

Kelly

Interview with: MRS. EMILY KELLY SWITTERS  
(MRS. CARL W. SWITTERS)  
1222 Essex Street  
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FRANCES BRENNAN: Just start talking; say who you are.

EMILY SWITTERS: I am Emily Kelly Switters and my birthday is November 21, 1900. I was born on the Agua Hedionda Rancho near Carlsbad. My father [Robert J. Kelly] inherited the property down in the southeast corner, which is in the Encinas Valley. The Encinas gas plant there is named [for] that valley. In the early days there were lots of oak trees there. Most of them have been cut down now. I had three brothers and a sister. My oldest brother was born in Coronado; the other four of us were born there at the ranch. To go to town, which was to Oceanside in those days, took an all day jaunt by horse and buggy or wagon. My father would go about every two weeks to get groceries. We bought sugar by the 100-lb. sack, flour by the 50-lb. sack. We killed our own beef occasionally and then it was my job to take the beef to my grandmother's house on horseback when I was still seven or eight.

My oldest brother and I started [school] when I was six and he was eight. We went to the Calaveras School which was to the north. In our first grade we rode a donkey. My father took some hay and some boxes; he left the boxes at the gates so that we could get back on the donkey coming and going. If it rained we stayed over-night at an uncle's [house] who gave us clean clothes and we went back the next day; getting home late the second afternoon. The next year we were large enough so we could ride a horse, which made it much better. The third year we went to a school which was opened to the south of us; called the Laguna School which was located at La Costa.

La Costa was the railroad station where the train would stop when flagged. There was a man by the name of Mr. Reister who lived there and he raised chickens. He would flag the train for people coming and going. You could leave your horse in his corral while you were away and he would watch it. There was also a warehouse there which held hay and grain for the Huchting brothers who were large farmers in that area at that time. They were one of the first large raisers of lima beans in San Diego County. The train would stop there, as I say, when it was flagged. There was a short-line that went from there to Escondido. It started there in the morning, from Escondido, through Vista, to Oceanside, then south to San Diego. So many of the people who had business in San Diego rode the train. They could come down in the morning and then go back late in the afternoon. That train was the time-keeper for us at school because our schoolhouse was half a mile east up the slope of the hill.

We went there five years to school -- I graduated from the eighth grade there with my eldest brother. Then we moved to San Diego, so that my oldest brother and I could go to high school, as the nearest high school was in Oceanside. If we wanted to go to high school in Oceanside, we had to go down to the La Costa station,

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take the train to Oceanside and then ride back in the afternoon. That was quite a chore, of course.

FB: What was the fare?

ES: The fare? I don't remember, but in those days a small amount compared to what you would pay nowadays.

FB: Did they have passes -- the kids?

ES: I don't know if they had passes, or not; of course, we had passes here in San Diego to go to high school.

FB: What kind of lunches did you carry in those days?

ES: The lunches we carried were usually a sandwich, a piece of fruit, a piece of cake, something like that. The sandwiches were meat sandwiches of some kind. And, oh, yes, and then when we were little we had goats. They were for the purpose of having meat in between the time when you killed beef. A beef was a large amount to handle in those days because there was no refrigeration and usually whenever there was a beef killed, one of the main projects was to make jerky. Jerky was the main fill-in meat at times when we had no fresh meat. Jerky was made by cutting the meat in very thin strips, putting it in salty water and hanging it on the clothes line to dry, so you had to have good drying weather.

FB: Did you have fruit trees?

ES: We had no fruit trees. The fruit that we had came from the Martin ranch [later the Lyman's] which was south of us. They had apricots, peaches and blackberries; and of course, their first fruit of the season was loquats. So I always remember loquats. To get grapes we always went to San Marcos, and usually to Mr. Fred Carpenter's vineyard.

FB: Were there oranges then?

ES: There may have been oranges around Escondido, but we did not take oranges.

FB: Did you have any illnesses when you were a child?

ES: Well, there were the kids' diseases, yes. We started out with whooping cough first, then mumps, and then measles; of course we all had them -- I guess we got them at school and they were passed around. Our doctor was Dr. [Robert S. Reid] from Oceanside. I had measles twice, a different variety, after we came down here; I had them once in high school and once while in State College.

FB: Were you born at home? Did they have a doctor, or a mid-wife?

ES: Yes, I was born there in the house at the ranch. My grandmother was the mid-wife.

FB: What was your grandmother's name?

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ES: Mrs. Matthew Kelly, Emily, whom I was named after.

FB: What kind of games did you play?

ES: Oh, at the ranch for games we played run-sheep-run, kick-the-wicket. We really didn't play much in the way of games because we had dogs, we had cats, and calves; we had little goats to play with; so I did not go in for dolls. I had one calf that I could ride and she would go round and around the house. Out front was a cobble-stone wall, so of course my knees got kind of skinned and bruised sometimes. I learned to ride horseback when I was very small and dad said I should have been a boy instead of a girl.

FB: Did you ride bareback?

ES: Oh, yes, sure, I rode bareback and then we had a child's saddle which we all used at various times until we grew into a big saddle. We always had our own horses to ride and going to school, as I have said, we rode a burro the first year. The second year we rode a horse, the third year we had a horse and a cart because then there were three [of us]. The next year there were four and we had a buggy. No, before we had the buggy, we had a larger cart, some fancy kind of a phaeton, and across the back it had a little shelf built with fancy spindles on the shelf and there we put our lunch baskets which were the oblong style of tobacco boxes of those days. We each had our own lunch box and they fit nicely in this little shelf/platform across the back. Then we went to a buggy and in the buggy there were three on the seat, two could stand up in the back and there was plenty of room for our lunch pails and also a plug of hay for the horse.

FB: Did it have a cover? a top?

ES: No, there was no cover top for the buggy -- we'd take an umbrella because there wasn't too many times when we would be caught out in the rain. And then in the spring -- this was a mare that we drove -- of course in the spring when she had her colt, we had to walk for about a week. So we knew the day was going to come, so we walked for a week. And then the colt was big enough to tie and run along side and later when it learned to follow, why, it was let loose on its own.

FB: And you drank goats' milk?

ES: No, we did not drink goats' milk. We had two cows, so that we always had plenty of milk; we had plenty of eggs.

FB: Did you make butter?

ES: Oh, yes, we made butter -- no cheese -- but we made butter and mother would take butter when she went shopping to Oceanside. She would go when we had to have things like sewing materials and things that she needed to look over. That was a driving horse -- we called her "Callie". She was a pinto, a black and white mare so people would know when mother was in town with her fresh butter from the horse [being there]. The [Frank Martin] brothers was the butcher shop where we always went to buy a little in-between meat. Mr. Levi Jones had the hardware store.

FB: Who were your neighbors up there?

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X ES: Our neighbors were quite some distance away. There were the Martins to the South; the [Louis] Luhrs; and [August Huchtings]. In the Huchting family, their oldest children went to school with my father and mother. The youngest of the family went with myself and my brothers and sister. They were a large family and lived on what we now call the Batequitas lagoon. In those days it was called the Gruendyke Slough because Mr. [Jacob Gruendyke] owned the property at one time. He was a well-known businessman around San Diego County in those days. Later on that area there was owned by Mr. Hillman, and how those records are up in the La Costa Real Estate office on a map showing the various ownerships of that land.

My father went to school at the Hope School which was in the close neighborhood there of where the La Costa project is now.

FB: How many teachers would there be? Was it a one-room school?

ES: Yes, in those days there were just one-room schools. [In] the first two years at the Calaveras School, there were the [W. W.] Borden family -- the Borden children -- some of the [Pete] Marron children and a couple of [William S. and Robert J. Kelly] children.

FB: Did you have school plays, or dances?

ES: No, in those days we did not have time for plays or anything; it was just plain reading and writing and arithmetic. Come and get your school in and then head for home, because home was a long way away.

FB: What were your school hours?

ES: School hours were about, oh, I guess, nine till three, and there were no little ones out earlier to go home because everyone had to wait until the other members of the family were through and ready to go home.

FB: Did you always have a lady teacher?

ES: Yes, we always had a lady teacher. I remember my mother talking about having a man teacher at San Marcos in the early days. I guess he was quite a character because the people talked about him so much.

FB: What was your father doing?

ES: Of course everybody in that area then were raising cattle and some hay. And then father had some oak wood cut which he sold in Oceanside. Of course the hay was sold, put on the train and usually was sent to San Diego, because people down here were still in the horse-and-buggy days. Out on the street here by my house on Essex Street there are still some horse rings.

FB: Did you come down to San Diego often?

ES: Coming to San Diego -- after we got an automobile in 1912 -- I made a couple of trips down here. I also came down in 1912 and stayed with my aunt [Jane Kelly Pritchard] who lived in Mission Hills [at 1835 Montecito Way.] I was here a couple

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of weeks then I guess.

FB: What kind of car did you get?

ES: A 1912 Cadillac because that was the first automobile that came out with a self-starter. My father said he would never buy an automobile until it had an electric starter. Too many people had had their arms broken that he knew of starting an automobile or being run over, trying to start a car. In those days the road down at the coast was not paved; it was all dirt road and about 1908, somewhere in there, 1910, was the road race from Los Angeles to Phoenix. We lived about a mile and a half from that road at the beach so went down there to wait for the road race to go by. Among those [racing] was Barney Oldfield. When we went to the beach for picnics in the summertime, we would count the automobiles that went by in the day. Maybe you'd get seven or eight automobiles for the day and that was a lot. And then there were gypsy wagons coming by with all their stuff hanging on the outside of their wagon, the dogs trailing underneath to keep in the shade.

The San Marcos people would come down through our ranch. Sunday school picnics, or groups, usually Sunday school groups, would stop at our ranch to water their horses going to the beach and then coming back in the afternoon, they would water their horses again. They usually had a big flat-bed with hay on it for the children to sit on. Of course when they came back some of them were pretty well sun-burned, as they didn't get to the beach very often and didn't know any better.

We went to San Marcos occasionally. I remember one occasion when Mother and I both rode horses and we went to San Marcos to visit some of her friends. That was the Dorans and a [Miss Augusta] Myers, who later moved to San Diego and lived [about the 1500 or 1600 block of] Fifth Avenue.

My grandparents, the Wittys, [Richard and Caroline] who came to San Marcos in 1892, built a house out in Twin Oaks Valley just fairly close there. While the house was being built, my grandmother had charge of the San Marcos Hotel which was to the west. In those early days before the railroad was built to San Marcos or through Vista and to Escondido, all of the traffic and all of the material was carried by horse and wagon from the station to Farr. It was just a siding where materials could be left. The wagons on that road went directly east toward San Marcos and they went by our place, to the north, just about a half a mile on a ridge, and there we could look up from the house and see the various wagons going along that road.

Back about 1884 one of my uncles - that is William Kelly - and John Kelly and William Kuchel from Escondido were fixing the road up in that area where it needed to be widened and the little slopes smoothed out. There was a big snowstorm came. When they had left home in the morning it was a nice day, but the wind came up and before the end of the day and that night [there] was a terrible snowstorm. There was even snow on Catalina Island. At the time of the big snowstorm there was a man who

had rented a part of the ranch for sheep grazing. The sheep crowded into groups and some of them were suffocated.

Speaking of doctors again, there were Doctor [J.V.] Larzalere and Doctor [Crise] in Escondido. I think when my sister was born we had either one or the other.

The beach was about a mile and a half from our house so we went there occasionally in the summertime. When we had picnics, it was always my father's chore to bring the watermelons. He could raise super watermelons, and those in the stores today, I just will not buy them! We usually had two big family picnics during the summertime. Then there were parties for my grandmother's birthday, which came in February - that is, Grandmother [Emily] Kelly - one time we went to Oceanside; another time we had a picnic on the beach at La Costa; and another time we had a picnic in a little park in Leucadia. Those were all rather convenient places for all of the members of the family to come to. In those early days most of the family all lived somewhere on the Agua Hedionda Ranch. It was first owned, given, back in the Mexican days, to Juan Maria Marron. From Juan Maria Marron it went to my great-uncle, Robert Kelly, and Francis Hinton. Hinton died first and when my grandfather died, the ranch was divided up among the nine children, my father being the youngest, Robert James Kelly. They could not divide the ranch until he was twenty-one. When he became twenty-one, they divided the ranch up so that there was water on each piece of property - that is, a spring or running water for a well. There was one part which was kept separate, which was down along the beach and that was sold. The other nine parts were put in a hat and the numbers drawn out so that each took what they fell heir to. My father's part was down in the southeast corner of the ranch, nearest to the ocean.

My grandfather, [Matthew Kelly] and grandmother came in 1868 from the gold fields in the north. They came from San Francisco to San Diego on the Orizaba [in November 1868] They rented horses from Searle's in Old Town to carry their furniture and various things out to the ranch. They homesteaded a piece of ground on the northeast side of the Agua Hedionda Ranch. There was lots of water there and when my father was little there was an earthquake that opened up a spring very close to the house. My father was born in the first house which was built there in 1868 and grew up there, and, as I say, went to the Hope School which was down in the valley. As the children grew up and married, they went to their part of the ranch, built a house and moved in there.

One uncle, Charles Kelly, came to San Diego and lived down here at 2448 "A" Street. He had a livery stable downtown at about Third and F Streets. During the year he would retire the horses and bring them out to the ranch to rest up; then he would come out and take those back to the city and bring out some of the others to rest.

My father had a beautiful saddle horse which he sold to the police force down here and we saw it often after we moved here.

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FB: What kind of a horse was it, a pinto? a purebred? a bay? So he bred horses.

ES: It was a bay. Yes, oh, yes, we bred horses. Grandfather Witty settled in San Marcos. In their earlier days he was with the railroad - a railroad engineer - and we had many pictures of where he was the wrecking engineer picking up the pieces after there had been train wrecks. They only lived at San Marcos a very short time and then they moved to Coronado. At Coronado he worked for the railroad that carried the rocks down the Point Loma jetty. The rocks I guess they brought up from about Foster on the railroad. My mother's younger sister, [Zelma] married a young man who worked on the railroad: William Hutchins. He died recently at 97 [years of age.] My grandfather also worked in the steam plant at Hotel del Coronado; then they moved to San Francisco and there he worked for the Risdon Iron Works. They were living there at the time of the 1906 earthquake. We went up there - that is my father and mother, my oldest brother and I - went up to visit. We took the train up to Los Angeles, from there we went down to San Pedro and took the Santa Rosa [steamship.] That was wrecked later on the coast. We had a cousin aboard when the ship was wrecked.

In San Francisco we could still see - that was in 1910 - still see some of the destruction of the 1906 earthquake which had not yet been cleared away. Coming back, we came on the train from San Francisco all the way back. I don't remember much about that trip.

While we were away my father had hired a man to paint the inside of the house and he was a bachelor. When we came back, [we found] in the cupboards uneaten food covered with high fungus mold. [In] the first house there was four rooms. When I was about six Father bought and moved out from Carlsbad a three-room house with one very large room, which we always called the "back room" which was for storage. Another room was very large and it was used for a dining room; and the other room was also very large where we had two double beds for my sister and I and company.

FB: You had no plumbing?

ES: No, in those days there was no in-door plumbing. There was a "chic-sales" out in the back. In the toilets we used the ashes from the stove as a disinfectant or deadener. We had turkeys and chickens. The turkeys were the big bronze turkeys. We had one big turkey gobbler that weighed 36 pounds dressed. When Dad went to town, Mother told him to get the largest roasting pan he could find, so he did. One Christmas we had my grandmother [Witty] who was living on San Diego and my aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Pritchard. They drove out in their Ford automobile for Christmas dinner and we had that turkey. The turkeys would always tell us when there was a snake around. They would gather around the snake and gobble and raise Cain. We had rattlesnakes - as children we learned to read the tracks that they left [so we could tell] whether they were rattlesnakes that cross the road, or whether they were gopher snakes.

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FB: Did you kill them?

ES: Oh, yes, rattlesnakes - I guess I killed my share. We would use a hoe or a spade or whatever happened to be handy. One time there was a little gap in the floor where the threshold is between two rooms and a snake stuck his head up through that.

FB: Did anyone get bitten?

ES: Rattlesnakes were quite numerous in those days. When the Huchting brothers cleaned the land down at the ocean, where they farmed, they cleaned the brush where the country car area is now - all the automobile agencies - that area was just full of rattlesnakes when the Huchtungs cleared the brush. In the early days a subdivision was started there. It was called Minneapolis Beach. It did not prosper and it died out. The last house that remained there was a yellow house in which the Griswold family lived - the only house that I remembered from the old Minneapolis Beach episode. South of Oceanside there was a man who raised carnations. He had a beautiful field down near where the old cemetery is now. We had to drive past that going into Oceanside. There was south Oceanside which had nothing. Carlsbad had very few stores, the railroad depot and at one time there was no school in Carlsbad; the school was east of there at Calavera.

FB: Was the spring there - the spa in Carlsbad?

ES: The old spa that started Carlsbad, yes, that was there, and there were the two [Alfred] Schutte houses. The one remaining is the Twin Inns that serves chicken dinner and has for many years. The old well now is enclosed in a building and you can see the old pipes down underground. If you wish to see them ask for Mr. [B.M.] Christianson who is the head of the Carlsbad Historical Society. He has an exhibit downstairs there and also a duplicate of a royal crown from Austria. Carlsbad was named for the spa at Carlsbad, Austria. In the early days there was a very super hotel there. I believe there are pictures in that Historical Museum of that other hotel.

At times on the ranch we had a dressmaker come in in the summertime before school started and she would make clothes for the five of us kids. There were boys' shirts and all the various things to be made, and dresses. I think we each had three or four dresses and that was to last us all through the school year. In the first and second grades I always wore an apron on Monday and Tuesday, then the dress was for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Shoes were high-buttoned shoes in those days for boys and girls both - there were no such thing as sandals. For underwear, bloomers and a top. When we were younger there were buttons - I don't remember what you call them - but you bought those and they had the little tapes with buttons at various stages so that the pants could be buttoned onto this top part at any different length that was need for the right length.

And the boys wore a blue - well, I guess in those days they called it a cambric material. They were blue - the men also wore those - overalls.



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Some were bib overalls, some were waist overalls. The children ~~always had bib overalls, with pockets front and rear.~~ My grandmother was living in San Francisco some of that time and she was a very fine seamstress and tailor and she would make especially nice clothes and mail down to us.

Once Father was called on jury duty. He came down here on the train from La Costa and spent two or three days here. He went down to Tijuana, which in those days was mostly on the American side of the river. He came home with a picture showing himself with a big Mexican sombrero on a burro. That was the thing in those days. They still have the burros down there now.

And also at about 1912 at the ranch we had a man from Mexico who was there working doing farm work. He was a bull-fighter. He had left all his fancy clothes in Tiguana and when he heard of the revolution and the fighting in Tijuana he left immediately - he didn't have time to draw his pay - to rescue his bull-fighter's clothes. We never heard of him again. Also at one time we had a real young Mexican boy come there to work. He was 19 years old and we taught him to read. The man who built the wall around the house was an Italian; he lived in a house near Buena. Cobble rocks were brought from the beach and mixed with concrete for the wall. When the new barn was built cobble rocks were also brought from the beach and put in a trench at the rear of the horses. Straw from threshing was used for bedding the horses. T'was a big barn with two sides with horse spaces, but only one side was used for horses, facing the south. There was a certain number of windows [through which] manure was pitched outside. When we got the new automobile in 1912 it was put in the other side of the barn and when the big freeze came in 1913, I believe the engine block was frozen. That year the lemons around National City and Chula Vista were completely ruined.

FB: Do you remember what you paid for the Cadillac?

ES: I don't remember what my father may have paid for the Cadillac. It was a big car that I think had jump-seats that pulled out from the back. So being seven of us, that's two in front, three in the back, and two on the jump-seats.

FB: Where did you get your gasoline?

ES: The automobile we bought from Schnack's Garage in Escondido. His mechanic wad Dan Oldham who taught Dad how to drive. In those summers when we first had the automobile on Sundays we would try to go someplace special. One we went to San Luis Rey where a man was having a political barbeque as he was running [for] sheriff. His name was Hubbert - I still ave a Kodak picture taken at that affair.

Another time we went to Moosa Canyon and we went to the old Frazee Castle. At other times Dad and a friend went to Pamo [Creek] up near Warner's for trout fishing. In those earlier days, in deer hunting

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season, Father, my cousin Ed and one of the Martins, the butchers in Oceanside, took horse and wagon and their provisions, went up on the ~~Santa Margarita y Las Flores ranch~~ [now Camp Pendleton] to deer hunt. My father knew Richard O'Neill (1890-1930) in those days. He also know Cave Coutts at the Guajome Ranch. On one occasion we drove over there in the Cadillac. I have a Kodak picture of that occasion. So the authomobile got us to town a lot oftener. Back in those early school days, still in the horse and buggy days, we were taken down to Encinitas for a school party. Our school was to combine with the Encinitas School for a program. It was at night. We drove down there by horse and wagon. After the school program they had a dance and we probably got home about midnight and coming in on that back porch room a skunk's tail stuck out of a can of grain. My Father got the gun and blew [a hole in] the skunk. The skunks would also take the eggs if they were laid in the barn. So to kill the skunks in the barn, you put [strychnine] in some of the eggs. Every farmer had strychnine in his [barn] for the coyotes. The coyotes were after the goats. The goats were loose, they rambled around and if a coyote had a chance he would take one of the younger ones. On one occasions in the winter time when there was frost on the ground my brother and I were sent up into the canyon to check the coyote traps. We arrived and found two coyotes - two coyotes in two traps. It was too far away from home to get Dad with his gun so my brother clubbed them to death. While working on one, the other was really jumping and jangling. We had a Mexican man that worked for us - an older man- who lived in an old abandoned house up on the hill to the south, Mollie, I don't know what his name was, but we called up "Mollie". He used to worry because I did not wear a hat - he was so afraid I was going to get freckles - I got freckles anyhow.

We moved to San Diego in September 1914, just in time to start high school. My eldest brother and I graduated from the Laguna School. We were [two of] three graduates in the class. We moved down here and the furniture and things were put in a truck. We carried the clock and varous other things in the car to be handled carefully. We came in on India Street. The year before my father had a house built in Mission Hills in an area on which, at one time Kate Sessions had part of her nursery. My father had the whole block on the corner of Stephens Street and Montecito Way and he had the house built there before we moved down here. We bought our furniture: the dining room and living room furniture and stove at [Frevert] Bledsoe's Furniture Store. The wood in the furniture was quatered oak which now has come back in style and is very expensive. It took a week for the gas company to run the gas line from Lewis Street to our house, so for breakfast we fixed our food in the fireplace and then late in the afternoon - probably four o'clock or sometime in that neighborhood - we all went down to Moore's Restaurant on Third Avenue between Broadway and C on the west side of the street. The street (in Mission Hills) was ungraded for a year or more; the area around there was all vacant. The people who lived farther over on Hermosa Way cut across the corners to go to the grocery store. Montecito Way between Stephens and Hermosa Way was down through a dip an in this dip was a

high fence covered with white small roses. Kate Sessions' Nursery was across the street to the east. One block, or at least half the block, was covered with a lath house and in this lath house there were ferns of all kinds. Where the street would [eventually] go through - and did go through - was her manure pile for fertilizer. There was a beautiful Papagontier rose that [grew] through the lath house roof. [It] was beautiful to see that rose in bloom from our second story. We also had a way to get up on the roof and in the winter time when the mountains in the back country were covered with snow we could go up there and see all the snow in the back country.

FB: What was the address of the house?

ES: Oh, when we moved there it was Broadway, 1508 Broadway. Soon they wanted the name Broadway for downtown so they renamed the street Montecito Way. They changed the numbering and we were 1708 instead of 1508. Our first telephone there had three numbers: 198, then they added an "0" in front of it, later they added a "J" at the back. The street was finally paved - curbs were put in first and later the street was paved. One morning we saw a coyote running down the street, came from someplace and got into civilization.

FB: How large was your house and is it still there?

ES: We had a seven-room house with three bedrooms upstairs and a bath; downstairs were living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom and a large back porch.

FB: Plumbing?

ES: Yes, of course, we had full plumbing. We had an ice box on the back porch. It had to be emptied - you remember the pan that sat underneath. The iceman came a couple - twice a week, I guess. We also had a Chinaman who came around with vegetables and we bought his vegetables; the iceman would come with ice.

FB: What kind of business was your father in then.

ES: My father was retired. He kept his interest in the ranch, of course, and it was being farmed. Mother was a housewife.

In starting to school the street car went as far as Hermosa Way and we got on just up at the next block at Stephens Street. During World War I we would start out practically in the dark in the morning to get to high school. The street car went down Lewis, down Hawk, then Washington, down First to Spruce; going on down along First we picked up Mr. Muller, who was one of the elementary school principals. His son was "Red Brick" Muller who was famous in high school here and also famous as a football player [at] Berkeley. He later became a doctor. Iris Muller would also get on the same street car in the morning. We had a "special" that came up to Montecito Way and all the high school outfit rode the street car. We went downtown, down

Fourth Avenue, jogged over to Third, past the Casaloma Hotel, or the Florence Hotel, down Third. Between Broadway and C there was a switch and there this car switched and turned and came back up B Street to Twelfth. By that time the new line had been built into the Park [Balboa] for the Fair in 1915. In the fall of 1914 we had to transfer downtown, into a little open street car that went up B Street to 14th, the end of the line, and everybody got off there for high school. Sometimes to be different we would get off and walk over through the Park and then up to the school. During the Fair years I had a pass to the Fair and after school I would take the street car up to the Park; go into the Park and listen to the band concert; [then] walk across Cabrillo Bridge to catch the street car to go on home. During the Fair years they had mounted police in the Park. There was also the Marine camp way down where the Ford Bowlis, down there in that flat area. The Marines would put on their drills - [Major] General Pendleton was in charge at that time. Later he became General and Camp Pendleton was named for him. I personally knew General Pendleton and "Aunt" Mary Pendleton.

In high school I had a math class, I guess it was algebra that you get first, then trigonometry, up on the east side on the second floor overlooking the stadium. In the first fall, 1914, they were building the stadium; they had mules and hand scrapers down in there working. Some of the teachers that we had there [were] Mr. [Ben] Lacey, who taught science and physics; [and] Dr. [Roy] Nichols, household chemistry - I took that course. I also took two years of cooking. The second year we cooked some for the cafeteria, especially desserts such as cakes and pies. So that way we got our experience. There was also upstairs an apartment where we had to take turns serving a luncheon. We could invite the teachers that we wanted to attend. We had to make out our menu, to be approved, of course, by the teacher. She would order the food and we had to cook the food, serve the food, and clear up afterwards. Under the table was a little pushbutton. If there was something wrong, or they needed service, they would push the button which rang in the kitchen and somebody had to go see what was up. But that was very interesting: cooking our meals and serving some of the teachers. For food there was a outside window at the cafeteria. Mrs. Mulholland who was in charge of the cafeteria would make a long meatloaf style of food which was put in nice fresh buns. They were five cents! Also there were cream puffs, with real cream for five cents! Those were my special lunches. We bought those at the outside window, went over to the lawn and sat down to eat our lunch. There were times when we took a sack lunch [and] sat on the lawn to eat our lunch. And of course those were the days when you counted the seeds in your apple. How many seeds: "He loves me, he don't, he does!" like pulling the petals off of the daisies - that was one of the things we did. The girls' gym and dressing room were downstairs underneath the home economics building. The home economics building, the mechanical arts building and the fine arts building were brand new that fall in 1914. The freshmen and sophomores had study hall [20]. We were lined up alphabetically. I can still remember the people who were in the "J's" and "K's" -

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we always sat together. Our home room, or attendance room, had also the same people in that alphabetical group. Certain teachers had certain letters in the alphabet and they took the attendance and reported.

FB: Is this where the old Russ (high school) is?

ES: The word "Russ" was practically going out at that time. We were the San Diego High School. The big doors on the entrance to the main building were saved and are used now in the new building. There was an inner court that had a fountain; there was a small auditorium. There was also a court in front of the fine arts building where there were tables and benches for outdoor waiting and refreshments. Football games were in the stadium; baseball games were also in the stadium. We paid 25¢ to go to a football game or to a baseball game.

FB: How many were in your class?

ES: I graduated in January of 1919. Those were the war years and quite a few of the senior boys had left for service, so we had a small class. After graduation from high school I went to the old Normal School. There they had four quarters, counting summer school, and I started in April of that quarter. I was there two and a half years to get my teaching credential and that being right at the time of the war, they were short of people attending there in the school so they put me out in the training school before I had hardly gotten started in my other classes. The training school was out [in] the back. The Normal School was up where the present City Education Center is located. The auditorium was upstairs in the center of the building.

In those days there was a big open area out front where they used to have the Maypole dances. I took a course in science with Dr. Skilling. I also taught an eighth grade training class under Dr. Skilling in science. That was a favorite class of mine. I did fall heir to a first grade reading class where we taught "The Little Red Hen." "The little red hen did this; the little red hen did that." In those days it was a very small attendance at the old Normal School; there were not more than five or six men all told, mostly women. Dances and parties were practically out on account of transportation and [it being] the war years. I eventually graduated after two and a half years - these were short years then. I went to one summer school and then I taught for four years. I went back and got my degree . . .

FB: Where did you teach?

ES: The first year I taught in a one-room school near Escondido. Here I met the Mr. [R. B. "Uncle Bob"] Kuchel [in 1921] who had helped build the [wagon] road way back in the 1880s. He was a man now of about 85. It was up in the back country there and in the fall the

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mountain pigeons came in, just swarms of blue pigeons. There was also an old winery there. I wonder what has become of those things now with that beautiful housing project that has gone through that area. [Ranch Bernardo - the winery is still there.]

The second year I thought I would like to get away from home, so I went up and taught in Visalia. There the winters were real, real cold. A friend and I lived with a lady who had rooms to [rent] [We walked four blocks to] the school. [After that] I decided that I would come home, as my sister was going away to college. So I came home and I taught two years at Otay. Those were back in the days when you had probably ten to fifteen Mexican children to one white child. It was a two-story building. The other teacher had the first and second grades; I had three, four, five and six grades upstairs. The 7th and 8th graders went by bus into Sweetwater High School in Chula Vista. Over near the school was the old watch factory and on occasion there they had "Holy Roller" meetings where they whooped it up all night.

FB: Where were you living?

ES: The other teacher and I lived in the teacherage which was owned by the school district. We were about a block from the store; we were on the main road that went down from Chula Vista, through Otay, down to Palm City and then through Nestor, to Tijuana.

FB: Is the school there now? What was your salary?

ES: No, that old two-story building has been taken down and a new school built. Salary? Oh, I've forgotten; probably around \$1300 for nine months. I was there two years and then I decided I would go back to State College [where] I [went] for one year and got my degree. [In] one of the classes, the teacher just couldn't be bothered with the [subject] - she had other things on her mind - I think she was writing a book - so that class certainly was easy; I just got by swimmingly in that. But I had to take a foreign language. I started with French and I just could not take the teacher, so I dropped that and switched over to Spanish with Dr. Brown. I see Dr. Leslie Brown around town occasionally still. One of the high school teachers I had was Ruth Price Weis. I see her around occasionally.

I had always had a yen to teach in Escondido. So when a vacancy came up out there I went out and applied for a sixth grade. You had to see the trustees individually - I went up on the bus - I found two of them, but the third one was not there that day. But I guess the two said it was o.k., so I had a job. That was 1926. When school opened in the fall we counted the children and there were enough for two eighth grades instead of one, so I asked for the eighth grade and gave up the sixth grade. They divided those into the fast and slow groups. Being the new teacher, I got the slow group. They had had a woman superintendent before that and I guess

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things were pretty wild. So this year we had a new man for a superintendent, a Mr. Rutherford, from Pasadena. The poor man was ill most of the time and just sat in his office; so being upstairs next to his office, I kind of began to take over. Well, in that first year the class worked out pretty [well] - some of the children were a little smarty, pretty big: 15, 16 years old, some of them. But we had a new shop teacher and betwixt the two of us we kind of calmed things down. No trouble from then on. The teacher who had the other eighth grade left at the end of that year to go back to Florida to live where her family was, so I automatically fell heir to that faster group: the upper bracket. I had that for a couple of years and then we had a new teacher for the other eighth grade and she couldn't handle the [class]. So I had to go back and take that other group. Some of the children [had a] mother who was a trustee, [and] she said, "what happened? Miss Kelly's room, what happened?" Well, she bounced right down, this trustee, to see what had happened. The new superintendent said that the new teacher couldn't handle the others. So that's the story.

FB: Did you have a PTA?

ES: The PTA was not very active there. They asked me several times to go into Girl Scout work. We had a new superintendent after those first two years. He came from the east and brought with him two other teachers who were also from the east. They were given jobs there and put on the staff. He was there some years and he said, "You know more about this than I do." So he never bothered me; he always came to me for advice. We had a wonderful class of people there; there were a few - a couple of Indian children. Sometimes in the fall they would take time out to go pick walnuts up on Valley Center. They came back with their hands black from handling the walnut shells.

FB: What was the superintendent's name?

ES: J. W. Lawson. Then the fourth year, the other women who had been the principal the year before went to El Centro and got a County hired job over in Imperial County. I went to USC and got my administrator's credential as that was looming up - you would have to have that in the teaching. So the superintendent and I went to Los Angeles along with various other people from San Diego to USC and took the required work up there. I came out with a secondary administrator's credential and my superintendent came out with an elementary superintendent's credential because he hadn't had the work back east before he came here so that was all that he was allowed.

In 1929 Mr. Lawson was our superintendent and I became the principal. Our school was growing and in 1929 I became teaching-principal and that went on for a couple of years. In 1934 I was married to Carl Switters. We were married in Santa Fe, New Mexico. We were going back east to visit his relatives who lived in Chicago. In 1928 I went to Honolulu with two librarians from San Diego.

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We went over on the City of Honolulu and at that time the western coast advertising group were having their convention. We were ~~very fortunate. They had super programs on the ship going over.~~ They had most of the ship for their groups. From Hilo the ship stayed overnight and we could go up to the Volcano House, or stay on the ship. Some people were afraid to go up there because they didn't know what the accommodations were going to be, but I decided you could always take a chance and live through one night, so I went and we got up there after dark. The next morning at daylight I sat up in bed and looked down into that crater. It was a beautiful sight and beautiful weather. On that trip I had my first airplane ride in an open cockpit plane. The pilot was a Mr. Jensen who was the second winner in 1927 or '28 in the Dole-Hawaiian Flight. I was really thrilled when I found that out. One of the girls was afraid to fly for it was something in those days to fly in an open cockpit plane.

At the time I was married those were depression years and if you had a job you held on to it. We had our salaries cut about 25 percent but the world went on; school continued; things progressed.

FB: Where did you live after you got married?

ES: My husband was in the building business here in San Diego and I lived during the week with a friend out in Escondido, a German lady who was a wonderful cook. I bought a car in 1931, a Ford that I paid \$625.00 for, over here on University Avenue, and I learned to drive the Ford with a clutch.

FB: Where were you living in San Diego?

ES: My husband and I were living down on West Spruce Street. I would come home on Friday and go back Monday morning, and I usually took one or two of the other teachers who lived here back and forth in the car. On occasion on a Thursday afternoon, I got my hair fixed downtown in Escondido and I would buy a roast. I had a big heavy roasting pan and I would cook it at this house up there on Thursday night and on Friday night when I came home the roast was already cooked for dinner Friday night.

FB: What was the road like to Escondido?

ES: Going back and forth in those days . . . Well, when I was living in Mission Hills with that car and I went up to school one night - it was a Sunday night because I was afraid to wait till morning, especially when it was kind of rainy - and going down Old Town hill toward the Presidio I thought I was going to skid off the road because it was not paved. And in going back, we went up over Kearny Mesa, past the olive grove, which is now gone, down the grade where the Big Stone Lodge still is Pomerado Road out across through Poway intersection . . . .



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ES: Yes, I think the road was paved about that time. It was narrow pavement, though, so when you passed anyone you slowed down carefully. And the country was beautiful in the spring driving back and forth. I remember one time when I had someone with me - maybe it was my father because he came out sometimes before I had my car - there was a rattlesnake crossing the road on the grade so we stopped and killed [it]. At Christmas time I always had a Christmas tree in my [class] room. Most of the other rooms, eventually, had Christmas trees. We would have them up about a week beforehand. The children were very thrilled to help decorate the Christmas tree and then I would take it down, take it home and use it at home.

FB: What kind of ornaments did you put on it?

ES: The ornaments were very similar to what we have [nowadays;] I still have some of those that I had used out there [at school], debating what I would do with them. In 1934 the summer that I was married we had a new superintendent. The other one left for a higher position and the next new superintendent was Delmar Gray. At our graduation exercises which we always held in the theatre downtown in Escondido, the new superintendent was in the audience. We had quite a bit of flu that spring and our music teacher who was in charge of the orchestra group that was to play was not able to be there so we had to find a substitute. It was quite a problem for me knowing that the new superintendent was in the audience and I was in charge of that evening's program. It worked out just fine. All the years that I was there I had charge of the eighth grades' graduation programs and our eighth grade banquet. We had our banquet in our cooking room and had the tables all set up. That was something new to many of the children, to get dressed up and come to a banquet. One time I think [the children] got just a little bit gay. Our superintendent made some remark that let them feel they could do as they pleased. So the next year I very carefully told the eighth graders what etiquette was at a banquet and they were very lovable; they understood.

In 1939 I asked for a leave of absence and that summer my mother and I went down to Samoa. My sister and her husband were stationed there. And I thought it would be smart to have my hair cut. My hair was long and I thought it would be smart to have it cut. When I got down there all the ladies had let their hair grow long. Because of that hot sticky climate they couldn't do anything with their hair otherwise so they had all let it grow long. And I had just cut my hair. I came home and bought a wig and most of the people never know I had had my hair cut. It's still long. After my year of absence was up I wrote a letter of resignation. My husband said to come home; there are plenty of things to do at home and so I handed in my resignation. So I have now been retired since 1939: that's 40 years. I came home and joined the San Diego Women's Club and I have now been working there for 40 years.

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I am past president. I have belonged to other groups and have worked there.

In those early days in Escondido we had a County Teachers' Association and one year I was the corresponding secretary. So all of the mail to all over the County was sent out from Escondido. Then I was first vice president and I served a year there. The president was a man from National City. During that year they changed the by-laws and I was ineligible to go on, so I did not become president of the San Diego County Teachers Association. I have worked in the American Legion Auxiliary, held offices there; hold offices in the Disabled Veterans Auxiliary and worked there.

I am a member of Chapter 208 of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, and of course I have been a life-time member of the San Diego Historical Society for some years. I served six years there on the Board of Directors. I had charge of most of the big banquets during those years. My biggest affair was the 200th Anniversary dinner held in Cafe del Rey Moro in the Park where we had to turn away people two weeks ahead of time. Thirty people from the Island of Majorca came for the occasion. We had autograph parties, which Mr. Copley of the Union-Tribune gave. I usually had charge of the reservations for those parties. Mr. Cook, his liaison officer, and I worked together on several affairs there. Mr. Copley entertained the State Parks and Recreation Department heads on one affair over on Harbor Island and he asked for six ladies to be hostesses. I was one of the six chosen. It was during the time that Colonel John Chambers was the temporary Director of the Society. We wore old-fashioned costumes and that was a very nice affair for people from all over the state. The autograph parties were held at various places. Mr. Copley was a very helpful man.

Now let's go back a little and get [in] some earlier family history. The-Kelly grandparents came from Ireland about 1842, the time of the potato famines in Ireland. They came to New Orleans and went up and settled in Nauvoo, [Illinois] which was the Mormon settlement at that time. I had understood that the family had some connection with the Mormons in Ireland before they left, but I have no proof of that. They lived at Nauvoo for some time and then some of the family went north to Wisconsin, which was opening up, especially in the lumber business- rafting lumber down the rivers. The gold rush came along in California and my grandfather decided to come to California. The railroads were in by then so they went to New York, took the boat and came around the Horn.

FB: Which one was this?

ES: My grandfather Kelly, Matthew Kelly, Sr. He was a blacksmith and brought his bellows and some of his materials with him. The

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bellows have been down in the Historical Society (archives). My grandmother, Emily Porter Kelly, came three years later. My grandmother, Emily Porter Kelly, and the first child, Elizabeth [Chester Gunn] came across the [Isthmus] of Panama and took the [John L. Stevens] from Panama to San Francisco [about 1853]. My grandfather met them in San Francisco and at the same time her brother Charles Porter came with her. They were up in the gold country and things were not too good; things were beginning to thin out and Uncle Robert, living down here on the Rancho Agua Hedionda, talked them into coming down here. They came down from San Francisco on the Orizaba with their furniture and various things. They moved out and built the house at Los Coyotes. That was the homestead adjoining the Agua Hedionda. He owned part of it; he did not own the Agua Hedionda. He bought my grandmother's property, the Los Coyotes.

The first house was a wooden house. In the '80s the children were growing up and they built a two-story adobe house. Upstairs on the porch, [Grandmother] kept her beautiful coleus plants. The earthquake opened up a spring close to the house so that water was available. There were fireplaces in the dining room and the living room. They had oranges in the front garden and roses. They had a chicken house, a blacksmith shop and a barn and the young men as they grew up all [helped] tend cattle either there or for Uncle Robert over at the Agua Hedionda. When Uncle Robert passed away, the ranch went to the nieces and nephews.

One of the Kellys who came to Nauvoo was William. When they asked for soldiers to come west at the time of the Mexican War, William joined the Mormon Battalion and came to California. Robert and John came with the Army through Yuma; John went to San Francisco and lived in Vallejo. Robert and [Jack] Hinton took over the Agua Hedionda ranch about 1860. When Hinton died it automatically went to my great-uncle. Amongst the articles down at the Historical Museum is the chair - a traveling, folding chair - that Col. St. George Cook carried on his pack horse during his travels with the Mormon battalion.

FB: About what year was that?

ES: 1847. My other grandparents: my mother's folks came in 1892. They had heard and read the ballyhoo about southern California. In those days the railroads were doing their best to get people to come to California to settle. He had worked on the various railroads in the east, moved around and lived in various cities. My mother was about 12 years old when they came here. She went through high school in Escondido, which was just starting. My grandfather's name was Richard C. Witte. He was a railroad engineer. His family in the early days went to Australia and settled near Adelaide, but my grandfather didn't like it there so he went back to England and then came to the United States.

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Some of the books on file down at the Historical Museum have material on the Kelly family and on the Witte family. A book of the family history and geneology and some of the notes, or stories written by various members of the family are on file there. Also the recent book on pioneer families contains the Kelly family and the Witte family. In the magazine called High Country Magazine No. 47 issue, there is a story taken from the notes of John Kelly about taking horses from here over to the desert, because of the lack of feed here - there had been good rain and grass on the desert.

Let's go back to the 1916 flood. We were living in Mission Hills, just a block from the top of the rim of Mission Valley. We could walk over and watch the water go by. We could see houses and animals floating by. Some people say it cannot happen again, but it can. At that time the Otay Dam and the Sweetwater Dam went out. At high school the water even got into the basement and put out the furnaces, so the high school had to be closed. The roads to the north, were all closed; bridges out, etc. If my father wanted to go up to the ranch, he could ride so far, take a boat across; take a car on the other side which transported people back and forth going north or south. My uncle Will Kelly and I and his daughter Gladys drove up to the Santa Margarita Ranch where the bridge was out. We sat on the remainder of the bridge and had crackers and cheese for lunch. I am surprised that they are building in Mission Valley; especially Bullocks with one floor of shopping below the river bed. It can happen here, I'm afraid.

In 1939 after I had taken the year's leave of absence from the Escondido Schools my mother and I [took] a trip down to Samoa - my sister and her husband were there. He was stationed there as a Navy dentist. We went down on the Monterey - no, the Mariposa. I stayed for a month; my mother stayed for two months. I was interested in getting back on account of the American Legion baseball [for] which my husband was the business manager the year before. The San Diego team under "Mike" Morrow had won the National championship, so we were looking forward to another wonderful year in junior baseball. My mother came back one month later and by that time World War II was brewing in Europe. The British passengers on the ship were very disturbed.

Samoa at that time had only 17 miles of roadway. My brother-in-law borrowed a station wagon from the ship that the Navy had there - it was a geological survey ship. We took the station wagon from the ship and we [rode] to both ends of the road. I was back there again in 1969 and I was amazed at the changes since the war they had there. Part of the bay was filled in [and is] now a park with ball parks and such. The country was littered with broken-down automobiles and trash. There was none of that in 1939. The Navy had built a beautiful big airport. A beautiful big hotel had

been built. The little island out in the bay which had a walkway where we walked out into the bay to go to dances had been cleared away; completely gone. The flowers were still the same; the houses were still the same. I looked for the little cottage where we had stayed. It was in the middle of a row of seven facing the bay. There were big coconut crabs at that time, very scary and hard to see. They would come out and climb up the coconut trees at night to get the coconuts and in the daytime they burrowed into holes in the ground. The house that my sister lived in had a wood stove. She had a cook; she had a housecleaner; she had a woman who did the laundry. The day mother and I arrived there - it is very hot and sticky there - when we got off the ship, I wanted to take a shower. I got in the shower and there were big black woolly bugs running up and down the walls. Boy, did I let out a warwhoop!?! And my sister said, "don't worry about those, they are just water bugs and they come up from the water pipes at the bottom; they are not harmful." I got used to the bugs! One morning I heard a [peculiar] "swish, swish, swish" and I wondered what that was. That was the cleaning woman going around with a whisk broom gathering up termite dust. There were beds out on the side porch where you could sleep which made it real nice. We were invited, mother and I, up to the Governor's house one day for tea. Before I went my sister said, "Be sure you bring a pair of fancy gloves", so I bought a pair of fancy lace crocheted gloves to wear to the Governor's tea. They sent the car down the hill, we walked a block, met the car which took us up the hill; brought us back down and let us out. Before I had arrived there my sister said they had had a terrible rain storm; one day the water stood at least 12 inches deep all over the ground. But it all immediately ran off into the bay and such.

FB: Did you know Kate Sessions?

ES: When we were living in Missinn Hills, Kate Sessions had her nursery across the street. At that time her north part faced on Stephens Street. She had two blocks there covered with shrubbery and so on and some beautiful palm trees. She hired Frank - he was just a young Italian boy, who worked there in the yard. We would see Kate around, with her sloppy hat; she wore men's shoes and a floppy skirt with pockets, which she would reach into for this or that, pruning shears or whatever she might be handling. She was very determined. She knew how she wanted things done. She was a very interesting neighbor. She lived a couple of blocks down further east where her home was.