

BIG SUR
FOREST SERVICE
DAYS
1942-1943

By Irma Oksen Reaves

To my husband, Ted.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This little story was written mainly for my future generations -- to help them visualize the beauty and grandeur of the Big Sur country -- where the Santa Lucia Mountains line the rugged coast of the pounding Pacific.

My thanks and my love go to my devoted family, my very dear friends of years past, Esther and Hans Ewoldsen, and to all who shared my interest in putting together my memories of those happy and treasured days in the beautiful Big Sur country.

The incidents and descriptions are just as I recall them -- relating back to the early 1940s, during the World War II years.

Irma Oksen Reaves
Green Valley
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INTRODUCTION

1929

I consider myself very fortunate to have lived in the early days of the 20th century. Although travel was slow and visits to places of interest were few and far between, the enchantment of these remote spots were imbedded deeply in my memory.

I can recall the spectacular beauty of the narrow, dirt, coastal road leading from Monterey to Big Sur; winding in and out, following the surging waves along the steep, rocky cliffs at the ocean's edge. At a few places the road was practically covered with sand, blown there by the chilly sea breeze. The sand along the sides of the road was bedecked with lupin, beach verbena and succulent plants.

The Old Coast Road left the water's edge near Bixby Creek. The old wooden bridge that forded the creek was rustic and picturesque. The road followed the heavily wooded Bixby and Serra Canyons to be devoured in the wilderness. After reaching the top of the mountain, this narrow and crooked road wound its way down into the Little Sur Canyon. A mountain stream skirted the road at various places. This wooded area proved to be a very enjoyable spot to relax and quench one's thirst with the cold, clear, mountain water.

The road continued on for a distance, leading to the top of a grass covered hill. From there it led down into the Big Sur Valley, near the Molera cattle ranch, where the river emptied into the ocean. About four miles further south, Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park began.

The Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park was named for John and Florence Pfeiffer, parents of my dear friend, Esther Pfeiffer Ewoldsen. John and Florence Pfeiffer donated one half of the price of the land. This was a State Park requirement at that time (around 1934) that one half of the land price must be donated before the purchase was made -- donations by organizations, individuals or otherwise.

To justly describe the beauty of the Old Coast Road is an impossibility for me. Each season presented a different picture of this spectacular terrain.

In the earlier years it took approximately half a day to reach Big Sur from Monterey over the Old Coast Road by automobile. The road was rebuilt in later years and most of the dizzying curves that followed the coastline were eliminated. No longer did the road lead back into the mountainous area. New modern bridges were constructed. However, the old mountain road is still in use, and it is a gratifying and rewarding route for lovers of nature.

The new road definitely shortened the distance and travel time to Big Sur. People from throughout the state and elsewhere found it a most delightful drive, drinking in the beauty of the rugged seashore and picnicking in the majestic redwoods at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park.

With our present fast mode of travel, I can't help but feel that we are missing much of the beauty and details of God's marvelous cre- ation.

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1 -- ENROUTE TO BIG SUR IN 1942

Through our associations at Arroyo Seco Ted learned that Mr. Anderson, the District Ranger for the Monterey Division of the Los Padres Forest, was looking for a capable man to fill the position of Forest Guard (Patrolman) at Big Sur. "Andy," as everyone called him, heard about Ted through mutual acquaintances.

In the spring of 1942 Andy contacted Ted, asking him if he would be interested in working for the U.S. Forest Service. Knowing about the Big Sur Patrolman job being available, Ted had previously given this matter some serious consideration. It was not only the lure of that beautiful and fascinating country that interested him but also the fact that he would be working with horses and mules. Ted always had a love for nature and for animals. To be able to ride and patrol the trails of this mountainous wilderness was not only appealing but would be rewarding in many ways. However, being war years, much time would be spent on patrol, both in the forest and along the coast. The entire Pacific coast was very vulnerable to fires, invasion and bombing.

Ted consulted the family in regards to this venture. It sounded very exciting to us all. Andy's description of the job, the living quarters, and even a chicken pen for our small flock of chickens, was enticing.

The family could remain at the Forest Guard Station (our living quarters) for the entire year if we so desired. However, Ted would be away part of the time during the winter months, helping to build lookout stations, aircraft warning service (AWS stations, putting up forest boundary signs, repairing telephone lines, clearing trails and whatever was necessary to be done in the forest, until fire season started the following spring.

The Pfeiffer School House at Big Sur was only a "stone's throw" from our quarters -- just the stock corral between. It would be very handy for the little ones. It was almost impossible for us to turn down such a golden opportunity. To me it sounded like a paid vacation.

World War II was in full progress now and our country was fighting on two fronts. Dependable manpower was limited on the home front. Many of the young men were in the service for their country or in defense jobs for Uncle Sam. Others were attending college if they were allowed an exemption from military duty.

During the first part of June, Andy notified us that he would like Ted to report for work at Big Sur on June 15th. That worked out well in our favor as school would be out for summer vacation by then. Also, that gave Ted's present employer ample time to get a replacement. Too, there were some loose ends to tie up at home, so to speak.

It was necessary that Ted have his own horse, a saddle, and the necessary tack on this new job. Also, official uniforms. Ted had all the necessities except the uniforms and horse. It seemed like such a limited time to find a suitable animal. He combed the livestock ads in the paper but there

were no horses listed for sale. He immediately inserted an ad of his own and received two answers. The first horse that Ted looked at was almost ready for the tallow works. The second was even more disappointing. This "broom tail" looked more like a billy goat than a horse and the price was unreasonable.

Ted knew that surely there must be a suitable horse for him somewhere in the county. The days were passing fast and time was becoming limited. Just five days before he was to report to Big Sur he received a call from Bill Knapp saying, "I've got just the animal for you, Ted." It seemed difficult for Ted to become too enthusiastic over that call as he already had two disappointments. However, he had to have a horse.

The following evening after work, Ted drove out to Bill's ranch to check out the gelding. When he saw Buck (that was the horse's name) he fell in love with him at first sight. Buck was an American saddle bred horse, dun (bordering on buckskin) in color. He seemed to respond to Ted's affection very readily. After checking Buck over and riding him around Bill's ranch, Ted knew this was the animal for him.

Ted gave Bill a check for the asking price. He then drove the car home to get his saddle. I rode out to Bill's ranch with Ted and drove "Betsy," our 1936 Ford, home while Ted rode Buck to Green Valley. Buck had a most even gait and a joy to ride but a bit headstrong. He had a habit of clamping the bit in his teeth so he could go where he chose.

Two days later, and just three days before Ted was to report to Big Sur, Bill Knapp knocked on our door, appearing terribly disturbed. He asked to buy Buck back. He even offered Ted a higher price than Ted had paid him. Seems as though Bill's wife had not been consulted before he made the deal. Consequently, she was very upset.

That really put Ted "on the spot." Being such a short time before Ted had to leave, he felt it impossible to relinquish Buck. He explained the situation to Bill. Bill understood and left with a heavy heart. At least he knew that his horse would have a good home and special care. (In the years following, our son, Bob, sometimes stopped by Bill's electric shop in Watsonville. Bill always asked about Buck and admitted that selling him was one of the biggest mistakes he had ever made.)

Our family had increased in size during the past year. We now had three of our little nephews in our care due to a separation in their family. Also Nana, my mother, was making her home with us due to her failing health. Charles Herbert (Chuck, as we all called him) also lived with us in our big Green Valley home. He had accepted a job at Arroyo Seco this year as caretaker.

Ted borrowed a double horse trailer from our Green Valley neighbor, Stanley Phillips. In order to pull this trailer with our Ford, it was necessary to have an extra piece welded onto our trailer hitch. This we had done at Everett Mollenhauer's garage in Freedom.

Ted and Bob took Buck down to Big Sur the morning before we were to leave. Buck occupied

one com- partment in the trailer. On the other side our little goat, Bambi, was secured, along with Ted's sad- dle, tack, and all the necessary gear that he felt might be needed in caring for stock.

Bob remained at Big Sur. He had previously accepted a staff job there at the Boy Scout summer camp, Camp Esselen (named after the Amer- ican Indians who inhabited the Big Sur area). Ted came back home that night to return the horse trailer.

Now the day arrived for the family to leave for Big Sur. I'm sure that all our hearts were a- flutter. Our little utility trail- er was packed to capacity with ne- cessities and food. We even took Grandma Plaskett's white, canvas tent to use during the summer as the Forest Service quarters were limited to one bedroom, a living room, and a kitchen. On the top of our tarp-covered load was our chicken coop containing thirteen chickens and Winnie, our duck. Andy had informed us that a chicken pen was located in the back yard.

Nana, Skippy (Ronnie), Sonny (Lloyd, our eldest nephew) and Corky (Ralph, our youngest nephew) sat in the back seat. Skippy held his gold fish bowl on his lap with his pet gold fish floundering ar- ound in a limited amount of water. Jimmy (our middle nephew) and I sat in the front seat, with Ted driv- ing. I held my canary, in his covered cage, on my lap with Rip (our hound dog) at my feet. Need- less to say, we were loaded.

As we left our Green Valley home a nostalgic feeling overtook me. I knew we would be returning occasionally to care for our place, but everything now looked so de- serted. Not even a chicken running around the yard. No sign of life on the little old ranch. Well, as the saying goes, "No matter how humble your home may be, go away but keep the key."

Alas, we were on our way. A most beautiful sunny morn -- that is, until we neared Moss Landing. Seems as though one can usually encounter fog in that area.

Many of the fields that were formerly planted in edible produce were now filled with green guyule (pronounced wy-oolie) plants. Guy- ule was a substitute used for rub- ber products during the war years. The government cornered most of the rubber for military purposes.

We turned off the Salinas road onto the Monterey Road at Castro- ville. The Moss Landing fog was still hovering over us. When cros- sing the vehicle bridge, next to the railroad trestle bridge over the Salinas River, Ted and I re- called our courting days some thir- teen years earlier. (Ted, my mother, little Bobby and I had camped on the sandy banks of this river just below the trestle. The weird, hollow sound of the freight trains crossing the railroad tres- tle at night still echoed in my ears. It was a fun weekend. We rented a rowboat from the owner of the camp ground and spent most of the day fishing. Our luck wasn't too good but who wanted fish to eat when we had fried capon -- prepared by Ted. The old Model-T Ford pick- up proved to be very efficient transportation for us in 1929.)

Further on down the old Monterey Road we came to a Southern Pacific train stop and loading platform. Also, a house painted in the usual S.P. colors. (It was here in 1930 that we got Bobby's dog, Toby, a little white, fluffy ball

of fur.)

I had not traveled over the Monterey Road for a number of years. I was amazed as we approached the Fort Ord boundaries. It was almost unbelievable how this military reservation had sprung up practically overnight. It seemed only yesterday that it was a dry patch of chaparral along the side of the road that was called "Giggling." Now the road was paved and an arched foot bridge had been built over the road for troops to cross on foot. Along the sides of the road soldier boys were walking -- heading in both directions. At the entrance to the fort was a security guard on duty, standing alongside a kiosk -- a small house-like shelter for sentries.

This sight gave me a feeling of security along with heartaches. Fort Ord was the last outpost to which our soldier boys were assigned before shipping out for overseas duty. It was the "Point of Embarkation" on the west coast for combat in the Pacific.

I knew that our coast was very vulnerable after the Pearl Harbor attack. I also knew that it would not be long before we would be making our contribution to Uncle Sam. Our eldest son, Bob, would soon be in that age bracket.

On this trip I do not recall seeing the large black and white sign along the side of the road that read: "PRATTVILLE -- SPEED LIMIT 99 MILES PER HOUR -- FORDS DO YOUR BEST." In years past this sign was located a few miles before entering Monterey city limits. Someone told me that a Julia Pratt owned a small piece of land there and her name was put on the sign with "ville" added.

After winding through the streets of the quaint, little historical town of Monterey, we headed south toward Big Sur.

Point Lobos, on our right from the thoroughfare, looked very much the same as in years past -- with the exception of the trees being more dense. Fishing from this point was ideal, but very treacherous. Many fishermen had been washed off the cliff by large, unexpected waves. Also, it was an ideal place for abalone hunters.

This was the first time I had traveled over this beautiful, scenic road since it had been rebuilt. There were still many curves but not the extreme switchback turns that I remembered from the past years. I missed some of the areas that so fascinated me in the early '20s. If one observed closely, parts of old roads could be detected, now and then, overgrown with brush and weeds.

About ten or twelve miles from Monterey and somewhere near Granite Creek, we saw a large, shiny, dish-shaped object that immediately attracted our attention. Alongside of it was a building. This was a radar detection system, installed there by the Navy. Radar was very new and had just come into use within the past year.

Some time later we heard rumors that the Navy had dog kennels in that area -- training

German Shepherd dogs to attack in case of an infiltration along the coast. This is debatable as we have no authenticity to back up this story. However, it is known that navy personnel did patrol the shoreline with dogs.

Farther on down the highway Ted pointed out to us two large California Condors. One was perched on a telephone pole and the other, circling overhead, was presumably looking for a place to light. The telephone wires were much too thin for it to grasp onto with its talons. I can truthfully say that these were not the most beautiful birds that I have ever seen, but rather unusual. (As of today, the California Condor is almost extinct with only a handful left in the Sespe Mountains near Santa Barbara. The California Condor is easily distinguished from the Turkey Vulture, or "buzzard," which is plentiful around Big Sur. The former has a wing span of about ten feet whereas that of the buzzard is only four feet or less.) At this time the California Condor could sometimes be seen in the Monterey division of the Los Padres Forest as they had a nesting area in the Rugged Ventana peaks..

I doubt if the rugged, but beautiful, coastline will ever change. It was just as I remembered it from years past -- the high, jagged cliffs and the steep drop to the ocean's floor. The mountains rose abruptly from the water's edge to the tall, pointed peaks of the Santa Lucia Range.

The spectacular view of the Pacific with its huge, fluctuating waves pounding against the craggy cliffs, gave me a very minute feeling. The splendor and harshness of this creation will definitely embed itself in the memory of any traveler fortunate enough to journey on this route.

After passing Rocky Point we soon came to the Palo Colorado Road, leading off into the mountains on our left. That uninhabited region was quite popular amongst the wild boar hunters as well as being the habitat of many other wild animals, many of which were prey for the marksman.

I was surprised to see the beautiful arched bridge which crossed the deep canyon of Bixby Creek. As I remember it in times past, a steep road led down to a rustic bridge that spanned the creek. I recall a little shanty on the green, sloping hillside; silhouetted against an azure blue sky. With the ocean as a backdrop, this formed a picture that could capture the eye of an artist -- to put on canvas.

This new bridge was the longest known single-arch bridge in the world at that time. It is officially known as Bixby Creek Bridge but due to its construction, observed from the nearby Old Coast Road, it was also called Rainbow Bridge. Sometime later, when Lady Bird Johnson visited California, she was honored by dedicating this unique piece of architecture, and

dedicating the road as California's first scenic highway.

As I recall from past years, the Old Coast Road wound back into the mountains near this point. The diversion from seashore to wilderness was amazing.

We parked the car near Hurricane Point to let the kiddies and dog out for a romp. I must say that this area was well named. The cold wind blew extremely hard off of the ocean.

Some distance further on we approached Little Sur River. This river was always a haven for fishermen. Now we knew that we were nearing Point Sur Lighthouse.

Point Sur was a treat to our eyes. The lighthouse was located on a piece of terrain that extended out into the ocean -- on a mountainous rock. This rock would have been an island except for being connected to the mainland by a stretch of sandy beach. It presented a most graphic scene to see the straight road across this low, sandy area and then wind up the mountainous tip to the buildings and lighthouse on the top. A lone building near the highway was the Sur Schoolhouse -- a small, remote place of learning.

I would like to momentarily diverge from our move to Big Sur in order to describe this landmark. The Point Sur lighthouse was manually operated until 1972. The original Fresnel lens was made in France and flashed an alternating red and white signal. There was also a fog horn which sounded a long blast followed by a short one. It was a familiar sound to which Big Sur residents often fell asleep at nights.

The lighthouse at Point Sur still operates day and night under an automatic program. The original lens was removed in 1978 and replaced by a searchlight from San Quentin. This new light revolves and emits the required flashes, but only in white light. The number of flashes between minutes, and the length of time between flashes, designates the lighthouse's location. There are no two lighthouses that have the same signal pattern. The fog horn has also been discontinued, presumably replaced by some sort of radio signal. Point Sur lighthouse was under the auspices of the Coast Guard. It is now California State Park property.

The Sur School that was near the lighthouse has been discontinued and the building removed. Several Cypress trees still remain, that had been planted for a windbreak. This Sur School was a replacement to the original Sur School that was located on the Old Coast Road near the Cooper ranch buildings -- over the hill from the lighthouse. The old Sur School building is practically gone due to deterioration with time.

Now, back to our move to Big Sur. The highway, as we passed Point Sur, was often covered with sand due to the constant wind off the ocean. As we traveled on we passed Molera cattle ranch on our right. As I recall, it was at this point that the highway left the ocean's shore and wound through beautiful groves of redwood. We were now approaching the short inland valley of the Big Sur area. It was hard to realize that our home, at least for the summer, was to be in this fascinating and majestic region.

Along the sides of the road were camp grounds and summer cabins, each in their own spectacular and ornate setting. Soon we came to where the Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park boundaries started. When we approached the park proper, we all were very excited as well as tired. We did not stop to eat our lunch as we were so anxious to reach our destination.

A short distance on up the road, past the park entrance, we turned off Highway 1 to our left. Along this frontage road were three houses, each a short distance apart. The first one was occupied by the McQueen family. Mr. McQueen was the highway foreman. Mr. and Mrs. Franklin lived in the second house. The next structure was our new home. I must say, "We got the surprise of our lives." Ted had informed us that the place would need some attention, but he didn't say how much or elaborate on it. The little three-room house was painted Forest Service brown. It was surrounded by a picket fence. The lawn around the house looked like dried weeds. They were taller than the three-foot-high fence. The shrubbery and vines were much overgrown around the cottage. Directly in front of the house and outside the fence, was the parking area. Here a circle of rocks surrounded a flag pole, but the rocks were hardly visible due to the abundance of weeds inside of the circle. This place was called "The Big Sur Forest Guard Station." (Today it is more commonly referred to as "The Big Sur Ranger Station.") I was almost afraid to go inside the house as the back yard was as badly overgrown as the front.

However, being only a three-room cottage and a bath, it couldn't be too bad. The furnishings consisted of the bare necessities. The front room had a table, desk and chair. A Forest Service, crank telephone hung on the wall. In the bedroom was a double bed and dresser. The narrow kitchen held a small breakfast table and four chairs, a four-burner butane stove, and a side-arm butane water heater. The house was piped for butane ceiling lights, which had mantles similar to gasoline camping lanterns. (Electricity did not make its debut in that area until 1953.) A large cooler was on the back wall of the kitchen. A small enclosed porch held a wash tray.

I couldn't help but wonder what our new neighbors thought when we drove in with our car and trailer loaded, and the chicken coop on the top. They must have thought that some of John Steinbeck's characters got loose from "Grapes of Wrath."

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2 -- SETTLING DOWN

As long as this was going to be our summer home, we may as well get busy with the cleaning. Ted cut the tall grass in the front yard with a scythe and then mowed it. Skippy and Sonny weeded the circle around the flag pole. Little Bambi, our goat, took care of the weeds in the back yard. Nana and I cleaned the house, washed windows, etc.

After the sprinkler had been used in the front yard for a week, we could see some green grass protruding. With constant care we had the front and back yard in good condition. The shrubs around the house produced new growth. The Woodwardia ferns, on the north side, showed new shoots after the old, dried stalks had been removed. Of course, water played an important part. (After forty two years I still have some Woodwardia ferns at our Green Valley home, taken from the mother plant at Big Sur.) Also, near the Woodwardia ferns was a bed of the most beautiful five-finger ferns that I had ever seen. The fingers were at least twelve inches long.

The front room of our living quarters was also used as Ted's office. Here, he issued fire permits, validated deer tags, and issued special permits for certain people to enter the forest in closed-entry areas. During the war there was a lack of manpower to fight any fires that might start. Consequently, much of the forest was closed to the public during fire season. (This practice was continued after the war, until just a few years ago.) Occasionally Ted found it necessary to issue a citation when someone violated this restriction. Another daily duty was to read the weather gauges and send the data to the King City office.

Ted immediately started on his patrols. His car patrol took him as far north as Point Sur and as far south as Pacific Valley, on the main highway. On these patrols he also drove back into the wooded areas for fire inspections. He furnished his own vehicle for which the government reimbursed him at the rate of five cents per mile. This included gasoline, oil, upkeep, etc.

The beach area was patrolled on horseback. When Ted first got Buck, he was timid about approaching a puddle of water. He would detour around it. When he saw the ocean, he really shied away from it. It took a little time but, with kind words and gentle persuasion, Ted soon had him walking along the foamy surf.

Much of Ted's time was spent on trail patrol, sometimes brushing the trails and posting signs. I could readily see that he had his heart in his work. This was the most pleasurable job that Ted had been involved in since we were married twelve years earlier.

The Pine Ridge Trail started at the state park boundary. It was the main trail that led from the coast back into the interior. From this trail there were a number of offshoot trails that led to various places and campsites in the forest. Some of the trail camps were Terrace Creek Camp, Barlow Flat Camp, Sykes Camp, Redwood Creek Camp, Cienega Camp and Ventana Camp. The Mt. Manuel Trail started at the south end of the state park, about where the old CCC camp baseball field used to be, crossing the ridge and gradually leading up to Mt. Manuel Peak. From

this trail there was an excellent view of the Big Sur gorge and also of the surrounding areas overlooking the coast. About two-thirds of the way to the peak was a lovely, shaded spring with ice cold water. Sunset Trail ran along the ridge west of the park, parallel to the coast.

Between our little cottage and the barn were a couple acres of Forest Service pasture on which the government stock was kept. I remember two pear trees in this pasture which the animals nibbled on. Close to the barn was a small corral and paddock. Each morning, before Ted would eat his breakfast, he would feed and attend the livestock. Most often there were government horses and mules at this location, being centrally located for Forest Service points further south.

Only a couple of days after our arrival at Big Sur, Kate, a dear, lovable and gentle old mule, was assigned to Ted as a pack animal. Kate had been with the Forest Service for some time. We were told that she originally came from the Santa Barbara area and that she was thirty-two years old. It is generally known that mules have a longer life span than horses.

Kate fell in love with Buck at first sight but I'm not sure that the feeling was mutual. Buck was fast becoming spoiled and very jealous of Ted sharing his attention with other animals. However, it wasn't long before Buck accepted Kate. In fact, he had no other choice as Kate soon became Buck's shadow. Wherever Buck went, Kate felt that she should be at his heels.

On a couple occasions, when Ted took Buck out on patrol and left Kate at home, she broke down the corral fence and also the padlocked pasture gate, to join them on the trail. Her instinct was good as she seemed to know just where to locate them.

When Ted first got Kate, her feet were so poorly cared for that she could hardly walk. Her hooves were so long that her feet sloped backward toward her heels. Ted had to trim her feet and shoe her. As soon as the Forest Service learned that Ted was an experienced blacksmith, he was also assigned that task. There was a Forest Service forge on the premises for heating the shoes. Ted used to do all the blacksmith work of shoeing Buck and Kate, and sometimes other horses and mules that were in his care, as well as some that were brought in from other stations.

One of Ted's first duties was to service the Anderson Peak AWS Station with supplies and mail. It was built in early 1942 but was not completely finished. Two people staffed each AWS station and took a twelve hour shift each, to maintain a 24 hour watch for airplanes. When an airplane was observed the person on duty would pick up the telephone, or radio, and say "Army Flash." This would establish priority and everybody had to get off the line or air. Then that person would report the necessary information -- type of plane, direction, etc. -- to the King City office which would relay the message to the appropriate Army office. These stations would also report blimps, ships at sea, and any type of pyrotechnic displays that were observed. In addition, the AWS stations were equipped with fire finders and reported forest fires or any other visible smoke.

Reporting the daily patrol of the Navy blimp was so routine that people could almost set their clocks by it. The blimp base was the old Watsonville airport on the Moss Landing Road. This was taken over by the Navy during the war. Each morning the blimp would travel south along the coast, looking for Japanese submarines. Then, during late afternoon or evening it would return.

AWS observers used to re- port it as the "Rubber Cow."

Anderson Peak was the first AWS station in that area during the early World War II years. Later an AWS station was built on Carmel Mountain and Mount Toro, at the northern edge of the Los Padres Forest. The latter was not actually in the forest and was serviced by the state. A small, sleeping cabin was also built at each regular Forest Service lookout station, to accommodate two people for 24 hour AWS work, in addition to being alert for forest fires.

Anderson Peak was located on one of the highest ridges over- looking the coastal expanse. The AWS station there was staffed by Harry Dick Ross, an artist and sculptor, and his wife, Lillian Bos Ross who was the authoress of two books -- The Stranger and its sequel, Blaze Allen. She was lovingly known to her husband and friends as "Shanna Golden." Both of her books were written while she was on Anderson Peak. They em- braced the early days of the Big Sur country. The radio call let- ters for Anderson Peak were 26- Lucy-7. Harry Dick drew a "Lucy Bird" performing AWS duties, as a station logo. (After World War II, Dr. Rogers, a Watsonville dentist, bought the AWS station and moved it a little south to Marble Peak for his weekend cabin.)

Ted serviced this AWS station once each week unless fire duty demanded his time elsewhere. He used our car to transport groceries and necessities, for which the government reimbursed him. Water was transported from Cold Springs, a trail camp along the road, about three miles before reaching Ander- son Peak. This water was almost ice cold. Ted delivered it and stove oil to the station periodi- cally in a government truck. He also delivered the building sup- plies needed to complete the structure.

The road to Anderson Peak was known as the Coast Ridge Trail Road. It started at Post Summit, off of Highway 1, at the southern edge of Big Sur. After entering the locked gate, the road led through Post's land which bordered the property of Paul Rubis, from Watsonville. From there, it was mostly on federal land except for a few more private ranches. In real- ity, this was only a bulldozed, dirt road -- narrow, steep, and full of ruts -- leading to Cold Springs, Anderson Peak, and termin- ating at Marble Peak. Ted would usually take one of the boys with him on this patrol to open and close gates. Bob said that it seemed like about a dozen locked gates before reaching Anderson Peak. However, they loved it and had the experience of helping Ted use the S-set radio or tap into Forest Service phone lines to check in with headquarters.

During the first week in our new quarters, a teen age girl friend of ours, from Watsonville, came to visit us. One evening she asked if she could take Rip, our hound dog, for a walk in the park. We consented, but cautioned her to be sure to keep the leash on him. It was necessary to keep dogs under restraint at all times. While walking through the state park, Rip got the scent of a deer. Well -- that did it! Before she realized it he pulled the leash out of her hand and was out of sight, chasing the deer through the park. Need- less to say that she was fright- fully upset when she returned. Rip came dragging in after dark -- ex- hausted and hungry. Marmaduke had nothing on Rip.

The following day the park ranger, Bill Kenyon, whom Ted had previously met but only

casually, drove up to our quarters. He informed Ted that a stray, hunting dog was loose somewhere in the park area and was chasing deer. He asked Ted to keep his eyes peeled for this hound and listen for its bay. Bill definitely didn't know that it was our hound, Rip.

This proved to be a very embarrassing situation for Ted. He explained the circumstances to Bill and assured him there would be no reoccurrence in the future. From that time on Bill and Ted became very good friends and found each other very congenial to work with. After that incident Rip was secured with a long chain. His domain was the back yard, keeping watch over the shaded tent area and the chicken pen.

Bob really enjoyed his work as a health and safety counselor at Boy Scout Camp Esselen. He, himself, had camped there every year since 1938 -- when he first joined the scouts. At the completion of his job at scout camp, Bob obtained employment working for Doris Fee at Ripplewood. He assisted her in the store, manning the gasoline pumps, cleaning the cabins, and whatever other handyman jobs were necessary around that resort.

We were looking forward to having Bob reside with us again. One may wonder how we managed to accommodate eight people in a three room cottage. Being summer time, it was a joy. The four younger boys occupied the tent in the backyard. The front porch stretched about half way across the front of the cottage. Ted set up a cot for Bob's quarters on this porch. He installed striped canvas curtains across the front and on one end, for privacy. The house provided the other two walls of this bedroom. The canvas curtains could be raised and lowered by a rope on little pulleys.

One of the residents nearby had given us a little, black kitten which we named "Cobina." She found it comfortable and warm sleeping at the foot of Bob's bed at night. It was only a short time before Rip and Cobina became good companions. During the daytime Cobina would often curl up on Rip's body while they both snoozed. Rip was white in color, with a few small, and several large, black spots on his coat. Here and there was a tinge of brown. At times during their "siestas," it was difficult to distinguish if it was Cobina on Rip's body or a big black spot.

The boys were having a glorious vacation. Of course, each one had their little chores to do each morning. Many of the afternoons were spent at the Big Sur River swimming in the pool. Skippy and Sonny were good little swimmers but I had to keep a close watch over Jimmy and Ralph. They both loved the water.

This enticing swimming pool was located in the park on the east side of the river. It was a large, concrete basin built by the CCC boys as one of their projects. There was one canal that brought the water from the river into the pool. Another canal returned the water to the river. In this manner the water was circulated and kept from becoming stagnant. Our boys and the camp children had great fun paddling our canoe around in the canals. There were wooden bridges across the canals, as well as across the river, for pedestrians to cross.

One corner of the pool was roped off for small children. Here the water was quite shallow. In

a deeper section of the pool a diving board was installed. However, most of the pool was not over four or five feet deep, so swimmers could play water games. There was a wooden raft in the middle. (Today that pool has been filled in and the area now used for a parking lot. What a shame!)

A sandy beach surrounded the pool for relaxing and sunbathing. Here, we met many people. This is where I met my dear friend, Esther Ewoldsen. Her two boys, Ernst and Martin were about the same ages as Sonny and Skippy. Many afternoons Esther and I sat at the side of the pool watching the kiddies and catching up on our mending. I was fascinated at the clever technique Esther had for folding socks. She taught me how it was done.

Esther's little girl, Christine, thought that she should be out in the deep water with her brothers. That was obviously not safe for someone that young, so Esther and I would take her out into the shallow water to paddle around. She looked so cute in her little bathing suit.

When Bob wasn't working he also enjoyed a dip in the pool with the boys. He really frightened me one time. He decided that he would swim the width of the pool underwater -- about 75 feet. He started from the further side. I waited and waited for him to surface for a gulp of air. No sign of Bob. I was greatly relieved when he came to the top, directly in front of us. He accomplished this feat OK but at the expense of a few more gray hairs for his mother. The water in the Big Sur River was always cold. It was quite a contrast to the Arroyo Seco water where we had become accustomed to swimming.

Nana often enjoyed a "ring-side seat" at the edge of the pool. She loved children and enjoyed watching their water antics. When Nana accompanied us we would drive down in the car. Otherwise, we took a steep path down from the rear of our back yard, through redwoods, briars and ferns. This was a short cut. We also used this path in the evenings to attend campfire programs in the park.

On one occasion on this trail, I encountered the most beautiful snake I had ever seen. It was huge -- at least it seemed so to me. Pretty as it was, snakes and I have nothing in common. I hurriedly side-stepped the trail. It could have the right of way as far as I was concerned. I later learned that it was a King Snake.

The campfires in the state park were a "must" for us to attend each evening, if at all possible. The boys usually took the trail route to the park. When Ted was available, he joined Nana and me in the car. Lloyd Sweetman, a high school teacher from Sacramento, was the recreational director for the summer. He was a very clever and outgoing person.

The evening campfire programs consisted of plays, solos, duets, quartets, pantomimes, and skits -- all of which was amateur talent from the campfire audience. During the day, when not leading a nature hike or other recreational activity, Lloyd would go from camp to camp to recruit the talent for that evening's campfire performance. He really put a lot of energy into his work. Usually, these programs were started with group singing -- such as

"Down By The Station, Early In The Morning," "Little Peter Rabbit Had A Fly Upon His Ear," "I've Got A Castle On The River Rhine," "You Are My Sunshine," "I've Got Spurs That Jingle Jangle Jingle," and others. Many cute motions accompanied each song.

Ted was asked to bring Buck on the stage one evening and give a talk on fire prevention in the forest, descriptions of mountain trails and camps, etc. Many asked questions about the Forest Service work. Apparently Buck became bored by just standing there behind Ted. He kept nudging Ted with his muzzle, pushing Ted almost to the edge of the stage. I knew that he was trying to get a message across to Ted. He then left his "calling card" (evacuation) on the stage platform. Seeing all those people around the campfire apparently made him nervous.

That was an extremely funny incident, particularly to our boys. They roared with laughter. Buck recognized their outburst. He lowered his head, raised his ears, and looked directly at them. Needless to say that Nana and I couldn't help from snickering. In fact, the entire audience seemed to think it was comical. I expected Kate to join them on the stage at any moment, but she was a good girl and stayed at home.

Petey Weaver was the assistant director of recreation and helped with the programs. She, too, was employed by the state park. Petey also attended the entrance booth to the park. When she asked me if Ted had any brothers at home like him, I told her: "No. When Ted was made they threw away the mold." I considered her question a compliment to Ted.

Often times we saw a string of horseback riders heading up the trails. "Lindy," as everyone called him, had a riding stable not far from the park. To people from urban areas, this was indeed a pleasant experience. Besides leading grown ups and children on trail rides, he also rented out horses by the hour to experienced individuals. Ted would occasionally rent a horse to take one of the boys or me on trail patrol with him. This was much more enjoyable than a guided, one-hour ride.

We considered ourselves very fortunate to locate a small vegetable farm not far from our quarters. The veggies were picked fresh from the garden while we waited. The owner of this place was Grover Meyrose. We were saddened to learn that he had lost his wife a short time before our arrival at Big Sur.

Being used to electricity in our Green Valley home, it took a "little doing" to become accustomed to the butane lights overhead. Cooking on the butane stove was great as we had been using this gas at home for years. It is much hotter than natural gas. The cooler on the back wall of the kitchen wasn't as cold as the 100-pound ice box that we were accustomed to, but it served the purpose.

What I missed mostly was the electric washing machine and wringer. Here, I had to wash clothes on a wash board in the set tub, or use a metal hand plunger. Then the clothes were wrung out by hand. The boys were a big help on the handle of the plunger. (They were used to it, however, as that is the way we washed our clothes while camping.) Here, we had an

umbrella-type clothes line at one end of the cement walk, in the back yard. Washing for eight people filled the lines to capacity.

I learned to cut many corners while at Big Sur. Having to heat the sad irons on the hot stove made my ironing days rather uncomfortable. Those were the times that I really wished for an electric iron. Instead of starched, cotton shirts for the boys, I bought them striped and plain colored T-shirts. Their jeans were folded carefully off the line, instead of being wadded up and then ironed later. The sheets, pillow slips, dish towels and underwear got the same treatment. Ted's starched uniforms and Nana's dresses were the main things that I ironed. A pretty oilcloth, table cover was used on our kitchen table. The cotton napkins were carefully folded. (This experience taught me a lesson. When we returned home to Green Valley later, I took my Big Sur methods with me. I only ironed the necessities.)

Our dear friends, the Ewoldsens, were one of the first families that we met at Big Sur. Esther and Hans were living at Saddle Rock Ranch with their three children -- Martin, Ernst and little Christine. Their two boys and ours became good friends.

We soon became acquainted with many more wonderful people in the Big Sur area. Mable and Bill Kenyon, as well as the McQueens and Franklins, our neighbors, were also some of the first acquaintances. Mable was the school teacher at Pfeiffer School. Bill was the head park ranger.

Everyone knew the postmaster, Ann Smith. (Today she would be called a postmistress.) We soon met Doris Fee, and Bob later worked for her at Ripplewood. Irene and Bill Post lived at the top of the hill on the highway, south of Big Sur. Also south of the park, the Steve Yeagers operated the Loma Vista Inn. We met Alvin and Kate Dani, who lived two miles down Sycamore Canyon. Their house was at the top of a little hill overlooking Dani's Beach. (At that time everyone referred to that beach as Dani's, but in reality it was Pfeiffer's Beach and is called that today. The name Pfeiffer's Beach dates back to the early days of 1869 when Pfeiffer first located there.)

The Borandas lived just north of Toro Canyon. Hal Krinkle and his very beautiful wife called on us at various times. They later separated. Hal's sister, Dorene, was truly a pioneer woman. She could shoe a horse as well as any blacksmith. She was an all-around mountaineer. I was surprised to meet my childhood playmate and neighbor, Elsie Kirkland Snyder, at Big Sur. They owned the place called "3 Acres." Elsie had the reputation of being a wonderful cook.

I vaguely recall the Harlands from State Hot Springs. At that time Lynda Sargent lived slightly north of the park on Highway 1, close to Ripplewood. We all felt badly when, later, her cabin burned down. She was a writer and the book manuscript that she was writing went up in smoke. Lynda's boy friend's name was "Red." Later, Lynda worked for the Forest Service and was stationed on Chew's Ridge Lookout.

Many of these folks visited us at the Forest Guard Station. Margaret and "Mac" Mac Collum became good friends of ours. Although I had visited with Shanna Golden Ross, on Anderson

Peak, almost daily over the Forest Service telephone hookup, it was over six months before I had the pleasure of meeting her and her husband personally. However, Ted had a broad acquaintance with almost everyone in the Big Sur country.

I recall accompanying Ted down the coast to call on the Lathrop Browns. They were lovely people. What really fascinated me was that their home was located far below road level and down a very steep bank. In order to reach their abode, we had to ride in an elevator car. This was a former mining car, operated by electricity off of a generator. Riding up and down in an elevator, out in the "boon docks," was an unusual experience.

Another interesting place that I visited with Ted was the Deetjen home, located a little distance south of Big Sur. These two elderly people, Helmutt and his wife Helen, were delightfully charming. They had originally come from Norway.

The front exterior of their home was an assemblage of art work, done by Deetjen, himself. There were numerous pieces of furniture, of various description, as well as many picture frames. What made this collection so unique was the fact that they all were made from selected wood in the natural form -- presumably from the surrounding area. A touch of paint or varnish on this art work brought out the interesting highlights. On this quaint little house, overlooking the Pacific, hung a sign -- "Deetjens."

(This elderly couple has now passed on. The family have taken over the home and the surrounding land. They have built rustic cottages along the coast. It is now called "Deetjen Inn." I understand that in order to get reservations at this unique place, one must contact the inn several months in advance.)

The Sweetman and Ross families had adjoining trailer camp sites in the park. They had been friends for many years and spent most of their summer vacations together at Big Sur. Lloyd Sweetman had been the recreation director in the park for some time. He was a tall and handsome man. His wife, Pinky, was a sweet and petite person. They had three sons -- David, Bobby and Eddie.

The Gene Ross family came from Westwood Village, in Los Angeles area. Gene was a photographer and had a studio there. He took some wonderful pictures at Big Sur. Sometimes he would show pictures at the campfire of the year-long tour he and his family took of the United States. Gene's wife was a jolly-fun person. They had two girls, Peggy and Mary Ann, and one son, Buddy.

We became good friends of these two families and often had pot-luck suppers together in the park. The Ross' had named their trailer "Happy House." Mrs. Ross sometimes made a delicious desert of crumbled cookies topped with pudding. Our kiddies loved this "goodie" and named it "Happy House Pudding." (In future years I made this desert for my family quite frequently.)

Bob and Peggy Ross became good friends and enjoyed each other's company in swimming, horseback riding and dancing. Each evening, after the campfires, the campers would enjoy

"tripping the light fantastic" on the park dance floor. The band was a nickelodian, or juke box which played records. A park custodian supervised the dance floor and was quite talented in leading various types of dances.

(The Ross, Ewoldsen, and Sweetman families became pen pals to us for years after we left Big Sur. During the Christmas season we received greeting cards on which were pictures of their families. These, we greatly appreciated.)

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3 -- HAPPY AND HUMOROUS MEMORIES

The early morning fog at Big Sur presented a beautiful picture with the misty haze obscuring the distinct outlines of the tall, stately redwood trees. Old man Sol was usually filtering through the foliage by mid morning. Generally the afternoons were delightfully warm -- sometimes bordering on the hot side.

As soon as the sun set behind the mountains, the air became chilly. Usually the nights were very cool. Extra wraps were needed as well as extra bedding for comfort. The winters at Big Sur were noticeably cold. But not nearly as cold as Ted's old stomping grounds, "back home in Indiana."

* * *

Occasionally I would ride the trails with Ted. Buck was the only animal that he would let me mount. If there was no other Forest Service horse available, Ted would ride Kate.

I had not ridden a horse for many years. We covered fifteen miles on my first trail ride. I felt sure that I wouldn't be able to walk the following day. To my surprise, I hardly realized that I had been on a horse. Buck's gait was like a rocking chair.

* * *

There were a few times when the corral was only occupied by Buck and Kate, but most of the time it was full of Forest Service stock -- either to be shod or cared for. Ted taught the boys how to trim the hooves of the animals and how to shoe them. He often let them assist in this task if the animals to be shod were gentle. Ted also taught our boys how to use pack animals, and how to tie a diamond hitch and box hitch. Most of the time the box hitch was used to secure the kyacks (canvas pack bags) which hung on each side of the pack saddle.

The boys learned other things from Ted during this Big Sur experience. Things they would not have had the opportunity to learn under ordinary circumstances. He taught them how to saddle and properly care for the animals, with necessary precautions taken. Not all the livestock, particularly the mules, were as docile as dear, old Kate. She was so affectionate that Skippy often walked right underneath her belly. She seemed to love the boys.

There was one mule that was exceptionally obstinate and mean. He had to have his foot in a sling in order to be shod. His name was "Wolf." Ted said, "He would kick your head off and spit in your face at the same time."

"Monk" was a tall, gangly mule and an exceptionally good pack animal. Bob later rode Monk up to Carmel Mountain from Palo Colorado, on one of his trips for the Forest Service. (He worked during the 1943 fire season as a lookout relief.) Monk was not a comfortable mule to ride -- as one person described his gait, "He seemed like he was walking on eggs." Going downhill was another problem, as Monk's withers (shoulders) were so slim that the saddle kept slipping

forward onto his neck. Bob had to stop periodically and readjust it.

The mule "Kick-a-poo," got his name from an Indian. He was gentle -- up to a point -- but could be very stubborn at times. Nevertheless, mules are very sure footed in the mountains. They are known to be smarter and have more endurance than horses. It is important to note that mules cannot reproduce themselves. They are a cross between a jackass and a mare.

"Buster" was a cute "little trick." He had a most handsome mustache which was red in color. (Possibly auburn would be a more accurate description.) If you have never seen a mule with a mustache, you have missed a sight. Buster should have been in a side show or a circus.

"Loppy" was a tall horse and very gentle. The reason for his name was due to a broken ear which hung to the side of his head. He was a lovable and affectionate animal. Ted would ride Loppy at times but his gait was like a camel's, compared to Buck's.

"Babe" was a black mare who was gentle but lazy. On the trail she had but one gait, and that was "slow." It was almost impossible to speed her up. There was one time, however, when she did accelerate somewhat. Chuck was riding her on the trail to Carmel Mountain AWS Station when one of the mules apparently stepped into a yellow jacket hole. Those wasp-like creatures swarmed all around. When one of them sat down on Babe's rump, she moved out "pronto." Babe ended up with several huge welts on her behind and Chuck had one eye swollen shut.

* * *

We hadn't been at Big Sur very long before Ted approached me, asking if I would cut his hair. This, I could hardly believe. I had been trying for years for him to let me "lower his ears," but to no avail. I had been cutting the hair of our five boys' heads, and also Chuck's, for many years. Should I now feel complimented? When Ted stated that he would have to take a day off and drive thirty miles to and from Monterey to get a haircut, that really pierced my ego.

I set up my "barbering equipment" in the back yard next to the boys' tent. At that date I did not have electric clippers but used the "hand mower." Sometimes these clippers had a habit of pulling the hair while in use. When this happened to the boys, they would let out a yelp. Ted thought it was hilarious. It was a good laugh at their expense.

I proceeded on Ted's hair very cautiously, trying not to cause a fiasco. I was very proud of my "hubby" and I wanted to do a good job on his hair. Lo and behold! All of a sudden he let out a "war whoop" and jumped up from the chair. I knew very well what had caused this outburst. The noise from the tent sounded like someone having hysterics. Bob came out laughing as though his sides would split. He knew that I was cutting his Dad's hair and he knew what had caused the "hullabaloo.". Well -- even Ted saw the funny side of it. Reciprocation!

Several days later two of the park attendants approached me, asking if I would be interested in cutting hair for the park employees. I thanked them for the offer of the job but told them "No way."

* * *

The trail head of the Pine Ridge Trail was at the state park boundary. It led to Barlow Flats, Redwood Camp, and a number of other trail camps further on. While patrolling this trail one day, Ted encountered a dead deer lying in the path. It was obvious that this deer had just recently been killed, more than likely by a mountain lion, as it was eviscerated. Being on the wayward side of the wind, Buck caught the scent of the lion and abruptly turned around on the narrow trail. His hind feet went over the downhill edge. This left nothing for Ted to do but to slide off Buck's rear end, fearing that if he didn't, Buck may roll over on top of him on the steep slope.

Buck managed to regain his footing and got back on the trail. Being that Ted had rolled a distance down the brushy canyon, he found it necessary to climb back on all fours. Ted said: "I never will forget the look in Buck's eyes when he saw me." They as much as said, "What in the world are you doing down there?" Ted grabbed hold of Buck's ankle and tail to assist him up over the bank and back on the trail again.

* * *

While brushing out a section of the Pine Ridge Trail, which was more or less a continuous job, Ted would tie Buck to a nearby tree. If Ted got out of Buck's sight and left him untied, Buck was likely to "head for the barn" with Kate following, and leaving Ted afoot.

Kate had loitered behind for several turns in the trail to devour some tender, wild pea vines. Pea vines and thistle heads were her favorite morsels. When she discovered that Buck was nowhere in sight, she let out a couple loud hee-haws as she came galloping around the bends, kyacks flapping at her sides. Ted's S-set radio, which was government property, was in its case, hanging over the pack saddle. In Kate's energetic distraught, the radio flew off into the air and landed somewhere down the brushy, wooded canyon. Ted spent much time looking for the radio as he used it for communication. He never did find it. As far as he knows, it is still somewhere in that steep canyon.

During the first year on Anderson Peak AWS station, Lillian Bos Ross wrote a book called The Stranger, which was centered in the Big Sur country during pioneer times. She presented Ted and me with an autographed copy of this book with a sketch, drawn by her artist and sculptor husband, Harry Dick Ross. This depicted the S-set radio flying through the air with Kate, the mule, nearby. Hovering over Kate was a huge "Lucy Bird." The AWS radio call letters were 26-Lucy-7, which were also inscribed on the sketch. Taken from the call letters, the "Lucy Bird" was the mythical mascot of Anderson Peak.

* * *

Before shipping out for overseas, one of the last assignments given to the soldier boys at Fort Ord, was a bivouac in the wilderness area of the Big Sur country. These companies, or regiments of soldiers made their base camp in the campground area of Big Sur Park. Being that the back country was a closed area, Ted was assigned to escort the soldiers over the mountain trails to the campout location. There were times when they only camped for a night or two, usually at Barlow Flats. When larger groups were on the trails, their encampment was often

for four or five nights. Most of the time Ted would hike along the trails with them, leaving Buck and Kate to follow.

In larger groups of soldiers, the company commander found it necessary to collect all the cigarettes and matches before going into the back country. There were always a few fellows who would not abide by the rules of the forest. A lit cigarette or match could easily ignite the dry brush or grass along the trails. The cigarettes were returned to them in smoking areas and in camps.

Their luggage consisted of infantry back packs. Their food was comprised entirely of K-rations. Ted also partook of these rations when with the soldiers. They came in breakfast, lunch and dinner packs. Each meal was in a cardboard container about the size of a crackerjack box. Inside was a tin of deviled ham, scrambled eggs, cheese, or something similar -- depending on the meal. There was also a bar of unsweetened chocolate, dried fruit, and some hard-tack cookies which the soldiers referred to as "dog biscuits." After packaging, the cardboard container was dipped in wax for sealing and waterproofing. The required number of meals were then carried by each soldier, in his pack.

As I previously stated, Kate was a loveable and gentle old mule. Most of the soldier boys took a liking to her and often fed her the unpalatable "dog biscuits" which were made of rye and whole wheat flour. These hard tacks were wrapped in waxed paper. Kate always seemed to know when a tid bit or treat was coming her way -- when she heard the paper rattling. She devoured the biscuits with gusto. As for Buck, he had no desire for "that stuff" and couldn't understand Kate's taste. (He did relish ginger snaps though, which our boys often fed him.)

One day, when coming home from the Pine Ridge Trail, Ted saw a group of soldier boys playing ball in the recreational area of the park. Kate also saw them. There was one young fellow standing on the sideline, unwrapping a K-ration. As soon as Kate saw him, and heard the paper rattling, she left Ted and Buck behind and took after the boy like he was "meat on the table." The poor boy took off on a dead run, with Kate on his heels. Ted yelled, "Stand still. She won't hurt you. She only wants your K-rations." The poor fellow looked at Ted, confused and frightened. He probably thought, "That guy must be off his rocker." Ted took the soldier over to Kate and proved to him that all the mule wanted was a bite of K-ration. The poor guy shook his head in bewilderment.

* * *

South of Big Sur, and at the mouth of Partington Canyon, was a steep, narrow trail leading down to the ocean's edge. The trail was overgrown with brush and barely visible from the road. We had heard stories about this weird place and all were eager to investigate it.

The trail was about a quarter-mile long and at its base was a tunnel, cut through the mountain side. On the far side of this tunnel was an old, dilapidated platform. Adjoining the platform was a tall, weather-beaten gantry (a heavy pole) to which were attached large, rusty pulleys. At the foot of the gantry was other rusty equipment which apparently was used for mooring ships in years past.

This place was known as China-man's Cove. Legend has it that this is where the ships docked at the turn of the century, smuggling Chinese into California to be used for menial labor. Herbs were also reportedly shipped in from China to be sold on the market in San Francisco. Even at this late date we imagined that we detected herbs growing amid the brush alongside of the trail. We apparently sensed that some seed may have dropped while the cargo was being carried to the road above. This adventure gave me a weird and mysterious feeling. I'm sure my family experienced the same reaction.

This legend is questionable but has been around for a long time. Whether it is truth or fallacy, this excursion provided a unique experience for us and others. People living in that mountainous region in the early days, believed it would be impossible to smuggle in Chinese without being detected. However, it is a fact that in the earlier years tan bark, redwood posts and railroad ties were shipped from this small landing, officially called "Partington Cove."

* * *

When Ted had a little time off duty, we would sometimes drive a couple of miles down the beautiful Sycamore Canyon, which left Highway 1 about a quarter of a mile south of our quarters and led westward. It was well named as the sycamore trees grew in abundance along this road, leading to Dani's Beach. The beach had a most beautiful, huge, rock formation at the edge of the water. There was one large rock that really impressed us. It had a big window in it.

To reach the beach we had to park our car near Dani's old home, walk through the farm yard and down a well worn trail which wound around a gentle hill. Here we loved to picnic and fish.

Most of the time the fishing was good -- using worms, sand dabs, and crawlers for bait. If we were lucky we could find some horrible looking worms on the big rocks. These, the fish really relished. The fish that we caught supplemented our quota of rationed meat. When we picnicked on the sandy beach, the graceful sea gulls circled overhead, vying for a tasty crumb, as we devoured our lunch. With a little wheedling, I believe they would have eaten out of our hands.

Occasionally the boys and I would hike over the Beach Trail which led from the highway and over the mountains to Dani's Beach. Sometimes we would don our swim suits, but only to paddle around in the cold surf. I was hesitant to let the kiddies venture out very far for fear of an undertow, which could be disastrous, even in shallow water.

Ted patrolled the beach from this point on Buck, with Kate following. He did this two or three times each week, depending on his other duties and fire calls. This beach was very vulnerable to invasion. Buck was very shy of water when Ted first got him. He refused to walk through a small puddle. He insisted on detouring around it. Ted patiently worked with him until Buck overcame the "puddle fright." To get Buck to accept the "big ocean" was quite a challenge. However, with patience, endurance and affection, Ted soon prevailed. Buck could then be seen trotting along the edge of the beach fully enjoying the foamy surf. From certain parts of the mountainous Sunset Trail, that followed the coast, Ted could get a bird's eye view of the ocean

below. In the evening, at the time the sun set, one could readily understand how this trail received its name.

As time passed, we became good friends of Alvin and Kate Dani. They were a dear, elderly couple. On one occasion, while visiting Kate in her home, she took me into a room in which I could barely turn around. She had stacks and stacks of newspapers that reached from the floor to the ceiling. It would be impossible to guess how many years it took her to accumulate all of those newspapers. I've often wondered what eventually became of them. (I learned that the old house burned down some time later, and also some of the buildings. A new house and barn were then built.)

Alvin Dani took a great liking to Ted. He loved to tell of his early experiences. I'm sure Ted was a good listener to those interesting tales. Mr. Dani gave Ted an old set of saddle bags that he had owned for a number of years. These, Ted used behind the cantle of his saddle while riding Buck, all during his Forest Service days. Ted still has them and has treasured them over the past four decades. (Mr. and Mrs. Dani have been deceased for many years.)

* * *

One of our favorite pastimes was to drive south on Highway 1 to Grimes Point. Here we could watch the sea lions frolic in the surf. To look at them, one would think they were clumsy creatures. On the contrary. They were most graceful -- rolling over and over -- diving in and out of the water -- splashing -- and barking, as though they were talking to one another. Their loud "arf! arf! arf!" penetrated the air -- even to our viewpoint. From this spot we could look almost straight down a steep, rocky cliff at them. We had a bird's eye view of their playground. Their constant barking could always be heard. At times the ocean looked like a sheet of marine colored glass. At other times, the billowing waves rolled in from as far out as we could see.

Directly below us was a strip of sandy beach where some sea lions were relaxing or sleeping. Occasionally we would spot a mother with her pup. If I remember correctly, this was the only location along this particular stretch of coast that harbored a herd of sea lions at that time.

During the early 1940s, I recall that many of the sea lions were killed by marksmen just for the enjoyment of shooting. Ted always had his ears alert for shooting, particularly in that area. A heavy fine resulted if caught.

* * *

About every two weeks I drove home to Green Valley with Sonny and Skippy. We had to make this trip occasionally to replenish ourarder, care for the yard, and perform various other chores. The usual morning fog, during the summer months, was beneficial to the garden in Green Valley.

Our little home orchard at Green Valley produced various fruits in abundance. The boys would wash jars for me while I canned the surplus products. With our large family to feed, these jars,

filled with fruit, were more than welcome during the winter months. I often stayed up until one or two o'clock in the morning to accomplish that task.

On these trips it was necessary to stock up on supplies for Big Sur for two weeks in advance, or as far as our ration stamps would permit. Also, being that gasoline and tires were rationed for military purposes, we had to take that into consideration in planning the frequency of our trips.

Several times, while driving along the coast highway between Big Sur and Monterey, we spotted periscopes in the waters. These, we reported to the Monterey authorities. It was well known that enemy submarines were lurking off the California coast.

If we were not in a hurry to get home, we often parked our car along the coast to watch the sea otters diving and surfacing in the blue, sparkling water, seemingly heading south. This was a rare sight. Up until the latter part of the nineteenth century they were in abundance, but hunters diminished their population to obtain their fur. By the turn of the century they were almost extinct. Federal protection allowed the herd to grow again but in 1942 they were still very rare. This stretch of coastline was the herd's only habitat. As I recall, the herd congregated a short way north of the sea lions, near Grimes Point. The two species did not intermingle.

* * *

No matter what time of the day or night we were on the road near Fort Ord, there were always soldier boys going or coming. We were happy to give them a ride when they were heading in our direction. Some of them appeared so young. It made my heart ache to know that they would soon be shipped overseas to fight for our country.

Although we enjoyed our trips home to Green Valley, we were always anxious to return to the Big Sur country and our family. We usually tried to return before dark but sometimes our chores kept us quite late. On these occasions we had to drive the coast highway after dark with only our parking lights to see by. There was a very rigid "dim out" law in effect. This was to prevent too much light from land. If ships were silhouetted, the hostile submarines could readily aim torpedoes at them and also bombard the coast.

I should emphasize the precarious situation which threatened the entire Pacific coast during the early part of World War II. It seemed as though steps were taken to keep the public unaware of a possible invasion by the Japanese. No doubt -- for fear of panic. Some homes along the coast were closely observed, suspecting that possibly the occupants would be sending signals to the enemy at sea.

We learned of some women's organization, on the Monterey Peninsula, that had set up a program for evacuating all the people living on the coast, in case of attack. When asked how word would be distributed to the residents, they replied, "By fire or smoke signals on certain promontories." And how would these people leave? "By convoys along the road."

To some folks, this plan did not seem practical. In fact, one family, living a little distance off

the coastal highway, decided that they would evacuate themselves and their children, if necessary, by going far back into the mountains. They had made out a list of things to take with them, such as their milk cow, blankets, some food, pots and pans, etc., etc. They chose this way rather than to be "sitting ducks" in a slow-moving convoy.

One night as we were returning to Big Sur from Green Valley, a policeman pulled us over in Monterey. One of our parking lights was not working and we got a "fixit ticket." The only trouble was that it had to be fixed right away as it was difficult enough driving thirty miles of coastal highway with two parking lights, let alone only one. We finally found a service station that had the necessary parts and knowledge to repair our light.

When Bob was available, he would go with us to the ranch and drive "Betsy." He welcomed this opportunity to practice, as he was just learning to drive. It was quite a challenge for anyone to drive that treacherous, coastal road at night, with only the use of parking lights, let alone a new driver. However, Bob did well and wasn't a bit nervous, nor was I. If the night happened to be foggy, one sometimes had to lean out the car-door window in order to see the line down the center of the road. I'm sure that we caused Ted some anxiety when we didn't return before dark. His greetings and smile portrayed his "thanks" for our safe homecoming.

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4 -- SOME TRYING TIMES
"Every silver lining has a cloud."

Ted, having spent his earlier years in Indiana, brought their hospitality customs to California with him. It was only a short time after we had arrived at Big Sur that Ted invited the District Ranger and Assistant Ranger to join him for breakfast, being that they were there at the time. Our kitchen was quite small, as was the eating table. I hurriedly prepared breakfast for the three of them so that I could do likewise for the rest of our family. This table could accommodate six in a very "togetherness" fashion.

Several days later the Forest Service telephone crew set up their temporary headquarters in our garage. Before I realized the situation, I was preparing meals for some of them. In fact, there were ten of them around our little breakfast table one morning. Just how hospitable were folks in Indiana???

* * *

As the weeks passed, the meal situation became more intense. There were usually some Forest Service men around when food was served. When I mentioned this to Ted, he remarked, "Where I was raised we always invited people to join us if they happened to be there when we were ready to eat."

I will have to admit that this situation "boggled my mind." It wasn't so much the extra work or the inadequate accommodations. Mainly, it was the fact that much food was rationed during the war. Each member of a family, or each individual, had a limited number of food stamps for meats, sugar, and various other foods, which were issued to them each month. However, none of these "free loaders" offered to compensate with food ration stamps or otherwise. Many of them were receiving a "per diem" allowance while they travelled. Getting free meals meant extra money in their pockets.

I tried to tell myself that these hungry men probably enjoyed my home cooking. However, I knew that it wasn't that good, although they always said, "Thanks for the meal." I did not want to appear selfish or inhospitable but I had an inner feeling that we were "being taken." What kind of "ding-a-lings" did these "boarders" think we were, or did they think we were just plain stupid.?

* * *

Pacific Valley was located some distance down the coast. There was a large Forest Service, fire-suppression crew stationed there. In order to get to Monterey or King City, where the district Forest Service headquarters were located, the personnel from Pacific Valley, and stations in between, had to pass our quarters. Somehow, many of them managed to be in our area at meal time. I had heard about grapevine communication but never realized that a message could be transmitted as fast as it was through the Forest Service grapevine.

There were rewarding aspects to this situation, however. The Pacific Valley coastal area was a haven for abalone hunters. This mollusk was found there in abundance. Often times some of the

young boys in the crew would stop by our place and leave luscious, abalone steaks with us -- pounded and ready to pop into the frying pan. I always extended an invitation to these boys -- to stay and enjoy the meal with us. Some accepted and some had other commitments.

Sometimes the abalone mollusks were not prepared for cooking. After being removed from the shell, they had to be sliced thin and then pounded to break down the muscle fibers. Skippy and Sonny would scrub the back cement porch and then hose it off. Here they would gently pound the steaks with a wooden mallet. We truly appreciated all the good seafood. This helped considerably with the meat-shortage situation. I can speak for all of us when I say that we got our fill of abalone at Big Sur. (As of today, the abalone has practically diminished on the stretch of coast between Point Lobos and Pacific Valley.)

* * *

On one of our trips to Green Valley we spent four days doing extra work around our little ranch. We brought Nana and our two younger nephews, Jimmy and "Corky," with us to spend a couple of weeks with other members of the family in Watsonville.

In purchasing our supplies, I again exhausted our food rationing stamps -- only buying the most essential necessities that I felt were beneficial to our health. It was "nip and tuck" and a challenge, but we were helping our country to win a war.

Upon returning to our Forest Service quarters, I noticed a pickup truck and some equipment parked in our driveway in front of our garage. I immediately put the foodstuff away before doing other chores. Being that we had no electricity and no ice delivery for an ice box, we made the most of our large cooler built on the north side of the kitchen. (A cooler is a closet with slated shelves for air to circulate through. Holes are bored in the ceiling and floor of the closet and covered with screen to keep flies and bugs out. This permitted cool air to enter from under the house and pass on up to the outlet at the top and into the attic -- cooling the food in the process. Because of this circulation of cool air, this device was named a "cooler.")

On this particular day I had "splurged" and bought two small steaks as a special treat for Ted. These, I immediately put into the cooler along with some hamburger (no ground chuck or ground round in those days) and wieners. From the hamburger I would make various casserole dishes that would last for a couple of days -- hopefully. The wieners could always fill in. Loma Linda meatless products (some tasted like meat) and other canned goods furnished much of our protein intake until our next trip home.

After I had the car unloaded and other things put in their respective places, I sat down at Ted's desk to look at our mail. The boys were in the back yard checking on their pets, etc. To my surprise, a young fellow walked in the front room of the guard station without knocking. This being our private living quarters, I was a little surprised. He walked directly past me without even saying "hello" or introducing himself. He went into the kitchen and lit the side-arm water heater with a match. (A side-arm heater was a cast iron cylinder with a small hinged door, opening at the lower front. On the inside of this cylinder were copper-tube coils connected to the hot water tank.

Below the coils was a butane burner which had to be turned on and lit with a match. This burner heated the water as it circulated through the coils and back into the tank. This side-arm heater sat about two feet off the floor.)

Then this fellow proceeded to open the cooler door and remove one of the "special steaks" that I bought for Ted, for which I had sacrificed ration stamps. He also helped himself to some of the other goodies that I had just brought. I'll have to admit that when I heard the steak sizzling on the stove and smelled the enticing aroma, drifting past my nostrils, I really became "hot under the collar." Who was this guy to whom Ted had given free reign of the premises? While this stranger was enjoying his freshly cooked meal at the table, I was boiling inside. The rascal had even cut himself a big chunk of cake that I had so hurriedly baked while at home. Upon completion of his "gourmet meal" he left his dirty dishes in the sink.

Our little portable, battery radio was sitting on the front-room table, near the desk. When I first arrived back I had turned on a radio station that I often enjoyed. This character nonchalantly walked past me, uttered no word, but turned the radio dial to a different station. By now I was wondering if Ted had moved out of the "joint" or had stretched his Indiana hospitality to the point of no return.

To get to the bath room, one had to go through our bedroom. Well, that's the route this fellow took. After a leisurely bath, he again went into the kitchen and prepared himself a cup of George Washington, instant coffee. (This was the first instant coffee on the market.) He then left by the back door. During all this time no word was spoken between us. Maybe he was just as curious to know who I was as I was to know why he was there. Having been away for four days, I felt that Ted may have been entertaining the whole U.S. Forest Service. Luckily, my husband didn't return at that time as I felt that I could have "clobbered" him with a broom. Was I MAD??!! Fortunately, the fellow did not return to our quarters. (If you think "square heads" -- Dane's -- can't get mad, you should have seen me then.)

Ted returned about 7:30 that evening with Charles Swartz, the King City dispatcher, and Chuck (Charles Herbert). They had just come down from Carmel Mountain via Palo Colorado. I didn't utter a word but I guess it wasn't necessary as I'm sure that Ted saw fire in my eyes. If ever in our twelve years of married life I felt like leaving him, it was then. I unraveled the episode of the afternoon. I'm really not a "pussy cat" but this incident definitely rubbed my fur the wrong way. It was the climax of a long list of Forest Service abuses.

To my surprise, Ted knew nothing about that intruder. He had given no one permission to enter the place. After all, it was our home and we were paying rent for these quarters.

When I finished my story, Charles Swartz was just as angry as was Ted. Of course Chuck also put in his resentment of the situation. Charles Swartz was one of the very few Forest Service men that had never appeared at meal time, expecting to be fed. He took my story back to King City -- to the ranger, the assistant ranger, and the "powers that be." It soon reached the head U.S.F.S. office in Santa Barbara. They immediately sent written notice to all government employees in

both divisions of the Los Padres Forest, stating that no meals were to be eaten at guard stations or other Forest Service quarters unless paid for by cash.

Somehow, I felt that I had been a little too hasty to anger but that situation had been going on for too long. Then, too, as I previously stated, the "heads" of the organization were also free-loading and pocketing the per diem money paid by the government. Sometime later I really felt I had accomplished some good. I received letters and telephone calls from most of the women of the Los Padres guard stations and other Forest Service AWS stations thanking me for bringing the matter to a head.

They, too, had been feeding the "freeloaders" over a period of time. The Santa Barbara office had also sent them letters stating, "No meals furnished to Forest Service personnel unless compensation is received." Needless to say, there were no more takers.

I also received a long letter from the Santa Barbara office apologizing for the intrusion and thanking me for bringing the matter to their attention.

* * *

The summer of 1942 passed much too fast -- but then, time has a habit of doing such. It had been a most enjoyable season for the family, and also myself, regardless of my frustrating experience. I can truthfully say that I enjoyed my leisure time in this vast and beautiful redwood country. Ted seemed to be extremely happy with his work. Even though the pay seemed inadequate, the joy he experienced on the job, and the pleasure of working with the public, more than compensated for that.

It would soon be time to return home to Green Valley. Our Forest service quarters were much too small to accommodate our large family during the cold, rainy, winter months. The tent served its purpose, but only for the summer.

Bob had one more school year to attend before finishing high school. Sonny, Jimmy and Skippy missed their Green Valley School pals. Skippy and Sonny belonged to the Cub Scouts and were eager to resume their scouting activities. Bob was active in both a Boy Scout troop and the Sea Scouts. He had already attained the rank of Eagle Scout. So, all in all, our place was at home in Green Valley.

Ted was committed to remain on the job at Big Sur until fire season ended, which was after the heavy rains. Bob, now sixteen years old and a very capable young man, gave me confidence that we could manage alright at home until Ted's return. It was difficult to say goodbye to our new-found friends along the coast as we didn't know when or whether we would see them again.

Ted brought us home, bag and baggage, a short time before school started for the fall term. He commented on how well the boys and I had kept things under control at the little ranch on our twice-a-month trips back, during the summer. This was Ted's first time at home since June.

It was almost impossible for me to keep the tears back when Ted bid us goodbye the following day, to resume his duties at Big Sur. I know that his emotions were the same. Our dear Nana was

happy to see her two sons and their families again, along with many old-time friends that soon came to visit her.

I kept very busy. The boys and I harvested our small acreage of apples. No matter how hard I worked, I could not overcome the feeling of nostalgia. Wherever I looked and whatever I did, I saw reminders of Ted. He phoned home frequently from Bill Kenyon's house, as the guard station had only a Forest Service hookup. The calls only made me more homesick for him.

I really got a lump in my throat when I heard that the Forest Service had transferred Ted to Barnes Camp, in the Cachagua region, to help with the mule packing of lumber and other building materials for an addition to the Ventana lookout. The Ventana Wilderness Area was considered one of the most rugged areas, located in the heart of the Santa Lucia Mountains. (Ventana means "window" in Spanish. There is a noticeable rectangular slot in the ridge east of Ventana Peak. It was from this window-like notch in the mountain that the peak got its name. Legend has it that at one time there was a large rock laying across the top of the opening which made it look like a true window.)

I kept telling myself that Ted was happy working with the animals or he wouldn't be there. I felt that I was selfish, feeling as I did. After all, I had our wonderful family here with me -- but, I didn't have Ted's shoulder to lean on.

As time passed, I missed Ted more and more. One morning in mid-November, while ironing one of his shirts that he had sent home to be laundered, an oppressed feeling overtook me. With the tears rolling down my cheeks I decided then and there that I needed my husband here at home more than the Forest Service needed him.

After lunch Skippy and I left for Barnes Camp in Chuck's car, which was left at the ranch while he was working on the Forest Service lookouts. Bob and Nana were able to care for the three nephews until our return.

We arrived at Barnes Camp, in the Cachagua area, about 4:00 P.M. (The Cachagua area is in the Carmel Valley. The Cachagua Creek flows into the Carmel River.) There we met Sherman Mansfield, the cook. He was in the cook house boiling up a big pot of beans on a wood-burning stove. (I remember him telling me, "Do not salt the beans before cooking and never stir them while simmering, with the lid on.") Sherman informed me that the pack crew wouldn't arrive off the mountain until after dark. Skippy and I waited indoors visiting with Sherman, as the air outside was exceptionally cold.

Ted and the other four men arrived at the camp about 8:00 P.M. What a big surprise it was to Ted when he saw Skippy and me. I immediately informed him that our being there was not an emergency.

After the stock were attended, the men washed up and then sat down to a hearty supper. This consisted of fried potatoes, beans, large steaks, bread and hot coffee. (This was one meal that Skippy and I had on the Forest Service.) The men were in bed by 10:00 o'clock. Skippy joined

them in the bunk house.

Ted and I sat in the car while I poured out my feelings to him. He seemed aghast when I told him of my plight. He said, "Honey, I certainly didn't realize that you felt that way or I would never have accepted this winter job." He told me that he would request a replacement the following day at the King City office. As soon as his job was filled, he would be home. That was a big burden lifted from my heart.

Ted joined the men in the bunk house while I curled up with a blanket, in the car. There were no facilities there to accommodate women. I never will forget that night. I didn't sleep a wink and almost froze to death. It seemed like hours and hours before the men arose at 4:00 A.M. It was pitch dark. They fed the animals as soon as they arose.

I stayed in the car until the men finished breakfast. Skippy was still asleep. It was daybreak by the time the mules were loaded for their daily eight-mile trip up the steep mountain. When Ted kissed me goodbye I felt as though I had taken a new lease on life. I was much happier than when I arrived the day before.

Ten days passed before Ted came home. He was so happy to be with his family again. He took a temporary job at the Granite Rock Company in Aromas as bookkeeper, timekeeper, and paymaster. Manpower was short and help was scarce during those war years. Ted was happy that he could help "fill the shoes" of others at the fighting front.

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5 -- RETURN TO BIG SUR: 1943

In the spring of the following year -- 1943 -- the district ranger, "Andy" Anderson, and his assistant, Jack Curran, called on Ted in Green Valley. They asked him if he would consider returning again to Big Sur as patrolman. They told him that he had an outstanding record at the main office in Santa Barbara and they definitely would like to have him back on the job. Could this have inflated Ted's ego, just a wee bit, to know that he was that important to the war effort and the Forest Service? Nevertheless, regardless of how well he loved the work, Ted felt that his first duty was to his family. He told Andy, "You can talk it over with Irma and I'll go along with her decision."

Needless to say that I was surprised at this request. I realized how much Ted had enjoyed that work the previous year. Too, Ted's job at the Granite Rock Company was temporary. Also, I had a little feeling of remorse about taking Ted away from that work last fall. When I told "Andy" my decision, he seemed pleased.

So -- again we got our paraphernalia and duds together, including our chickens, goat and Rip. This year Ted got a Forest Service trailer to transport Buck, the rest of our pets and the chickens. (These were very special chickens as Ted had sent to Missouri for the White Jersey Giant eggs to hatch in our incubator, and then raise the chicks in our brooder. These hens laid very large, brown eggs. Ted had castrated most of the roosters for our table use.)

As always in the past, our trip to Big Sur was a most enjoyable journey. Our Big Sur friends seemed happy to see us return. All of our acquaintances were very wonderful people.

Ted resumed his duties and I'm sure the animals, too, were happy to see him back. Of course, little, old Kate was on hand to greet Buck. On this meeting Buck seemed overjoyed to again see his old "side-kick," Kate.

Once more the little, white tent was erected under the oak trees in the back yard for Sonny's and Skippy's quarters. Rip was once again secured on his long chain, and the chickens made themselves at home in their wire pen -- even little Henrietta, the runt. She always managed to squeeze through the wire, somehow. Ted made some box nests for our flock, in which they could deposit their products. Poor little "Winnie," the black Muscovy duck, was no longer with us. She turned out to be "Wimpy." However, we often called him "Black Beauty" as he was so homely. He came from the ugliest black duck we had ever seen. Ted loaned Wimpy to a friend for breeding purposes and we never saw Wimpy again.

This year the Forest Service had the fire-suppression-crew quarters established in the state park area. Any meals eaten by the outside personnel were required to be done so at that place.

Our boys enjoyed their summer fun last year, but did so even more in '43. They were happy to be with their old friends and resume their activities of fishing, swimming, hiking, picnicking, playing horse shoes, and just being together again. Too, there were also some new playmates.

The nightly camp- fires were always great fun and enjoyable. Lloyd Sweetman was a devoted entertainment director.

The Sweetman and Ross families had the same trailer spaces in the park as last year. We again had our "Happy House" pot-luck suppers together. Our boys discovered a new dessert that they enjoyed almost as much as "Happy House Pudding." They placed a slice or two of bread in a dish, topped it with jelly or jam, and then poured enough milk over it to saturate the bread. I'll have to admit that it was very palatable. Desserts were quite few, due to sugar rationing. This dish made a good substitute.

My friend, Esther Ewoldsen, often brought her two boys, Martin and Ernst, down from Saddle Rock Ranch to play with our boys. They became very good friends.

This year Bob accepted a job with the US Forest Service as a relief man on the Los Padres look-outs. Chuck, also, was now acting in that capacity. The two of them would be working together on twelve-hour, alternating shifts at the various lookouts. They visually combed the surrounding areas for smokes and fires, as well as reporting all aircraft, pyrotechnics, and of course, the daily travels of "Rebound Elsie," the Navy blimp. The usual stay on each peak was five to ten days while the regular personnel had a vacation. This work would normally terminate when fire season ended, but during the war the Army paid to keep the stations open for AWS work. However, Bob was only to be employed for the summer. Whenever he traveled along the coast, he spent some time with us at Big Sur, again occupying the canvas-draped quarters on the front porch.

About 2 o'clock, on a cold and chilly morning, Bob came dashing into our bedroom. He was very excited. I couldn't imagine what wild animal could possibly have attacked him out on his sleeping-porch quarters to create such a turmoil. Bob said, "Come quick! Cobina has given birth to her babies at the foot of my bed."

Ted and I jumped out of bed immediately. All of us had been waiting several weeks for this "blessed event." Cobina was now a new mama of five little, black kittens. They were so cold that we thought they were dead. We immediately heated the oven. After wrapping the new additions in a piece of warm blanket, we placed them near the warm oven. It was daylight before they actually "thawed out." They then seemed very lively and ready for "chow." Ted prepared a warm, lined box for Cobina and her family, and placed it on the floor at the foot of Bob's bed. That territory was her domain.

When Skippy and Sonny awakened that morning they were overjoyed. Now they had some new pets to show their friends. I do believe that everyone in the park knew about the increase in our family. Cobina proved to be a good mother in spite of being a "single parent" with five babies to care for.

When it came time to find homes for these kittens, the boys had no problem. The only drawback was that we all were attached to them. They were placed in homes at Big Sur. However, in later years such placement was not so easy. Cobina proved to be a very promiscuous gal and we ran out of "takers." (No "fix-its" in those days.)

The Ross family had obtained Cobina's sister for a pet. She was larger and not as pretty -- at least in our opinion. But cats weren't the only pets our boys enjoyed. There were many harmless snakes at Big Sur and a favorite with most of the boys was a small species which grew no longer than a foot. These snakes had forest green backs and orange bellies with a bright red ring around their necks. The boys called them a "Ruby Ringnecks." I doubt if that was the correct name but they were very pretty reptiles. While being very swift and difficult to catch, once caught they would curl up snugly in their hands -- or jacket pockets. Some of the boys at Big Sur delighted in taking these snakes to the evening dances. While dancing, they would reach into their pocket, withdraw a clenched hand, and then open it close to the girl's face. The reaction was usually very unpredictable. Of course, our "little angels" would never think of doing anything like that!!!

The Ross boy seemed to have a particular attachment to snakes. Over his parents' protest, he took a two-foot-long King Snake home with him at the end of summer, and kept it in his bedroom. The Ross family had a maid who was deathly afraid of snakes and definitely wouldn't go into that room. I was told that one day the snake escaped. The Ross family looked all over for it. They didn't dare tell the maid for fear she would quit. Where did they finally discover it? Wrapped around a warm pipe in the basement -- directly over the head of the maid who was there, ironing. It must have taken delicate tact to get the maid out of the basement while they retrieved the snake. (I've often wondered what happened to that snake -- and also, the maid.)

One morning, when Ted went out to the barn to feed the stock, he found Buck terribly ill. Buck's mouth, nostrils and throat were extremely swollen. His jaw and his head were burning with fever. Ted immediately called a veterinarian in Monterey, who was listed in the classified advertisements section of the telephone directory. When Ted explained the situation, the Vet remarked, "I wouldn't make that trip to Big Sur for all the horses in California." Ted thanked him and hung up. How could such a man become a doctor?

Being that Ted had a Monterey County phone directory, he called a Salinas veterinarian. Dr. Hamilton answered the phone. As soon as Ted told him about Buck, he said, "I'll be right down as soon as I can get there." This, he did. Salinas was twenty miles farther away from Big Sur than Monterey -- a distance of fifty miles, total.

Ted tried very hard to keep his horse on his feet. It is an accepted fact that if a horse is sick enough to lie down, it will never get up. Regardless of Ted's efforts to keep Buck on all fours, Buck finally stretched out on a bed of hay. Ted covered Buck with a heavy, woolen blanket to keep him from getting chilled.

The boys and I, as well as Ted, were anxiously awaiting the doctor's arrival. I'm sure that we all were offering silent prayers to the Man upstairs, for help for our horse which we all had learned to love. It was less than two hours when Dr. Hamilton arrived at Big Sur. The minute that he saw Buck he remarked, "You have a very sick animal here." I had never been around a sick horse before but, glancing through my doctor book while awaiting the vet's arrival, I had pinpointed Buck's symptoms to ailments similar to blood poisoning.

After Dr. Hamilton gave Buck a thorough examination and several shots, he asked us to bring some buckets of hot water. With this, he applied hot compresses to the swollen joints. About that time Buck's illness was "getting to me" so I headed for the house. Being that Dr. Hamilton had decided to stay and keep watch over Buck, I prepared snacks and coffee for him and Ted during the night. Neither of them left Buck's side.

By early morning they managed to get Buck on his feet. That was a good sign as earlier they could not budge him. After more shots, Dr. Hamilton felt sure that Buck's illness was hemoragha purpura (blood fever). Being that he had done everything that could possibly be done for that sickness, he headed for home at daybreak. He left instructions as well as medication with Ted and asked to be contacted regularly.

Buck's progress was slow but steady. Dr. Hamilton made two additional trips to Big Sur on his own volition. For these last two trips he refused to accept payment, due to the fact that this was his first case of hemoragha purpura.

Buck continued to recuperate with lots of TLC (tender loving care). It was almost a month before he was again on the trails. During Buck's recuperation period Ted rode Lopy. Kate didn't seem too happy about the switch but was content to be with Ted. I do believe that Kate was as happy as the rest of us when Buck again resumed his Forest Service duties.

We shall always be grateful to Dr. Hamilton for his devotion to animals. However, we will never underestimate the power of prayer. We never did find out the cause of Buck's illness. Even the Vet was uncertain.

Bill Knapp was a frequent visitor to Big Sur. On each occasion, he always stopped by to see Buck. When he heard about Buck's illness, Bill made a special trip down to see him.

Chuck's and Skippy's birthdays were quite close together -- on the 1st and 12th of August, respectively. Skippy and I made arrangements to spend a couple of days at Chew's Ridge Lookout where Bob and Chuck were then stationed. It was the one lookout to which the public could drive. Nana and Ted could look after the three nephews. I cooked food to leave for the family at home as well as to take with us. Bob particularly, would enjoy not having to cook for himself for a couple of days. I also made a big birthday cake for the "Birthday Boys" to share.

When Skippy and I left Big Sur that morning of August 7th, Ted cautioned me to be sure to listen for any fire calls that may come in over the Forest Service radio. If one came through, I was to return to Big Sur immediately as Ted would have to use our car to report to the fire. He also cautioned me, when returning home, to proceed down one particularly steep grade in low gear, as it was a treacherous and sharp decline.

It was a happy reunion with Bob and Chuck again. Skippy enjoyed the new, wild surroundings. He immediately started collecting pine cones. When he spotted one about fifteen feet up a small tree, he proceeded to climb up to get it. He was a mess when he got back on the ground. Sticky pine pitch was all over his clothes and himself. We had to use turpentine to get it

off his skin and out of his hair.

Lo and behold! We had been on the lookout barely three hours when a fire call came through, reporting a blaze in the Big Sur area. Skip- py and I left immediately, leaving all the birthday goodies for Chuck and Bob to devour. As I had been instructed, I was driving "Betsy" down that particularly steep grade in low gear, hugging my side of the bank. While maneuvering one sharp, hairpin turn, a car approached us going faster up the grade than I was going down. Unfortunately, the driver was cutting across my side of the road. The result was a head-on collision.

To make a long story short, I managed to contact Ted. Bill Kenyon, the park ranger, drove Ted to Monterey that evening to pick up Skippy and me at Dr. Wolfson's home. Dr. Wolfson was a dear, kind person. After giving me two aspirin tablets, he made a cup of hot chocolate for Skippy and a cup of hot tea for me -- and toast for us both. I never will forget his kindness. Skippy's elbow had gone through the windshield and was badly cut. Dr. Wolfson took care of Skippy's injury that night. The steering wheel of our car had hit me in the chest. The steering wheel broke in three places. X-rays at the Monterey Hospital the following day revealed that I had a heart contusion, fractured sternum, and a couple of broken ribs. I'll have to admit that the ordeal was very, very painful. It took me many weeks to recuperate from that accident, but we were grateful that it wasn't more serious. The two women in the other car were not injured but were definitely "shook up." Poor "Betsy" was laid up in a garage for several months as parts for cars were difficult to obtain during the war years. Many of our personal possessions were taken from the locked trunk of our car. Ted had to then use Chuck's car to perform his Forest Service duties.

During my recuperation period after the accident, I often took leisurely strolls alone. To sit on a large rock next to the river and watch the "dipper birds" (water oozles) was very fascinating. There was one particular spot where they seemed to congregate. They were interesting to watch but they looked so silly -- continually dip- ping their heads in and out of the water. Sometimes they would actually dive in and swim under the water. The Big Sur area is the only place where I have seen these birds.

Also, the quarter-mile walk to Pfeiffer Falls was always invigora- ting. The pathway, leading to this alluring place, gave me a feeling of remoteness. To sit and listen to the constant murmur of the waterfall could whisk me into fantasy land. I'm sure that this was beneficial therapy. And where could I find a more delightful place to daydream than at this beautiful spot?

During the summer we had many visitors -- even more than the previous year. Arroyo seco camping pals and friends from Watsonville all seemed to enjoy this beautiful country. Some of them dropped in two or three times during the sum- mer. Everyone knew about the food situation so they came prepared with such. The overnight guests either stayed in cabins or brought their sleeping bags and blankets with them.

There were so many places of interest to show them. All enjoyed watching the sea lions at Grimes Point. We took some friends down the brushy trail to Chinaman's Cove. Dani's Beach was a delight to our guests, particularly the children. The short walk to Pfeiffer Falls, through the magni- ficent redwoods, was a stroll to remember.

While Bob was at Big Sur, he enjoyed the visits and companionship of many of his Watsonville friends during their days off. Bud Daugherty, Dan Leddy, Steve Duer, Bill Bottero and Payson Gregory were some of his closest buddies. Sometimes a group of them would camp by themselves in the park. Teddy and Jacquie Carlyon spent a week with us at the guard station. Teddy was Sonny's age. Bob kept company with Jacquie for a while.

It was such an enjoyable summer. Again, it passed much too quickly. It would soon be time for the boys to go back to school. We now had a decision to make. Nana, my dear mother, had made arrangements to spend several weeks with her son, Jim, and his family in Watsonville. Our Green Valley neighbors and very dear friends, Dick and Pauline Crandall, wanted to keep Jimmy and Corky (Ralph) for the school semester.

Skippy and Sonny begged to remain at Big Sur and attend the Pfeiffer Big Sur School, which was located close to our quarters. Ted and I talked it over together. We decided to remain at Big Sur for the winter. We all seemed happy with the arrangements. My little mother would be visiting with other members of her family and the two youngest nephews were excited to be able to stay with the two Crandall boys, Jimmy and Richard.

The Forest Service had assured Ted that most of his work would be in the vicinity of Big Sur. Occasionally he may be away from home, but only for a couple of days, unless fire duty demanded his time elsewhere. There had been more fires along the coastlands on private property this year, as well as in the forest areas. It is not uncommon to have large fires in redwood forests during the winter as well as summer, lightning being a common cause.

With part of our family settled in temporary homes in Watsonville, it was a contented change for all. Sonny and Skippy became quite excited as school days approached. They would now be attending class with all their Big Sur friends.

The Newell family lived quite some distance from the school. Ralph Newell called on us, asking if we would consider boarding his young son, Peter, in order for him to attend the Pfeiffer School. Being that he was in the same age bracket as our boys, we consented to do so. We could somehow manage to make room for one more in our small quarters.

The Pfeiffer School house, located on the south side of the Forest Service acreage, consisted of one room. That size was adequate at that time and accommodated about twelve pupils of all ages and grades. It sat back a short distance off of Highway 1. Mable Kenyon was the lone teacher. She had been instructing there for a number of years. Everyone seemed pleased with her capability. (Later in the late 1940s or early 1950s, the Pfeiffer School house was torn down. There was no longer need for it after the Captain Cooper School was built. This new school was located on an upper flat, east of Highway 1, and obscured from the road. It is still in use today.)

The day that school started, the three boys had "sparkles" in their eyes. At school the teacher addressed our two boys by their given names -- Lloyd and Ronnie. Being that most of the children brought their lunches to school, our kiddies asked to do likewise, even though it was only two minutes walk from home. Recess and lunch hour were the fun times -- filled with games and other

activities. On the east and south sides adjoining the school yard, the terrain was more or less in its wild and natural state with trees, shrubs and grass. When permitted, this was an ideal place for the boys to play "Cops and Robbers" or "Cowboys and Indians." (In that era, those games were accepted.)

Frequently, the teacher would take the class on nature walks. Needless to say that they all enjoyed these educational strolls. Mable Kenyon was well qualified for such expeditions. I believe she knew the names of all plants, trees, birds, and many other things of interest in the forest.

Peter seemed very happy in his temporary home. He and our boys became close pals. He shared the tent with Skippy and Sonny until the rains started. His father took him home for each weekend.

Shortly thereafter, Ted had taken a large group of soldiers back into the forest on a five-day bivouac. Being that our boys were now attending school, Bob was a lookout relief man for the Forest Service, and the rest of our family was in Watsonville, I felt a little lonely and bored. The Monterey High School would be resuming classes on the following Monday. The man that was to drive the high school bus, from Big Sur to Monterey, was not going to be available. When a party called on me and asked if I would be interested in the bus-driving job, I didn't hesitate to say "Yes."

The following day, Friday, I drove our car into Monterey and took the necessary tests, of which I had no difficulty in passing. I was so happy that I'm sure I whistled all the way back to Big Sur.

As I lay in bed that night I made plans as to how Skippy, Sonny and Peter would manage until my return home each day. Too, Ted would soon be off the mountain and he could help oversee things at home. Then -- I started wondering how I would pass my time during the high school hours. I knew no one in Monterey to visit. About that time -- and at a late hour -- a brilliant idea hit me. Why not work in the fish cannery on Cannery Row until time to return to Big Sur? They were crying for help there. But, what about the fishy odor on my clothes? Would high school students mind such an obnoxious smell? Well, I wasn't going to stay awake all night wondering and pondering over the fish situation.

The following morning, Saturday, I awoke walking on cloud "-10-". I had never worked outside of our home since we were married. Wow! Wouldn't this be a stupendous surprise for Ted! I'm sure that I had a mental list of things to buy with the extra money -- a list about a foot long. It wasn't that Ted's salary was not adequate, but extra things are always needed in a large family.

I didn't expect Ted back until Sunday or Monday. To my surprise, he returned Saturday evening. If I thought I had a surprise for him, I was mistaken. He had a bigger surprise for me when he told me, "No, I was needed at home." He definitely did not want his wife doing any work which would dilute her duty to her family at home. Ted didn't put me on a pedestal but he did put me in my place. In one respect I admired him for his stand, but I had to admit that "my wings were clipped." (Some forty-three years ago most married women "had an apron attached

to their attire," so to speak. They were the homemakers and took care of their children at home. How times have changed in these modern days -- some for the better and some not too good.)

I immediately contacted the person who had hired me for the bus-driving job. I expressed my regret. He was sorry but he understood my husband's concern and affection.

A short time later I was offered the job of postmaster (post- mistress) at Big Sur, following the death of Ann Smith. She had held that position for a number of years. There was no hesitancy about my answer. I thanked them for the consideration but told them that I was needed at home.

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6 -- POSTSCRIPTS

One October day, after the park had closed for the season, Bill Kenyon asked Ted if he would like to accompany him the following morning on a hike up the Big Sur River. He wanted to check on park boundaries and signs. Of course Ted was more than eager to go. He and Bill had become very good friends.

When Ted told me about his plans for the following day, I really became excited. Nana was back from Watsonville now and she could watch over the boys. I asked Ted if I could go along with them. His answer was, "No, Honey, it's too rugged a trip for you. You wouldn't be able to keep up with us and you can't expect Bill to sit and wait for you." That made me want to "vent my venom," as I knew good and well, from past experiences, that I wouldn't be a hindrance to them. I did a little coaxing until Ted finally said that he would consult Bill.

That evening I was overjoyed. Bill had said that it was OK with him. I prepared a "rough-it" lunch for the three of us before retiring.

We left early the next morning at daybreak. Nana, Skippy, Jimmy and Sonny could manage alright. The boys would be in school part of the day. Too, they loved being with their Nana. She enjoyed telling them stories about her childhood and many interesting experiences "when she was a little girl."

What a gorgeous, spectacular, fall morning it was as we followed the trail along the fast-flowing Big Sur River, on its way to the sea. Where the trail ended, it was necessary to wade through water -- some placed waist deep. I was somewhat surprised at the huge rocks and boulders that must have bordered the banks of this river for centuries. If I was a little apprehensive about starting this hike, I soon overcame it.

The recent rains had washed and brightened the trees and foliage along the water's edge, and as far beyond as one could see. What a beautiful sight as the morning sun peered over the mountain top. Just to be there in that spectacular wilderness made goose pimples run up and down my spine. I felt as though I was living in a world of enchantment. Unless a person is a lover of the outdoors and nature's bounty, it is impossible to understand my innermost feelings.

The reverberation of the gushing water over the partially-submerged rocks, and the birds chirping in the tree tops above, were the only audible sounds, with the exception of the occasional drone of our voices. I do believe that this was as near to fairyland as one could possibly be.

The water became deeper and much colder as we approached the first part of the gorge. By now I was in the lead. I waited on the bank for Ted and Bill, wondering what to do next. We could go no farther on this side of the river due to the walls of rock. There were two alternatives: we could climb over large boulders or swim the gorge to reach the other side. I chose the latter as I was already drenched and shivering.

The crystal-clear water was deep and extremely cold. I splash- ed into it with vigor and lost no time reaching the opposite side. This was the first time that I had ever swam in ice water. Ted followed me, but his progress wasn't quite as rapid. I was slightly concerned. When he came closer I extended my hand which he willingly accepted.

Bill had chosen to climb over the boulders to join us. Being that we had already eaten an early lunch, the only thing Bill had to carry was a coiled rope which he had brought from home. Ted and I waited for him in a sunny spot on the big rock, water dripping from our clothes and oozing from our shoes. I guess Bill had a rugged, steep climb as he was puffing when he finally reached us. At least he wasn't drenched and cold. Possibly he was the wisest of us three.

Again, we were on our way over more rocks and gullies. Suddenly, around a bend in the river we came upon one of the most beautiful and spectacular scenes. The high, rocky banks on both sides of the river were partially covered with tall ferns and shaded with over- hanging trees that entwined them- selves like a canopy over the river. This scenic view reminded me of a grotto made by Mother Nature. Very little light filtered through to reflect upon the water. This prevented us from getting a good picture of this fascinating place. (In those days we didn't have the fast film we have today.)

Following an overgrown trail up the river, we came upon the se- cond part of the gorge which we had to cross. This time Ted chose to take the "inland route" with Bill. When I saw the high rocks I would have to climb, I chose the frigid water. But when I reached the rock wall on the other side of the gorge, there was no place to go but up. I circled upward and around this huge boulder, digging in with my tennis shoes in order to obtain a secure footing. When I reached the top of the rock I was panting and exhausted. I sat down to relax in the shade of a tall tree that had grown out of a crevice in the rock. The view from this spot was beautiful, but at this point I was not interested in a view. I was becoming a little concerned. Where were Ted and Bill? I looked down on the sheer sides of this big boulder. It was vertical rock -- straight up and down. The adjoin- ing rocks were the same with only crevices between. I began wonder- ing if Bill had been in this area before. If so, where was he going and how was he going to get there? About that time I heard voices and felt somewhat relieved. I'm sure Ted felt the same when he saw me gazing down at him from my "roost."

I was wondering, "Where do we go from here? Do they come up or do I go down, and how?" Bill did not bring that coiled rope with him just to play "cowboy." He tied one end of the rope around a rock and hurled it up to where I was "perch- ed." He missed and tried again. No luck! After he and Ted took several turns trying to get the rope and rock to land in a place where I could reach it, they were finally rewarded. They told me to tie the end of the rope onto some- thing secure. To me, the only thing that looked fairly reliable was a large tree branch that was hanging over "my perch." If only they knew how inadequate I was in tying knots, I don't think they would have felt so confident as my square knots often turn out to be "granny" knots. In a real sense, "they were at the end of their rope -- or at the end of mine." I did the best I could, knowing their safety was in the balance. I kept tying one knot on top of another, hoping for the best -- that some of them would hold. This was a pre- carious predicament that I had got- ten myself into.

Ted tackled the ascent first, pulling himself up on the rope, hand over hand, and walking up the rock with his feet, in order to keep his body from coming in contact with the boulder. He made it OK. My knots held! Now it was Bill's turn. He was somewhat heavier than Ted. I'll have to admit that I said a little prayer of "thanks" when both were safely on top.

To conquer this barrier, we had to slide down the rope on the opposite side of the boulder, using the same technique as on the ascent. Bill descended first -- then I. Ted brought up the rear. There was no way that we could retrieve the rope. (I've often wondered how long it remained there and if my knots were ever untied.)

We now again followed the river for some distance until we came upon a less-dense opening. This led us up to a trail which later intervened with the Pine Ridge Trail. I couldn't help but wonder why we took the most hazardous route to reach our destination. No doubt, there were river boundaries that Bill checked, but my eyes were glued to the most beautiful, wooded scenery that I had ever encountered.

After following the trail for a while we came to a gate. This was the turn-around point. I was getting "powerfully hungry" as we had eaten our lunch hours before. The chilly October air and our rugged experience did much to whet my appetite. However, I didn't complain -- I didn't dare, as I was supposed to be a rugged mountaineer gal.

The trail leading back home seemed long but enjoyable. There were no rivers to cross nor rocks to climb. Even though I was tired I made sure that I didn't lag behind. When Ted and Bill stopped for a "breather" or a short rest, I welcomed it as much as they.

It was dark by the time we reached the Guard Station. Nana and the boys were becoming a little anxious but were relieved when they heard us coming.

I'm sure that I didn't eat much supper that night although I was famished along the trail. I was too anxious to crawl into bed and rest my weary bones. As long as I live I shall never forget that wonderful expedition, back into the wilds and the rocky terrain of the Big Sur country.

Some time later I heard that Bill never did learn to swim. He always was timid of deep water. That accounted for his refusal to swim the gorge, and his preference for climbing the boulders.

Ted never again refused to let me accompany him on missions back into the forest whenever possible, whether on foot or by horseback. Of course, there were many, many times when it was not feasible for me to go with him.

There was one experience that Ted would like to forget, but it demanded action in his line of duty. He was on car patrol and fire inspection down the coast. He drove to a house located some distance off the road. After parking his car in the parking lot, he walked toward the house. Hearing voices from the rear, he approached the back yard. To his surprise, he saw two men skinning out a deer. Seeing Ted startled them as this was not deer season. They knew that they were committing an illegal act. However, in the wilds of the back country it was generally

known that many of the land owners partook of venison throughout the year, regardless of season.

Under the circumstances it was somewhat pathetic, as these men were boarding students that had mental problems. Although meat was rationed, each student had his own ration card which should have sufficed.

Ted explained to the men that as much as he disliked doing so, he would have to report this incident to the game warden. Being an officer of the law, if Ted did not do so, he would be considered an accomplice -- an accessory after the fact -- and would be labeled just as guilty as they. These men informed Ted that he was only the second person that had visited them in over a year. Ted always regretted that incident.

Bob finished his stint with the Forest Service in mid-October and spent the rest of the month with us at Big Sur. He shared the tent with Sonny, Skippy and Jimmy. Each had a single-bunk bed. Since these were school days for the younger boys, they had to arise about 7:00 A.M. Bob usually slept an hour longer. After breakfast each morning, he returned to the tent and found an egg on his pillow. Skippy and Sonny were at school so they couldn't have placed it there. (They always delighted in playing tricks.)

The mystery remained unsolved for some time, until one morning when Bob slept later than usual. He was awakened by a flapping of wings against his head. Somewhat startled, he jumped up. There was little Henrietta, the runt hen, perched on his pillow, looking very distraught. She had apparently squeezed through the fence each morning and had been attracted by the warmth of the pillow which Bob had just vacated. What better place for a nest? Being that Bob had slept later that morning, the urge to lay apparently became too strong and she insisted that Bob vacate "her cozy nest."

The boys had made a pet of Henrietta but we didn't realize the depth of her affection until the egg incident. She continued that mission until the tent was removed. We never did solve the riddle of where and how she squeezed through the chicken wire of the pen. We failed to catch her in the act. We were somewhat fearful that some wild animal might attack her during the night, but I'm sure old Rip kept intruders away.

Being that our wedding anniversary was in October, Ted selected some silver jewelry for me from the gift shop at the Big Sur Lodge. This beautiful, rustic building was located near the entrance to the park. The interior of this structure contained a large curio shop, in which many novelties were displayed for sale -- such as redwood momentos, redwood burls, Indian artifacts, and post cards -- depicting the forest and coastal areas of the Big Sur country. Also, there was other merchandise, including a glass showcase of lovely jewelry. Visitors to Big Sur enjoyed browsing through this interesting place, purchasing souvenirs to take home with them.

In one section of the lodge was a dining area which was most appealing. A row of windows skirted one side of this room. These reflected a delightful view of the wooded, outdoor surroundings. A rare Chinese redwood had been planted in the garden area, near these windows.

This particular redwood was a unique addition to the Big Sur country. It complimented the native species. During nature hikes, attention was always called to this exotic specimen.

The Big Sur Post Office was also located in this building. It was here that postmaster (postmistress) Ann Smith served the public for many years, prior to her death in 1943.

Sometime later, after we had left Big Sur, this beautiful lodge was destroyed by fire. I have always wondered if the Chinese redwood survived. A short time later, a new lodge was built.

It was around the latter part of October in 1943 that the Ewoldsen family moved from Saddle Rock Ranch (McWay Canyon) down into the Big Sur valley. They leased the former Apple Pie (Roger Camp) and named it "River Inn." Hans took charge of the cabins and made considerable improvements around the property. After the death of Ann Smith, Esther took over the postmaster (postmistress) job at Big Sur and held it for over fifteen years. The two boys, Martin and Ernst, remained very good friends of our boys after we left Big Sur. Hans and Esther invited Sonny and Skippy to spend some time with them at River Inn, of which our boys were overjoyed. Later, Ernst and Martin came to Green Valley for a visit with us. True friendship is never forgotten.

Bob had graduated from high school the previous June and had made plans to attend Curtis Wright Technical Institute in Glendale, starting in November. He planned to study aeronautical engineering. At the end of October I took him to Watsonville to pack. He boarded the train south and we sent his trunk to him later. It was an eleven-month crash course and we thought Bob was happy with his studies.

Chuck continued as lookout relief after Bob left. Whenever Chuck had a few days off, he came to Big Sur to be with us. On one occasion, he asked if he could accompany Ted on a trip to Carmel Mountain AWS Station. The Palo Colorado Guard Station, which normally serviced Carmel Mountain, was closed for the winter. The lookout, which remained open all year for AWS work, was now serviced by the Big Sur station. Ted was happy to have Chuck accompany him but suggested that he ride Buck. Kate and Buck were the only two animals available for riding at that time. However, Chuck insisted on riding Kate. No matter what Ted said, Chuck was persistent. Well, if that's the case, so be it.

Kate was a small jenny and Chuck was a lofty six-foot-four. After Ted adjusted the stirrups for Chuck's comfort, he assisted him into the saddle. To mount and dismount was still difficult for Chuck due to his arthritic condition. Nevertheless, Chuck declined to use the stirrups. For comfort, he chose to let his feet dangle -- almost touching the ground. This presented a rather comical sight.

Little Kate knew the route up to the mountain top exceptionally well. She also knew where each thistle and pea-vine plant was located, bordering the narrow, winding trail. Kate stopped quite frequently, on the way up the mountain, to indulge in this favorite tid-bit of hers. No matter how persuasive Chuck was, he couldn't get Kate to budge until that juicy, sweet, pea-vine was devoured. Then, when she finally glanced up and saw that Buck was nowhere in sight, she let

out a loud bray of panic and started galloping around the bends "full speed ahead," causing Chuck some very anxious moments. Even though his feet almost touched the ground, he could not dismount without assistance. I don't know which of the two -- Kate or Chuck -- were the happiest when Buck finally appeared in sight. Ted wasn't concerned as he knew Kate's habits on the trail. Nevertheless, Chuck was happy to relax when they reached the top of the mountain.

It was late in the afternoon when Ted completed his mission on Carmel Mountain and was ready to start down the trail -- homeward bound. To Ted's surprise, Chuck again insisted on riding Kate for the return trip. Could it be that he felt safer on the little mule, knowing that she had her fill of pea vines on the way up? Whatever the reason, Chuck was astride Kate when they left the mountain top.

In November darkness sets in early -- particularly in the wooded wilderness. Some distance down the trail old Kate stopped. Being dark, Chuck couldn't see what caused the delay. He knew that she was not eating. What he forgot was that horses and mules have good nocturnal vision -- much better than humans.

With all his verbal persuasion to Kate, he just couldn't get the little jenny to budge. Finally, in desperation, he yelled, "TED! I don't know what has come over this damn mule. I think she's gone crazy. She steps forward a foot or two and then backs up again. She continues doing this over and over." Ted let out a real loud laugh. "Don't worry Chuck," he yelled back. "She's only scratching her belly on some sage brush." Ted could visualize the look of ecstasy on Kate's face -- her muzzle twitching and wrinkling with each gratifying stroke.

Chuck's loud response was, "I want to get off this (expletive deleted) mule." Shouting back, Ted assured him that he would be all right, but he couldn't possibly dismount there as the trail was too narrow and the canyon too steep. Chuck reconciled himself to Kate's peculiar behavior for the rest of the trail ride. As far as I know, Chuck never did ride dear, old Kate again -- or any other mule.

Much earlier than this incident, Bob accompanied Ted on patrol using a rented horse. Kate was loaded with the usual equipment required for trail maintenance. She detoured off the side of the trail when she saw a large, purple thistle to devour. Ted told Bob to follow him. They went off the trail a short distance and hid behind a clump of brush. When Kate looked up and couldn't see Buck, she let out a loud hee-haw. She went galloping past them at a fast clip, kyacks flapping. Bob and Ted then started following her. When she reached the next rise and still couldn't see Buck anywhere in sight, she let out a real bellow of alarm. She turned back and caught sight of her side-kick. Buck let out a whinny and Kate came a-running. She stayed close for the rest of that patrol.

In late November, after being down in Glendale for about a month, Bob called us person-to-person on Kenyon's telephone line. We could tell by the sound of his voice that he was distraught. He poured out his feelings about how disillusioned he was with the course and asked us what steps we would advise him to take. We explained to Bob that this was his first major decision in life and it was up to him to decide. We also assured him that whatever choice he made,

we would stand by him.

It was less than a week when we met Bob at Watsonville Junction. He had failed to locate his suit- case after a porter had put it on the train. Luckily, it was found in San Francisco and returned to him. His trunk was shipped later. We were happy to see Bob again. He felt that he had made the right decision. The course did not meet his expectations.

It was now December and Ted was working on telephone-line maintenance and trail repair. As much as he enjoyed his work at Big Sur, he was beginning to feel some- what suppressed. He had put "his all" into his work but there was no possible chance of advancement, due to the fact that he had no forestry degree. To us, this didn't seem fair. Hadn't the head office in Santa Barbara commended him for his outstanding work the previous year?

For some time, Bill Kenyon had been trying to interest Ted in working for the California State Department of Natural Resources -- mainly in the Division of Parks and Beaches. That type of work held no interest for Ted, however.

Soon the holidays would be upon us. We wanted to have Jimmy and Ralph (Corky) home with us for Christmas. We also knew that they were counting the days until we would be reunited again as one, happy family. We realized that this was impossible in our three- room quarters at Big Sur during the winter.

Again, we had a decision to make. This time it would be final. Taking everything and everybody in- to consideration, we decided that our hearts and roots were at home in Green valley. Fortunately, "we kept the key."

A short while before we left Big Sur, some Forest Service offic- ials came in a pickup truck with a horse trailer. They came to take Kate away. It seemed as though the Army needed some gentle pack mules to carry stretchers for the injur- ed. Now Kate was called for a new type of service to her country. What a sad occasion that was for us -- to see the pickup and trailer take dear, little, old Kate away for the last time. But we were happy that she would have a chance to help wounded soldiers, as she was so gentle and displayed consi- derable good "mule sense." (I've often wondered if little, old Kate was rewarded with K-rations on the battle lines.)

The day we left Big Sur we had tears in our eyes but joy in our hearts. Those wonderful days with the US Forest Service will never be forgotten -- nor will all our won- derful friends of the mountains and coast. (As of today, many of those kind people have passed on but the loving memories of them will remain with us always.)

Bob and Ted loaded Buck into the Forest Service horse trailer and pulled it home with a govern- ment pickup. I followed in "Betsy" with the rest of the family and the utility trailer. Upon arrival at Green Valley, we discovered, of all things, that we had left little Henrietta behind when we gathered up the flock. Ted returned the Forest Service equipment to Big Sur the following day. Bob drove "Betsy," our Ford, for return transportation home. When they ar- rived at Big Sur, little Henrietta was in the front yard waiting for them. I'm sure she had a "twinkle in her eye"

when she saw Bob.

Our happiness at home was undermined by the thought that Bob would soon be joining the ranks with his buddies, fighting for the freedom of our country. The war was very much present in our lives. Besides the food and gasoline rationing, it still was difficult becoming accustomed to having all our windows draped with blankets each night, in order to prevent the glow of light from shining out- doors. This was necessary in the event of an enemy attack. A song that was very popular at that time was "When The Lights Come On Again, All Over The World."

After a couple of weeks at home, catching up on chores, etc. -- and after the holidays were passed -- Ted went back to work for Granite Rock Company. There he worked until after the war ended.

In the meantime, he organized and trained a volunteer fire de- partment for the rural area around Green Valley. It was called "The Foothill Fire Fighters." This eventually led to the organization of the Salsipuedes Fire department. Through this experience Ted was re- quested to work for the State Divi- sion of Forestry. In many respects it was the same type of work as his Big Sur duty, except there were no livestock involved. Then too, there was a chance for advancement, according to one's ability. Ted remained with the State Forestry until 1955, at which time he re- tired from such as Dispatcher.

Buck was now retired, more or less, on our 3-acre pasture in Green Valley. We all rode him occasionally. He lived to be twenty-eight years old. We also heard that little Kate had been retired on Los Prietas Range near Santa Barbara. We do not know how long she lived, but if there is a "Mule Heaven" I'm sure that dear, old Kate was welcome there. (Mules live much longer than horses.)

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It has been said, "When one starts to reminisce, it is a sign that they are growing older." Well, if that is true, I'm happy to grow old. Years have a tendency to wrinkle the skin, but to give up one's memories will wrinkle the soul. It has been such a great pleasure to relive those days of the past, as fond memories keep the past ever present.

To my dear family and wonder- ful friends -- may all of you have enough rain and sunshine in your lives to create a lovely rainbow; and just enough clouds to make a beautiful sunset.

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