music, and we'd put on a play in the Bohemian Grove up at Guerneville.
- HS: This is a redwood grove?
- PG: In the redwoods, yes, up at Guerneville. The Saturday night play was a very elaborate play—Bispham! He was the baritone, one of the professional singers that took part in one of these plays. We sang in the choruses and did our part. We had really a lot of fun with the music.
- HS: Was this the Metropolitan Opera?
- PG: Oh, yes. And Walter Damrosch was the conductor. And Modjeska, I think she sang, she was part of it, too.
- HS: She didn't sing; she was an actress.
- PG: Oh, I guess that's right, yes.
- HS: She did a great deal of Shakespeare. I was going to ask you about her.
- PG: I don't seem to remember much about her except the name. Schumann Heink, of course, she was the baritone woman with a deep voice. Big German woman. She had a tremendous voice, you know. She was beautiful.
- HS: She left her mark on San Diego. She had a great following. She seemed to inspire affection.
- PG: Oh, yes, she was a motherly type of woman.
- HS: You didn't see Modjeska's plays?
- PG: No, I don't remember Modjeska's plays particularly. Later on, I know we saw a lot of Tetrazinni. She was a light soprano. I remember Bispham in one of our plays. Bill McCoy of the Athenian Club wrote the music for it. It was an Irish play about the clans in Ireland; his music was very martial.
- HS: Bagpipes?
- PG: Yes. (pause)
- HS: You were saying that Myford Irvine was a director of the Society of California Pioneers.
- PG: Yes, and for one year was the president of the society. He gave the society \$50,000 to build their new building, which is in existence now, in San Francisco.
- HS: That was because his grandfather was a '49er?

PG: Yes, his grandfather was a '49er. Do you know a family here in Santa Ana by the name of—I can remember what happened ten years ago but I can't remember what happened yesterday.

HS: Give me a clue.

PG: Bill, Bill—(searching for papers) Bill Cheney. You know the Cheney family?

HS: Oh, yes. The son went through school with my sister here. They were a little younger than I. He was the one who started the Farmers' Insurance Group. My father knew him.

PG: Yes. And he was a flyer. He married my stepson's [ex-wife], Marie Moriarty. They were married just a couple of years ago.

HS: Your stepson's what, widow or divorced wife?

PG: Yes, divorced wife. Bill Cheney married her. They're living now down at Earp on the Colorado River, down near Yuma. They've got a big trailer. I had dinner with her Sunday night, this last Sunday night at the celebration of my being a great-grandfather. That's an interesting story too—the modern way they're handling the girls at the time of childbirth. This doctor up in Anaheim, he doesn't use any anesthetic at all, and the boy was telling me—

HS: We don't need to put this on the tape. (pause)

PG: [I don't remember] whether it was the night of the earthquake or not, but there was a—Caruso was the head man in this particular opera, and I think we were in the chorus at the opera house. The night before the earthquake, I think it was. I'm not quite sure whether it was that night that I'd gone home and waked up in the morning to the earthquake.

HS: I seem to remember Caruso's giving a performance or a concert after the earthquake. "The show must go on!" Do you remember that? I'm not very clear about it. It may be in your book.

PG: I don't remember that. The old opera house was built during the days of the Gold Rush, you know, and San Francisco was noted for their interest in opera and music and all. Still are. I used to go to all the operas that I could, and later on many operas.

That Bohemian Grove up at Guerneville is a beautiful spot. It's right in the primeval forest, the redwoods. They've never been cut down, the original trees. The amphitheater is a side hill, with the trails going by, for the different stages, you know, and they put on these beautiful plays down below and they have a professional orchestra that's brought up from the city, you know, to play for it.

HS: Is this still continuing?

- PG: Oh, yes. I don't think as much as it used to, but—I wish I had all that, the manuscripts and the books and all that stuff that I had. We moved so many times that every time we moved we'd lose something, and there's very little left of any of that stuff.
- HS: You didn't save any programs?
- PG: That's what I mean. I lost all that stuff. When I left Oakland to come down to the desert—I told you that story, didn't I, about the location of Edwards Air Force Base?
- HS: Yes. Well, I think we should get back to the earthquake. We're now a week later.
- PG: I told you about going back up to the building after the fire, after it cooled down. Everything was gone. My brother-in-law had offices on the other side with a common reception room and I was on this side. Over the door going into my office, I had a beautiful deer head. It was up over the door. Can you imagine going into that room and turning around to look up to see whether that deer head was still there? Can you imagine that?
- HS: It wasn't, of course. Completely destroyed.
- PG: Oh, yes, completely destroyed. The heat must have been so tremendous. You see, with these tall buildings and the drafts from down below, the suction just blew everything out, just like a chimney. You'll notice in looking over that book of the fire—I'm very much interested in getting somebody like Dr. Richter that would tell the story of why there was so much destruction of buildings in San Francisco. The reason was, as far as I can figure out from what I've heard and read and seen, was the poor construction.
- HS: Well, we had an earthquake in Santa Ana in 1933 and in Long Beach. We did not have fire. There was an earthquake in Santa Barbara in about 1918, I think, that knocked down a lot of the old adobes. They didn't have fire. We may be learning something.
- PG: Oakland had no fires at the time of the big earthquake; it was only thirteen miles, you know, across the bay.
- HS: But it was not so badly shaken.
- PG: Oh, no. It shows pictures of that in this book, too. And Santa Rosa and San Jose, and Stanford University was pretty well shaken down. And the insane asylum at Agnews was destroyed more or less, too.
- HS: What about recovery? How long did it take to turn the clock around?
- PG: Not too bad. People pitched in. I have an interesting story connected with the earthquake. The night of the earthquake, this Mr. Burnham, this retired man that I used to chum with—he had a daughter that I was interested in at the time. I've often wondered, later on, was I more interested in the daughter or was I more or less interested in automobiling? I have an interesting story about one of the first automobiles that was shipped to California.

But the night of the earthquake there was a family that had a home out in San Leandro. He was a very prominent insurance man in San Francisco, named—his name will come to me in a minute. There was a hotel in San Francisco called the Hotel Pleasanton; it was a family hotel and the businessmen that had their business in San Francisco either lived in Menlo Park or many of them lived in Oakland. They'd keep a suite in this family hotel for weekends. At the time the Pleasanton Hotel was an eight-story building and at the time of the earthquake the front of it fell out, but you could look up there and see the beds and that. You've seen pictures of that.

HS: Yes, many.

PG: Well, this man and his wife and son and daughter happened to be in the city at the time of the earthquake; they were old friends of this Mr. Burnham in Oakland. When the earthquake came, the people that stayed inside of the buildings, there was no trouble at all. A couple of them were hurt where the stuff fell out and they'd run out into the street. The family went across the street to the park and they sat out in the park, scared to death. The man was a big, heavy-set, pussy sort of a man with not too much intestinal fortitude, scared to death. Herbert Landers, Herb Landers. They had a ranch down at—not Millbrae, but a place down near Stanford University. They had a little ranch down in there and they raised horses and a few things as a hobby, more or less. Herb, the afternoon of the earthquake, the family scared to death, sitting out in the park across the street from the hotel, he got across to Oakland and came down to the Burnhams' home, and I happened to go down to the Burnhams' house that evening. Herb came over to Oakland to see if he couldn't get Burnham to help get the old man and his wife and sister out of San Francisco. Burnham had a 1906 Winton touring car. We took off from Oakland at night, drove down on the Oakland side of the bay.

HS: That was the night after the earthquake?

PG: The night of the earthquake; the city was burning, you know. I never will forget that. The rumors were that there were great fissures opened up in the roads down below, round Agnews and toward San Jose and all, and that roads were impassable. But we took off in this touring car, drove down the Oakland side of the bay and were able to cross by Milpitas, way down in there, and come back up to the ranch. This young man harnessed up a team of horses and a light wagon that they had there and drove up into the city to pick up the old man and his wife and daughter and get them down to the ferry to Oakland.

HS: Who was Herb Landers? Was he the old man or the son?

PG: No, Herb is the boy. His father was Landers. They had a big home out at San Leandro.

HS: But they were in San Francisco, at the hotel?

PG: At the hotel. They weren't hurt at all; in fact, they didn't get out of the building. The people that stayed in the building weren't hurt. Floors didn't collapse, but the fronts fell out and the reason they did was—the story that I want to tell, if I can sell the idea to Dr. Richter or someone of the men up at Caltech, to tell the story of why the city was so

badly damaged in the quake. I can prove it; you'll see the pictures of the city hall. The city hall was built on the lines of the Capitol in Washington with big pillars out in front supporting the—

HS: I think we have that on the tape, the concrete barrels, cement barrels as fillers.

PG: Yes, it shows the columns fallen down, the hollow columns like pipe lying there. That building was completely destroyed, practically destroyed in the earthquake. No fire, it didn't burn. But the next building to it was the hall of records. Did I mention that?

HS: Yes, you have mentioned that.

PG: And the records were all destroyed. The building collapsed, too. That burned because at that time there wasn't too much electricity and they had gas burners in the buildings and at night in the offices they'd have a gas burner burning. The watchman walking by could look in and see the light burning in there, you know. And that's what started the fires on the south side of Market Street, the gas burning, setting them afire. If you'll look at all the pictures in this book, you'll see that it shows pictures of the city before the earthquake, during the earthquake—not during the earthquake but during the fire after the earthquake, and it shows the buildings downtown with people walking around in the streets the afternoon of the earthquake, with no damaged buildings. You see the point that I wanted to make? I could mention oh, so many buildings that were not damaged at all in the earthquake, practically at all.

HS: What about your friends. You are at the ranch. You were telling about driving to this ranch, and he took the wagon and team.

PG: He drove up into the city.

HS: Did you wait at the ranch?

PG: Oh, no. We left right away and came back home that night.

HS: Did he make the rescue? Did he bring them back to the ranch that night?

PG: Oh, no. The next day, I think probably it was the next day. Yes, I have an interesting story about one of the first automobiles that was shipped into Oakland. It was in 1903. This Mr. Burnham was a wealthy man, retired, and he read in a magazine or something, of an automobile that was being built back east, the Haynes Apperson. It had a picture of this surrey, a high-wheeled surrey with four posts and top and fringe around the top, you know. In the front seat it had a post up in front with a lever out here to steer it by.

HS: It had pneumatic tires or iron?

PG: No, hard rubber tires, high wheels. It was originally a horse-drawn setup, you know, and they put a little engine in under the front with chains that ran back to the rear wheels. He bought one of these things from the advertisement. Eventually it was shipped out and it landed down at the Sixteenth Street depot, freight depot, and it was wheeled out onto the

platform and Burnham called me up that morning and asked me if I didn't want to go down and see the automobile, the horseless carriage it was called then. There was a mechanic there in Oakland by the name of Hiram Bradley, a very clever mechanic, so he came along and they wheeled the carriage out and down onto the ground. There was a booklet to tell you how to start it, you know, and all and Bradley of course studied it and they put gasoline in the little engine—little 25-horse engine or so. Had a crank on the side. Put gasoline in there and cranked the damn thing up and it ran! We got into the thing and they drove around. There was a big parking place there in front and they drove around there to learn how to handle the thing, you know, and drove it up to his home. That created quite a commotion, a lot of interest in Oakland at the time. The *Oakland Tribune*—

HS: Did it land in Oakland? I don't know where this Sixteenth Street depot is.

PG: Oh, it's right in Oakland, on the Southern Pacific coming in. A couple of Sundays later, I accompanied them and they took a ride out the San Leandro road, a dirt road. We were touring out towards San Leandro on this dirt road, and the road was a little rough, macadam road, but chattering along on hard tires, hard rubber tires. I was sitting in the back seat with the young lady and Burnham and his wife were up in front. All of a sudden the carriage settled on one side. On my side here was the wheel, big wheel alongside of me and that wheel was rolling down the road. The axle had broken off right at the edge of the carriage and the body of the car settled down a little bit. It didn't go clear down to the ground. No harm done, because we weren't probably going over ten or fifteen miles an hour. As near as I can figure out, there was one up at Reno, the big gambling czar up at Reno, Smith, has a museum up there, one of the biggest museums of antique automobiles in the world as far as I know. Beautiful setup that he has there. He had one of these Haynes Apperson surreys in his show. Smith, isn't that his name?

HS: Harold Smith?

PG: Harold's Club. You see, there's two, there's Harold's and Harrah. Harrah's is down at the lower end of the lake. He has a tremendous big barn; it's a huge place with big mechanic's shops there and they take the old cars—Here's an odd thing: my first car was a second-hand Franklin, 1913 Franklin automobile.

HS: You were late getting a car, weren't you?

PG: Yes. Well, I couldn't afford one. There weren't too many of them and they were very high-priced. I bought this coupe, runabout. It was a year old, only in very good shape. I drove that car for five years.

HS: Oh, they were good cars. My husband had an old Franklin. I can't remember the year of it, but with the sloping front. He loved it and we should have kept it; it would be a classic piece now.

PG: Oh, it would be worth a fortune now. It had a wood frame. It had full elliptic springs. The modern cars are all steel frames, you know. But the Franklin had, the side piers that came along were laminated wood that high and that wide; and the full elliptic springs fore

and aft. The engine of course out in front. That was a marvelous car. You could go anywhere with it.

HS: It was always fun to drive it later, I remember, because the mechanics were always trying to get under the hood so they could fill the radiator. They never remembered.

PG: Well, there was no radiator.

HS: No, but they forgot that.

PG: The flywheel on the engine was built with vanes in it, like a squirrel cage, like a ventilator, you know, and that sucked the air in over the engine down and out underneath. That was the theory of it. In fact, it's used today in the Volkswagen, the same idea, air-cooled. I had three Franklins in fifteen years. I'd drive one five years.

HS: Were they always used when you bought them?

PG: Yes, always used when I bought them, because they were very expensive.

HS: I'm going to shut this off. (pause)

PG: In Oakland we had the Reliance Athletic Club. This was in the days of the bicycles, before automobiles. My brother and brother-in-law and Warren Olney—you've heard that name?—and Philip Carlton and Barnays, who was the Victor bicycle agent, we all—they rode their bicycles on Sundays. One of the stunts they did was to ride their bicycles down on the Oakland side of the bay and cross over and come back on the San Francisco side. It was a hundred-mile ride, and they'd make that in a day. Of course, I was ten years younger than my brother and the rest of them, but a very active kid. I had my bicycle too, and I thought that I rode with them oftentimes. The first time that I made the trip I rode on a tandem, two-seater, and the afterwards I had my single Victor bicycle.

HS: Were those normal bicycles?

PG: Regular bicycles, but they didn't have the brakes on them like they have on the modern bicycles. They didn't have any brake on them at all.

HS: You couldn't push your foot back and put a brake on the rear wheel?

PG: No, there wasn't any brake on the wheels at all. The only way you could stop them—they didn't have a fender on the front wheel and you could put your toe in the fork there and press on the tire, so slow it down. That's the only way you could stop them. One year, while I was in high school, they decided to take a trip up into northern California. Warren Olney—he's the father of the present Warren Olney who represents CBS in Sacramento.

HS: Wasn't he his grandfather?

PG: His grandfather, yes. The old man Olney was my father's attorney in Oakland, fine man.

HS: Was he a judge?

PG: He may have been a judge later but—no, they never spoke of him as Judge Olney. He was one of the first directors of the Sierra Club with John Muir. We went over across the bay to Sausalito and rode up through Petaluma, Santa Rosa, Healdsburg, Ukiah, Clear Lake and across the mountains and down the Napa Valley back to Oakland on bicycles. This was before automobiles at all.

HS: You camped?

PG: We'd go to hotels at night. No, we didn't camp. We didn't carry any equipment with us that way. In the mountains some of the grades were so steep—the mountain roads were built for wagons, of course, and they didn't—some of the roads were so steep we couldn't ride up. We might have to walk them in spots, but going down on the steep roads, we always took a rope with us, and we'd tie a big bunch of brush on the rope and use it as a drag to hold you back going down the hills. You can imagine the amount of dust we'd stir up, too, on these dirt roads. When I was in high school, our home—you saw the picture of our home, there?—across the street was a nice home. A family from below San Luis Obispo had a big cattle ranch down there, cattle and dairy ranch and grain ranch, at Arroyo Grande below San Luis Obispo. The widow and her son, she brought him up to Oakland to put him in high school. He was a boy just about my age and I got to know him very well, red-headed kid. Steele the name was. One summer, the boy wanted to go back to the ranch to spend the summer vacation and so he invited me to go down there. We rode our bicycles from Oakland to San Luis Obispo, believe it or not!

HS: How long did it take you?

PG: Well, the first day we rode to San Juan Bautista, about twelve miles below San Jose. Then we walked and rode over a mountain business to a place called Jolon down in the Salinas Valley. The next day we made King City and the day after that we left San Miguel. They hadn't built the railroad in those days; they had a railroad down the canyon but there was no road down the canyon of the Salinas River, so we had to go over to the coast to a place called Jolon and then back to Paso Robles and then from Paso Robles we hitchhiked it and bicycled. We had to walk a lot of it; the hill going down into San Luis Obispo was pretty steep. It took as about five days, I think, and all dirt road, no pavements at all in those days.

HS: Quite an adventure.

PG: It was quite an adventure. And I spent the whole summer down there, riding horseback with the cattlemen. It was about five miles inland from Pismo Beach. Pismo Beach is quite a town now. There was nothing there then at all, just an open beach. It was about five miles from where the ranch house was down to the beach, and we'd ride our horses down to the beach and ride around in the surf and get a sack of clams, you know, and bring back.

We always ate in the cookhouse. They had about a dozen men employed on the ranch and they had a big cookhouse with a Chinese cook. They had a big dairy. This Doctor

Steele imported some of the first Holstein cattle from Holland, dairy cattle, into California, and he had a creamery and dairy there in connection with the ranch. They shipped the milk up north to San Luis Obispo, I don't know where they shipped it to, but they made butter and cheese and all that sort of stuff down there. Very interesting. I spent six weeks of the summer, whole summer vacation down there; it was very interesting.

HS: Did they let you help with the cattle?

PG: I rode one of the cow horses, you know. Sure, every time they'd go out to round up the cattle and all, I always rode one of the cow ponies.

HS: Did they have Mexican cowboys?

PG: No, they were American cowboys, Spanish-American, I think. I guess you could call them Mexicans. Yes, they were Mexicans, come to think of it.

HS: Many of them were, in those days.

PG: Yes. They raised a lot of grain. He had a big ranch, beautiful big ranch. I had a lot of fun there, did a lot of hunting, dove hunting and quail hunting. Then, on the way back, we rode our bicycles up to San Luis Obispo and took a train down to Port Orford that was on the ocean. At that time, the steamers ran from Los Angeles up to San Francisco, passenger steamers and freight steamers. The railroad had only just been built and the business of hauling freight from Los Angeles to San Francisco was all done by steamer. We rode down to Port Orford with our bicycles and took the steamer back to San Francisco and home. But that country now is all built up.

HS: Were you ever in southern California when you were a boy?

PG: Southern California? Yes. My dad loved to travel and my first experience in southern California, when I was about eight or ten, I think, we took a steamer down to San Diego, stopped at the old Grant Hotel. I don't know whether Dad hired a team or whether there was a stage that drove down to Tijuana. It was just a Mexican village there at that time.

There was a fad at that time of collecting souvenir spoons and mother collected spoons wherever we traveled. I had a wonderful collection of these souvenir spoons that she'd collected; my niece up in Berkeley has them now. I remember that was my first trip, and then we came back to Los Angeles and spent a few days in Los Angeles.

HS: How did you go there, by ship? To San Pedro?

PG: Yes, we took a ship, the *Captain Alexander* and the *Queen*. I remember going out in a horsecar, out into the country, to a place where there was a kind of a lake. It's MacArthur Park now, I think. Then we came on back home. We spent quite a few days in Los Angeles. We went out to Pasadena, Hotel Raymond, on horsecars.

HS: Did you go up Mount Lowe?

PG: We didn't go up Mount Lowe. I knew Lowe's daughter; she was quite a character, Florence, Florence Lowe Barnes.⁸ You've heard of her?

HS: Yes, I knew a niece of hers. She was an aviator.

PG: I knew her very well. Yes, she flew. She had a ranch east of Lancaster, out east of Rosamond. She was a pretty tough character, that gal.

HS: Yes, she was.

PG: She was on a banana boat down in the canal, out of New Orleans or somewhere, where they used to run bananas back and forth. And she did a lot of flying; and she developed some trotting horses there at the ranch. She used to come into Lancaster. We put on little horse shows in Lancaster. Florence Lowe Barnes, I knew her very well and her boy. She was quite a character. I wonder if she's still alive.

HS: She was until quite recently.

PG: I think so, yes.

HS: I don't know. I'm going to have to go.

END OF SESSION

⁸ Ms. Florence Lowe Barnes, known to all the world by her favored nickname "Pancho," was never officially a part of the Edwards Air Force Base community but spent many years as one of its most enduring champions. She became familiar to the general public as the colorful, swashbuckling friend of America's best known test pilots, but the aviation community always knew her as a skilled professional and one of the respected figures in the Golden Age of flight. She died in 1975.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
 CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Oral History Collection

NARRATOR: DR. PERCY D. GASKILL

INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith

DATE: February 22, 1970

SUBJECT: Gold rush of 1849, Oakland merchants, Frank Smith's borax fortune made and lost, Realty Syndicate, itinerant dental practice, Adolph Sutro

HS: This is Helen Smith. Today is Washington's birthday, February 22, 1970. I'm talking with Dr. Gaskill in his home on West Fifth Street, Santa Ana. We are going to start with some of the stories he remembers that his father told about his trip from Boston to San Francisco in 1849. I'm referring to a thesis for the degree of M.A. by Kenneth O'Brien, Jr., who was a second cousin of Dr. Gaskill. The title of this is *From Boston to San Francisco, 1849: The letters of DeWitt Clinton Gaskill*. I'm looking at a letter that is headed "On board the good barque *Thames*, lying in the stream, Boston Harbor," and the note says, "The barque rig consisted of three masts. The foremast and the mainmast were square rigged and the mizzen mast was fore and aft rigged." You were going to tell some of the stories you remember your father told.

PG: Yes. Yes, they took ship and—oh, first, my father organized a group of young men from called the Rutland Company, about twelve of them.

HS: That's already on the tape.

PG: Oh, you've got that.

HS: Yes. We had a few comments about the trip and about the food, how bad it became.

PG: That was on the Pacific side, later on. But they finally landed at Aspinwall on the Atlantic side of the isthmus, and they hired the Spanish pirogues and went up the Chagres River as far as they could, and then walked from there over the hills to Panama on the Pacific side. He, I remember his commenting to me about the mules loaded with gold that would come down to Panama on the Pacific side from the gold fields and carry it over the hills to the Atlantic side to bring it up to the, to New York. Apparently—I've read many articles and books about the terrible hardships. My father had a sense of humor like mine, I think. They didn't suffer too much. In fact, they got along pretty well.

HS: Young men don't suffer when they're on an adventure, do you think?

PG: No. They landed at Panama, walked over and finally landed at Panama, and they were there a couple of months at Panama waiting for a ship to come around the Horn to take them north. My father was intrigued about the Spanish language and he met a young Spaniard there whose father had a hacienda down somewhere below Panama, and this friend invited my dad down to his hacienda where they had a coffee plantation. He was entertained there for a week, and his description of the life that these people enjoyed was very interesting. He learned quite a little, speaking Spanish. Finally a ship came up from around the Horn and landed at Panama. Part of the Rutland Company got so restless about waiting there so long that they bought a little schooner and started out on their own. They were not seafaring men, and somewhere they were wrecked, up on the coast somewhere and they disappeared. They were out of the picture entirely. But the rest of them stayed with the boat. And they finally put out from Panama and their first landfall was Acapulco, where they would re-water and refuel and then go on to San Francisco.

Well, they got out to sea and the ship was becalmed, and to make a long story short, they were ninety-four days from Panama to Monterey. Ninety-four days, think of it. They went way out into the Pacific to get wind. They landed in Acapulco, and this book tells the story. My father had come from a religious family. Sunday to them was a day of rest, and they attended a Sunday service in Acapulco, and the priests and the cockfights—they all got together for a big celebration, a big hoopla on Sunday. Sunday was a day of play. My father in his letters home said, "I couldn't understand that." They didn't take their religion seriously; that was his viewpoint.

Finally they got more goods, and part of the cargo was beef, sides of beef that had been "browned," I guess they call it. Dried beef, I'd call it. When they got out to sea and they got becalmed way out on the Pacific, they ran out of fresh food, and he described hauling these quarters of beef up from below up onto the deck, and the sailors beating the beef sides to get the bugs out of it so they could boil it up for food.

Finally they made Monterey, and most of the people on the ship were so tired of the voyage that they deserted the ship and started out overland for the mines. But my dad stayed with the boat and they finally made it into San Francisco harbor. There, they'd run out of money.

HS: I think we have an account of how they started selling merchandise immediately. That's on one of the tapes.

PG: Did it mention about taking the boat up to Stockton? He went to work as a carpenter's helper and got money enough to buy his equipment, the tools and stuff for mining, and supplies, and they took a sailboat and got as far as Stockton. I remember so well, when they landed on a little wharf there at Stockton and on the wharf there were boxes of what my father said looked like love apples, tomatoes. And he said, "We raised those things back in Vermont but we never ate them." They were not supposed to be edible; and he marveled at the fact that these things were on the dock to sell in San Francisco.

HS: Had they been raised in California?

PG: Oh, yes, they were raised around in back of Stockton.

HS: We were more enlightened out here then.

PG: He said he never enjoyed anything more than biting into one of those juicy tomatoes, love apples as they called them, and enjoying it.

HS: It must have been the Mexican influence. The ancestor of the tomato is a native of Mexico, and they've consumed them there for hundreds of years.

PG: Oh, yes. And they finally started out for the mining district and landed at a place called Rich Gulch. His partner, Rich Cooperthwaite, was one of the original Rutland Company boys. The two boys stayed together and the rest of them scattered. They were given, on the creek that they landed at—the miners in that area, on that creek, formed a group and elected their own little alcalde. They made their own law. This was before the state, it wasn't even a territory, and they made their own rules; and they were given a claim of fifteen square feet on the creek. They mined it that fall and winter. They dug down to bedrock and got enough gold out of that so that in the spring of '50, they started out north because of rumors of big gold strikes further north. They estimated around \$1500 worth of gold they took that winter. Well, they had enough money, enough dust to buy mules and saddle horses and they started out overland to go north and they finally landed at a place called Tolles' Diggings in Butte County.

HS: We have that on the tape. You have told it before.

PG: My father got tired of chasing over the hills looking for gold, so he decided to go into business, having had training in Boston in merchandizing. They went down to Marysville, which at that time was the headwaters practically of the Sacramento River, and little boats could sail up as far as Marysville. And they bought supplies, staple goods, flour, bacon and staples and hired an outfit of oxen and a wagon and dragged it up over the hills to this Tolles' Diggings, which was later called Forbestown. They landed in Forbestown on a Saturday and they sold the complete wagonload of stuff over the tailgate for gold dust. They realized that that was their forte and they went into business. Have you seen that picture? That's a picture of the store.

HS: Yes.

PG: They stayed there until 1876. Old Man Gaskill, as he was called in those days, was more or less the head man of the town, because he was a prosperous merchant, had a good big store business—

HS: What became of Copperthwaite?

PG: I don't remember what did happen to Copperthwaite. He doesn't mention that in his letters and I don't seem to remember his telling me about him.

HS: The reason I ask is that somewhat later in San Diego, I believe there was a Copperthwaite who was sheriff of San Diego. Some of them went down into Lower California. I just wondered if it was any connection. [Note: I was thinking of Crosthwaite.]

PG: It could have been. Whether Copperthwaite left Forbestown I don't know. But he [DWG] finally built this bigger store in town there and sold all sorts of merchandise. Of course, whiskey was apparently something that most of the miners liked, but for a long while he wouldn't sell whiskey in his store. He wouldn't have anything to do with it. It was his old religious training. But finally he did break down—in his letters I think you'll find it—he did allow whiskey to be sold in the store.

They built a home there, and of course, he married my mother in Forbestown. (interruption) He married my mother there in Forbestown and they had two children that died as babies, due to some disease or something that happened up in there. There was no doctors and one thing and another. But, my brother and sister that were ten and twelve years older than I were born in Forbestown.

HS: How did they handle their early schooling?

PG: I don't remember, but I can tell you a story about that later on. Of course, they did get some early schooling, but when they were living in Forbestown, that's when they first met John Muir. He'd come up there and was a guest in their home—I told you that—on several occasions. They moved to Oakland in '76 and built this home at Nineteenth and Harrison Street in Oakland. That's practically on Lake Merritt. Do you know Oakland? It's practically in the center of the city now.

HS: I want to ask you about early Oakland, what you remember about the merchants who were in business at the turn of the century.

PG: I remember that very well. (pause) I remember downtown in Oakland. Oakland was not too big a city at that time. I think there was around 40,000 people in the city of Oakland. Many of the big merchants from San Francisco had their homes in Oakland. Some of them they had down on the peninsula, but Oakland was, of course, just across the bay there and the ferries running back and forth and many of the merchants lived in Oakland. The part of the city that we lived in was the fashionable part of the city, like Nob Hill in San Francisco. I remember so well some of the merchants. An interesting thing: I was reading an advertisement of Hills Brothers Coffee. On Madison Street, two blocks from our home, on the edge of the lake, there was the Schilling family. On Madison Street was the Hill brothers, and further down on the same street was the Folger family. The three families that had—the biggest coffee people in the state and still do—lived within two or three blocks of each other. I knew them all personally.

HS: How about Ghirardelli? Did they live there?

PG: Ghirardellis lived in Oakland, too, yes. Joe Ghirardelli I knew very well. We belonged to the same club. He was quite an entertainer, Joe was. The chocolate people. Of course, we played as kids on Lake Merritt.

HS: Is that a natural lake?

PG: It was an arm of the estuary, a saltwater lake. This estuary ran way back up into the town, and Dr. Merritt—they built a dam down on Twelfth Street and dammed the lake up and put in gates there, to make a lake out of it. Then they built a big sewer at the foot of Harrison Street just a block away from our home that run clear across the city and over into the bay further on, to get rid of the sewage, you know. And we kids, of course, played on the lake, with rafts first. Of course, the ducks in the winter would come there by the thousands, and we kids would shoot with the little BB rifles, and shoot the ducks. It was against the law, but we got away with it once in a while. Finally, my father bought me a little, light boat and we used to row it down to what they called the dam, which was where the water was impounded, at the gates. When the tide was high in the estuary from the bay, they'd open the gates automatically and the water would fill the lake up high and then they'd open the gates on the big sewer and wash it out. It was a wonderful engineering deal they had, for those days. I remember one day we were shooting ducks down by the willows. Two of the constables driving around in their buggy spotted us and they followed us till we came back home and they took us down to the police station and impounded us there. They didn't fingerprint us because that was before the days of fingerprinting. And they called up Dad and they came down and picked us up and gave us a little—

HS: What was the objection, because it was inside the city?

PG: The city limits, yes, the law was you weren't allowed to shoot rifles or shoot anything inside the city.

HS: Not to protect the ducks.

PG: Oh, no. East Oakland was separated from Oakland itself by the estuary and the dam across, the Twelfth Street dam. I remember so well the early days in Oakland. It was—the free markets. We'd drive down. My father had a team of horses and carriage. When they built the home there on Harrison Street, it was about five blocks from there down to Fourteenth and Harrison Street where the University of California started. The college started there.

HS: Was there a town of Berkeley then?

PG: There was a little town of Berkeley, yes, small town, but the college was not started at Berkeley. It started in Oakland.

HS: I thought it started in San Francisco.

PG: No, it started in Oakland and on one side of Harrison Street and Twelfth Street was a big dormitory, wooden dormitory on the right-hand side, and across the street was the first college building. It had a little cupola on the top. What they called Nineteenth Street later in those days was called Durant Street, after one of the professors in the university. And the school was started there on Twelfth and Harrison Street. Then they moved out to Berkeley and started the college there in Berkeley. And they changed the name from

Durant Street to Nineteenth, which it is known today. I had some very interesting experiences, and it was when we were living there that the family went over to visit with John Muir over at his home in Martinez. I've told you that before.

My brother and sister—my brother was ten years older than I and my sister was twelve years older. My sister married a young chap by the name of Carlton, Harry Carlton, who graduated in dentistry in the University of California in 1886, and he had an office in San Francisco. His father was an educator. He was principal of a school in Oakland at one time, the father Carlton. He had quite a little influence on me, and that's how I came to take up dentistry. After graduating there, he stayed there as an intern and worked up and was finally professor of dentistry in the college. My first thought, when I went to Berkeley, was to take up mining engineering, because I liked geology and I liked the mountains and all. But he talked me into taking up dentistry and when I graduated there in the fall, we took up offices there in the Crocker Building in San Francisco, the old Crocker Building, which was just across the street from the palace Hotel. You have that on the tape, I think. We stayed in that building until 1906.

HS: How many years?

PG: From the fall of 1901, six years. Then we moved into the new Shreve Building on Post and Grant avenues, which is about two blocks away from the Call Building and the Crocker Building and all those buildings. I'd like to go over that book with you; I'd point out some of the reasons why I want to write Dr. Richter. In an article about five or six years ago, he had a pamphlet printed out of Caltech at Pasadena about the geology of the West Coast here and he issued a statement which is very important, to warn people. He said, "Be very careful when you upset nature's balance." That leads up to another story. What he meant was that when we came to California and saw the beautiful hillsides and the mountains and all, and what man has done to despoil nature. Is this part of the tape?

HS: It's on. Everybody's talking this way now. I'll turn it off. (pause) To return to the city of Oakland in the early days.

PG: It was a—of course, every Saturday, my father and mother and the team, we had a two-horse team there, and we'd drive down to what they called the free market, where they'd do the buying of groceries and the vegetables and one thing and another.

HS: Why was it called "free"? It was open air?

PG: Open air market, yes. An interesting thing, too, was the Chinese. They used to come around with their baskets on a pole, big baskets loaded with vegetables. There must have been a couple of hundred, three hundred pounds of stuff when they'd start out with the big U pole, you know, resting on their shoulders. They'd walk around to the back doors of the homes on Harrison Street and the ladies of the house would go out and pick out the vegetables. And then the Chinese did all the laundry work, and they had little wagons and would drive around and deliver the laundry and take it and wash it and bring it back. And we kids, of course, were little devils, you know, and we'd make the Chinese miserable. When they'd be delivering the laundry we'd run out there to the street and

unhitch the tugs from the [wagon] and then the Chinamen would come out and start and the horse would walk out of the shafts. We thought that was a lot of fun. We never threw rocks or did any physical damage to them, but just annoying things, as kids will do.

HS: What other services did the Chinese provide? Did they have grocery stores?

PG: Down in Chinatown, yes, they had grocery stores.

HS: In San Francisco?

PG: In Oakland, too, a little what they called Chinatown in Oakland. Oh, yes. You see, the Chinese were first brought here, you know, in the gold rush days, and they helped to build the railroad, the Southern Pacific Railroad, over the mountains. Of course, in San Francisco Chinatown was a big place. Oakland had their own little Chinatown, too.

HS: Where was it located?

PG: It was down between Seventh and Eighth streets between Broadway and Franklin streets, and in that area there. It was a small community. My mother and Mrs. Smith—Mrs. Smith was the wife of the Borax King, Frank Smith—well, my mother and Mrs. Smith founded the YWCA, the Young Women's Christian Association in Oakland. They built a home for girls.

Frank Smith I knew very well personally. And he and Frank Havens formed a sort of a partnership. This Frank Havens was the father of the young lad that I hunted with over in Alaska and Wyoming and all over the country. We were very close friends with the Smith family, at their home in East Oakland, Arbor Villa. Of course, Smith was a millionaire; he was estimated at around \$20-\$30 million. And he was the Borax King. He built a group of homes in East Oakland there, called the Home Club. He built six two-story houses along this street, and put a mother in each one, or a chaperone, and then they had girls living in these houses, like a fraternity row in college.

HS: Were they college girls?

PG: Working girls, not delinquent girls. The idea was to have decent girls that were working, that had a decent home. It was before they built hotels for the girls, you know.

HS: A kind of forerunner of the Martha Washington in New York, where working girls lived?

PG: Yes. Then he built a clubhouse with a dance floor and quarters for cooking and all, to have dances, so that the girls that were living in these homes would meet the nice men, young men of Oakland, you know, after matrimony of course, and all that sort of thing.

HS: Apparently it didn't work, with you.

PG: It didn't work with me, no, and I don't know that it did with any of my men friends, but it was the headquarters for the dancing set of Oakland, that is, the young men. We had

many parties at the Home Club in East Oakland, and that was really a very wonderful setup.

HS: I wonder how long that lasted?

PG: Well, it lasted—the story of Borax Smith is an interesting story. It's a sad story, completely sad, because he died broke. Frank Havens was an insurance man in San Francisco, a very well-educated man and a prosperous insurance man in the city. He was a kind of a dreamer in a way. And George Sterling—you've heard of him?

HS: The poet?

PG: The poet—was a cousin of Havens. You see, brothers—that will explain the type, dreamer type. Smith was a hardworking miner that went over into Death Valley in the early days, looking for gold, and finally found borax and made his fortune out of borax. The twenty-mule team and the development of Death Valley and all, is all Frank Smith's business deal and he built the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad that went up from Dagget up into Tonopah and all up north. He developed the twenty-mule team borax business when they pulled the ore out and dragged it by team to Mohave where it was loaded on the trains and came down to Oakland to be refined into borax.

HS: To Oakland?

PG: Yes. Well, it was in Alameda, across the estuary from Oakland. Of course, my father and Smith knew each other very well, because of their wives working in charity work in Oakland. I know my dad took me several times to where they had their refinery on Alameda Point and where they had big vats, the long, big vats filled with water and solution, with rods going down into them and electricity to collect the borax from the other saline propositions on these metal rods. That was how they developed the borax business. Of course, that grew to be a big business because borax was a very valuable product used in ceramics and in medicine. It was used all over the world and Smith made a fortune out of it.

Frank Havens had a dream for Oakland, for the future of Oakland. He was a man who could envision the city twenty or thirty years from now. And he used Smith's money to buy up practically all the hillsides along back of Oakland and up into Berkeley, the hills back of Berkeley, Claremont and in all that country, the Claremont Hotel and all that business. They bought the water companies in Oakland. It was known as the Realty Syndicate. Paul Dinsmore—you've heard of him, of course—Paul Dinsmore, in the banking business there in Oakland, was given a big job with the Realty Syndicate. He knew all the insides of the Realty Syndicate and the banking business in San Francisco and Oakland.

I left Oakland in the spring of 1916 to come down to the desert to live, but Paul came down to Santa Ana on the advice of James Irvine's wife, Katie Brown White. Smith built the Key Route ferry, built a big bridge out into the bay and started a big ferry system like the Southern Pacific ran the ferries across the bay. You've ridden on the ferries, I guess, haven't you? Yes. It was known as the Key Route. Trains used to go out to San

Leandro and towards Hayward and scattered all over, and they all culminated there at Fortieth Street in Oakland. Trains ran down to the ferry so they could go to the city. It was a big business. Smith used his borax stock. He probably controlled about 75 percent of this big borax company. An English syndicate bought up all of the stock that they could. Smith put his stock in hock for the money to buy all these different propositions and the building of the Key Route. It was known as the Realty Syndicate. Frank Havens and he were all together in that business. It was a tremendous business.

HS: Did they build buildings? The Claremont Hotel was already there, wasn't it?

PG: No, they built the Claremont Hotel. I don't remember any big building downtown. Between Twelfth and Eleventh streets and Harrison and Franklin, he owned the block there. They had a big market there, what they called the free market, too. This was after the original free market I was talking about. Smith was a religious man. He belonged to the same church that we did, the Congregational Church. My mother was one of the founders of that church, by the way, in Oakland. Of course, we all went to church. I remember every Sunday morning Smith and his wife would come in down the aisle and had their regular pew, of course, every Sunday. Well, finally when the Syndicate was going strong, and they'd bought the water company and they had the Key Route System and all this property that they'd purchased in the foothills, which later on became tremendously valuable, the banks had the paper. And when the time came for the bankers, they cut his throat.

HS: About when was that?

PG: Well, it was—let's see—it was about the time that I left Oakland, about '15 or '16. The worst of it happened after I left Oakland.

HS: When did they start this project? When did they organize their syndicate?

PG: That's when I lived in Oakland, you know.

HS: About when was it? After you had grown up? Nineteen ten or so?

PG: Oh, yes, along in there, earlier than that even.

HS: It didn't last very long then?

PG: Oh, seven or eight years, I think, that long.

HS: Did he not salvage anything at all?

PG: Oh, they sold a lot of property.

HS: I suppose Walnut Creek would be a part of that?

PG: Yes, Walnut Creek. The railroad ran over to Walnut Creek. And the big lake out at San Leandro, and the big water system for the city of Oakland. Of course, Oakland began to

grow very fast after the earthquake, you know. In '06 many people from San Francisco moved to Oakland to settle; they were burned out in San Francisco. That was the start that gave Oakland the big boost.

I remember so well that Smith, there in this big block that he had there, he built a tabernacle called Mills' Tabernacle, for B. Fay Mills, one of the ranting evangelists like Moody and Sankey. He built this big tabernacle for the evangelists. I remember that was about the time when I was ten, eleven, twelve years old. Of course, the family, we went to all these meetings and all the exhorting and all. It was a peculiar thing with me. I don't know why it was, I never could figure it out just why, but I resisted being pressurized as a kid. You know what I mean?

HS: Still do, probably. Yes, I know exactly. I feel the same way, especially with religion. What was his name, B. K. Mills?

PG: B. Fay Mills. He was quite on the Billy Graham order.

HS: What did Mr. Smith expect to get from that? Was it just a philanthropic gesture to build this building? He didn't expect to get any income from it?

PG: Oh, no. It was used as a convention hall later on and for political meetings and conventions and it was finally torn down. But Smith lost all his money. Of course, Dinsmore was responsible for telling me his final episodes, because Dinsmore knew Smith very well. They all worked in the same outfit in the banking business and in the Realty Syndicate. The Syndicate had to be very closely associated with the banks, too, and that's how Dinsmore got his bank training.

HS: What finally happened?

PG: Well, Hanford and Tevis—Hanford was the man that finally sewed Smith up, as a representative of the bank. The banks called Smith's loans and he couldn't pay them, so they took his stock away from him and broke him, broke him completely. And Paul Dinsmore told me one day when he was in the hospital down here, he said, "I was one of a half a dozen men there in Oakland that paid for his funeral."

HS: How long after the catastrophe was that?

PG: It was after I left Oakland. I lost contact with Oakland after I left there, you know. His first wife died and he married his secretary, Evelyn Ellis, and she had two brothers and sisters, two brothers. There was a little property left that she inherited, some mining interests in Nevada and all. I never could understand why she didn't help out in—Smith. There was a breakup in the family or something, I don't know. I think the Ellises worked the Smith deal to their advantage. He started his borax business, you know, at Searles Lake, at Trona. That's another story that I'm familiar with, because I practiced dentistry at Trona. God, there are so many things that I've done. (laughter)

HS: Tell about Trona.

PG: I can tell you about Trona. I should say I can. When I came down to Lancaster and started to develop an alfalfa ranch, the ranch with the expense of pumping and all, and labor and one thing another, that was one reason why I went back into dentistry, was to support the ranch. I had a little office, used to go into town once a week, and then it was two days and finally, eventually I got so I practiced entirely and had a foreman to run the ranch. With my wife I used to—I had an office in Mohave and in Randsburg and Trona and Independence, Inyo County. I used to take a month and drive the old Franklin and the wife was along with me. I had a portable chair and student cases with my tools and all and we'd go to the hotel and have an office there for the local people, to help them out, partly to help and partly to make as much as I could financially, too. I always was a sucker for helping people. In driving out through the sagebrush and greasewood to these towns in the desert there where there were no straight roads like they have today, why the homesteaders that lived along in there recognized my car and several times they'd stop me on the road. I'd set them down on the running board at the side and I'd do an extraction for them, help them out that way. Every month at a certain day—

Oh, we went to Trona. How that came, after Trona was started the superintendent and general manager of Trona was a white Russian engineer, educated in Heidelberg, a man about six foot five.

HS: Do you remember his name?

PG: Baron de Ropp.

HS: Who owned the Trona Company then?

PG: It was a British syndicate.

HS: Was this before the borax in Death Valley?

PG: Oh, after, way after Death Valley. British Limited, I think it was called, that started Trona. They built this setup on Searles Lake. Dennis Searles was a compadre of Frank Smith. See? They were tied together. In fact, the first borax that Smith recognized as borax was called "cotton ball." On the lake in the winter, the water on the top of this dry lake, the waves would fluff up the water heavily impregnated with borax and wash it onto the beach. You've seen this cotton candy, spun candy? It looked a good deal like that. It was called cotton ball, looked like cotton. And that was how Smith got into the borax business, to start with, with Dennis Searles. I knew Dennis Searles's son very well. That was along in 1910, '12, '14, somewhere along in there. And young Dennis Searles, the son of the original Searles that was a compadre of Smith, worked in the Realty Syndicate at the same time that Paul Dinsmore did. We all belonged to the same social club in Oakland, the Athenian Club, which is a prominent social club in Oakland like the Pacific Union in San Francisco or the California Club in Los Angeles, very high-grade social club, men's club, and the Bohemian Club in San Francisco. I could tell you some stories about that, too. Let's see.

HS: The development of Trona.

PG: Oh, yes. At the south end of Searles Lake, Smith built his own plant to make borax and potash. Potash was really the big product of Trona and borax was more or less of a sideline as part of the development. He built West End at the south end of the lake and Trona was up at the north end of the lake. They got the brine—the lake was dry practically all of the time, but the top of the lake was salt, mostly sodium chloride, salt. They'd drill holes down and suck up the brine and pump it up to the shore where they had the big factories there and separate the different salts, potash and borax and bicarbonate of soda. They made different products from this brine that was sucked out of the lake. That was a big deal and it still is a big deal over there now. Trona's a big setup now.

I used to go over there once a month. The Baron de Ropp was superintendent of that whole deal. And at that time he was head man for the Selby Smelting & Lead Company down on the bay shore. He was a magnificent type of man and he lived in Oakland on Madison Street right close to where we lived, with his family. I knew the family very well. The Baron was a member of our club. My wife and I were down in the city one day, in Los Angeles from the ranch, walking along the street and here came the Baron de Ropp. You'd recognize him anywhere. We stopped and talked and he was glad to see us and all from the days previous in Oakland. They had their main offices in Los Angeles. So we went up to his office and he took us to lunch; and that's how we came to go to Trona to practice dentistry. We'd drive over to Trona and they'd built me an office building there and set me up with a chair and all the equipment except my hand tools, and we'd spend a week in Trona.

HS: Where did you stay?

PG: At the big dormitory house. You see, the typical British deal is the laborers down here (gesture) and a little higher up on the hill is the foreman and the big shots live on the top of the hill, the engineers and the superintendents and all. They had a big dormitory there for the traveling salesmen that came there and the single engineers that were not married and didn't have any homes there. We always lived in those quarters, and we'd spend the whole week there. They had their own doctor. I made quite a little money there. Usually three or four hundred dollars I'd collect for a week's work there, making plates and fillings and extractions, and working with the M.D. in the anesthetics and one thing another. We had our old Franklin, water-cooled car, or air-cooled car, to drive through the desert. It was a wonderful car in those days. We could beat any of the water-cooled cars from Trona to Mohave, on dirt roads. You see, they'd break springs in the dirt roads, bumps you know.

HS: It was a sturdy car.

PG: Oh, a sturdy car. You could drive it anywhere, drive it out in the brush. I've herded sheep out in the brush with it. We really enjoyed that life very much there at Lancaster. The wife was a great help to me in the office. At the end of a week at Trona, we'd drive up to Lone Pine and I'd stay there a day. Then we went on to Independence. And finally we left the ranch and went up to Bishop to live, or to Independence first, in Inyo County, with our two boys. My wife was a widow with two youngsters when I married her, little tykes. We moved up to Independence and had a home there, and we still kept going back

to Trona and we even went back to Lancaster for a week. We didn't have any dentist in Lancaster at that time. Like I did originally with the home base in Lancaster, we had the home base at Independence, Inyo County. One reason why I wanted to go up there was because I was close to the high mountains, because that's what I loved, the high mountains. And the wife was just as good a camper as I was. Our summers were spent, a month or six weeks, in the high mountains with pack trains. And that's one reason why I was mixed up in the Sierra Club deal, too, not from a membership but I used to see their operations. When they'd have their safaris in the summer, they'd have 100-150 people. The big pack outfit was at Independence, this man—oh, what the hell was his name? It will come to me because I knew him so well. He had horses and mules, over a hundred horses and mules in his pack outfits and the Sierra Club would hire him to pack all these people through their mountain trips with the Sierra Club. And I used to contact the Sierra Club, the people in the mountains, quite often.

I have nothing against the Sierra Club at all. I like their conservation ideas and what they have done in the past to help in conservation of our wildlife and our mountain areas and the primitive areas in the High Sierras and all, and their zeal for conservation. But I've tangled with them a little bit and I have just recently, I realize—shut that off. (pause)

I was eight years old when Arbor Day was—I don't know whether there was a federal rule or state arbor day or what, but they designated a certain day as Arbor Day. And we went from Oakland over to Goat Island, which is now Yerba Buena Island, to plant trees on Goat Island. Goat Island was a bare hillside; there wasn't a damn tree on the island.

HS: Is that the island that the bridge goes through?

PG: Yes. And a group from San Francisco that had a green thumb, headed by Adolph Sutro, came over. We all met at the little wharf at Goat Island there. The nursery people from Oakland furnished little flats of seedlings and seed.

HS: What kind of trees?

PG: Well, mostly pine trees, different types of pine trees, and eucalyptus, cypress trees and stuff of that kind, little stuff—you know, evergreen stuff. That was 1886. I just jotted this down to remind you of things I could talk about. We dug holes, little holes and planted these, in some cases seeds and in other cases little seedlings on the side hill. And the group from San Francisco, we all got together and worked it out. Adolph Sutro was a tree lover, too. He had a big home in San Francisco, the Cliff House, you know, above the Cliff House, and he had the Sutro Baths there. He built the Sutro Tunnel in the Comstock Lode. Sutro was a well-known man in California in those days, an engineer. I think he was a Russian.

HS: He was a bold man, too, with imagination.

PG: Yes. Yes. That was the first trees that were planted on Goat Island, now Yerba Buena.

HS: Is it still forested?

- PG: Oh, yes, still forested. It's pretty well solidly covered with the trees now. Many have probably been planted later. I remember that; I was eight years old at the time.
- HS: Lots of people there, or only dignitaries?
- PG: On the island? Nobody lived there then, except there was a wharf and they had a lighthouse on the point, for the protection of the ferry boats and all, in the fog, you know.
- HS: I was thinking of the people who gathered for Arbor Day.
- PG: Oh, they were just people like ourselves from San Francisco and Oakland that were interested in building trees and horticulture.
- HS: Did you ever meet the man who laid out Golden Gate Park?
- PG: MacLaren, John MacLaren.
- HS: The Scotsman.
- PG: Yes, I knew his son, because he was at Berkeley at the time I was. I jotted here, "A journey of many hot springs." I don't know why it was, but my father had a passion to travel. He took me as a child, naturally, with him everywhere that they went and the different hot springs that we went to: Winter Springs, Highland Springs—
- HS: You'd better locate these places. A lot of them are probably gone.
- PG: Oh, they're all gone now, practically. They were all in northern California—and the geysers on Clear Lake; and Congress Springs at Los Gatos below Oakland; and Byron Hot Springs, out at the head of the San Joaquin Valley, near Niles, right out in the valley there. All those big hotels and everything are all gone now. I don't think there's any of them left.
- HS: And before the hotels were built the Indians always gathered around—
- PG: These hot springs, yes. When Smith was at his height there in Oakland with the Realty Syndicate and they had the ferry boats—they had their own ferry boats running back and forth—at the time the Panama Canal was built. You remember the White Fleet that went down and around and landed in—I'm not sure, but I think Admiral Halsey was the head.
- HS: Too early for that. It was 1915, wasn't it?
- PG: I don't know when it—
- HS: Well, it was the time of the San Francisco Exposition. In 1914 the Panama Canal was opened.
- PG: Oh, yes, 1915, and they had the big fair in San Francisco. Well, at the time the White Fleet put into San Francisco they had a big hoopla, naturally, and Smith invited all of his friends and they took one of the ferry boats and went out into the bay to observe the

White Fleet coming in. I don't remember who the admiral was in charge of that. Halsey was at the time of the Second World War. Teddy Roosevelt was president at the time, I think.

HS: At the dedication of the Panama Canal I think he was, yes.

PG: Victor Metcalf, who lived on our street there in Oakland, was Teddy Roosevelt's Secretary of the Navy at that time. I knew Victor Metcalf very well. And that was quite a little event. Here's another: "a trip to Lake Tahoe to visit Tom McConnell at McKinney's." The McConnell brothers were part of the original Rutland Company. They stayed with the ship and with my dad to San Francisco. Back home in Vermont they'd had sheep or something, I think it was sheep. So they decided instead of going into the gold country to mine for gold, they were going to become farmers. They went up on the Sacramento River below the city to a place called Elk Grove, as headquarters, and they went into the sheep business to raise sheep. And when they got a big enough flock they drove them up into the High Sierras every summer, you know, for summer range. On Lake Tahoe they bought a quarter section of land near Emerald Bay, what's called McKinney's now. When I was eight years old the family took us up on the railroad up to Truckee and a stage around the lake to visit the McConnell's place there on the lake.

END OF SESSION

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: DR. PERCY D. GASKILL
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: April 8, 1970
SUBJECT: Dr. Merritt, fill land in San Francisco, Jack London, and Alaskan trips

HS: A friend of mine is very much interested in Captain Dunnells, who was one of the first people to come into Newport Bay, brought his boat, the *Vaquero* in and this was supposed to have been built and used first by Dr. Merritt. Do you know anything about that? It was an early steam cargo boat.

PG: That wouldn't be the Dr. Merritt of Oakland, would it?

HS: Yes.

PG: I know a lot about him, of course.

HS: Do you know anything about his connection with the *Vaquero*, the boat that he built?

PG: No, he had a sailing schooner called the *Casco* and it was in the harbor there in Oakland, in the estuary.

HS: Could you date that?

PG: Well, it was during the time when I was commuting back and forth to the city, going to college. You see, the affiliated colleges of the university were in San Francisco up in Parnassus Heights, and of course I went back and forth every day to go to school.

HS: That would have been around the turn of the century, then?

PG: Yes, before 1901. He had this sailing schooner that was tied up to a wharf where the narrow gauge railroad ran across the estuary going out to the pier in Oakland. Robert Louis Stevenson hired that boat and took it on a trip down to the South Pacific. That was Dr. Merritt's boat. And the famous Merritt Hospital in Oakland was named for Dr. Merritt and Lake Merritt in Oakland. He did a great deal to help to build up the city.

HS: How did he use that boat? Was it a pleasure boat? He chartered it sometimes?

- PG: It was just a pleasure boat; he let people use it.
- HS: What about crew? Did he supply the crew, or do you remember?
- PG: He always had a caretaker on the boat. As a young man, we used to go down along the waterfront to watch the shipping, to see the ships unload. I was always interested in that, a good deal like Jack London. Did I tell you the story of Jack London?
- HS: No. Let's finish with Dr. Merritt, and then get back to it. You don't remember about any other ship that Dr. Merritt had? This would have been before your day, I guess.
- PG: I didn't know that he was interested in any ship down here.
- HS: Well, he had it built up there and then sold it after a few years to Captain Dunnells, D-U-double N-E-double L-S.
- PG: It was a sailing schooner?
- HS: No, this one was a stern wheeler. There aren't any pictures of it available. There are only pictures of boats like her, but she was a very early boat into Newport Harbor, and that's why my friend is interested. Did you know Dr. Merritt?
- PG: I've met him, yes. His home was on Jackson Street, Madison and Jackson. He had a whole block for his residence. (pause) I'm just trying to think of any instance—of course, he was a big shot there in Oakland at the time and there was so much that he did for the city. He built the—Lake Merritt was an arm of the estuary, coming up into the town, and he built a causeway that they called “the dam” down at the lower end, on Twelfth Street going over to East Oakland, built a dam there and put in locks to keep the water in the lake. When the tide would come up in the estuary, the water would flow into the lake and when it started to go back, the gates would close and keep the water in there. Lake Merritt was a big lake; it was a lake that I grew up on.
- HS: Yes, so you said. Do you know the foundation of Dr. Merritt's estate, his fortune you might call it?
- PG: No, I don't. I don't know where he made his money. He wasn't a practicing physician in Oakland, as I recall. I don't know where he got his title. I could find out, get a history of that from Oakland. I have a couple of nephews that live up there. The last big thing that he built—he put up the money to build what they call the Merritt Hospital which is a very big institution there now, still operating.
- HS: David Hewes, I guess, was a self-made man, wasn't he?
- PG: Apparently so, according to this [article]. The city [San Francisco] is on a peninsula, you know. It's not very big.
- HS: It's surprisingly small considering its reputation.

PG: And the only way it could go was south, down toward Menlo Park and San Mateo County. And it was very hilly and there was a flat place in this cove [foot of Market Street] protecting from the bay. The cove cut into the land. The Spanish people that had founded the Mission Dolores out further south there, they built the little pueblo of—I don't know what they called it.

HS: Yerba Buena?

PG: Well, Yerba Buena was the island.

HS: Well, I thought the town was called that.

PG: Yes, they called it Yerba Buena and they built a broad street from the edge of the bay clear up through the flat lands down toward San Mateo County and that's where the Mission Dolores was. They built a little wharf out into the bay, and at high tide small boats could come in and land at this wharf for supplies and one thing another. But, it was too shallow for ships to land. Well, when the gold rush came and the ships from all over the world, sailing ships, flocked to San Francisco, the harbor was almost full of ships, but they were way out in deep water, they couldn't land on the shore. My father, when he landed in '49, he had to go in a row boat to shore. The only way that the city could grow was to grow out into the bay. So this man Hewes, whether he was an engineer, he must have been some sort of a construction engineer because he built a couple of steam engines later on in the story here. He took the job of cutting down the side hills there and filling in the bay out to deep water, out to what they now call the Embarcadero on the waterfront. They built some docks there and slips for the ferry boats to come from Oakland and Berkeley to San Francisco. In the late '90s when I was going to college, we took the ferry boat every day back and forth to the city. I remember the old ferry building very well. Finally the state built a new ferry building of stone and steel, with a big clock tower at the top, right at the foot of Market Street. The state had their offices of different departments, their local offices, there in that building, and they had a big museum for mining exhibits and one thing another. It's a very fine building, stone building, and it was built at least more than a quarter of a mile from where the original land was. In other words there was a quarter of a mile of fill. And the lower part of the city which consisted of the wholesale houses and markets and tenements and shops for the sailors and all was built on this fill land clear out to where the ferry building was. All those buildings that were built on that filled land, land right over the mud flats, you might call it, when the earthquake came that's the part of the city that was wrecked. It's part of my story that I'd like to tell these people up there someday because I think they ought to know it. (pause)

Jack London was the son of a night watchman there in Oakland. He used to go around and look at the doors and windows at night and see to everything, down in the business district.

HS: Was he hired by the businessmen?

PG: He was hired by the businessmen. Not a very bright character particularly, and he had this son, Jack, and they lived down near the waterfront. Jack was brought up on the waterfront. You might call him a “wharf rat,” in a way. In the Oakland High School in the late 90s, I can’t think just what year it was, but we were in high school. Every Friday night in the old city park that was the center of town, it was a town not a city so much, they had a band concert and we kids used to go there in the evening and listen to the band concert and fool around with the people and the girls and all, playing around you know. Jack London, every Friday night, would stand on a box at the foot of the steps going into the old city hall and rant against the government. He was more or less a forerunner of the IWW, the Wobblies.

HS: He was grown then?

PG: He was grown. We used to listen to him a little bit, didn’t pay much attention to him. He was not well dressed and had fairly long hair, unkempt. He was antisocial due probably to his background and the seamen and all that he was familiar with down on the waterfront.

One day in the Oakland High School—we had classrooms and my classroom was the English class and every morning we’d assemble in our class and then go to the different rooms for chemistry and physics and geometry and all and then come back to our classroom late in the morning. From 11:30 to 12:00 Miss Cushing, our class teacher in English, we were supposed to write little stories about what we’d seen the day before out on the streets, you know, to try to stimulate our observation and from what we saw, to put it down on paper. Well, all we kids thought of at noon was getting on our bicycles and riding home for lunch. So one day this young man came to class, four or five years older than we were, and he came to our class in history and he was given a seat right in front of me in the classroom. The day after—we were supposed to write what we had seen during the noon hour and the next day we would read them. Well, London saw an old man sitting down somewhere that interested him and some other event that we’d seen but paid no attention to. But he did and he wrote very interesting little stories.

HS: This was London who sat in front of you?

PG: Oh, yes, Jack London himself. He was a young man; I’d judge he was about eighteen or nineteen years old. He was there in our class for five or six months. We recognized him because we used to see him down on his soapbox, you know. Of course, we kids were more or less snobs, you know; kids are, particularly from the well-to-do neighborhood, and we kind of looked down in anybody that wasn’t dressed as well as we were. Not exactly that, but you know what I mean. Well, Miss Cushing recognized his ability; there was some spark in him that she recognized, and she got him a job at Berkeley, the university, as a janitor. He stayed at the university for two years studying English and expression and writing and all that sort of thing, and that’s how he came to get the language and the meaning of words. He had the ideas.

HS: Yes, and the observations.

PG: He married, and some years later—of course he went on and he went around the world. He married and he had two children by his first wife, and he deserted them. At that time I was practicing dentistry in Oakland; this was after the earthquake. At the time of the earthquake I opened up an office in Oakland and practiced dentistry there until 1916 when I came to southern California. Dr. Porter, my physician friend, we had a common reception room; he was a very prominent surgeon there in Oakland. One day he came into my office and he said, “I have a woman here with two children and they need some dental work very badly. She’s broke, she hasn’t any money. I wonder if you’d look them over and see if you could do something for them?” I said, “Sure.” I was always that way about people, poor people. So this woman came in with the two children. One was about eight and the other ten; the boy was eight and the girl was ten.

HS: You don’t remember the names?

PG: Well, young Jack, that’s all I knew; I don’t remember. I have it somewhere here. I did a little dental work for them; the boy had some—his front teeth stuck way out this way. They were terribly deformed. I extracted a couple back here so that they could come back. But that was an interesting episode; that was Jack London’s first wife. I lost track of them, of course, particularly when I came down here to Lancaster. Later on I ran across the girl who was, of course, middle-aged, old woman later on that lived up there. I contacted her, and she was the woman that was the little girl that I worked on in the dental office in Lancaster [Oakland?]. I have all that in these books here.

HS: Something that you’ve written down?

PG: Yes. Joan—no, not Joan; I’ll think of her name. It’s a funny thing how I contacted her down here. I used to read the “Trouble Shooter” in the *Register* and it’s interesting. It’s one of the few things that I did like because people write in, you know. I read one day about somebody asking about some early ship that had sailed out of Boston Harbor, and the “Trouble Shooter” said there was an old sea captain that has a record of all the shipping that came out of Boston in the early days. “He happens to be living here in Garden Grove. His name is Captain Burnett,” and he said, “if you call him up, he’s living in a rest home here, he probably could give you the name of that ship and the date of departure, years ago.” So I called up this Burnett and he said, “Sure, I’ve got all the dope.” And I said, “I’m curious to know the name of the ship that my father came out of Boston on in the early days.” My stepson drove me out there one Sunday and we found him in this rest home, a very nice rest home, and we had a very interesting talk. He asked me, “Do you know anything about northern California and San Francisco and Oakland?” I said, “Hell yes, I was born there.” He said, “Did you ever hear of Jack London?” I said, “Of course. What do you know about him?” “Well, Jack London, as a boy of about nineteen, sailed with me on a sailing ship around the Horn out to San Francisco.” He was a passenger on this sailing ship. He [Burnett] was the one that gave me the address of Jack London’s family, the girl up north there, and showed me some old letters of hers that she’d written him. He, of course, went on to fame as a writer; he was a war correspondent in the Russian-Japanese-Chinese war.

HS: Also in Mexico, Vera Cruz.

PG: Yes. Of course, he had his headquarters more or less in Oakland until he built his home up in the Napa Valley, the Valley of the Moon. He was a heavy drinker, of course; in fact, he drank himself to death. He married again, a woman writer by the name of Charmain Kittredge.

HS: She was a rather silly woman, wasn't she?

PG: Yes. And she went with him on his sailing ship, the *Snark*, when they went down to the South Pacific and around. Of course, he wrote most of his stories, toward the last there, at Valley of the Moon. He died, I guess, in a drunken stupor; he was a very heavy drinker. I was a member of the Bohemian Club in San Francisco and we had plays—they had their camp up in the redwoods and put on their plays. As an adult later on, I would run across him up there at their plays. When he got affluent, made money in Alaska and all, in his writing, he more or less dropped the IWW stuff.

HS: Did he? I thought he was a revolutionary all his life.

PG: Well, he was, but what I mean, he would—it used to amuse me up at the [Bohemian] Grove, seeing him with all his literary friends sitting around the table drinking champagne. In other words, he was a Wobbly at heart but welcoming all the luxuries of capitalism. Very inconsistent, of course.

HS: He appears to have been quite a good-looking man.

PG: He wasn't too big. He was about five feet, ten inches—ten or eleven, hair a little long, not long hair but more or less unkempt, with a flowing tie.

HS: Did he have a ruddy face? His pictures look as if he had quite a high color.

PG: More a tan color, I'd call it.

HS: Was he a good speaker?

PG: A good speaker, yes. Several times he spoke at the Home Club in East Oakland. That was an interesting club, built by Frank Smith.

HS: Yes, you told me about that the last time.

PG: He spoke there a couple of times on different subjects, but he was a kind of a loner, not sociably inclined, apparently. If he were living today, he'd probably have long hair and a beard, like a hippie. He was always clean shaven except that his hair was always mussed; he had a way of running his hand through his hair all the time, you know.

HS: It was rather heavy, dark hair, wasn't it?

PG: Yes, dark hair. Of course, he and Joaquin Miller were quite pally, and Upton Sinclair and George Sterling and—I can't think of some of the writers.

- HS: Did he ever have anything to do with that artistic group in San Francisco, Ernest [Peixotto]. I can't think of his last name, but he wrote for the *Lark*, a little monthly magazine that came out for two years. It was edited by Gelett Burgess, I think, and he printed "The Purple Cow." That's what it's chiefly known for. Did those people have anything to do with that group?
- PG: He might have. Let's see, I can't think of that man's name; he probably was prominent in the Bohemian Club, too. The Bohemian Club sponsored the writers and painters; they were all broke, financially broke.
- HS: There were a few women there, too: Mary Austin and Ina Coolbrith.
- PG: Ina Coolbrith and Gertrude Atherton and, I can't think of this girl's name that married Frank—the man that wrote the stories about the San Joaquin Valley.
- HS: Norris?
- PG: Frank Norris. And Charlie Norris, Charlie Norris and I were very good friends. I knew Charlie very well.
- HS: Frank was a much better writer than Charlie.
- PG: Oh, yes. Charlie wasn't—he went on to New York. He married a San Francisco girl that I knew quite well, Kathleen. They went back to New York and he was writing for the *Liberty* magazine at the time, I think it was.
- HS: She was a one-woman novel factory; she turned them out like clockwork.
- PG: Yes. What was her name? I knew all that crowd very well, in the Bohemian Club.
- HS: Did you know Ina Coolbrith?
- PG: She lived about six doors from our home in Oakland, on Harrison Street. She was the patron saint of our old Athenian Club there in Oakland, social club.
- HS: She's finally getting proper recognition; her memory is really honored.
- PG: That's usually the case, you know. George Sterling did quite a lot of writing; he was a poet more.
- HS: I have the bound volume of the first year of the *Lark*. I'll have to bring it over and let you look through it and see if it reminds you of anything.
- PG: The *Liberty* magazine, do you remember that, for awhile?
- HS: Oh, yes. You don't mean Fulton Oursler?
- PG: I wish I could see a file of the old *Liberty* magazine. At the time of the earthquake, I told you the story about being on top of the Shreve Building. On the front page of one of these

copies at the time of the earthquake was a picture of the fire taken from the hill, Nob Hill, looking down over the city, down to where the Call Building was burning. It showed three men standing on the roof of this Shreve Building.

HS: You and your brother-in-law and the superintendent?

PG: Yes. That was on the cover of the *Liberty* magazine.

HS: You didn't keep it?

PG: I had a copy but it got lost in moving around.

HS: Well, *Liberty* magazine was bought by Bernarr Macfadden, that awful health food man; but I think that was later. He didn't start it. (pause)

PG: Now, you were asking me what I knew about Metlakatla. In 1889 my parents took me over to Contra Costa County to the home of John Muir, and we spent the night there in his home. Muir told my father about the beauties of Alaska.

HS: They were old friends, weren't they?

PG: Friends, because Muir was a guest in their home up in Forbestown, Butte County. He told my father about the beauties of Alaska and what a wonderful trip it would be because, he said, "I know you like to travel," which was true. So on his advice we went up to Tacoma by train and took ship from there to Alaska. It was a steamer, more of a freight boat with a few passenger cabins on it.

HS: What was the name of the ship?

PG: She was the *George W. Elder*, Captain Hunter. We left Tacoma, we stopped off at Victoria on Vancouver Island, the capitol of British Columbia at that time—still is—and took on more supplies. Their business at that time was hauling supplies to the canneries. Every creek in Alaska at that time had a little cannery there canning salmon. There wasn't any mining in Alaska at that time except for one mine, and that was the old Treadwell Mine at Juneau. After we'd started out up the Inland Passage, we got to know a few people on the ship among the passengers. My mother was very much interested in an Episcopal minister, priest I'd guess you call them in the English Church, by the name of Duncan.

HS: He was a passenger?

PG: He was a passenger. I learned later he had gone to Washington to see the government there about acquiring title to some property that he'd taken in Alaska. I found that out from the natives when I was talking with them up there. I remember so well his telling us on the ship that he had a mission in British Columbia and he had trouble with the Canadian government at that time.

HS: What was the trouble?

PG: It was about liquor. He was dead set against the Indians having any liquor. In the communion in the English Church, where they served the wine, you know, he was against that. So he had moved his group out of British Columbia and they settled on this place called Metlakatla—

HS: This is on Annette Island?

PG: Annette Island, yeah. That was in 1887, as it turned out to be, that they landed there and started to cut the logs and to make a little settlement there. He had gone back to Washington to intercede for his mission and get title to this property. In Washington they gave him title to this property for the church and for the village. On his return from Washington we met him on the ship.

We got to know him very well because my mother's maiden name was Duncan; she was Scotch-Irish, that is, she was a north of Ireland Protestant, Scotch. So we got to know him pretty well and did a lot of talking with him on the trip. When we came to Metlakatla, which was the first landing spot for the ship going north and unloading supplies for this little village; I remember it so well because the log cabins were just cut right in the forest, right down almost to the water's edge. They'd cut the trees away and used the logs to build cabins. It was all fresh. They'd built a wharf, a little wharf out there and the bark was still on the trees in the pilings. It had a smell of new wood, pine and fir. I remember so well when the boat came to the little dock the natives all flocked down. They had a little band, too, a few cornets and they made a lot of noise, a little band of the Indians. They serenaded us; we went ashore.

HS: Do you remember how the Indians were dressed?

PG: They were dressed in American clothes.

HS: Heavy clothes.

PG: The squaws, some of them had long skirts, but they were not like the Indians out in the plains. They were a different type of Indian for one thing. Reverend Duncan had a little cabin and he invited us to have lunch with him in his cabin. We must have been there three or four hours, I guess, unloading the boat and all the things we took on. The next stop was, it wasn't Wrangell, it was Ketchikan, and then we stopped at Fort Wrangell and we were there for quite a little while, all day, I guess, unloading and one thing another. At that time there was the Stikine River, flowing way back into British Columbia and it debouched into the bay at Wrangell. There was a gold rush up in the interior there and there was quite a lot of travel going up it into the mines up the Stikine River. We spent a day there, I think, at least.

HS: Was there much of a town there then?

PG: It wasn't a big town. It had a salmon cannery. Unfortunately, we didn't have a camera; I was too small a boy to have a camera at that time. Cameras weren't as good as they are today, box cameras, you know. So I didn't have any camera on that trip. But mother always picked up the picture postal cards they had, and we had those. And in every town

that we came to where there were natives, she'd always buy something made by the natives, mats and baskets and other things. She was quite a collector of little artifacts that was native At Wrangell—but that was my second trip that they're interested in, I think.

HS: Both—the one where you remember best.

PG: The first trip, I remember there was a little stream near the town [Wrangell] and they told us it would be interesting to walk over to that stream and see the salmon running up this creek. We did, and I remember so well a riffle coming down to a pool, maybe fifty, seventy-five feet in diameter, a shallow pool, and the salmon running up to spawn. They were so solid in that stream, and we could see them working their way up through the riffles. The salmon were so thick in that stream on the bottom that you could hardly see the water. There was a little dog that followed us along there and one of the men picked it up and tossed it out into the water; it was trying to straddle these salmon that were just under the surface. Of course, being rather an active kid, I had to get into the play, so I walked out into the water and there was a big salmon coming up through here and I grabbed hold of the thing and the next thing I knew I was flat on my back because that salmon flipped sideways and knocked my feet out from under me and I was down in the water, which caused a lot of laughs. I didn't catch the salmon. That was at Wrangell.

We put in at several canneries further north where there were no particular towns. Then the next port of call was Juneau. That was the biggest town in Alaska at that time, and there was a big mine over on Douglas Island which was just across the bay there. That was a tremendous big mine, called the Treadwell Mining Company. They had just finished a new mill with 240 stamps. I remember it so well, a huge building, a long building with all these stamps pounding. This rock that they were crushing was very low grade and you had to have tonnage of rock in order to make anything out of it. That's why they had so many stamps. From there we went on to Sitka which was the old Russian capital of Alaska when the Russians had it. We visited the little stores there—

HS: This is still 1889?

PG: Yes, '89—and we went into the old Russian church, Greek Orthodox Church, I think they called it. There were two Russian priests there dressed in their habits. Of course, we'd taken over Alaska from the Russians before that, but they still were in contact with the old Russian church there. I remember my mother bought quite a lot of stuff there, mats and baskets, and she got a silver spoon hammered out of a silver dollar, I guess it was. She was quite a collector of souvenir spoons from all over the country. Every town we ever went to she'd always find a jewelry store and buy a souvenir spoon of the town. All that stuff is up in Berkeley now. She bought a totem pole; it was about that high [eight inches] carved out of black slate, beautifully carved with a pedestal on it. We had that in our home quite a few years after we came home. I don't know where that disappeared to.

Then we went on to Glacier Bay, because Muir had told us about Muir Glacier and the passengers on the ship were very anxious to see this glacier up in Glacier Bay. Hunter said okay so they went up into Glacier Bay. At that time the bay was pretty well filled up with little icebergs, some big and some little, that had broken off the glacier as it pushed

out into the bay into deep water. When it got far enough out these chunks of ice would break off the glacier and fall into the water and make icebergs. There were two men on the ship that wanted to go ashore, they wanted to go up onto the glacier. I got an impression that they were two Englishmen, but they probably were from Boston, because they had the British accent that Bostoners still do, a Harvard accent. So the captain said okay and he had a boat lowered. I begged to go along and Dad said okay so I rode in the boat with them to shore and they climbed up in the broken rock along the edge of the glacier and finally got down on the surface of the glacier. As I remember it, as far as I could see, it was smooth ice. There probably were crevasses there that I couldn't see. We walked back a little way. There was a point further back that looked interesting and they wanted to go look it over. They said, "You better stay here." I said okay. Well, I stood on the ice there, got tired of standing on the ice. They'd taken their coats off because it was warm in the sun. They left their coats with me and I put them on this ice and sat down on the ice. Finally, maybe an hour or two later, the ship whistle blew and the men started back and we finally came back to the ship. That was my first trip to Glacier, Muir Glacier.

On the way back we came to Juneau and picked up a load of supplies and stuff out of Alaska for shipment down below; and on the Inland Passage, inside of Vancouver Island, very quite water in there because the ocean didn't affect it, we passed a ship coming up which was a sidewheel steamer called the *Ancon*. The whistles blew on both boats, so they stopped and joined together. There was a little freight that was exchanged from one boat to the other and a couple of the men on our boat got onto the *Ancon*. Then that boat went on. It was a funny thing, I couldn't remember what year it was that I had gone to Alaska but I remember the *Ancon* so well because it was a sidewheel steamer. That trip was the last trip the *Ancon* made. She was wrecked up there. Through this magazine, the *Alaska* magazine, I wrote to the editor and told him my story about going onto Muir Glacier and all, but I didn't know whether it was 1889 or 1890. I wrote a letter to them and they printed my letter in the magazine, and a man from Berkeley read my letter in the magazine, because I had asked the editor of the paper if he could figure out what year that was that I went. This man said, "You spoke of the *Ancon* and," he said, "the *Ancon* was wrecked on June 30—or whatever it was—in 1889, so that was 1889 that you saw that ship."

HS: Couldn't have been later than that.

PG: Couldn't be later than that. So we finally came back down and landed in Portland. Of course, they [parents] still wanted to travel and we went up to the Dalles on the Columbia River and rode down through the rapids of the Dalles back down the Columbia River to Portland and then came on home. That was our Alaska trip. That was my first trip.

Then in 1912 I took the second trip to Alaska for a hunting trip. Those pictures that you saw were of it. That showed a picture of those Indian boys in Wrangell. When we went to Wrangell, at that time Telegraph Creek was quite a little village; they had a Hudson's Bay Store and Jack Hyland had a big store there.

HS: How did he spell his name?

PG: H-Y-L-A-N-D. He had a lot of horses and he capitalized on hunting trips, outfitting hunters with supplies and horses and guides, to go into the mountains to hunt. We had contracted with him by telegraph previously.

HS: Who was in your party?

PG: There were two men with me, Harold Havens from Oakland and Bob—I can't think of his name. We were all members of the Athenian Club in Oakland. This Havens was my closest friend and hunting companion; I hunted all over the country with him. His father was Frank Havens, "Borax" Smith's friend. Those Indians that—we showed a picture of three Indians there, [at the Alaska show at South Coast Plaza,] and the youngest one they called Johnny was just a young chap and he was our cook. This fellow we talked to down here the other day said, "I believe that's the same Johnny that's an old man up there in Wrangell now."

HS: We may hear about that when we send him the transcript. I have his card.

PG: It could be the same Johnny Boy. Of course, this fellow that we talked to down there the other day said that Telegraph Creek now is almost deserted. I don't quite understand that because in one of the *Alaska* magazines, I think it was last year, it showed a steamer running up the Stikine River up to Telegraph Creek. He said the town was practically deserted and the natives have all gone down to Wrangell. Of course, at that time these Indians that we engaged as guides and all were up at Telegraph Creek.

HS: Was it an Indian village?

PG: There was kind of an Indian village there, too—

HS: But not wholly an Indian village.

PG: No. Those guides that they used in the summer always came down in the winter and spent the winter in Wrangell. According to the pictures that I showed there [at the fair] of Wrangell, he didn't recognize them. He said, "Oh, of course I remember now the town was burned up." It burned up after we were there, and they built new buildings.

HS: Did you stop again at Metlakatla on your second trip?

PG: No. No, I don't remember it. On the second trip, the hunting trip the ship—

END OF SESSION

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY

Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: DR. PERCY D. GASKILL
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: June 15, 1970
SUBJECT: Jet engine development, Los Angeles aqueduct, World War II draft board, advances in dentistry and various dental patients, Judy Garland

PG: I left Oakland in the spring of 1916 and moved down to the Antelope Valley, Lancaster, where my father had purchased a section of land in the '70s from the railroad company. I developed an alfalfa ranch and a home there. I had given up the practice of dentistry, of course, when I left Oakland and thought I'd had enough of it. But I found after I came down here—Lancaster was more or less of a whistle stop on the railroad. The homesteaders had moved in and filed on quarter sections of land and started development and they were all poor and having a hell of a time to get along. And I heard so much about people having dental troubles and that sort of thing that I decided, well, I'd open up a little office there in Lancaster and maybe work one day a week in the office and then the rest of the week at the ranch. I always enjoyed outdoor work and I worked on the ranch along with the people that I had hired there. Of course, my dental activities increased more and they began to interfere with my work on the ranch.

HS: I thought you said at one time that it was also a kind of subsidizing of the ranch, which wasn't able to maintain itself.

PG: That's true. I had to go back into dentistry to support the ranch. Of course, I was—I won't say prominent, but very active in the little local politics in the town, and of course, during the First World War they had a draft board there in Lancaster and the draft board asked me to work with them, which I did, in examining those that they were drafting. They finally made me a member of the draft board, I guess about six months before the end of the war.

I remember so well at that time there were things like sugar and stuff of that kind that people tried to buy up and hoard, and there were several men in Lancaster that bought sugar by the sack and hid it out in their basements, and they became very unpopular because they were very unpatriotic. And then during Prohibition, that was a very interesting time because these moonshiners went out into the desert and set up these stills and made a lot of moonshine liquor. Of course, we all enjoyed that very much ourselves

in a way and we always sympathized with those that manufactured the stuff. Of course, a lot of it was terrible stuff to drink, but it was better than nothing. Then too they made beer and the bathtub gin. It was very interesting. When the war was over, of course, they got back to normal.

I finally set up an office in Lancaster. There was a banker in town who said that if I'd open up an office, he'd build a little building for me to have an office in, which he did. Then I married in 1919 and my wife and I used to travel. We went to Trona.

HS: We did that the last time I was here. That was very interesting.

PG: Oh, did we? Finally—oh, I wondered if I ever told you about how the Edwards Air Force Base—did I speak of that?

HS: Yes, how it was established, yes.

PG: Through Hap Arnold. I'm a Mason and I get a bulletin from my Lancaster lodge and I noticed that at Rosamond, a little town north of Lancaster, they've recently formed a Masonic Lodge there in Rosamond, and I've been intending to write the secretary. They call it the J. H. Arnold Lodge, and I'm going to write the secretary and ask him why they named the lodge for Colonel Arnold. I was wondering if they knew why. You know what I mean?

HS: Somebody must know why or they wouldn't have done it.

PG: Did I mention the fact that the first jet engine that was flown in the United States flew on Edwards Air Force [Base] out at Muroc? Did I mention that?

HS: I don't think so.

PG: That's an interesting thing. That was during the Second World War. The Germans had developed a jet engine which they used in the bombing, flying over to bomb England. They were very much ahead of us here in this country developing jet aircraft, and they had made these jet engines and adapted them to the regular propeller planes and we apparently got ahold of one of those engines. It was shipped over here to this country and the Bell Aircraft Company of Buffalo, New York, were given the program of developing an engine in this country similar to the German engine and applying it to our aircraft.

HS: Was the German engine used on the guided missiles, the V-2s, those things that were sent without pilots over England or was it used in piloted aircraft?

PG: Well, I think they were using them in the pilotless missiles. The government gave the Bell Aircraft Company [a contract to] experiment with this engine and apply it to the regular planes we had. We had the monoplanes at that time, but they were all propeller-driven. I think it must have been through Col. Arnold, who recommended the army and the air force [when] they wanted someplace that was isolated where they could experiment with this engine and apply it to our planes. It probably was through him that they designated Muroc Lake as the experimental factory. So Lt. "Bud" Kelly who was a

graduate of Pensacola in navy aircraft—his father was a captain in the navy, old-timer—and they designated him as a flier to experiment with this engine. They built a little plant up in the north end of the lake. Muroc Lake is ten or twelve miles long, a huge big property. The Santa Fe Railroad runs through the north end of it pretty well, and they built a little factory up at the very north end of the lake. The south end of the lake the air force had started to build hangars, with the air force in command of that. When Kelly was shipped out here to start up this little factory, he came into Lancaster and inquired about a place for his family to live while they were in this experimental stage; and my friend, Rutledge, in the real estate business, turned him over to me. So he rented our home out on the ranch. I had two houses there on the ranch and my wife and I moved into one and we rented the big house to Bud Kelly, a fine chap that I got to know very well. We used to talk about what he was doing out there. He never told me exactly what they were doing. The only thing that he did tell me was that they were developing an engine that was much superior to the propeller-driven engines. He said that with the propeller-driven engines you've always got to watch yourself because there's a tendency to pull to the right in flying, so you've got to be alert to keep yourself on course by looking at your compass and all. And he said this engine didn't have that trouble. He didn't tell me that it was a jet engine; in fact, I naturally didn't expect him to tell me anything because all that he did tell me was that up here they had nothing to do with the army people at the south [end of the lake]. They didn't trust them in other words.

HS: Yes, that's always been the problem, hasn't it?

PG: Yes. So the officers down at the south end of the lake didn't know what was going on up north. They used to fly very early in the morning and he'd fly this plane in the evening to be as inconspicuous as possible. I guess they were there on the ranch for about a year. The engineers back east from the Bell Aircraft Company used to come and spend weekends there at the ranch, and had huddles out in the back yard there. Of course, I didn't get in on any of that, naturally. I didn't ask any questions because I didn't expect any answers. Of course, things quieted down after the war was over and people went back to farming and all and I farmed a little out in the grain fields out west.

Then along came the Second World War. I married a widow with two children, two small children. The youngest of the two boys had grown up to man size by the time of the Second World War and he wanted to get into it because at the time they were drafting the boys. There was a sportsmen's club down in the San Fernando Valley, and they used to come up Sundays to shoot rabbits. At that time the jackrabbits were a pest in the valley. They used to have rabbit drives, you know, and the company from L.A. used to come out with their trucks, and they'd drive these rabbits into a pocket and then kill them and the companies would take these rabbits down to make tamales. Those rabbit drives were very interesting; and out in that part of the valley where I had the ranch, the rabbits were particularly bad and we had to, around the ranches, we had to put three-foot wire around the outside fences to keep the rabbits out, otherwise they'd eat the alfalfa as fast as you could raise it. These sportsmen's clubs came up from San Fernando and used to shoot Sundays and make a sort of a headquarters at the ranch. The head man was a captain during the Philippine War, and in talking with him about the boy enlisting, he said, "Don't wait for the draft. If he wants to go in, I advise him to go down into the city and

enlist, and to be sure to get into an old, established regiment of seasoned soldiers that have been in the army for years. They know how to take care of themselves, rather than one of the new regiments where they were all green.” So we drove down to Los Angeles with the boy, and in the city hall—they had the induction center there, that is, the army had their quarters there. So we went up there. The young men that were running around there, clerks and all, were just shavetails, little chaps. Bill was a big, husky kid, six-footer and about 190, big husky kid, you know. They took him in back and examined him physically and the report came out that he was too big! They turned him down. Bill was very much hurt because the boys in town knew that he’d gone down there and he felt ashamed. So I got hold of this captain again and he said, “You go down to Fort MacArthur and enlist down there.” So we drove him down to Fort MacArthur and they took him inside and in ten minutes he was back okay. We left him there. They put him in a regular regiment of old-timers that had been down in the Panama Canal Zone when they were shipped back. They shipped him up to Oregon and Washington, Fort Lewis, to train up there and then they shipped him down to San Diego and put him in amphibious work and then up to Monterey to Fort Ord. There’s a big station there at Monterey Bay. They trained him in what they call Higgins boats that let the front end down for shore landings. Then they developed what they called the ducks, D-U-C-K-S. They had wheels like an automobile and yet they were a boat.

HS: You see them on [Camp] Pendleton from time to time, the marines.

PG: Yes. Well, they assigned him with his company to the handling of these boats and finally they went overseas and landed at that first landing in Africa. It wasn’t Casablanca, no. Can’t think of it. At any rate, they went ashore there and that was the first invasion of Africa in which we were mixed up with. Then they crossed the Mediterranean up to Italy, and at the battle of Anzio his job was driving one of these ducks between the ships and the shore, when they landed at Anzio. Of course, the Germans had taken over Italy, you know, and we had to fight against the Germans there at Anzio. The ships, loaded with armed men and materials, were stationed a mile or two offshore and his job was driving one of these ducks, taking men and materials and ammunition and stuff and landing it on the beach. He got a wonderful citation from General Clark, who was head of that expedition. He has it now up at Bishop. He drove his duck up through Italy into France, to the Rhine when Patton—you know the story. When the war was over they came back. Of course, his job, when our army advanced on the Germans there at the Rhine, was driving trucks loaded with materials up to the front and bringing back injured men and all. When the war was over they flew him back home; he’d been up in Holland at the last, driving mail trucks and one thing another for the army. One of the boats he was driving from ship to shore a bomb hit near it and sunk his boat and there was a lot of shrapnel. He got a few little injuries, not to amount to anything. They finally discharged him here in this country and he’s now living up at Bishop.

HS: What does he do there?

PG: He has a mail route up there (sic), just to keep busy. He’s never married. At the time of that invasion, the bomb going off injured his eyes. Something happened to him and he’s

really going blind; eventually he'll have to go to probably some veteran's hospital for the blind.

HS: Is that why he's wearing glasses in that picture [at the time of discharge]?

PG: Yes. I got a card from him just the other day that he got somebody to write for him. He's very proud. He won't tell me over the phone. When I talk with him he's always "fine" and everything is fine, but I'm satisfied that he's getting almost blind now. Some woman wrote this card for him.

HS: Can he still deliver mail?

PG: Not mail, newspapers, newspapers in Bishop. He has a tricycle that he rides around and distributes the stuff, just to keep busy. He has an allowance from the government, compensation, and he's getting along all right financially. He's coming down here to see me for a week pretty quick. I'm anxious to see him. He's quite a chap. He never has told me too much about his experiences, very reticent about talking about the past. I pry little things out of him now and then. He must have had some interesting experiences over there in Europe.

HS: You never had any military service, did you?

PG: No, I never did. When the time came there in Lancaster in the draft, of course, I'd started to raise hogs and rented land out in the foothills and planted grain. I was exempted. I raised castor beans. At that time the airplane engines they used castor oil [in] and we planted ten acres of castor beans on the ranch and irrigated them. Raised the seeds there which the government took.

HS: Now that I think of it, that may be why we have so many wild castor bean plants now. I hadn't thought of it. There are lots of them growing in various areas, concentrated, roadsides. There are a lot of them on the Irvine Ranch near the university.

PG: That's how the castor beans got scattered around, in the Second World War.

HS: I know there's still some guayule growing down on Camp Pendleton. They raised it there during the war, World War II, as an experiment to see if they could make rubber from it. They abandoned the plantation and nothing ever came of it, but there are still plants growing there. What about the War of 1898; you were in school then.

PG: Yes. I remember that so well, the Philippine or Spanish-American war. The 7th Regiment from Los Angeles, the National Guard Regiment, came up to the presidio in San Francisco, and one of the officers in that regiment, Major Welch, was a distant cousin of my mother and we used to see him quite a little. He came over to our home in Oakland and visited and then we went over to the presidio. A regiment was shipped in from Iowa and they headquartered there in the university campus at Berkeley. That regiment was headed by a Colonel Fred Funston, and he took his regiment over into the Philippines and of course he went on from there on the way up. He was in charge of the presidio during the earthquake.

HS: Do you remember any great displays of patriotism or public spirit during the Spanish War?

PG: Well, of course there was none of the modern hippie business in those days.

HS: I don't mean demonstrations against it; I didn't expect that but—

PG: Well, they had big parades in the city. Oh, yes, the American people were very enthusiastic about that, and there was none of that business in Congress of pulling the soldiers out like they have today. They had parades in the city. At the time of the IWW, the Wobblies, and the time of the bombing in San Francisco and the time when they bombed the *Los Angeles Times*, when was that? I was up home; I hadn't gone to the desert yet, when they bombed the *Times* and killed a dozen or more of the *Times* people there, the old Times Building.

It was before I left Oakland to go to the desert. I know it was, because Jack London was a kind of a Wobbly himself. He grew his hair long and he was a generation or two ahead of the present generation of dissidents. I knew him, casually; I didn't know him intimately. I've told the story, I guess, of knowing him in school. (pause)

HS: You're speaking of M. H. Sherman, Moses H. Sherman?

PG: Yes. At the time the aqueduct [Los Angeles] was built and Mulholland was the chief engineer, when they surveyed it down the San Fernando Valley, the smart boys, the bankers and all, moved up in there and they bought all the land they could. Van Nuys and Lankershim and Sherman and Harrison Gray Otis of the *Times*, they all got together and bought up a lot of that land. They made a fortune out of it. Of course, today that would have been a conflict of interest, but they got by with it in those days.

HS: They didn't get caught. They were probably instrumental in ruining Owens Valley and taking the water out.

PG: Oh, they did all that. I was up in the Owens Valley at the time of the building of the aqueduct, because I had friends in Independence. One of my classmates at Berkeley in dental college was a boy from Independence, and we used to go up there in the summer and go in the high Sierras together. So I knew that country at the time they built the aqueduct. Of course, the people of Inyo County were terribly incensed at the stealing of their water. They called it stealing, which it was. In fact, they had to get an act of Congress to take the water out of Owens Valley and ship it to Los Angeles. Teddy Roosevelt was president at the time. Finally the L.A. people, politicians and all, worked through Congress and they did it so quietly that they got an act of Congress to allow them to take the water out of one watershed and put it into another watershed. Our state laws at that time forbid that. The president's proclamation was that the only reason that he consented to sign that bill was that it was the greatest good for the greatest number of people, in other words, to take agricultural water for people to drink in a foreign area. They had a lot of trouble up there. They dynamited the aqueduct several times, the farmers did, and the people of Inyo County were very bitter. The bankers up there, the Watterson brothers, had a chain of banks. They had a bank in Lone Pine, one in

Independence, and one in Bishop. There was a lot of monkey business going on there with those bankers, too, and the city. They finally put one of the Watterson brothers in jail. Those were interesting times. Did I ever discuss Arbor Day?

HS: Yes, when you went over to Goat Island.

PG: Panama Canal and the arrival of the Pacific Fleet, did I mention that?

HS: Was that the Great White Fleet? I believe you did briefly.

PG: “Borax” Smith—I knew him, you know, very well. Journey of many hot springs, (reading from a list of topics) Mt. Lassen trip—did I tell you about that? Antelope hunting; Franklin Haynes Apperson; meeting with Death Valley Scotty. Visit to ship that father came on to San Francisco.

HS: There are several things there that we haven’t done. What about that ship? Was that the one that your father came out on?

PG: Well, apparently so. When I was a small boy, we went over to the city and I don’t remember how it was, but my father was invited by the captain of one of these sailing ships that was put up at the dock down on the waterfront. He took me with him and we had luncheon on this sailing ship that was tied up to the dock. It must have been probably the captain of the ship that originally came in.

HS: Oh, but not the same ship?

PG: Probably not, no.

HS: It would have been in the 1880s, I suppose.

PG: It would be in the ‘80s, yes. The luncheon there in the ship’s cabin—funny how you remember little things. Of course, they served me with ginger ale, and I remember so well the ginger ale bottles were round-bottomed. You couldn’t set them up, you know. They had a little stand with a wire business here that they set the bottle in, to keep it from tipping over.

HS: Why did they do that, make rounded bottoms? They made it on soda water bottles, too.

PG: I don’t know why.

HS: Dentistry in 1900, you were saying.

PG: Yes. At that time the University of California had a dental college in San Francisco, where they had the clinic in the city; and they had their classrooms out in Parnassus Heights, out by the, toward the ocean, Cliff House. I went to dental college in 1898. At that time it was a three-year course. Today it’s four years.

HS: You had a pre-dental preparation for it, I suppose?

- PG: Yes. Before I went to dental college, there was a mechanical dentist there. He worked for the different dentists, did their plates and stuff of that kind, you know. Dental laboratory. So for six months before I went to college, I worked at his office and learned how to make plates and soldering and making bridges and that sort of thing. I'm naturally a mechanic with my hands; at one time I thought of even going into that business, but I didn't. My brother-in-law was one of the first graduates in the college in San Francisco in 1886. He was connected with the college, in fact, he was one of the teachers in the college and that's how he got me to go into dentistry. So I was a freshman in 1898 and graduated in '01.
- HS: Was it possible to go directly from high school into dental school? Or did you have a college preparatory?
- PG: You had to have a certain amount of Latin from high school. In order to pass the examination to get into dental college you had to have a certain amount of Latin which you didn't get in the high school. So I went to a private school in Berkeley, Boone's Academy, and specialized in Latin. I don't think that they require that now.
- HS: But didn't they require chemistry and physics and things like that?
- PG: Oh, yes. I'd had all those in high school. We had a very good high school in Oakland in those days, one big high school.
- HS: I think he [Jim Sleeper] was interested in the equipment and anesthetics and things like that.
- PG: He called me one day and he said they were setting up a dental office up in the museum [Bowers], an old time dental office, and he wondered if I wouldn't help him out on something with it, but he never followed it up. I remember so well, after I'd graduated and was practicing in San Francisco, one of the big dental supply companies developed a system of what they called "analgesia," not anesthesia. Analgesia is something on the order of the modern sodium pentothal. Of course, we used to use an awful lot of nitrous oxide, what we called the old laughing gas. They developed a stand and supplied one tank with nitrous oxide and the other with oxygen, and by mixing the two together in the proper proportions they had a sort of a mild analgesia. They had these two tanks with a pipe that came over to a clamp that went over the nose, sort of a mask over the nose, and the idea was that while the dentist was working on your teeth, you were breathing through your nose this mixture of oxygen and nitrous oxide and it made you kind of groggy.
- HS: Well, who administered that?
- PG: The dentist was supposed to do that himself.
- HS: Did he keep it flowing while he was operating on the person or did he put him out and then take the things of?

PG: No, he kept it on there during the drilling and any painful work. When I had my office there in San Francisco, Dr. Pichel was a nose and throat specialist on my floor. He was operating on young people a great deal, removing polyps out of the nose and tonsils and I used to give his patients nitrous oxide. I worked in his office with the nitrous oxide. We'd put them to sleep; for the polyps in back of the nose the doctor had a little armored, hinged thing that went over his finger with a little scraper on the end, and when I put the youngster to sleep, he'd go in there quickly in the mouth and put his finger way up in the back of the tonsils and scrape out those polyps. He had this business on there so they wouldn't clamp down on his finger, bite his finger.

I assisted Dr. Grant Selfridge—he was a nose and throat specialist—at the mastoid operations. In those days where they had infection of the middle ear and the infection ate through the bone, got into the brain oftentimes, killed people—in the mastoid bone, right back here. He used to operate on those cases out in the hospital and I went with him. He used to use a foot engine, dental foot engine. Some of the surgeons used chisels to cut away the bone over the mastoid process to get into those cells and clean them out, but he used fairly good size burrs with a dental drill.

HS: Pumping with the foot?

PG: With the foot engine.

HS: Was it a real engine or did he pump?

PG: No, there was a standard with a wheel on it and I ran it with my foot. It was belted up to the head, and then a flexible arm with a drill on the end of it. My job was to stand right alongside of him, watching him. And with the burr cutting the bone you've got to be careful that you held it steady, otherwise it would catch and jump. He had developed that type of operating, using a burr rather than chisels. And my job was to stand there watching him with my hand on the cords running from the belt up here and if anything would catch, I'd just pinch the cord and stop the drill.

HS: Were you pumping also?

PG: Oh, yes, pumping.

HS: You weren't managing the anesthetic?

PG: Oh, no. The anesthetist in the hospital took care of the anesthetic. Of course, in those cases they were completely knocked out with ether or chloroform.

HS: I guess they don't have to give mastoid operations anymore, do they?

PG: They don't because of the modern antibiotics. You know, this boy Bill, he had a mastoid, and they operated on him and cleaned out one of them. In fact, he's deaf in one ear from that. No, they don't operate anymore at all on mastoids. The nose and throat specialists made lots of money in those days; they'd get \$1,000, \$1,500 for an operation.

- HS: They made a lot of money taking out healthy tonsils, too.
- PG: Yes. I had mine out when I was forty, thirty-nine.
- HS: So did I, but I had already had mine out when I was four or five, but they didn't take the roots out in the early days, so mine grew back.
- PG: I don't know whether they do that much anymore or not, whether they take out tonsils.
- HS: Oh, they do, but only when there is a real infection or a deformity, the mouth becoming deformed—that would be adenoids. You once said that dentistry was a matter of mechanics. You're not the only one who's said that. I've heard someone else say that, too. But do you think the mechanics have changed much? Of course, they have air-cooled and water-cooled burrs now, and that makes a difference. I never have anesthesia anymore; I hate those Novocain shots.
- PG: I don't think the mechanics of dentistry have changed too much.
- HS: I wouldn't think so. And the prosthetics, they haven't changed either.
- PG: And orthodontia, you know, straightening of the teeth, that was pretty well advanced in my time.
- HS: My teeth were straightened when I was in my first two years in college, 1922 and '23. That's quite a while ago. Now they have those things that go around the back of the head, the harnesses. I never work anything like that.
- PG: I had those; to pull the anterior teeth back, you know. We had that when I was practicing in the office. I did quite a little in orthodontia. One of the professors in the college was a specialist in orthodontia. I straightened a lot of teeth, as a sideline.
- HS: It's a status symbol for your child to have braces now. They put them on for the slightest irregularity.
- PG: Yes, just to make money. I'm disillusioned, to a great extent, about the medical profession.
- HS: It's certainly true that the costs of medical care have gone up in proportion more than the costs of any other facet of our life.
- PG: Yes. You take in the hospitals, \$50 a night for a room and all that sort of thing.
- HS: Of course, they say they've made so much progress, they do so much more, that it costs them more to operate all the fancy machines. It seems to me that a lot of it prolongs the lives of people who don't care whether they live or not.
- PG: It's a funny thing about life, that way. You take with me personally. I've said to my friends here that I hope some morning I don't wake up.

HS: I hope so, too; you would be lucky.

PG: Yes. I believe, under proper circumstances, in mercy killing.

HS: That's a tricky subject.

PG: A very tricky subject.

HS: I don't believe people can be trusted to handle such a thing.

PG: No, not without, under proper auspices.

HS: I don't think you could have enough safeguards.

PG: Maybe not.

HS: I'm a little bit disillusioned, too, about people. Have you ever spent any time in hospitals?

PG: Only working. I've never been a patient in a hospital but once, when I had my tonsils out. That's the only time I've ever been sick enough to go to a hospital. I had shingles at one time. That's when I was down in Lancaster, out in the desert. That was a funny deal. We had a common reception room with an M.D., Dr. Cunningham. He was one of the old school of doctors. I had this condition of pimples coming on here and I went in to his office. "Well," he said, "I don't know just what it is but we'd better tape you up." So he took this three-inch tape and put around over the pimples. It was on a Sunday, I remember. I drove home. That night I just went crazy with the pain from this business; the wife, of course, got the scissors out and cut this damn tape off of me, pulling that tape off these blisters on my side. Well, it turned out that it was a case of shingles, from here clear to the center on one side. I was laid up for a month at home.

HS: It was so obvious you'd think he would have recognized it, because it doesn't cross the line.

PG: Yes, but he didn't get it. I never will forget the wife using the alcohol to try to get that tape off, put right on those raw blisters. It bruised the tissues so, taking it off, that it was really one big scab, clear around my side. I was at home for a month; it laid me up completely.

HS: To go back to the dental business: I remember going to a Mexican dentist in Mazatlan about twenty-two or twenty-three years ago. I had lost an inlay. This dentist, I think, had trained at USC, but he was not powered. He didn't have to use a drill, but he had a chair that he pumped up with his foot and he had a hand atomizer that blew air and a hand atomizer that squirted water. He probably has all the modern equipment now, but at that time he didn't. And I suppose you had those things, too, didn't you?

PG: Well, when I quit dentistry it was just about the time when they were developing that water spray with the drill, to cool the burr off. That was more to keep the burr cool.

- HS: Yes, and it's the heat that makes the tooth ache. Oh, that was a blessing.
- PG: Yes. Of course, anesthetizing the lower jaw, going in here and catching the nerve on the inside way back, for extractions and things of that kind, that worked very well even for drilling. A careless dentist, if the patient is anesthetized completely, he might do too much drilling, get in too close to the nerve and do more harm than good.
- HS: Well, there is a question. My dentist tells me that—or maybe ten or twelve years ago—she said she would rather give a shot because the person wasn't all tensed up, gripping the arms [of the chair], and fighting.
- PG: That's the reason for the cooling water, to keep the burr cool in drilling.
- HS: I suppose painting on of fluorine is something new. I don't know how much good it does. I mean, when they treat children's teeth.
- PG: Well, you take the 6-year molar when it comes in. Oftentimes the four lobes are not thoroughly sealed together and by drying the tooth off and painting those fissures with fluoride—we did that years ago. It doesn't make them grow together; it's just to keep the infection out. There's no question but what fluorine does help. I had patients there in Lancaster from one of the mountain towns in Colorado where the fluorine was so heavy in the drinking water in the town that it mottled the teeth, but the teeth were perfect. It didn't damage the teeth, it just stained them. It disfigured the anterior teeth and stained them, but there was absolutely no decay. That was my first experience with fluorine, and there's no doubt but what it does help.
- HS: We used to hear about Deaf Smith County, Arkansas (sic) where nobody had any cavities.
- PG: Yes. In this town, chloride, I think it was, in Colorado, a mining town where the water was so impregnated with probably too much although it didn't hurt the people any—of course, they don't use it that way now.
- HS: It's been a boon to the sale of toothpaste, of certain types of toothpaste that have fluorides in them. Did you do the whole gamut? Did you do the extractions, the oral surgery?
- PG: No, not too much. I never went into that side of it, when it came to wholesale extractions, except when I was down there in the desert when I had to do it. We always sent them to a doctor who didn't do anything else except extract.
- HS: Why did you do that? Because you didn't like to do it?
- PG: Well, I never did go into that type of extracting too much. Of course, I pulled thousands of teeth in my time, particularly out here in the desert. When I used to travel around with the wife through Randsburg and Trona and that country, the homesteaders and miners, we had to do a lot of extracting. With the old car we used to go up through the greasewood going to Trona and on certain days as I passed through there, the people

knew that I was coming, and they'd stop me on the road out in the brush there. I've extracted teeth with people sitting on the running board of my old car.

HS: The reason for that was that the tooth was too far gone or they couldn't afford repair or they didn't want you to fix it up? Whose choice was it, yours or theirs?

PG: Let's see. Of course, an abscessed tooth with them was usually decayed, the crown of the tooth was decayed and the nerve had died and caused an abscess on the root. They were suffering and there was only one way to clear it up and that was to extract the tooth.

HS: I was just wondering if they ever came and said, "Pull this tooth out" when it was a tooth that could have been repaired.

PG: No. No, it was always emergencies of that kind. When we got to the point where we could inject along into the inferior dental nerve on the inside, it helped a lot in working on the lower teeth. There was a time when I was practicing in the city before the earthquake, somebody developed the idea of drilling a small hole up in the bone in the upper, with a blunt needle put up against the bone and injecting the novocaine into the process above the molars and the anterior teeth. That didn't last too long. That was one way. Then they had another idea where an upper molar, maybe a first molar, had to be extracted or a second molar, they built a little platinum cage, drilled down into the process and set this little porous cage into the bone socket, with the theory that the spores of the bone would grow up through this little mesh and hold it so you could put a tooth on later on. That didn't work too good. We tried that for awhile but that didn't work. The bone wouldn't accept it.

HS: What about tooth transplanting?

PG: At one time there was a dentist in Paris that made a fortune out of transplanting teeth, attempting to do it, but that didn't work either. Eventually nature throws it off.

HS: Sometimes, though, when a tooth is knocked out, it can be put back, can't it, into the same socket?

PG: If it could be done quickly enough, after you've removed the nerve from it. You've got to get the nerve out first, otherwise it would die in there and cause an abscess. It's still a dead tooth. Of course, modern dentistry is much perfected over the time that I used to work. There's no doubt about that. When we made inlays for \$10, \$15 apiece, now they get \$50 or \$100 apiece for them. It doesn't cost any more to make them today than it did twenty years ago. Grinding down the anterior teeth and setting caps on them, that's done of course a lot today, too, particularly among actors and all.

Little Judy Garland. You've heard of her? Well, that's interesting. I sold the ranch and we moved into Lancaster and had a home there in town. The people who lived next door to us was a family by the name of Gumm, Frank Gumm.

HS: I know her real name, Frances Gumm.

PG: A man by the name of Carter of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, had moved out here with a family; they were a pioneer family in Lancaster and they bought up a lot of land around town. There was a young couple from Oshkosh that had been hoofers back home, what they call hoofers, you know, vaudeville. So this Carter built a theater in Lancaster and he sent back east and got this young couple, the Gumm family, to come out here and run the theater. It was the beginning of moving pictures, very crude of course. I knew the Gumm family very well, naturally. They had three daughters and Baby Gumm—can't think of the other girls' names. The Gums were very, not charitable but—we'd go to different shows around there in the different desert towns and sing. We had a quartet in the Kiwanis Club. I was first president of the Kiwanis Club when we started one in Lancaster. We used to sing in a quartet and the Gumm family would go along and they'd put on a show, in Mojave and one in Randsburg and places like that, to raise money for the schools. It was all charity work on our part, of course. Ethel [Gumm] played the piano very well and when we used to practice with our quartet we'd all go over to the Gums', next door, and practice these quartets that we were singing, and she'd play the piano for us. Baby Gumm, as we called her, of course she was in grammar school there, five, six, seven and eight years old, nine, ten years old, and Ethel Gumm at night would drive down to L.A., take the baby with her and put her in dancing school. That was Judy. She used to take her down there at night to get training, because her mother could see the potential in the baby. The two older girls never took to the stage too much, but they always went along, the three of them together, dancing on the stage and one thing another. With Baby—she was a nervous little brat; her teeth were terrible. Jeez, her anterior teeth were terrible, and I couldn't do a thing with her in the dental office. I couldn't touch her at all. Of course, when she got on the stage the dentist down there in L.A. took over and they had to cap all of her teeth. Childhood decay due to candy and improper diet and one thing another, her teeth just were soft and in terrible shape. In later years she must have had plates. I can't imagine they were able to save her teeth at all; she must have had plates. She was not a nice child, nervous, and her mother had a hell of a time with her.

HS: You know what she said later? "I never had a childhood. I never had time to be a child."

PG: Well, that's true. The grammar school was just in the next block to where we were living and she went. She didn't get along in school. The kids didn't like her. She didn't have a normal childhood; that is very true. And it wasn't too many years ago when she was in her prime, somebody wrote a long article in one of the papers. It made me so damn mad that I wrote him. I said that if it hadn't been for Judy Garland's mother, she would have grown up as a housewife in Lancaster, and that would have been the end of her. Judy Garland's mother made her, made the child, and then she turned on her mother, you know. She turned on her mother; after Judy married these Jews down in the city, you know, and they grabbed hold of her, naturally, to use her, make money out of her, she turned against her mother completely. Her mother had to go to work. Her mother was a riveter in one of the airplane companies down there in L.A. during the war. After Frank Gumm died, she married again, married a salesman for electric pumps, pumping water up there in the desert. He died too and she had to go to work in L.A., worked as a riveter in one of the airplane factories. One morning she drove to work and she died out in the parking lot, dropped dead. Judy never did anything for her mother, helped her at all.

HS: She probably felt that she didn't owe her mother anything for her childhood.

PG: I wrote this letter to this man and I think he'd collected everything that Judy'd ever done and said, had quite a library of her junk. I wrote and told him that if it hadn't been for her mother she'd have been just a country girl and grown up and raised a family in Lancaster. She had a spark. At six years old, she was an actor. She had the spark, there's no question about that.

HS: Was she singing when she was small?

PG: Oh, yes, singing. Yes, I knew the family very well indeed. Frank died in—he must have been not over forty-five or fifty, at the outside. Good-looking chap. He died of some general infection, really caused by his teeth more than anything else. I tried to get him to have all of his teeth extracted and make plates and get rid of the infection of pyorrhea and general mouth infection. He had a terrible set of teeth. Of course, we had our x-ray there in Lancaster. We'd x-ray the teeth. If he'd had his teeth all taken out and had plates made, he'd have been probably alive today.

HS: What killed the mother?

PG: She dropped dead out there in the parking lot at the airplane factory, her heart failed. Frank did, too. His trouble was the infection had gotten into his heart and killed him that way.

HS: I was going to ask you if you ever did any dental medicine, this business of combating pyorrhea and receding gums, that sort of thing?

PG: Well, of course we worked on the pyorrhea and scraping the sockets, you know, and getting rid of the tartar. With some people the tartar accumulates and pushes the gums away from the teeth and infection gets down into the socket. Eventually the teeth get loose and have to be extracted. In many cases they'd almost fall out. Cleaning the teeth or scaling the teeth was almost a profession in itself, with all the different scrapers that all the dental supply houses made for that purpose of going down and scraping around on the sockets, on the outside, getting the tartar off. Some of the dentists specialized in that kind of work. We did all we could.

HS: I understand the things they call "water pics" and electric toothbrushes have been beneficial in combating this.

PG: Yes, I can imagine they would strengthen the gums around the teeth, and clean better in between the teeth and all. There's no doubt but what all those things are worthwhile.

END OF INTERVIEW



Figure 6: Katherine White Brown Irvine



Figure 7: Ruins of San Francisco City Hall

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON
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Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: VERNIE GRASER
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: February 18, 1967
SUBJECT: Family dairy ranch and neighbors

Most of the question-answer format had been removed from this manuscript prior to its arrival in the Center for Oral and Public History.

I am Vernie Graser, 13532 Prospect Avenue, Santa Ana. My father came to California when he was twenty-one years old, from California, Missouri. He and his brother came by train and landed in San Francisco. (I have not got the ticket yet, but I have something about the San Francisco hotel.) My father was born in 1863, so that made it 1884; he was born in Missouri, the sixth child of ten. He was William Henry Graser and his oldest brother was Philip, the oldest boy and second child, the one who came with him.

My uncle (Philip) had worked there (MO) and had heard that there were possibilities of work in California, so he was going to come and he came back to the town of California first and Papa said, "I'm going with you." Of course, he didn't think his mother would allow it, so Papa never even went home. He knew his mother would try to persuade him to stay home. Uncle Phil went home; but his mother did come to the town of California to see Papa before he left.

They landed in San Francisco. I don't know how long they stayed there. I understood Uncle Phil went north for a while, but at last both of them came to San Bernardino and Papa worked for a woman named Mrs. Wolzencraft there in a dairy for two or three years, and then he came down into Orange County. His brother stayed and lived in Riverside all the rest of his years.

The first place Papa rented in Orange County was what is now at the corner of Warner and Greenville. There's a little church there. There was a big two-story house and they just built that new church there. He lived there for several years and there is where he met my mother, because she lived catercorner on what was then Old Newport Road. There was no crossroad west then. Papa and my grandfather sort of worked together; Papa took care of Grandpa's cows. Papa's next oldest brother came and the two of them lived there together until they both got married. My folks were married in 1893. He rented the property from Mrs. Raebel. He had cows and had forty or fifty acres. At that time there wasn't much here, and over at the river they called it "The

Willows,” and you could run your cows over there in the willows. I still have the cowbell that the bell cow wore. They would turn their cows out over there and then in the evening they’d have to go get them. Papa had a dairy; at that time nearly everything in the area was dairies. The cows probably grazed in wild hay; I don’t think they planted pasture. Papa was in the dairy business until 1918.

About the time he got married, or just before, he bought a place on what is now Warner Avenue; it was Delhi at that time. It was just where the circle is, almost at Raitt Street. They lived there from ’93 to ’96. They were married February 26, 1893; next Sunday will be their anniversary. My oldest sister was born there. In 1896 they bought, in connection with my grandfather, the place where I lived all my life (now called 18471 S. Fairview Road, Santa Ana). Grandpa took the front thirty because it had a big house on it, and of course, it cost a little more, too. It must have been twenty-eight acres, because the school piece (two acres) was out. There was a different schoolhouse then, but the Greenville School is in the same location.

Papa took the back thirty acres. There was a North Methodist Church that was just north of the schoolhouse and Papa tore that down and they built a four-room house that is still standing. The wainscoting is the old church wainscoting and I have the two double doors of the church there in the kitchen. The living room was put on later and it had shiplap on the outside, but I think the shiplap on the rear part was original from the church. That was the house where I grew up; the street was called the Old Newport Road. My school address was Old Newport. There was no street address; it was a rural route. I think we started with 90 and went to 223, and then 300 and progressed to this. When I first started to school, there was a little post office opposite the school, but just about that time they brought the rural route in from Santa Ana. I don’t know what the little post office was called. I don’t know anybody who would know about that, unless it was Jim Nuckels (sp?). His mother ran that post office; he lives in Orange. She was a widow with three children and ran the post office for a short while. Her father had been a minister.

Fairview Road goes just the way it did then. The whole road from Edinger I guess, south was Old Newport, all the way down to where the Newport Freeway comes in. No, Old Newport didn’t go to the present Newport Boulevard, because at that time Fairview did not go any farther than Baker. It went on over toward what is now Harbor. There was a road that went through the Whittier Ranch, where the SAAAB⁹ was during the war. We used to go through there and then they closed it during the war years (World War II).

Question: Did Henley Ellis live on what is now Fair Drive?

VG: There was no street through there at that time. Perhaps my aunt could tell you more about it. But I remember in later years that my mother pointed out the house that Liz Ellis lived in (Henley and Boyd’s mother) and it was more down on the bay, the back bay. They farmed a big acreage in there to barley. As a kid I know that Henley and Boyd used to come by with about eight horses with bells on them. We’d go out to the front gate and hang on it to listen to the bells on the horses as they carried their grain to Santa Ana. Their place was down near the bay

⁹ Santa Ana Army Air Base (SAAAB) was an air base without planes, hangers or runways that was used for early training of newly inducted soldiers in the Army Air Force. After nine weeks of basic training and then testing, they went on to other bases for specialized instruction.

between the end of 22nd and 23rd streets, at least during the last years Liz and Henley lived. Boyd lived in a white house at the corner of Dyer Road and Newport Boulevard. Now I could be misremembering, like a man in the *Register* a few years ago. He came out with the idea that the hotel out there at Fairview was a two-story building; he remembered it very well as a boy. To me it was three stories. Mrs. Babb was alive at the time and I went down there and she said absolutely not. They lived (the Babbs) just opposite there and her son worked for the hotel and she said it was three stories. So, you see, I could be a little confused like that fellow.

I remember the Fairview Hotel. I have two pictures here that came out of the hotel when they had the auction. They are copies. One is a picture of two or three pheasants and the other is watermelon and fruit. They were for the dining room. The auctioneer said the other man who was bidding against Papa didn't need four pictures, so they divided them up and each took two. That's all I can remember Papa bought at the auction. I don't remember what other buildings were around the hotel. When we were kids, we just had some work horses and we didn't use them on Sunday. That was their day of rest, unless it was something special. Once in a while we went down to the beach, on the Fourth of July or sometimes we went—There was a clump of cypress trees on the point at Balboa, or close to where Balboa is now. We used to go down there once a year. There were hardly any houses, just a couple of shacks, and we screened a year's supply of shells for our chickens. We just spent the day. Papa had a dairy he couldn't leave. We were always in a hurry to get through with the shells so we could go down and get in the water before we had to come home. We waded on the ocean side; the bay was kind of muddy and oozy. I never learned to swim until I was grown. We never even had swimming suits.

I was born in September of 1896. All we children were born at home. I have the old bed out here that we were born in. I have two brothers and three sisters, all living. They are all in Orange County except the youngest sister; she is up at Hollister. She moved there a few years ago and wishes she was back, but her husband likes ranching and here ranching was going.

In the early days, our shopping was done in Santa Ana, but our acquaintances were in our school district. We also went to church there. On the east, our neighbors were the McClains; they moved there about 1900 or 1901, about the time I went to school. North of them were two deaf and dumb people, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Ould. They had five acres and so did Mr. Maesser, a bachelor, that joined the north of our property. On the west, by the school house, Obadiah Ellis lived there about the time I was born and for three or four years. He might have been a brother of Liz Ellis' husband, and he (Liz's husband) died before I was born and I don't remember his name. Both the Ellis boys were interested in racing, and they raced up at Corona. I think Boyd was the driver.

Farther down next to the Ellis place was A. T. Cole. At one time he was deputy assessor. I don't remember when they came here. He brought Mrs. Cole as a bride, in the eighties. The Segerstroms bought the place just below there for a while, when I was a child. Before they bought it, it was Fallerts'; they moved from there when I was about six. Thomas Warne lived west toward the river. Nearer us was Harlow Merritt. They were renting from Mrs. Streeter of Los Angeles and lived there for a good many years farming the land. Just west of us were Mr. and Mrs. Youngling. Her name was Harriet Rowena, but his I don't remember. The Obadiah Ellis family had several children: Clyde and Nave, Anna and Maggie and another I can't

remember. Maggie was a little older than I was; the others were older yet. They never had a dairy; I don't think there was ever a dairy on that place. Part of it wasn't even farmed, it was just in weeds. (Part was farmed by Japanese in 1907 and later.) One time they had a Fourth of July celebration over in that field, and we sat on our front porch and watched it. The neighbors went together and bought the fireworks. There was nothing on that field; it was in the corner of the road east of us.

Mr. Youngling didn't have a dairy; he grew corn. Pattons, across from Younglings had a dairy. They were English folks; there was Daisy, Edna, Laurine and a boy who was called Budsy. Everybody had chickens. Mrs. McClain had a couple of incubators and she did custom hatching for anybody who wanted to bring their eggs. Some folks across the railroad tracks had brown Leghorns; we had white Leghorns.

There were smaller places north of us and in one of them was Jeff Harlan. Irene Lancaster is a native daughter; she lives up close to Greenleaf. She was a daughter of Tom Harlan. They lived out on Baker still west of where the McClintock place is, a big two-story stucco place west of Fairview. Colombinis (sp?) lived near them. The Henry Meyers lived west of there. Sherman Babb lived west of the Fairview Hotel, but he didn't own the property. I believe the George Clarks owned that, across from the hotel. Also, George Clark owned just west of where the Harlans lived; there was a big three-story house there, a beautiful home. It burned a few years ago. I couldn't tell you who else owned around the hotel. North of the hotel in later years some speculators owned land. Will Armstrong had an interest and so did Steve Grisot, and I believe (A. W.) Rutan the lawyer had some interest. As I say, we didn't go very much, and across the river was like going to another country, away from our school district and our church district.

As long as I knew the school near us, it was the Old Newport School. There was one teacher, but there were two rooms in the building. I have a picture of the school the first year I went to school. I'll find it later.

My mother's family came west in 1876 from Monette, Missouri. Mama was born in Monette. When she was six months old, her folks went to Kansas, close to the Oklahoma border, to a Mrs. Babb who was a cousin of my grandmother, and stayed there for three months. They left there in the spring of '76 and came across the plains in, my mother said, the first mule team. They'd always been oxen before, but they came with mules, in covered wagons. They were in a party with guides. All of my grandmother's folks came: her father and mother. My great-grandfather had asthma and he had come around the Horn in '49 to California for his health and stayed a while. Then he went back, how I don't know. Grandma had two children, the older brother was three years older than Mama and Mama was just nine months old. Grandma always said she carried her to California on her hip; she walked except when they had to ford streams and she had to drive one of the wagons across the stream. I remember her as a woman of 180 to 200 pounds all her life, and she said when she got here she weighed 120 pounds. I heard very little about the trip. My grandmother refused to talk about it; it was just something she wanted to leave behind her and forget. Mama was nine months old when they left. The trip took nine months; Mama was a year and a half when they got down to this place, the Estancia. They had two men leading them and they led them off the trail where they should have been, and they were without water. They were going to hang the fellows and then they found the trail for them.

They were so desperate without water that they were ready to hang the fellows for getting them off the trail after they'd paid them to guide them here.

There was my great-grandfather and great-grandmother, Thomas and Charity Vaughn—they're buried out here in Fairhaven Cemetery—and my great-grandfather was a Mason. He and Max and Julius Reinhaus in Santa Ana were very good friends. Then there were my grandfather and grandmother, Robert and Sara Ann Selvidge, and the two children. Then my grandfather's brother, Tate Selvidge, a nineteen-year-old man, and my grandmother's sister and brother. That was nine. They must have had a few rigs to have two guides; this group had three or four wagons. John and Mary Rachel Vaughn were grandma's brother and sister. For a great many years he lived below Segerstroms where the freeway (San Diego) is going through on Fairview Road, and then he moved up to Merced and his children are still living around Merced.

They got here in October and they lived at the Estancia for a year and a half. I understood that just my grandparents and the two children lived there. I believe Jesse Allen lived there then; his brother owned it. My aunt told me a while back that evidently there were no screens on the doors, and this Allen had some pet cats. Grandma had to cook for the men, Allen and whoever else was working there, and she had been preparing a meal and put some of it on the table, and she turned around and some of the cats were up there. She got the buggy whip and went to it, and Allen always wondered afterward why his cats wouldn't come in the house. I don't know how much land was being farmed there, but I imagine it was all in grain because at that time there were no cattle out in that area. It was all grain farming. They shipped it all out. The Ellises always took theirs into Santa Ana when I was young, but it's possible they took some of it down to the railroad. I don't think it went by ship. I've heard my mother say that when she was a girl there was nothing on the peninsula (Newport) and that when they wanted to go onto the peninsula they walked the railroad pier. There wasn't a road across except the railroad.

For years there were only two houses on the whole mesa, the Henry Meyers on the one end and the Ellises on the other. Irving Meyer married Esther Segerstrom; she died when her second child was just a few days old (Marilyn Parker). Their house was down on the bluff (Henry Meyer's) south of Adams Street; he had the first automobile in that area. The first auto ride I had was in Ed Farnsworth's [vehicle].

END OF INTERVIEW



Figure 8: Reaping on Ed Kraemer's rancho, four miles northeast of Anaheim, Calif.

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Helen Smith Collection

NARRATOR: GEORGE FISKE HAMMOND
INTERVIEWER: Helen Smith
DATE: August 27, 1970
SUBJECT: Interaction with San Miguel Island caretakers

Mrs. Elizabeth "Elise" Lester joins interview recording on the second side of the tape.

GH: This is George Fiske Hammond, and we're right now here at our house at 1445 South Jameson Lane in Santa Barbara, California. I was just thinking, I have the mail bag that I used to take all the mail over there [San Miguel] that Herbie got made and we used to carry all his mail because you know I got all his mail for all those years. It's still here in the room, and here it is!

HS: A very professional looking mail bag. Did Herbie have that made? It's leather bound at top and bottom, and metal reinforced or riveted together.

GH: Yes, the leather's riveted and it has a canvas main body with the leather top and bottom.

HS: I see the leather is prepared so that the strap at the top runs through metal rings and then can be padlocked at the back.

GH: Yes, that's right.

HS: Would you like to read the inscription on the outside?

GH: It says, "George F. Hammond, Bonnymede, Air Mail, Kingdom of San Miguel Island." Of course, Bonnymede was where I kept the plane, and as I was telling you a bit ago, that picture (over study mantel) shows the plane taking off. It's a very good picture, and Elise happens to be in it. And I think the children are both in it, Marianne and Betsy.

HS: Can you date that picture?

GH: Pretty close. It was along in about 1937.

HS: Was that the first plane that you used?

GH: No, it wasn't. The plane that I first took over in the first trip I went over was in 1933. I have the log book right here.

HS: I was looking at the guest book from the island, from the other end, but that was the last time I was here and I'm not too clear on the dates. They had been there about two years?

GH: As I recall, Marianne was between three and four. When was she born?

HS: I believe in 1930. (pause to ask Mrs. Lester) The Lesters moved to the island in March of 1930 and Marianne was born in February 1931.

GH: Yes. I have a log right here and I'll be able to tell you exactly about the first flights. The ship that I used at that time was the Travelair and the license number was 477N, and it had a Wright J-5 in it. That's the same kind of an engine that was used in the *Spirit of St. Louis*. That was the ship that I made the trip in and I'm trying to see if I can't find out exactly what day it was I went over there. I think I've got it right here. (pause to search log) Here's the first one I see from Bonnymede to San Miguel. "Took Mr. Callahan up. Made a stop at Santa Maria." "San Miguel Island and return with John Woodin." That shouldn't have been the first flight. That shouldn't have been the first flight. (refers to log again) Here's a funny thing. I've got Santa Rosa Island.

HS: Did you land on the other islands?

GH: Oh, yes. I used to do that all the time. Here—this is the first one that I seem to find in regard to my ship. It was a three-place open biplane. It was a Travelair; it was the second ship I owned, a Travelair built by Walter Beech. I bought many subsequent Beechcrafts. In fact, I still have one, one that I used to go to San Miguel in. "Bonnymede to San Miguel Island and return, forty-five minutes out, thirty-eight return." That is the first one I can see here in the logbook and that's August 8, 1934.

HS: Can we hesitate there and can you hark back to how you remember the Lesters and the island the first time you landed when they were living there?

GH: Well, first, of course, I landed in this field just below the house, which was not really a suitable place to land. I remember going over there three times in that week, the first week, including the first time I landed. Then I made another trip over there and took Mr. Goux along and landed in this field that was very, very rough.

HS: There was no preparation made after your first trip to smooth the field out?

GH: Well, we never used that field after I made about three or four landings in it. Because it was so rough, we established this field that we called Hammond Field that was about three-quarters of a mile straight east along the fence line. That field was a very good field; it wasn't too large, but it was large enough.

HS: That was toward the tip, toward the sandspit, toward Santa Rosa?

- GH: Yes, that's right, toward Santa Rosa Island. As I recall, first I remember that Elise seemed to be—well, they didn't know who I was because I just went over there without knowing them and just landed. So Elise was a little apprehensive. I always recall that she said that, she seemed to want to explain to Herbie that I wasn't a belligerent person. Somehow it struck me. Then of course, the house to me was a fascinating house, and I'll never get over that. And then of course, I began making many, many more trips and I know that at times they seemed to be out of food. The food didn't come over as regularly as they expected it. So I got to bringing food over to them, and a lot I just took over myself, I bought it myself. Other times I'd get it from Bob Brooks, but he didn't seem to be very regular about it.
- HS: I don't think he was. One thing that is mentioned in Herb's guest book is that your mother sent things, such as a roast turkey at Thanksgiving.
- GH: That's right, she did. We took lots and lots of things. I remember one time—I don't think I bought this though—but I remember one time that they had a crate or a carton of eggs. You can check with Elise, but as I understood it was nineteen dozen eggs in one carton. Apparently that's the number they could put in a carton of eggs; I don't understand why. I took it over there and I remember that they were able to keep those eggs a long, long time.
- HS: I think there's a little story that cross checks that. Mrs. Agee came from San Nicolas Island and gave them some way of preserving eggs and it didn't work, so I don't think they used all of the eggs. She has already mentioned it a number of times. It had something to do with dipping them in boiling water, which was supposed to make a protective coating, and it didn't work.
- GH: Of course, I'm very mechanical and I ended up by taking over a radio receiver, battery-powered, and then they wanted to be able to transmit so they needed a generator. I took a windmill generator over.
- HS: That's quite a bit later, isn't it? I seem to remember I was on the island when Elise was ashore on vacation, about 1937. It was right after Bob Brooks had sat on a spike, and he had come back and they were going to finish that pier Bob said that as a result of that accident, when he lay on his stomach for thirteen days with the flag upside down, that they now had a radio, so they could communicate. Was this the radio that you brought?
- GH: The first radio I brought was just a Sears Roebuck battery set to receive broadcasting. I don't know where we got this one that they could transmit on. I'm pretty sure I took that over.
- HS: You don't remember what it was? Herb probably wrote it in the book. He always described all his equipment.
- GH: Oh, yes. As I say, I was greatly impressed with the house, and of course, I was greatly impressed with the wind blowing over there.

- HS: That wind, the sound of the wind like that reminds me of San Miguel Island still. Doesn't it you?
- GH: You wonder how I was impressed? I certainly enjoyed going into the house, and I remember particularly how Marianne used to like to read. She was quite young and she was able to read some things out of a book or recite poetry. And we used to sit there and talk in that library. It was such a homey atmosphere and everything. Then of course, Elise was always very good about serving me some kind of a lunch. And then I took my friend, David Gray, over there. As I recall, I made this first flight over there and then that same week I took my friend Jay Goux over there.
- HS: What is his last name?
- GH: His name is Julian F. Goux, G-O-U-X. He's a Santa Barbaran, he's a very famous lawyer. He's very competent, a very fine lawyer here in Santa Barbara. He has water cases; he's the lawyer for the Calleguas Water District. He likes to fly and we've flown a lot together. I notice here in the book that we'd been on several trips together. He got very much interested in flying and he's the only person I ever taught to fly. In fact, I soloed him. But I haven't got an instructor's rating, so I can't legitimately do that.
- HS: Who taught you to fly?
- GH: Oh, I'll tell you about learning to fly. Earl Ovington—I don't know if you've heard about Earl Ovington—but he was an early mail pilot, one of the first pilots to fly mail in the east. He came out here and resided here and he was a great enthusiast for flying. He used to go over to the islands and he liked to go over there, but I don't recall that he ever went to San Miguel Island. Anyway, that's how I happened to start this island-hopping. My first trip to the islands was at Santa Cruz. Where I learned to fly was that Earl Ovington in 1927 took me down to San Diego and I learned to fly at the Ryan Aeronautical Company. That was the company that built the *Spirit of St. Louis*. So I worked with him down there. All the time I was learning to fly I was hired as a line boy, to do different work around the field. And one of the things was I was watchman for the *Spirit of St. Louis*. I did actual work on it; for instance, I helped them stitch the wings on the ship, and I actually slept in the hangar that the ship was stored in.
- HS: Was the ship being built for the transatlantic flight?
- GH: Yes, specifically. Lindbergh arrived there just shortly after I did, so all the time I was learning to fly and did solo [was] before the ship was finished. I was working there so I stayed on and worked and I was there when he made the flight. So that, you see, was in 1927. I worked in different factories. I was an engineer for the Spartan Aircraft Company for a year and also for the Fokker Aircraft Company in Teeterboro, New Jersey, an American concern, but they had his name, Tony Fokker. Then I drifted back here and then is when I picked up this second ship and started flying around here. That's how I happened to go over there.
- HS: What was your first plane?

GH: The first plane was also a Travelair, but it was an OX-5, biplane, three-place. Earl Ovington sold me that. He was living here and I bought it from him, but I took delivery of it in Wichita and flew it there and then when I moved to Hackensack, where the Fokker Company was, and was working for them, I couldn't take the plane with me. So I sold it there in Tulsa. After about three or four years then, I came back here and started flying here and did an awful lot of flying.

HS: That's why you didn't meet the Lesters until 1934 then, isn't it?

GH: That's right. I hadn't been out here flying until that date. I tell you, somebody went over there [to San Miguel] before I did. Elise must know who it is. They used a foreign ship. I met this fellow—I can't figure out who it was, but he told me about it, that it was all right, and he even explained the landing area. He might have explained the field that we eventually adopted, but it was the handiest field and the nearest one to the house and the most suitable considering the high wind and the fog. You know I'd often go over there and land when the fog was around the house. I could do this because the fog always cleared off on the leeward side of the island, which was—the wind coming mostly from the west northwest would blow over the island and on the east side over toward the sandspit we were just talking about, towards Santa Rosa, it would often be clear and you could get down. When I took off, I took off not into the clear area because the wind was coming in from the opposite direction. I'd always come in toward the west, which would be toward the house, because the field was east of the house. You always had to land and take off heading against the wind because that both decreased your landing speed and decreased (sic) your takeoff speed by the amount the wind was blowing. So, if it was blowing at forty miles an hour, which it often did, you'd give her the gun and you'd be in the air in a matter of, say, fifty feet. That's one reason I could land on that rough field, because the wind was blowing.

HS: Well, people still do that with small planes, don't they? That's standard practice.

GH: The thing about the fog over there was, I could get below it and still see the ground and although the fog would be maybe only a hundred feet or so above the landing field, I could see the landing field and see the house and then I could steer right for it and just come in relatively slowly and low, very low, in fact, sort of crawling up to the field and set her down. Of course, they wouldn't know I was there until I walked up there because I was downwind from them and they wouldn't hear me.

HS: There were a few times, I guess, when you were unable to land?

GH: Oh, yes.

HS: They'd hear the plane but not even see it and you'd have to turn around. You kept your planes at home? You had your own landing strip?

GH: Yes, Bonnymede which is right south of here, just about a half mile from here. It was a grass field, it's 1,400 feet long. I had it laid out in such a way that I could take off over the water and I could land over the water. I had the runways laid out in such a way that I had two strips that crossed each other, one for landing into a west wind and one for

landing into an east wind. The 1,400-foot strip, the one I took off into the west; the one that I landed on going to the west was only 1,000 feet long, and they both started from the water and went up about 10 feet and they were both sod, both grass. We had a very wonderful system of sprinkling the lawn and cutting it, so it made a beautiful landing area. You have to do that to subdue the dust, otherwise, when I first started flying to take off and it was dry, the dust would just go all over.

HS: I suppose it did on the island at times, too.

GH: Well, no, it didn't so much, because the fields over there had a kind of a cover crop that the sheep fed on.

HS: In some places there was ice plant, that kind of ice plant that grows after ground has been cleared. It wasn't that, surely, was it? That's skiddy.

GH: That's true, and I skidded in some of that one time. But anyway, there wasn't dust. I built a hangar on this field here at home and I had gasoline there and everything, and I took off from this field over here at Bonnymede. The hangar's still there now, but the field is not. Half of it has been built on. It was perhaps the most wonderful setup of an airport that you could ever have, because I actually could taxi the airplane to the front door of the house, as I did on several occasions. One occasion I came in there in a terrible rainstorm and taxied the ship right up to the front door and got out and left it there for awhile until the rain stopped.

HS: It probably was an unusual field in not having trees and telephone poles.

GH: Well, it didn't, but the way I laid the runways out, it had them at the other ends of each of these fields. In other words, if you landed, you couldn't go around. Lots of times in a short field, if you land and you're going too fast, instead of trying to complete the landing if you end up halfway down the field, instead of trying to stop you give her the gun, as we say, and take off again. On my field, you couldn't do this. Both runways were such that, at the end of the west runway, what we'd call a runway about 2-5 now, why, you'd just run up against the Coral Casino there and there was no possible chance of taking off. If you overshot the field, you couldn't do it. You had to decide before you got to it whether you were going to land or not. It's like that at San Miguel.

I was very much impressed with the house, you know, all the sliding doors and the nice, large rooms. I spent a night or two over there, several different nights, I believe, not many. There was one night, you know, that I took Mr. [George] Putnam over, and his fiancée. You know, he was married to Amelia Earhart, but she'd lost her life by that time, and so he was interested in this girl—you'll have to get her name. Anyway, we went over there and I had the idea—I don't know why I got this idea, but I figured that in a strong wind, it was a good idea to turn the ship around, for two reasons. One was to taxi back to the starting point, because you always took off. The other reason was that I figured that the wind would blow and the ship wouldn't tend to take off. You see if you left it into the wind the theory is that if the wind would blow hard enough, it would lift you. So I did that this time, and we got it that way, and I went out later in the afternoon

to get the ship and we got all ready to take off. Herbie was there and everything. I made a test of the controls, which is a thing you're supposed to do, and I noticed that one of the ailerons wasn't working. It was just flipping up and down, the right aileron. So I cancelled the flight. I had a radio on my ship there and I was able to radio back and tell them that I wouldn't come back. He [Putnam] wanted me to be sure and get them to tell this girl's mother that they were stalled over there for the night. And I arranged that a ship would come and get us in the morning, or would come and get them. In the meantime, we went back to the house, of course but in the meantime Herbie and I went out and fixed the airplane. The way we did it was—the fog came in and the wind blew, and the fog came in terribly and the visibility, you couldn't see more than about fifty feet. I found that I could take the aileron off very easily and I found this fitting that was broken. So Herbie and I took the aileron, which is quite long, probably eight feet long—

HS: Is that the piece that fits into the wing, and it tips?

GH: Yes, into the wing, and it gives you your lateral stability. If you want to bank, you use that control; it's the basic control to keep the plane's wings level. There are two of them, one on each wing. I'll never forget Herbie and I taking that aileron up, because the wind was blowing. He took one end and I took the other, but if you went a little sideways, the wind would blow us over, and the thing would get away like a kite.

HS: No shelter at all. It's sort of like carrying a sheet of plywood in the wind, isn't it? It almost takes off.

GH: Yes, exactly. Of course, we didn't want to, we couldn't let it get away or get pulled out of our hands. And then the fog was very bad and you were walking uphill besides walking against this terrific wind. But we got it up to his shop and we worked all that evening in his shop. You know, he had a very wonderful shop there that they had built, that had been built by the people that built the house. John Russell had built this shop. We found parts of a windmill. There was a little piece of galvanized iron that I bent into the proper shape and drilled about three holes in it and was able to put it back onto the ship and fly back the next day. But the wonderful thing about it was, the next day the air was just beautiful. There wasn't a bit of fog; there was no wind or anything. Visibility, you could see the mainland. Burt Bundy came over and they went flying back, the three of them. Of course, they got back to the mainland, and I was satisfied that I could fly the ship over without any difficulty. I'd connected it up but of course I knew my fitting wasn't very good. But anyway, I flew the ship over. Of course, we put a standard fitting on that would pass the specifications, and the plane was all right. That was one of the many experiences we had over there.

I remember, talking about things, I used to take chickens over to them. I took chickens one time, live chickens, and then I also took a sack of cement. I think there was one thing about one of the radios I took over, that it wasn't designed for a change of altitude. It had something in it that had liquid in it and I think it fractured this container of liquid and it did some damage to it. I don't remember exactly how it was. I think the fastest trip I ever made [to San Miguel] was seventeen minutes from takeoff at Bonnymede, and I estimated the distance, I'm pretty sure, as forty-eight miles. I could check that on a map.

I always went up high, in the event that I had engine failure, so I could have glided to either side. You have to go by Santa Rosa and I would steer a kind of an S-course. I'd take off and keep near enough to land so as I gained altitude I could land on the mainland, and as I got higher, I made a switch and headed toward Santa Rosa and then I was high enough then that I could land at Santa Rosa [Island]. Of course, that's a pretty good rate of climb, to climb up to 7,000 feet in a matter of, say, seven minutes or eight minutes is pretty good. This ship that I used to do that in had very high performance, and of course, I was relatively light. That ship that I used to do that was the Beechcraft that I was just showing you the picture of, which was also made by Walter Beech. It was the third ship that I had, actually ship number four. It was made by Walter Beech and it had a cruising speed of over 200 miles per hour and it had a 420-horsepower engine. It was five-place, and it was closed, a cabin job and it had a retractable landing gear. I went over there many, many, many times with that, when I got carrying the mail.

HS: Was there anything complicated about carrying the mail? It didn't involve anything to do with the post office, did it?

GH: No, it was purely voluntary on my part. More particularly, it wasn't a commercial operation in any sense of the word for two reasons. One, it wasn't, and secondly, I wasn't at that time a commercial pilot and that's one of the strict rules. A non-commercial pilot is not eligible, in fact, he could be fined and his license could be taken away if he used the plane for hire, either the plane or himself, I mean. They wouldn't take the plane away, but he wouldn't be able to fly for hire. The insurance would affect the airplane, that is, the plane wasn't insured for hiring.

HS: Yes. What I was thinking about was whether the post office department put any special burden on you. They're so fussy about mail.

GH: No. It was very simple. All the mail was sent here just care of me at this address, you see. And there was no requirement that I take it there at any time. Sometimes it might sit around here for six weeks or a couple of months. (laughter)

HS: Not very often though.

GH: I used to go over quite often, but it was a nice trip, you see. It wasn't too long, and it was a challenge to be able to land on the island in all its different kinds of weather.

HS: You know, it's even a challenge when you're over there on a ship to get through the surf.

GH: Oh, yes, yes, yes. It's much more difficult. I remember at least one time—in fact, I did it more times than the one—getting Jay Goux to walk down to the pier. We used to go down there and swim occasionally. And I know it was a chore to walk up and down that hill. That was really something, wasn't it?

HS: It still is. I was over there last in 1963, and Herb's path that he took that sand sled up and down is still there, but there have been little runoffs off the cliff above so there are gaps in it. It's difficult; it slopes like this and it drops off and it's really difficult to get up and down on the path. Plus climbing steeply, you have to leap across these things.

GH: Is the sheep shearing shed still there?

HS: I think they're gone.

GH: Speaking of the last time you were there on the island, I was there in '61 with Seth, my son Seth. We were going to Alaska. Anyway, we landed there. We went over there in the afternoon and we spent the night in those two buildings that the coast guard, I think, had put up. It was really quite interesting because there were no windows in these buildings. There were some doors and there were some beds. I don't know whether the mattresses were even usable. The doors would bang, the wind would blow through the windows, but we managed to sort of sleep some way. We planned to get up very early and we had some way we could cook breakfast. We walked to the west end of the island and I'd never done that before, where the seals were. We walked out there and we saw that airplane that had been wrecked out there. That fascinated us and we kept going on and on. I estimated it was well over six miles one way. Not being accustomed to making a walk of that length, and up and down hills, it took a lot of urging on. Both of us urged ourselves on, but we did do it! We got down on the beach and we saw the seals and I took a lot of pictures of those seals. I know Herbie used to talk about them all the time.

HS: Did you see any of the sea elephants? I think they're down in that direction.

GH: Yes, that's where they are. I don't know just exactly the distinction except that the elephant is the larger one.

HS: The male is huge; he can weigh up to several tons. They have that hideous proboscis like an elephant; the female is much smaller and doesn't have that.

GH: I don't know whether we saw them. We saw some awful big seals; it was certainly bigger than a seal. I think you'd call it a sea lion. I was interested about one thing as we finally got to a hill just before descending to the beach. The sea gulls saw us and they all took off and made this screeching sound and, of course, they warned the seals that we were coming down. And of course, as we neared the beach, they all made a race for the water. Herbie was telling about somebody that walked over there and fell on one of the seals and broke a wrist or something. You could get that close. There were one or two that we got fairly close to but the main bunch wobbled very rapidly off to the [water]. You know, they like to lie in the sand and they take and switch the sand over them. Did you know they did that with their flippers?

HS: I've seen pictures of them doing that; I've never seen it.

GH: That was quite a trip. There was a field over there on the way, but I had never landed in it. I'd always wanted to but I'd never landed in it. I took lots of pictures of the island. I took Bonelli—I pronounce the word "Bonelli"—but I took him over there when they had that dedication of the Cabrillo monument.

HS: Well, didn't they bring that up from San Diego. I think it was the Cabrillo Historical Society that furnished it.

GH: I don't know how to explain my impressions except that it seemed to be such a sufficient place. Another thing about getting into the house was the way they had the nose of it, the narrow part of the compound or the enclosed area which consisted of a fence and the house, it went from the point of the house and spread out sort of like an A. Then on the fence side at the bottom of this pyramid shaped piece or rather triangle, was the shops and then the house was the other side, the north side. Of course, the portholes impressed me that they'd used, and the sliding doors, and that revolving door such as you'd find nowadays going into some hotel in New York or any cold area, where they have those revolving doors.

HS: But really the most surprising thing on the island was the people, wasn't it? Such a surprise, such a shock to meet people like that on a barren island out in the Pacific.

GH: Yes, completely incongruous, wasn't it?

HS: I think that's one thing that gave the island such allure for all of us in those days.

GH: Yes. Well, of course, Elise had all the books and she's so intellectual and so was Herbie, and we used to talk so much about different things. It was a treat, you know, to go and meet both and visit with them both. It was really quite an experience. I think that was another reason that I went over there so frequently. And as you say, to meet people of education over there, in effect really looking after the sheep, I don't know anywhere where you could find such an intelligent and aristocratic sheep herder family. Do you? And then of course, it was very exciting to go there when they were shearing the sheep. And then of course, there was so much of keeping up fences and keeping the windmill going and things like that. I think I did a lot of work on that pump, too. I did some work on it. I forget just what it was. Then he finally got an engine, I think. That was one thing when he got the engine going, because the wind wouldn't—and then of course, there was the windmill-run generator. We had a job rigging that up. Then later on, when he got his transmitter, I took over the head of the weather bureau in the Los Angeles area; I flew him over there. His name was French, Mr. French. He set up Herbie with a weather report that was to be made every six hours or once a day, I forget which. I know we had this code, and a big sheet. He would take these observations; there were about thirty-six of these, and he would put down the wind direction and the clouds and all that. On each number he'd write over and tell what number would be appropriate to what reading he'd made, and then, I think, I telephoned those in to Los Angeles, at the expense of the weather bureau. Herbie would radio them over to me. I had a receiver that I could receive them on. That was the idea. We did it for a few months, but I don't know how long and I don't know how regularly we could do it.

HS: Sounds like a kind of makeshift way of keeping weather.

GH: Well, finally, you know, they did have, they finally put a weather bureau over on Santa Catalina, but French wanted to do this because he felt that knowing the condition of the weather over there [San Miguel], a great deal of it coming from the west, he would be able to forecast. That's why he wanted it.

HS: I was thinking of that, if they had wanted to put a stronger transmitter in, he could have communicated directly with San Pedro, instead of going around the mulberry bush.

GH: That's true. Elise could put you straight on that. I think he did a lot of that. But you see, there was a funny thing about that all. The first trouble was getting money to get these transmitters. The weather bureau couldn't do it very well; they didn't seem to have money enough to do it. Then the other thing was that, at that time, they were very fussy about transmitting on radios. You couldn't get a license to have a radio transmitter on the island at that time. The Federal Communications Commission didn't have anything in their system of radio licensing that would do that, cover it. That was before the war, because I bought that ship in 1935, this last one, and flew it up to the war.

HS: Well, radio was just developing into a really commercial thing then, and they hadn't made the rules to accommodate you.

GH: Well, look, the FCC had a provision for the boats, they had a provision for the airplanes. I think commercially they had it sewed up so that you couldn't start using the radio, the idea being there weren't enough frequencies allotted to it. And they hadn't been using what we're using now, high frequency. For instance, I use a thing that we call VHF which is way, way up in kilocycles, higher than any we used back in those days. I transmit now in the 108 megacycle range, or I transmit from 118 to 135.

Well, besides going to San Miguel, my first flight to the islands was at Santa Cruz Island. Earl Ovington had gone over there a number of times and I got intrigued with the idea of flying to the islands. Anyway, I started out from the field here one afternoon. I told the gardener, the young chap Johnny Woodin, that I was going over there and so I did. It took about twenty minutes or so to get over there and I picked out a place that I thought would be good to land in. I did. This first airplane that I'd gone over there [in] was the Travelair, the second Travelair I'd owned, the second airplane, an open three-place job, and I was alone. I had these large low-pressure tires; they were designed and used for landing in fields, you know, pastures, and you could land in soft fields. In landing I rolled over a very sharp rock, and it was in such a way that the tire came up and got pinched on the rim and it cut the tube, and it was out of air. In other words, I had a flat tire. It was a slope and I just didn't know enough about flying and I didn't dare take the ship off. So there I was, marooned on the island. Before I'd landed I'd circled a couple of times and this was on the east end of Santa Cruz on the area owned by the Gherini interests, still owned by them. It's one-eighth of the island. The original Mrs. Gherini was a Caire; she was one of Caire's daughters and Gherini had married her. This was the younger generation, Pier Gherini, who was running the island then. I had noticed that of the two farmhouses, I'd seen one that wasn't too far away, so I just left the plane and started walking. I woke this fellow up, although it wasn't dark, but he seemed to be almost—he seemed to be kind of a recluse. He was living there alone.

HS: Was that Gherini?

GH: Oh, it wasn't Gherini himself. It was a farmhand. I think what he was—Gherini was a judge, you know, and I think he used to get some of these people that had gotten into

difficulties one way or another, and he got them over there, sort of to keep them busy. Anyway, this fellow couldn't help me much. I think the reason I'd gone over to this side was, I'd noticed a boat out there. I'd say it was approximately a quarter of a mile offshore, so I walked down and I yelled to them and they heard me fortunately, came up on deck. It was a fishing boat. I got him to come ashore and I explained my plight, and he said, "Well, fishing isn't very good." And I said, "Well, you've really caught something here. I'd like to get you to take me home." So he did.

HS: What do you do with the plane in a case like that, tie it down?

GH: I just left it. There was nothing to do. Usually you tie the controls, lock the controls, so that the control surfaces wouldn't—I usually carry things to tie it down with and I hadn't done this. I wasn't worried about that. I was just worried because there I was intact and so was the plane when I left it. So we got aboard but we didn't get home until about nine-thirty at night, and then I had a job getting people at the house. What had happened, Johnny had gone over looking for me, had hired a boat and started out to look for me. Of course, he thought I was lost.

HS: Did he know you were going to Santa Cruz?

GH: Yes, I'd explained it to him, and so he went out and got a boat. I forget who he got. He hired a boat and went over there and started looking. Anyway I got hold of a tube. At that time they had an airport at Carpenteria and I was able to get a tube for this tire. These fellows took me back the next morning. We got back in the evening and so we slept on board. I couldn't sleep very well on board; I wasn't used to it. So in the morning I said, "Now, look, I want you to go along." I pointed to where I thought the ship was. "I don't want you to go too close, because it's up on a mesa and it's back from the mesa and if you're too close you won't see it." I kept telling them to keep away and they didn't keep away far enough, but I got up on the crow's nest of the fishing boat and sure enough, I spotted this orange-colored wing. He anchored again and we got off in a skiff and he went ashore with me. I had the tube. I'd taken some food this time—I hadn't had any food the last time, the time I took off. We got ashore and climbed up on the cliff and got to the ship. If it hadn't been for this captain—there were three of them on board and the captain—if it hadn't been for him I would have never gotten that tire on. But he was very good and we got the tire on, and we had to pump it up, of course. Just about the time we got the tire on, Gherini's superintendent came over. He wanted to know what I was doing on the island. I just told him I wanted to land there. He said, "You know you're not allowed to land here." I had the food with me; I was going to take off and I thought, I don't need the food, so I gave it to him. You know, he just grabbed it like that—he was hungry. This was the man that lived in the other house, the main ranch house on the north side of the island. Anyway, I flew back. Naturally I paid the fellows for having the ship all night, the boat. It was just wonderful. I got back here in no time with no trouble. The aftermath was kind of interesting; I got a letter from Gherini wanting to know why I'd landed on the island, reprimanding me for doing it. I have the letter somewhere. In that way I finally got to meet him, about it, and I ended up by flying him over there one year.

HS: I was going to ask if it ever led to a friendship.

GH: Yes, it did. I not only took him and several others over—there were four of us—and we went on a sheepherding expedition. I'll never forget that either, because we rounded the sheep all up. We went out in one direction and brought them back another, but we'd forgotten to close the gate that we entered this area in and so we'd herded them all down and they all marched out the gate we went in. So the whole trip was lost on that.

You were interested in some of my airplane experiences. I think I had one rather interesting experience. There was a man that had a seaplane here and I was very anxious to get some seaplane time, so I used to go up with him, and took some dual time and landed his single-engine Sikorsky amphibian on the water. I never got to land it on the land; however, this man knew some people in San Diego. These brothers had a cannery there and they were from Baja California. Their mother was very sick and dying and they wanted this fellow, Dieterling, with his amphibian to fly them down there—he was a commercial pilot—to La Paz. But it would have taken him two days to do it, two hops. He would probably have taken him nine hours of flying, and I don't know that he could have even gone down there in two hops. So he called me up from San Diego one day and asked would I take them down. I said, "I don't fly commercially." He wanted to know if I'd take them down, and I said, "Well, all right. I'll take them down. I'll just do it." So I took off one foggy noontime from here and went to San Diego and got into San Diego before the fog closed me in there. The next day we arranged that I would take off, as I recall it, I took off from Tijuana, because I had to check into Mexico. It was approximately a four-hour flight down there and I landed at La Paz. This was the first time I'd ever gone there, and I'll never forget, their father came out and the boys went into their mother's house. They put me up somewhere; there was no hotel in La Paz, and they put me up in some native's home. I wasn't too used to that kind of quarters, but I had a good night's sleep. Then I needed gasoline, and they had promised that I would have gasoline to leave. In the meantime, they didn't know whether they would want to go back with me or not. They got there before their mother died, but she died in the nighttime, so they came out the next morning and said they wouldn't go back with me. So there I was left there without gasoline that they'd promised, and I didn't have enough gas to get back. They gave me quite a bit of trouble about taking off, but finally got permission to take off from some adjutant of the army down there, or something. So I took off and flew over to Guaymas and I was able to buy a barrel of gasoline. That gave me enough gas to get back

HS: What year was that?

GH: That was about 1935. The field at La Paz was very small and very bumpy. It wasn't like the good field they have now. I flew from La Paz to Guaymas and from Guaymas up here in a rainstorm and landed at Agua Caliente and cleared into the United States, and then flew up here in one day. That was pretty good when I didn't get off from down there until about nine o'clock and I had to go over to Guaymas to get the gas. That was one of my experiences.

HS: Do you remember the name of those people?

GH: I can find them. I can't repeat them just now.

(move to tea table for refreshments)

GH: Elise, we were just trying to figure out when I got over there [San Miguel]. You were telling about, tell me what you said about Mrs. Felton.

EL: Felton? She was Julia Felton, a cousin of my great-grandmother and she was a Farley from Cambridge. She was out here.

GH: Oh, yes, she lived here and she was a great friend of ours as well.

EL: Do you know that she named the Miramar Hotel?

GH: No. Really?

EL: Yes, she did. You know, several weeks ago—what's his name?—Walker Tompkins was on the thing talking about who named it and mentioned her name. I called him up and I told him she was a cousin. When you came over, Herbie was down at the beach and you landed in the lower pasture, and you came up to the fence and I came out. Then you said, "Were you Elizabeth Sherman?" and I said, "Yes," and then you said, "Mrs. Felton sent me over."

GH: Oh, good. Yes, go on now, Elise.

EL: Then we brought you in and Herbie came up after a while. He'd been down to the beach.

GH: I remember one thing that you told Herbie, this thing I always kind of remember: "Friend." You said, "Friend." I don't know why, but I guess you weren't used to having people fly in on you.

EL: Yes, "friend." Herbie asked me what you did and I said, "I don't know, but I think he probably looks after his mother's affairs, the estate there at Bonnymede."

GH: Yes. So you got Herbie and he came in.

EL: Yes, and I told him that you were, that my cousin, Mrs. Felton, had sent you over. You know, I think she wasn't my first cousin; she was one of my mother's or my grandmother's, maybe two or three cousins away. But we knew her a great deal more than a lot of our first cousins. She had a very interesting daughter. Her daughter was Elezina; I think her husband was a professor.

GH: You know she was very prominent here in Santa Barbara. She was just about the head of everything, Mrs. Felton, at that time. She lived right over here not far from this house.

HS: What was her first name?

EL: Una. They all had funny names. She named her daughter Elezina. The family was quite an interesting family. Her brother, I believe, was my great-grandmother's uncle, and my

great-grandmother was seven years younger, or her uncle was seven years younger than she was. They lived in 16 Law Street in Cambridge. I used to see a lot of them when I'd go visit my grandmother. She had a younger sister who was brought up by another older sister; I forget her name. She was an old maid. Christine Farley was twenty years younger than her sisters, and her older sister brought her up. She couldn't cross the street alone; she didn't allow her to do a darn thing. Una would travel all over the world.

GH: Elise, after that first trip over I came over next time—

EL: You came over a couple of days later. The first week you came over a number of times, three or four times.

GH: And one of those trips I brought Mr. Goux, you remember?

EL: Yes, I remember, and I thought it was so exciting. You landed on the beach and had a swim. Then you flew up and landed in the field.

GH: Oh, really? I'd forgotten that. But I'll tell you one thing I remember, that when we landed or took off, I never remember such bumps because the field was not really fit to use as an airplane landing spot. We bounced something awful, but we got off, we got in the air.

EL: And I remember one time you came over with Mr. Goux and you said, "We just flew over Mt. Whitney and we thought we'd just come over here and have a swim." I think one time you came and you had lunch and this has always thrilled me. You said, yes, you could stay for lunch but you had to go in (because) you were going to a reception, either a wedding or a big reception in Santa Barbara. I thought it was fun that you could be over in San Miguel and then go back and have a life on the [mainland].

GH: I told of George Palmer Putnam but I couldn't remember the girl's name. Do you remember?

EL: Wasn't her name James, Miss James?

GH: Oh yes. The girl he finally married, I think she was a Mrs. James. Now, Elise, one other thing about when I used to come over there: What was it that Marianne was [doing]? Was she reciting poetry? She recited this rather long poem that she'd learned.

EL: Yes. And you know I never see Mr. Goux that he doesn't recite me a poem that Marianne recited to him. Did he ever say it to you? It was a long poem, "And slovenly Peter—"

GH: But she did it so very well. Well, we were just talking about Mr. Goux; we've flown a lot together.

EL: About the time you and he flew over Mt. Whitney and came out to San Miguel to cool off.

- Mrs. H: Was that the time I came over with you?
- GH: Yes, I think it was.
- EL: You came over a couple of times before you were married.
- GH: She came over a lot.
- EL: Before she could make up her mind to give you the honor of her hand.
- GH: I'll tell you one experience. Did I ever tell you about this over there? I used to go riding, didn't I, on a horse occasionally. One time I went riding. I always carry my wallet in my hip pocket here and I lost it. It slipped out of my pocket, so I came home without the wallet, and I was of course just—I couldn't believe it. I flew back over there the next day and I went out there on the trail and there it was intact!
- EL: Do you remember the picnic, the time that I came over for a vacation and stayed at Bonnymede? I don't know whether it was Nancy Gray or who, but we were invited to that party. It was a fancy dress party. It was an African scene and you and David brought Nancy in in a kettle, and you were going to boil her, and I was a missionary that was going to try and save her life. Do you remember that? That was funny. I was dressed up like a missionary and I had a prayer book.
- GH: No, I'd forgotten about that. Elise, I don't know how you got the word over, but I think the radio must have been going. I don't know whether you told about the time you had some kind of difficulty and I got a hold of Dr. Eder—
- EL: Oh, I had a miscarriage, and you remember you came over because Marianne had ringworm. You had come over before and you went and bought some kind of salve for the ringworms. Then we told you that I was sick and needed the doctor, Herbie did. We didn't know really if it was a miss or not, but it was, and you brought over Dr. Eder the next day, I think.
- GH: Yes, I brought him over and he was able to really help you out, wasn't he? That was quite a thing, I thought. There was another experience about the island, Elise, that was very good. It was the time that you were on a vacation and Herbie got very apprehensive. He said to me, "Do you think Elise is ever coming back?"
- EL: That was when I went east.
- GH: Yes, and you were only taking a very short vacation. Anyway, I took Schermerhorn—I forget his first name, but he was a nephew of McKinley Helm, my brother-in-law. I was going to make a trip over to the island and would he like to go? So we got over there and Herbie was very lonesome and I said, "Well, that's all right. I'll just leave young Schermerhorn here," and so I took off and left him. (laughter) He was there for about a week.

EL: Well, he must have liked it because he went home and told his mother and his mother sent us a big box of clothes; she made dresses for the girls.

HS: You remember we were talking about Dr. Cockrill and his wife? You flew them over, didn't you?

EL: You remember Dr. Cockrill? We landed in the wind. And you know what happened? He went back with that fisherman, Hans Josephson. I had a letter from the Cockrills when they got back and he said, "It was very lucky I flew over with George because if I'd gone on the boat, I never would have left the island." He was so sick going back on the boat he said he would have stayed and never left the island.

HS: Didn't you say he was lashed to the mast?

EL: He was lashed to the deck, because he was so sick.

GH: Do you ever see Steve anymore? I haven't seen him for several years, but I used to see him down on the waterfront often.

EL: I told Helen she must have a talk with him, because he was very good. And his wife, Virginia, always likes to tell the story about when Marianne was born and how Herbie at the hospital on the mainland would tell me when it was time to nurse the baby. He would take a watch out and say, "Now, start!" (laughter) then in twenty minutes, "There! Stop!" Virginia is so good at that, really. Did you know that man who came over with Standard Oil? He had a Gypsy Moth before we knew you.

GH: Yes, Gypsy Moth. He was the one that I got the data from. Do you remember approximately how long it was? Was it the same year?

EL: I think he came around in the spring and I think you came in the summer. I have the date in our guest book. Have you got the date?

GH: I have one date that I went over there. You know, just to tell you a few things—to change the topic from San Miguel—you wanted to know some of our early experiences in flying. I'll tell you one interesting thing. I took this Travelair and flew it across the continent. It was the first time that I'd made a cross-country flight, and I took my bride up in it. It was about her second flight. It was an open ship.

EL: You thought that Cousin Una would jump out. That's why you wouldn't bring her over.

GH: Oh, really? Anyway later on after we were married, we made a trip from Manchester, Connecticut, our home, down to Miami and over to Cuba and from Cuba we went over to Mexico, Yucatan and [from] Yucatan over to Mexico City and Mexico City up to Guaymas and Guaymas up to Palm Springs and then we came in and landed here at Bonnymede in a rainstorm and that was one of those times when you practically taxied the airplane to the front door of the house to unload.

But it was a very interesting flight because I'd never been to Cuba before, and of course, there was the thing of navigating to get over there, and then we had to get our papers so that we could go to Mexico. I'd succeeded in getting the papers in Miami to go to Cuba, and we succeeded in getting our papers to go to Mexico, and then the thing was to plot the course to Yucatan. We went over at 16,000 feet. I think there's approximately 128 miles of water, and that seemed like a wild thing to do. I remember one thing about it was that when we made landfall at Yucatan Peninsula, I was kind of amazed because in the haze off in the great distance, you could just see this dim outline, and the land was flat. We kept on the shore until we got to the coastal harbor of Merida. I remember particularly it was beautiful flying over the gulf there. You could look down and the water was different shades of green. The bottom seemed to be rippled, and there wasn't much wind at the time there. But anyway, I'll never forget one thing. We were transmitting on around 3105. In order to transmit in those days on that frequency you had an antenna that you let out approximately 62 feet. It was on a reel and you actually trailed it with a weight. Have I still got that weight hanging up there? I can show you this weight. You'd let out—this thing went right out between the seats and the reel was there. I rolled out 100 feet of wire; you'd tune the transmitter by the amount of feet you'd let out, I mean you could peak it by just the exact amount. That's the way we used to do it. Then you put a safety wire on it so that when you let it out, it always stopped at that point.

I had the thing reeled in and it broke loose in some way and started to unreel. You know how a fishing reel gets going around? It got going around and then of course, it got to the end and made a terrible banging noise, and it just scared the daylights out of us. It didn't tear loose, and we wound it in again. We landed at Merida and we drove down to Chichen Itza and then we had a beautiful flight from Merida all the way into Mexico City. That's quite a little distance, about 750 miles along the coast, you know. We missed a lot of very wonderful places to go to, but I'd been to Mexico City before. Then we just flew on to Mazatlan, from Mazatlan to Guaymas and spent the night there.

- EL: Do you remember the time that couple came, bride and groom from Rye, New York, and you brought them over? They had a big bus flying—
- GH: An airplane, you mean? I think you are thinking of that Spartan airplane of George Aaron's.
- EL: Yes, George Aaron's. They lived in Rye where we did. He came out with his bride; they'd flown across.
- GH: I'll never forget one thing George Aaron did that interested me. We have a radio and we still use it now. It's one particular frequency, 75 megacycles. It gives a signal straight up and when you cross over it, it will give an audio signal or they have the radios fixed up so it'll light a little light, and then you know exactly that you're over this particular point and usually you're on a beam, so you know exactly how far you are from landing. He said, "Oh, yes, I've got a little—they call them sea marker receivers—and he was selling it real cheap, \$75 or \$100. So I was delighted and got this thing and put it in, and it never

did work. I think he had the right idea, but it's like a lot of radios, they don't always do the way they're supposed to do. They still don't work now when you put them in.

HS: You know my son is a radio announcer and disk jockey on one of those Hollywood stations and he has had letters—he used to have a night program, from midnight to 6:00 a.m. and he would get fan letters. He got one from Spain. A man has picked him up there. This station isn't that powerful; it goes down to 10,000 watts at night. It's KMPC, the Gene Autry station. He's not on at night anymore; he couldn't stand that midnight to 6:00 a.m.

GH: Do you know what frequency that is? We ought to write that down.

HS: It's 71 or 710 kilocycles. But he asked one of the engineers in the studio, How does it happen on 10,000 cycles they can pick me up in Spain? And the man explained to him it was a matter of bounce. The waves hit and then they bounce. And they bounce clear across the Atlantic.

EL: During the war we had a blackout, you know, after Pearl Harbor. (speaking to Hammond) You didn't come over.

GH: No, there was no more flying.

EL: I was sitting listening to the New York Philharmonic, sitting on the porch there, right in front of the living room, and all of a sudden they stopped and said, "The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor." It was such a beautiful day and you hadn't been over since Thanksgiving. We thought you and David would be over. It was a lovely day and we were expecting you. But Herbie said, "Well, there'll be no flying today." Then after the blackout, we didn't get any news from Santa Barbara, but we got news from New York and the Middle West, all kinds of stations, anything but California. There was one time—we heard from Chicago and New York and around there. (tape interrupted)

GH: Oh, Bessie Owen landed over there?

EL: She didn't land, but it was very mysterious because we saw this black plane flying over the island and it wouldn't stop. We didn't know what it was. We thought it was a Jap plane. I found out, of course, after Herbie had died and I came over to the mainland, I found out that it was Bessie Owen that flew over that day.

GH: Was it after war had been declared?

EL: Yes.

GH: She wasn't supposed to be flying.

EL: No, but she did.

GH: Well, I never heard such a story in my life.

EL: She did. She flew over and she brought somebody. She didn't land but she kept flying around the island, and we thought it was a Jap because we knew nobody was supposed to fly. Later I discovered it was Bessie Owen, but Herbie and I both had it down in our notes that we thought it was Japs.

END OF INTERVIEW

INDEX

- Agee, Mrs., 279
agriculture, 91–92, *See also* indiv. food
 changes in, 88
 experience in, 94
 marketing, 149, 272
airplanes, 55, 284, 288
 Beechcraft, 278, 284
 Fokker, 280
 fuel for, 289
 jet aircraft, 256–57
 pilot regulations, 284, 295
 radio, 294
 repair, 283
 seaplane, 289
 Spartan, 294
 Travelair, 278, 281, 287, 293
Alaska, 250–54
Alver Hill, 17
Anderson, LeRoy, 108, 110
apples, 88, 89–91, 94, 104–5
apricots, 91, 130, 146
Arbor Day, 240
Arnold, "Hap", 208, 209, 256
asparagus, 128, 129
Aspinwall, Panama, 177, 228
automobiles, 275
 Franklin, 190, 208, 223, 239
 Haynes Apperson, 222–23
 racing, 273
 Winton, 221
Babb family, 273, 274
Bailey, Charles A., 184, 185, 186
Bailey, Paul, 103
Ballena, Calif., 159, 160
Banning family, 85, 88, 92, 93
 property, 107
Barnays, Philip, 186, 224
Barnes, Florence Lowe, 227
beaches, 146, 148, 149, 150, 154, *See also* sea shells
 church camps, 153
 toilets at, 148, 151–52
 vendors at, 149, 152
beans, 49, 130, 149
Bell Aircraft Co., 256, 257
bicycle trips, 224–25, 226
Bixby family, 97, 98
Black Swan, 30, 31
Bohemian Club, 248–49
Bond Act (1911), 51
Bonnymede, 277, 281, 290, 293
 flights from, 278, 282, 283
 runway design, 282
Borax King. *See* Smith, Frank
Borchard, Leo, 58
Botanical Lore of the Indians of California, 9
bottles, round-bottomed, 261
Bradley family, 72, 76
Brooks, Bob, 279
Brown, Philip, 34
Brown, Ralph, 34
Bryan and Bradford, 89, 92, 93, *See also* water
 sources
Bryan, Bradford and McCoy. *See* Bryan and
 Bradford
Bryant ranch, 36, 37
Bundy, Burt, 283
Burnett, Capt., 247
Butterfield stage, 72, 160
Carisoza, Ben, 22
Carisoza, Benny, 23, 24, 33, 43
Carisoza, Louie, 21
 children, 12, 23, 29
 cousins, 23–24
 employment, 5
 father. *See* Carisoza, Luis
 grandfather. *See* Serrano, Frank, *See* Carisoza,
 Nacho
 grandmother, 5, 11, 18
 mother. *See* Serrano, Regina
 tribe, 12
Carisoza, Luis, 20, 21
Carisoza, Nacho, 21–22, 22–23, 24
 wife, 22
Carlton, Harry, 183, 200, 212, 213, 233
Carrillo, Leo, 198
castor beans, 259
Catalina Island, 93
cattle, 178, 179, 185, 193, *See also* dairy farms
cemeteries, 68–69, 71
Cheney family, 219
chickens, 274
Chinese farmers, 128
Chinese laborers, 206–7, 234
Clark, Galen, 185, 186
Cole, A. T., 273
Cooperthwaite, Rich, 178, 230
corn, 130, 274
Corona del Mar, Calif., 51
Costa Mesa School District, 107–9
 board of trustees, 110
 school bonds, 111
 superintendent for, 110
Costa Mesa, Calif., 94, 95, 96, 98, *See also* property
 values
 businesses, 97
 communist, 96
 name, 81, 87, 105
 planning, 84, 85, 93
Cotton, Hamilton, 92, 93
Croddy, William Floyd, 52–53, 56, 57

INDEX

- background, 45, 49
- creditors, 59–60
- education, 46, 57
- employment, 46, 47, 50, 51, 55, 58–59
- father, 46
- residence, 46–47
- Crowninshield, [Jacob], 118, 119
- Culver family, 53
- Cuyamaco High School. *See* Julian High School
- Daily News*
 - sports coverage, 50–51
- dairy farms, 271, 272, 273, 274, *See also* cattle
- Darrough, Eleanor, 63, 64
 - father, 63, 73, 77
 - grandparents. *See* Warnock, William; Warnock, Ellen
 - husband, 64
 - mother, 65, 67, 71, 73
 - health, 63–64, 79
 - sister, 64
- Davidson, Sidney, 110
- de Ropp, Baron, 238, 239
- Death Valley borax. *See* Smith, Frank
- Delhi, Calif., 272
- dentistry. *See* Gaskill, Percy D., dental practice
- Dinsmore, Paul, 194, 195, 197, 235, 237
- Disney Company, 187–88
- Dodge, Donald J., 81, 89
 - community involvement, 103, 107
 - employment, 94, 95, 104
 - health, 106
 - mother, 82, 83
 - property, 82–83, 85–86, 89, 107
 - siblings, 83
 - uncle, 106
 - wife, 83, 103, 104, 106, 107
 - windfall income, 95–96, 98
- duck clubs, 208–9
- Dye, Mary Ann, 67, 68
- Earhart, Amelia, 282
- earthquake (1906)
 - aftershocks, 202
 - dynamite after, 201, 202, 215
 - effects in Oakland, 184, 199–200, 220
 - effects in San Francisco, 200–201, 203, 215, 245
 - land titles, 206, 222
 - fires after, 183, 201, 202, 206, 213, 214, 220, 222
 - public reaction to, 199, 201, 212–13, 215, 221
- earthquakes (1918 and 1933), 220
- Ebargaray, John, 26–27
- Edwards Air Force Base, 208, 209, 256
- Edwards, Nels, 108, 109
- eggs, 279
- Elliott, Stella, 157
- Ellis family, 88, 272, 273
- Etchinique, Cornelio, 27
- Fairview Farming Co. *See* Fairview Farms
- Fairview Farms, 88, 89, 92, 93
- Farley, Christine, 291
- farm laborers, 48
 - mechanization and, 48–49
- Fed. Communications Commission, 287
- Felton, Julia, 290
 - daughter Elezina, 290
- Ferrey, Francis, 110
- ferry system, 200, 231, 235, 236, 241, 245
- Flaherty, Hazel Greenleaf, 113, *See also* nursing
 - as barber, 136
 - birth, 123, 127
 - camping, 146, 147, 148, 149–50, 151
 - childhood, 127, 131, 155
 - education, 128, 130, 131–33
 - employment, 135
 - father. *See* Greenleaf, Sterling Price
 - gold nugget, 124
 - grandfather. *See* Greenleaf, Eli Franklin
 - grandmother, 118, 137
 - children, 116, 137, 153
 - church affiliation, 155–56
 - death, 157
 - health, 131, 133, 137, 143, 146
 - husband, 138
 - mother, 113–14, 125
 - family ranch. *See* Mendocino Co. Reservation
 - parents, 125
 - religious training, 155–56
 - shell collection, 151, 154–55
 - siblings, 116, 120, 123, 125, 127, 128, 133
- Flood, Dr. William, 50
- floods, 135, 141
- fluoride, 266
- Forbestown, Calif., 176, 178, 179, 180, 230, 231
- Ford family, 169
- Ford, D. E., 58
- Ford, George, 169, 171
- Ford, Rose
 - as teacher, 164, 166
 - community activity, 167
 - daughter, 173
 - education, 161, 162, 163
 - employment, 163, 168
 - father, 159
 - grandfather. *See* MacIntyre, John
 - husband, 162, 167, 171, 172
 - property, 171, 172, 173–74
 - siblings, 168
- Forster family, 11, 26–27
 - Lucana, 46
- French, Mr., 286
- From Boston to San Francisco, 1849*
 - The letters of DeWitt Clinton Gaskill (O'Brien)*, 176, 228

INDEX

- fumigation, 47–48, 52
 Funston, Fred, 201, 259
 Garland, Judy, 267–69
 Gaskill brothers, 196
 Gaskill, DeWitt Clinton, 228, 229
 death, 190
 education, 176
 mercantile business, 178, 179, 230, 231
 property, 189, 203–4, 205, 210, 231, 255
 travels of, 180–81, 226, 241, 250, *See also*
 immigration
 wife, 231
 Gaskill, Percy D., 175–76, 265
 affiliations, 189, 207, 210, 217, 238, 248, 256
 dental practice, 183, 189, 237, 239, 240, 255
 equipment for, 214, 263–64, 265, 269
 methods, 266–67
 office for, 201, 202, 210, 220, 233, 256
 education, 182, 233, 246, 261–62
 father. *See* Gaskill, DeWitt Clinton
 hunting trips, 182, 189, 232, 253–54
 mother, 180, 181, 182, 199, 234, 236, 251, *See*
 also souvenir spoons
 on Muir Glacier, 181
 residences, 188, 190–91, 209, 235, 239
 rented out, 208, 257
 siblings, 178, 183, 190, 205, 210, 231, 233
 social life, 189, 216–17, 235
 stepson, 257–59
 summer vacation, 225–26, 240
 wife, 199, 210, 239, 256
 Yosemite trip, 184–85
 Gherini family, 287, 288
 ghosts. *See* haunted houses
 Goat Island, 240, 245
 Gobernadora, 36
 gold mining, 124, 178, 181, 185, 230, 245
 Goux, Julian "Jay", 278, 280, 284, 291
 Graser, Philip, 271
 Graser, Vernie
 ancestors, 274–75
 birth, 273
 education, 272
 father. *See* Graser, William Henry
 home, 272
 mother, 271, 274–75
 neighbors, 273–74
 siblings, 272, 273
 Graser, William Henry, 271, 273
 wife, 271
 Great Depression, 96, 104
 Greenleaf estate, 137, 138
 development of, 140–41, 153–54
 Greenleaf name, 116, 119
 Greenleaf, Edward Franklin, 119
 Greenleaf, Eli Franklin, 114–15, 120, 156
 children, 115
 home, 123
 medical practice, 114, 117, 119
 Greenleaf, Errol Francis, 116
 Greenleaf, Frank, 153
 Greenleaf, Sterling Price, 116
 employment, 119, 120, 123, 124, 135
 marriage, 120
 near drowning, 154
 property, 117, 137, 139
 tenant farming, 127, 129, 133–34, 135, 136
 Griffith, William, 148
 Gunn family, 164, 165
 Hammond, George Fiske. *See also* Bonnymede
 employment, 280
 flying lessons, 280
 island-hopping, 280, 284, 287, 291
 lost wallet, 292
 trip to Central America, 294
 wife, 292, 293
 Harper. *See* Costa Mesa, Calif.
 haunted houses, 134, 138
 Havens, Frank, 182, 234, 235, 236
 Hercules Powder Co., 205
 Hetch Hetchy Valley, 184
 Hewes, David, 244, 245
 hoboos, 48
 Home Club, 234, 235, 248
 horse racing, 30–31
 horses, work, 272, 273
 hot springs, 14, 37, 241
 Huntington Beach, Calif., 58, 106
 Hyland, Jack, 253
 immigration, 66–67, 177, 178, 228–29, 274
 Indian artifacts
 beads, 4
 games, 7–8
 tools of bone, 13–14
 Indian culture
 boats, 15
 children, 18
 diet, 3, 16–17
 fishing, 4, 15–16
 homes, 2, 65, 118
 hunting, 1, 17
 in Alaska, 251
 medical treatments, 5–7
 medicines, 1, 5
 migration, 1, 19
 paint making, 2–3
 Indian groups, 180, 188
 Mission, 12, 25
 Indian reservations, 10–12, 35, 161, 188
 Indian restitution funds, 12–13
 Indian-Anglo interaction, 74, 78, 251
 Irvine Company, 56, 84, 85, 88, 195

INDEX

- water rights, 102
- Irvine ranch, 32
- Irvine, James, 55, 85
 - health, 195, 198
 - property, 194, 199
 - wife. *See* Irvine, Katie Brown White
- Irvine, Katie Brown White, 193, 198–99, 235
- Irvine, Myford, 193, 194, 195, 199, 218
 - niece. *See* Smith, [Joan Irvine]
- IWW (Industrial Workers of the World), 260, *See also* London, Jack
- Japanese farmers, 274
- Jessup, Effie, 46
- jitney bus. *See* Orange Dummy
- Joplin ranch, 37
- Julian High School, 162, 163
- Julian Hotel, 167
- Julian, Calif., 165
- Kelly, "Bud", 256, 257
- Key Route. *See* ferry system
- Kittredge, Charmain, 248
- Kroeber, Alfred, 188
- Lake Merritt, 231, 243, 244
- Lancaster, Calif., 210, 227, 238, 255, 257
- Lark* magazine, 249
- law and order
 - court systems, 95
 - enforcement officers, 94–95
- LeConte, Joe, 185, 186
- Lester, Elizabeth
 - ancestors, 290
 - daughters, 277
 - Marianne, 278, 280, 291, 292, 293
 - food suppliers, 279, 283
 - guests of, 280
 - health, 292
 - personality, 279, 286, 290
 - trips to mainland, 292
- Lester, Herbie, 277, 290
 - daughters, 293
 - personality, 292
 - records of, 279
- Liberty* magazine, 249–50
- literary figures. *See* Bohemian Club
- Lobo, Clarence, 9, 10–11
- London, Jack, 244, 245–47, 247–48, 260
- Los Angeles Aqueduct, 260
- MacInerney Act, 203
- MacIntyre, John, 160–61
- mail service, 161, 272, 280
 - voluntary, 277, 284
- March Field, 208, 209
- Marston, George, 165
- Martin, Eddie, 55
- Martin, Glen, 54–55
- Masonic Lodge, 179, 256
- McBride, [J. L.], 58
- McCain, Maud, 163
- McFadden, Ed, 5
- McGee, Claud, 163
- McLaughlin, Charles, 96
- medical doctors, 115
- medical treatment, 63, 68, 125, 126, 144, *See under*
 - Indian culture
- Mendocino Co. Reservation, 121, 123
- Merritt, Dr., 243, *See also* Lake Merritt
- Mesa Grande, 78
- Metropolitan water, 101, 103
- Mexico
 - flying in, 289
 - laborers from, 49
 - seafood in, 3
 - seaports, 177
- Mills, B. Fay, 237
- Mineral King development, 187–88
- minerals, 235, 239, *See also* gold mining
- Mission Dolores, 245
- Mitchell, R. P., 108, 110
- Modjeska, Madame, 38
- Moulton ranch, 32, 43
- Mt. Lassen, 207
- Mt. Whitney, 183, 187
- Muir Glacier, 181, 252
- Muir, John, 180, 182, 186, 192, 225, 250
- Muroc Lake, 208, 256–57
- Musselman, Frank, 47, 48
- Native Americans. *See* Indian groups
- Nelson, Mrs. A. P., 110
- Newport Beach, Calif.
 - incorporation, 84, 94
 - pier, 99–100
- Newport Heights tract, 84, 85, 86, *See also* water, irrigation
- Newport Mesa Irrigation District, 104
- Newport Mesa tract, 84, 88, 93, 97, 102, *See also* water, irrigation
- Norris, Mrs., property, 92–93
- nursing
 - general duty, 146
 - private duty, 142, 144
 - training, 125, 137, 143, 145
- Oakland, Calif., 228, 231–32, *See also* Arbor Day
 - Chinatown, 234
 - growth, 237
 - housing, 235
- oil exploration, 106
- Old Newport Road, 271, 272, 274
- Old Newport School, 274
- Olivares, Juan, 25
- Olivarez, Jenny. *See* Serrano, Jenny
- Olivarez, Martin, 40–41
- olives, 133

INDEX

- Olmos, George, 35
Olmos, Lupe, 35, 40
Olney, Warren, 186, 224, 225
Opp, Fred, 97
oral surgery, 262–64
Orange County Water District, 103
Orange County, Calif., 38, *See also* water, irrigation
 development, 51–52, 56, 58, 140–41
 economy, 39, *See also* property values
 justice court. *See* law and order
 real estate promotions, 85, 92
 school district creation, 107–9
 schools, 46, *See also* individual names
 social network, 273, 274
 transportation, 46
 water supply survey, 103
Orange Dummy, 99
orange groves, 47, 92, *See also* fumigation
orthodontia, 264
Ovington, Earl, 280, 287
Owen, Bessie, 295
Owens Valley, Calif., 260
Pablo, William, 9
Pacific Electric [Railway], 85, 108
peaches, 130
Pepper family, 77, 168, 171
piñon trees, 121, 122
plums, 130
Portola expedition, 36
Prohibition, 255
property values, 37–38, 51, 56, 58
 in Costa Mesa, 83, 107
Putnam, George P., 282, 291
quitclaim, 204, 205
rabbit drives, 257
radio broadcasting, 287, 295
ranch supplies, 68, 69–70
Rancho Santa Margarita, 37
Rancho Santa Teresa, 46–47
Realty Syndicate, 228, 235, 236, 237, 238, 241
Road Race, Los Angeles to Phoenix, 54
roadways, 65, 70, 87, 147–48, *See also* Old Newport Road
Robbins, Theodore, 110
Robinson, Anne
 family, 40–41, 42
 property, 35–36, 41
Romero, John B., 9–10
 property of, 11
 publication. *See Botanical Lore of the Indians of California*
 siblings, 9, 10
Ross family, 118, 119, 152
Rotansey ranch, 63, 77
Ruef, Abe, 203–4, 205
Russell, John, 283
Rutland Company, 177, 178, 228, 229, 230, 242
Ryan Aeronautical Company, 280
salmon, 250, 251, 252
San Bernardino, Calif., 67, 68, 69, 70, 71
San Diego, Calif., 64, 68
San Francisco, Calif., 244, *See also* Bohemian Club,
 See also earthquake (1906)
 construction, 192, 193, 201, 203, 214–15
 Embarcadero, 245
 Hotel Pleasanton, 221
 mayor, 203, 205, 217
 Nob Hill area, 200
 North Beach area, 200, 213
 Palace Hotel, 212, 215, 216, 217
 theatrical productions, 217–18, 219–20
San Joaquin Fruit Company, 46, 47, 52, 55, 56
San Miguel Island. *See also* sheep, *See also* mail service
 accessing, 284, 293
 caretakers, 278, 286
 communication systems, 279, 283, 286
 flora and fauna, 282, 285
 landing field, 278, 281, 282, 291
 medical treatment on, 279, 292
 structures on, 283, 285, 286
 house, 280, 282, 286
 weather, 279, 281, 283
San Nicolas Island, 279
Santa Ana Community Hospital, 145
Santa Ana Heights Water Co., 101
Santa Ana High School, 46, 108
 athletics, 50
Santa Ana Valley Hospital, 198
Santa Ana, Calif., 50, 273
 Fairview Hotel, 273, 274
Santa Cruz Island, 189, 280, 287, 288
Santa Maria Island, 278
Santa Rosa Island, 278, 279, 281, 284
Sarco, 30, 31
Sawday family, 66, 67, 68
 business, 159, 162, 168
 property, 166, 169
school district legislation, 107–9, 163
sea shells, 273, *See also* Flaherty, Hazel Greenleaf,
 shell collection
Searles Lake, 237, 238, 239
Searles, Dennis, 238
Segerstrom family, 273, 275
Sepulveda, Adolph, 6
Serrano, Frank, 29
 children, 24, 26, 32, 33–34
 property, 24
 wife, 26
Serrano, Frank Jr., 26, 32–33, 43
Serrano, Jenny, 20, 25
 brothers, 25–26

INDEX

- children, 32
- husband, 26
- Serrano, Jose, 29–30
- Serrano, Juan, 43
- Serrano, Miguel "Mike", 26, 31–32, 34–35
 - wife, 35, 40
- Serrano, Regina, 20
- Serrano, Reyes "Ray", 26, 32, 40
 - wife, 43
- sheep, 242, 282, 285, 286, 289
- Sherman Institute, 122
- Sierra Club, 183, 186, 187, 225, 240
 - founding, 185
- Sierra Point, 185, 186
- Smith, [Joan Irvine], 195, 198
- Smith, Frank, 182, 241
 - businesses, 234–35, 235–36, 237, 239
 - charity of. *See* Home Club
 - fortune of, 234, 235
 - wife, 234, 237
- souvenir spoons, 181, 226, 252
- Spaatz, "Tooe", 208
- Spanish-American War, 259–60
- Spencer family, 97, 98
- Spirit of St. Louis*, 278, 280
- Spurgeon Memorial Methodist Church, 156, 157
- Spurgeon, [William], 115, 117, 156, 157
- Staffel, Emil, 33, 34
- Star ranch, 36, 37
- steamships, 226, 250, 253
- Sterling, George, 235, 248, 249
- Stevens, Sherm, 55
- Sutro, Adolph, 228, 240
- Swycaffer family, 73, 167
 - home, 160, 170
- tomatoes, 229–30
- Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad, 235
- Townsend, Stephen, 84
- Townsend-Vandewater Co., 84, 85, 100, 102
- Trask family, 167, 170
- Treadwell Mine, 181, 250, 252
- Trona Co., 238
- Trona, Calif., 237, 238
- Tustin, Calif., 45, 54
 - fire department, 54
 - population, 46
 - walnut house, 27–28
- Tustin, Sam, 45, 53
- twenty-mule team borax. *See* Smith, Frank
- typhoid epidemic (1926), 57–58
- University of California, 233, 243, 259, 261
- Utt, [C. E.], 47, 55, 56
- Vaquero*, 243
- Vaughn, [Frank], 94
- volcano. *See* Mt. Lassen
- Wallace, Lew, 108
- Wallace, Walter, 208, 209
- walnuts, 27–28, 52, 85, 86
- Warnock, Arthur, 69, 77
- Warnock, Austin, 63, 64, 71, 77
 - family, 69
 - property, 77
- Warnock, Ellen, 63, 64, 74
 - children, 67, 68, 71
 - death threat, 75
 - homesickness, 66, 71
- Warnock, Gene, 69, 77
- Warnock, Mary Ann. *See* Dye, Mary Ann
- Warnock, Sam, 66, 72, 75–76, 76
 - employment, 160
 - wife, 76, 160
- Warnock, William, 63, 74, 160
 - children, 67, 68, 71
 - death, 64
 - guests, 68, 71, 75
 - trip to Calif., 66–67, 72
 - wife. *See* Warnock, Ellen
- Wash Hollow, 159–60
- water rights, 102
- water sources, 14–15, 78, 100, 101, 102, 152, 236,
 - See also* Los Angeles Aqueduct
 - damage to, 102, 103
- water, irrigation, 46, 100, 101, 103, 136
 - cost of, 104
 - districts, 102
- Watson, Keller, 128
- weather bureau, 286
- White Fleet, 241
- Willows, The, 272
- Wolsey, Roy, 183
- Woodin, John, 278, 287, 288
- Woodrough, Howard, 86, 88, 105
- World War I, 255
- World War II, 257–59, 295
 - enlistment efforts, 257–58
 - homefront, 259
 - training sites, 272
- Wynola, Calif., 162, 166
- Yerba Buena Island. *See* Goat Island
- Yerba Buena, Calif., 245
- Yosemite Valley, 185, 186
- Young Women's Christian Assoc., 234