

ORAL TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

INTERVIEWEE: Esther Rideout (E)

Place: 390A Sevilla, Laguna Hills, CA.

Date: September 22, 1976

Subjects: A. R. Rideout, Rideout House, avocado industry

Interviewers: Phyllis Pearce (P), Martha Russel (M)

E: I know the year the house was built and I know the family somewhere has a picture of it, but I don't know who would have it.

P: Do you know who did build it?

E: I was too young to be aware of it, the architect. It was a Swiss Chalet type of house with fourteen rooms and that was quite extensive for a growing family of five children; but, I can't tell you anything more than that.

P: Okay, maybe we can check back through the tax records and find out a little more information.

E: It had hardwood floors downstairs and two wide porches on it. It was quite a large house. It had an upstairs with three bedrooms and bath up there. Incidentally, and this is just because of the current interest in it, we had a solar heater. We heated our water with a solar heater.

P: Where was your solar heater, up on top of the house?

E: No. It was back of the house on a special rack of its own. As I can remember it as a kid, looking at it, it was a big box - flat box, tipped so it - tipped to the south so it got full sun and it had paper, black tar paper on the bottom, the floor of it. And then there were pipes crisscrossing the black tar paper. They did not touch the paper and there was glass on top of that.

P: That is really interesting.

M: You were about the only house in Whittier that did have solar heating.

E: I don't know about that but I never knew of another person, another house, that did have solar heating. As a child I was interested in that because on a day like this I was always amazed how much heat the water would have when we had a bath - all that warm water coming out of the faucet. A cloudy day can really produce a lot of heat for water.

P: We were commenting on the heat in the car and that would be the same principle.

E: Yes, it would be the same principle, the glass collects it. So that was a novel, in a way, of heating at that time, heating your water. And the water came from a reservoir that was up on the top of Rideout Heights, on a hill above us. It was piped up there and came down by gravity to our place and to some other places.

- P: Did the reservoir also hold irrigation water?
- E: I don't know but I think so because my father had a pump. There was a pump on one end of the , always from the house and I remember I used to have to take the dog at night, go over there and turn off the pump. It was a gasoline powered pump so I think that it would pump the water up to the reservoir. I have a hunch it was used for irrigating.
- P: You said something on the phone about working with your Dad on budding and grafting the trees.
- E: Being the oldest of five children and him not yet having a boy, and I wasn't too interested in housework, working along with my mother, I followed him around. Before I was in high school, seventh or eighth grade, he taught me how to bud, mostly, and sometimes graft, his avocado trees. I used to work with him, crawling on my hands and knees through the small trees that we planted. He was always trying to improve the avocados.

I was thinking, what were his goals? These are his goals as I remember them:

1. to produce a smaller seed
2. to produce more oil in the avocado so that it would ship better
3. to produce a tree that would grow taller and then wider so you could plant more to the acre
4. produce more fruit per tree - this was accomplished in the beginning by a process called girdling.

I think he probably discovered girdling by accident. This is for old trees. You take some of the limbs and cut a strip away all around the limb to the cambian layer. He wouldn't touch the cambian layer. That layer and other elements on both sides would fill in and form a nice seal. Then that limb would produce a lot of fruit the next year. It was a kind of fantastic thing of discovering how to produce, on the older trees, more fruit on one limb.

Then, of course, he was always working with seedlings because that is where the new things would come. I can remember when I was about six or seven he brought in his first avocados. My sister and I had to sit on the back porch with buckets and we would take the seeds out of the avocados for him. The fruit around the seeds was only about a half inch to a fourth of an inch thick and that was all the fruit there was to eat. He had some arrangement, I don't know what, with the government and the government sent to him, as long as I could remember while I was home, all sorts of semi-tropical and sometimes tropical plants to try out, to experiment. I don't know if the government sent him these Guatemalan avocados, these seedlings, or not. But, I can remember taking the skin off. It was very thin, almost like paper, and then planting them in a sand box of some sort. Then they sprouted. I don't remember at that age what he did with them but he was experimenting, probably from 1912 to 1914.

We moved up on the hill so he would have a frost-free area for avocados. The top of the hill where we lived was frost free no matter what the temperatures were down below in Whittier. That was of number one importance for the avocados. Certain avocados can stand more cold than others but some were very tender; especially the young trees were very tender and subject to frost.

Then there was a tree, a large tree, in Whittier. I am sure you can find it in some of the records - the Ganter tree.

P: Yes. That's the one that is in the Plymouth Congregational Church parking lot.

E: Is it still there?

P: Yes, it is still there.

E: Well, the old Ganter - I don't know whether it was on my father's property before we moved up the hill or adjacent, but anyhow - I know there was some talk in the family that that tree should have been named after my father and it was named after Ganter. I don't remember the details.

Then, it is interesting that there is a fruit on the market, in the summer here in California, that is the best fruit that you could get and it is called Haas. It was originally called summer Fuerte by my father. It was one of his seedlings and it was raised right close to the house there on the top of the hill on the next lot - there were a number of lots - and there was a whole row of them. I remember how excited my father was when he found out that he had a seedling that fruited in the summer because he was always working for a seedling that would be good for salads, summer salads. The man who bought the property was named Haas and so my father gave him the right to name it after himself. I don't know how much it meant to that man but it meant something to my father. He was a very generous person; always doing something for somebody else. That's how the Haas came on the market, came into being. If you will notice, if you have ever eaten a Haas, it has a lot of oil content so it has a nutty flavor. The very best avocados have a nutty flavor because they have the oil content.

There was a man in New York that my father used to ship avocados to and then he would get a report from him on them - how well they carried. When he would get a new variety he would ship it to the man. The man would report if the fruit was in any condition to ship back to him; then he would ship it back so he knew how it would ship.

M: Wasn't there for a time a brand called the Rideout avocado?

P: There was an Elsie that Rideout was supposed to have developed. Was that named for someone in your family?

E: No. That was an aunt by marriage. My father's two best fruits that I remember were pear shaped, had that rough skin, and lots of oil content were the Prince and the Princess. He promoted

another one called Lyon and this Lyon was a tall growing tree; you could plant a lot to the acre. I remember that he had a number of his trees planted in an orchard near Redlands. I remember going with him and looking at the trees in that orchard. He often took me with him just to have somebody to go along with him on some of his trips. My father was in the nursery business. A lot of trees in Escondido and around Rancho Santa Fe were my father's. When I was in high school I had to deliver avocado trees, budded trees, to these places down near Cardiff, Santa Fe Rancho, Escondido and in there. I would take them in a trailer and our old car that we took the back seat out of. We loaded the trees where the back seat was, made a platform, and then the trailer was filled. I would take them down to Santa Ana to the fumigation place. Then I would pick up some there, leave the others and deliver the balled trees that I picked up. My parents did not know whether or not I should do this - they were quite heavy. But, anyhow, my father needed a delivery boy. Then I would take them down into San Diego County so it was an all day trip for me. I don't remember the names of the places I did deliver to because at that age I wasn't interested.

Then, I remember going with him to Santa Ana. There used to be a Queen Anne's hotel - it was a large hotel right off of Sixteenth St. across from the court house in Santa Ana and there used to be an avocado convention there. I remember going with him to the Avocado Association conventions.

Then as I told you on the phone, for years - I don't know how many - he went to the Orange Show in San Bernardino and I went along with him. It was exciting and I could help him. He made a lot of wax, bees wax, models of avocados. The whole one and then the cut one. He painted them with oil paint so they looked real, so they carried. He always carried some fruit with him but in case he didn't have any he had these demonstration models. He made them with plaster of Paris molds. I can remember seeing them sitting all over the breakfast room bench that we had. It was kind of a storage place underneath. Also, he would give out crackers and samples on toothpicks to all the people. And then he got the idea of making avocado ice cream which I never cared for. We had avocado ice cream two or three times - took freezers of it to meetings and served that. I don't remember that he ever did anything with salads; it was mostly crackers and toothpicks with avocado samples.

The Avocado Association came into being. At first my father was quite interested in it and then it happened - and I don't know - over some minor thing - he got at odds with the Association. I think perhaps they did not give him the recognition he thought he should have as being an originator of a lot of things. So, he kind of dropped out of the Association.

There was a man in Los Angeles that he sent samples to and this man would run a chemical analysis. That's how he knew about his oil content and the protein content that was in the avocado.

Another thing he developed was something new in budding. All the citrus used to be budded and tied in place; the bud tied in place with what was called budding cloth which was made of fine muslin.

It was dipped in bees wax, dried, and then torn into strips the size you wanted. He got onto the fact that rubber bands could be used just as well and saved him a lot of trouble. So we used to go to Zellerbach Company in Los Angeles and get rubber bands - huge boxes of them. Then he found out that by using chewing gum, the gum helped form the seal. So, besides going and getting rubber bands, we got boxes of Wrigley's chewing gum. That used to irk me because I don't like chewing gum particularly and I had to chew gum all day long while I was budding to seal off the bud at the top with chewing gum and then wrap it up with the rubber band.

We found out that rats ate avocados and loved them and so do dogs. Our dog, if he could reach one that was on a tree with a low-growing limb, he'd eat it off before it ever got ripe.

P: I knew about the rats but that's the first I've heard about the dogs.

M: Oh, dogs will get them fast.

E: I met a woman this summer near Covina - I was at her home with a friend - and she had two large avocado trees. She picked up two or three off the ground and said, "You know, I don't know why these are here because my dog eats them all the time."

M: But it is a special breed of rats that eat them.

E: I don't know which breed it is.

M: They don't go in houses, just outside.

E: It's kind of an outdoor rat.

P: I think they are called fruit rats.

E: There may be a fruit rat.

The hill in front of the house was terraced and on these terraces is where the old nursery trees were grown.

P: There are still some growing there on the terraces. People who live on South Circle which is below the front of the house have avocado trees and I know someone who lives just across from where the driveway went up to your house have one tree that has at least three different varieties of avocados on it.

E: That is something my father did, too.

P: It was one of the experiments?

E: Yes. You know, they take citrus - I don't know if it is just a basic understock but they will graft, and I've seen the trees, grapefruit, lemons and oranges all of the same tree. Tangerines, too.

My father was originally in the citrus business and we moved up on the hill, in 1914, I think because that was the year of the terrible flood on the Rio Hondo.

This is my friend Hazel Thrasher that is coming in now.

H: I'm from Whittier, too, but I only lived there a year and never went back.

E: Incidentally, about that flood. Let me back up a minute. My father had a camera that took postcard size pictures. . .

H: Esther, it was in February that we had that flood because the basketball team was stranded on the other side of the river.

E: She lived in Whittier.

H: I graduated in 1914.

M: You must know Frances King; she graduated in 1915.

H: Well, I doubt that I knew her. I knew Ethel King.

M: They are not related but Ethel is still there in Whittier.

(Next part of conversation with Hazel is unintelligible. She was in another room by this time)

E: That's a good way to remember.

P: Just in case the tape didn't pick up about the basketball team I'll put it in my notes about them getting stranded in 1914. Okay, Esther, go ahead.

E: We went down as soon as we could get out with the car from the mud. We went down to the river bank of the Rio Hondo and looked across. I remember the people coming across in breeches buoys and they were sending milk across in big cans. The railroad bridge was all twisted and the car bridge was just an empty space. Bobbing along in this roaring river - you could hear it for miles and miles - I can remember a walnut tree going right on the top and there were chicken coops with chickens sitting on top of the coops. The river had changed channels and the change had taken out a whole walnut orchard and some peoples' homes there.

M: That was above Pico that it took out that walnut orchard.

E: That was out toward the old winery, some where in there. That made a terrible impression on my life and it is something you never forget. That was a catastrophe and people were stranded for two weeks or so because it took everything out from the mountain to the ocean, every bridge.

My mother, incidentally, was born in Marysville, California, and came down south when she was two years old with her parents - her mother - they lived with my grandmother on her side, that would be her mother; they had the house on Painter and what is Whittier Blvd. now. What was their name?

M: She was related to the Hazzards.

E: Yes, the Hazzards.

M: That was the Wheatland house.

- E: No. The Wheatlands were my cousins. They were my second cousins through the Hazzards on my mother's side. My mother used to tell stories, because they used to have to go. . . You may not be interested in this.
- P: Yes, I am. We spent yesterday afternoon going through Wheatland Construction Company records.
- E: Well, this is what I remember my mother telling me that made an impression on me, that one of the big crops when she was a little girl in the Whittier area was mustard. And that, she said, to her as a little girl - the thing that made an impression was that she heard several people were bitten by centipedes in the harvesting of mustard. She said the mustard used to grow, the stalks would be as big around, and would hold up her wrist. I never believed it. I always thought, "Oh, she's just imagining things." Even as a kid I didn't believe her because I have never seen mustard stalks that big. But, you know, in virgin soil that has never been used before, and rich soil, this might be possible because she said the mustard was so high you couldn't see a man riding horseback except for the top of his head. And they used to go to Artesia for all their supplies by wagon. She remembers as a little girl seeing Pio Pico on a white horse. I don't know where. I think she remembered the time the San Gabriel River split and came down. I remember something about Pio Pico's place. In one of those floods, whether it was the 1914 or not I don't know, it could have been - flooded into there and one end of the building was lopping off because I went down to see it. And then, right there where Pio Pico's house was, right close was a bridge and that is where the Sunday School used to go for its picnic and swimming in the summer.

My grandmother remarried. Her husband died in Marysville and she was a widow with five children and had no way of making a living. She came to live on the Hazzard property. We don't know but what the Hazzard's had her marry one of the workmen on their ranch by the name of Brokaw because she had no means of support. So they lived down there.

M: Was it your grandmother that married the Brokaw?

E: Yes. So there is a Harold Brokaw in Whittier that is my mother's half brother. He could probably tell you about the family. I couldn't possibly. I can remember going down to the old Brokaw home - my grandmother's home, and the impression I have - the impressions of a small kid - was gathering eggs and secondly was that they had fig trees and one was a Smyrna fig. Then there was the walnut orchard and we used to play house in the walnut orchard.

(Tape was defective, making loud screeching noises and was changed. Part of conversation was lost. New tape begins with fragment of sentence about corresponding with Harold Brokaw each year at Christmas.)

We write once a year and tell all the family news we know of. I went to see him about ten years ago. I was hunting my birth certificate or a record of it. He wasn't too well then and his sight was very bad. He used to be my idol as a child because he had a motorcycle and not many fellows had them then.

M: Wasn't he ^{interested} ~~intered~~ in oranges?

E: Yes, through my father. And he workd - there was a Harry Cooper, I think that's the right combination of names - for Harry Cooper who had a nursery in Whittier and my uncle Harry Brokaw worked with Harry Cooper and he worked for my father, too.

P: There was a Charles Hamburg who had a nursery here, too.

E: Yes. The Hamburg property was one of those properties at the bottom of the hill on Beverly. Going up the hill it is to the left - going up to Rideout Heights. There was a house owned by Hamburg and my father built a little building just before you leave the first turn. And in that old barn - I don't know if it is still there as a garage - it was built so it looked like a house. We spent that winter, the rainy winter while the house on the hill was being built, in it. It just had shingles on it - there was no other protection - and the rain came down on all of our beds and we had to have oil cloth on our beds to keep them dry.

P: To keep from drowning when you went to sleep?

E: Yes. We had just a little corner partitioned off from the living place with wire and then there were sheets hung on the wire to make rooms and that is where we lived.

There is an oil lease still called the Hamburg lease.

P: Did your father have oil drilling on your property? There is still a derrick up there on the hill.

E: Well, it was opposite the home of some people, it was originally called the Sutherlands, that lived there as you start up around the hill. I was trying to think of the fellows name. And then a man who was a lawyer bought from them by the name of Smith. And I can't remember who bought it from them?

P: You mean the oil property?

E: The Sutherlands owned it, then Smith and then the Simmons.

M: Which Simmons was that?

E: S. G. He was a real estate man in Whittier. S. G. Simmons and his daughter Georgia lived there when I first moved here. She's over at Quaker Gardens if you want to try to interview her.

P: Is it S I M M O N S?

E: Yes. She'd have an entirely different viewpoint on things from where they lived. We used to - the families used to ride to school.

M: (Made comment or asked question which was not picked up on the tape)

E: Her brother's name was Lester Simmons

M: The Sutherland boys were Don and. . .

- P: There still are some Sutherlands. We've got a house on our list called Sutherland house. Is that a relative?
- M: That's the Sutherland who lives down by the park. Was the Sutherland house out there on the. . .
- E: On Sutherland point. It was a two story house near the oil well. There's an oil rig just right on the edge.
- P: That's right, just over the edge. And there is a house that looks like it was built about 1910 sitting here on the side of the hill. It looks like it's been vacant for a long time and somebody is now moving into it.
- M: Is that the place that has all the old wood around it over on Pioneer?
- P: No, no, this is up on Rideout Heights.
- E: I'll tell you something more about the hill. It's not about the oil or avocados. It's about the hill.
- P: That's fine. Just anything you remember we want.
- E: We lived on Citrus Avenue when I was a little girl until I was seven. Citrus is right down there at the bottom of the hill. I don't even know if there still is a Citrus.
- P: Yes, there is.
- E: Anyway, we lived on Citrus and we moved there - I don't know when - when I was small. I wasn't born there but my sister next to me was born there. We were there, I should say, four or five years, and my father was raising dew berries at that time and he had pickers come in from all over to harvest the dew berries. And then he got interested in grafting walnuts and I went all over with him to sell English walnuts and I helped him plant and sort. And another thing, we used to go clear over into the washes at Covina. The old car was and we'd make of day of it. We'd pick up black walnuts out of the washes and come home with them and then use them as seed nuts for the English walnuts that were grafted on. That's another story.
- P: No, that's interesting. Go ahead.
- E: That has to do with what was raised at that time and about how it was done. They were put in seed beds and I can remember going to La Habra and to San Fernando with my father with walnuts. That was before we ever got into the avocado business. No, going back to that location. That area in Whittier was originally owned, when I was a little girl, by some shepherders and there used to be a little house on the hill there as you come up Pickering you turn to the left and start down - right in that area is a little shepherders house. They always had dogs around so I was afraid and I can remember the sheep on the hill. It was all fenced. Then we moved off of Citrus and we moved into town. We were two years, at least two years, in Whittier. I don't know why we moved but we moved. Then father found out the shepherders were no longer going to run sheep there and whoever owned that land was going to sell it. So, he bought it all on a shoestring. He bought all of Rideout Heights on a shoe-

string and he asked the city of Whittier to develop a road. They said it couldn't be done; whoever the engineer was said it couldn't be done or it would cost too much. So, he went ahead with it himself. He laid out all the roads and hired graders and that - there are some old pictures somewhere in the family of grading and taking off all the cactus. So he laid out all the roads to Rideout Heights and Rideout Heights roads for years were all his own. The city eventually took them over because the upkeep on them was something.

P: Oh, I can imagine.

E: Then my father had an unusual ability to see ahead, what we call foresight. He was a dreamer but he had foresight and he - I can remember this - couldn't hold all that land because he didn't have the money. He decided he'd pay for the whole by selling off the parts until he paid for the whole. So, up there where the Coits residence is, on the top of the hill, he built a summer house with a roof on it and he had a table in the middle of it. He used to go down to Whittier, he advertised in the paper, and he'd get people to come up to see the property and he'd take them up in the car. On the table of this little summer house he had a big tall jar of beans. He'd have them guess how many beans were in there. The closest one who guessed would get a piece of property. And that was a gimmick that he used in those early days of selling property. A free ride so you could see everything like they do now but the bean thing was extra.

P: That was a great idea.

E: So, he was a promoter, in a way, on land.

P: That house that you lived in on Citrus, did you plant any avocados there?

E: No, that was later. But an interesting thing there that not many people had - I think we were the only ones in the country. We raised guavas there. We had beautiful guavas and by the time we left there, in my child's mind, they were much taller than I so we did have some semi-tropical fruit at that time. He was probably working with the government and trying to see what would grow there.

P: If avocados were planted clear down Citrus, and there are still a lot of them in people's yards from the old grove, it is possible that whoever bought from your father got involved in avocados.

E: He was just starting the avocado business with those huge seeds. Some of the seeds were that big around (approximately three inches in diameter) if I remember right as a child. I have seen some seeds like that. There used to be a man in Orange County we used to go to see that had beautiful avocado trees and they were Sharpless. He was an old timer here; he lived down in Tustin and it was a beautiful tree. Once in awhile on some little stand where they have fruit near that area, in summertime, I can find the Sharpless there. That is the only place that has the trees. It's a large fruit, a beautiful fruit.

- M: The Sharpless family here was connected with avocados.
- E: I didn't know that. I had a party once when we lived on Penn Street here in Whittier.
- M: (Asked question not picked up by tape.)
- E: No. We were just a block from the school and I went to school there; and the Wheatlands came to the party. I remember how impressed I was to have my cousins at the party.
- P: You must have had a lot of cousins you didn't even know about.
- E: Yes, but my folks stayed to themselves. They weren't very cousin minded. I know people who have cousins that are just like part of the family. When my mother married my father she took on her husband's family. You know, sometimes women do that and I think this is what happened in our family. I had an aunt we were very close to. Her name was Edna Stoddard. My uncle had a little jewelry store in Whittier.
- M: I remember that.
- P: I've seen ads in old papers for that store.
- E: She lived on South Greenleaf and when I went to Whittier this summer I went by the old location. I just wanted to make sure that I could recognize where the spot was even though there isn't anything there to tell where it was. It was where, I think, Penn Street comes into . . . you'll find some pictures somewhere. She had a palm tree in her front yard that was so tall it was a landmark in Whittier; and she had a hydrangea out in front that was immense. Those two things were her pride and joy. She was very active in the women's club, the Whittier Women's Club.
- The street car, in those days the street car went down Greeleaf, and right there opposite her place was where the car stayed overnight, sometimes. It didn't go back sometimes. There used to be deep pits in there for repair; I suppose underneath the cars. And I remember we kids used to play over there in the pits. They were deeper than we were tall. They weren't carbarns, they were just pits.
- P: They could get under them between the rails?
- E: Yes. My grandmother also owned a house down on Greenleaf not far from my aunt's. My aunt was always interested in the exotic and unusual things and she had a yard that was always full of exotic plants. I remember she had things that my father would run across and take to her. It was sort of a jungle of everything but I can remember the ginger plant that she highly prized. They had a citrus tree there that had all different types of fruits on it. She had a night blooming cereus that was new to Whittier and everybody used to come there at night to see it. I remember staying all night one night and they got me up at four in the morning and I thought, "Why is a flower so beautiful that I have to get up at 4:00 o'clock in the morning to see it?" The night blooming cereus grew up quite tall along the outside of the house. She had a cactus garden in the front of the house with many types of cactus.

P: Was it worth getting up for?

E: Not at my age.

P: I wanted to ask you - someone gave me the name of Seppi as in some-way being involved in the avocado industry up on the hill there.

E: What was that name again?

P: Seppi - S E P P I.

E: I don't recall - no recall on that name.

P: Her name is Blanche and I think she is some relation of Walter Wood. (NB: This should have been Walter Keen but I said Wood on the tape.)

E: I went to high school with him.

P: He is one of the people who is helping us.

E: My father had many business contacts that I wasn't aware of.

I'll tell you something else interesting, not on the avocado industry respecting my father that you might be interested in.

There used to be, when we would drive to Los Angeles in our old car with the thin tires on it that used to blow out everytime we went to Los Angeles, we could always depend on a couple of blowouts. We used to go the ordinary way that you go through Montebello, Whittier Blvd., straight in to 7th St. or Stevenson Avenue it was called then.

At that time it was all cattle and outside of the few businesses and homes in Montebello, we used to see cattle right along on either side of the road. Then, I don't remember the date, but the Japanese moved in there on the cattle land with their gardens. My folks belonged to the Congregational Church at that time and they always had a missionary bent - wanting to serve. So, my father said, "Here are all these Japanese and they don't have any place to go to church. So he started what was called the Montebello Japanese Mission in connection with the Congregational Church. I used to go with him, and I was learning to drive the car then, and we went over there every Sunday morning. We would go around to all these little Japanese places and pick up the children and take them to this Sunday School. The Congregational Church built a Sunday School building there that was a place where they not only housed the children but had church services there. There was a man that lived in Whittier that my folks knew whose name was Carl Matsua and he had a direct connection with this church. The first minister that I remember over there was Mr. Fuchima. I don't remember how long I went over there with my folks but later on that became a Japanese Mission and I can remember that it had a fiftieth anniversary. I was impressed that they had a vested choir and all. And we had started this in the Japanese community. That was a project of my parents, mostly of my father.

E: Another thing, I used to go with him all over the Montebello hills where there was a possible dirt road that a car would go on and he used to shoot doves. Part of our food, when I was a little kid when we lived on Citrus, would be wild game. There were marshes down near Bolsa Chica and Huntington Beach and out this way and my uncle Harry, who was a great hunter, and my father, who was a crack shot - they used to go hunting and we had a lot of wild game, wild ducks. I can remember the wild ducks as a child. I always thought they were too beautiful to be killed. Then, we had many, many meals off of the dove. They were very plentiful in the hills at that time. Occasionally we had quail. People in those days did use the fowl that was here to sustain themselves. We very seldom had beef. We lived on chickens and eggs and what my father would shoot in the way of birds.

P: How long did it take him before his avocados actually started to break even for him?

E: I don't think they ever broke even. I think he just eked by. I do not think they ever broke even because he was no businessman. We often talked about it afterwards. He could see money but only the gross, never the net value of money. He was almost always in the red, the avocados never paid.

Another time he had a hobby and got interested in raising pheasants. The mother pheasant would not take care of the eggs in captivity so we got all these banty hens that sat on the eggs. We had pheasants running all over - little pheasants running all over the place. The minute they hatch they can run as fast as anything. We had a number of types of pheasants. We never had any trouble with coyotes and the pheasants. The things we had trouble with were weasels, owls and bobcats. The coyotes took the chickens but they never bothered the pheasants. My father had a shotgun that he kept loaded on the back porch. We never touched it. He'd hear the chickens cackling in the night and he'd go out and shoot the gun up in the air to scare the coyotes away. I don't know if it scared them away or not but he did not want to kill any chickens. We did catch a bobcat in a trap, and a great horned owl that was catching the pheasants. They would pull the pheasants right through the wire fence. The wire mesh was fair size and the pheasants stayed close to the fence. Whittier College took the carcass of the bobcat. I don't know if they had it stuffed or not.

(Defective tape made the rest of this side unintelligible. Mention was made of the Hofstetters. Questions were asked about who bought the house from the Rideouts and who had owned it since. Esther found an old album and the pictures were discussed. Impossible to transcribe complete questions and answers because of tape noise.)

E: These were what we used for Christmas trees in those days.

M: Outdoor?

E: Outdoors but it was moved from indoors to outdoors.

M: This is you?

E: Yes, and Marjorie and Alberta. This was before the other two came along. We were kind of spread out; they tried too many times for a boy.

This is a family group down at my aunt's place. This is the vine covered trunk of the huge palm tree.

M: That isn't Mrs. Stoddard is it?

E: No, that is my mother. This one was taken at Long Beach. (Picture of family in early 20th century bathing suits.) A friend took these old, old films and reproduced them. He said they were in excellent condition. This is my brother when he was a baby. We were up on the hill then. These are two pictures - I don't know where they were taken, maybe at San Gabriel - my folks car and my uncle Wynn's car, or maybe it was Uncle Ed. This is my father back here and this is my Uncle Wynn who was from Lakeport that I told you about. Look at the size of the tires on those things. This is my father again here - he took a terrible picture.

P: Where would this be with the ivy on the trees?

E: I think it is over near San Gabriel. The other one was taken near the San Gabriel Mission I know. So this probably came from the same place.

These cars had a - there's the horn, and they had a little, I don't think it shows here - box of silver right here that was called a Presto-Lite. I don't know what kind of chemical it was, but anyway it made - these are the coils - and they operated the headlights from this Presto-Lite box.

P: What kind of cars were they?

E: I don't know. I don't think I was car conscious at the time about the types of cars.

Do you see this bar? It held the windshield up and then they had a fold-down type of roof and isinglass to keep the rain out on the sides which it never did.

M: The Isinglass was always broken. Let me see the one with the Wheatland again.

P: Allan Wheatland was born in 1912 according to the information we were given by Mrs. Wheatland yesterday. So this couldn't be Allan.

M: Did you go out to his office?

P: Yes. Mrs. Wheatland asked that we identify the three Wheatland males in the construction company when we give credit for getting information from them. She gave us the dates for the three of them: Earl, Allan and her son.

M: Oh, I'll bet the Wheatlands would love to have a copy of this.

P: Would you let us copy it and give a copy to the Wheatlands?

E: Sure.

(Other pictures discussed.)

E: Oh, here's a picture of the house; I do have one.

P: Is this your father?

E: No. That's my great-grandfather, S. S. Rideout. He was out here for two or three years from Michigan and that's Alberta. Those little tangerines and oranges - my dad was experimenting with some blood oranges. I can remember he would always go out here and cut two or three oranges to show people what they looked like. That was the only time I ever saw blood oranges. They probably came from the government.

He had cherimoyas and jujubas and several other types of semi-tropical fruit that are on the market now. There at the house, on the ranch, they were raised successfully.

P: That's a great picture.

E: The roof line is gone. The roof was white - white tar paper.

P: Can you tell me the date the picture was taken?

E: No, but you can tell from the size of the trees.

P: How old would Alberta have been?

E: Well, she looks to have been maybe five. Let me do some backtracking and I can come up with it approximately. Let me get a pencil.

It was 1916, we had been in the house two years.

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