

Pioneer Memories of the Santa Ana Valley

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PIONEER MEMORIES
OF THE
SANTA ANA VALLEY
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Editor, Maureen McClintock Rischard
Typist, Betty Henderson Stanley

RECOLLECTIONS
OF MY ROOTS
IN SANTA ANA
CALIFORNIA

by Eugenia Gilbert Selleck, 1983

COVER PICTURE: Lura May (Yandell) Gilbert

RECOLLECTIONS OF MY ROOTS IN SANTA ANA

I'm a mixture of New England austerity and Southern hospitality blended together by ancestors who migrated to California and wound up in Santa Ana. Much of my genealogical information is gleaned from a Whittier Birthday Book written in the beautiful, spidery handwriting of my Grandmother Gilbert, and given to me for Christmas, 1917. My grandmother recorded not only family pertinent data, but also birthdays of Longfellow, Dickens, Shakespeare, Ulysses S. Grant, Mozart, etc., etc. My Father, Eugene Sylvester Gilbert, born in Chelsea, near Boston, Massachusetts on July 20, 1865, was given his middle name in honor of his Great Grandfather, Hon. Sylvester Gilbert, a Dartmouth graduate. He was the middle son of nine children.

I understand from my first cousin, Dr. Gordon Gilbert, Phoenix, Arizona, that I like he could be accepted for membership in the Society of Mayflower descendants, but I must confess I've never taken the necessary steps to authenticate this. He and I grew up as close as brother and sister, and our Grandmother, Susan Fisher Gilbert (born September 6, 1835 - died January 10, 1920), divided her time between his home in Huntington Park, California and mine in Santa Ana after her husband of over fifty years, Henry Clay Gilbert, born August 18, 1832 in Hebron, Connecticut, died December 27, 1912 in Huntington Park, California.

I adored my Grandmother Gilbert, a tiny, wiry woman who at one time served as the first woman on the Board of Education in Boston. My chief delight as a little girl was to comb her hair and decorate it with pink Cecil Bruner roses from our garden. She never complained that I pulled her hair or stuck her with thorns. Pity the child who never knew the wonders of having a grandmother! No thought was ever given to putting her in a Rest Home.

My grandparents on my mother's side of the family were from the deep South: Lumsford P. Yandell (born October 20, 1856, died May 3, 1939), and Sarah William Bell (born August 5, 1857, died April 26, 1934), both born in Tennessee. My grandfather was in the midst of his medical education in Tennessee when his father died in 1875. He and his eldest brother, John Yandell, immigrated to Bishop, California, to be followed in 1880 by his widowed mother and the balance of her nine children. It took my grandfather until June 16, 1886 to persuade my grandmother to leave the life of a genteel lady music teacher in Tennessee and join him in matrimony in the rugged life of a sheep rancher in Inyo County near Bishop, California. But - love had its way and on April 16, 1887, my mother, Lura May Yandell, was born in Poleta, California. She was the only girl followed by four brothers, one dying in infancy. As Bishop did not have an accredited high school my mother was sent to live with two of my grandmother's sisters in Austin, Texas where she attended high school and then graduated from what is now known as Texas State Teacher's College in Denton. Her major was Home Economics. She was President of her class and awarded a gold medal for achievement in Scholarship. Her skill as a seamstress is beautifully memorialized in her picture in her graduation dress. After graduation she returned immediately to California and enrolled in 1907 in Normal School in Los Angeles and in June, 1908 obtained her California State Teacher's Credential. She received appointments to teach in two schools in the fall of 1908 - Riverside and Santa Ana. She chose Santa Ana, and that September began life in this city which continued until her death here January 27, 1978.

Courtship in Santa Ana of a young schoolteacher was somewhat limited in 1908. She roomed and boarded in the Keeler home on North Main Street, and they treated her with protective, loving care of a daughter. My father got his room and board a little further north on Main Street in the Asa Vandermaast home. Their acquaintance grew as they walked south on Main Street to their

respective work places. My father was a very eligible bachelor who owned Gilbert's Dry Goods Store, 110 W. 4th St., Santa Ana. I'm sure he plotted his time to coincide conveniently with my mother's schedule to walk with her as she was a very attractive, young, single woman. She played her part in furthering the romance by purchasing some of her school supplies for sewing classes from his store. Their "big date," I was told, before becoming engaged to be married was an all day trip to Laguna Beach in a surrey with the fringe on top! They were married at an early morning hour, June 16, 1909, by Rev. J. A. Stevenson, minister of the Santa Ana First Presbyterian Church. The early hour was to enable them to catch the then popular Pacific Electric "Red Car" to Los Angeles so they could continue their honeymoon journey by boat to Catalina.

My mother's teaching career in Santa Ana came abruptly to a halt after one year where she taught all the students in Santa Ana sewing and cooking in classes from fifth grade through high school. Among some of her students still living and belonging to Ebell are Frances Bennett, Lillian Butler, and Lela Deardorff. However, my father's decision was that after the wedding she'd have a class limited to one person, and he'd be the one!

"Home is where the heart is," and after a year of married life my parents purchased a lot at 420 S. Main Street, and had their dream house built. At that time they didn't know residential property would move north, not south, but home is where the heart is, and that's where they both lived until they died. Roots like that are rare now! I arrived on the scene in the back bedroom of that home on October 23, 1911. I was delivered by Dr. C. D. Ball (that name now legend in Santa Ana is continued by a number of his doctor descendants today).

My sister, Geraldine (Gilbert) Newhall, was born in the same bed in the same back bedroom

January 2, 1919, only she was delivered by Dr. J. I. Clark. I awaited her arrival on our front steps with other neighborhood friends. They accosted the doctor when he came out accusing him of leaving the baby at the wrong house! I used my new skates to tell all within earshot of the blessed event.

My favorite room in the house was the dining room. It was the largest, and had a beautiful, big built-in buffet with mirrored wall and indirect lighting which caused my mother's collection of cut glass to dance, glisten, and sparkle. The plate rail displayed delicate, hand-painted Haviland plates and chocolate set - all the artistic work of my mother. This beautiful collection remained there intact until most of it was shattered in the earthquake of 1933! The plate rail then became the display spot for my collection of tiny cups and saucers which began when I received them as birthday gifts as a child and continued through the years to represent demitasse cups from friends and relatives in all makes and patterns of fine China.

The huge, round, claw-footed, oak table was the center of the dining room activity. Every night we gathered at this white, linen covered table while my father asked the blessing before serving our evening meal. We had linen napkins, and vegetables were always served in little sauce dishes. I was fascinated by a buzzer under the carpet under the table which, when we were small, my father would press after we'd finished our first course and were ready for dessert. This would summon our live-in maid who'd clear the table and serve the goodies to come. (As we grew older, my sister and I took over duties of live-in maid!)

This big, round table hosted many friends through the years. When my sister was about 8 or 9 years old, unbeknownst to our parents, she invited Dr. and Mrs. Clark to dinner. I remember she served, among other things, boiled potatoes and creamed chipped beef. Her idea of boiled potatoes was to put raw potatoes in a pot, and when the water came to a boil, to turn off the heat and serve! Needless to say, the welcome was warm,

but the menu was not gourmet.

Our friends were often invited to stay for dinner. There was just one requirement--that they also abide by house rules, and eat all their vegetables, or do without dessert. As my mother was a superior cook and served yummy delicacies at the end of each meal, she was credited with developing nutritious food habits of many of our friends. This round table could be extended to form an oval large enough to seat eighteen for holiday feasts, birthday celebrations or wedding receptions.

One must not overlook the stove in the large, airy kitchen. It had a special personality of its own with the date 1909 stamped on its dark Garland body. It was a huge, gas monster installed with the birth of the house early in 1911, and remained in use till the house was sold in the fall of 1978, after my mother's death. It boasted a high oven, broiler and warming oven, and four big gas burners. My mother baked and gave away many mouth-watering goodies to friends through the years. When little children came to visit her in her last, long illness, one of the things they always asked to see was "stove", then a valuable antique, but still in service.

Super markets and chain stores weren't in existence in the early days. My mother "phoned in" her grocery and meat order, and things were delivered. Milk and cream from Raitt's Dairy appeared daily on our doorstep. We had a beautiful, big, oak ice box on the back porch where we stored all perishables. Most folks had to hang out an ice card, but my mother never did as she and the ice man understood she wanted 50 pounds of ice delivered on a regular basis. I'm sure it was with at least a wee bit of regret that my mother parted with her oak ice box and purchased a new fangled refrigerator!

The California bungalow with its two bedrooms and den, living room, dining room, baths, kitchen and service porch became too small to accommodate all the family and friends we liked to entertain.

One summer in early 1920's while we were spending our usual month's vacation in Idyllwild, my father had two huge bedrooms and a bath built over our double garage. This was a great place for slumber parties, overflow houseguests, etc., and in later years after my father's death in 1936, it served as a source of rental income for my mother.

The mention of double garage leads me to talk about our family cars. The first was a Studebaker touring car with isinglass curtains that could be snapped on in case of rain. We had two such cars before 1919 when my father bought our first Chandler Sedan with glass windows that rolled up and down. My baby sister needed special protection from wet weather! My father believed even in the early twenties, that women should drive so he taught my mother, and it was not long before they were both driving their own Cadillac. These Cadillacs in the twenties were long limousines--7 passenger with jumpseats. If you weren't careful, you might end up on the floor instead of the backseat, it was so far back! However, this spaciousness, and the fancy, silk shades you could pull for privacy made an ideal place for us to change clothes before going swimming at Newport or Balboa Beach.

When I was 16 my father agreed to teach me to drive, but when I cut a couple of corners too sharply, he decided his nerves and patience weren't up to the task. He told a Lincoln dealer he'd buy a new car from him if he'd teach me to drive. He took me out on roads with little traffic, then between Santa Ana and Costa Mesa, and lessons continued. I still remember his warning me "not to take my eyes off the road."

My sister and I both went through Santa Ana Schools. I began at Spurgeon (now Franklin) and wasn't quite five when I went eagerly to Kindergarten. I was sure I could find my way home alone, but I made new friends that first day and walked home with them. After the last one had left me, I suddenly realized I was lost--and far from home. Tears came falling fast until a kind lady came to my rescue and when I gave her

identifying information, contacted my mother who needless to say was relieved to find me. We didn't move, but the zoning for schools was changed so I graduated from 6th grade at Roosevelt School and was always a "mid-termer" which had its disadvantages.

My first semester of Junior High School I went to a building on North Main Street. This was just long enough for them to complete Lathrop on South Main Street. I remember there was a big parade of all the students from North to South Main the day the school opened. Education was exciting--especially beginning to study French in the 7th grade! They were experimenting with early teaching of foreign language. I met good, new friends from Costa Mesa and the nearby beaches who were brought to school by bus as there were no junior or senior high schools in the area. I remember sewing and cooking classes were compulsory, and my new friend from Costa Mesa and I had to draft patterns and make dresses which we decided to do "alike" for graduation. School colors were green and gold, and I won a letter for playing jump center on the basketball team. Being tall for my age was an advantage. Scholarship rather than sports was my chief interest, however, and I maintained an honor roll average throughout my years as a student in Santa Ana Schools. I graduated from Santa Ana High School in 1929, and from Pomona College, Cum Laude in 1933.

My father owned Gilbert's Dry Goods Store for twenty five years, selling the store wisely in 1928. He learned the business in his youth working at Filene's in Boston, and Lord and Taylor's in New York City. Roots were his lifestyle, too! He had the same cashier, bookkeeper, hosiery saleslady and ready-to-wear buyer during all the years he was in business.

He installed the first Otis Elevator in Santa Ana-- a cage-like contraption that had to be operated by an elevator boy. I remember one of the son's of Rev. J. A. Stevenson, the minister who married my parents, was one of these "boys." This elevator went down to the first bargain basement in Santa Ana, then up to the first floor and on to the mezzanine where business offices and also draperies were and finally to the second floor where dresses, suits, coats, furs, lingerie, and millinery were sold.

In those days hats were a popular item, and many of them were handmade. I recall my father employed the mother of Gilbert Gonzales who for many, many years has owned La Fonda Restaurant on South Main. Gil's mother didn't speak any English at the time my father hired her, but he appreciated her needlework skill in millinery and she appreciated his confidence so much she named her son Gilbert!

One of my happy recollections of my father's store as a child was being able to go to the second floor and press my face against the window as the Circus Parade marched down 4th Street. No one could obstruct my view of the elephants, clowns, bands, etc. What a thrill for a youngster!

We were never permitted to take anything we wanted out of the store without a business transaction being completed like that for any other charge customer. This has proved most valuable training. During my high school days I worked in the store during my Christmas vacation. I was assigned to the pattern department clear in the back of the first floor. I found this boring at times and liked to walk my way up to the front where gay gift items were featured for holiday sale. Unfortunately, my father could see me then from the mezzanine balcony, and he didn't want me taking sales from his regular employees, so back I'd go to the patterns!

In those days yardage and notions were popular items. I remember that every spring and fall my mother hired a dressmaker to come to our house a week each time staying all day to make clothes for my sister and me. I recall a lovely, salmon pink party dress she made for me which I wanted trimmed with pale pink ostrich feathers. There was much discussion as to where and how these feathers were to be used. I lost the argument, and they appeared very sparingly in a corsage on the dress, but it was generously sprinkled with my tears before the dress ever got out of the sewing room.

Security of my father's store was maintained by his paying a night watchman to make regular checks on all the locks each night. I remember one year when I was in high school my mother and father planned an extensive motor trip south and east so my mother decided she'd store all her sterling silver flatware in the safe at the store. During their absence a burglar entered the store from the roof and down the elevator shaft to the safe. He took all the money, but left the sterling silver untouched. Needless to say, my mother left her silver at home after that! (It wouldn't be so safe today.)

During the 20's and 30's the hub of business in Santa Ana centered around the block on 4th Street between Main and Sycamore--Rankin's was my father's friendly competitor at the corner of 4th and Sycamore. Hugh Lowe, Vandermast's and Hill and Carden all had men's clothing stores in the block, and Kendall's had a hardware store and Weisman's a fine china shop. The only business remaining there today is Lloyd's Bank at the corner of 4th and Main though this bank has changed names many times since those days. Dying innercity business has given way to outlying shopping malls with ample parking. Chain stores have now taken over for independent merchants who can no longer hack it alone.

My father was a very civic minded man serving his community as President of the Merchants and Manufacturing Association. He was also a golf enthusiast, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Orange County Country Club located on top of the hill overlooking the Back Bay. He was one who gave money to and served long as a member of the Board of Directors of the Santa Ana Country Club where grass greens replaced sand ones at the Orange County Country Club. He played golf three or four times a week, and though he was never "great", enjoyed the game and the fellowship. He was left-handed so I never could use his clubs. He made a lucky hole in one at the Santa Ana Country Club and was awarded a silver, engraved bowl in recognition. This silver bowl always had a place of honor on a little table by our front door, and guests would leave engraved calling cards in the dish. Remember when people used calling cards??

There was no Arthur Murray Dance Studio in Santa Ana when I was growing up, but when I was in high school I took dancing lessons in the home of Bill and Beedee Spurgeon. (The Spurgeon family founded Santa Ana. The grammar school I attended was named for them, and a building on 4th, and a street in the city.) There must have been about ten boys and ten girls in the dance class. Our parents felt it important that we should know how to trip the light fantastic. I recall one way we had of mixing partners, the girls all put one shoe in a pile and the boys had to find the girl that matched the shoe. We had fun while we learned.

My spiritual heritage dated back to my maternal grandmother Yandell who was the Superintendent of the Sunday School in Bishop, California, and an Elder on the Session of the Presbyterian Church there. I was baptized there in infancy, and became a member of Santa Ana First Presbyterian Church in a Youth Communicants class in 1923. I remember being a regular and enthusiastic attendant of Sunday School and Church all

during my youth. My mother loaded all the neighborhood children in her car and took them to Sunday School, too. Christmas Eve celebrations were geared to children with a beautiful, big tree and hard candy for all. Stores in Santa Ana kept open on Christmas Eve in those days and my parents both had to work, but arranged for a friend to take me to the holiday celebration at church.

The church originally had a pie-shaped sanctuary. It was in this church that I first walked down the aisle as a bridesmaid in a long, beruffled, coral net dress and broad brimmed, horsehair hat. Would you believe that Katy Spicer Flint and Mary Ford Dever were in this same wedding, and we, along with Gerri Cole Douglas now have a Bridesmaid Bridge Group!

Early in the 1930's, Dr. O. Scott McFarland, minister of the Santa Ana First Presbyterian Church, asked me to serve on the Finance and Rebuilding Committee. Though I'm not sure, I was a great asset then, it was a challenging and exciting experience for a young girl. Glen Martin of aircraft fame gave all the oak pews in memory of his mother. The family grew up in a house not far from us on South Main Street. The Communion Table has an inset wood carving of the Lord's Supper, a gift from the McFarlands that never fails to inspire me. The Gothic lines of the sanctuary lift my spirits as they did my mother's who worshiped there regularly all her life. A beautiful memorial service was held in that sanctuary to celebrate her life after her death in January 1978. In lieu of flowers, gifts were made to the church to be used for Scholarship funds.

Last fall after a worship service to celebrate our Centennial, we prayerfully released hundreds of balloons in gratitude for the past and faith in the future of our Christian fellowship. Roots again! This church stands in the center of the innercity --across from the historic, sandstone Courthouse. Our Education building now stands where the old

jail used to be, and next to the Waffle House moved and preserved as a landmark for posterity. Dr. Waffle was one of the early woman doctors in the area. My mother assisted her as mid-wife in delivery of the baby of one of her friends. One of Dr. Waffle's daughters gave me my first doll on my first birthday.

Ebell was an important center in the social and cultural life of my family from the day my father decided to give money to help buy land for the Clubhouse. My mother's name, Mrs. E. S. Gilbert, hangs in the foyer of the Clubhouse in recognition of this gift. She was a Life Member of Ebell, I'm a Charter member of Junior Ebell, and my sister is a Charter member of Girl's Ebell. My own first vivid memory of Ebell is performing in the auditorium in a piano recital as a music student of Carolyn Haughton. I played Chopin's "Polanaise Militaire" and a duo piano number from Grieg's "PyrGynt Suite." Next, as a Pomona College student I remember the gala holiday formal dances given in the Peacock Room to celebrate the homecoming of young people for Christmas festivities. Then, soon after I graduated from college, I was asked to model for a fashion show sponsored by American University Women given in the Peacock Room. I recall walking down a long, elevated ramp in the center of the room. Guess whose clothes I modeled in the 30's?? "Patricia's", and her Elite shop was then located on Sycamore, just around the corner from 4th Street!

I, for one, feel very grateful for all those who had vision and faith to give us this beautiful Ebell Clubhouse where we can continue to enjoy educational, philanthropic and social pursuits. We are blessed with a place where we can gather to meet old friends and make new ones, be entertained and entertain, and do all this with the gracious and able assistance of our matrons. Let's keep this dream of our ancestors alive and growing!

The 1930's were rough years everywhere! Santa Ana was no exception. My B.A. Degree from Pomona didn't entitle me to teach, and my plan for graduate work

at U. C. Berkeley had to be forgone to save for the upcoming graduation of my sister from high school, and her turn for a college education. I was fortunate that my college education paved the way for my being hired as a Social Worker for the State in Orange County. The office was located at the corner of 2nd and Broadway in Santa Ana. In my 5 years as a Social Worker I learned a lot about life in Orange County especially among the poor and unemployed. I'm sure I was resented by many of these proud, hurting, needy persons. I was young and inexperienced but had the power, in a way, to determine whether or not they would receive help even for bare subsistence. Early in my career I was selected to be sent to Riverside for six weeks special training in Social Work offered by the State. That was a wonderful opportunity and a helpful experience for me. I began doing field work all over Orange County. At that time there were many Mexican Colonies where people were huddled together in inadequate housing without work. Jobs were seasonal: picking citrus fruit, thinning beets, picking berries or beans. Most of the Mexican homes were neat and clean, but overloaded with sets of furniture sold on time and being repossessed because of inability to make payments while unemployed. These colonies were hotbeds for insurance salesmen, too. Again they'd convince Mexicans to insure not only themselves, but all their children. When they couldn't keep up premiums, everything went down the drain! Many of the women had special talents in handwork, crochet, and hemstitching often done on flour sacks, their only available material. There were as many Whites as Mexicans out of work during these depression years, and in the 30's there was no unemployment insurance or medical/medicare programs.

There were some WPA projects and CCC camps, but times were grim and many persons were out of work and hungry. I moved from doing "Field Work" to "Intake" taking initial interviews of applicants

for assistance. Red tape and rules both State and County, presented many problems in meeting emergencies. Our very best rapid resource for aid was Salvation Army who'd provide temporary food and housing. (This is still true, and we have lots of "street people" and "bag ladies" in Santa Ana now.)

Speaking of emergencies, after I'd worked a couple of years, I was sent with a Supervisor from our Santa Ana office to Imperial Valley to help in a crisis freeze situation that had loaded relief rolls with transients living under bridges and culverts. These conditions were much more severe and critical than those in Orange County. Our first order upon arrival in El Centro was to go to the Health Department for smallpox vaccinations as an epidemic had broken out. We were on "per diem" from the Santa Ana office for six weeks and lived in a motel, but were lucky to have home cooked meals in the home of the Director and his wife whom I'd known at Pomona College. We were warned to watch out for black widow spiders that had been found lurking under wooden benches in the Relief Office. Reality was ruthless!

Migrant workers were rolling into California from the Dust Bowl area in Oklahoma searching for work. Their cars and what they could load into them were their only possessions. They hoped to find work in the crops moving upstate from place to place--moving from one harvest to the next. However, the freeze of the peas in the Imperial Valley dashed their hopes, and we found them destitute, hungry and desperate.

Our experience in social work proved helpful in expediting applications and disposition, but after six weeks we were expected to return to Orange County Office. The Director and his wife offered me a home with them and a promotion if I'd transfer to Imperial County, but I decided to return to Santa Ana as my father had died in 1936, and my mother needed my help in putting my sister

through Pomona College. My new experiences were valuable in Santa Ana, too, and I was soon made an Assistant Supervisor and then a Supervisor of Social Work. I liked the work, and welcomed the opportunity to be of service to the needy.

I resigned my job in Santa Ana in 1940 and thought now that my sister was graduating from college and I was free of this responsibility, I'd pursue graduate work in Social Service. However, by April, 1941 I was working as a Secretary to the Supervisor of Government Furnished Property at Douglas, Santa Monica. When war was declared in December, 1941, I was frozen to my job. How quickly the course of one's life changes.

Death stalked through my life in Orange County in the thirties. My grandmother and grandfather Yandell had moved from Bishop to Costa Mesa in the Twenties and lived on five acres of land bounded by 17th Street and Newport Boulevard. They continued the country life of chickens, a jersey cow, and a huge, wonderful vegetable garden. My grandmother's life suddenly stopped at the breakfast table on April 26, 1934. She had a heart attack and was gone. The lovely, maiden, Lutheran lady who had been living with them keeping house stayed on through my grandfather's long and painful illness.

My own father was next to die in our home in Santa Ana, after a lingering illness on September 9, 1936. He was buried the day before my sister, Geraldine, entered Pomona College as a Freshman. I stayed with my mother working in Orange County to help send my sister through college.

My grandfather Yandell was finally released from his suffering on May 3, 1939. Both grandparents and my father were taken to Smith and Tuthill Mortuary then on Broadway and 6th. (The building, still on the same location now known as Broadway and Santa Ana Boulevard, has been beautifully restored and

is housing Santa Ana First Federal and Loan.) All the deceased were given a final resting place at Fairhaven Cemetery.

My mother, a comparatively young widow, picked up the pieces and made a new life for herself. She worked as a teacher at Mrs. Bradley's Private Nursery School at Walnut near Orange Avenue in Santa Ana from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, five days a week. She loved working with the children ranging in age from 2½ years to 5. Story telling was one of her fortes, and she could hold her group spellbound. Many of the children were those whose mothers she's taught Home Economics in 1908-09. She used her big seven passenger Cadillac to take the children on field trips. Favorite outings were to the Fire Station on Cypress and to the Zoo at Prentiss Park.

Her hours of teaching still left her free for social and cultural life at Ebell, Church and P.E.O. As soon as war was declared in December, 1941, she began a long term of volunteer work in the U.S.O. Her longtime residence in Santa Ana provided her with very special ability in finding lodging for the many servicemen's wives who flocked to the area to be near loved ones in the Santa Ana Air Base. Many of the townspeople opened their homes to these persons, and my mother was able to place persons with skill and understanding.

During these war years, 420 S. Main Street, my mother's home, was opened to these concerned women. Often their loved ones would be granted brief leave and come spend the night with their spouse at my mother's home. The round oak table in the dining room and the stove in the kitchen were pressed into active service again! Buddies would gather round the table, and savor my mother's homecooking and sing her praises. The highlight of these years of U.S.O. Service was when my mother met the train by prearrangement bringing a lovely, young girl from West Virginia to marry her sweetheart who was stationed at Santa Ana Air Base. Her parents would permit this only if she could stay with my mother.

My mother helped the girl plan her wedding. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Harry Owings, the Baptist Minister in Santa Ana. My mother was the girl's attendant, wearing a white gown. She also baked the wedding cake, and provided the reception for the bride and groom and their friends--once again in the dining room at 420 S. Main--until the death of my mother in 1978, this couple who live in West Virginia never forgot my mother's birthday or Christmas!