

LIFE on a SAN DIEGO COUNTY RANCH

By

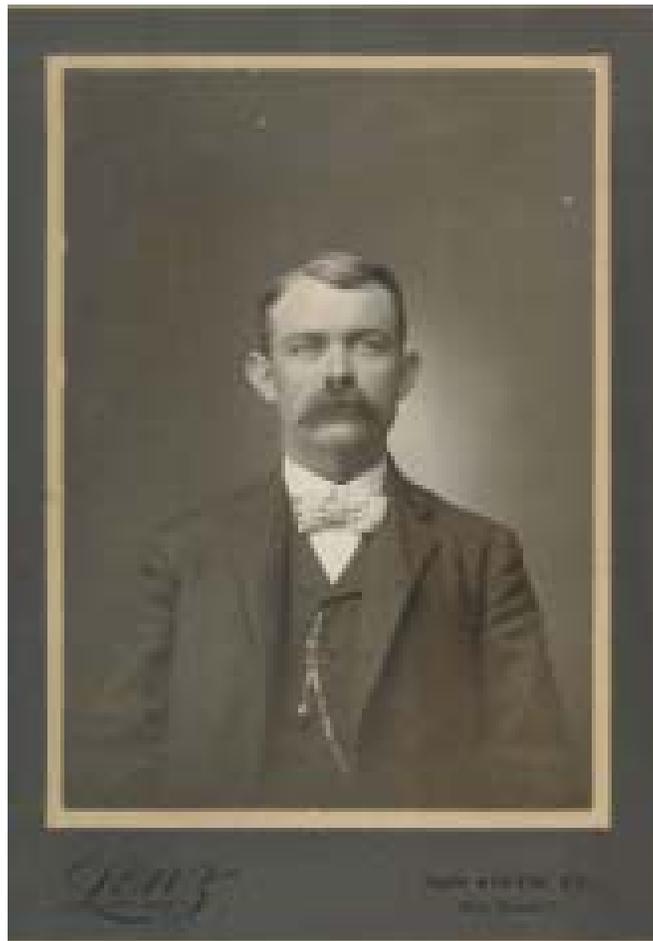
JOHN L. KELLY

Great Uncle John Kelly wrote this account in about 1925.

Retyped by family members

Susan Kelly
Lucia Kelly Sippel
Andrea Pasek
Elaina Blankinship

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John Lincoln Kelly

Circa 1900

Foreword

John Lincoln Kelly (1867 – 1938) was the seventh child of Matthew and Emily Porter Kelly. Matthew came from the Isle of Man in 1844. Emily came from England to Wisconsin about 1844 where she met and married Matthew. In the next years Matthew crossed to the California goldfields believing that it was easy to pick gold off the ground and get rich quickly. After waiting three years, Emily started for California with her small daughter and her brother. They went to New York and by steamer to Panama, walked across the Isthmus of Panama, then waited for a ship to San Francisco where her husband met them, then on to Deadwood. Deadwood was a small gold mining town in the central Sierra near Michigan Bluff. Matthew did well at blacksmithing work but never discovered much gold. Emily, apparently the only married lady in town, cooked and took in occasional travelers as the situations demanded.

As the children grew older, the parents became concerned about the influence of the surroundings (bars and miners) and began to consider moving. They finally settled in San Diego County in November of 1868. John was 16 months old when they arrived.

In San Diego County they “took up” a homestead adjacent to the 13,311 acre Rancho Agua Hedionda which was being managed by Matthew’s Brother Robert Kelly. Much of the work described here by John, was done on the big ranch as well as on their homestead by Matthew’s children while they were teenagers and later as ranch owners.

It is fortunate that John found the stories of old timers so interesting. That he thought it worth while to write down how work was done on a cattle ranch. Though he planned the account for his own contemporaries about 1921-1926, we of the great grand children’s generation are the ones to appreciate his efforts.

In order to share it with others, we have retyped it as he wrote it only using the computer’s capabilities to correct spelling or typing errors and to produce copies as requested.

Introduction

There have been a great many stories written about life on a western cattle ranch, and some of them are very interesting reading. But I have thought for a number of years that if someone who had really had the actual experience would write it up in a truthful way, without any false coloring, it would be both interesting and instructive.

In the first place it is a life that is almost a thing of the past. True, there are a few big ranches still, but the ranges are nearly all fenced, and the life of a modern cattle man is entirely different from what it was thirty or forty years ago. I have often thought in looking back over old times that one would really have to go back beyond the year 1880 to get a sample of real western life. With the coming of the railroad everything changed. New people came into this country, and the old open ranges were a thing of the past.

In those early days we thought nothing of a man's coming into the house and sitting down at the table, or in the room where the family congregated, with a big pistol hanging on his belt. I do not want to give the impression that it was necessary to go armed, or that everyone went about in that way, but if anyone whose business it was to be out in the hills with cattle or other stock, called at the ranch, and was invited in to eat, or to spend an hour or two, it was a matter that would attract no comment if he came in with his side arms on. There were men then who always went armed, and there were also men in this country then who never went armed. My father, Matthew Kelly, came to California in 1851 and lived among the pioneers until his death in 1885, and never carried a revolver. He went about among all sorts of people, and was never afraid to stand up for his

rights under any circumstances or conditions, but he never thought it necessary to carry arms to do so.

Every once in a while someone comes back to San Diego who claims to have lived here for awhile “away back in the eighties”, and who tells an awful story of what a bad place it was then and of how men used to take the middle of the street if they had to go down town after dark. I can testify (and any other old-timer who is truthful will bear me out), that the streets of San Diego were just as safe then for people who knew how to behave themselves as they are today. Of course, if one was looking for “rough stuff”, there were plenty of places where he could be accommodated; but if he were peacefully inclined there was no need of his having trouble of any kind. It was the same out in the country among the stock men. If one behaved himself and did not go hunting trouble, he would find the people kind and hospitable. True, there were times when some “outlaw” was at large, when people living away back in the hills, away from any neighbors, would necessarily be a little careful of how they allowed visitors to approach their houses – especially after dark. But any “outlaw” who tried to carry on a “bold bad career” usually met his waterloo before he had gone far.

With most men, especially old men, the story of their lives, if truthfully told, would be very interesting. But how few of the old people you meet can tell a true story.



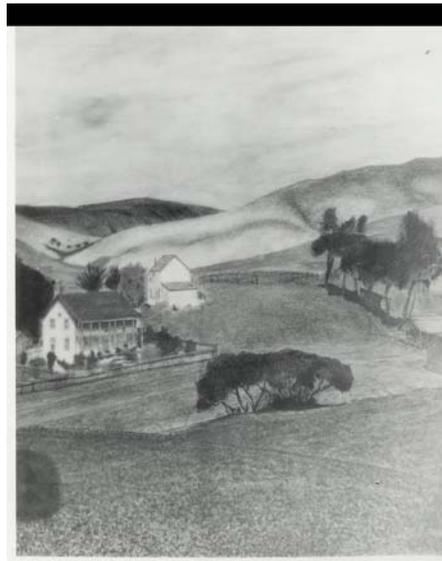
The Five Brothers circa 1925



J.L. Kelly and Watch



John L. Kelly and family



Artist rendition of Original Homestead
With New Adobe in foreground



Los Quiotes Adobe

Life on a San Diego County Ranch

I was born in California, in Placer County, July 8, 1867.

My father came to San Diego County the following year with his family, which consisted of a wife and seven children, of which I was at that time the youngest.

I have looked the matter up and find that we landed in San Diego from the steamer "Orizaba", the third of November, 1868.

Being then only sixteen months old, I of course was not playing a very prominent part in the events that were taking place

My father rented some rooms in an old adobe house in "Old Town", owned by Father Ubach, the priest in charge of the Catholic Church at that place, and left Mother and the children there while he was getting a house built out at the ranch.

Father's brother, Robert Kelly, was in the cattle business in partnership with Francis Hinton at the Agua Hedionda Ranch, and Father had been down to this county the previous year visiting his brother. At that time he had decided to bring his family down here and take up a homestead. Uncle Robert had shown him a piece of government land adjoining the Agua Hedionda Ranch, where there was running water, and also another place farther back in the mountains which Father liked very much.

He came down here the following year with the idea of settling on the place back at Bear Valley, but found that it was already settled on when he arrived. So he proceeded to build on the place adjoining the ranch on which his brother lived.

At that time this county was considered utterly worthless for any purpose except stock raising. And land without running water was not

considered worth anything. Pumping water for stock was considered an impossibility.

The small valley where Father decided to settle was known by the Spanish name of “Los Quiotes” which is Spanish for “the Yuccas” – a beautiful flowering plant well known in this county and which grew plentifully on the hills around there.

The house that Father erected was a very crude affair. It was sixteen by twenty feet and a story and a half in height made of rough redwood lumber with battens over the cracks. As shingles could not be had at that time in San Diego, they made a roof by nailing rough redwood boards up and down over the sheeting. These boards had first had a channel about one-half inch deep and one-half inch wide cut along both edges with a tool that carpenters call a “plow”. Then after they had been securely nailed up and down over the sheeting, and as closely joined as possible, one-half by three inch battens were nailed over the cracks, and these grooves or plowed channels were supposed to carry off the rainwater instead of allowing it to leak through into the house. Father had been advised by Mr. Hinton (Uncle Robert’s partner) that this sort of a roof would turn water as well as a shingle roof, but it proved an utter failure, and had to be covered over with split Redwood shakes, as it leaked like a basket

The house was divided upstairs into two rooms, but downstairs it was one room, except for a sort of pantry that was built under the stairs. There was a door at the northeast corner, a window in both the east and west sides downstairs, and a half window in each of the east and west sides upstairs.

Father was a blacksmith by trade, and a very good one, but he was a very poor hand at carpenter work. The man he got to help him build was also a very poor workman, and as they had only the roughest kind of lumber

to work with, the house when finished was a very crude affair. It was built upon a bench of high ground between two arms of the valley, and there was a spring just at the foot of the hill, and a little west of the house, where we got our drinking water.

Father had rented the rooms at Old Town for a month, and at the end of that time he came back to town on horseback and hired a man with a big wagon and four horses to take the family and their belongings out to the ranch.

I have often heard Mother tell of that experience. Of starting from Old Town early in the morning and arriving at the ranch after it was dark. In the hurry of packing-up that morning, all the matches they had with them had been put in some place where they could not be found. Imagine arriving at an utterly strange place in the night, with seven children, and all your belongings, and no light to unpack by. Of course, the children were tired and hungry, as well as sleepy and cross, and then to have to unroll bedding and try to find them something to eat under these circumstances, must have been a sore trial for a woman of Mother's nature, for she was a woman of a shrinking, timid disposition, who was never intended for pioneer life. The door of the house was still unhung, and there was a carpenter's workbench and many shavings and scraps of lumber in the lower room of the house. My eldest sister was about seventeen years of age, and my brother Matthew was twelve. All the other children were younger. Mother often said that the most terrifying part of it to her was the fact that the house had no door hung, and the coyotes were barking all about and so near that she was greatly alarmed for fear they would carry off some of the children before morning. (Of course coyotes were at that time something new to her, and she did not

know how cowardly they were.) Mother used to say, “Well, we got through the night someway, and with daylight things looked a little less gloomy”.

[In Lizzie’s account, she tells of her Father stopping to help the driver of the cart which was stuck in the mud. Matthew had the matches as well as knowledge of the lay-out of the house but was not present to help.]

There were, of course, no fences or anything else to keep away the hundreds of wild cattle that had been accustomed to watering at the spring, and they were another source of danger in Mother’s eyes as she greatly feared they would attack the children. However, there was little danger of that, as wild cattle are very much alarmed at the sight of people on foot, where they have only been in the habit of seeing men on horseback, and will run away almost as readily as deer or other wild game animals from the sight of anyone who is unmounted.

When I look back and think how wild and uncivilized the country was in those days I cannot help but wonder how anyone could bring women and children to such a place. But Father had lived for the previous fifteen years in the mines of Northern California, and had become thoroughly disgusted with mining, so I suppose it was a case of man’s natural desire to own a ranch; and the fact that his brother, who was a bachelor, was in a position in this county to help him to get a start. Of course, my people’s experience was no harder, and perhaps not so hard, as hundreds of other families who helped to settle the “great West,” but for the women of the household it was certainly hard enough.

At that time there was no school nearer than Old Town, which was thirty-five miles away. The nearest neighbors were about three miles away, and they were Spanish people and could speak but little English. However,

the following summer a couple of other families settled within four or five miles of us and after that it must have been a little better.

As for churches, I suppose there were Catholic services occasionally at the San Luis Rey Mission, which was twelve miles from us, but our people were Protestants and never attended the services at the Mission.

In those days this was what was known as a stockman's country. If anyone tried to do any farming he must protect his crops by means of fences, from the hundreds of head of wild cattle and horses that roamed at will over the land. During the first two years on the ranch, Father with the aid of my oldest brother, (who as I have said was twelve years of age when we came here) and some Indians that he hired, cut posts and rails and built at least a mile and a half of rail fence. It is hard now to realize what an amount of hard work that must have been. Let me explain how that fence was made – and when you think of how little timber of any kind grew in this county, I am sure you will agree with me when I say that I cannot imagine now how any man could have had the courage to go at such a job.

In the first place they laid out the line of the fence. Then a post hole was dug every three feet along that line. Each hole was about eight by twelve inches in size and two feet deep. Then two posts were placed in each hole with a space of about five or six inches between them. The earth must be thoroughly tamped as it was being filled in around the posts. Then rails were laid in between the two rows of posts until the fence was about thirty inches high. Then the two posts must be tied together with one-fourth inch tarred rope called “marlin”. Then more rails were laid in between the posts until the fence was about four and a half or five feet high. Sometimes the posts were tied together again at the tops after the last rail was in place, but this was not done unless they were making an unusually good fence, such as

a corral or something of that kind. You will see that this fence calls for over three thousand five hundred posts to the mile and a vastly larger number of rails. And all these were cut from the scrub growth of every kind that grew in the neighborhood, and hauled to the job on a cart with oxen. What a job it must have been!

I was too young to remember the building of this fence in the first place, but I have a very vivid recollection of helping rebuild a section of it where it blew down after the posts rotted off. There were some kinds of trees growing in this part of the country that would make posts that would stand a long time in the ground without rotting, and there were other kinds that would rot off in a couple of years. Father had to learn most of this by experience, as he, of course, was not familiar with the lasting qualities of the various woods until he had tried them out. In later years we knew from bitter experience that certain varieties of posts would last but a short time in the ground, while others lasted very well indeed. Such woods as live oak, Sycamore, Willow and Sumac would rot off in the ground so soon that posts of those were not worth the trouble it took to set them; while posts of Elder or Mountain Mahogany (*Rhus Integrefolia*) would last a long time. In fact, we considered the Mountain Mahogany almost an everlasting post. There was such an amount of work connected with all this fencing that Father had little time for anything else, for the first two years that we were here. If Uncle Robert had not helped him by furnishing us with beef, I am sure I cannot imagine how we could have lived.

Some of my earliest memories are of Mother's shouting to us children to come into the house from where we were playing, as, "Uncle Robert and some of his vaqueros were coming with a big steer," The vaqueros would have the steer lassoed – usually with two riatas on him, and he would be

fairly frothing at the mouth with anger. He would charge first one horseman and then the other in a mad endeavor to gore the horse, but by having two riatas on him, one man would hold him as he charged the other, and they would try to have every mad lunge he made bring him a little nearer the house. Sometimes Uncle Robert would put his horse right in front of the steer, and have the vaqueros ride well apart and a little to the rear of him. The steer would charge Uncle's horse, and by his allowing him to keep almost near enough to comb the horse's tail with his horns and the two riatas as tight as fiddle strings, they would come into the yard on the run. Of course, there was considerable danger connected with this kind of work, for if one of the horses should stumble, or one of the riatas break, an angry steer would make short work of either man or horse. But cattlemen were used to handling stock in that way, and while they fully realized the danger, they had the most utter confidence both in their horses, their riatas, and in each other.

They always butchered the steer as near the house as possible – not over fifty or sixty feet from the door, so it would be convenient to hang the beef on the line – for it would all be made into “jerky,” except what could be eaten fresh.

We children were, of course, ordered to stay in the house until the steer was dead, and we usually got upstairs and watched things through the upstairs windows.

When they got the steer as near the house as they thought necessary, they would throw him and one of the men would dismount and “stick” him. In those days there was no such thing as hanging a beef up while skinning him. They skinned him just as he lay – as you would a buffalo that had been shot down on the plains. The skin was spread out and the meat was cut into strips about an inch in diameter and from one to three feet long. These

strips were then dipped into brine and then hung over a rope line. Every ranch, in those days, had these lines strung across the yard just as clothes-lines are in this day and age. After the “jerky” had hung over the rope for about twenty-four hours in dry weather, it was turned over so that the side that had been next to the rope or line was turned up to the sun so that it would dry thoroughly. After hanging in the sun for four or five days, it would be taken down and placed in sacks and kept in a cool, dry place until it was used. If the nights are foggy and damp, the “jerky” must be taken in in the evening and hung out again in the morning after the fog clears away. Good beef cured in this way is, in my opinion, perfectly delicious. And I would rather have a good string of it right now than a Porterhouse Steak.

It was always the rule to allow the vaqueros to eat as much meat as they wished while doing the butchering, so the first thing they did after killing the steer was to start a fire on the ground near where they were skinning the beef. As soon as they had enough of the skin removed to do so, they would have some strips of meat roasting over the fire. Uncle would tell Mother to “give the boys some salt,” and if there were one, two, or half a dozen on the job, bread and salt was all that Mother had to furnish them when meal time came. We children soon learned to join the men in roasting meat over the fire, and there is no better way of cooking it, in my opinion. Simply stick the meat on the point of a green stick, (a dry stick will burn) and hold it over the fire, after salting it, and turn it over and over until it is done. Take some steak with you the next time you go for a picnic and try this way, and if you don’t think it is good you can say that I am no judge of what is good!

There were lots of splendid vaqueros in this part of the country in those days. In my opinion, the native Spanish Californian was the best in

that line that the world has ever produced. I have seen and worked with lots of different men, from different parts of the world, but for work with cattle and horses in their wild state, I have never seen any other men who could equal some of the old time “Spanish Californians.” They seemed to know by instinct just what either wild cattle or wild horses were going to do before they did it. I have seen “Americans” that were considered very hard to beat, and they were good; but I have never seen one that I thought was the equal of some of the native Spanish Californians that I have known. As far as riding wild horses or mules, I have seen Americans that were as good at it as anyone could be, it seemed to me. But when it comes to both rough riding and being experts in the use of the riata, too, I have never seen the equal of some of the old Californians. (Of course, I am not saying there never were any Americans who were the equal of any of these old-timers that I have in mind, but I am saying that in forty years in the cattle business, I never had the luck to meet one of them.) Among Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona “cowboys” it is a common practice when roping on horseback, to have the rope or riata fast to the saddle. They simply use a rather short rope or riata, and have the end fastened to the horn of the saddle. Then, when they rope an animal, they let him take the whole length of it. There is no letting the riata run on the horn of the saddle in “setting a horse or steer up,” as we say – that is, in bringing him to a stop when he is running. When the riata is made fast to the saddle, the animal that is roped hits the end of it with an awful jerk, which is very hard on the back of the rider’s horse.

I never saw an old-time Californian use a riata fast to his saddle. When he lassoed an animal he took three or four turns of the riata around the horn of the saddle as close to the fleeing animal as possible. Then, when he wanted to stop him, or set him up, he threw his weight in the stirrup on the

opposite side from which the animal was running and as the weight came he let the turns run a few feet on the horn of his saddle and the horse he was riding got no such a jerk as he would have if the riata had been fast. And besides being easier on the ridden horse, it is much easier on the animal that is lassoed. I have seen many horses, and also some cattle, hurt badly by being set up with a jerk. And I have always said that I would not allow any man working for me to lasso with his rope fast to the saddle. In fact, I think if a man cannot handle his horse and rope without fastening it to the saddle, he had better start in and learn the business.

I have described the bringing in of a beef steer by two or more men, but a good vaquero was expected to be able to do it alone whenever it was necessary. I remember quite well, once when I was a small boy, Uncle Robert coming over to our place and Father telling him that we were nearly out of beef. Uncle said, "My vaqueros are all busy, so you had better get Juan Ortega to bring in a beef steer for you." Juan Ortega was a Spanish Californian who was foreman on the Encinitas Rancho, which ranch was about four miles south of where we lived. The next morning Father saddled his horse and started, telling the family that he was going to get Juan to bring in a steer. There were no wire fences in those days, and a man on horseback could ride across the country in any direction. The road to the Encinitas Ranch that was usually traveled led off east for a mile or so and then turned south. Father started away from the house by that road, and we children naturally supposed they would come back that way with the steer, for there were a great many of Uncle's cattle running at large all over the country, and we supposed they would bring one from over near the Encinitas Ranch.

We small folks were in the habit of rambling around the hills in any direction we chose, provided we kept inside the fenced field. Mother was

always afraid the wild cattle would chase us if we ventured far outside the field, but we frequently went outside the fenced land just the same. This morning my two sisters and two brothers and myself went down on a small rocky point which we called the "Green Hill," and which was about a half-mile west of the house. We were inside the fenced land, but there was a wagon road that came up the valley from the west and entered the field by a gate, right near where we were playing. Suddenly we saw Father coming up the valley at a fast gallop, and when he saw us he shouted to us to run for home and to keep in the house as Juan Ortega was bringing a big, wild steer up that road. I remember very distinctly looking off down the valley and seeing a vaquero with a lassoed steer. I also remember our starting for home on the run. The other children were all older than I was, and everyone in the gang was trying to make the fastest time he could. We were all frightened, and were trying to run so fast, and also trying to look back every few steps to see if the steer was gaining on us, that we did not pay much attention to the rough ground we were running over. First one and then another would stumble and fall, and sometimes in looking back we ran into the one ahead of us and both fell. But you may be sure we were soon up and going strong. We got to the house almost as soon as Father did on horseback, and he loped all the way. Mother was out in the yard as we approached the house, and she was fairly screaming to us to hurry and get in out of danger. Well, we all got in and rushed upstairs where we could watch the rest of the proceedings through the windows.

Father told us later that he had met Juan out riding on the range. Juan had immediately consented to bring the steer in and butcher it, but said that the riata he had with him was not heavy enough to handle a big steer. He was afraid it might break when he got the steer up near the house, where he

would be a very dangerous customer. Father told him that he had a heavy riata at home, and that when they had driven the steer into the lower end of the valley (which would be over a mile from the house) Juan could keep him there while he would hurry up to the house and get the heavy riata. That was what brought Father up the valley in such a rush.

One of the women folk, either Mother or my oldest sister, I am not sure which, was bringing out the riata to Father as we children came puffing and crying into the yard. He took it shouting to everybody to keep in out of sight when they came up with the steer and then he rode back down the valley at a rapid gait. However, before he had gone far, we, at the upstairs window, could see Juan coming with the steer. I remember as if it were yesterday just how that animal looked. He was a big, brownish-black fellow with a white stripe along his back. Juan was giving him almost the full length of the riata and the big angry beast was going around and around the horse and rider in one big circle after another, but every turn bringing him a little nearer the house. Every few minutes he would charge on the horse, bellowing with rage, but the little brown horse and his rider were always too quick for him, and every charge only brought him a little nearer the goal. The little riata looked almost as small as a wire clothesline, and it seemed impossible that it could hold such a powerful animal, especially when he was in such a rage, and trying so hard to get away. When they got near enough to the house we could see the steer's nose was bleeding, and then we saw that instead of having him lassoed by the horns or neck, as vaqueros usually did, he had the riata in his nostrils. Juan had lassoed and thrown him, while Father was coming after the heavier riata. He had made his horse hold the steer down while he dismounted and with his knife cut a hole through the cartilage between the nostrils. He had then knotted the point of

the riata through this hole, and remounting his horse had allowed the steer to get up. The noose, which was on the steer's two hind feet, would drop off as soon as it was slackened and he attempted to run. Then he had him by the nose, and of course an animal is easily held by that hold.

Juan brought him up to within twenty yards of the house, where he drew him up against a big gate-post, and stuck him behind the horns with his knife which ended his life very quickly. We children then came out of the house and watched the butchering, as usual roasting steaks over a fire, while the men worked.

Juan Ortega was a thorough vaquero, and is still living up in Orange County.

Riding wild horses was another part of the business that we saw a great deal of in those days. Horses were raised by the hundred, and they were never handled in any manner except to brand them (which was usually done when they were yearlings) until they were old enough to break. They were usually considered to have reached that stage when they were four years old. But on big ranches where a great many horses were raised, many of them were not ridden until they were six or seven years old.

Very few people, unless they have had actual experience at such work, have any conception of how wild and vicious a five or six-year-old horse is, that has been raised out with a wild herd as these horses were.

Horses or colts raised up among older horses that are gentle, seem to inherit some gentle and civilized ways from their mothers, and the other gentle stock with which they run. But even to a greater extent, horses that are raised from wild, unbroken mares, inherit the wild and vicious ways of the herd with which they have run.

In the old days of which I am writing, the mares were never broken to the saddle. Only the geldings were ever used for saddle purposes, and for anyone who considered himself a vaquero to be seen riding a mare was to invite the jokes and jibes of every band of vaqueros he might meet. It was considered allowable for an old man, who did not pretend to be a rough rider, or a boy just learning to ride, to be seen mounted on a gentle mare.

The result of this was, the mares grew up wild and vicious, and their offspring were taught every bit of the wildness, viciousness and cussedness with which those mothers were familiar. So, by the time they were old enough to be branded and separated from their mothers, they had imbibed about as much deviltry as their hides could hold.

Before I go farther I will explain how the various bands of horses were separated in those days.

The brood mares with the foals up to yearlings ran in bands called “manadas,” each manada headed by a stallion. The stallion would not allow any gelding or other stallion to come near his manada. One old mare in the band usually wore a bell, merely to make it easier to find them.

The geldings were in another band with a bell mare to lead them. This band was called the “caponero.” (Caponero is the Spanish word for a band of geldings.)

It seems almost uncanny how these horses would become attached to the sound of that bell. If a saddle horse should get loose in the night forty or fifty miles from home, he would immediately strike out to find his bell mare. No matter how tired he was when he got loose, he would scarcely stop to eat a mouthful until he had gotten back and joined his old band.

I well-remember a gray horse that my brother sold to a man down at El Cajon. The man kept him for several years, but if he ever managed to get

loose at night, he was always back with the bell mare at our ranch in the morning. They finally got tired coming after him, and sold him to a man who took him to Arizona.

Another incident I will relate to show how horses remember their old bell. We had an old bell that the various bell mares had carried for a number of years. Finally the strap wore out and broke, and the bell was lost. A couple of years afterwards I rode under some large live oak trees over on the ranch, and saw the old bell lying on the ground, where it had been lost when the strap broke. I dismounted and picked it up. Of course, I knew it was the old horse bell, and the first thing I did was to ring it to see if it was still in working order. Within a minute after I had given it the first jingle I was surprised to hear horses neighing and, looking up, saw a herd of horses coming down from a ridge about a half-mile south of me. They were coming at the top of their speed and all seemed to be neighing and greatly excited. They gathered around the tree where I stood ringing the bell, and looked as if they could not understand where that old familiar sound could be coming from.

The men riding for a cattleman were usually put to riding or breaking horses in the spring when other work got slack. The horses would be driven into the corral and a certain number of unbroken horses selected for breaking. The boss would usually select certain of his men that he knew were capable of doing that kind of work, for the rough breaking, or *manza duro*, as the Spanish call it.

Each vaquero selected for the work would then lasso the horse he intended to break; or, if there were a number of vaqueros, several of them would ride into the corral. One would lasso the horse's neck and hold him out in the middle of the corral. Another vaquero would ride up and as the

horse made a run past him he would deftly throw the loop of his riata in front of him (and if you were not in the habit of seeing it done) you would be surprised how that horse would seemingly put his two front feet right through that loop. It would then be only a couple of minutes until he was lying flat on his side and the man who was going to ride him would be putting a 'tapajo' over his head and fastening it with a strong string or thong around his neck, so that it could be pulled down over his eyes.

The tapajo is simply a wide strap of leather, usually about two and one-half inches wide and about eighteen inches long. It usually has loops riveted on to the ends of it for the thong. This is dropped down over his head so that the wide tapajo covers the horse's eyes and the thong goes over the head just back of the ears and the ends fastened under the throat.

The blind or tapajo can then be pushed up above the eyes, or pulled down to cover them.

The "hackamore" will probably be put on him also while he is down. This is used rather than a bridle for breaking horses that are to be used when broke for vaquero horses. It is simply a strong loop of braided rawhide that goes around the horse's nose. It has a headstall and throatlatch like a bridle, and the reins are usually made of a strong horsehair rope. The reason for using the hackamore instead of a bridle is that in breaking a horse it is often necessary to pull very hard on him, especially if he bucks, and in so doing his mouth will get very sore after a few days. Then, as he keeps fighting, his mouth will gradually get well, but will become very tough or hardened, and he will have what they call a tough mouth and will always be hard to rein. If he is ridden with a hackamore until he is gentle, and then gradually broken to the bridle while still wearing the hackamore, he will have a good mouth – or in other words, will be a horse with a "good govern." No one but those

who have lassoed wild horses and cattle on horseback knows how important this is. What we call a well-reined horse will turn to the right or left by merely the pressure of the rein against his neck, and will stop with a pull of little more than the weight of the rein

But to get back to the horse-breaking. When both the tapojo and the hackamore are on, and the tapojo is well down and covering his eyes, the vaqueros will slack the riatas and let him get on his feet again. While his eyes are covered he will not move around much and it is an easy matter to saddle him. You would be surprised how tightly they will cinch the saddle. But tight lacing is not only the style, but also the necessity in this business, for he will probably do everything in his power to get that man and saddle off, and if the saddle goes, of course the man does.

As soon as the saddle is cinched and made secure as possible, and the reins of the hackamore adjusted to the proper length, the vaquero who is to ride him will raise the tapojo and let himself be seen. Then, as soon as the blind is raised, he will probably give a shiver and a squeal, down will go his head right between his front legs, and he will do all that he can to buck the saddle off. However they will probably drive him outside the gate where they will gradually get up to him again and pull the blind down over his eyes. The man will then slap the seat of the saddle a time or two, then deftly slip his toe into the stirrup and swing into the saddle. He will probably adjust the string of his hat under his chin securely, get the coil of his horsehair rope, and the right hand rein in his right hand, then with his left hand will reach forward and raise the tapojo. As soon as the blind is raised the horse may do one of several things. The most probable thing is at the first sight of the man on his back he will throw his spine into a hump, and his head down between his knees, and buck and squeal at every jump—

perhaps keeping it up until the rider's nose bleeds from the terrible shaking, and the horse is dripping with sweat. Under these conditions the rider will probably ply the quirt and spurs not as "tenderfeet" usually think, just to punish the horse, but to get him to quit bucking and go to running. If he can get him on the run, he can soon tire him and get him so out of breath that he will not have much buck in him. After a few hours of this sort of business, and with much hard yanking around by the rider, first to the right and then to the left to teach him to guide, he will probably take the saddle off and let him go until the next day.

But if a horse bucks hard the first time he is ridden, he will probably buck harder the second time, so there will probably be lots of fun in the morning.

I have said that when the blind is first raised the horse may do one of several things, and that the probable thing he would do was to buck. But he may do what is vastly worse. He may sulk and refuse to move, and as soon as the rider urges him may rear and go straight over backwards, and this so quickly that a man who is not as quick as a cat would surely be caught under him and terribly crushed. The kind of rider that I am writing of, though, is not the kind that is easily caught. As soon as he sees the horse is straight up on his hind legs and is still coming back, he puts one hand against the horn of the saddle, gives a quick push, and jumps back, landing nimbly on his feet with his rope in his hands ready to hold his horse from running away with the saddle, as soon as the vicious brute regains his feet. To let a horse run off with the saddle was an unforgivable thing for a vaquero to do (for a horse loose with a saddle on will stampede all the loose horses on the ranch).

Sometimes, however, a real wild horse will start off without bucking, falling, or doing anything mean, but this is very exceptional. However,

when a horse can be gotten gentle without ever letting him learn any of these bad habits, he is ever afterwards a much better horse. For these bad habits learned, they are never afterwards forgotten, and he may try them some cold morning, even after you think he is perfectly gentle.

I remember when I was a small boy, my Father used to ride a little horse that Uncle Robert had loaned him. He was apparently as gentle as a horse could be, and Father used to saddle him every morning and ride out to see the stock. One night we had quite a hard shower, and in the morning Father brought his horse out, while he was wet and cold, and saddled him. As he considered him perfectly gentle, he mounted without leading him from where he stood while being saddled. The result was Father was thrown, and had his collar-bone broken. The horse simply remembered some of his old tricks, and tried them that morning because he was wet and cold.

Now the average man, or even woman, you meet, who has ridden gentle horses, or perhaps ridden a colt that had been raised in a gentle manner about the barn, firmly believes that he or she could ride any horse. Although they may have seen a few horses do a little bucking in a show, or some such thing, they think it would be an easy matter to stay on them. But I want to say to the average man or woman, that if a horse really bucks with you, you will be doing well if you are still on his back at the end of the second jump. Being able to ride a bucking horse is something that is acquired only by long practice, and hard experiences.

II

We boys, my brothers and I, saw so much of the kind of life I have been describing while we were yet too young to take part in it, that it is not strange that our young minds ran almost entirely to that sort of thing.

Instead of playing at games of various kinds as other boys do in these days, we played at riding wild horses, and lassoing wild cattle. True, our horses were stick horses. But each of us had our “caponero” or bank of them. The kind of work we did soon made one horse tired or too slow for the job - so we changed horses frequently. And every horse we rode bucked, or fell backwards, perhaps both.

Our horses’ behavior was most always governed by the behavior of the real horses we saw ridden. If we saw a vaquero mount a wild horse and he bucked under a tree and pulled the man off against a low limb, or ran bucking through a cactus patch, or over a pile of wood, or through a mud-hole, the next stick horse that we mounted invariably ran bucking under a tree and pulled the rider off, or bucked through a cactus patch, or over a woodpile, or through a mud hole, or whatever a real horse had done.

Our horses consisted of the straightest sticks we could cut along the creeks; from one-half to three-fourths of an inch thick, and from four and one-half to six feet long. We each had a large bundle of them. And there were a number of especially vicious animals in each fellow’s string. I remember as if it were yesterday, how we used to go out of a morning to where we kept our horses, and each one of us would select a mount for the morning’s work. How we would go through the motions of saddling – with many hitchings up of our pantaloons while doing it. Then the saddle must be slapped a couple of times after it had been well cinched. (Of course, the

saddle part of it was strictly imaginary). Then the blind must be lifted from his eyes, and he must be led a few yards and turned shortly around to take the kinks out of him. Then, after much effort, we would get up close enough to him to pull the imaginary blind down over his eyes again. Then, coiling our ropes up carefully, and with another hitch at our pantaloons – (this part of it was very important) we would swing into the saddle. When we had everything properly adjusted, we would reach forward and raise the blind. Oh! What bucking, squealing, and running would take place, and some of them would throw themselves on their sides, which last habit was bad for breaking stirrups, as well as necessitating great skill on the part of the rider in getting out of the way quickly to avoid being hurt. But we nearly always got clear of these bad actors.

Among the men who rode bad horses, it was considered something of a disgrace to get hurt by a bad horse; for it was looked on as lack of skill to let a horse get the advantage of you and hurt you in any way. So we boys were very careful not to let them hurt us. But just the same, we frequently had some awfully close calls, when a horse, not yet bridle-wise, ran under a tree, or when a horse suddenly went to bucking when we had a big wild bull lassoed, and got one of us tangled in the riata.

The most treasured part of our equipment was our riata. Rope of any kind that would do for such purposes was awfully scarce, and hard to get. But Father used lots of tarred rope called “marlin” for tying the posts together when making the rail fence that I have described in the previous chapter. This marlin was about one-fourth inch in diameter and very strong. It was strictly against the rules for us boys to take any of this, but rules or no rules, something of the kind must be had, and was had. A piece of marlin about twenty feet long with a running noose was as fine a riata as any young

vaquero could wish for – and Father could not always be on the watch. Mother had a long clothesline of hemp rope stretched from the corner of the house over to the corner of the chicken-house – some eighty feet perhaps. She also had a shorter line – some twenty-five feet, perhaps, of small cotton rope. We used to gaze with longing eyes on the little cotton rope and think what a riata it would make. But I would have no more thought of taking it than I would now of going down and stealing the boots off a policeman. So imagine my surprise one day, when one of the bunch – whose name I will withhold – appeared at a roundup we were having, with this very cotton rope. He had a running noose made in it, and it sure was about all that could be desired when a boy was talking about what he would like to have for a riata. The rest of us rode up around him and admired it with perfect wonder. “But Mother will make you bring that back,” we all said in concert. “Oh! no, she won’t,” said he, “she has five times more clothesline than she needs, and will never miss this short piece.

We all thought it a great honor to have such a fine riata at our roundup, but our honors were short lived. That very evening Mother demanded to know what had become of her cotton clothesline. And it had to be brought back and put up again, just as it had been before. And we were all told what would happen to all of us if it ever disappeared again. After that, what pleasure we got out of that rope was gotten admiring it where it hung doing duty as a miserable clothesline.

Our cattle were the various old dry pieces of driftwood, and the various old rotten stumps that could be dragged in from the surrounding hills and canyons. But the best of all were the old bleached heads of dead cattle that were lying about where they had died during the dry years of the past. These, with the long crooked horns still on them were simply ideal. To be

able to tell the other fellows that there was a big steer of yours running up in a certain canyon, and asking them if they could spare time to go up and help bring him in, was enough to bring joy to the hearts of the whole gang. Then there would be the saddling of our best horses – no half-broken horses for this kind of a job. And we would all ride off and come up to him in a way to prevent his getting into the brush, before someone could get a riata on him. Then, the fellow that got the first rope on him started towards home at the top of his horse's speed, with the big, wild, long-horned steer in mad pursuit. And it was the business of the other fellows to get their riatas onto him as quickly as possible, and string him out between us, so as to prevent him from horning any of the horses. In this way we brought him in, bellowing and fighting, and after throwing him down and taking the riatas off of him, he must be carefully herded with the other cattle that had been brought in on previous occasions. We had often seen the real vaqueros throwing wild cattle to take the riatas off them. This is done, when they desire to let a steer loose; that is, lassoed by the neck or horns, by another man lassoing his two hind feet, and with one horse pulling one way and the other pulling in the opposite direction he is soon down on his side. Then the one who has his hind feet will ride up rather close to him, and taking several turns around the horn of the saddle, will rein his horse back on his haunches, and hold the steer from getting up while the other man will slack his riata, ride up close, dismount, and quickly take the noose off his neck or horns. Then he will lose no time in getting back into the saddle, for the steer will be struggling to get up, and if he does, it is a very dangerous place to be caught on foot. As soon as the man who has dismounted to remove the riata from the steer's head is back in the saddle, the man holding him by the feet will slack his riata, and the animal will immediately get on his feet – and he will surely be

on the fight in dead earnest now, so everybody must keep out of his way. If he can be gotten back among a lot of other cattle he will soon quiet down, as a general thing.

Another thing that was often done when throwing an animal to take the riatas off him (especially if there were a lot of people around on horse-back) was to let the steer up the instant the dismounted man pulled the riata off his head. Of course, the steer would be on his feet and after the man on foot in an instant, and the poor fellow would have to make a dash for his horse and mount him on the run, amid the shouts and laughter of the crowd. I have seen this trick played many times, but always considered it too dangerous to be funny.

We small boys, though, used to get no end of fun letting our imaginary wild steers get up and chase the fellow who was off his horse. And there was many a flying mount made, after pulling the riatas off some old, bleached-out cow's head.

We each had our ranch house. There were many big green bushes or clumps of shrubbery in the various canyons, and each fellow had one of these selected as his ranch house. Where many cattle run, they nearly always have all the clumps of bushes trimmed up underneath where they stand in hot weather and when flies are bad. We boys could therefore walk around under the thick foliage of these bushes and they made fine "ranch houses."

We also had a number of imaginary neighbors who lived under certain other bushes. They were all named, and some of them were good neighbors, and some of them were very hard cases, who would corral our cattle and charge us heavy damages, without any reason whatever. There was "Old Jack," who lived under a sumac bush up on what was known as the White Hill. He kept cattle, too, and was a fairly decent old fellow. Then

there was "Old Dick." He did not raise stock, but was a fairly good neighbor. He lived under a hollyberry tree up near the Buzzards' Canyon. But "Old Stewart" who lived under a clump of mountain mahogany bushes away up on the north side was a bad lot, and gave us no end of trouble. We frequently found cattle and horses of ours that had been shot by "Old Stewart." Many were the plans we laid to get even with him, and many a rock was fired into his house as we rode by. Then there was "Old Conafony." He lived out in Mushroom Canyon and was a pretty good fellow for a while, but later on he got in the habit of bothering us in various ways, and finally got to associating with "Old Stewart." After that we would have no more to do with him.

I often think now of how real these imaginary characters were to us. We talked of them just as if they had really lived under those bushes. We spoke of having met one or another of them while out riding. And sometimes one of us would tell the others of having seen such and such a horse or cow that had been shot by "Old Stewart." They were all old. It seems queer that mere children, as we were, should discuss imaginary characters that were all old, but such was the case.

I think it was in 1872 (when I was five years old) that a school district was organized in our neighborhood. It was called Hope District. The south boundary of the district was what was then known as the San Elijo Creek which opens into the Pacific Ocean just south of what is now the town of Cardiff. The west boundary was the ocean. The north boundary was the Agua Hedionda Creek, which opens into the ocean just south of what is now Carlsbad. Just how far east the district ran I do not know. I do not think there were any other districts laid off at that time to the east of us, unless it was at Julian. And I am not sure there was one there that early, though there may have been. There was a school at San Luis Rey, twelve miles north of us.

That was organized at about the same time as our district, I think. The neighbors got together and built a little rough wooden school house. I think it was fourteen feet square, with one door and two small windows, and no floor but the earth. There were only three families that sent children to school, but those three sent twenty-five. These families I will name: Mr. and Mrs. Feeler lived at what is now called Green Valley and sent nine children, although some of them were certainly no less than twenty-one years of age. Mr. and Mrs. Adams lived about one mile east of what is now known as the San Marcos (Bataquitos) lagoon or slough. They sent nine. Our family was represented by seven. So it is plain there was no race suicide among those old pioneer families.

That little school house was sure pretty crude with its dirt floor. I very well remember when I was a very small boy, we had a cranky old fellow for our teacher whom none of us liked very well. The fleas got pretty bad in the dust of the dirt floor, and seemed to annoy him more than they did the pupils. He used to throw water on the floor to drive fleas out, and we small boys (who were all barefooted) would pick up the wet clay with our toes, make mud balls and when we thought the teacher was not looking, throw them across the room at someone. I can also testify to the fact that sometimes when we thought the teacher was not looking we were mistaken. He sure had a way of "treatin' 'em rough."

In 1877, an addition of some ten or twelve feet was built on to the back part, by digging into the hill to get room for it. The teacher (a very nice man named Mr. Kay) with the aid of the schoolboys did all the work of building the addition. If the little building looked crude before, it looked still worse after that addition was put on. The hill had to be dug away so that there was a bank several feet high at the back, and the dirt was thrown out in

great heaps on the sides, which made the poor little thing look like a little house growing out of the hill. That was the only school I ever attended.

In 1872 Uncle Robert decided that he had far more horse stock on his range than he needed, and tried to sell off several hundred head. The best offer he could get for them was nine dollars per head. And that offer was from a man who had a U.S. Government contract to furnish meat to feed the Apache Indians in Arizona. Those Indians would just as soon, or a little rather, have horse meat than to be furnished with beef of any kind. Uncle Robert refused to take this man's offer of nine dollars per head, and decided to drive a band of horses and mules out to Sale Lake City, in Utah, where he had been told there was a ready sale for them among the Mormons.

As Uncle had a large number of stock to look after and quite a number of men in his employ, it was impossible for him to go with this drive to Salt Lake. So he got my father to go in charge of the drive.

I think it was in April, 1872, that they started with four hundred head of mares, mules, and young stock. They planned to make the drive in three months, and to be back in four months at the most. But they had all sorts of trouble, with lack of feed, and the stock getting poor and run-down. They had to stop several times where they found good pasture and let the stock feed up for a while. When winter came on they were up in central Nevada, near the town of Austin. The winters are very cold up there and lots of snow. They built a log cabin and went into winter quarters at that place. In the spring the stock was so poor from going through the hard winter, and feed was so late coming, in the cold, bleak part of the country, that it was summer before they could start on. Of course they knew there would be no sale for poor stock, and they must get them to their destination in good condition if they hoped to

sell them. The result was that Father did not get back until the fall of 1873, being gone eighteen months, instead of four, as was expected.

Mother was left at the ranch all that time with the children and no man to help with the ranch work. My oldest brother, Matt, was riding for Uncle Robert, and then about sixteen years old. Brother Charley was the oldest boy she had with her, and he was about ten years of age. Uncle saw to it, as he had agreed to before Father left, that the family had enough to eat, but I know it was a great hardship on Mother to be left in such an out-of-the-way place, with such a big family to look after.

Father came back as far as San Francisco by rail, then by steamer from there to San Diego. (There was no railroad in this part of the State at that time. There was a stage-line between San Diego and Los Angeles, and the road ran about a mile and a half west of our house. Father would come out from San Diego on that stage-line, and it passed by our place somewhere along about ten o'clock at night. Mail was very uncertain in this part of the world in those days, and Mother did not know just when Father would start back home. I remember just as well as if it were yesterday, of a neighbor, a Mr. Johnson, coming to our place one morning, and showing Mother a San Diego paper in which there was a list of names of passengers coming from San Francisco by steamer. And among those names was the name of Matthew Kelly. I remember how Mother cried with joy at the good news. And of how we planned to all walk down the mile and a half to the stage road, on the evening on which we thought he would get home. There we built a big fire of dry wood, and sat down around it to wait from about six in the evening until ten that night, when the stage came along. And Father leaped off that stage before the driver could bring it to a stop. It was a happy family that

walked back up that valley that night, with Father carrying my little sister
(who was born the year after we arrived in this country).

III

From about this point, as I remember it, there was a change in our lives, that is, the lives of smaller boys. We were now big enough to begin to ride real horses – old, gentle ones, of course, but real horses just the same and of course the stick horse was a thing of the past. In after life I put in many years riding on the range, and rode all sorts of horses, good, bad, wild, and gentle. And I look back on those years as happy ones, even though there were many hardships connected, necessarily, with such a life. But (and I say it in all seriousness) the joys of riding real horses were tame compared to the joys of riding broncos freshly cut from a willow bush.

After Father came home from his trip to Salt Lake, he was pretty busy with the work about the ranch, getting things to rights and clearing some land of brush and stumps.

He was not a good hand at ranch work, and usually went at a job in a way to make the hardest possible work of it. We children went to school at the little schoolhouse I have described, and helped Father mornings and evenings and also Saturdays, with the work on the ranch. We had from six to eight months of school each year, but the schools were not graded then. Each new teacher we got tried us out as best he could after inquiring of each boy or girl where they had been in their studies the previous term, and, as I remember it, frequently started us in away back behind where we had been during the previous term. Of course, the country schools such as we had were very crude and poorly managed, at best. Some of the teachers we had would have been much better farm laborers than they were teachers.

However, when I was ten years of age I had to quit school, to look after a band of sheep and goats we had. Previous to this the sheep and goats had roamed over the hills at will, and the only care we had with them was to see

that they were corralled at night. But about this time they failed to come in one night, and in the morning there were eight head missing. Father and brother Charley rode out and found the eight head dead, where they had been killed by wild animals. Father was greatly worried over this loss, and said that they would have to be herded by one of the boys from now on. I do not remember just how it was decided, but I was the one selected to look after the sheep and goats for the rest of the school term. Uncle Robert said it was probably a mountain lion that had killed the goats, and Mother was greatly worried lest I should be carried off by it. Uncle Robert, however, assured me there would be no danger of the lion's bothering me.

To most people now, it would seem as if a boy of ten was pretty small to be carrying a double-barreled shotgun but I had been shooting one for a year or two and was considered a pretty good shot. I think this more than anything else was what caused Father to decide to put the sheep and goats in my charge. I remember as if it were yesterday his deciding that "Johnny" was the one to take charge of the sheep and goats. For my part, I felt greatly honored to be selected for the job. I remember how Father helped me load one barrel of the old muzzle-loading shotgun with six pistol bullets and the other barrel with bird shot. I was told that I could shoot the barrel that was loaded with bird shot at quail or rabbits, as often as I pleased, but must always have the right hand barrel that was loaded with the thirty-six caliber pistol bullets, in reserve to be used only on some animal that was attacking the sheep or goats. Mother worried a great deal for fear of my being carried off by a mountain lion, but I considered myself greatly honored by being selected for this job, while the other boys had to go to school. I remember I thought Mother very foolish, to be worrying about me being carried off by any kind of a wild

animal while I was so well armed, and in my opinion, so well able to look after myself.

I often think now how I would worry if my boy, who is eleven years old and very large for his age, were out in the hills under like conditions. But then I felt greatly honored in being selected for such an important position, while my brothers had to go to school. I had a small Scotch terrier that went by the name of Leach. (The man we got him from had named him Leach because he was so much like a little lawyer of that name, who practiced in the San Diego courts in those days and was always spoiling for a fight.) To say that Leach would fight his weight in wild-cats was putting it very mild. (I am now speaking of Leach, the Scotch terrier.) I have seen him fight several times his weight in wild-cats, and wild -cats were glad of a chance to call the fight off, too, the minute they got a chance to do so. Leach had been trained by someone who had owned him before we did, as a hunting dog. And he was as good a retriever as I have ever seen. In those days there were quail by the thousand in this part of the country, and it was an easy matter to kill a few dozen.

The old muzzle-loading shotguns we had were so bad to scatter the shot that we could not depend on their killing anything with birdshot at a greater distance than twenty-five yards. We did not try to shoot game on the wing very often. We used to think that we must get at least three quail at a shot. Less than three at a shot was considered simply throwing ammunition away. Five or six at a shot was considered doing very well, and eight to twelve was an unusually good shot. I once killed nineteen quail with a shot from one barrel of a number twelve shotgun. In all the hundreds of times that I have fired into large flocks of quail this was the only time I ever killed anywhere near that number. I think twelve was the best I had ever done at

any other shot, although I have got that number a good many times. I have no doubt there are many people who would find it hard to believe that quail were ever so plentiful in this part of the country that a mere boy could kill a dozen at a shot with the poor guns we had in those days. But any "old-timer" will tell you that to say you could see quail by the thousand would be putting it mildly. Then there are the so-called true sportsmen who will only shoot at his quail when it is on the wing, and who will tell you that it was wanton destruction of game to shoot at quail on the ground. The same true sportsman will go out and shoot at every quail that flies up, whether it is in range of his gun or not, and will wound far more quail than he will kill, in all probability.

When we went hunting as boys, with our old muzzle-loading guns, we allowed many coveys to fly away before we got what we thought was a good chance to make a pot-shot. And I doubt if we wounded one quail where the so-called true sportsman wounded three. We seldom hunted merely for the sport there was in it, either, but rather with the idea of getting something to supply the home table with meat. And where there were from eight to ten people at the table as there were in our family, a dozen or two quail did not last long.

But I started to tell you about my little dog Leach as a retriever. When he would see me getting the gun and ammunition ready, he knew there was a hunt on. And he would be so excited and so anxious to start that he would be shivering all over. When I finally shouldered my gun and started out, Leach would take his place about three feet behind my heels, and maintain that position through brush or cactus or over any other kind of ground. His watchful little eyes were on me all the time, and when he saw me stoop to sneak up on a covey of quail, he would slink down until his little belly was almost on the ground and fairly crawl along. The instant the gun

cracked he would dash ahead, all excitement, and if there were any wounded quail, that is quail with wing broken but still able to run with great swiftness, Leach would make it his business to attend to the catching of these, and allow me to pick up the ones that were dead. If there were several wounded birds he would rush after one, seize it in his little mouth and hurry proudly back to me with it, and as soon as I had taken it from him, he would rush off after another and come tearing back with it. Then when we had apparently gotten all that were killed or wounded gathered up, he would make several rounds all about the spot to see if there were any more wounded birds hiding in the weeds or bushes. And he would frequently come proudly back with another quail in his mouth after I had supposed we had all that had been killed or wounded. As soon as I started on he would take his position at my heels again, ready to dash out at the next shot. I have seen many fine hunting dogs since then – Pointers, Setters, and various other kinds, but I am sure I have never seen a better or more faithful one than the little Scotch terrier whose name was Leach. If I happened to be out without my gun, Leach would chase around through the bushes just as other dogs usually do, driving out rabbits and occasionally catching a ground squirrel or some other small game, but when I had my gun he knew his place and kept it – right at my heels.

One very foggy morning, I was letting my flock of sheep and goats feed along through the bushes on a hillside, when suddenly I saw only a few yards ahead of me a large wildcat or bobcat wrestling with a half-grown goat, and trying to drag it down. I had my double-barreled shotgun with the one barrel loaded with thirty-six caliber pistol bullets and the other barrel loaded with number seven shot for quail or rabbits. Instead of shooting at once, as I suppose I should have done, which would have probably killed both goat and wildcat, I rushed in shouting at it, but with my gun ready to shoot it the

instant it separated itself from the goat. At about this stage of the game, however, Leach suddenly rushed past me and leaped onto the cat. Before I had been afraid to shoot for fear of killing the goat, and now I could not shoot for fear of killing my faithful little dog.

The big wildcat was far bigger than Leach, but what has size got to do with it when a Scotch terrier sees a prospect for a fight? All I could see was a rolling mass of dog and wildcat clinched in deadly combat and before I could do anything they were rolling down the steep hillside under some thick brush. I rushed down through the brush as fast as I could in an attempt to get to them in time to save my little dog's life as I thought the big wildcat would surely kill him. But the scrub oak brush was so thick that it was very hard for me to break my way through. By the time I got down to where I could see the fight again, the wildcat had evidently had all the fight he wanted for just then he managed to break loose and dashed away down the hill with Leach in hot pursuit. I had to rush back to round up my flock as they had been greatly frightened by the cat attacking one of their number. I got them rounded up and quieted down again and after a while Leach came back up out of the brushy canyon in an awfully exhausted condition. I rushed to him to see if he was badly hurt. There was a good deal of blood around his head and I could see that he had a number of scratches on his nose and ears but when I turned him on his back his little belly was a perfect mass of long scratches from the big cat's claws. Every wound on him however, was proof that he had kept his face to the foe. There were no wounds on his back.

While herding the sheep and goats I used to put in a good deal of time making various things especially things to be used in hunting, such as powder horns and braiding cords for slinging the powder horns and shot horns over my shoulders. Father had made me a standing offer of a dollar for every

coyote or wildcat I might kill. As money was something very scarce with us boys in those days, I had great hopes that someday I might really kill a coyote or wildcat. I am quite sure however, that the dollar reward, though very alluring, was not half so much of an incentive as the hope of bringing home a coyote or cat that I had killed myself. I remember one day I was sitting in the shade of a bush busily scraping on a powder horn that I was making when I heard the goat bell jingle as it does when they start on a run. My gun was lying right beside me. I raised up to see what was frightening the goats when a big coyote ran past within two or three yards of me. He was headed straight for the goats and had not heard or seen me as I sat in the shade of the bush. I made a jump for my gun, but he evidently heard me, for before I could get out where I could have taken a shot at him, he was out of range and going like a streak. I had sat for hours on many occasions hoping a coyote would come up within range of my gun, and now just when I was off my guard he had come and caught me napping. For several weeks immediately after that it would have been a hard matter for any animal to have come within range of my gun without my seeing it.

One day in the late afternoon, when my flock was just starting out to feed, after lying in the shade near the water during the heat of the day, I happened to glance down to the westward and saw what I thought was a coyote coming up among some low brush and tall weeds. He was coming directly towards me, and was evidently intending to sneak up on the goats and sheep that were feeding on the opposite side of me from where he was. He had evidently not noticed me yet, and I could only get an occasional glimpse of him as he came through the low brush. There was an old dry willow stump, probably eighteen inches in diameter, and about four feet high, standing on the bank of the creek very close to where I was. I very quietly

slipped around behind this stump and rested my gun on it, while I waited for him to come within range. He had disappeared from my view at about this time because the low brush through which he was approaching was a little taller where he now was and completely hid him from view. Suddenly he came out of the tall weeds and brush at a distance of about sixty or seventy yards from me and to my surprise I saw that it was not a coyote, nor a wildcat, for it was much longer and larger than one of these animals. I immediately decided it was a mountain lion, though I had never seen one before. It was of the cat kind, and had a long tail. As soon as I had decided that it was a lion, I concluded that he was about near enough—though he would undoubtedly have come on up to within a few yards of me if I had kept still and not disturbed him, for what breeze there was coming directly from him to me, so he could not have scented me. However, he was near enough and I decided to let him know that I was there, so taking a deliberate aim I gave him the contents of the barrel of my gun that was loaded with pistol bullets. I suppose if I had left him come up to within about half the distance that he was when I fired I would have killed him. But as it was, at the crack of my gun he whirled around and the low brush and weeds that had hidden him most of the time as he was approaching had no such effect as he retreated. He fairly bounded over the brush, and was soon out of sight in the big tall brush that grew a few hundred yards farther to the west.

I immediately drove my flock up near the house and went in and told the family of having shot at a lion. Mother was greatly worried for fear the lion would get me instead of a goat or sheep. Uncle Robert came over to our place that afternoon, and when he was told of what I had seen advised me to keep a dog with me all the time while out herding, as he said a lion would never come near where a dog was. Uncle had been in this country since 1851, and

had been riding in the hills and mountains after stock all that time, so he was quite familiar with the habits of the wild animals of this part of the world. I went on as usual, herding the sheep and goats, and never saw the lion again. In fact, for the next thirty years I rode over the hills and mountains of this country after stock and have never seen another lion in its wild state. However, only a year or so after I saw this fellow, two lions were poisoned by a man who lived about five or six miles southwest of our place.

This man had settled on a very brushy ranch with the idea of engaging in the bee business. He built a small cabin in a little piece of cleared ground that was surrounded by brushy hills on all sides. He had two fine mares with young colts. These colts were sired by a very fine horse and the owner valued them very highly. He went out to feed his mares one morning and one of the colts was missing. After hunting all about the place and not finding it, he concluded that it had either been stolen by someone who knew of its fine breeding, or else that it had followed someone's team off, as the county road passed near his cabin. I think it was the second morning after he found the first colt missing that the other colt was also gone. He then noticed a mark on the ground leading away from where the mares were tied and going out into the tall brush. He followed this trail and soon found not only the last colt that was missing, but the remains of the first one, too. The remains of both colts were covered with sticks and leaves when he found them. He then knew that some wild animal had killed and dragged them out there. Without disturbing the leaves and sticks that covered them any more than he could possibly avoid doing, he cut slits in the flesh and put in a liberal amount of strychnine. The next morning he went out to the spot and found two mountain lions lying dead, with their paws resting on one of the dead colts.

In later years we lost a number of colts by their being killed by lions while we had our horses up in the mountains between Fallbrook and Temecula. In fact, the lions killed every colt there was in the herd. One of the mares, who was the mother of one of the colts that was killed, also had some deep scratches on her, that she evidently got while trying to defend the colt. The man whom we had in charge of the horses, borrowed some hounds of a man who lived at Temecula and brought them to his camp, fully expecting to tree the lion. The hounds, however, were not trained to hunt such big game, and utterly refused to follow their track. In fact, he said the poor dogs were so frightened when he put them on the tracks where he had seen the lion but a few minutes before that they would do nothing but tuck their tails between their legs and howl. So he took them back to their owner in disgust.

The mountain lion evidently does practically all his traveling and hunting by night, and for that reason people very rarely get to see him.

The wildcat or bobcat is another animal that sheep raisers have to reckon with. I remember very well indeed how my father used to count the sheep, and especially the lambs, every morning, as they came out of the corral. It was in the early springtime when the lambs were nice and fat. He would say, "Johnnie, there is a lamb missing. You must be more watchful. The coyotes are getting them." That day I watched the herd very closely and saw no sign of coyotes. The herd always runs when a coyote comes near, and the bell jingling would tell me at once that something was wrong. But nothing of that kind had occurred, I was sure. That evening Father counted the lambs, and there was another one missing. He was sure, then, that I must be neglecting my job. But I assured him I was not. This went on for several days. I had not been carrying a gun for some time as sheep with lambs

require a good deal of extra care, and sometimes I had to carry home one or two young lambs, so the gun was much in my way on such occasions. My little dog Leach was getting old, and did not feel able to follow me much of the time.

One morning, after perhaps a half-dozen lambs had been taken, at the rate of one per day, two old dogs that we called “Smith” and “Sallie” went with me. Along in the late afternoon the lambs were playing on the banks of some deep gulches that ran off into a brushy canyon. I was sitting reading a book that I had with me, when the two dogs started up and ran barking down the hill towards where the lambs were playing. Of course, that frightened all the sheep and they came running at a great rate up out of the gulches. When I got down to the foot of the hill, I found the dogs barking under a clump of mountain mahogany. Of course, I knew they had something “treed” and when I got close to where they were whining and barking, I could see an unusually large wildcat sitting quietly in the top of the clump of mahogany. I knew, of course, that he would stay there as long as the dogs stayed under the tree, but if I went home for my gun, the dogs would probably leave him and come home with me. If I had only had a string of some kind to tie a dog under the tree, the game would be there when I returned, without a doubt. But I had no string or rope of any kind. I knew now that this was the fellow who had been taking a lamb every day for the past week, and I was bound that he should not get away. I puzzled my brains trying to plan some way of getting word home, but for a long time could think of no way of doing so without running the risk of letting the cat escape – and I would not take that chance under any condition. My! but I did wish that I had my gun. If it had not been for the fear of the coyotes killing a lot of the sheep and lambs, I believe I would have stayed right there with the dogs until someone came to

the rescue. But under the circumstances that plan would not do. Finally an idea struck me. I had a small bag in which I carried my lunch, made from part of a flour sack. It was made like a game bag, only smaller, and I carried it slung by a strip of the same material as the bag was made of. I immediately tore the bag into strips, and by tying the strips together, I soon had two strings long enough to tie the two dogs under the tree. This done, I struck out double-quick for home. I was very much afraid, however, that the dogs might want to try and follow me, and they would bite the strings off and leave the wildcat. So as soon as I came in sight of the house I decided to go no further, but try to attract the attention of Father and a Mexican, who were hauling out manure from the corrals, and putting it on the ground in the orchard.

I was up on the brow of a high hill south of the house, and the distance to the house was about a half-mile. I began shouting, and Mother immediately heard me, and called to the men, telling them there was something wrong, and that I was needing help. Father left the team with the Mexican and started to come to me, but I could see that he had not understood me when I had shouted for him to bring a gun. I finally got him to understand that I had a wildcat treed, and he went back and got a gun. The Mexican, Jesus Orosco, also came up. He asked in Spanish where the wildcat was. When I told him that it was a half-mile or more back up the canon he gave a contemptuous sniff and said, "Oh he go long time now." I said, "No, the dogs will keep him in the tree." "Oh, you leave dog? That all right then."

Father in his hurry had brought a miserable old shotgun with little light loads for shooting rabbits in the cactus, where they were only a few feet distant. And he had brought no extra ammunition. I told him he should have

brought the gun I usually carried, and which was loaded in one barrel with pistol bullets. He said, "Oh, this will kill him at such close range."

When we got back to the tree the big cat was still sitting peacefully in the top of it. I went in under it and untied the dogs before Father attempted to shoot him. Then Father stepped up to within some ten feet of the tree and fired. The cat gave a lunge as if to jump out, and then settled peacefully in his old position. The Mexican made a remark about an "Escopeta no vale nada." (The shotgun is good for nothing.) Father cocked the other barrel and gave him that, with exactly the same result. It did not seem to faze him. With a few more uncomplimentary remarks about the gun, the Mexican picked up a stone that would probably weigh about six or eight pounds, and, walking around to the uphill side of the tree, and where he was standing almost on a level with the cat, he threw the stone, striking the cat with terrific force. The big fellow gave a sort of whining growl, as the big stone struck him, and leaped from the tree. He landed fully twenty feet away from the root of it, and started down the gulch with the dogs at his heels.

We all rushed down the canyon a short distance, to find the dogs barking and scratching at the entrance to a big sink hole. The wildcat had gone in there. These sink holes are made by the rain during heavy storms. The running water evidently finding an underground opening (probably a gopher hole) which it washes out until it is large enough for a good-sized animal to go through. This sink hole had two openings, as they usually have, probably twelve feet apart – one where the water had entered, and one where it had come out.

We immediately stationed ourselves so as to guard both openings. We could hear the wildcat growling and snarling as the dogs barked and clawed, sometimes at one end and sometimes at the other end of the hole. Father left

the Mexican and me to see that the cat did not escape, while he went home and got the other gun. He also brought a pick and a shovel, with the idea of digging him out. Jesus said it would be easy to drive him out by putting a fire at one end of the hole and letting the smoke blow through. Father agreed with him in this, so I took my stand with the gun at a point where I could command both openings, and ready to shoot if he should come out. Father and Jesus carried a lot of dry wood, and soon had a roaring fire at one end of the hole. The smoke came through like it was coming out of a smokestack, but no cat came out. We could still hear him growling in there. Then Father and Jesus went to digging. They worked perhaps a half an hour, but the ground was so hard that they made little headway. Then we made a fire at both ends of the hole, but still he would not come out. Finally Father said, "Let's shut him in at both ends with dirt and so smother him." This they did, much to my disappointment, for I thought if we do not actually get him there will be very little glory in the job – besides, I didn't see how I was going to get a dollar for a cat that we did not really get.

Well, it was dark by the time we got the hole thoroughly tamped with dirt at both ends. The sheep had gone home long before this, and had been shut in the corral by the womenfolk of the family. We went home tired and hungry, and I can testify to one member of the party being very much disappointed. It seemed to me as if the wildcat had gotten away, for we did not bring home the remains. I think it was on Thursday that all this took place. Father told me the next morning that we would go over to the place on Sunday morning and if the wildcat had not dug out by that time he would consider him dead and pay me the dollar reward. Well, we went over at the appointed time, and found everything just as we had left it. So Father took

out a silver dollar that looked as big as a cartwheel to me, and presented me with it.

There were no more lambs missing for a long time, and we all knew that we had gotten the fellow that had been taking them. He had doubtless lain in waiting every afternoon in the dry gulch and when the lambs came there to play, had pounced upon one and carried it off without frightening the main herd in the least.

It was not very long after this that Father hired an Indian boy to herd the sheep and goats, and I have never done that sort of work since. We gradually increased our herd of cattle and I think it was in 1883 that we sold the sheep and goats, and never had any of that kind of stock afterwards. I was surely glad when we got rid of them, for they made lots of disagreeable work for us boys. However after Father got the Indian boy to do the herding, my brother Will and I who had taken turns tending the flock for the last several years, got a better chance to go to school.

Father had built on a shed kitchen on the south side of the house shortly after he came home from Salt Lake. And a few years later had built on a sort of two story addition on the north end. The shed had no windows in either the north or east sides, but it did have a small half-window in the west side of the upper room where we boys slept, and a full window in the west side of the lower room. There was a small flower garden about twenty feet long and eight feet wide along the east side, fenced in with rough pickets. In this, the women of the family raised a few flowers and shrubs.

The boards on the kitchen were put on horizontally and the lumber of which it was made was of the roughest pine and not lapped like siding but merely nailed around on upright posts. There was some attempt to nail battens over some of the cracks, but, as the reader probably knows, battens

nailed over horizontal cracks do very little good, as far as keeping out the rain is concerned.

The rooms at the north end were made of one-by-six inch boards nailed on up and down, and never had any battens over the cracks at all. You may be sure that we had plenty of ventilation in stormy weather, without opening any doors or windows. An open stairway led from the entry or porch to the upper rooms of this addition, and the winter wind could howl up this stairway with no hindrance whatever. This part of the house had a good shingle roof, so that the only rain that could bother us was what beat in through the cracks in the sides. It seems now as if people would freeze in such a house, but we grew up a pretty husky lot, and apparently were none the worse for living in that way.

In January 1882 we had a very unusual storm. It was on the twelfth of the month that we had a snow storm that not only reached clear to the coast, here in San Diego County, but snowed out on Santa Catalina and San Clemente Islands. The native Californians, who were all old men and women, had never seen anything like it before. The season up to that time had been very dry indeed. Practically no rain had fallen and it looked like we were in for a real old-fashioned dry year. On the eleventh of January a cold dry wind blew from the northwest. My brother Will and I were out that day with a bunch of men helping survey a road between Escondido and the coast. We did not go prepared for cold weather, as it was not blowing when we started. I did not even wear a coat or a vest. After we got up on a ridge where we were to begin work, the cold northwest wind began to blow. It was a very disagreeable day for this part of the world. But there was no sign of rain in sight that day. Just a cold dry wind and everything so dry that the dust was flying so you could hardly see.

The next morning when we got up the sky was all overcast with heavy clouds and some drops of rain were falling. While we were eating our breakfast Mother went to the window and on looking out remarked with great surprise that it was snowing. Father said, "Snowing, be hanged." But Mother said, "I have seen enough snow in my time to know it when I see it."

We all rushed to the windows, and sure enough it was falling in large flakes. We children were delighted to see anything so strange – for snow was something we had never seen before in this part of the country. The snow fell more or less all day, but did not stay on the ground long before it melted. Towards evening it turned to sleet and the weather grew colder. The next morning the hills about the ranch were all white, and every gulch was filled with snow and sleet.

When we went up on the hills, where we could see the country towards the mountains, everything to the east of us was buried deep in snow. And looking out to sea the Islands of San Clemente and Santa Catalina were white just as we had often seen the high mountains to the east of us, where snow in the wintertime is a common occurrence.

There were a great many sheep lost the night of the snow storm. One sheep man, whose camp was out in Rose Canyon, had thirty-two hundred head in his corral, and the next morning sixteen hundred were dead. Many other sheep men lost almost as heavily.

The trees, too, were badly broken, as they had grown up in a climate where snow was unknown before this time, and they were not accustomed to have such weight on them.

We learned afterwards that this was a freak storm that drifted across from Kansas, burying the entire western part of the United States in snow. On some of the higher hills (such as those just south of the San Marcos

Valley, on which we had never seen snow before) there was snow to be seen for two weeks after the storm. It is now thirty-nine years since that storm, and we have never seen anything like it since.

The summer of 1882 we built a new house at the ranch. It was built of “adobe”, or sun-dried brick. The house was thirty feet wide and forty feet long, and two stories high. The foundation was of stone, three feet thick. The walls of the lower story were twenty inches thick, and the walls of the second story were eighteen inches thick. There were eight rooms, besides halls, pantry, etc. The partition walls were ten inches thick for the lower story, and nine for the second.

The “adobes” were made by contract at the rate of twelve dollars per thousand. (By McKellar of Cocktail Springs Stage Station) We had a carpenter to do the wood work, and a mason to lay the stone and the adobes. All the other work, such as digging the trenches for the foundation, hauling the stone and adobes, and mixing the mortar for laying them was done by my brothers, Charles and Will, and myself. The adobes for the lower story were twenty inches long, ten inches wide, and four inches thick. For the second story they were eighteen inches long, nine inches wide, and four inches thick. The building of this house was a hard summer’s work but after it was built we had a very comfortable home.

IV

Ranch life had its changes as everything else has. Away back in the early seventies, I think it was 1874, Uncle Robert decided to go out of the cattle business, as the country was settling up, and stockmen could no longer let their cattle run at large as they did in the early days. In the real early days, that is previous to about 1870, if anyone planted crops he must protect them from the cattle and horses of the ranchers by fencing them. The stock raisers had the right to let their stock run at large and if they destroyed the farmer's crops, he was considered to be to blame, for not having fenced them. The country was not supposed to be good for anything but stock raising, and anyone foolish enough to attempt to engage in agricultural pursuits was considered an enemy to the cattlemen. But in the early seventies I think it was about 1871 – a bill was passed called the “No Fence Law.” That is, it exempted farmers from the necessity of fencing their crops. And it gave them the right to collect damages if the ranchers' cattle or horses trespassed on what was planted.

The cattlemen, of course, put up a perfect wail about the injustices of such a law. Were they not here first? They would have the “No Fence Law” repealed. But the “No Fence Law” was not repealed, and of course the stockmen were beaten. That was before the days of “barbed wire” and the only fencing that could be used was lumber. That was too expensive, and so the only thing to do was to sell off their stock.

As a small boy I used to hear Uncle Robert and the other cattlemen talking of how unjust the “No Fence Law” was, and of course, we thought it was an awfully bad law. Uncle Robert had been very good to us, and was not the law causing him great expense? How could it be a good law? We never seemed to think how hard it must be for the poor settlers to have their crops

trampled or eaten up in a single night, with no recourse but to fence them so well that no stock could get in. I can see now that what we considered a very unjust law was in reality a very good one.

Of course, there were some unprincipled men who planted out an acre or so of barley or some other kind of crop in places where they knew very well it would never grow and make a crop, but where they knew they would have an independent income from collecting damages from stockmen. There were even cases where these unprincipled wretches would go out and gather up a band of cattle and drive them on to their crop, and herd them there for a while, and then put them into their corral, and send word to the owner to come over and settle the damage. All the stock-in-trade necessary to put over this sort of a game was a small piece of crop planted, and a corral built. They even went in together, and made one corral do for several pieces of farming. That is, they would drive the stock from a piece of crop that they claimed had been damaged over to some other fellow's place, who perhaps had no crop, but who had a corral and when the cattlemen paid for the damage done, the fellow who had the crop and the fellow who had the corral would divide the proceeds.

There was another class still worse than any of these. They would shoot cattle or horses down whenever they found them trespassing on their land. I have seen both cattle and horses going about terribly wounded, perhaps shot in the stomach, where they would live for days perhaps, in terrible agony, only to die in the end. And I have seen horses going around dragging a broken leg, where they had been shot by one of these miserable wretches.

Well, the war between the stockmen and the squatters was a very bitter one, but it could have only one ending. The stockmen must get rid of their stock – and they did.

In the spring of 1874 Uncle Robert, who had sold off several droves of cattle previous to this, determined to gather up all his remaining cattle and sell them at the first opportunity. Those that he still owned were mostly wild “outlaws” who hid in the brushy hills, and came out only at night to water and feed. Getting them out of their wild haunts was a very hard job, but he hired good vaqueros and went at the job, determined to succeed at whatever cost.

I know from experience that to go into rough country, where the brush is big and lasso a wild cow or steer and bring it out, is a very exciting as well as very dangerous pastime.

Many of them were so wild and vicious from their wild haunts that they would be very hard to keep in the herd after they were brought in. All those that were exceptionally wild, and, as a matter of course, on the fight all the time, were immediately thrown, tied, and their horns sawed off within a few inches of their heads. It is remarkable how quickly a wild steer or cow will respond to this treatment, and become quiet and gentle. This may seem cruel, but it is no more so than to take the chance of one of those vicious animals goring a horse, and perhaps his rider also.

My brother Charley, who was then only about twelve years of age, was sent over to Uncle Robert’s place to help herd the band, which increased in number every day, as the vaqueros brought in more cattle. Later on Father built a large corral, and the band of cattle was brought over to our place and herded about the hills during the day and put in this new corral at night. Charley put in a year or more herding them, and thus missed that much time

that he should have had in school. But Uncle Robert had done so much to help our folks during the hard times we had gone through that Father did all that he could to help him in return for what he had done for us.

I am not sure whether it was in the year 1875 or 1876 that the last of this herd was sold, and Uncle was out of the cattle business.

From that time on for a number of years, he rented the ranch out to sheep men. Sheep had to be herded, and could be kept out of the crops of the settlers. From about the year 1874 up to probably about 1882 sheep were about the only kind of stock that were raised to any extent in Southern California.

In the very early eighties, barbed wire began to be used in this part of the world for fencing. It was pretty expensive at first, costing about fifteen cents per pound. But even then it was much cheaper than lumber for fencing, and was not so apt to be injured by fires. In the spring of 1883 Uncle decided to fence the ranch with barbed wire and go into the cattle business again. By sending to Chicago, and buying a carload, he could get the wire at eleven and three-fourths cents per pound. The kind of wire that he intended to use would run a rod to the pound.

Uncle Robert had been living at a hotel in San Diego for some time, and I well remember how father came home from San Diego one evening and told us that Uncle had ordered a carload of wire, and several thousand redwood posts, and that we should all help in every way possible in building the fifteen or sixteen miles of fence that would be necessary to enclose the ranch. We boys all agreed to do all we could to help with the job.

The ranch line must be flagged out – that is a line of flags composed of small strips of white cloth tacked to lath, were first set on as nearly a straight line as possible from corner to corner of the ranch. My brother

Charley, with the aid of an old surveying instrument that he borrowed from a friend who had been a surveyor in earlier days, flagged out the lines, with the aid of us younger boys to set out the flags. The country was very brushy, and very hilly. There were many deep brushy canyons to be crossed, and many high hills.

After the lines were flagged out, so that they could be easily traced, Uncle put Indians and Mexicans to work cutting away the brush along this line. This cleared strip was generally about a rod in width.

Then we boys made several thousand small wooden pegs, about eight inches long each, and sharpened at one end. These were to mark the places where the postholes were to be dug. The posts were to be set two rods apart, so we took a line about eight rods long and marked it every two rods by tying a piece of red calico securely to it at each of these places. We then measured off the line with this, driving one of the little pegs at each of the two-rod marks.

Then the men who were to dig the postholes came along with their digging tools, and dug a hole two feet deep at each place.

My brother Matthew, with a big wagon and four horses, hauled the posts and bales of wire up from the railroad station and distributed them along the line. When the postholes were finished along a mile or two of line, we boys came along, armed with shovels and heavy steel tamping bars, and set the posts. The posts were of split redwood, about four by five inches, and seven feet long.

Uncle Robert was very particular that the fence, when finished should be a substantial one, and he insisted that all the earth that had been taken out in digging the postholes must be put back in the hole when we set the posts.

Of course, as the post took up quite a lot of the space in the hole, it required a lot of tamping to get all of the dirt back in, but it had to be done.

After we got the posts securely set for a distance of a couple of miles along the line, we would start putting on the wire. Whenever the ground was such that we could drive a wagon along the line we strung the wire out by putting the spool of wire in the back end of the wagon, running an iron bar down through it and through a hole in the floor of the wagon. Then, taking the end of the wire back and fastening it to the corner-post, which post we securely braced so that it would not pull out of the ground when the strain came on the wire.

Then with one man driving the wagon, and another standing up in the rear end of it with one hand on the top of the iron bar that was run through the spool of wire we would drive along the fence line, with the spool of wire whirling around and around in the back part of the wagon. The wire would in this way be strung out along the line. As none of us had ever made any wire fence before, we had a lot to learn about this business.

At first we only tried to make short stretches, of three or four hundred feet at a time. But we gradually got to making longer pulls, and before long we found that a whole spool, which was usually a quarter of a mile long, was as easy to stretch as a shorter pull and saved lots of time. When the required amount of wire was strung out along the line, we would make it fast to the back end of the wagon. Then, when everything was ready and everybody was clear of the wire, the driver would start up his team and draw the wire tight as a fiddle string. By using a tolerably heavy wagon, and setting the break tightly, the tension of the wire could be maintained; especially if the wagon was at a point where the pull was slightly down-grade. A couple of us would then go back to staple the wire to the posts. On reasonably even

ground, this was an easy matter, as one of us would hold the wire against the post at the proper height (which height was determined by means of a strip of wood with notches in one edge of it the proper distance apart for each of the four wires.) The other man carried a hammer and a supply of wire staples, and quickly stapled the wire fast to the posts.

Building wire fence across canyons, and over very rough ground, however was a different matter. In the first place, on this kind of ground, the wire must be carried between two men by means of a bar thrust through it. This in itself is no easy job where the hills are steep and rough. Sometimes the spool will get to unwinding too fast, and a number of turns will fly off at once and become badly tangled. Sometimes one or more coils of the wire will fly around the neck of the men carrying one end of the bar. At such times, if you were nearby, you would probably hear some remarks by the entangled party that would not look well in print. Then when the wire is drawn tight, by the team, or any other means that may be used for stretching, it will only touch the ground on the ridges. Crossing the canyons, it may be a hundred feet in the air. Under these conditions it must be drawn down at each post as you descend the hill. The man at the wagon must back a little by slacking the brake, as the men who are stapling the wire pull down on it. It is dangerous to pull on the wire, at such times, with your hands. It may break at any minute. And if it does, while under such a high tension, the ends fly back, and hands may be terribly lacerated. The pulling down should be done either by hooking the claws of a carpenter's hammer over the wire, or by putting a bar across the wire., and one man at each end of the bar putting their weight on it until it is down to the required position, where it is to be stapled fast to the post.

During the summer of 1883 we built some sixteen miles of fence, much of it over very rough ground, and none of it less than four wires and some of it five wires.

As I said in the beginning, we started with the idea of having the posts two rods apart, but after we had several miles of it built under that plan, Uncle Robert decided that the posts were too far apart, and had another posthole dug between each of the posts, and another post was set. This post was placed on the opposite side of the wires from where the other two were, so that the wires could not be easily knocked off the posts., in case of an animal running into the fence. We carried this plan out throughout the entire job, first setting every other post along the line, then putting the wire on, and afterwards putting in the middle posts on the opposite side of the wires. This fence building was a long hard job, but it surely was well done, and practically all of it is still standing, after thirty-eight years.

V

I do not think a history of ranch life would be complete or very interesting, without some account of game hunting. My brother Matt and myself were the only two members of our family who took naturally to that sort of sport. Matt was a born hunter. And though he is now well past sixty years of age, he is anxious to go out every year when the deer season opens, and try his luck, as he ever was.

There is no other sport that appeals to me as much as hunting. I mean hunting with a rifle. I never could get much enthusiasm hunting with a shotgun. When I was a small boy – too small to be allowed to carry a gun, I used to follow Matt around when he was hunting, and carry the game he killed. That is, when he was hunting small game. Many a time, I have come home with a load of game that was about all I could stagger along with. And I have been so tired, from following him over the hills and about the creeks that I could hardly get home. But it was always a pleasure to be allowed to go, and I enjoyed every one of those trips to the fullest.

When I was a real small boy the only gun Matt had, other than a shotgun, was an old army musket. When he first got it he had no bullet-mold, to cast bullets for it, but used to pour melted lead into pieces of hollow bamboo, set up in the ground. When the lead had cooled, he would split the bamboo away, and then cut the bar of lead, thus made, up into short lengths, and work them down to fit the bore of the old musket as nearly as he could, with a small hammer. I remember he killed several deer with those handmade slugs of lead. Later on he got a bullet-mold made, and then the old Enfield musket would sure shoot some. I have carried home what was left of many a jack rabbit and cottontail, that he had shot with that old fifty-caliber gun.

I think it was in the summer of 1875 that Matt got his first Winchester rifle. He bought it of a man named Potter who had been a sheep man in our neighborhood but who had sold out his sheep, and was going away. I know that Matt was pretty proud of that pretty rifle, but I am sure he was no prouder in owning it than I was to be allowed to follow him around the hills and watch him bring down game with it. It was what was called a “Winchester model of 1873”, and was of forty-four caliber, and took forty grains of black powder. It would not be considered a hard hitter among the high-powered rifles of today, but at that time was considered a rifle that was hard to beat. There were a good many deer in this country in those days, and it was no uncommon occurrence for Matt to come home leading his horse, with a deer tied across his saddle.

Then, what joy it was to me to hear him tell of how and where he killed it! Some of those thrilling accounts are as fresh in my memory today as though it had only been last week that the event had happened.

I can recall several occasions of Matt’s going up on the hill in the early evening, and of our hearing several shots in quick succession. (We always knew he was after big game when he fired a number of shots in that manner.) Then he would appear in sight on the brow of the hill, and shout to us to bring up a horse to carry in a deer he had killed. Father or my brother Charley would get the horse saddled, and ride him up there, but they had to go some if they beat us smaller kids up to the spot where the deer lay. It was considered a great honor to see it first. The first thing was to look to see how many prongs he had on his horns, and then to examine him to see where Matt had hit him. After that it was, “Where was he when you first saw him, Matt?” And then Matt would give us a most interesting account of just how he came to “jump him up” and of how he ran, of just where he was when “I

cut loose at him the first time,” and of how he “came down” when he got the one that dropped him. Of course deer were usually killed while on the run, and that usually took a number of shots. To kill a deer at what was called a standing shot, or in other words, while he was standing still, was a tame affair compared to getting him on the run.

Matt always went hunting on horseback when he was after deer. And many a time I have followed him through the hills and canyons (myself mounted on some old gentle horse or mule) and have seen him dismount and begin firing rapidly at something, before I had seen anything at all stirring. And on several occasions, when I was only a small boy I saw him kill two or three deer in about that many seconds, so it seemed to me.

How I did long for the time to come when I would be big enough to have a rifle of my own – and kill a deer myself! Matt had allowed me to shoot his rifle a number of times, and I had made some very good shots with it, and felt sure that if I had a gun of my own I could get a deer. Father took no interest in that sort of sport himself and thought money spent buying cartridges an awful waste. In fact, I very well knew that the only kind of a rifle I could ever get ammunition for would be a muzzle-loader. I began using a shotgun when I was ten years old as I have stated before, but how I did long for a rifle.

I think it was about the year 1880, or so when I was thirteen years old that Matt came home from a trip to San Diego and told us that he had seen a fine muzzle-loading rifle for sale in a gun store for nine dollars. Charley, Will and I talked the matter over very seriously and agreed that we ought to have a rifle on the ranch. (I have forgotten to state that Matt had been married several years, and was not living with us any more.) So, by much saving, much plotting, and much planning, we finally put together all the

money we could each rake and scrape, got the deal, as we might say “financed”. To make a long story short, we managed to raise the nine dollars.

Matt was going to San Diego again, so we turned the money over to him with instructions to bring home that rifle. I was in a terrible state of uneasiness for fear he would come back and tell us that some other syndicate had gotten in ahead of us, and purchased the rifle before he got there. But to my great joy he came back with the goods. In other words he had that rifle on the wagon with him when he returned.

It was a joy to look at it, and I could hardly sleep that night for thinking of the deer I would kill. But the only trouble was there was too much of it! It was so long and so heavy I could not aim it to save my life, unless I had something to rest it over. As I remember it, the barrel was forty inches long, and at least an inch and a quarter in diameter. It was an octagon barrel, and it shot a forty-four caliber bullet. The stock, too, was much longer than the stock of a modern rifle, and when I stood it up beside me it was taller than I was. Charley and Will did not seem to be much interested in it, but I came pretty near sitting up with it the first few nights.

I remember their joshing me about my having to stand up on a hill and place the stock of the rifle down in a canyon so that I could load it. But I told them they needn't worry. I would attend to the loading of it.

The man from whom Matt had gotten it had sent along a pound of bullets, and also a bullet mold. So I was ready for business. The next morning I loaded it up and went out and by resting it over a fence, or something of the kind managed to kill several squirrels.

When I talked of going deer hunting the other boys told me I would have to do my hunting only where there was a fence to rest my rifle on. And

some of them suggested that I had better drive my deer into the corral, where I would be sure to have a fence for a rest. All the family except me seemed to think those remarks and suggestions funny, but I could not see anything funny about them.

The next day I went out and got me a nice straight stick with a fork in it. It was about as thick as a hoe handle, and dry and light. I cut it off just the right length, so that when I stood it up it was the proper height to rest my rifle over. I trimmed it up nice and smooth, and carved the fork out so that my gun would rest nicely over it, and lo, I was ready to go after big game. There was one difficulty I had to prepare for. The bullets, as everyone who has used a muzzle-loading rifle knows, must be forced down enclosed in a greased "patch." The "patch" is a small square of cotton cloth about one and a half inches square which is well greased. This is nicely wrapped around the bullet and forced down the barrel by means of a ramrod. But the bullet fitted so tightly that I could not start them with the ramrod. To overcome this difficulty I took a piece of hard tough wood, about ten inches long and an inch and a half in diameter. About an inch from one end of this, I sawed in about a third of its thickness, all the way around it. Then from where I had sawed this ring around it I shaved it down until about nine inches of it was small enough to enter the barrel of the rifle. Then, by smoothing up the head with a file I had a "starter" with which I could force the patched bullets down with the palm of my hand for a distance of about nine inches. When I had gotten the bullet in that far, I could force it on down with the ramrod. This "starter" I carried on a string slung around my neck, and hanging where I could use it readily.

With the starter and my powder flask slung from my shoulders a handful of bullets and a box of caps in my pockets, the forked stick for a rest for my gun in one hand, and my heavy rifle on my shoulder, I would set out.

I know now, that I did not hunt in a very skillful way, for I had not yet learned the ways of the deer. I used to go into the hills where the heaviest brush grew, and sneak around very quietly, expecting to surprise a deer by coming up on him when he was not expecting any such mighty hunter to be abroad in the land. As a general thing, the brush was so much taller than I was that there was of course very little chance of my seeing a deer. There were deer tracks everywhere I went, and it was hard for me to understand why I saw so few deer. I remember putting in a number of days wandering around in the big brush, without more than hearing the thud, thud, thud of a bounding deer a few times, and not even getting to see him.

I was supposed to be herding a small band of milch cows, but I would take them over into some canyon where the feed was pretty good, and where I was pretty sure they would stay for a few hours and then I would strike out to see if I could get a deer.

One morning I came back to my cows awfully tired and awfully thirsty. I had no water with me, and the nearest place I could get any was down the canyon about a mile and a half, at what was called Los Monos Creek. I decided the only thing to do was to go there for water. It was a hot morning, and I had been putting in every minute of the time since eight o'clock tramping over the hills and through the canyons looking for deer, but had seen none. I was so tired from carrying the heavy rifle that I at first decided I would hide it in the brush until I returned from getting a drink. But then I looked around for a place to hide it, I could find no place that satisfied me. I was afraid someone might see me, and steal it while I was gone. So I

finally decided to take it with me, though I felt sure there would be no probability of my seeing a deer on the trip down to the water and back.

Shouldering the heavy old rifle, and with the forked stick in my hand, I struck out for the water. There was a plain dusty trail that was used by anyone going through the canyon on horseback, and it followed along the bottom of the canyon. The hillsides on both sides of this canyon were quite rough and brushy.

I had gotten about half way to the water, and was trudging along as fast as I could travel, when suddenly a fine big doe bounded out of the thicket of heavy brush, and went up the steep hillside on my left. The hill up which it was running was very steep, and it ran only part way up and stopped behind a clump of bushes at a distance of about eight yards from where I was. I got my heavy rifle rested over the forked stick I carried, just in time to see the deer step out from behind the bushes and stand broadside to me. I admit I was some excited, but I aimed at the center of her shoulder and fired. At the crack of the rifle she “bleated” shrilly, and came bounding down the hill into the same clump of heavy brush from which she had run only a minute before. She apparently came right on through this heavy brush, though she was hidden from my sight while in it. I was hurrying with all of my might to get another load in my rifle, and while I was thus hard at work, the deer was standing just across a narrow creekway, from me, turning around and around and seeming very much bewildered.

I could see it so plainly (it was not over forty or fifty feet from me) that I kept looking to see if there was any sign of it being wounded. But though I could see first one side and then the other as it turned around there was no sign of blood to be seen. I decided I must have missed it clear, and felt very much disgusted with myself.

It seemed to me I never had loaded the old rifle when the bullet was so hard to force down as this one was. Of course I couldn't help being excited. Who wouldn't be, with a deer dancing around within forty feet of him, and a miserable old muzzle-loading rifle to load? I finally got the bullet rammed down, and was hurrying to get a cap out and into the rifle.

At about the time I got the bullet rammed down the deer started off, and just as I was ready for another shot it disappeared around the end of a small hill. I hurried after it, hoping to get a shot before it got away, but never got near enough again to stand any chance of hitting, though I followed it for a mile or more.

By that time I was so thirsty that I gave up the chase, and hurried down to the water and drank and drank, lying on my stomach, with my lips in the running stream. I then started back up the canyon by the same trail I had been coming down when I saw the deer. I kept thinking to myself, "Oh, if I had only taken a little more careful aim." And "there was no reason why I should not have killed that deer." I repeated these thoughts a hundred times during the afternoon, I am sure. The next morning Matt came over to our place and I told him of shooting at the deer. When I told him how it had bleated when I shot at it he said, "If that deer bleated you killed it. A deer never bleats unless it is mortally wounded." I said, "Well, that deer bleated all right, but it wasn't hurt at all, for didn't I follow it for a mile or more? And there was no sign of blood on its trail. Besides, I could see perfectly plain, while it was dancing around just across the creek from me, that there was no sign of a wound on it." He said, "I'll bet that it was not the same deer that you shot at, that came out and jumped around before you." I was equally sure that it was the same deer.

Matt was so sure I had killed it from my description of how it had acted that he finally said, "Let's go over there and have a look." I assured him that there was no use going over, but he insisted on it so we started. When we got to the hill overlooking the canyon where I had shot the deer, we could see a number of buzzards sitting on the rocks down in the canyon. Matt said, "Now, what did I tell you? There is something dead down there." We hurried down to the spot and there lay a fine big doe right in the bottom of the creek. The shoulder that was uppermost was the one that had been towards me when I shot, and there was a bullet hole right in the center of it.

I stood there perfectly speechless. Matt dismounted from his horse and turned the deer over. There was a lump just under the skin on the opposite shoulder. He took out his knife and slit the skin and took out the bullet. "There," said he "is your bullet. You couldn't have made a better shot. It went right through the heart."

I kept looking at the dead deer and then at the trail that followed along the creekway through the canyon. It passed within six feet of where that deer lay dead, and I had come up that very trail on my way back from Monos Creek about an hour after firing the shot that had killed it. "How could I have missed seeing it as I passed?" was what I kept saying over and over to myself.

I suppose I must have been looking up on the hillside to where the deer stood when I shot, and the dead deer was in the dry creek bed, with the trail right on the very brink of it. To say that I was disgusted with myself would be putting it very mildly. "Why in the world couldn't I have looked and seen that deer lying there so near me, as I passed?"

Of course, it was all very clear to me now, how I had mistaken another deer for the one that I had shot at. At the crack of my rifle the deer

had bleated and come bounding down the hill, almost towards me, and into the big brush that hid her from my view. Right immediately after she disappeared from my sight another deer came out of the heavy brush, just as one I had shot at should have done if it had come straight on in the way it was headed when I last saw it. I very naturally thought it was the same deer at which I had shot. And when it had turned around and around right in front of me and showed no signs of being wounded I of course concluded that I had made a bad shot.

I have since that killed a good many deer. But I have always thought if I had really gotten that first one, so as to have it brought home, it would have meant more to me than a half-dozen of those I killed in later years.

A short time after this Matt invited me to come over to the old ranch house (that is, Uncle Robert's house) where he was living, and have a deer hunt with him. He had been over at our place with his wagon that day and I got my old rifle and outfit ready and went home with him. We got to his place quite early in the afternoon, and at about three o'clock we started out on foot for a hunt. In those days there was a good chance of seeing a deer within a mile of the house. At about that distance from the house we separated, he going out towards the Monos Canyon, and I keeping up through the sage hills, back of the "Little Encinas."

I had traveled to a distance of about two miles, and then as the sun was getting low I swung around to the south and worked towards the house. Just as the sun was setting I saw a spike buck, at a distance of about a hundred yards. He had evidently just gotten up from where he had been lying during the day, and was walking directly away from me. It was plain that he had not seen or heard me as yet. I got my rifle rested on my forked stick and took a shot at him. He staggered off to the right and fell over a

bunch of sagebrush. I thought I had killed him, but I started loading again as fast as I could. Before I had finished loading, he got up and started on, and disappeared around the end of a small hill. I hurried around after him as soon as I had finished loading, and soon saw him again. He was again going directly from me, and was evidently badly crippled in his right hind leg. I again set up my rest, took another shot at him, and again he fell. Loading again as fast as I could I was surprised to see him get up, the same as before, and start on. I hurried after him as soon as I had finished loading, and soon saw his head above the brush, where he was standing, looking back at me. I took a deliberate aim and shot him directly through the head. I sure felt some elated, for I had really got a deer. I hurried down to the house and told Matt's wife that I had made a kill. She was greatly pleased at my success, and told me to saddle a horse and start back for it, which I did. Before I had gone far, I met Matt coming in. He had killed nothing and was somewhat surprised to hear that I had. We went back together and brought in the game, and you may be sure I was a proud boy that night.

It was not long after this that an Indian boy named Frank came over to our place. He had an old "Henry Rifle" and offered to trade it for the muzzle-loader. His rifle was slight out of order, but I readily saw that I could fix it without much trouble, so I soon made a trade with him. He had no cartridges for the "Henry Rifle" and that was the reason for wanting to trade, as he thought he would probably stand a better chance of keeping the muzzle-loader in ammunition than he would to buy cartridges for the "Henry."

It did not take me long to fix the broken piece, and then I felt that I had a real rifle. I soon managed to get a box of cartridges for it. (They came fifty in a box.) And it did not take me long to try it out, to find whether it

could shoot true or not. I found it to be an unusually true shooting gun. In fact, I think it was sighted as nearly correct as it would be possible to make a rifle. In later years I have used many rifles and of course a high powered rifle is much superior to the old Henry. But for accurate shooting up to a distance say of one hundred yards I don't think the rifle was ever made that would beat it. It held fifteen cartridges in the magazine and one in the barrel – sixteen in all, and it was short and light enough so that I did not have to carry a forked stick to rest it over.

I carried that old rifle for ten or twelve years and killed a lot of deer and coyotes with it. I traded it for a later model Winchester Carbine but would give a good deal now to have that old rifle back in my possession just as a keepsake. The old muzzle-loading rifle that I used to carry was such a clumsy, heavy, and ungainly old thing that I would not carry it a mile now – I can not imagine why people thought it was necessary to make rifles so long and heavy as they used to in the days of the muzzle-loaders. They were not to be compared for hard shooting with the short breech loaders made in later years; nor would they shoot any more accurately.

About the time that I came into possession of this old “repeater” our herd of cattle had increased to such an extent that it was necessary for us boys to be out on the ranch on horseback most all the time, looking after them. So the next twenty years of my life was spent almost entirely in the saddle.

We had fifteen thousand acres under fence and that is quite a bit of country to ride over.

There were always a good many deer in the brushy hills on the ranch, and in riding after the cattle I always kept an eye out for deer tracks. They are much like cattle or horses on a range. They select a certain feeding

ground and stay pretty close to that spot until they are killed or scared out by someone. So whenever I saw deer sign in some particular part of the range it was a pretty safe bet that the next day would see me over there with my rifle across the saddle. Especially if the tracks looked like they were made by a big buck. And I sure did kill some big fellows.

VI

We had fenced the ranch in the summer of 1883, as I have before stated. As soon as Uncle Robert had the ranch under fence he began to buy cattle to re-stock it. Father and the various members of our family had perhaps seventy or eighty head of cattle already on the ranch, and Uncle bought up several hundred head more, so within a very few years we had a matter of a thousand head to look after. We also had a good many horses.

Uncle was very particular about our looking after the fences around the ranch, and as there were a good many miles of it to be seen to, that took a good deal of time in itself.

We boys had to look after his cattle as well as our own. We got no wages for doing so, but he allowed us to let our cattle and horses run on the range free of charge, and what we derived from the sale of these was all the income we had.

In former years when Uncle had lots of cattle and no fenced range, he was on horseback all the time. In fact, in my younger days I can remember of but very few times when I saw him riding in any sort of a vehicle. He usually rode a pretty good horse, and was generally accompanied by one of his best vaqueros.

After he had the ranch fenced, however, he took to driving around in a spring wagon, with a span of strong gentle horses. He kept an old man named Peter Drugan at the ranch house, who did the cooking and chores about the place. Peter was a typical Irishman and had a good deal of the native Irish wit. He was a queer old character with a lame leg. This leg had been broken by a fall from a wagon in his middle life. He said he had set the

bone himself, and it surely looked as if he might easily have improved on the job he did in setting it, for it was very badly out of shape. It had been broken just above the ankle, and from the place where it had been broken the bone set at an angle from the rest of his leg, and his foot turned in at an angle of something like forty-five degrees.

Uncle Robert gave Peter strict orders to prepare a meal for any of us boys who might come to the house while we were riding after the stock on the ranch. So most every day some of us were there to lunch. When Uncle was at the ranch we boys would sit in the front room of the house and talk with him while Peter prepared the meal. But when Uncle was away in San Diego where he spent a good deal of his time, we would sit in the kitchen and listen to Peter's account of his many adventures. I had heard his stories so many times that the minute he began one of them I knew exactly what was coming. He always made himself the hero of the story, and the number of "Sezzes" that he could get into a story was something wonderful. If he started out to tell of something some other man had said to him it would be like this, "says the fella to me, says he, 'Peter', says he," and then when he had related what the "fella" had said, he would begin his answer with "Says I to the fella, says I to him, says I," etc. etc. His stories were amusing from their very ridiculousness. But there was one thing I can say of Peter's stories -- he always told them the same. And his having regaled us with a long account of some one of his adventures on one day would not for one moment prevent him from telling it all over the next day. If some one of the boys complained after we had ridden away of having been bored with Peter's story, the next day he would surely have to listen to it all over again, for we knew just what remark to make to call forth any story that we cared to hear, and someone would surely call forth the story that had been

complained of. He had an especial dislike to the “chinamen”, as he called the Chinese. The “Chinamen” had driven “all the decent laboring men out of employment” in many instances, according to Peter.

Uncle Robert had another funny old fellow named Hett that worked on the ranch for quite a while. Hett was a German, and a most radical Socialist. I don’t know why Uncle kept such a man, unless it was from pity for the old fellow, for if there was any one thing worse than another in Uncle’s opinion it was Socialism. He used to lecture Hett in language far more forcible than elegant along these lines. I have heard him tell Hett, on various occasions that in his opinion “A socialist was another name for a ---- - thief”. And Hett always agreed with “Mr. Kelly” in everything. When Uncle would say, “Hett do you know that a Socialist is only another name for a ----- thief?” Hett would say, “Yes, sir.”

Uncle Robert ordinarily talked in a rather loud voice, but when he was lecturing Hett on some subject he would raise his voice until he could be heard all over the premises. I once remarked to “Old Peter” that Uncle didn’t intend that Hett should fail to hear him. “Yes”, said Peter, “several times I have ran from the barn thinking they were in a fight, but when I got to the house I found that Mr. Kelly was just a-larnin’ him.”

Hett used to tell me that “If a man in Germany had so much land like your Uncle, he voot haf the soldiers to behind him go.” Meaning I suppose that he would have a bodyguard.

It was very amusing to us boys to hear Peter and Hett vying with each other in their endeavors to gain favor with “Mr. Kelly”. Sometimes they would quarrel while out at work and then when they came to the table Peter (like a true Irishman that he was) would try to see how stubborn he could act. Hett would say, “Have some more potatoes, Pete?” and Peter would

say, "Put them down there, I can rache them." He would then stand up and "rache" as far as he could across the table and get what he had just refused to take from Hett.

I very well remember Uncle Robert leaving me at the ranch, with Hett to do the cooking while he spent a week or two in San Diego attending to some business. I spent most of my time out on the range attending to the stock but when I was at the house Hett waited on me just as if it had been Uncle Robert at home. One day when he called me in to eat my dinner he was loud in his apologies for not having some rice cooked. He had been "too busy that morning to prepare it". I assured him that it was all right and that I did not care much for rice anyway. But he kept on talking about it as if it had been a very important matter to fail to have rice on the table. Finally I said, "Oh, it is all right, Hett, you can cook some this afternoon. He said, "Yes sir, yes sir, I vill do dot, Mr. Kelly." I thought no more of the matter, and after finishing my dinner, sat down in the front room to read.

After I had been sitting reading for perhaps a couple of hours Hett suddenly opened the door and thrust his head in, shouting "Mr. Kelly! Der rice is reaty!" and immediately disappeared, closing the door behind him. I was astonished at such a sudden announcement but on going out to the dining room, there stood Hett with the perspiration rolling down his face, and a big bowl of boiled rice on the table, and my plate and chair all in place. I said, "Why, Hett, I meant that you could cook some rice during the afternoon for our supper." Well, he finally got it through his head that I did not care to engage in a rice fest so soon after eating my dinner, so he put it away, and went about his other work.

Sometimes three or four of us boys would be at the ranch house for dinner on the same day. Uncle would immediately order Hett to prepare

dinner for the crowd, and we would sit in the front room with Uncle Robert and listen to a lecture by him on the proper way to do something or other, while the meal was being prepared. In the course of half or three-fourths of an hour, Hett would open the dinning-room door, and with a look of awful worry on his face, would count the guests, with a wave of his finger at each one in the room. He would then disappear, closing the door behind him. In the course of the next ten or fifteen minutes he would suddenly appear again, with great beads of perspiration rolling down his face, and again go through the motions of counting the crowd, and again disappear. About this time Uncle Robert would say, "Boys! I will have to go out and tell Hett how many places to prepare at the table. The poor -----fool will never get them right unless I show him. And out he would go, leaving us grinning across the room at each other, and listening to a lecture on setting a table that came to us through the dining room door.

Uncle Robert was one of the most remarkable men I have ever met. He was a very exacting man in many ways. If anyone promised to do anything he expected it to be done. He used to devote hours to lecturing us boys (or as we used to think, to scolding us). As I now look back over my boyhood and young manhood, I have great cause to be thankful for the lectures and advice he gave me. But at the time I thought him a very cranky old Uncle and considered his remarks as merely the ranting of a very disagreeable old fellow. As I have said before, Uncle Robert was an old bachelor but he took ten times as much interest in seeing that we boys grew up with proper ideas of how to attend to business affairs, and how to properly do our work, as my Father did. We all knew perfectly well that if we had done any thing which we should not have done, or had failed to do something that we should have done, and Uncle Robert found it out, we

were sure to get a lecture the first time we met him. As I have said before he always talked in a loud voice, but when he was reproofing any of us for something we had done or failed to do he would get his voice up to a pitch that could be heard at a distance of a city block. And after he had gone on in that manner for perhaps half an hour, he would suddenly say, "Now, you think I am scolding, but I am only counseling you." And bless his old heart, I know now that I am a better man than I might have been if it had not been for Uncle Robert's lectures.

He used to employ the Indians that lived in various parts of the back country to ride for him when he was in the cattle business, and many of them were exceptionally good in that line. And he was well acquainted with almost all the Indians throughout the entire back country. These Indians always called him "Patrón". (Which is Spanish for Protector or Master.) These old Indians very well knew that the "Patrón" would give them a severe lecture if they did something that he thought they should not do, or if they failed in doing something that he thought they should have done. But they looked up to him as their friend. And it was really pathetic the way they would come to him for advice when they were in any trouble. Many a time I have seen an old Indian ride up to the ranch house, having come sixty or eighty miles, to ask advice of the "Patrón". Perhaps some white man was trying to take his little piece of land from him. Or perhaps his son had been arrested for something or other. Or perhaps his squaw or some of his children were sick and needed "medicino" and they had no money. All these Indians spoke the Spanish language, as they had worked all their lives on the various stock ranches, and these were practically all owned by Spanish-speaking people in those days. Uncle Robert could converse in Spanish as well as he could in English, and when he would see one of these

old Indians approaching, he would get his field glasses and take a long look at him before the old fellow got very near. The old ranch house was up on a high point of land, and anyone approaching it could be seen at quite a distance.

I have frequently been sitting on the porch talking with Uncle when he would suddenly say, "Who is that coming yonder?" Immediately he would get his field glasses and take a long look. Then he would say, as the horseman came closer, "It looks like Old Celedonio", or perhaps, "It looks like Old Francisco from the Mountains".

Then he would put his glasses down and go out to the end of the long porch and as soon as the old fellow was within fifty yards and had been recognized for a certainty, he would be greeted in a loud voice, in the Spanish language, with "Que hay? Celedonia". Or, "Que hay, Francisco? Como estamos? Pues, hombre?" Then they would shake hands and then it would be ---"Como esta la familia?" (How is the family?).

The old Spanish style was for a visitor never to dismount from his horse unless asked to do so. And if one came who was not welcome, and was not asked to "A pie ti" (dismount) he simply sat upon his horse and stated his business, and then went his way.

These old Indians who had worked on the ranch in times past were always asked to dismount, and if the grass was good, to "quita la silla" (take the saddle off) and picket the horse out. Then the cook would get orders to prepare for him something to eat, "in the kitchen". (Uncle never allowed an Indian to eat at his table, but always in the Kitchen).

After the old fellow had eaten he would come out and he and Uncle would sit down and have a long talk. And if the Indian thought at the beginning that he was going to conceal part of the truth for any reason he

would find himself very much mistaken. For when that interview was ended he would find that he had told it all. But, as a general thing, those old Indians knew before they left home that they would have to tell the truth to the “Patrón Kelly” for he would question them in so many roundabout ways, that he was sure to get at the whole truth before he got through, whether they had intended he should or not.

When he had all the facts of the case he would give him some good sound advice. At those times he would talk to one of those simple fellows just as a Father would talk to a child, and if he thought their case deserving he would loan them money, even to quite an amount.

I am going to relate one case of this kind even at the expense of boring some readers, for I know some who may read this in future years, and who knew Uncle Robert, will appreciate it.

After Uncle’s death, which occurred in November 1890, an old Indian who went by the name of “Kanack” came to the ranch to tell us how sorry he was to hear of the “Patrón’s ” death. He had been one of Uncle’s old vaqueros, and had worked on the ranch, off and on, for many years. He showed genuine sorrow and told us that if he had heard in time that his old “Patrón” was dead, he would have come and tried to do something to show his gratitude for the many things his “Patron” had done for him in years gone by. He then told us that he should always consider himself under obligations greater than he could ever repay. On asking him what it was that caused him to feel under such obligation he told the following story.

“It was many years ago”, said Old Kanack, “I had been sick for a long time, I thought I surely would die. My woman also was sick. We had awfully hard time. Finally I got a little better but I was not yet well. My woman too was better but neither of us were well. We have been obliged to

sell our horses, and all our chickens, in order to get something to eat while we were too sick to work. Then when I was well enough to be up I was not strong and no one would give me work. They said I was no good in the field, and they were right, for I had no strength. Finally we had only enough food in the house to keep us alive about three days. Then I told my woman I was going away. She said, 'Why do you go away?' I said, 'The food will last you maybe one week, but if we both stay here it will all be gone in three days'. She said, 'You better stay and we die together; you are not strong enough to get work'. I knew she was right but I said nothing and went away.

"I did not know where to go, but I traveled north by the wagon road, I had started "Muy mañanita" (very early in the morning). My woman was still sleeping when I left. Well, I traveled all day and that night I slept by the roadside. I was very hungry and very tired. I got up and started on the next morning, 'muy mañanita'. In the middle of the forenoon I came to the Agua Hedionda Ranch house. The Patrón came out and said, 'Que hay Kanacka? Que tienes, hombre?' (Hello, Kanacka. What ails you, man?) I told him I had been sick a long time. He asked me where I was going. I said I did not know. He then called the cook and ordered him to prepare me something to eat. While the cook was preparing the meal the Patrón had me tell him my story. He then told me to go to the kitchen and eat, which I did, for I was very hungry. After I had eaten the Patrón asked me if I had had bastante (enough). I told him I had. He then said, 'Go and saddle my horse'. I did as he told me. He then said, 'Go and find the caponero (band of saddle horses) and bring them to the corral. I mounted his horse, and went out and rode until I found the caponero, and drove them to the corral. He then came into the corral with a riata and pointing out a grey horse, he handed me the riata and told me to lasso him. (All horses had to be lassoed in those days.) I

lassoed the horse and led him out to the gate, where the Patrón had a saddle, bridle and everything ready. He told me to saddle the horse and I did everything just as the Patrón ordered me, without asking any question.

“While I was saddling the horse the Patrón went into the house. When I had the horse listo (ready) the Patrón came out with something tied up in a handkerchief. He handed it to me with orders not to open it until I got to a store that was some fifteen or twenty miles back towards my home. He told me there was enough in the handkerchief to get some provisions for my woman, and that I was to take the horse and go quickly and get what provisions and medicine were necessary, to take it home, and as soon as my woman was well enough and I was well enough, to come back to the ranch. He gave me very strict orders not to talk with anyone on my way home. When I got to the store I untied the handkerchief and found in it thirty dollars in gold. I got all the provisions the horse could carry and took them home. My woman cried and said, ‘The Diós (God) had sent it’. But I told her ‘No. My old Patrón had sent it.’ In a few days I felt well again, and I went back to the Agua Hedionda Ranch and worked for my Patrón for a long time. He kept a little out of my wages every month until I had the debt all worked out. I wish I could have done something for him to show I had not forgotten. I might have dug his grave if I had heard of his death in time. He was a muy buen hombre” (a very good man).

This was Old Kanack’s simple story, as near as I can remember it. I would rather have an Indian say that much for me after I am dead, than to have a tombstone erected over me as high as the Washington Monument.

Of course his story was told to me in Spanish and changing it to English has detracted much from the beauty of it. When it comes to beauty of expression the English language utterly fails as compared with Spanish. I

have related this little bit of ancient history simply to give a little insight into the true life of an old pioneer of this county, and a man who was generally misunderstood by many who knew him. Uncle Robert almost never talked of the hardships he had been through, though he had been through some experiences that would have been considered thrilling by most anyone. When coming to California in 1850 and while passing through the part of Arizona known as the "Apache Indian Country" he and one other man went back six or eight miles and buried three or four members of the Oatman family who had been murdered by the Apaches the day before. Traveling through that hostile Indian country with ox teams in those early days was no pleasure excursion. But for two lone men to go back six or eight miles from the wagon train, to bury a party that had just been brutally murdered by those Apache fiends would certainly take some grit. And yet I never heard Uncle Robert so much as mention his having had that experience. And I probably would never have known of it only that it came to me through reading the account of the "Carrying away of the Oatman Girls by the Apache Indians".

In early days he was one of the Judges of the Plains. These were men appointed by the Supervisors of the county to settle all disputes over the ownership of cattle. They naturally provoked enmity, especially from the lawless portion of the community. Just at dusk on the evening of July 15, 1856, after a hard day's ride looking after cattle, he was attacked out in El Cajon by a gang of Mexican desperadoes who attempted to kill him. They succeeded in wounding him severely, three bullets taking effect. One grazed the top of his head, one struck him in the back of the neck, coming out through the cheek, and the other went through his left arm. That he escaped with his life was owing partly to the fact that he was riding a better horse

than any of the bandit band that were intending to kill him. Most men would have talked a great deal in after years of such an exciting event in their lives. But in all the years that I knew Uncle Robert I never heard him bring this event in his past life up but once. And then he merely recalled being at one time in the hospital with three balls shot into him.

Only a short time before his death, I asked him to tell me about this event, and he did, in about as many words as I have used in relating when and where it happened. He attributed his escape from death at that time to the protecting hand of God.

He once rode a mule from Fort Yuma to San Diego in two consecutive days. This was a distance of two hundred miles, and was one of the most remarkable rides that I have ever heard of anyone making. I once asked him some questions about that trip. He did not seem to consider it so very remarkable. I asked him if the mule was not completely tired out when he finished the second day. He said, "No, she was not. When I was coming down the mountains back of the Jamacha Ranch I met a manada of my horses going up the trail. In order to turn them back I fired my pistol in the air, which frightened the mule, and she ran away with me. And I had to throw my pistol away so that I could hold her. After I got her quieted down I had to go back and get my pistol." That would be good proof that there was a good deal of life still left in that mule, even it she had gone nearly two hundred miles in the past thirty-six hours. I have made a good many long hard day's rides, but I am quite sure I never rode a hundred miles in a day. To ride one hundred miles, you would have to keep up a six-mile an hour gait for over sixteen and one-half hours. And to keep that gait up for that many hours in one day, and then get up in the morning and do it again the next day, is something that very few animals could do. It would also be a

hard test on a man's endurance. I had my first lessons in riding on the same mule that made that remarkable trip. But at the time I rode her she was probably over twenty-five years old. She never got over her fear of firearms, and would snort and run, even in her old age if any shooting was done around her.

Whenever Uncle Robert saw one of us small boys riding her, he would say, "Be good to the old mule. She is getting old, but she has been a splendid animal in her younger days."

VII

In 1881 the first railroad was built to San Diego. Before that everything that was raised on the ranches, such as hay and grain, had to be hauled to that place on wagons. There was no other market place and San Diego was then only a very small town.

In those days when a farmer living away back in the mountains raised a crop of grain of any kind, it must all be loaded on a wagon and hauled over miserable roads to San Diego. Twenty-five miles per day was a hard day's trip with a load. So a rancher who lived forty miles from town had at least a two days trip with a load, to market.

And in those days if anyone spoke of going to town everyone knew that he went to San Diego – for there was no other town in the county.

Most all the ranchers or farmers had a wagon that would carry from one to four tons. They would hitch four or six horses or mules to this wagon, load it with sacks of grain, as many sacks as they thought their team could possibly pull. Tie a camp box, containing a few cooking utensils, and enough provisions to last them for the trip, and also a roll of bedding, on top of the load and start out.

The roads were always bad, for in those days, when a part of the road got so bad that teamsters could not pull a load over it, instead of the road being repaired, they usually broke out a new track, and traveled that until it too got impossible. Then, after the next winter's rains had come and settled the dust, they would go back over the old road, "straddling the ruts" – (that is, putting a wheel on each side of the old ruts), and thus got along the best way they could.

A four-horse load was usually from three to four thousand pounds, but teamsters never talked of tons or thousands of pounds. It was “thirty hundred”, “fifty hundred”, “sixty hundred,” etc. ¹

Most boys who lived on ranches learned, when quite young, to drive a team, that is, a four or six-horse team. For if they did not drive a team on the road, they had to drive a plow team. The crops were all put in by means of gang plows, which plows were usually drawn by six or eight horses or mules. These teams were expected to be in the field, ready for work, as soon as it was light enough to see in the morning. And they were not expected to leave the field until it was too dark to see the furrow.

The teams had to be fed at least an hour before starting for the field, and the driver must not only feed his team, but he must curry and harness them before breakfast, too.

These long hours during the planting season, which in this country is from about December first to February first, was made necessary on account of the large amount of plowing that must be done in that short time. One good six-animal team was expected to plow at least two hundred acres during the planting season. And as this is the rainy season here, they must expect to lose a good many days on account of rain.

Those who had to hire drivers for their plow teams never seemed to have any trouble to get men willing to put in these long hours. The men seemed to realize that the time for such work was limited and that the work must be rushed. And the early planted crops were usually the best.

¹ 2000 lbs. = a short ton or 2240 lbs. = a long ton.
If sacks weighed 100 lbs each, then 30 sacks would weigh 3000 lbs. or over one ton.

Of course I am writing of the good old days before the war in Europe caused the laboring people to lose their heads and to demand an eight-hour day. And with only about half the amount of work done in those eight hours that an ordinary man could do in that length of time.

As soon as the planting was done there was always lots of work in fixing roads and fences, etc. until harvest was on. First came the haying, cutting, raking, shocking and then stacking.

After that came the grain harvest. The grain was cut with a header. With this machine the horses push the header before them. It usually cuts a swath about twelve feet wide and is ordinarily pushed by six horses. It is steered by a tiller like a boat. The driver stood away back on a small platform behind the horses, and astride the tiller. He has a long lever by which he can raise and lower the cutter bar. He can vary the height of the cutter bar from six inches to three feet. The cut grain falls on a running canvas draper and is carried up through a draped spout and into the header wagons which are driven alongside and under the spout.

One man drives the header, another man drives each wagon – (there are two or three wagons) -- and one man loads or places the grain in the wagons. Loading header wagons is very hard work. A header will sometimes cut thirty acres per day, and where one man has to load it all, changing from one wagon to another as the wagons are filled, it surely takes a man who knows his business to handle this job.

The writer has done most every kind of work that there is to do on a ranch and on most occasions has been able to fill a man's place at any kind of a job. But I never tried loading header wagons but part of one day. And I decided right then – like the elephant that tried to climb the tree – that “it couldn't be did.” At least that I couldn't do it. The grain was very heavy,

and came up the spout in such volume that I was snowed under, and had to put in all my time in digging myself out. A man who understands loading, however, will seemingly have little trouble, no matter how fast it comes up the spout.

Of course, after the grain is cut and stacked, it must be threshed. In my boyhood days the threshers were always what were known as “horse powers”. That is, instead of having an engine of some kind to drive the machinery a number of horses – usually twelve to sixteen – were hitched to a series of sweeps, and the power driver stood on a platform in the center, and kept them going around and around all day. The power thus generated was transmitted to a wheel called the “Jack” by means of a series of tumbling rods. A long belt ran from the “Jack” to a pulley on the threshing machine, thus driving it. There were so many horses with one of those old fashioned threshing outfits, and they got so little done in a day, that they almost would clean out a farmers crops before they got it threshed. Then there were from twelve to twenty men went with such an outfit, and they had to be fed by the farmer. And such appetites as these fellows would have! To see the threshing machine coming was enough to give the farmer’s wife a nightmare.

Of course in later years these old horse power machines gave place to big steam-driven threshers, that did not have more than half as many horses with them as the old-timers had, and which would thresh two or three times as much in a day as they did. These big outfits also brought a cook wagon with them and boarded their own men. So that was a great relief, especially to the women of the ranch.

But in the early days before the railroad came the hauling of the crops to market was surely a long tiresome job.

Most boys however after they were big enough to handle grain sacks, considered it a fine job. To be sent with a four- or six-animal team and a big load of grain to San Diego, and to be gone from home at least three or four days – they thought was quite a lark. But before the crop was all hauled the fun had long since departed from it.

There were always a good many teams on the road in those days and there was naturally a lot of rivalry amongst the teamsters as to whose team could pull the biggest load. Of course some farmers had much better teams than others. But there was almost as much in the driver as there was in the team. Some drivers could take a very ordinary team and haul a bigger load than others could who had very good teams.

In early days there were too, a good many of what were known as “long teams”, that is, teams of eight, ten, twelve, or even sixteen animals, and these teamsters would have two, and sometimes three, big wagons to each such team. These “long teams” were always driven with a single line, which was called a jerk line.

There are many auto drivers now that boast of their skill as drivers. But it took a hundred times more skill to handle one of those “long teams” hauling loads over mountain grades than any auto driver ever dreamed of. The old mountain roads were very steep and very crooked. And anyone going over such roads now would never think that a long team of six or eight span of mules or horses, with two big heavily loaded wagons, could ever be gotten around the short turns in such roads, without getting at least one of the wagons off the road. But those old-time teamsters were really skilled drivers. And they rarely had any trouble even if the roads were bad.

Now I am well aware that this rather long description of farming and teaming as I have written it is rather uninteresting, but I started in to write an

account of life on a ranch and every ranch had to have some of that sort of thing. And we boys all had to do some of the disagreeable work, as well as some other kinds that were more to our liking. The ranch on which I was brought up was devoted principally to stock raising. But we had to do quite a lot of farming too.

VIII

As I have said, after the ranch was fenced in 1883 Uncle Robert bought up quite a number of cattle, and with those we had on the ranch and the natural increase the ranch was soon well stocked.

We boys did all the riding and looking after the cattle. In fact one or two of us were riding the range every day.

We raised a good many horses, and were kept pretty busy breaking young horses to ride or drive. It seemed to me that I was always riding half-broken horses. As soon as we would get a horse well broken some one would buy him and then it would be time to break another in.

Of course with as much riding as we had to do, we changed horses quite often anyway. For we were not like Owen Wister's famous character, "The Virginian", who could ride one horse every day, for year after year, on a big cattle range – Monte surely must have been a wonderful horse. Neither did we ride like the characters in the modern "movies", who always ride on a run.

In riding after stock a man who really understands his work never rides a horse fast, unless it is necessary to do so. If he did his horse would probably be so tired and so nearly exhausted when an emergency really did arise that he would not be equal to the occasion.

Ordinary range riding is done at a walk or a jog trot. That is, when you are just riding among the stock and are not moving them from place to place, or doing any special work with them. At that gait a horse can keep going all day and still be able to get in and do some really hard work at the last. But if a man rode as we see them in the "movies" it would surely take a lot of horses to keep him going.

I have come in at night, riding a very tired horse a good many times, but never had a horse give out with me. That was one of the things we learned from the old “Spanish Californians”. They never rode a horse hard unnecessarily, at least, not when they were riding after stock. For they well knew that they might, at any time, have to put him to his very utmost. And of course if he had been ridden at a gallop for an hour or two he would be so winded and exhausted that he could do very little when an emergency arose where it would be necessary for him to do his very best.

In riding after stock on a well-broken horse a rider should take an easy gait (and especially while climbing hills) and not ride with a tightly cinched saddle. Of course if he were riding a wild or only slightly broken horse he would keep his saddle tight. For he would never know just when his horse might take a notion to buck or do some funny business. And in that case, if he were riding with a loose saddle, he might have to walk home. We were taught to always save our horses’ strength for a possible emergency, but when an emergency arose, to put him to his very utmost, and not spare him in the least until the emergency was past.

You should take the bridle off, slack the saddle, and let your horse drink, when you came to water. And do this a number of times in a day if possible. And not let a horse go without water so long that when you do water him he will drink so much that he is a misery to himself for an hour or so afterwards from having drunk too much.

Also when feed is plentiful it is a wise plan to remove the bridle and let him eat, if only for a few minutes. And do this, if possible, several times a day. If you have never tried it before, you will be surprised how ten minutes’ grazing will revive a horse on a hard day’s ride. Take ten minutes several times a day, if you are not specially rushed, and let your horse eat,

with his bridle removed and the saddle slacked. You will be rested yourself, and your horse will be almost like a fresh one. There is nothing tires a man like riding a tired horse.

I have had people who were not familiar with such work ask me why on a fenced range it was necessary to ride among stock so much. There are a great many reasons why it is necessary to keep close watch of this stock. Cattle and horses, like people, are subject to many troubles and difficulties. Various things hurt them, and they have a way of hurting one another.

Probably the commonest difficulty among cattle is for one to hook or horn the other. A slight wound of any kind, especially in hot weather, will cause blood to start. Then flies will “blow” the wound and an ugly sore will soon result. That animal must be lassoed and thrown, and the wound cleaned out, and some disinfectant applied. In the hot weather we usually carry a bottle of strong disinfectant of some kind with us while riding among cattle, and wherever we find an animal with trouble of this kind we throw him and attend to the wound, and turn him loose again right on whatever part of the range he happens to be.

Then cattle or horses will sometimes get “chollas” (a species of ball-like cactus) stuck on their nose while feeding. These cause a good deal of suffering and prevent the animal from grazing in comfort. Of course these cases must be lassoed, thrown, and the “chollas” removed.

Then there are of course a thousand other things that may happen, that will require attention. We once found a young mare out on the range fastened by the hair of her tail to an old snag, or broken shrub. She had been held in that way for four or five days (judging from her condition) when found, and would have died from want of food and water if my brother Charley had not happened to find her.

Once I rode up to a big water trough at a spring over in the Agua Hedionda valley. We had a home-made windmill that pumped water into this trough. The stock would usually drink the trough dry in the afternoon, and the windmill seldom started pumping again until the sea breeze started up the following morning, at about ten o'clock, so the trough would be empty all night and until the mill began pumping in the morning. The morning I am referring to was at a time of year when the weather was quite warm, and the stock had come to water some time before there was enough wind to cause the mill to pump. There were a number of horses gathered about the trough, and the sea breeze had just begun to blow strong enough to start the windmill. The mill had probably been pumping a few strokes and then stopping and waiting for the breeze to get stronger, then pumping another few minutes and waiting again. But at about the time I arrived there, the old mill was just beginning to get a fair wind, and was beginning to pour a steady stream into the big trough. This trough was made of three big redwood planks, sixteen feet long and twenty-four inches wide, and was flared out so that it was about three and one-half feet wide on the top. As I drew near I was surprised to see the legs of an animal sticking up, out of the trough, and galloping up quickly to see what was wrong, found a big fat four-year old mare on her back in the trough, and the old windmill pumping a solid two-inch stream in onto her. In less than another hour the trough would have been full and the mare drowned. I happened that day to be riding a well broken saddle horse, and hurriedly putting my riata around the mare's neck, and to the horn of the saddle, I reined my horse back and turned the mare over and out onto the ground. She was none the worse for her experience, but a few minutes more would have ended her life. The horses had come in thirsty and found the trough dry or nearly so and had

been biting and kicking each other, as each one wanted to get to the part of the trough where a little water was coming spasmodically from the pump. And in trying to get out of the way of the heels of some vicious old mare this one had fallen against and then into the trough.

Of course these two incidents that I have just described are things that would rarely happen to animals running on a range, but I have mentioned them just to show those who are not familiar with this kind of work what unexpected conditions we do come up against at times.

When cattle are poor as in time of drouth the most common difficulty they get into is getting mired down in some mudhole. It always seemed to me as if the poorer and weaker an old cow was the surer she was to get into some place where a strong fat animal would have no trouble in getting out. We used to try to keep the worst mudholes fenced so the cattle could not get into them and mire down, but in dry seasons late in the fall the stock would be very thin and weak and then it kept us on the lookout all the time trying to see that those animals that became mired were gotten out as soon after they had gotten in as possible. For if they are left very long in the cold mud they will not be able to stand on their feet after being pulled out, and so are nearly sure to die. They will not only get stuck in the mud, when they are thin and poor, but will fall into dry gullies and all sorts of places. We usually managed to pull them out of their difficulties with our saddle horses, pulling by the horn of the saddle, but some times when we found one stuck in a very difficult place we had to pull with several horses to get them out. While I am writing along this line I am going to relate a rather amusing case that comes to my mind.

My brother Charley had an Indian working for him whose name was Frank. He was a splendid hand with horses, either at riding or driving them.

One morning I was riding among the cattle when I saw Frank coming down from the direction of Charley's place, with a span of large young horses hitched to a strong farm wagon. The horses were trotting as fast as they could, and trying to run every now and then.

When he got to where I was sitting on my horse by the roadside he pulled up the team and set his brake. I said, "Where are you going in such a hurry, Frank?" "Oh, Mr. Charley sent me down to pull a dead cow out of the mud at the "Macario Spring," said he. I said I would go down there and help him. "Oh, I guess these two small horses can pull her out," said Frank and he started on as fast as ever. I followed him at a fairly good gait, but he got to the spring quite a little time before I did. The cow was stuck in the middle of a patch of mud that was probably two or three rods in diameter, and she was already dead. But Charley had sent Frank down to pull her out and take the skin from her. I sat on my horse and watched to see how he would go about getting her out of such a place. He drove the wagon around the mudhole and stopped with the back end of it as near to the edge of the mudhole as he could get it. Then he tied his lines fast to the brake, which was set on hard. He then climbed down from the seat, and took a big coil of strong "derrick rope" from the wagon. Going around to the rear end he tied one end of the rope to the rear axle, and taking the other end began wading out into the mud. He wore heavy cowhide boots with his trouser legs stuffed inside the tops of them. As he waded in, the mud got deeper and deeper, until by the time he had reached the cow, the mud was almost up to the tops of his boots. Then he tied the end of the rope securely to the dead cow's neck. At about this stage of the game the team, which had been doing some great snorting and pawing the earth, suddenly made a lunge and started on the run. I was on the opposite side of a big gulch and could not get to them

in time to do any good, and Frank was out in the middle of this mudhole which was so deep and sticky that he could not run through it to catch the team. But as the rope was long, there was quite a lot of slack, and in the time it took the team to run far enough to take up the slack, Frank had gotten probably half way from where the cow lay to the edge of the mud. He evidently saw that it would be impossible for him to get to the team in time to prevent their running away, but his head was never known to fail him in any sort of emergency where the behavior of horses was concerned. As the rope suddenly came taut, the old cow came loose from where she had been mired, and started after the flying team at a terrible rate. Frank shot a glance at the running team, and another back at the now fast moving cow, and as she came by him, fairly making the mud fly, he suddenly leaped upon her back and grabbing her horns, went flying out of the mud and off down the canyon in a cloud of dust.

I think it was the most comical sight I have ever seen. A team running away with a big wagon, with a dead cow hitched behind and an Indian riding on the cow's back. I, of course, thought the team would surely be badly injured, and the wagon probably broken to pieces. As for the Indian, I had seen him in so many scrapes with wild horses where he had come out safely that I felt he would come out of this without injury. Well, after running quite a ways the team found that they had run down between the forks of a deep dry gully, with banks that were straight up and down and some six or eight feet deep. They had been running along the edge of one deep gully which was just to their left, and coming suddenly to another deep gully coming in from the right and so deep that they could not cross, they suddenly turned sharply around to the right and started to run back out of this pocket they had run into. The Indian was, as I have said, on the dead

cow, at the end of the rope, which was probably sixty or seventy feet behind the wagon. As he saw the team turn he suddenly sprang from the cow's back, ran out to the right, and as the team passed him he grabbed the side of the wagon and nimbly climbed into it, and up onto the high wagon seat. Reaching down, he unwound the lines from the brake, and with a few hard yanks soon had the team at a standstill and headed up against an old elder tree. Tying the lines back tightly, he sprang nimbly down from the wagon, went around to their heads, and soon had the team securely tied to the tree. He then went over to where the cow lay, untied the rope, and when I arrived at his new location he was starting to skin the cow, just as if everything had worked out in the way he had originally intended it should. As I rode up to him he grinned and said, "Well, Don Juan, how do you like that way of pulling a cow out of the mud?" Frank was a very peculiar Indian. He was at that time probably a little past twenty years of age, and had been raised by or rather had worked for white folks all his life, and could talk English as well as the ordinary white boy. There are many people who will tell you that the American Indian has no sense of humor. But Frank certainly was an exception to the rule, for he had as keen a sense of humor as any young fellow I ever saw. He could not read, but we used to read the funny items and stories to him from the magazines and papers, and he would laugh and enjoy them to the utmost. If any funny story particularly amused him he would enjoy it for weeks, and would quote the parts of it that had interested him most while about his work, and upon all other occasions. But poor Frank went the way of many Indians. He became dissipated, and finally had to leave this country and skip into Lower California, to keep out of the clutches of the law. It was afterwards reported that he had been killed by some members of a tough gang with whom he had been running. If he had

only seen fit to lead a sober, honest life, it would have been hard to find a better all-round ranch hand than he was. But drink and bad company ruined him, as they have ruined many white men.

I have described some of the routine work on a stock ranch, and of course some of it is pleasant work, and some is very much the other way. In the spring of the year, when all the stock are fat and strong, there is nothing, in my opinion, prettier than a big “roundup” of either cattle or horses. The calves on a cattle ranch must be “branded” and “marked” while the weather is cool. For in hot weather, if this sort of work is done, there will be no end of trouble from flies “blowing” the wounds, which makes a lot of work, we always tried to have this part of the work over with by the first of May, if possible.

On our spring round ups, we always had it understood beforehand just what part of the range each man was to cover, in gathering the stock. Each man would drive in all the cows with calves (if it was a round up of cattle) and the same with the mares with colts, if it was a horse round up. We would try and have them all rounded up in the valley near the old ranch house at as early an hour as possible – which would usually be by about nine thirty or ten o’clock in the morning. Then all hands would have to work hard to get them into the big corral. Cattle brought from the various parts of the range where they are in the habit of running will try their best to break away from the round up and go back to their old feeding grounds. So by the time the herd is in the corral every horse on the job is apt to be wet with sweat. And as the cows and their calves frequently get separated from each other in the rushing in of the herd to the corral, there is always a perfect din of bellowing and bawling so that by the time the big gate is closed on them,

you can hardly hear yourself think for noise. Then there is a rush to get a fire started and the branding irons ready.

With us everyone usually had his regular work on such occasions. My job was always to work in the corral on horseback lassoing and throwing calves, or colts, as the case might be. This was not because I was a better hand on horseback than the other brothers, but rather, I think, because I was not as good as the other boys on foot. It was a case of putting each man where he could accomplish the most. And by the time the day was done everybody would be tired and so covered with dust and grime that it was really laughable to look at each other. When the cattle are turned out of the corral in the evening it is interesting to see how those that have been brought in from the various parts of the range will separate themselves from the others and start back to their own feeding grounds. It seems to be a sort of an “unwritten law” with them to stay on their own particular part of the range.

But a round up of horses is much harder work than one of cattle. True, they are much easier gathered in from the range, and gotten into the corral, but then the real work begins. After a day’s work lassoing and throwing horses, everybody’s hands will be so sore and blistered that he can hardly hold a rope at all. The usual course of procedure is for one man on horseback to lasso the colt or horse by the neck and hold him out from the other horses (usually over near the corral gate). Then another man lassoes his two front feet, or legs, and he is soon down on his side. But a big strong wild colt is very swift, and the man lassoing either his head or feet is likely to get his hand badly burned or blistered before he can get his “turns” on the horn of the saddle. Lassoing grown horses that are wild is a far better test of good horsemanship than lassoing wild cattle. Of course with wild cattle the

principal danger is that the animal will horn or gore your horse. And it surely does require considerable skill to keep out of the way of a vicious cow or steer. But with a wild horse, the main danger is of his taking the horse you are riding off his feet. He will run past you at the top of his speed, and it surely takes an awful jar to stop him. The rider must always keep his horse headed in the direction that the pull is going to come, for if he does not, but lets the horse get a side pull on him, his horse will surely be taken off his feet. Then to this is added the danger of the riata breaking. That might seem to one not accustomed to such work as of little consequence – merely letting the horse get away. But I can testify, from experience, that the breaking of a riata is sometimes a very serious matter. We were once catching some horses over in the corral at the ranch and I was in the corral on horseback doing the lassoing. A big wild young horse suddenly jumped over the bars and got out. The other boys let the bars down, and I rode out to try and drive him back into the corral. Just as I got him up to the gate, he broke back past me, and I whirled my horse around and lassoed him as he came by me. He was going down grade, and at the very top of his speed. I got my turns on the saddle when he had taken out about three-fourths of the length of my riata, and in order to avoid having my riata broken, I let the turns run on the horn of the saddle until he had taken all but about a foot of it, and even then I stopped him so suddenly that he fell at full length. One of the boys was quite near him when he fell (for he had been out there trying to head him back into the corral) and ran up to scare him up onto his feet, and drive him back in. I shouted for him to let the horse lay where he was until I could ride up and get my turns at about the half length of the riata (which was nearly sixty feet long) but before I could do anything the horse was on his feet, and coming by me at terrible speed. I just had time to wheel my

horse around, so as to take the pull, or jerk, head on, and when he came to the end of it, the riata broke (as I knew it would) and the end came back like a whiplash, and struck me in the right eye with such force that it almost knocked me from my horse. I thought then I should have to go through the rest of my life with one eye. But after several weeks in a dark room under the care of an oculist my sight was saved. But for a long time after that it was hard for me to keep from ducking my head when lassoing a horse or steer that was on the run.

I have used the word “riata” so many times in this narrative that it has occurred to me that some people who are not familiar with the Spanish language might not understand just what it meant, or how it was made.

Most writers speak of it as a “lariat”. But that is really putting two words together to make one. “La riata” would be the same as “the riata”. If you should ask a Spanish American what he called such a thing, “la riata” or “esa la riata”, which in English would be “the riata” or “that is the riata”. It is made of rawhide. Usually four strands braided together, though sometimes they are of six strands. To make a good “riata” is a lot of work. In the first place the skin must be taken from the animal very carefully so there will be no cuts in it. Then as soon as it is taken from the animal it must be stretched out smoothly on the ground, or still better on a floor, and staked or nailed around the edges to keep it from wrinkling. Then, when it has dried enough to be firm, the man who is going to make it into a “riata” will begin, with a very sharp knife and cut out a circle about a foot in diameter right in the middle of the hide. Then he will commence cutting the strand, around and around this circle, working from the center of the hide towards the outside. He will cut the strand much wider than he intends to have them when they are ready to be braided in the “riata”. He usually cuts them

something like an inch wide. He will not be very particular about cutting them true and even at this time, for they must be soaked in water until they are quite soft and then they must be stretched until they will stretch no farther. To do this the old time “riataros” or riata makers used to tie one end of the strands to a strong low-hanging limb of a tree, and then taking the other end of the strands to another long low-hanging limb, that was quite a little farther from the first limb than the length of the strands, and by drawing the two limbs towards each other until the strands would reach, tie them fast, while the raw hide strands were very soft and wet. Then, as the strands stretched, the two strong limbs being at a strong tension, would keep the strands tight, no matter how much they stretched. After they had been kept tight as fiddle strings for a couple of days, they would have all the stretch taken out of them. Then they are taken down and pulled through a “gauge block” that has a sharp knife set in it, and this trims them down to one width for their entire length. Both edges of the strands are trimmed in this gauge block and the knife is set on a slant so that the edges of the strands are beveled. That is so the grain side of the strands will be a little narrower than the flesh side. As the hide is thicker in some places than in others the strands must be trimmed all to one thickness the flat way, too. This is also done with a knife set in a block of wood, but before this last gauging flatwise the hair must be scraped from the strands with a knife. When they are all nicely gauged to one width and one thickness, and the edges nicely beveled, they are ready for braiding. As they will now be hard and dry, they must be moistened enough to make them soft, and then after putting a knot that sailors call a “Matthew Walker” on the end, they are coiled up in balls in a way that, as the braiding progresses, the strands can be drawn out from the center of the balls. (I have coiled these balls up many

times myself, but could not write a description of how it is done so that another could understand me). The knotted end is now made fast to something and the strands being kept moist, the braiding can begin. This braiding must be done just as tightly as possible if you want to have a nice even “riata”. And it is important to have all four of the strands as near the same tension as possible so that one will not break from being tighter than the others when put to the test. The riata when finished is usually from forty-five to sixty-five feet long. The strands must be about one-fifth longer than you want the finished riata to be. A nice “hondo” must now be made from rawhide and put on (some vaqueros prefer a brass hondo) and you are ready for business. The riata will be hard and stiff at first but use will soften it. I do not think a riata is any stronger than a good new manila rope, of the same diameter, but it is heavier and better to throw from a running horse and will also last longer.

I still have my old riata – that is, the last one I had while I was in the stock business. I did not make it but it is one of the best made ones I ever saw. I also have my old silver mounted spurs and my riding bridle. My saddle got burned in a fire since I moved to town.

The kind of riding bridles used by stockmen is another matter I want to take up. We always ride with what would be called a “severe bit”. Most people not accustomed to a well-reined horse will say, “What a cruel bit to put in a horse’s mouth”. But when you understand the whole situation you will not think it so bad. In the first place, as I have described in a previous chapter, a well broken horse is ridden with a hackamore until he is gentle, and then he is ridden with both hackamore and the severe bit, called a Spanish bit. While being thus ridden with the two at once the rider teaches him to stop short by lifting the reins of the bridle gently and at the same time

pulling him up hard on the reins of the hackamore. The same with teaching him to turn quickly. The bridle rein is merely pressed against his neck, and he is pulled around sharply with the rein of the hackamore. It is a slow process but after a horse is thoroughly broken in that way, the mere weight of the rein will cause him to stop short, or the mere touch of the rein against his neck will cause him to turn to the right or left, or if held against his neck steadily, to turn completely around as quickly as it is possible for him to do so.

In lassoing on horseback this is absolutely necessary, for you must have your horse at all times under perfect control – to stop, turn to the right or left, or completely around a second's notice. And as you must hold the rein and coils of your riata in your left hand, while you handle the turns on the horn of the saddle with the other, if your horse has to be pulled around by one rein or both hands are needed to control him, you are going to get hurt. And the horse too will be badly hurt if he is not at all times under perfect control.

Now I am well aware that the average person who sees an expert horseman lassoing horses or cattle thinks the horse is so trained that he requires no attention from his rider. I have heard many people both men and women remark on such an occasion, "Did you notice how his horse was trained? So that he knew just when to turn, stop or go ahead at the top of his speed, without any attention whatever from the rider?" Now any man who has really done this kind of work knows that the horse was at all times completely under the control of his rider. If you do not think I am right, just put a man on that same horse's back who does not attempt to control him and you will see how quickly they are all tangled up, or the rider is pulled off his horse.

I can testify from actual experience (and I have ridden many horses that were as well trained as good vaquero horses ordinarily are) that the horse is always controlled by the rider. But a well broken horse is controlled so easily that an onlooker, who was not himself used to doing such work, would not notice the movements of the rider's hand. A horse that is "hard in the mouth" is an unsafe one to use in work of this kind. And he is not only unsafe and dangerous to the rider, but to himself as well, for he might easily be badly hurt by not being in the proper position when a hard jerk came. And I have seen many eastern horses whose owners called them fine saddle horses that would be as useless as a wooden horse in the stock business. This was simply for the reason that they were hard in the mouth from not being broken in the way good vaquero horses are. So I hope I have made it clear why stockmen ride with severe bits.

Another thing that is criticized by many people is the wearing of spurs. There may be some merit in their criticism. And I can understand how, what they call a gentleman's riding horse or saddler, could and probably should be ridden along roads or streets or across country without spurs. In that kind of riding, the rider has one hand to guide his horse, and the other to use a riding whip, if necessary. And in his case if the horse does not start from a walk to a run at the instant he wants him to there is no particular harm done. But for the vaquero who is holding a big steer on the end of his rope it is very different. Both his life and the horse's safety depend on the horse acting instantly at the will of the rider. The rider has both hands thoroughly occupied, and he must govern the speed of his horse with his feet.

And the kind of spurs cattlemen use are not the miserable little sharp-toothed things that "jockey's" and "Kentucky gentlemen" do. The rowels in

a pair of vaquero's spurs are ordinarily from the size of a half dollar to the size of a dollar. (The larger the rowel is the less easily they will draw blood from a horse). And the points on the rowels are not filed to sharp, needle-like points, like those of the little "jockey" spurs are. In conclusion, I will say that it is not necessary to hurt a horse any more when you are riding him with spurs than it is when you ride with a whip. But if a rider loses his temper he can be cruel with either. And many a horse has been saved from being horned by a vicious cow or steer by a quick touch with the spurs, when the rider's hands were both occupied so that he could not have used a whip if he had wanted to ever so much.

The old Spanish blacksmiths used to inlay both their bridles and spurs with genuine coin silver in a most elaborate manner. And some of their work was very handsome as well as expensive. They also used the very best "Norway iron" for making their wares, so there was no such thing as a bridle or spur breaking. They simply wore or rusted out after long years of service.

The old "Spanish Californians" never went about on foot with their spurs on. And to enter a house with spurs on was a sign of the greatest disrespect to the house owner. As soon as they dismounted from their horse, they removed their spurs, and either hung them on the saddle, or carried them carefully in their hand. They might enter a saloon or store, wearing their spurs, but a private house never. I personally think that many of our modern cowboys and would-be cowboys could well learn something from those old "Spanish Dons". How often we now see the gaily bedecked heroes (?) going about, indoors and out, with their leather chaps, leather vests, wide and fancily ornamented leather belts, "ten-gallon" hats and jingly spurs. To me it is disgusting.

Fancy bridle reins of braided calf or deer skin are not so common as they used to be, though they are occasionally seen even yet. I have seen many pairs of bridle reins that were real works of art. And they must have represented weeks and weeks of patient work to make them. Of eight, twelve, or fourteen strands, beautifully braided and ornamented with all sorts of beautifully braided-on buttons. And attached to the reins was a beautifully braided “ramal” or whip. Some of the old-time Spanish vaqueros, as well as some of the old Mission Indians were certainly experts at fancy work of this kind. I remember one old Mission Indian who lived for years and years at the Guajome Ranch used to do beautiful work of this kind. Old “Nalberto” was certainly an artist in that line. I wish now I had put away a pair of reins of his handiwork. They would certainly be a relic worth keeping. Whenever I needed a pair of reins, or a new riata, I used to go to “Old Nalberto” and ask him if he had any for sale. He would probably be working on a pair at the time. Upon my inquiring if he had any already made he would gaze off into space for a time, as if trying to remember whether he had any or not. Then he would slowly rise from the box on which he had been sitting, and go to his room in the old adobe house. Soon he would return, bringing a most beautiful pair of reins, and quietly hand them to me for inspection. After I had looked them over I would say, “Bueno, Nalberto, cuanto vale las riendas:” (Well, Nalberto, how much are the reins worth?) The answer he would make was invariably the same “Dejame pensar.” (Let me think). And then he would sit and “pensar” for a time. There was no use trying to hurry the old fellow. But after he had spent quite a time thinking the matter over, he would name a price which would represent about ten cents per day for the time he had been making the reins.

The Indians now charge full price for their wares. They have learned that many of the tourists who come to California have money, and will bid highly for their work.

The Indian baskets, so much sought after by tourists, now bring high prices. But years ago, the Indians would bring a bundle of baskets from the mountains to the coast, and sell them for one dollar each.

I was once at the old store run by Henry Wilson on the “Warner Ranch”. While I was there a couple of men drove up to the store in a buggy and stopped for something. The store was in an old adobe building. Overhead, it was partly floored over, and the proprietor used to throw those things that were in little demand up on those boards overhead. While one of the gentlemen was attending to some business matter with Mr. Wilson, the other was looking about the store at the various wares offered for sale. Finally he looked up and saw some Indian baskets on the boards above.

After walking about and gazing at things a while longer he casually asked Mr. Wilson how he sold the baskets. Mr. Wilson said, “Oh, I have to take them in trade from the Indians and I try to get a dollar each for them”. The stranger said, “I would like to get some baskets”. “All right”, said Mr. Wilson, “how many do you want?” “Oh, I will take whatever number of them you have at that price,” said the man. The old gentleman got up on the counter and began throwing the baskets down and when they had counted them there were thirty-six in the lot. The gentleman made out his check for thirty-six dollars, and he and his partner drove away with baskets tied all over the buggy. And as they drove away Old Henry Wilson looked after them and remarked to me that “Every once in a while some _____ crazy fool like that comes along here”. And then he took another look after them and said, “Now what do you suppose the _____ fool is going to

put in them baskets?” As I could not enlighten him, he shook his head, as if the problem was entirely too deep for him, and walked back in to the store. Each one of those thirty–six baskets represented from one to several weeks’ patient toil of some poor old squaw. Basket making is an art that is fast dying out among the Indians. The old squaws that did such beautiful work in that line have many of them died, and the younger ones have not taken it up. So, within only a few more years, it will be hard to get any of the really nice baskets. And those who have collections made when they could be gotten easily have something that is becoming more valuable every year. Many of the designs worked out in colors in these old baskets are very pretty indeed. It is said that each squaw had a few special designs for her baskets. So anyone who was familiar with these points could tell as soon as they saw a basket who had made it. Some made the “rattlesnake” design on the basket; some a “shooting star” or “meteor”. These were worked in beautifully and made very pretty designs. There is a story of one poor old squaw, who used to make baskets with the “rattlesnake” design on them. Finally her boy was bitten by a rattlesnake and died. After that she made her baskets with the same design, but she always had the snake cut into several pieces. Mrs. Ambler of Mesa Grande, has a basket with his snakeship in sections on it.

It is really wonderful how those old basket-makers could imitate the colors of the “diamond rattler” in their work. Either the “black diamond” or the red and larger variety of Diamond rattlesnake was worked into the basketwork in colors that were very true to life.

In riding about on the range we used to have quite a little run chasing wildcats and coyotes with dogs. We most always had from two to four dogs that followed us everywhere we went. We did not keep hounds but just

some ordinary ranch dogs. In fact hounds are not satisfactory in my opinion, as other dogs, for such work as we were doing, for the reason that a hound will take a track that is too old. And he will follow it too long. You cannot leave your work to follow him up every time he takes a trail and the animal he is trailing may be several hours ahead of him. Of course he is just as likely to be following the trail of a coyote as of some animal that he could “tree”. And then, after following it perhaps all day he would not get it in the end.

An ordinary dog other than a hound will not pay any attention to a track unless it is but a few minutes old. And they will not follow it very long either. So, if it happens to be a coyote that they are trailing you may be sure they will soon give it up and come back to you. But a hound would probably follow it all day.

Our dogs used to “tree” a good many wildcats. We always made it a rule to try to find out if they treed anything, and to help them get it out of the tree, either by shooting it with a revolver, or by knocking it out of the tree with stones and letting the dogs kill it. Many an exciting time we had getting a big wildcat out of a tree, and many an exciting fight the dogs had after they had him on the ground.

A dog’s ability to follow a scent is something wonderful to me. Of course a hound is supposed to have that trait highly developed. But any ordinary ranch dog can surprise you along that line if he only wants to. I well remember a little experience I once had that I shall never forget. For it proved to me what a very ordinary cur could do when he tried. He was a little spotted dog, half shepherd and the other half just dog. He was hardly full grown yet, either. We were going to have a round up of horses, and take a band from down on the ranch up to my brother Charley’s place. When I

left home that morning one of my dogs failed to be on hand and so was left behind. After riding all over the southern part of the ranch driving in horses, we finally got a band of some hundred head or more rounded up in the valley just north of the old ranch house. There were several of us at the job, and some of the boys “held herd”, while Charley and I did the cutting out. In doing this we would ride into the herd and drive out two or three that we wanted to separate from the others, and let a man hold them near the main herd while we went back and selected others that we wanted, and drove them out to this small bunch. In this way I went back and forth probably thirty or forty times into the big herd and out again, then back in and out again. Finally a big wild two-year-old colt broke from the herd and I had to chase him almost a quarter of a mile over into another arm of the valley and bring him back to the band. Then I went ahead with the “cutting out” as before.

After we had gotten probably thirty head separated we started them up the hill towards Charley’s ranch. When we had driven this bunch part way up the hill, Charley and his man said they could take them from there on home without the help of my brother Rob and me. So we rode back onto a point of the hill overlooking the ranch valley, where we had just had the horses rounded up, and had done the parting out. As we sat there on our horses, looking down into the valley, we suddenly saw my little dog (whose name was “Tray”) coming up from the west at a fast run, and evidently following my horse’s scent. Now I had been driving a band of thirty or forty head of horses, but I could see that he was following the zigzag course that my horse had taken as I drove the horses up the valley. As we were in a commanding position where the whole valley was in view of us, we decided to watch and see if the faithful little fellow could really follow my horse’s

track among all the other tracks that there were to confuse him. He came on at a rapid rate, taking all the windings that my horse had made in driving the band. We watched to see what he would do when he came to where we had done the “cutting out”. We felt sure that he would become confused, and lose the track of my horse then. But after he had taken a few turns around where the herd had stood, just as I had done, he began going back and forth just as I had done in cutting out the horses. He would wind around in a zigzag way and then rush out to where the small band had been held, then back into where the herd had stood, and out again as before. After doing this back and forth act a number of times he suddenly dashed off to the west and away off over the ridge into the other arm of the valley, just as I had done when the big colt had broken away from the herd, and I had followed him away over there and brought him back. We now watched with the most eager interest, to see what the outcome would be. When he got to where I had gotten ahead of the colt, he turned back and came fairly flying to where the herd had been. Then he began going back and forth, back and forth, just as I had done for perhaps another dozen times. Then away he went up the valley towards Charley’s place, still zigzagging on my horse’s track. When he got to where we had left the other boys and turned back, he whirled about and came flying along through the bushes, and right up to my horse, where he reared up on his hind legs and placed his two front paws on my stirrup in a perfect ecstasy of delight at having found me. Of course I was so pleased with such a display of ability and also of affection on the part of my little friend that I dismounted and fairly took him in my arms. His poor little sides were fairly throbbing he was so tired from his long run. And of course he was panting at a terrible rate. But how could he have done it? Track one

horse through all sorts of windings among a hundred others? It is too much for me. I simply would not have thought it possible.

The faithfulness of a dog is another thing that is hard to explain. It doesn't seem to make much difference who his master is – his dog will be faithful to the end.

The last six or eight years that I put in riding after stock, I had two dogs that followed me everywhere I went. Riding hard, over all sorts of country, anyone must know that he might, at any time, be badly hurt by his horse falling with him. And being hurt badly out in the hills far from help might be a very serious affair. I never worried any about the danger of an accident, but I knew of course that there was always a possibility, as well as a probability, of such a thing occurring. And it was always a comfort to feel sure that my two faithful dogs would stay by me until they died of starvation if necessary.

A Dog

I've never known a dog to wag
His tail in glee he didn't feel,
Nor quit his old-time friend to tag
At some more influential heel.
The yellowest cur I ever knew
Was, to the man that loved him, true.

I've never known a dog to show
Halfway devotion to his friend,
To seek a kinder man to know,
Or richer, but unto the end
The humblest dog I ever knew
Was, to the man that loved him, true.

I've never known a dog to fake
Affection for a present gain,
A false display of love to make
Some little favor to attain.

I've never known a Prince of Spot
That seemed to be what he was not.

But I have known a dog to fight
With all his strength to shield a friend,
And whether wrong or whether right
To stick with him until the end.
And I have know a dog to lick
The hand of him that men would kick.

And I have known a dog to bear
Starvation's pangs from day to day
With him who had been glad to share
His bread and meat along the way.
No dog, however mean or rude,
Is guilty of ingratitude.

The dog is listed with the dumb.
No voice has he to speak his creed,
His messages to human come
By faithful conduct and by deed.
He shows, as seldom mortals do
A high ideal of being true.
(From American Field)

It is next to impossible to get along on a ranch without dogs. I have know a number of people to try it, but the wild animals, such as coyotes and wildcats, will annoy them so much by killing chickens pigs, etc., etc., that they will in the end have to keep dogs. For my part I would not live on a ranch without a dog anyway. Many a dark stormy night I have lain in a warm bed and heard my faithful dogs charging out into the storm and cold to drive some intruder away. Why did they do it? They gained nothing by going out into the cold and storm. Then why did they not stay under shelter, and let the coyote or whatever it was raid the chicken roost or pig pen? I

knew very well why they did it. It was because they knew if they lay in a snug and warm place and let the wild animal carry something away, they would not be acting faithfully by their master. But there are few men who would be that faithful.

And there are some people whom dogs mistrust. Whenever such a person comes about, and an old house dog, who is ordinarily friendly to everybody, growls a little, you can depend upon it that fellow will bear watching. A dog knows by some animal instinct when a person is not to be trusted.

I was once talking with an old friend along this line. When I said that a dog knew, by some instinct, when a man could not be trusted, my old friend said, "You bet a dog knows when a man is not to be trusted." He then went on to tell me of a brother-in-law of his at whom his old dog always growled. He said he had heard people say that a man at whom a dog would growl could not be trusted, but, said he, I thought the old dog was mistaken in this case." But said he, "I later found that I had never really gotten acquainted with that brother-in-law of mine. And when I did I found that the old dog had sized him up about right."

A dog will also recognize worth in a man that people might consider entirely worthless –

"And I have known a dog to lick
The hand of him that men would kick."

The coyote is a much-abused creature. I have hunted him all my life, and have killed a great many of his tribe. I don't suppose there is one person in a dozen who ever missed a chance of killing a coyote. And yet, of late year, I have come to believe that he has probably done less harm to the ranchers than he has done good. He is a terror to the poultryman. And those

who raise sheep or pigs lose considerable from his depredations. But few stop to think of the good he does. I have noticed since as far back as I was big enough to notice things closely, that whenever coyotes were numerous rabbits and squirrels were far less numerous. And whenever rabbits were very plentiful you would see very few coyotes.

In other words we know that the coyotes live almost entirely on rabbits and squirrels. And whenever there are a good many coyotes there will be a far less number of rabbits. Some seasons we remember when rabbits were so very numerous that the whole country seemed to be overrun with them. On such a season if you took notice you saw very few coyotes. But whenever rabbits become very plentiful and commence destroying crops and gardens, etc., etc., the next thing you will notice that coyotes are getting much more numerous and then the rabbits will disappear very quickly. “Where the carrion is there will the eagles gather”, is a saying that was written many centuries ago. And it is very true, as we all know. It is also true that where anything that coyotes feed on are plentiful, there will the coyotes gather. They seem to flock into a certain part of the country when there is something to attract them, and to emigrate to some other place when food is scarce.

Did you ever stop to think how rapidly rabbits increase? A female rabbit will bring forth from four to six young at a time, and will raise two or three litters in a year’s time. The female members of these litters will be bringing forth young themselves before they are a year old. So, if you want to do some figuring you can easily and surely arrive at the conclusion that if there was nothing to destroy them they would in a very few years overrun the whole country in such countless millions that they would eat up every green thing. The common ground squirrels multiply about as fast as rabbits

do, so between them both we would have very little chance, if nature had not provided some way of keeping the increase down. Scientists tell us that every insect pest as well as other pest has some natural enemy. And whenever a pest of any kind becomes a menace if we can find its natural enemy, and put the two together, things will be balanced up. The All wise Creator evidently attended to these things away back in the beginning.

I have no doubt too that the coyote has its natural enemies (probably man is his worst) or he would become so numerous that he would overrun everything. And while as I said I have killed many of them for bothering our sheep, pigs, or chickens, and shall expect other farmers and stockmen to do the same, I am perfectly sure that if the coyote were entirely exterminated, we might have even worse enemies. Some time back I came across a little poem written by a man who seemed to have the same ideas on this much-despised animal that I have. I will give it to you here, as I think it fits the case exactly.

To the Coyote
By Fran N. Linderman

I used to hate ye once, but now
I've weakened some, and wonder how
Ye live on airth that's ditched an' fenced.
An' lately, somehow, I've commenced
To like ye.

I uster thin ye devil's spawn
But, dang it, all my hate is gone.
I watch ye prowl an' win yer bets
Agin the traps a nester sets
To ketch ye.

Once I practiced onery traits,
An' tempted ye with p'isoned baits:

But if ye'd trust me, an' forgit,
I'd make the play all even yet,
An' feed ye.

It took a time for me to see
What's gittin' you has landed me:
Yer tribe, like min, is getting' few—
So let's fergit: an' here's to you
Ol' timer

If I could, I'd turn the days
Back to wilder border ways:
Then we'd make our treaty strong,
An' try our best to git along,
Dog-gone ye.

The Indians, and many of the Mexicans, consider the coyote a very wise animal though they speak of him as we would of one who was rather cunning than wise. They consider him far too smart to be deceived by what would easily deceive other animals. “No hay otro animal que tiene buen cabeze comco el coyote.” (No other animal has so good a head as the coyote.) This is a very common expression among both Indians and Mexicans. I remember well hearing a little old Mexican talking along this line. He told us how it was utterly useless to deceive a coyote. “Had not Mr. Smith, who used to own the San Dieguito Ranch, tried it, and failed?” “Mr. Smith had placed two pieces of meat in the road on the hill in plain sight from his house. One piece had poison in it, and the other had none. He sat on his porch and watched a coyote coming along to the spot where the meat lay. The coyote smelled of both pieces, then walked over and ate the piece in which there was no poison, and trotted on. “Mira! Que cabeze, hombre.” (See, such a head, man!)

The Spanish people frequently speak of a man as “Un Hombre muy coyote.” From which you would understand that he was a man who was very shrewd in looking after his own interests. So, while they consider the coyote as very smart, it is a sort of cunning smartness.

The great Horned Owl is looked upon by the Indians as a very wise bird. In fact they have a superstitious belief that the owl contains the departed spirit of some wise old Indian. But the wisdom of the owl is considered to be for good ends, and not for cunning, like the coyote.

I have heard Uncle Robert take advantage of this superstition among the Indians, but he always used it for their good. Sometimes he would be talking with an Indian and would suddenly accuse him of having been connected with some affair that was not at all creditable. Uncle had probably gotten his information from some other Indian, and he would always make the accusation as if there were no question as to the truth of it. The Indian would probably deny it at first, but when told by Uncle Robert that there was absolutely no question of his guilt, would say, “But how did you find me out, Patron?” “El tecolote me cuenata.” Would be the answer Uncle would give him (The Owl told me). And the poor, superstitious Indian would at once confess. For what was the use of lying to one who got his information from the “Tecolote”?

The Bear was another animal that was considered to have more than ordinary intelligence. And some of the stories told by the old-time vaqueros were very interesting. A great sport in the early days of California was to lasso the grizzly bear, and bring him in alive. Then they would spread the news far and wide that there would be a great fight, on a certain day, between, a wild bull or steer, and the captive grizzly. I am well aware that there are many men who question the statements that full-grown grizzlies

were brought in alive in this way. But those who question their having done so are men who did not know the ability of the “old-time California vaqueros”. I have heard men who were absolutely reliable tell of helping to lasso and bring in some of as-big bears as ever ran the mountains of California. And I do not doubt their having done so.

When one man alone would bring in the biggest and wildest steer what show would a bear have with four or five such men? Of course I have read Ernest Thomson Seton’s story of “Monarch the Big Bear”, and of how he dragged all the cowboy’s horses away with him, and a lot more such stuff. But that fits in very well with the rest of his story, which is very nicely written. However, I want to say right here, that if four or five old California vaqueros had been there that day “Monarch the Big Bear” would have come back. And he would have come back without it making any difference whether he wanted to or not. They simply would not have consulted him as to what his wishes were in the matter.

When I was a boy I have sat for hours and heard some of the old-timers tell of lassoing bears. Some of them who did not claim to have taken part in such adventures could name no end of other men who had. And if a man, or even a horse, had been killed on any one of these occasions, why, that would be talked of for two generations at least. As a matter of course, many of those who could tell the biggest stories of bringing in bears alive, or of seeing them brought in, were not truthful. And some of the stories they would tell were amusing from their very ridiculousness. Many of the poor ignorant old fellows thoroughly and firmly believed that a grizzly bear could sit up on his haunches, and take hold of the riata with his paws and pull horse and rider right up to him. When you lassoed a bear you must always have a sharp knife ready at your belt to cut the riata in case it got foul on the

horn of the saddle, and the bear started pulling you up to him hand over hand. There was no use telling them that a bear could not take hold of a rope with his paws in that way. “Had not their father told them of seeing, with his own eyes, a man dragged up to a bear in this way, and killed?”

One old fellow, “Don Casildo” used to tell us of how they used to grease half the riata (The half next to the Honda or loop end) and leave the other, or half next to the point, dry, or free from grease. By doing that they would out wit the bear. For they could hold the dry end of the riata very easily. But if the bear attempted to sit up on his haunches and pull their horse up to him, the riata being so greasy, would slip through his paws, and they were in no danger.

“Pero el Oso es un animal muy valiente.”

While speaking of bears, I must relate a story that Old Qurino used to tell, of how the bears had regular places in the timber where they held regular country dances, just as people do. He had not seen this himself, but an old friend of his, “Don Francisco” had told him all about it and he could vouch for the truth of it all.

“Don Francisco” had, in early days, been the Majordomo on a big cattle ranch up in the central part of California. He and one of his old vaqueros were once riding after cattle in the mountains where there were a great many bears. The old vaquero that was with him was much more familiar with these mountains than was “Don Francisco”. Finally they came to some large oak trees, with wide spreading branches, and “Don Francisco” was very much surprised to see that the ground under these oaks was swept perfectly clean. Having never seen anything like it before, he asked the old vaquero that was riding with him what it meant. “Why, Don Francisco, that is where the bears dance at night” said the vaquero. Don Francisco however

was skeptical. He said, “Esta ponendo mentiras”. (You are telling me lies.) The vaquero then said, “If you do not believe me I will convince you. We will wait here until after sunset, and you will see for yourself.” So they rode away back from the spot and tied their horses. Then they crept back and hid themselves on the side of the mountain, where they had a good view of the spot under the oaks that was swept so clean.

They lay quietly in hiding there. After the sun had set, and twilight was coming on, an old grey-headed bear was seen coming down out of the hills to this spot where the dance was to take place. He sat himself down with his back against the big tree. “Es el musicaro” (That is the musician) said the vaquero. Then they noticed many other bears coming down to the spot in couples. They came in from all directions but always in couples. Presently there were some thirty or forty of them gathered there under the oaks. Then the old grey-headed “musicaro” sat up straight against the big tree, and commenced to sing, “Hoo-ha! Ho! ho! Ho! ho!” and each bear selected a partner and they stood up on their hind legs, with their arms around each other, and danced waltzes, polkas, and quadrilles, just as people do. “Ahora, que dice, Don Francisco?” (Now what do you say, Don Francisco?) Could anything require more proof than this?

Another old vaquero who sat there listening to the story, immediately declared that in his opinion Qurino’s story was not true. He said he had no doubt but that bears danced, but they did not dance so much after the manner of human beings as this story would indicate. He said he had frequently heard some of the “old timers” tell of seeing a number of bears collect under a large tree, with low spreading branches. And when the dance was ready to begin, each bear reached up and took hold of one of the long swaying branches with his paws and they all sprang up and down, in perfect time, as

the musician sang his Ho--ho-- ho-- ho-- ho-- ho-- ho—just as if they had each had hold of a spring pole. He could readily believe that bears danced in this way but of Qurino's story he had some doubt.

Qurino, however, assured us there was absolutely no question of the truthfulness of the man who had given him this account.

There was another old character whose name was "Manuel Durazno" but who went by the name of "Panza Leche" (Milk Belly) from the fact of his having nearly killed himself once trying to drink more milk than anyone else in the camp could.

"Panza Leche" (who was a cook) said he was once cooking for some cattlemen up on what is now called Palomar Mt. It was then called "Smith's Mountain" – from the fact that a man named Smith had a ranch on the top of it, where he raised cattle and hogs.

These cattlemen that he was with had taken their cattle up onto the mountain to try to carry them through a very dry season, when the grass was very short on the Coast Country. It was the very dry season of 1864. He said there were many bears in the mountains at that time. And while he was up there that summer they were causing this Mr. Smith a lot of trouble by killing his cattle.

As a means of preventing further loss Mr. Smith finally had a large and very strong corral built and had his cattle all driven into it every evening, in hopes that the bears would not bother them while they were thus protected by the strong fence.

But to his great disgust he found the corral no protection at all. In fact it made matters much worse, for the bears made a regular circus ring of it. Two or three of them would climb over the fence into the corral and each would seize a cow by the tail, wrap it around his hand, and standing up on

their hind legs, chase the cows around and around the enclosure like boys playing horse with one another. And all the time they would be thus chasing the poor cows, the bears would be making a clucking noise with their mouths, like men driving horses. When the cow became tired and refused to play horse any longer, the bear lost his patience and with one blow of his big paw on the side of her head, scattered her brains all over the ground. Then he caught another and went through a like performance with her until he was himself tired out. Then, after they had all eaten their fill of the dead cattle that now lay about the corral, the bears climbed out over the fence and went their way back into the woods.

But according to “Panza Leche” there was one big grizzly who was the “capitan” of all the bears on the mountain. He was probably as big a grizzly as ever grizzled. And Mr. Smith offered four of the biggest and fattest steers from his herd for this old fellow “dead or alive”. That, according to Panza Leche, soon ended his career; for the next day after this offer was announced, four of the best vaqueros then working for the cattleman for who he was doing the cooking, started out to get that reward. They knew that this monarch of the bear family spent his days hidden in a big tule swamp in one of the damp valleys on the mountain. Whenever he had been scared out of this swamp he would run up a certain smooth green swale to the heavy timber, where he was safe from pursuit. So, two of the vaqueros posted themselves on that edge of the tules, and the other two coming into the swamp from the opposite side, soon started him from his hiding place.

As soon as he was well out of the swamp these two “Buenos vaqueros” closed in on him, and it was not two seconds from the time the first “riata delgada” was around his throat until the other man put his on in

like manner and the big bear was strung out between the two horsemen. Then, with one horse back on his haunches on the left, and the other in like position on the right, “what chance did the bear have?” In less than fifteen minutes he was choked to death.

Then they removed their riatas from the carcass and rode up to claim the reward. Mr. Smith when told that they had finished the career of the old cattle slayer, could not believe it possible. “Come with us”, they told him, “and we will convince you that what we say is true.” So he mounted his horse and they took him to where the dead monarch lay.

Mr. Smith was so pleased that he said they had more than earned the promised reward. He not only presented them with four of the largest and fattest steers from his herd, but he had another of the largest and finest slain and the next day it was barbecued in the finest style, and all the vaqueros from the surrounding country with all their friends and relatives were invited to the grandest fiesta that was ever held in the mountains.

Now these stories told by “Old Quirno” and Old Panza Leche” I have related more to show the reader that some of these ignorant old fellows could tell an interesting story, even if there was not a word of truth in it, than for any other reason.

Neither of these Mexicans could read or write a single word. All the knowledge they had was from things they had actually seen or from what someone else had told them. Most of their friends and acquaintances were equally as ignorant as they themselves. And when several of these old fellows got together around a campfire and the cigarette smoke had begun to soothe over the rough places in their memories, then they could tell some quite interesting stories. Some people will call them liars of the first magnitude. But would not such men, if they had had educational

advantages, have made good fiction writers? Their stories are no worse than what the majority of our educated people read every day under the heading of fiction.

As far as “Panza Leche’s” story of the vaqueros lassoing the bear there was nothing impossible or improbable about that. It had been done many many times as testified to by some of as reliable men as ever lived in California, or in any other state. But his account of the bears playing horse with the cattle in the corral is where he spreads on the romance.

While I am discussing this matter of the California vaqueros lassoing bears, I call to mind an account of an adventure of this kind given me by Don Juan Ortega. He was for many years a resident of San Diego County, and lived only a few miles from where the writer was raised. I have introduced him to my readers in an early chapter where I described his bringing in a beef steer for my father when I was a small boy.

Juan Ortega was known as one of the best vaqueros in the southern part of California, and I doubt very much if there were many better ones in any part of this great state. I think I have before stated that in my opinion the native Spanish Californians were the best all around vaqueros that the world had ever produced. He was a man who never boasted of his ability. He did not need to. All those old timers who knew him knew that among good vaqueros, Juan Ortega was as good as they made them. He was born in 1842, in Ventura County I think. So he was six years of age when California came under the American flag.

Cattle raising in those days was the only real industry in this state. They were killed by the thousand for their hides and William Heath Davis, in his book called “Sixty Years in California” gives a good description of how this slaughtering was done. He says that they usually rounded up a

band of cattle in some chosen place and selected about fifty head for the matanza. These were lassoed by the vaqueros and butchered. The skins were hung over poles or ropes to dry. But little of the meat was used; practically all of it being left for the wild animals, buzzards and vultures to devour.

Heath Davis also tells us that bears were very plentiful in those days and that they would come in great numbers at night to where one of these matanzas had been held during the day, to feast on the carcasses of the dead cattle. He says these old rancheros used to consider it sport for kings to go out on moonlight nights, mounted on their best horses, to where they held a matanza and lasso bears that had come down from the hills for a feast on fresh beef.

One ranchero who had a big ranch near San Francisco Bay told him that in one night he and his vaqueros had lassoed and slain forty bears.

But to get back to my story about the adventure of Juan Ortega. He said he and his brother rode out early one morning to where they had seen a dead cow that had been killed by a bear the day before. They thought that by getting there early they might find the bear at breakfast. They had their riatas ready, and were mounted on two of their very best horses. Keeping a small rise of ground between them and the carcass until they were quite near it, they rode suddenly up over this rise and there, eating at the carcass was not one, but two big grizzlies. They made a dash in and each lassoed a bear. Juan said he got his bear by the neck and the old fellow as soon as he found he was caught began snarling and growling in an awful manner. He reined his horse back, keeping the riata tight as a fiddle string, and in a very short time had the bear choked down. By keeping a steady pull, it was not long until he had choked him to death. As soon as he was sure the bear was dead,

he rode up and removed the riata from him and went to the aid of his brother. The brother had made a bad throw and gotten his bear by the neck and one front leg through the loop. With that hold he could not choke him and the bear was giving him a terrible tussle.

Juan said, "As soon as I got to him I lassoed him around the neck and by my brother pulling one way and me pulling the other, we soon choked the bear to death." He said he thought either of those bears would weigh at least a thousand pounds and perhaps twelve hundred. This took place in early days in Ventura County. Most anyone would think that they would have been satisfied with getting one bear. And they certainly were taking a long chance in lassoing the two. But those two brothers were men among men when it came to doing that sort of work. Juan Ortega is still living. He now makes his home in Santa Ana, Orange County.

It used to be quite the proper thing in the early days of California for those old vaqueros to bring a bear into town alive. To do that a number of men would go out and lasso him. They might have at least five or six riatas on him. But two of them would get him by the neck and one front leg. Then they would take a dry bullock hide, cut two holes in it up near the neck end while the other men held the bear strung out between them. The two who had him by the neck and one front leg would pull the points of the two riatas through the holes in the dry hide and work the hide down as near to him as they safely could. Then, as these two men dragged the bear ahead, the hide would slip back on the riatas and they would soon have him on the hide, and could drag him along as if he were on a sled.

Having several times in this narrative expressed the opinion that the Spanish Californians excelled all others as vaqueros, I would explain here

that I would not have my readers confuse the term “Spanish Californians” with Mexicans.

Before this country became part of the United States the people living in what was then known as Alta California considered themselves quite distinct from those living in Baja California and Mexico proper. Many of the leading families of Alta California were direct descendants of the early Spanish explorers and were a fine race of people. Some of them had of course, intermarried with Mexicans, and there was doubtless some Indian blood mixed in where it was never intended. But there were also a large number of Spanish people perhaps more especially among the Spanish women, who had married Americans or Englishmen.

So taking all things into consideration, many of the best Spanish families of California have up to the present time maintained themselves as a fine race of people. Of course, many of their ways are not our ways but neither are our ways their ways. They have as good right to their ways of living as we have to ours. They are a pleasure loving people as all the Latin races are and as a result many of them have little left to live on when they become old. Where old age finds any of them in poverty it is usually because of their extreme hospitality.

Most of them live up to the admonition that if “you have two coats and your neighbor has none” you are to give him one of yours. Most any of the old families who were well to do themselves expected to have to look after a number of their friends who were not so fortunate.

There is another matter that I wish to touch on in justice to these people. It seems to be the general opinion of a great majority of eastern people and Europeans generally that the Spanish Californians were a treacherous cowardly race and that one of their class could equal a half

dozen of them in an encounter. Now there never was a greater mistake than this. The Spanish people of California and the average Mexican too, are as brave and as fearless in danger as any average person. If anyone doubts what I say, let him start in to run over or trample on the rights of one of them and he will soon have cause to change his opinion. I have lived among Spanish and Mexican people all my life and have seen many, many instances of great bravery displayed by them.

Most of those who sneer at these people will say “Look at the record they made at the time of the war with Mexico, back in the late eighties-forties. Were they not driven back every time the American troops came in contact with them?” We must admit they were. But what was their army but a mere rabble? With arms (where they had any) that were at least a half century behind the time. Mostly they were armed with sharpened sticks that they called “lances”. A half starved and ragged band; officered by a miserable band of political grafters who were so utterly unprincipled that they were afraid of their own men in many instances.

In a corrupt government the most contemptible always get in command. What army ever accomplished anything without a good leader? Was it not said many centuries ago that “an army of asses commanded by a lion will overthrow an army of lions commanded by an ass.” No truer saying was ever uttered. But in the Mexican War we sent an army of lions commanded by a lion and they met a half starved army of lions commanded by an ass.

Most of us know that the Latin races in general are a vindictive lot. If anyone insults them or does them an injury they will try very hard to get even with him. And as their memories are good when it comes to

remembering grudges or injuries, they usually succeed in getting good and even with anyone whom they think has done them an injury.

The Indians of Southern California were also very much on the same order. That is, if anyone abused them or tried in any way to injure them, he was very apt to find before long that they had gotten back at him in some way. Perhaps he would find that his horses had been stolen. Or some other deviltry had been done. They would surely get even if any opportunity was offered. Where both horses and cattle ran at large they could be easily driven off.

With our family it was always a rule to treat all these people as fairly and honestly as if they had been of our own race. And though we raised horses in large numbers during forty years that we were in the stock business in San Diego County we never had a single one stolen from us. We had a few cattle killed and part of the meat carried away (probably by some poor wretch whose family was half starved) and there may have been some cattle taken that we never knew of. For it is impossible to keep track of them all. But with the horse stock we kept track of all of them though we frequently had as many as two hundred and fifty head on the ranch. We know we never had a single one stolen.

I could name many other settlers in this county who had horses stolen from them. It was not at all uncommon to hear of horses being stolen right out of stables or corrals. Of course the horse stealing was not done by any one class or race of people. There are lawless and unprincipled people among all groups. We see proof of that in the many crimes of all sorts that are committed all about us these days. I would be very proud of the fact if I could truthfully say that the American race was less prone to commit crimes than any other. For one always likes to believe the best of his own race. But

alas! When we look over the news of the day and read the vast number of crimes of all kinds that are recorded, we have to confess that they are pretty evenly divided among all races.

While speaking of the old Spanish vaqueros, there are a few other traits of character among them that I would like to speak of before I close. One thing I have noticed especially was with what confidence they trusted each other when working with stock. For instance, if one of them had a wild and vicious cow or steer lassoed and was holding it with his horse and it became necessary for the other man to dismount in order to do any part of the work that he could not do from his horse, he would do so with apparently no fear of the other man letting the cow or steer gore or horn him. I have seen this test made a great many times and several times my hair has fairly stood on end in fear of seeing a man on foot horned. But the fellow who was taking all the risk seemed to have no fear but trusted implicitly in his partner's ability to hold the vicious brute even when it was lunging and plunging at him and a gain of a foot or two would mean his death. One instance of this kind I recall that impressed me very strongly. It happened in the summer of 1896. I was in charge of a herd of some three hundred and fifty head of cattle that we had driven up into the swamp near the mouth of the Santa Ana River in Orange County to carry them through the dry year.

At that time there were hundreds of acres of willows from ten to thirty feet high in that swamp country. And it was almost impossible to ride through them. In taking our cattle into the swamp we had to drive them for several miles on a road cut through one of those willow thickets and this road was only just wide enough for a wagon to pass through. While passing through this part of the road we lost a cow and two young bulls. After we had gotten our cattle settled in the pasture to which we were taking them, I

took a ride back and found those that had been missing. As they were wild, I did not at that time try to bring them down to the pasture for I knew they would scatter in the willows and I might lose track of them altogether.

Don Marcos Forster had a herd of seven or eight hundred head of cattle in a pasture adjoining ours on the west, and his cattle were in charge of Garibaldo Carrillo. Carrillo and I helped each other in any way we could and when I told him of the strays up in the willows he agreed to come up and help me get them down to our pasture. Some days after this, Johnnie Forster, (a son of Don Marcos) came over to Carrillo's camp to stay for a day or two. While he was there he and Carrillo came up one morning to help me get the strays.

We rode up to where I had last seen them and soon had the strays located. One of the bulls was with another man's cattle and he said I might leave him in his pasture as long as I wished. So we decided the best way to take the other two would be to neck them together to prevent their separating and then try to get them through the willow thicket.

Johnnie Forster (who went by the nickname of Chico) lassoed the cow and getting a turn around a small willow, hauled her up to it. I followed the bull around among the thick willows for a short time and finally got him out into a small clear space where I lassoed him and brought him up near to where Carrillo and Johnnie had the cow. While Johnnie held the cow up pretty snugly to the tree, Carrillo dismounted and started to fasten a rope around her horns, by means of which he intended to neck the bull and her together. As soon as Carrillo came near her on foot the cow was on the fight and she bellowed and lunged at him in a perfect fury. He was standing right at her head and tying the rope around her horns, when she made an awful lunge at him and finally got him back against a heavy clump of willows

through which ran an old wire fence, so that he could not have retreated an inch farther. The cow was lunging at him in a perfect fury and her sharp horns were not missing his stomach more than eight or ten inches. I expected to see him try to beat a retreat, but he kept right on tying the rope about her horns and at the same time telling Johnnie in a loud voice, “No la aflojax ningun dedo Chico!” (Do not give her a finger’s length, Chico!) All that kept her from horning him was the fact that Johnnie did not “afloja ningun dedo.” Now I call that having confidence in your partner. Well, we finally got them necked together and with one horseman ahead with a riata on them and another behind to hold them back, we got them down through the willows and turned loose with the main herd.

That same summer while I was staying up there looking after the cattle, I went up to Santa Ana one day on some errand. While there I met Don Marcos Forster, and he told me his vaqueros were bringing a band of seven hundred head of cattle from the Rincon, (which place is on the Santa Ana River below Corona) and were going to take them down to Las Bolsas to the pasture where Carrillo was tending another band (of which I have spoken before). He asked me if I would tell Carrillo to come up the following day and meet the herd somewhere on the San Joaquin Ranch and show them the way to the Las Bolsas pasture. I agreed to do so. The same evening I rode down to his camp and told Carrillo what Don Marcos had said. He asked me if I could come down and camp with him that night and we would take a very early start the following morning, and thus meet the men with the cattle well back on the San Joaquin Ranch. So I went back to my boarding place and told them of our plans and then went down to Carrillo’s camp again.

The next morning he called me at two o'clock and while he cooked breakfast I went out and saddled the two horses we were to ride. Then when we had eaten we hurried out and mounted our horses and were off before three o'clock. It was a cool, pleasant morning in the early fall. At that hour in the morning it would have been still quite dark had it not been for the fact that a bright moon was shining.

We were mounted on two of Don Marcos Forster's saddle horses. As soon as we had gotten through the water and tules near the camp and had gotten to where the ground under our horses was reasonably firm, Carrillo who led the way struck into a brisk gallop. It was several miles across the damp sod ground of the swamp country, but we were following a track where wagons had gone so we rode side and side. When we got to the east side of the valley we had to ascend quite a hill to get up onto the mesa. We had ridden at a long swinging lope all the way across the valley or swamp. When we came to the foothills at the east side I looked for Carrillo to slow down but he kept the same gait all the way up the quite steep slope leading onto the mesa, which we reached a little west of the small town of Fairview.

From there we had level or slightly descending ground to the valley of the San Joaquin Ranch. Still we rode at a lope. I kept thinking that we should be slowing up and giving our horses a chance to get their breath (though they were not puffing or breathing hard in the least although we had now come at a lope for at least seven or eight miles.) Finally I said, "Carrillo, we had better slow up for a spell and give these horses a breathing spell." He seemed surprised at my concern for the horses and said, "No! These horses are not tired at all. They will go at this gait all the way to San Juan if necessary, and not be tired when they get there either. (From Las Bolsas to San Juan was between twenty and twenty-five miles). I said no

more about slowing up and we kept the same gait clear across the valley of the San Joaquin Ranch and met the vaqueros with the cattle away up near the hills on the east side.

I don't know what the distance was that we rode that morning, but it must have been at least fourteen or fifteen miles. And every foot of that distance we rode at a fast lope.

Don Marcos Forster had for many years been breeding good horses and large numbers of them. At that time he had a splendid lot of well broken saddle horses and also many splendid driving teams.

I was much amused that day as we drove the cattle on towards the coast, at the arguments between Johnnie Forster (who was in charge of the drive) and one of his old vaqueros. This old fellow, who had grown grey in the employ of Don Marcos, was very impatient and wanted to keep the herd moving all the time. He kept telling Johnnie that unless we did keep them on the move we would not reach Las Bolsas that evening. I had some doubts myself of our getting to our destination that day. But Johnnie, very wisely, kept letting the herd stop every hour or so, to rest and feed. And every time he would stop the herd he would in a good natured way call to this old fellow and ask him what he thought of our chances of finishing the drive by night. During all the forenoon whenever he asked the question he always received the same answer. "No! No puedo llegar in este modo, Patron. Esta' muy lejos de aqui a Las Bolsas." (No! We cannot reach there in this manner, Patron. It is a great distance to Las Bolsas.) But later in the day when it began to look as if we would make it through, the old fellow had little to say. Finally, as we were allowing the herd to rest and feed, when it was well past midday and our drive was considerably more than two thirds done, Johnnie called across to the old chap to ask him if he thought by now

that we would reach Las Bolsas that evening. His answer was, as he gazed off into the distance, “Parado no.” (Standing still, no!) I don’t think I ever heard a more expressive answer to a question.

We did however reach Las Bolsas that evening by sunset.

X

Looking back over a span of something over fifty years in San Diego County, there have been some wonderful changes. The next fifty years will witness far greater ones. But they will be of a different kind. From now on for as far as we dare to look ahead, progress will be steady and along natural lines. There will be few difficulties that would differ materially from those to be met and overcome in any growing community. But looking back to what the pioneers had to contend with, we see a very different state of affairs. Many of them came across the plains from the various more civilized states. And when they determined on the move to the Golden West, they of course knew that it meant cutting themselves loose from not only their friends and acquaintances, but from the protecting hand of the law. For they must travel for months through a part of the country where there were few settlements, and where the uncivilized tribes of Indians were anything but friendly.

What some of the women suffered who came across the plains with those old immigrant trains, God only knows. Mothers with little children who never lay down to sleep at night without the thought that they and their dear little ones might be murdered or scalped before morning. If a coyote or a wolf howled near their camp they must be alert for it might be Indians imitating these animals. If an owl hooted in a nearby tree they must draw their little ones near them and pray to God that it wasn't an Indian imitating the hooting of an owl. For the dreaded savages could imitate the barking of a coyote or the hooting of an owl so perfectly that they could deceive anyone. And they always had the danger with them of their teams being stolen by these fiends, and of themselves and their little ones being left with no means of proceeding farther. When you think of these dangers, and then add the

dangers of fording rivers, and of traveling over next to impossible mountain roads, we certainly must feel like standing with bared heads while a woman whom we know passed through these experiences, passes by.

I have talked with a number of them and it has thoroughly convinced me that women in time of real adversity and real danger are braver than men. I have never talked with one of these pioneer women who boasted of having done anything remarkable. Their husbands had decided to come to California, and of course they had cast their lots with their husbands, for better or for worse, when they were married.

The writer's Father and Mother did not come across the plains when they came to California. They came by way of the Isthmus of Panama and by steamer. I have always been thankful that my mother escaped the trials and dangers of a trip across the plains. Though her trip here by sea was far from being a pleasure trip.

There is an old couple living within a hundred feet of where the writer is sitting while penning these lines, who came across the plains from Texas in the year 1868. I refer to Mr. and Mrs. L.H. Bailey of 4227 St. James Place, San Diego, California. Mr. Bailey was born in 1840, so he was twenty-eight years of age when they started for the Pacific Coast. Mrs. Bailey was born in 1843, so was in her twenty-fifth year. They had two children. A little daughter of four, and a boy two. Both the old people are quite feeble with age now, for Mr. Bailey will be eighty-five and Mrs. Bailey eighty-three this summer. But their minds are both very clear when they talk of events that occurred when they were crossing the plains fifty-six years ago.

They started from near Houston, Texas on April 1st and got to a place in San Diego County near Campo in the last days of November. So they

were eight months making the trip. Most of the parties who came from Texas made the trip in about six months. The Baileys would have made it in that time, too, if they had come direct. But they traveled north from Houston for several hundred miles, with the intention of coming over a more northern route by way of the Great Salt Lake and entering Northern California. However when they had gotten almost up to where they would have taken the more northern road, they learned that the danger from Indians was so great on that route that year, that all the trains were taking the more southern route, via Santa Fe, and coming into California through Arizona. So they too turned about and came over the southern route. In making this northern detour they lost two months of valuable time.

Mrs. Bailey and I had a talk about her trip across the plains only a few days since. According to her account they had about the usual experience of immigrant trains coming to California.

They had no encounters with Indians, though they saw where another train of wagons that had preceded them had been attacked and the wagons burned. Nothing but the iron parts being left. Neither did they see any buffalo on their trip across. This was unusual at that early date for they were sometimes seen in herds of thousands. The part of their trip that I especially wish to refer to though is that part after they had gotten almost across the desert in this – San Diego County.

Most San Diegans have been over the road between San Diego and Imperial Valley. And those doubtless have not forgotten the road leading down into the desert from the hills beyond Jacumba, past Mountain Springs, and on down through the rocks, sand, and general desolation to Coyote Wells. Some people think the road, either up or down the mountains is dangerous even yet. But if they would take note of what those poor old ox

teams had to get over in order to reach the – at that time – inhabitable part of California they would say that any road they have ever been over in the West (no matter how bad it was) was a boulevard.

The old road, after passing Coyote Wells (coming towards San Diego) was up quite a heavy grade, and through coarse dry sand, with plenty of cactus, chollas, and rocks, until you reached the mouth of what was called the “Devil’s Canyon.” To reach the mouth of that awful gorge you passed on by the canyon that the present road enters – past what is known as the “Sugar Loaf” and after going through heavy sand with lots of rocks to bounce over for a mile or two, turned up to the left into the rockiest, roughest, and most altogether awful piece of road you have ever seen. From that point until you were up to the Mountain Springs, you wouldn’t believe it possible to take wagons over any worse road. But when you get to the Springs stop and look at the big rocky mountain that rises up like a great wall before you. If you look closely you can see the old road that the old ox teams had to climb. (Yes, it’s there yet.)

As you stand at the present station called Mountain Springs, looking west, you will see the grade that is traveled now, bearing to the left as it ascends the mountain.

You will see another older grade leaving the Springs and bearing to the right. It is much steeper than the road now used, and doesn’t look very inviting. You will probably say, “Thank God, we don’t have to travel over that grade.” But right between those two grades – the one now used, and the older and steeper one bearing off to the right, as it ascends the mountain, is a big steep rocky mountain peak.

And zigzagging right up the face of that rugged mountain is the old original road that the pioneers had to climb in order to get over the

mountains. It was made by John C. Fremont in 1848, when he came across the continent to San Diego.

I saw the old road many times before I so much as dreamed that wagons had ever traveled over it. I supposed it had been a trail up which pack mules or burros had been driven.

John Capron, who in 1857 had a contract to carry the mail and passengers from Los Angeles via San Diego to El Paso, Texas, told me that his stages traveled up and down that old Fremont road until they got what they called the “new grade” built. (That is, the grade bearing right as you look west from Mountain Springs.)

He said they considered the old grade so bad and dangerous that they always asked their passengers to walk up the hill from Mountain Springs. He told me an amusing incident that occurred there once. There are many San Diegans who remember John Capron, as he died here only a few years ago. And they will also remember that he had a wonderful sense of humor.

He said they used to have a station at Mountain Springs, where they changed horses. Once when he was himself coming to San Diego on one of his stages, they stopped as usual at the station and changed teams, putting six horses on to come up the mountain.

They had four or five passengers that trip. The driver, as usual, explained to the passengers that they had a very bad mountain to pull up, and asked them to walk up the trail, which was much shorter than the road the stage must travel. All of them readily agreed to do so, except one, who was a German. This German said he had paid his passage and besides his feet were sore, and he was going to ride even if it was a steep hill.

Capron said, “I got the driver aside and told him, ‘Now Frank, when you start up the grade, put the whip on those horses, and whatever else you

do don't let that Dutchman get out! We will give him the ride of his life'.” He said the road was awfully rocky and steep as well as very sidling in places, and as Frank was giving them the buckskin and going at a fearful rate the “Dutchman” began to fear the stage would tip over and roll down the mountain side. So he began to shout, “I vant to get oudt! Vant to get oudt!” Capron shouted back at him, “you sit where you are!” But the poor fellow was getting worse frightened every minute and shouted, “I vant to get oudt!” “Sit still, you ----- Dutchman!” shouted Capron, and drawing a revolver he shoved it up against the side of the fellow's head and told him that if he did not do just as he was told he would blow his brains out. Just then the stage made a short turn and came to a place a little more sidling than any they had passed. “Get out and stand on the brake block on the upper side or this stage will tip over,” shouted Capron. “And if you attempt to jump off I will shoot you!” We made the trip up the grade in about half our usual time,” said Capron, “And we were carrying the worst frightened Dutchman you ever saw.” And though there was little danger of the stage tipping over, they made the poor Dutchman think there was. When they reached the top and stopped to pick up the other passengers, the “Dutchman” had been given such a fright that he was almost sick. He assured the driver that if there were any more mountains like that on the road he would be willing to walk up them.

Any old timer who remembers John Capron will readily believe that he would put a contrary passenger through just such an experience and enjoy the fun to the utmost.

But I must get back to Mrs. Bailey's experience coming over this old road in a covered wagon in 1868.

As I remember her story they camped at Coyote Wells Sunday night. Monday they pulled up through the heavy sand to near the mouth of the Devil's Canyon. By the time they had got that far their oxen were almost worn out. There were only two families in the party now – Mr. and Mrs. L.N. Bailey and children, and his brother Henry Bailey and family. They had three yoke of oxen on each wagon.

The men here decided that as they now had a very bad mountain to climb they must leave one wagon and use double teams. That is, put the twelve oxen on one wagon and take it up to the top of the mountain, and then come back and bring the other wagon up.

I will now endeavor to tell the experience of Mrs. L.N. Bailey, just as she has told it to me. "The men went on with the other wagon leaving me and our two children, and Henry Bailey's wife and children camped there in the sand. The men got back with the oxen some time Wednesday, having taken one wagon up the hill. They started up with the second wagon that evening. I walked behind the wagon that night all the way up through the Devil's Canyon. We got to Mountain Springs about midnight, and camped there until morning. In the morning we started up the big mountain back of the Springs (The old Fremont grade) I walked behind the wagon all the way up. We got to a place called Milquati Friday evening, where we went into camp. The following Monday night my son Harvey was born."

Now, if that is not an experience for a woman to go through that would cause a man to raise his hat and stand with bared head as she passed, then, in God's name, what would be?

When I asked Mrs. Bailey if her experience at that time was not perfectly terrifying, she said, "No, I felt that I was sustained by a higher power, and that I should get through it all in some way."

God's Book tells us that "if ye have faith ye can remove mountains." But here was a little woman who had faith sufficient to enable her to climb over mountains, without having them removed.

California was settled by a wonderful class of people who were not afraid to face danger and privation when they had a purpose in view. "The cowards never started and the weaklings died on the way."

And the pioneer women who settled the Great West were, many of them, wonderful women. Some of you who have read the accounts of the awful experience of the "Donner party," who, after a very trying trip across the plains, were caught in an unusually early and very heavy snow storm at what was afterwards called "Donner's Lake" near Truckee, and where most of the party perished, will call to mind how bravely the women of the party faced the dangers.

Those of the party who were rescued alive the following spring told of how parties of the stronger ones (some men and some women) attempted time after time to fight their way through the terrible snow drifts that covered the high Sierra, in a vain endeavor to reach help. And in almost every instance the women of those parties outlasted and outdid the men, in those awful days and nights of breaking trail through the deep snow. Not one of those parties succeeded in getting through to the settlements. They either died where they gave out or turned back to die of starvation, in their camps at Donner Lake. But the fact remains that the following spring when the few remaining alive were rescued by search parties from the western side of the Sierras, and they had sent out searchers to find the remains of those parties who had so bravely lost their lives in struggling through the terrible storms of the mountains, in almost every instance they found that the women had gone farther than the men before giving up. Some will say that was because

the men shielded the women in every way they could, and thus wore themselves out while the women's strength was reserved. We can readily believe that those brave men did shield the women all they could. But the diaries of the various men all seem to agree that the women, from the very first, took an equal part with the men, in breaking trail and all the other hardships they had to undergo.

What explanation can we give, then, that would account for their being able to go farther than the men of the party? Men are ordinarily very much stronger physically than women. In the writer's opinion the answer lies in Mrs. Bailey's explanation of how she managed to walk up those terrible desert mountains less than a week before her child was born. They were "sustained by a higher power." Women have a stronger faith in God than men have.

XI

As the writer's intention all along has been to give a description as nearly accurate as possible, of how the early settlers in this county lived, and to describe as many of their experiences as he could get authentic accounts of, he will have to give an account of another experience that this same Mrs. L.N. Bailey had the first year they lived in San Diego County.

My readers will note that the writer has confined himself entirely to matters connected with the back country. Many other writers have written accounts descriptive of the events that took place in the town or city of San Diego. But this is an account of events that took place in San Diego's back country.

In the year 1869 Mr. and Mrs. L.N. Bailey settled on a piece of government land in a small valley just at the foot of the Alpine grade.

They built a small cabin about three fourths of a mile west of what is now the paved highway. It was partly under the branches of a large live oak tree. There were a number of beautiful oaks in the small valley, and there was and is yet a fine spring of water a short distance below where their cabin stood. The hills all about the little valley were very rugged, and covered with a heavy growth of brush, in which deer and other wild animals were frequently seen. Mr. Bailey still delights to tell of some of the big bucks he killed in those hills with an old "Hawkins rifle" that he had.

But not long after they had gotten their cabin built, he had to go to work on a threshing machine, in order to earn money to get them the few necessaries of life that they must have.

As the thresher was working in El Cajon, Mr. Bailey could not come home nights. So, Mrs. Bailey and the little children did not see him from daybreak Monday morning until after dark on Saturday evening.

They kept a few chickens, and these roosted in the oak tree partly over the cabin. As there were no neighbors nearer than what is now called "Flin Springs", it was a pretty lonesome place for a woman and three little ones to be left. But all went well for a time. Then one night something caused a great commotion among the chickens in the tree over the cabin. There was a great cackling and squawking, then she could hear an animal of some sort up in the tree eating the chickens he had caught. She knew it was a large animal for she could hear it crunching the poor chicken, bones and all. As soon as it would finish eating one chicken it would catch another, and then poor Mrs. Bailey would hear the bones of that one too, being crunched between the powerful jaws.

As she had no idea what kind of animal it might be she was of course in a great fright. At that time bears were not uncommon in the higher mountains, and she did not know but one might have strayed down here. She barricaded the door of the little cabin and fastened the little window as best she could. After it had eaten a number of the chickens it went away.

The next night it came again, and there was a repetition of the previous night's proceedings. More squawking of badly frightened chickens, and more crunching of bones. After it had eaten its fill it again went away.

Fortunately the next day was Saturday, and Mr. Bailey would be home before bedtime. We can well imagine how anxiously poor Mrs. Bailey waited for his coming.

It was after dark when he arrived, and he had a Mr. Armstrong who was a professional hunter with him. And this Mr. Armstrong had a large dog that followed him everywhere he went.

While they were eating their supper Mrs. Bailey told them of the terrible fright she had had the past two nights with the animal killing her chickens. Mr. Armstrong decided it was probably a mountain lion, and said, "If it comes around here tonight my dog will surely tree it."

Before they had finished their supper they heard the dog bark, and chase something up the mountain side. When the men went outside they could hear the dog barking excitedly under a tree up on the brushy hillside. Mr. Armstrong said, "Whatever it is, my dog has it treed."

Mr. Bailey got his old muzzle loading Hawkins rifle, and he and Mr. Armstrong climbed up the steep hillside to the oak under which the dog was barking and whining so excitedly.

Looking up towards the sky they could see a dark object in the tree that, from its size, they at once decided was a mountain lion. But the night was too dark to see to shoot with a rifle without a light to shine the sights. So they decided to gather some dry sticks and grass, and build a fire under the tree, by the light of which they could see to shoot whatever it was. Just as Mr. Bailey was arranging the material to start a fire, the lion – for such it proved to be – jumped down from the limb on which it had been to a dry branch which broke under its weight, and it came down almost on top of his head.

The big dog chased it up the hill and soon treed it again. The two men worked their way through the heavy brush, and were soon at the second tree. Then they cautiously started a fire, and by its light they could see an unusually large lion in the tree.

Mrs. Bailey said in the clear night air she could hear the men up on the mountainside talking to each other, and when Mr. Bailey was taking aim with his trusty old Hawkins rifle, Mr. Armstrong was cautioning him to, “Make a sure shot, for if you only wound him he will surely kill my dog.”

Mr. Bailey was in those days a splendid shot with the rifle and at the crack of the gun the lion crumpled up and fell to the ground, shot through the brain.

When they dragged him down to the cabin they found that he measured almost eight feet from tip to tip.

XII

There are some interesting characters in the back country of San Diego County. And I have always very much enjoyed talking to them.

One evening I was standing with a group of men in front of a little country store and post office. It was so dark that I could not see any of their faces well enough to form any idea of what any of them looked like. And most all of them were strangers to me.

We were discussing various subjects and finally I made some remark about something that had happened in the year 1881. "Were you here at the time?" asked one of the men standing in the dark. "Yes," said I. "I had been here quite a number of years at that time." He then asked me what year I had come to this county and I told him I had been here since 1868. Upon my asking him what year he came here, he said he came in 1865. So we had quite a little talk about early days, as we stood there in the darkness.

As we were separating to go to our various camps, he said, "Come over and see me some day while you are up here." And he described to me the way to find his place. So, a day or two after that as I was rambling around, I decided to go over and hunt up my new acquaintance.

I had no difficulty in finding his cabin, for when one old-timer tells another old-timer how to find a place, it is easy for him to follow the directions.

We had of course told each other what our names were the night we had met in front of the little store. But it had been so dark that I had no idea what my new acquaintance looked like. But as he was now in his own cabin, I thought I had a little advantage on him. So I accosted him with a "Hello! Mr. Morris. I know what your name is, but I don't suppose you know mine."

He shook my hand and said, “Well, you told me the other night that your name was Kelly. But I don’t know whether you told me your right name or not.”

Now how had he been able to see what I looked like, when it was so dark I could form no idea of how he looked.

He was an interesting man to talk with, and I made a number of trips over to his cabin, and spent some very pleasant hours discussing old times and Old Timers with him.

Once I asked him how he came to know what I looked like when he had only seen me in the dark. He said, “Know you? John Kelly! Why, I would have known your ashes if I had seen them in a pile by the side of the road.”

It seemed to me that he was well acquainted with every one of the Old Timers that I had ever known.

I have for many years made it a point when I meet an Old Timer like him to get from him as much information and early history of our back country as I possibly could.

He once told me that he came across the plains in 1865 with the Warrens and some other early settlers of the Campo Country. He said they came up the old Fremont Trail, back of Mountain Springs, and got caught in a terrible cold sleet and snowstorm just as they got to the top of the hill. And how they camped there all night in the storm. In the morning they found that two of their oxen had frozen to death during the night. Of course, they didn’t really freeze, but being very badly exhausted, and very thin from want of feed while crossing the desert, they simply died from cold and exposure.

When I asked him if he had ever driven a team over the “Old Fremont Trail” after he came up it in coming to this state, he said, “Oh, yes! I drove

ox teams for Gaskill Bros. hauling freight out across the desert quite a number of trips.” He said he once had a team of three yoke of oxen with a load of freight run away down the old Fremont grade.

When I remarked that must have been some exciting experience to have a runaway down such a road, he said, “Yes, I had been driving Gaskill’s freight team of three yoke of cattle for some time. Finally, there was more freight than one team could haul, so they hitched in some partly broken steers and made two teams of three yoke each.

“The man who was out on the job with me was made boss and Gaskill gave him the gentle team that I had been driving and I was given a team with several young steers only partly broken. In those days we did not have brakes on our wagons like we have now, but chained a wheel with what we called a lock chain, when we went down a hill.”

“Well, when we came to the top of the hill this side of Mountain Springs I chained a wheel and started down. The young steers in my team were frisky and kept trying to run, but I managed to keep them fairly quiet for a ways. Then I came to a short piece of up grade, and the man driving the gentle team said, “You will have to knock your lock chain off or the oxen can’t pull the load up that piece of road.” Morris said, “I told him the oxen would surely run away if I knocked the chain loose. But the other man was boss of the outfit, and said, ‘knock it loose.’ So I knocked it loose and away they started down the hill. “I tried to stop them,” said Morris, “But they soon got to going so fast that I had to let them go. When I got down to the short turn near the Spring I found them all tangled up in the chains. And the other man and I had a terrible job getting them straightened out again.”

“There was a barrel of dried apples setting up at the rear end of the wagon, and in bouncing over the rocks the head was shaken out of this

barrel. After the head was gone, every time the wagon bounced over a big rock in the road a lot of the dried apples flew up in the air and landed in the road behind the wagon. By the time they got to the foot of the grade there were not many apples left in the barrel.”

“When we had gotten the oxen untangled and everything straightened out as nearly as it was possible to do so, the man in charge said, ‘Them there apples are worth a dollar a pound, and we will have to go back up the hill with buckets to gather them up.’” Morris said, “I just told him that it was all his fault for my having the oxen run away and if he wanted to gather up any of the apples, well and good, but I wouldn’t go back after any of them. The other man,” he said, “went back and gathered one bucket full, and the rest were left where they lay, even if they were worth a dollar a pound.”

Only those who have seen this old time mountain road have any idea of what a runaway down it would mean. The writer has seen and been over most of the old mountain roads of San Diego County, and in his opinion the original Mountain Springs road was the worst of them all.

In traveling from San Diego to the Imperial Valley over the splendid road that we now have, we pass through the very pretty town of Jacumba. It is an oasis right at the edge of the desert. Big cottonwood trees, evidently planted there by Indians or early settlers, furnish refreshing shade. And the splendid springs of fine mineral water will undoubtedly cause it to become a world famed health resort. The present owners and managers are now spending large sums of money in improvements and when this is added to what nature has done to the place it cannot fail to become a thriving resort. The writer well remembers when the old tule roofed, rock and mud house, was almost the only building in the place.

And speaking of that old house I have noticed for the past few years that someone has maintained a signboard on the front of it that tells the traveler who stops to read that “This old house was built by Old Joe Jacumba in 1804.”

And the last time the writer passed through Jacumba only a few days since (written in 1925) – he stopped to read quite an elaborate typewritten notice, claiming to give the true history of the poor old hut. Said typewritten account being in a neat wooden frame which is fastened to the front of the old building.

It tells how a man named Stanton and his two sons reached Jacumba in 1804, after a terrible trip across the plains in which all of the members of their party were killed by the Indians; how they “reached Jacumba in a covered wagon, drawn by their last remaining yoke of oxen.” It doesn’t tell how they managed to get a wagon up the mountain from Mountain Springs with one yoke of oxen in 1803 when it took six yoke to get a wagon up in 1868. Nor does it mention the well known fact that no wagon attempted to come up that terrible rocky piece of mountain trail until after the before mentioned old road was built in about 1848.

But, bravely ignoring all the impossibilities of the case, they tell how they were met here by some friendly Indians. And how the chief, Joe Jacumba, treated them very hospitably, and upon finding the elder Mr. Stanton confined to his bed in the wagon with rheumatism told them that if he could but drink the water of their springs, and bathe in it for a few weeks, he would surely be cured of his rheumatism. All of which they did, and in a very short time the elder Mr. Stanton was entirely cured.

By that time they had become so in love with the place that they had decided to make their home there. So, with the aid of Chief “Joe Jacumba”

and his men they built the old rock and mud house in 1804. And it is still standing there a silent witness to the truth (?) of their statement!

The writer had gone to considerable trouble trying to find out just when that old hut was built. Mr. and Mrs. Bailey, who as I have stated before, live within a hundred feet of where this is being written, and who came through Jacumba in 1868 say the old house was not there then,

Mr. Lee Morris who came into the Campo country from Texas about 1865, who as I have stated still lives in the mountain country, says the old rock and mud house was not there when they came. He thinks it was built a little prior to 1870.

Mr. Alonzo Warren, of Campo, says it was built in 1869 by a man named Walsh. Mr. Warren came to campo in 1865 as a child, and has lived there ever since.

Now it is too bad to question the truthfulness of the one who wrote that piece of romance that now adorns the front of the old building, and who signs himself "One Who Knows." But still, "the truth is might and will prevail." And it does no one any good to have false statements circulated, especially about any of our old landmarks when the truth about them is far more interesting.

The word "Jacumba" is not a proper name but is said by the Indians to be the name of a sort of volcanic spring several miles south of the present town of Jacumba. It means, in the Indian language, Dangerous Water. The Indians say the waters of this spring have wonderful curative powers for various ailments, and they frequently bathed in it.

It had a way of sucking or drawing its waters back into the cave or opening in the mountainside very suddenly and without any warning whatever. Several Indians were drawn in with the water, at different times,

when it thus suddenly receded, and their bodies were never recovered;
Hence the name Dangerous Water.

The Indians of the county had their own names on all the various places that they frequented. Every spring in the mountains, every clump of oaks from which they gathered acorns, every mountain peak, and every canyon had its name. And every name had a descriptive meaning. They had no maps of the country, and Indians rarely traveled far from where they were born. But in that part of the country, with which they were familiar, every spot had its name and every Indian knew these names. Any Indian of the tribe could tell any other one of his tribe at just what spot any event had taken place. If a deer had been killed and the Indian who had killed it wanted to tell the other members of the tribe just where it was killed, he would name the spot, and every one of the tribe would know exactly where it was. To the writer, these Indian names of the various places in our back country are very interesting. Most of these names are descriptive of some peculiarity of the spot or place. For instance, Ja-ma-cha, a well known valley about fourteen miles east of San Diego means the small striped gourd commonly called the mock orange.

Guatay – a large council house

Otay – a solitary hill in a flat valley

Jamul – Antelope Spring

Anahuac – Water grass, my spring or my water

Cuyamaca – spring behind a rock, rain behind

Seguan – Yellow Primrose

Ha-co-pin – the Indian name for Warner's Spring's meaning hot water

We-a-pipe – (on Laguna Mts.) means Leaning Rock

Ma-tar-ti – Indian name for El Cajon, means wide valley

Ma-tar-too – Indian name for Viejas, means middle of the valley
Is-now-qua-whirp – Indian for Wynola, means Valley fringed with
Live Oaks

Milsch-qua-nun – name for Santa Ysabel, means Tumble Bug
Ha-qua-silsch – Indian for Carriso Gorge, means alkali water
Am-voee-ha – name for Palm Springs, means palm spring
Mut-nook – Indian for Mason's Valley, means elbow of wash
Ha-wee – Indian name for Vallecitos, means Rock Springs
Yah-ki – Indian name for Laguna Reservation, meaning Wild Plums
Quil-ach-nusk – name for Capitan Grande, means a long canyon
Ha-to-pah – name for Coyote Wells, means Coyote Springs
Milsch-qua-ti – name for Campo, means Big Valley
Milsch-queit-nuct – name for old San Felipe, means Valley up a
Canyon

Palemo-mate – Agua Hedionda Valley – meaning unknown
Co-le-ma – name for Whitney Peak, south side of San Marcos,
meaning unknown

Halsch-you-na-wah – Indian name for Conejas Reservation, meaning
Cottontail Rabbit House

These are the Indian names of a few well known places. But as I have
before stated, they had a name for every little spring, canyon or grove of
trees. To me these local Indian names are very interesting.

Mr. Sparkman, who for a number of years kept a small store near the
La Jolla Indian Reservation, and who was a highly educated man, was the
first to reduce the tongue of the Luisenos or Indians living along the San
Luis Rey River and who were originally affiliated with the San Luis Rey
Mission, to a written language. He thought their language one of the most

wonderful in the world. I have thought that because he was an idealist when discussing Indian affairs, he took this view of their language. But that is a subject far too deep for me to discuss.

There is another matter in connection with the Indians of San Diego County that I do feel competent to at least express my opinion of. That is the terribly inhuman, dishonest and disgusting way in which some of the Indian tribes of this county have been treated by the white people and the U.S. Government. Many of us old settlers well remember how the Indians of the beautiful San Pasqual Valley were driven from their homes in the fertile valley of that name where they and their ancestors before them had lived for many generations. Simply because there had never been a reservation surveyed off for those Indians, they were driven from their homes.

The land where they had lived for ages was sectionized by order of the U.S. government and immediately was located and settled upon by parties who had no consideration for the prior rights of the poor Indians. Driven from their homes by these settlers, and having no other place to go, they moved up into the rocky hills to the northward of their old valley homes and built themselves miserable little tule huts, on land that is, in most instances, absolutely worthless. How the few of them that are left have managed to exist all these years on land that will produce nothing is more than I can understand. The writer is not in the habit of hob-nobbing with presidents and Secretaries of the Interior, but he would like to take the President of these United States, the Secretary of the Interior all the senators and representatives that could be gotten out here and as many Agents of Indian Affairs as could be gotten together in a party and take them through the beautiful San Pasqual Valley. I would show them the fertile valley

lands, now settled by prosperous white people, but once owned and occupied by the Indians. Then I would ask them to get out and walk up through cactus, thorn brush, rocks and deep gullies – up, up, up to where the poor poverty stricken Indians now live. But would it do any good? No! Of course not. They would say, “It’s too bad that such injustice has been done. But we can do nothing to rectify the matter now.”

Now, I don’t want any of my readers to get the impression that the present settlers of the San Pasqual Valley are in any way to blame for the injustice that has been done the Indians. They have simply bought out the original squatters who got possession of the land that by every right belonged to the Indians.

I have used these terms, “by every right” advisedly. Doesn’t every law of our land recognize the fact that twenty years undisputed possession of land gives a title? Then, if twenty years undisputed possession gives a title, the fact that a people had enjoyed many generations of undisputed possession should give them some rights on earth – even if they are Indians.

The Indians at Temecula were driven from their homes in an even worse manner than those of San Pasqual, as all old timers know.

These wrongs have been brought before our government officials for correction many years ago, by people who knew how cruelly the Indians had been treated. Helen Hunt Jackson in her book “Ramona” did what she could to get the public interested in these matters. But nothing ever came of it.

There are not many people of those tribes of Indians left now. And this great American Republic should yet do what it can to make amends. We should buy a tract of good land and divide it among those people and thus, even at this late date, show the world that we have a wholesome respect for justice.

I am not writing this as an idealist but as a plain, everyday American citizen who believes like most other citizens, in fair and honest treatment to all.

While the Indians of Temecula were perhaps treated in a crueler manner than those of San Pasqual, in as much as they were forcibly driven from their homes and their buildings burned, yet there really were more grounds for ejecting them than there was at San Pasqual. At Temecula the rancharia was on a Mexican Land Grant. That was a tract of land the deed to which dates back to a time when this country belonged to Mexico.

The owners or grantees of many of the old Mexican Land Grants allowed the Indians to live on the land that had been granted to them, just as they had lived there for generation in the past. They worked for the grant owner when required, both men and women. They were allowed to let their few horses or cattle run at large, and any of them who desired could plant a little garden, raise a little corn and a few sandias (watermelons).

As long as the grant remained the property of the old Spanish Californians, the Indians remained there happy and contented. When a beef was killed by the ranch owners they were given the offal and at times some of the meat. But when these grants fell into the hands of new owners of other nationalities, the Indians were frequently driven off. This was the case at Temecula. And as the title of all Mexican grants antedated any title our government could give, we were not altogether to blame for what the owners did.

But at San Pasqual the Indians were on government land. The township lines were run out by our government in about 1854. I think it was in the early seventies that it was sectionized. And as soon as the land was surveyed it was immediately located and settled upon.

Of course the Indians knew nothing of our government land laws and very naturally supposed their having been in possession since time began, would give them the prior right. And in all justice they were right in their belief. But what they supposed, or what was just and right availed them not. They had to move off. It is something every honest American should be ashamed of.

XIII

In this chapter I am going to try to describe a country dance that was held away back in the early seventies, out in the part of the country where our people lived.

The old house in which it was held is still standing. Another room has been built on, and the whole house weatherboarded on the outside. It now looks quite different from what it did back in the summer of 1873. The people who gathered there over fifty years ago did not have a lot of room in which to swing their partners. But if you think they didn't have a good time, or that there were not many people in attendance at that dance, why, all I have to say is that you have another think coming. I am quite sure there must have been close to a hundred people there that night and many of them came a distance of twenty or more miles.

The house had been built by a Mr. Feeler who came down to this part of the world from Lake County, California. I think they came in 1869. Mr. Feeler brought a wife and nine children and another son was born a year or two later, making a family of six sons and four daughters.

Mr. and Mrs. Feeler were religiously inclined and I remember very well how, through their efforts, a little country Sunday School was organized. Mr. Feeler acted as teacher. It was not such a small Sunday School either for as I have before stated, the four families, the Feelers, Adams, Harts and Kellys of which it was constituted, could at that time muster thirty-one children. The Feeler family had nine, the Adams family with ten, the Hart family with four and the Kelly family with eight. Some of the members of these four families were at that time men and women grown and some were babies in arms.

This Sunday School was organized I think, in 1870. And as there was at that early date no other place for them to meet they met at one of the family homes. Mr. and Mrs. Hart lived in between the other three families and so being more centrally located, their house was the usual meeting place, as I remember it.

Mrs. Feeler died quite suddenly in the year 1871 leaving Mr. Feeler with a large family of children to look after. The next spring he moved over to the Poway Valley leaving the ranch on which they had been living to his son Eb. About the same time, the Harts left and went back to Texas from whence they had originally come.

Eb Feeler lived for a number of years at the old Feeler place in what is now called Green Valley and is located about three and one half miles northeast of the town of Encinitas. He usually had some of his brothers living with him and not infrequently other young men made his place their headquarters. And as they were all unmarried, the place came to be known as Bachelors' Hall. So it was at Bachelors' Hall that the dance of which I am writing was held.

I think the room in which they danced was about 14 by 16 feet though Eb Feeler who still lives on Boulder Creek in this county told me a short time ago that it was sixteen feet square. Whatever the dimensions of the room were, though, I can testify to the fact that all the floor space there was thoroughly occupied that night. I can also testify to the fact that for small boys to attempt to go through that room while the dancing was going on was a very dangerous undertaking for said small boys. And I ought to know, for I tried it.

Well, the dance that was to be held at Eb Feelers, or Bachelors' Hall, had been the talk of the country for some time. All the big girls and young

ladies had been saving up “tea lead” and hiding it where their brothers would not find it and melt it up to make bullets. The “tea lead” would be used to curl their hair – provided the boys didn’t succeed in finding it.

The day before the eventful night of the dance all the children were sent to school dressed in their best. And after school was dismissed they would walk over to Eb Feeler’s instead of coming home from school.

Clint Adams came up to our place very early in the afternoon with a span of mules and a spring wagon (they called it a “Hack”) and took Mother and me and my baby sister Jane, also a big box of good things to eat, over to Bachelors’ Hall. Father was out in Nevada with a drove of horses. Mrs. Adams was already there when we arrived. She and Mother began talking over plans for the supper. I very well remember her saying to Mother, “Now, Mrs. Kelly, you and I will just take charge of things here as far as the supper is concerned.” And they did.

Later in the afternoon various other people began to arrive, most of them coming in big farm wagons. Some coming from San Luis Rey and others from up the San Luis Rey River at what is now called Bonsall.

The young folks from our school all came in the late afternoon. Before dark there were teams unhitched and tied to wagons all about the place. Every family brought a big box of eatables. There was a long carpenter’s work bench in the yard that was used as a table. Additions to it were made by some loose boards supported at the ends on boxes or saw horses.

Mother and Mrs. Adams had spread table cloths on these boards and work benches early in the evening and set them out with what they had brought.

Everybody had to stand while they ate and as the benches from which the eating was to be done were higher than the heads of a lot of us small boys, we certainly didn't consider the feeding plan a success. All we got was what some of the grown-ups handed down to us. And what they handed us was not always what we wanted either. As soon as one crowd had eaten, the tables were cleared and reset and another crowd took their places. And so it went on until all had eaten.

No doubt there were lots of good things to eat there that night as every family brought of the best they had. But I don't at this late day remember what anybody brought with but one exception. Juan Ortega, who then lived at the Old Adobe ranch house on the Encinitas Ranch, which was a couple of miles east of where the dance was held, brought a big box of delicious Mission grapes. I got some of them and they were by far the best grapes I have ever eaten. I shall remember them as long as I live.

Joe Foster, who is now the president of our County Board of Supervisors, was at that dance. He was at that time a young fellow of some fourteen or fifteen years of age and doubtless remembers the event very well. I could name a lot of others who also were in attendance that night. But the majority of those who were at that time grown up are now dead. It is now over fifty years since I made my "debut" into society.

But to return to my story. It was scarcely sunset when the fiddlers began to tune their instruments and as they say now of the horses at Tijuana, "They were off." The dancing began. And they kept it up until daylight the next morning with very little time between dances. Those old-fashioned honest country people came to have a good time, and they were having it.

There were many babies and small children and their mothers made beds on the floor in the kitchen and as the little ones grew sleepy they were

tucked away in all sorts of places. The married women sat in the kitchen and visited until they got their little ones to sleep, and then they joined the dancers and had as good a time as the young ladies had. None of them wanted to be assigned any task that might prevent their dancing if the opportunity offered.

I well remember one young matron, not long from Texas, who was sitting in the kitchen trying hard to get her baby to sleep so she could get out among the dancers in the other room. Her husband came and unbuckled his belt and laid it and an old dragoon six shooter down among a pile of the same kind of weapons that had already been laid aside by other men who had come in earlier than he. As he laid it away he said to his wife, "Keep your eye on that for me, will you?" But she said, "Now Johnson, I shain't do it." Evidently she didn't propose to be cheated out of any dancing while she sat there guarding her husband's six shooter.

In this day and age it would seem strange to see men come to a dance armed in that way, and all disarm before joining in the festivities. But in those days nothing was thought of it. Many of those men had only recently come across the plains, and through the Indian country and in fact many of them had lived all their lives in an Indian country so had gotten so accustomed to carrying their weapons that they didn't feel as if they were entirely dressed unless they had a big six-shooter on.

Now many people of this day will think that because those men came to the dance armed there must have been a lot of rough stuff pulled off there that night. But there was not. Those men were as peaceably inclined and as well behaved as any like number of men would be now. In fact I feel quite sure that any girl or young woman would have been far safer among those

big rough fellows than she would be among a like number of city men of today.

Along about eight or nine o'clock in the evening I was in the kitchen and my brother Will, who was three years older than I, and a boy of about his age came in. They each had some cookies which they were eating. The other boys' name was Dick Adams. I was hungry and asked them to give me some of their cookies. But they said there was a big pan of them outside on the table and if I wanted any to go out and get some the same as they had done. The outside door of the kitchen was jammed with people sitting in it for want of any other place to sit, so I couldn't get out that way. The only other way of getting out was to get through the front room where the people were dancing. I was bound to get out and get some of those cookies, so I decided to go through the front room.

The people were dancing a square dance of some kind. Captain Foster, who lived for many years at San Dieguito, was calling in a very loud voice, and the dancers were going forward and back. I watched my chance (or at least I thought I was watching my chance) and when they all went forward towards the center of the room, I made a run to get through behind them. But I evidently mis-timed my charge for they came backing up onto me before I was half way across the room, and of course I was swept off my feet. (A man on horseback would have had no chance where I was). I was pushed back against the wall, where I lay at full length on the floor with a big stout woman dressed in black standing on my jacket in such a way that I couldn't get up. If the dancers had been ordered to go forward again I would have gotten out of the scrape pretty well. But they backed up and stopped and I was underfoot. I shouted to the big stout woman to get off of my coat. But my voice was of course drowned by the noise of the other people

dancing. (It used to be the proper thing, you know, for everybody to keep time to the music with their feet during the time they were not actually going through the various figures of a quadrille.) The big woman was the only one in the room I think, who didn't keep her feet in motion in time to the music. Well, when I found she paid no attention to my shouting, I decided it was going to be as the saying is, "a survival of the fittest," if I didn't do something desperate and that very quickly. So I bit her a couple of times, which brought forth a very violent exclamation and sudden change of position which released me from my terrible predicament. And you may be sure I didn't waste any time getting back to the kitchen. I had forgotten all about those cookies that had been so much desired only a short time before. I was so sore and bruised that I crawled into a corner and slept until morning. It was broad daylight when the dance broke up and everyone went home. But it continued to be the talk of the neighborhood for many weeks.

I frequently pass that little house in which the dance was held for it is still standing. It has been added onto a little, and has been weatherboarded on the outside, but the same room in which the dance was held and the same little kitchen are there. And as I drive by I frequently point it out as the place where I first went out in society.

One of the very interesting things at that dance, and one that chiefly interests the young ladies and young gentlemen present, was a new schottische that someone introduced there that night. It was called the Seven-up Schottische or Seven-step Schottische. To be able to dance the "Seven-up" was to be strictly in the swim.

I have dwelt on this little country dance more than some may think necessary perhaps. But an occasional dance was the only entertainment that was to be had in those days. I wonder what some of the young people of this

day and age would think of such an existence? Those women and girls in the back country of San Diego County went on year after year at the same routine of house and ranch work with almost no diversion of any kind.

There were very few light driving rigs of any kind in those days. Big heavy farm wagons were about the only kind of wheeled vehicles that the various ranchers had. A Spring wagon of any kind—no matter how old and dilapidated it might be, was called a “hack”. And to be taken for a drive in a “hack” was the very last word in the way of style.

Most of the young people, both young men and young women rode on horseback when they went out anywhere for pleasure. And some of the married women too were splendid riders.

For many years our post office was at San Luis Rey, which was twelve miles from where we lived. We used to saddle our horses and ride there to get the mail, thinking no more of the trip than we do now in going a few city blocks.

But the most convenient mail delivery we had in early days as I remember it was when our post office was at Old Town or North San Diego as it was called. The mail was carried by Stage from San Diego to Los Angeles and these Stages passed through the ranch on a road that ran about a mile and a half west of our house. Louis Rose, an old time resident of Old Town was the post master and he knew our people very well. My Father nailed a candle box on the top of a post by the side of the road and Mr. Rose, instead of putting the mail for the Kelly Ranch in the regular mail bag, tied it in a bundle and gave it to the driver. When he came to our mail box he stopped and deposited in the box any letters or papers there happened to be for us. To have your mail delivered within a mile and a half of your home was like having it delivered now at your door. Some of the time the stage

coaches passed along by our ranch in the day time and at other times they came by in the night. The Stages were the world famed old Concord Coaches. If the passenger business was good they ran four horse coaches. But when business was dull, they used but two horses.

Once when Father was out in Nevada with the horses, my oldest sister who was teaching school had to take the Stage at a time when it passed the ranch in the night. On such an occasion the whole family would walk down to the road before dark and wait there until the Stage came along. On this occasion my mother and several sisters were in the party that went down to the road. They carried an old fashioned lantern with a candle in it. When the Stage finally came along they all got up from where they had been waiting behind some bushes that protected them from the wind, and walked out to the road, where the Stage came to a stop and my sister got aboard. The next day the driver told some of our folks that a passenger on the Stage the night before had his revolver ready when we came out to the road as he thought we were Stage robbers. He said they saw the light as they came near to where we were waiting and then it suddenly disappeared—probably from being swung around back of the skirts of some of the women. The driver, and the man on the boot with him, immediately became suspicious as robbers frequently carried what were known as dark lanterns. That was a lantern from which the light could be suddenly switched off by means of a shutter. After that when any of the family had to take the Stage in the night, they were more careful how they held the lantern. For some people who traveled on those old coaches had a way of “treating them rough” when they thought they were dealing with Stage robbers. Shoot first and ask questions afterwards. And some of those old sawed off shotguns loaded with an enormous load of buckshot in each barrel that were carried on the stages

when Wells Fargo's box was unusually heavy, were death dealing affairs. A revolver might miss or get only one at best. But one of those old Messenger guns might get a half dozen at one shot.

So, if any one had to stop a Stage at night, it was a good policy to select an open space for doing it, and thus give the occupants of the coach as little cause for suspicion as possible.

Last Chapter

In bringing this narrative to a close, I wish to say that I have endeavored to give my readers an insight into California Ranch life as I have seen it. Much more might be written without doing the subject full justice, and an abler pen might have gotten far more from the material used.

It has been my endeavor all through this narrative to give a little much deserved credit to some of our people who in my opinion, have been sadly neglected by many others in their writings on Southern California.

I refer to the Spanish Californians and also our Mission Indians.

Both of these deserve far more from the present California population than they have ever received. And it is my earnest hope that as our great state develops, as it is bound to do in years to come, people will better appreciate what we owe to those people.

When California came under the U.S. flag the Spanish Californians were the upper class, and the Mission Indians represented the lower.

Our great state was settled by people from every part of the civilized world. The fact that most all of them came here to better their condition financially, was the cause of the former inhabitants being crowded out of what had previously been theirs.

The old Spanish land owners were too easy going, and too hospitable to compete with the great throng that rushed to the West from all parts of the earth, all eager to better their condition. They soon lost out in the mad scramble for riches. But who of the real old timers have failed to admire the genuine dignity and ideal home life of those old Dons?

Only those of us who have visited in the homes of these old rancheros have any idea of the real true hospitality they dealt out to the stranger within their gates. The ideal life they led is a thing of the past and is something

very much to be regretted. While anyone must realize that the easy going way in which they lived made it impossible for them to compete with the grasping, money making newcomers, yet when we are asked as to which class we think got the most genuine enjoyment from life, and which dealt out the most real true enjoyment to others, the answer is easy.

As for the Mission Indians, they have simply been crowded out of what was rightfully theirs for want of honest friends to take their part. Many people will say, "They were a lazy, shiftless race and would have lost their property anyway, so the white people might just as well have taken it from them first as last." I have heard that opinion expressed many times by people who had evidently failed to stop and think what a lame excuse it was for the way a race of people have been treated. Does the fact that a race of people might have lost their property anyway excuse us of the crime of stealing it from them? As for their being lazy, I can say after some fifty years of experience with them that while they are not what we would call good managers of their own affairs, yet when working out for others as hired hands, they are as good as the average white man that works for wages. Some of the best harvest hands I have ever had, when living on the ranch, were Indians. And if I were going out today to look up a bunch of ranch hands, to work either on foot or on horseback, I would sooner take chances on a bunch of Indians that I could gather up in our back country than on a like number of white men that I could get together for the job.

As far as they might be needed for horseback work, the Indians would be far superior to the average white man, for they are nearly all good hands in that line, while there is not one white man in ten that can do that kind of work at all.

When we speak of Indians the average person from the East immediately thinks of a naked, uncivilized fellow, like we read of in story books that go about hunting for a living and that no civilized person would want to have around them. No doubt if we went far enough back, our Mission Indians were just that kind. But that is one of the things we owe to the old builders of our Missions. They civilized the Indians, and taught them to work and dress much the same as working men of other races worked and dressed.

Another mistaken idea many people have when discussing our Indians is that they are a very dirty filthy class. From my observation I think they are at least as clean in their habits as the average white man.

I well remember when I was a boy of a number of Indians who were working at the ranch going up in a timbered canyon on Sundays a mile or two from the house, and where there was a nice stream of running water. There they would take their clothing off and wash it in the stream and also bathe themselves and then wait until their clothing was dry before dressing to come back to their meals.

You would rarely find a white man who would go to that much trouble to keep himself clean. And if you go among our Indians in the back country where they live, you will find almost all of them both the men and women dressed in remarkably clean clothing. While that clothing may be of a very cheap kind (the men in overalls and cotton shirts and the women in calico) yet you will very rarely see one whose clothing is not clean.

I have often thought that the good behavior of our Indians was due in large measure to the work and teaching of a good man who for many years was the priest in charge of the Roman Catholic Church at Old Town. I refer to Father Ubach. While neither the writer nor any of his people were ever

Roman Catholics, yet it would be very hard for any one who wished to be fair and unprejudiced to fail to give that good man a lot of credit for the work he did among the Indians. What “Padre Antonio” said was law and Gospel with them. And many San Diego people will remember how, at his death, the Indians from all over the mountains came to the funeral (a two days’ journey for many of them) bringing loads of wild flowers to place on the grave of their beloved friend.

For many years he had made regular trips among them, marrying those couples who wished his services—baptizing the children, and praying for their sick and dead. And the respect they showed him during his life and the genuine sorrow displayed by them at his death showed that he had won their hearts in a way that very few ever succeed in doing. So, whatever our religious beliefs may be we should, “render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s.”

Father Ubach was the Father Gaspara immortalized in Mrs. Jackson’s story of Ramona. The people of San Diego County will some day erect a fitting monument in his memory.

In bringing this narrative to a close I can look back over fifty years of life spent in San Diego County. Many changes have of course taken place, and the old days of cattle, horses and sheep have gone never to return. Those of us, who can look back to those days and nights too, spent in the saddle, can recall many hardships endured. But the pleasant parts of the life far outweighed the unpleasant, and it was a life that did not tend to make atheists...”I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.”

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