

My mother had an, or possibly the, original copy of this story. That copy was ultimately given to a Painter descendant. My sister gave this transcript of the story to me, but she doesn't remember who typed it. I corrected a few obvious typographical errors: Primarily spelling errors and missing spaces between words.

Lannie Dietle, March 22, 2024.

OUR REAL LIFE-ADVENTURE

by Lela Painter

This story had its beginning in early 1923 but came to a climax in June of that year. This is December, 1975.

My husband, William Painter, myself and our four children - aged 16 months to 8 1/2 years- lived in Jackson Center, Mercer County, Penna. My husband worked in the coal mines around the area, but times were rather dull and work was slow in the coal business. At that time, I had a brother, Jim Sheasley, living in Beverly Hills, Calif, and he was a plastering contractor and the building business was good out there so he and his wife kept writing to us and asking why we didn't sell and come out there and he would give my husband steady work. So after much thought and many misgivings, we decided to go, but first we had to find a buyer for our property, which we finally did. We had a sale of our household goods and live stock, even our good old coon dog, bought a new Model T Ford car (\$475.00), loaded our family into it, with what camping gear we could carry, said "good-bye" to friends and relatives and started for Calif.

Well, the first 2 or 3 days were rather smooth sailing and interest-ing but even in that short time the children were getting bored and tired. On the evening of the 3rd day, we were in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and looking for a place to camp for the night. We finally found a place near the fair-grounds, but that wasn't tood (too) good because some sort of a fair was in progress there and people and cars and wagons kept coming and going all night so we got very little rest or sleep. By morning I had begun to realize that this was not going to be much of a pleasure trip - for one thing, cooking for 6 people over a camp fire with the aid of a 2 burner Coleman stove and setting up a tent every night and tearing it down every morning, having to stop and buy groceries every day and making sure we found good water and clean rest rooms.

I didn't drive so my husband took care of that job and many other unexpected ones as the days went on. The night after we left Fort Wayne, we camped in Aurora, Illinois in a large camp ground and met many travelers, even some from Penna. and of course everyone tried to get acquainted and find out where they were from and headed for. There were really no exciting things happened after the rest of our journey thru Illinois but we hadn't gone far into Iowa until trouble started. We had had good roads all the way up until we were within about 50 miles of Cedar Rapids when our hard road ended and we really got into black, sticky Iowa mud. We were not alone because there were cars in all directions stuck in the mud. However, there were many nice people and everyone was trying to help each other. At any rate we only made about 25 miles until darkness began to come upon us and we knew we couldn't go very far at night, so we were close by a big farm house and pulled into the driveway and asked the owner if we could camp on his property for the night. He was very nice and told my husband to pull right into the front yard, so we were pleased to get in out of the mud. We didn't build a camp fire but lit up the Coleman stove and made hot coffee for Dad and I and heated some water

Page 2;

for hot chocolate for the youngsters. While we were eating the lady of the house came out with a big pitcher of milk and a plate of cookies and home made bread and butter, so we had a good supper. Not only that, but she

showed me where the "outside plumbing" was. Now this farmer raised corn and hogs and there seemed to be all sizes of "hogs most everywhere. Of course the larger ones were fenced in but the little pigs had the run of the place which we found out after we got settled down for the night because those little ones kept rooting into our tent at all hours and waking the children. They weren't afraid of them but even wanted to catch and hold them. Anyway it wasn't too bad and we got some rest. That farmer's corn fields were so large that every 12 rows made an acre. He got loaded up the next morning and left there about 9 o'clock. It was 21 miles yet to Cedar Rapids so we didn't get there until after 1 o'clock. I thought I'd never want to see mud again. We had a good meal at this place which we cooked at a camp ground and there were nice clean rest rooms at the gas station. After a short rest we got on our way again- but didn't make too much progress as the roads were at still in poor condition on account, of so much rain.

The next day was sunny and much warmer and in the afternoon we came to a place where they were selling sweet cider and that sounded like it might be a real treat so we all had a good glass full but somehow it wasn't the right thing for me. By nightfall, when we had arrived at Marshalltown, I was so sick my husband had to go into town and find a doctor to get me some medicine. He said he would like to see me the next day if I wasn't better but I managed to get on the way by noon. We ran onto a detour that P.M. and made poor time; so did not get any farther than Boone, Iowa that evening. We were directed to the city park where we would find camping facilities and truly that was the loneliest place I was ever in. There were no lights and the place was all hills and hollows and not, another soul in sight. I fully expected to be robbed or killed before morning.

We didn't have very many interesting things happen within the next day and a half and by then we had arrived at the Missouri River. We crossed over into Nebraska by ferry, at a place called Blair, but the farther west we traveled the poorer the traveling became. Rest rooms were few and far between and good water was scarce. We carried 2 water bags on the tail end of the car and whenever we came to a place where we were sure of good water we loaded up. The roads were mostly gravel or ash and Nebraska seem like a long, long state to cross, and not too heavily populated but people were friendly and very willing to give help, if needed. The children were really tired of traveling by this time so we tried making our days of travel shorter so we all could relax longer in the evening.

At a place called Chappell, Neb. we stopped at a gas station and there were 2 partly tamed badgers there under a building and our little gang thought they were real playthings but after a few slaps and growls they decided they would pass them up. We finally got to the Wyoming border and crossed over at a place called Pine Bluffs, there on to Cheyenne, then away north to Medicine Bow, then to Rawlins, Wamsutter,

Page 3

Rock Springs, Green River and on through to Evanston, which was on the border between Wyoming and Utah. Now there were many things that happened on our trip through Wyoming. For one thing the old Route 30, which we traveled, was very crooked in places due to very high elevation and it seemed like we would never get across the state. 45 miles per hour was a good speed for a loaded Model T and many places we couldn't travel that fast. There were no hard roads and even some of the other kind were not too good. As for scenery, there was sage brush, roaming cattle, wild horses, prairie dogs, road runners, coyotes and some herds of antelope. But we were not the only ones on the move, we met many travelers and some who were in dire straits, such as having flat tires and breakdowns of one kind or another and in some places they were very far from help. The safe drinking water was really a problem in places. In those days Wyoming had what was called jip water which contained alkali. Gas stations were not too numerous and rest rooms were few and far between. Occasionally they were just the wide open spaces, but every day there were many things of interest. We got our first look at

some high elevations when we got to the great Rockies in that state. Our little Ford had hard time climbing those heights but there is always some consolation - we could coast down the other side, in some places we would come to little shanties along the highway with a wood burner stove and wood stored inside. These were used in winter time in case someone got caught in the snow. I guess the highway dept. took care of that but we heard stories of travelers freezing after being caught up in a blizzard and I could well believe it could be so. There were fences to keep the sand off the roads in summer. Anyway, we finally got through Wyoming and crossed the border into Utah at Evanston. For some reason I will always carry memories of the state of Wyoming and the long stretches of quiet loneliness. After we got into Utah we were really in mountainous country for a while which was very beautiful, but sort of scary too. It was mid summer but all of the mountain peaks were white with ice and snow and the three older children thought that would be a good place to have a sled ride. There was much beautiful scenery all the way from Evanston, Wyoming to Ecko, Utah where the country side flattened out into farming and every where there was water where it was needed. We really enjoyed that after traveling through Wyoming where so much of the land was dry and hot. There were so many tall poplar trees they seemed to reach up to the sky, and we could buy nice fresh vegetables and fruit at very reasonable prices. I think I could have been happy in that valley for the rest of my life but we were headed for Calif, so we had to go on. Anyway, we finally arrived at Salt Lake City and stayed there for 2 1/2 days. Speaking of water, they had plenty of it in that city. It ran curb deep on every street and seemed to be rushing down from the mountains and so sparkling clean. I surely needed our rest stop there and found a large camp ground with nice out-door cook places -also a laundry, which was a blessing because just about every bit of clothing needed washed. There were no modern conveniences, just a good old wash board which was rented for \$1.25 which was returned when we left, after we paid \$.25 for renting it. Borazine soap powder was \$.25 a box and a bar of Lenex soap was \$.05. To do ironing, the cost was \$.10 an hour with a gas iron. There were no clothes dryers, just

Page 4

wire lines outside to hang the clothes to dry. I was real busy for one whole day and my husband gave the car an overhauling, but the next day we drove around the Morman Tabernacle and would have liked to go inside but were told that no children were allowed. I grocery shopped, mostly for unperishable food, which we could crowd into our already overcrowded vehicle. We were about to start on the last long leg of our trip to Calif., south into what was mostly hot desert coun-try and little did we know how hot and dry it was.

We had good hard roads after leaving Salt Lake until we reached the city of Provo, Utah, which was about 50 miles south. From there on we traveled the old Arrow Head Route which was very poorly marked and no more good roads until we reached Victorville, Calif. We didn't make very good time and many things happened on that part of our trip. Probably as the years {53 of them) have passed, my memory has failed to recall everything of importance. Now, up to this time, we had been on the way for 2 weeks and had made fairly good time and expected to be in Los Angeles in about 3 or 4 days at the least but it turned out to be wishful thinking. A number of miles out of Provo we had gravel road but soon that faded into pure sand, sage brush, great tall cactus and tumbling weeds, but there was no turning back now after going that far. If there had just been two of us I wouldn't have worried but with four children we both were concerned and to make it worse, the natives would ask where we were going and tell us they hoped we got there. Well anyway, we hadn't gone many miles and were still on gravel road when we came to a place along the road where beautiful clear water was coming out of the side of a hill and we stopped to get a drink and fill up our water bags. There was a real nice oldish lady lived there and she had a grape vineyard of Thompson seedless grapes. She was glad to visit a while with us and talk to the children and before we left she gave us about a peck of grapes and wished us a safe journey. That was at a place named Nephi. From there, the weather seemed to get much warmer and the children were restless and

the 3 older ones were fussing in the back seat of the car one day and I was holding the youngest on my lap in the front seat when all at once everything got so quiet in the back seat. I looked back and there were only 2 girls! Mildred had pushed Carl out of the car. Needless to say we were shocked for an instant but looked back to see our son running like mad to catch up, crying and skinned up on his knees and hands and fearing he was left behind because the day before their father had told them if they didn't stop fussing he would leave them on the desert. We had peace and quiet for the rest of the P.M. but we didn't make very good time that day and stopped for the night at a place call-ed Filmore, which was only a spot in the desert, but at least we could get gas there.

Nothing important to speak of at that place, but the next day we got off the route, which was very scantily marked, and drove through miles of grazing country where we had to open gates and go through miles of cattle ranch land and close a gate when we got through, but that was the only road there was so we followed it and hoped we could soon get back to our Arrowhead Route, so far that day, about noon, we hadn't seen

Page 5

anybody to ask where we might be, so we just kept on following a poorly traveled road and finally met some rangers on horse back and they told us where we could get back on the route again but it was quite a long way and we were afraid we might have to camp out in that forsaken place all night but we finally came to a little place where there was a gas station and a little store and a few buildings, mostly just shacks, so we stayed there overnight and cooked our supper over a camp fire. I think our girls can recall that place because a big dog came around and kept bothering us and we found he was looking for someone to help him because his nose was full of porcupine quills My husband took him over to the store and the man said he would take care of him. I didn't sleep much that night but no one bothered us and the next morning we bought a few things in the store and started out again to find our way back on the right road, which we reached in about 3 hours so we lost better than a days driving by getting lost. The next day wasn't too bad except for heat and that evening we reached Cedar City. There was a big camp ground there and a good many travelers and big outside places to cook and lots of good water and outside plumbing wasn't too bad, but there was a buzzing of excitement around the cooking area while we all were getting supper. Of course I didn't get acquainted right away but soon after I did I asked one of the women what all the whispering was about and she said, "Haven't you heard"? I said "Heard what?" and she said "There are bandits in this camp. Three of them came in on horseback and they must be staying all night because they took the saddles off their horses and were cooking their supper over a camp fire near a grove of trees just at the edge of the camp." Well if the night before had been bad, this was worse because we figured everybody would be robbed before morning. We were carrying quite a bit of money so I did something, and decided to make up four packs of money and pin it inside of the 4 childrens clothes. I figured they wouldn't rob a child and if we gave them what amount we had in our pockets, they might take it for granted that we were as poor as we looked. Well to make a long story short, no one was shot or robbed that night and the next morning early the bad men had gone, but we were to see them again before long. Anyway, after breakfast we got most of our trappings loaded up and I went to the little store at the edge of the camp and replenished our food supply which was quite a problem at times. However, by this time I had become an expert at camp fire cooking and bought only enough food for a day or two at a time because of the heat. If we came to a place where there were apples or grapes, that was a big treat, otherwise we ate canned fruit. My old can opener really got a work out on that trip. After we left Cedar City the country around was quite high and some of the hills were high and steep and long but that little Model T was still doing a good job. We had just climbed an especially long hill or mountain when we got up to the summit, what do you think we saw? The 3 men who had been in camp that night before, sitting on horse back by the side of the road. I said to my husband, "Well, this is where we get robbed" and I was saying a silent prayer as we approached them, but our fears were short lived because they just

tipped their sombreros and said "Howdy" as we drove by. If they were highwaymen they were looking for a more prosperous outfit than ours.

Page 6

Now we were headed toward St. George and the road was very hard to travel on in places. Some times it was in a dry creek bed or a dry gully and sometimes the sand was so deep we almost get bogged down, and there were not many travelers to call on for help. Many times we wondered if we were really on the Arrowhead Route, then all at once there would be the yellow sign of Arrowhead fastened to a twisted post. Off in the distance at times we could see shacks and wondered who might live out there but there were Indian reservations around because we saw sheep and goats occasionally and knew they didn't belong to cattle men. We also saw hundreds of beautiful wild horses and occasionally some wild burrows. At one time there must have been a real bad flood in that part of the country because of the myriad of stones of all sizes and so white they just shined in the sun. In places the route we were following ran thru what, seemed to be old creek beds or draws, as they were called, and the going was rough. One day we thought we saw a lake off in the distance and wondered if we would be near it, but it just turned out to be a mirage, made by the hot sun shining on the sand. But that same day we did have some good luck. We came upon a flowing well, just a pipe in the ground with water coming out of it. It was real cold water but we couldn't drink it, for a sign said "Not safe for use", but we drove the car into the wet sand to cool off the tires and the children waded in their bare feet. We stayed about an hour and enjoyed it. That was the only place we had ever seen a snake. I don't know what kind it was but we didn't get too close to it. There were lots of prairie dogs or gophers and little black lizards darting around among the rocks. We didn't quite make it into St. George that day but stayed over night at a little wayside camp at a place called Leeds, because darkness comes early in that part of the country and we sure didn't want to be watching for road signs at night. It wasn't far into St. George the next morning. There were lots of people in that place, because of some big celebration. If I remember rightly, it was the linking up of two railroads. There were places to buy meals so that was a treat. We had a good dinner, which we ate on outside tables, and bought enough for our supper where ever we would happen to be that night.

Well, we left there in early P.M. and before night fall we had been in three different states that day – Utah, Arizona, and Nevada. We stayed that night in a little hamlet called Mesquite, just across the border in Nevada. Seemed like the farther we went the hotter the weather and dryer the soil became and before we left Mesquite we were told that the nearest place beyond where we could get gasoline and safe drinking water was 100 miles so we had to have a full tank of gas and 2 full water bags. Gas was 45 Cents a gallon and 25 Cents a gallon for water. That was the only place we encountered those kind of prices. Our next stop was a wild west type of place with board walks and hitching posts for horses and a number of one and two story shacks, which today is called Las Vegas, and we stayed there over night but not in the shacks. We were really tired because we had traveled thru some very hot places that day. One place was called the Valley of Fire, so we didn't build a camp fire but bought some food at a ""so-called" restaurant, and ate it in our tent.

Page 7

Now we had traveled all those many miles and had never been in a rain storm but that night a wind and rain storm came up and blew our tent partly over. The trouble was, that the sand was so deep the tent stakes couldn't hold but we survived and was glad to get out of that place. By the way, we could have bought all the land we wanted there for \$1.25 an acre - but who wanted just sage brush and sand? Oh! if we had only known! We could have had a few acres of very valuable land. Our next stop was to be Needles, Calif, which was about 100 miles south and turned out to be rather rugged country. At one time there had been lots of prospecting for

silver in that area and we came to a place called Searchlight where a few people lived and tried their luck in the old diggings. We stopped there for a while to ask a few questions. A real nice lady had a sort of restaurant, and boarding house, and she told my husband that if he was interested, he could buy a mine for very little and might be lucky, but as I said before, we were headed for points farther west. There was very little habitation from there on to Needles and that day we seemed to have the trail pretty much to ourselves. We were all a tired bunch, mostly from the heat, and we were all so tanned it would have been hard to tell us from the few Indians we met occasionally. Some were friendly and others just looked us over, but none talked much and some lived in huts made of mud and grass, and I wondered where they found food. It surely was desolate country. We finally made it to Needles by late evening and no relief from the heat. We stayed there overnight. As I think back, we must have been a rugged family to have withstood all those days and weeks of not knowing what the next day might bring.

From Needles we headed west to our next expected stop which was Barstow, Calif. From Needles on to Barstow, today, is Route 66 and there was no hard road then, until we reached Barstow and I couldn't call that a hard road but it was better than sand. Now we were nearing the end of our journey and I am sure that not only we as passengers, but our little Model T Ford, was glad to be getting on firm ground again and we were anxious to get going so we didn't tarry long in that town but while we were getting gas a man came by selling oranges. He had them in 12 quart buckets for 25 cents a bucket full, so my husband said "Just dump them on the back floor". Now I want to tell you, that became a juicy mess in a little while, but I couldn't deprive those youngsters of their pleasure, although I had to limit their consumption. There were no orange trees around there that we could see, but when we got down in the valley below San Bernadino the orange groves were everywhere and I thought our gang would be so excited at seeing oranges growing and hanging ripe on the trees, but I guess they were too full of oranges to give them much heed. After all that sand and heat we had been driving through for the past week or so, that valley, with its grape vineyards and orange groves was really a beautiful sight. After 53 years it is still very clear in my mind. We were amazed to see such beautiful homes and along every street the trailing geraniums were planted right out to the curb. I kept asking my husband to drive slow so I couldn't miss anything but we were so near to the end of our destination, I guess he was more interested in that, so we just kept going and finally would up in the heart of Los Angeles about eleven o'clock at night. There wasn't

Page 8

much traffic but the city was brilliantly lighted and that was a great sight for the children. We were temporarily lost until a policeman came to our rescue and directed us toward Beverly Hills and from there we got onto Wilshire Blvd., which we followed until we came to a canyon road, one of many, called Beverly Glen and that was where my relatives lived - about a mile up that canyon and they lived in the last house.

They were rudely awakened at some time after midnight by a car load of weary travelers. Of course they were expecting us but not at that time of night. I hadn't seen my brother and his wife for 12 years and they had never met my husband or family but we soon got acquainted. There was one obstacle. They were in the process of building a new house and it was only partly finished and they were living in a tent house - that is a wood floor and wood sides up about 4 feet and rafters covered with canvas. Lots of people out there lived in them at that time but it wasn't big enough for all of us. We could have bunked down in the unfinished house, but that wasn't for me, as they had killed 2 rattlesnakes in it a day or two before so we just spread our tent on the ground and slept there for the rest of the night. We were all tired enough to sleep anywhere, except with rattlers. Anyway we enjoyed a good home cooked breakfast the next morning and got the desert dust washed off ourselves. Now we were Californians and had to get busy and find a place to live and that came about the very next day, and we

were lucky enough to find a place in the same area where my brother lived. We only had 2 rooms but that seemed like a mansion after what we had been living in for more than 3 weeks. We went to a second hand store and bought a couple of bed outfits, a table and chairs and an oil stove and dishes. There were built-in cupboards in the house, also an ice refrigerator, but no inside plumbing. Our water system was an outside well, an old oaken bucket type, which was alright for laundry purposes,, but we had to buy water at 10 cents per gallon, in 5 gallon jugs, every other day for house use. I also bought a couple of wash tubs and a board. We had to heat the wash water on the oil stove, also bath water. The floors were bare so not hard to keep clean. There was a screened porch where we could sit out in the cool evenings and watch what was going on around us. We had nice neighbors, who were very friendly and our young ones soon got acquainted with others their age and all was well for the time being.

We hadn't lived there very long, when our landlord, an old Swedish bachelor, took pity on us and built on another bed room, so then we had lots of room. Within a week of arriving we were settled and my husband was working 5 1/2 days a week at \$10.00 per day. In the meantime another of my brothers, Jack and his wife Cora and little girl Irene, came down from Eugene, Oregon. He was a plasterer too and also worked for my brother Jim, so it was another big get-acquainted time and they moved into a house near us so we were all one big family and really had good times together.

We lived only 12 miles from the ocean and Santa Monica beach, and Sautelle was our nearest shopping center, which wasn't to be compared

Page 9

to what we have today. In the Glen where we lived there was a grocery store and meat market, also a gas station, or I should say a gas pump, so things were not too bad. Everything was going smoothly and we had begun to feel like residents. The weather in that area was not too warm because we always had the ocean breeze and nights were cool. There was a cottage next door, which at that time was quite famous. It was owned by a movie actress who had shot and killed her lover not too long before we arrived there and I think every one on the west coast must have known about it for Sunday was a big day for sight seers. A lady who lived across the street was the care taker and took people thru. Nothing much to see except a dark red stain on the floor. There was a long court trial about it so I guess it was real.

Now by this time I was getting acquainted with Calif. Poison oak seemed to be everywhere on the hills and most of our young gang were susceptible to it. It acts the same as poison ivy and there was also what the natives called "Dobyitch" but it was really impetigo and that was worse than poison oak, so I made quite a number of trips to the doctor. There was very little grass where we lived and the children had to play on sandy ground. There were lots of families lived in that mile of canyon and I think big Airdale dogs must have been popular at that time because most every house had one or two chained to a box and some were very cross. One Sunday I heard a car going by and a man was calling to everybody to get inside as there was a mad dog on the loose and sure enough there was, and it came down the street right near our house, one of our neighbors had a very large Airedale dog and he pulled his big box out onto the street after the mad dogy but by this time some one had shot the dog and the police patrol took it away, so all the excitement was over, but not before a little girl had been bitten. Another of our neighbors had a small farmette and raised goats and sold the milk. They also made goat cheese which was very good. They were real nice people and their name was Ralph. They had a girl about the age of our girls. Her name was Edith and she lived there with her grandparents. There also was a boy named Vernon Beatty who lived nearby and that was the sum total of our youngsters playmates, but they had good times together, most of the time. Occasionally there were differences of opinion.

We hadn't been there long when our 4 contracted the chicken-pox but Carl was the only one who was real sick. He also had a very bad accident one day at play. All the gang were playing at a place where a big pipe layed across a ravine and they were walking across there and he fell off and down among some broken glass and almost cut his big toe off. Another trip to the doctor. It seemed like everything happened to Carl.

The silent movies were at their height in those days and the movie colony in and around Hollywood was really glamorous. No income tax in those days. We did lots of sightseeing on weekends with my brother Jack and his family and the greatest pleasure was going to the Santa Monica beach on Saturday with our supper or sometimes stopping at a

Page 10

Chinese restaurant for chop suey supper. My husband, Bill, and my brothers worked on a Wallace Beery mansion in the Hollywood hills -also one for Harold Lloyd and many other beautiful homes while we lived there. It seemed like the first month or so went by so fast and now it was time for school. The 2 boys were not school age but our girls went by van to Beverly Hills where a lot of the children from the Movie Colony went to school.

In the fall when the English walnuts were ready to pick there were lots of walnuts left on the ground after the pickers were finished and people were allowed to go into the orchards and glean, or pick nuts off the ground so we took advantage of that and picked about a bushel free of charge. Such things as that don't happen anymore. I remember a fruit truck which came up through the canyon where we lived once a week and I could get a peck or more of grapes for 25 Cents and oranges and apricots for about the same price. We learned early where to buy to save money. For instance, if I bought naval oranges in the markets, the price was 70 cents a dozen but there were trucks from the packing houses stationed at different points along the main highways where we could buy ripe oranges at 2 dozen for 50 cents or sometimes less. Those were the ones which were too ripe to pack and ship but they really were good. Just about 1/2 mile from where we lived there were acres and acres of tomato and lima bean fields. At harvest time we could buy a peck of tomatoes for 25 cents and when the lima beans were dry and ready for harvest the big mowing machines cut them and they were threshed out right in the fields and after that was all done and the thresher had moved out people could glean there for beans which had spilled out on the ground. My neighbor, Mrs. Ralph, and I each picked up 25 lbs. of lima beans one day. So it paid to be on the alert, and cost of living was nothing compared with today's prices. After we had lived there in the canyon for several months, my brother Frank and his wife Jean, who lived in Burbank, which was on the other side of the ocean range of mountains, induced us to move over there near where they lived. We finally did but that was a bad move because we had been used to the cooler ocean breeze and over there we got only desert breeze, which was hot and we all got sick from the heat and the big red ants seemed to be every where so we only stayed one month and moved back over to Beverly Glen. This time, however, we moved in with my brother Jack and his wife. Now their house wasn't too big so we set up 2 tents in the yard and put up our beds in them and cooked and ate in one room of their house, so everything worked out fine. The lady we rented from was a Mrs. Smith who lived with a couple of cats and a little toy dog named "Taddy Bows". She had a couple of orange trees growing in her back yard and she had our youngsters pick the oranges for her and gave them a bushel for their labor. One day she came to our door and asked if she could borrow my "man child" until she could get her keys which she had locked in the car in the garage. I wasn't sure what she meant by "man child" but finally realized she meant Carl. He got them for her and I can tell you that caused a lot of laughter around our place for many days and sometimes yet, it is mentioned with glee. One Saturday PM. we all decided to take a shopping trip to Sautelle, our nearest shopping center. There were all kinds of stores

Page 11

there and of course the youngsters liked to shop around. But there were some special things which attracted Irene, Jack and Cora's girl, who was only 3 yrs. old, and her parents thought she shouldn't have it and right then pandemonium broke loose. She kicked and screamed until all the clerks were wondering what had happened. Her mother couldn't console her so her father decided he would try but to no avail. We finally got out onto the sidewalk and started across the street to a place where we could get an ice cream cone but when we were about half way across the street car was coming and Irene layed down on the tracks and the motorman on the street car was clanging the bell and Jack said to Cora "Mama can't you do something with this baby?" so "Mama" used a few smacks of persuasion which got us all safely across the street . The street car motorman got a big laugh out of that per-formance - in fact we all laughed up our sleeves.

Sautelle was noted for the Old Soldiers Home which was there and the cemetery was so full of graves that it was really a sad place to drive through. All of the streets were lined with date palms, but it wasn't the time of year to pick dates so all we could do was look. They hung in great bunches and looked so tempting but there was a lot of processing to be done in the packing houses before they were good to eat.

While we lived there it wasn't too far to Mexico so one week end my brother Jack and his wife and Bill and I farmed our youngsters out among our relatives and we took off for a 3 day trip to Tijuana and that was an experience of our stay in Calif. The weather was terribly hot in places inland from the ocean and at that time there was a bad outbreak of hoof and mouth disease among the cattle and every time we drove across a county line we all had to get out of the car and walk thru a shallow ditch of disinfectant and drive the car thru and there was no getting; by without that process because there were guards with rifles standing on both sides of the road. In some places the affected cattle were lined up along dug trenches and just shot and rolled in and covered over. Our milk consumption was very light. No one was allowed to sell milk unless they had a government inspection sticker. We finally got into Mexico and what a place it was. About every other door way was a chicken fight or a booze joint and other sorts of places. There was one very large building where one could buy anything and if you had the money, everything, but you had to pay duty on anything over \$100.00 at the border. In a way I was glad we went but I was glad to get back into good old U.S.A. On our way home, we visited an old Spanish mission called Capistrano where the swallows come back every year at the same time. We signed our names in a great book in the entrance and were shown through by guards and nuns. That was one of the nice things of our trip. San Pedro Harbor on the ocean was an interesting place. We stayed there over night and visited on some of the big ships in dry dock. They surely were well equipped for business. It was the time of year when the cactus was in bloom and the hill sides were simply beautiful with color. We finally got home safely and had many memories of the trip.

There was another interesting thing took place while we lived there. It was the day that the first around the world flyers took off from

Page 12

Los Angeles and they came right over our house. When Christmas time arrived we were wondering how our little ones would take Christmas w no snow and no Santa or reindeer, but we managed to get a pine tree and some home-made and store bought trimmings and fix up quite a Christmassy room. Then my brother got some sleigh bells some where and we dressed him up to look sort of like a Santa and while all were quiet in another room he came in jingling the bells and putting the gifts under the tree, so after all we really had a happy Christmas. The next day our son Carl found the bells in the garage and he won-dered why they were left there. He thought every Santa Claus needed bells. A while after the holidays, we decided to take a few days on a camping trip up into the mountains where there was a nice lake, so we loaded up our camping gear and took off. We had planned on

staying a week but I developed a bad tooth ache so 4 days was about as long as I could stand that so we sent back home and it is a good thing we did or we may have been marooned up there for several weeks because the evening of the day we left, a forest fire broke out in the canyon. We had to travel through to get home and our men folks would have had to stay to help fight fire and it was a bad one. Anyway, my aching tooth helped us out of a bad situation and I had it pulled the day after we got home.

By early spring the building spree had slowed down a little and things began to tighten up and the banks quit loaning money for the building trade and there was nothing else in our men folks' line, except a job now and then so we decided to move out of that area. My brother Jack and his wife and little girl decided to go back to Oregon and wanted us to go there with them. By now I had begun to feel like a gypsy but anyway we went Eugene with Jack and his family. My brother Jim and his wife stayed on in Calif for a few years because of health (he had asthma) and Frank and his wife lived their years out in Calif. Before we left Calif, we traded our little old Ford for a big Nash car which gave us plenty of room, but Jack kept his Ford. We traveled up the coast route and stayed one night and day at Pismo Beach on the ocean. Dug for clams and had several good clam meals. We just took our time on the trip and enjoyed every place. There seemed to be lots of people on the move and there were lots of camp grounds and everyone seemed so friendly and many yarns and stories passed through the crowd. We managed to get to the summit of the Sisque Mts. between Calif, and Oregon but on the way up the mountain we met a caravan of cars and among them was the One Millionth Ford car. It was quite a sight. So many cars and people and most of all noise. Every one blowing horns. I thought we were meeting a circus. We stayed for about half a day on the summit viewing the beautiful scenery. The trees were so high they seemed to reach the sky. But time seemed to be always calling for us to move on.

There wasn't too much excitement after we got into Oregon but one night we slept on the ground at Grant's Pass in the midst of tall timber. The next morning a forest ranger came by and gave us a real "what, for" and asked us if we realized that we could have been attacked by grizzly bears, so after that we made sure we reached a safe camping ground. Our destination in Oregon was Eugene but while we were traveling thru the mountains in southern Oregon we had some car trouble - blew a

Page 13

cylinder head gasket and had to stop at a place called Arbuckle for repairs. It was a small place and my brother and Bill had to take Jack's car and go about 15 miles to find the part for our car so the rest of us stayed near-by in a camp where they held rodeos. There had been one there the day before and we noticed 3 youngsters picking up things under the grandstand and eating them and then going to garbage cans and eating out of them so we wondered where they came from and who they belonged to. We investigated and found that their mother was sick and lying in the back of a pickup truck and they had nothing to eat because they had run out of money after leaving Calif, on their way home to some where in Washington. The mother said her husband had found work that week in the almond orchards but wouldn't get any pay for a week or so. My sister-in-law and I went to the only store we could find and bought, enough food to last them several days. Those kids were really hungry and I have often wondered what happened to them or if they ever reached their destination. The mother had a very young baby in the truck with her. We reported them to the people at the store but they didn't seem too much concerned, but perhaps they did look into it.

We went on to Eugene where my brother Erwin owned a home but he had lost his wife during the past winter and his 2 children were with their grandparents at McKenzie Bridge, Oregon and he was working away in a logging camp. We stayed at the home. That was in Sept. 1924 and the deer season was open in Oregon and I had an urge to go hunting. Bill and I left our brood with Jack and Cora and took off for tall timber land. We drove up the McKenzie highway for about 60 miles and left our car with an old fisherman who had a shack near the river. We crossed the river on a hand propelled ferry and started up the mountain. It was about a mile to the top where we were to camp overnite, There were several old logger cabins there and we thought we could spend the night in one of them, which was only a dream because pack rats had taken possession so we built a big bonfire out side and cooked bur supper of bacon, bread and coffee and spread our blankets beside the fire and decided to get some rest. This was another dream for about eleven o clock at night it started to rain and it seemed like all of the clouds had let loose so we moved out, put our gear in under a lean-to porch of one of the cabins and proceeded to try again to get some rest. Not those pack rats smelled the bacon and they just deviled us all night. By morning the clouds were so heavy and the rain so hard we couldn't see 100 ft. in any direction so we stayed in the cabin and fought and killed rats for an hour or so. The clouds finally lifted and Bill decided to try his luck at finding a buck but I wasn't that brave. I stayed at the cabin and kept a fire going to get dried. Finally Bill came back wet and tired but no deer so as it was now nearly noon we decided to eat and start back down the mountain. We followed a log shoot down to the river to keep from getting lost. We came out O.K. and found the ferry and started to cross the river. The salmon had started to spawn and had dug up sand bars out in the middle of the river and we had a hard time getting across but finally made it. We found our car, gave the old fisherman a tip and started to Eugene. All I got out of that was a real bad cold and a lot of experience and a sort of respect for pack rats because they felt they were the real owners and were being invaded by out-siders.

Page 14

Well, Bill tried to find work in Eugene but logging seemed to be the only thing in sight and he wasn't cut out for that kind of work so we finally decided to go back to Penna. as the coal business had picked up some in the time we were gone. We began to get ready for another long trip, which I dreaded and it was getting late in the year to start out over the Rockies.

On the 2nd day of October, 1924 we said good-bye to Oregon relatives and friends and started out for Penna. We traveled north to Portland then up the Columbia highway and thru the Blue Mts. and on into Pendleton where we stayed the second night out. Our next stop was Baker, Oregon and we stayed there over night. It was pretty cold for camping but we had warm blankets and a good tent and any way by this time we were quite used to roughing it. The next night we entered Idaho at a place called Fruitland - a small town near Payette. We stayed there over night and stocked up on groceries and some warmer clothes the next day, then on again. Idaho was not too heavily populated in those times and the miles seemed long but we made it to Mountain Home that night. We bought our supper in a restaurant but ate in the tent. The wind was quite cold but as yet so snow in that area. The next day we had pretty fair roads and got as far as Snowville just on the border between Idaho and Utah. The next day we reached Evanston on the border of Utah and Wyoming and now we felt that we were on the trail homeward. We didn't stay there but went on to Green River, traveling on old Route 30. The country was barren and dry but we were running into snow and cold weather and after we left Namsutter we had rain and we finally came to a place between Rawlins and Medicine Bow where there was about 20 miles of new road being built. By the time we had fought the mud for 20 miles it was beginning to get dark and we were still 20 miles from Laramie where we had intended to spend the night. We decided to get off the road at the first place on the prairie where we could find dry land so we did and a couple more cars pulled off there also. We built a fire of sage brush and got some supper rigged up and all stayed there that night. We were the only ones who had

children and of course the other travelers were up and gone before we had breakfast. Anyway we finally got packed up and ready to start out again in the muddy road but then things began to happen. My husband got in the car and tried to start it but not one sound or movement so he figured the battery had gone dead so he flagged down a tourist who was headed toward Laramie and told him he needed a hot shot to start the battery. The man said he could go with him but would have to find a way back so that meant that the children and I had to stay there alone, which wasn't a very pleasant thought, without a building in sight. We had water and enough grub for a couple of meals so he took off and left us there miles from nowhere. That was about 11 o'clock in the morning and with so few people traveling he didn't get back until 4 o'clock in the P.M. There was nothing to see except big rolling hills and sage brush. Occasionally a car came by and stopped to see if they could be of any help but I always politely refused and told them my husband had gone for help and would be back soon. Of course I expected wolves or coyotes to attack us at any time. I kept a close look-out for anything that moved because I had a gun and I kept the children close by. As I watched those hills I thought I was seeing a mirage because I imagined this one big mountain was slowly

Page 15

moving and as I watched it I came to the conclusion that it really was and it seemed to be moving right in our direction. I almost became panicky but as it kept getting closer I knew it wasn't the hill moving but something was moving on it. I decided it must be a great herd of sheep, which it was. I gathered the children into the car. I had heard stories of how rough sheep herders and cow pokes were in the west so as the herd came closer I got my little old 38 and took my stand along side the car. There were about, 5000 sheep and several herders and dogs. When the herders saw us they called to the dogs and herded those sheep off in another direction. After a while the chuck wagon came in below us and prepared to stay for a while. He unhitched the horses and hobbled them out to eat and rest. I knew he would be there for a while so I kept close watch on the children - not so much because I was afraid of the sheep dogs, but they didn't come near. They were very well-trained and knew every command of the old fellow who was the cook and the herders.

The chuck wagon was only a short distance from us and the cook came up to our car and asked if we would like to have some sour dough biscuits. I said that sounded good so he took the children down to the chuck wagon near us and gave them each two biscuits. They were real good and we had some jam to put on them and they really hit the spot. The old fellow told me that the sheep would stay in that valley and eat until the snow began to come then move on to higher ground. I wondered where they stayed during the winter months when the heavy snows came. Well, we finally got word to a garage in Laramie to send a tow car out after us and it was dark by the time that thing got to us because of the muddy road but we got hooked on to it and started for Laramie. We still had troubles because that tow car had 2 flat tires on the way and the 2 drivers and Bill had to work in the mud to get them fixed and decided to go on and drive the rest of the night because light snow was falling and the man at the garage said it would probably get worse by morning and advised us to go on. In places we had to follow snow plows but arrived safely in Cheyenne about 7 o'clock that morning. We planned on having a good warm breakfast there after such a harrowing twenty-four hours but Mildred was sick and we couldn't take her into a restaurant so Bill got us hot chocolate and hot coffee and sandwiches and we all got cleaned up in a nice clean rest room. We spent about 3 hours there but; it, was quite cold and we were anxious to get moving on to where it would be warmer. The weather didn't get too much warmer until we reached Nebraska. There it seemed the wind never stopped blowing and when we reached Lincoln Bill had such a cold I thought he would have pneumonia. I sent him to find a doctor and get some medicine after we located a camping area near a railroad track. I built 3 camp fires before I got one to burn. The wind was so strong it just blew them away. There was an old discarded saw mill near by so we could get plenty of wood. We tried to put the tent up but that was

impossible. We had intended to stay there that night but decided to move on after supper before we were blown away. We drove on to a place called Carroll and stayed there that night. We were getting out of the snow belt and the weather was warmer, The next morning we ate breakfast in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Nothing of importance happened that day and we reached Fort Wayne, Ind. that

Page 16

nite and had a nice camp ground where I could cook our supper on an outside cook oven.

Now we were nearing home and the next evening we had reached my sister's home in Sharon, Penna. Back in good old Penna. and glad to be there. We had been on the road for 2 weeks and a day and sure were glad to get out of the car. We were sun-burned and wind-blown and looked like a bunch of Indians. It had been a rough trip home but not as bad as the trip west, where we really suffered some days from heat and dust as we crossed the desert. We stayed at my sister's home for a couple of weeks and it was nearing the small game hunting season. My brother, Plummer, and his wife and little girl, June and another brother, Ralph, all arrived from New York the next day for the hunting season. My sister and her husband had 3 children (Bob had arrived while we were away). With all of these people and the 6 of us we really bulged the house. We all pitched in and helped with the buying of groceries and cooking and slept where ever there were beds or floor space. We had a good time with us telling of our experiences and their trying to believe everything they were hearing. The men hunted and rabbits were plentiful. We had a roaster full of rabbit most every nite for supper. However the good times had to come to an end and after 2 weeks my brothers went back home to New York and we had to get out and hunt a place to live. We went back to Jackson Center and found a house for rent on the Barnes farm so we got busy and bought some furniture and moved in and got the 3 older children started in school about the middle of November. It was the Jones country school and just a short distance from our home. It was a bad school year for Mildred and Carl for they were not used to the cold weather and had bealed ears and colds half the winter. Then Billy got pneumonia in February so I had my hands full with sick children but by spring everything was in fair shape. Bill was working in Grove City and we were sort of living again. We lived there 2 years then moved to a larger house on the McMillan farm and lived there 3 years. After that we bought the farm where we have lived for the past 49 years. Our 4 children are all married. Bill lives in Sacramento, Calif. Carl lives in Hubbard, Ohio, Mildred is a widow now and lives in Grove City and Betty lives in Jackson Center. I lost my husband, Bill, on August of 1975 but I am still on the farm. It really isn't a farm any more for 50 acres have been stripped for coal and the other 30 acres are planted in pine trees. The house is in good shape and over 100 years old. Also, there are 2 big lakes well stocked with fish which give lots of pleasure to our family and friends in the fishing season. Now I have come to the end of 54 years of remembering a trip my husband and family and I took to California and back, which lasted 16 months. I am nearing my 84th birthday and I hope my children and their children will read this and compare life in those days with how things are now.