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About the Cover: George Amalong took this photo of the Thompson Brothers Ranch from atop the windmill tower in May, 1926. Grace Thompson in a white dress is carrying son Jack. Ruth Stidham in a dark-colored dress is carrying son Ben in front of Grace. Maryan Williams is standing in the corral gate, shading her eyes as she looks toward the windmill. This photo and all others in this issue are courtesy of Maryan Williams Thompson Stidham.

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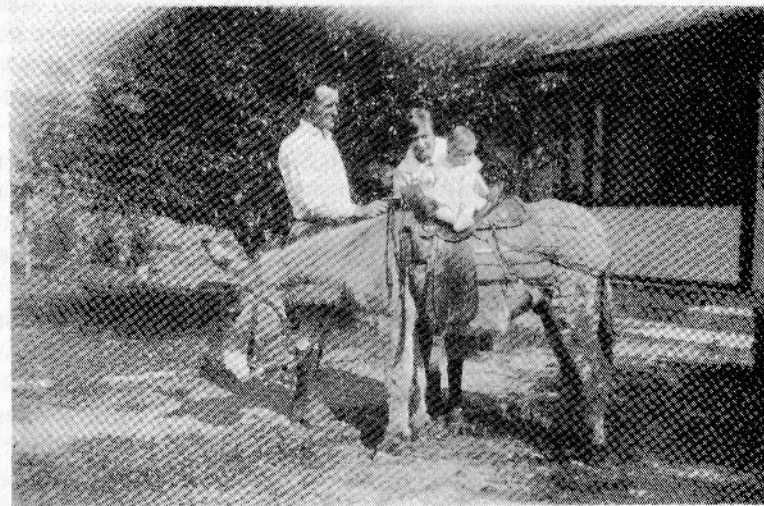
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DEPRESSION DAYS ON THE RANCH

By Maryan Stidham

Summer vacation, 1926, began for me with birds singing and gentle breezes bringing on the fragrance of the Chiricahua mountain pines to the Grauer place in North Pinery Canyon, Cochise County, Arizona. I was a paying guest of my friends, Ruth and Blackie Stidham. Ruth had taught the primary grades at the Hilltop school for the two years before I taught there, also for two years. So we always had much to talk about.

For a moment I was amused at remembering the difficult time Ruth and I had earlier in the spring when we tried to take pictures of their active baby, Ben, and their squirmy little white dog, Jiggs, in the yard here at the Grauer place, under an apple tree.



Blackie and Ruth Stidham with their son Ben on a burro, July, 1926, at the Grauer place in North Pinery Canyon.

Then I remembered that this was the day we were to go to the Thompson Brothers Ranch, down in the valley west of here. There was to be a roundup, and Blackie, a former cowboy from Texas, could help with the cattle. We would have a good old Southern dinner, for the Thompsons were from North Carolina. Ruth was from Georgia, so she knew about Southern cooking.

I dressed in the hiking clothes I had worn from the teachers' cottage on the other side of the mountains, expecting to go back for more of my things in a day or two.

When I joined the little family for breakfast, I could see that Ruth was elated at the thought of going somewhere. She and Ben were home alone so much while Blackie drove their Model T Ford to his job at the road camp in Pinery Canyon. Ruth loved to talk, and with Southerners too! This was going to be a great day.

Ruth reminded me that we had seen Mrs. Alec Thompson, Sr., at the El Dorado School program last winter. The room was crowded, so we did not meet her. But we did meet and congratulated her daughter, Helon Thompson Hendrix, who had put on the program. I found that she had also taught at Pearce and at Douglas and I admired the graciousness with which she conducted the program.

And I was really impressed with the white-haired lady, dressed in becoming black, her mother, who somehow didn't seem to belong in this rural setting.

I met her son, Alec Thompson, Jr., one evening later in the spring, when I was again a visitor at the Grauer place and Blackie had brought him over from the road camp. The Forest Service was using the Thompson work horses on the road being built over the mountains and Alec was hired to take care of them.

I smiled to remember that I had watched through the window as Blackie and Alec drove up. It seemed that Blackie was having to urge his visitor along the path to the house.

"Poor guy," I thought. "He'd rather be with the fellows at the road camp."

But he was pleasant enough as he came in, doffing his cowboy hat. I noticed he had black, wavy hair and gray eyes that seemed on the verge of smiling. I had taken charge of little Ben so that Ruth could enjoy a visit with a fellow Southerner. In the meantime, I continued my quiet assessment of him. I noticed that he held his own very well in the lively conversation with Ruth.

The talk finally turned to the World War, which had been over for several years. Blackie said, "Let me tell you my war story. It won't take long. I wasn't drafted and I began to feel lonesome with all pals gone to war. So I decided to enlist. I had a few head of cattle on a few acres of land near my uncle. So I told him I'd sell out to him. He said, 'Don't do that. You'll be sorry if you do.' But I was one of the smarties and wouldn't listen. So he said, 'Awright, but don't you ask me to give it back.'"

"So I went to the enlistment place, but when I got there, the guy said, 'Hey, don't you read the papers? The war's over. They don't want no more soldiers.'"

"So that's the end of my war story. And my uncle wouldn't give me back my little ranch."

Poor Blackie! But he could always turn his bad luck into a good story. Alec said he could tell one almost as sad.

"When I got through my first training back in Kansas, I was told I could go

home on leave. It was the dead of winter and I had picked up some kind of germ that sure had my stomach upset. I didn't want to foul up my leave, so I boarded the train and we got into one snowstorm after another. That made us 24 hours late getting into Douglas. There was John, waiting for me. We finally made it out to the ranch and, by durn, I was still sick and couldn't eat a thing but bread and milk the whole time I was home."

We all groaned in sympathy and I found myself looking forward to more of his tales. I had always been interested in history and here was a person who had come through the War To End All Wars.

And now on this particular day, Ruth eyed the clothes I had on and suggested that I should wear a dress. I hadn't brought one so she got out one of hers, a nice summery one, dark blue with a big white collar. It fit me very well, so I seemed doomed to dress up, instead of trying to pass for a cowgirl.

When we started down the canyon in their Ford, Ruth delighted in telling me about the people on this side of the mountains. There was really a distance of only a few miles between these settlers on the west side of the Chiricahuas and those who had come to the east side, around Portal, Paradise, and Hilltop, but contact between them was rather sporadic.

The first house we passed was the little place of Grandpa and Grandma Stephens, with chickens and guinea hens pecking away in the yard beneath oak trees. Ruth and Blackie sometimes bought a chicken or a dozen eggs here but today we kept going. Grandma Stephens was a sturdy little person, dressed in gingham or calico, her skirts about ankle length, no matter what the styles. Grandpa was thin and wiry, glad to talk about his garden to anyone who stopped by.

Next came the Frank Hands house, almost hidden by trees. Frank and his brother John were Englishmen who had acquired the first claim to the Hilltop mine begun on this western side of the mountain. They sold out to a regular mining company and Frank stayed on the west side. But John established his home on the eastern side near Portal.

Now we were passing the Rhoda Riggs house, a tall, two-story one much too big for this unmarried member of the Riggs family. She left it to the Lindseys, younger people with a growing family. Two or three children stopped playing in the yard to watch us drive by.

Now we entered the broad Sulphur Springs Valley. We passed two school houses, which constituted the El Dorado School. Ruth reminded me that Albert Hendrix was principal and teach of the upper grades in the first and newer one and his wife, Helon Thompson Hendrix, was the primary teacher who had put on the program we had attended some time before.

Soon we approached a settlement with big trees, a whitewashed house and unpainted buildings and corrals near by. This was the Riggs Home Ranch, built by the pioneering couple, Brannick and Mary Elizabeth (Robbins) Riggs, as a home for their large family. They had come by covered wagon from Texas. Their last child, Barney Kemp Riggs, known as Kay, was born

in Big Immigrant Canyon, near Apache Pass on Aug. 23, 1879.

We stopped at Riggs Home Ranch, for Blackie had an errand there. Two teenage children invited us in so we all got out of the Ford and went into the house. The roomy living room was comfortably furnished in turn-of-the-century style and when Kay and his wife, Mary, came in, I was reminded of some of the successful farm families I had known around Greeley, Col., where I grew up. Kay and Mary had met in Willcox, but she was originally from Fontana, Kan. Both Kay and Mary were very pleasant, likable folks.

As Kay and Blackie discussed road equipment, the matriarch of the family, known far and wide as Grandma Riggs, opened the door of an adjoining room, glanced our way, and went on to the kitchen. She apparently asked the children who was there, then turned and went back to her room. I had time to notice that she wore a very long, dark dress and a white cap on her head. Her steps were firm and she seemed in no sense an invalid. She was 87, they said, and in quite good health. I have always been glad that I had a good look at a real pioneer woman.

When we got on our way, we soon passed the Riggs Cemetery, a square piece of land set off from the surrounding ranch country with good fencing and a number of evergreen trees among the grave sites inside. The next settlement was the home of Ida Lillie Riggs, known with affection as Aunt Ida. She had come to the Riggs Settlement as its first teacher and as a tutor for one of the older boys in the family. She must have been a good tutor, for her student was William M. Riggs of the Riggs Bank in Willcox. He was also elected the first president of the Cochise County Stock Growers Association in 1912. He and Ida had married but in time he asked for a divorce, to which she reluctantly consented.

Later, he married Cora Riggs, a young woman from another branch of the family and eventually they had a handsome son, William M. Riggs, Jr., known as Billie.

Ida Lillie Riggs had some land around the small house we were now passing, where she lived with her long-time companion, Carmen Kennedy, who was a very good worker around what was called the Star Ranch. Recently, a nice new house had been built for them, painted a cheerful yellow. But Ida Lillie kept putting off moving into it, for she kept quantities of old magazines, some with pictures cut out and pasted on the walls, as well as empty bird cages, flower pots and a whole sun porch full of flowering plants, which she wanted kept where they were. So she rented the new house to Albert and Helon Hendrix while they were teaching at El Dorado School.

By this time we were passing the Stark Ranch, also part of the Riggs Settlement. Mary Frances (Riggs) Stark, one of the Riggs daughters, had married William A. Stark, better known as "W.A." I was to know their sons Harold and John better than their other children, Frank and Eunice, during the coming years. Harold was a good kind person and good-looking too. Small wonder that Susan Sweeney, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from the Uni-

versity of Arizona, found him appealing. She had been teaching school at the mining town of Pearce, farther south in the Sulphur Springs Valley, and she and Harold were to be married some time in the coming summer.

John Stark and his wife, Goldie, had three daughters, Mary, Connie and Frances, and they all had experiences on several ranches. At one time, the parents decided that the girls should go to school in Douglas and they happened to live in a house just two doors down from us on Ninth Street. Connie and my daughter, Ellen, were chums then and later were roommates at the University of Arizona.

These folks of the Stark family, whichever ones happened to be living here, were the Thompsons' closest neighbors, Blackie said. Their ranch was called the Stick Ranch, or STK for short. Now we were just seven miles from the Thompson Brothers Ranch, with a couple of gates to be opened and shut. I offered to do that, but Blackie said no, he would. Ruth added that I probably couldn't and I began to wish that I were more of a ranch hand.

Now we were really out in the wide open spaces. I enjoyed looking back at the long sweep of the Chiricahuas, running almost north and south, with the Dos Cabezas Mountains branching off from the northern part toward the west. Between the two ranges was Apache Pass, known for its bloody history of 40 to 60 years ago.

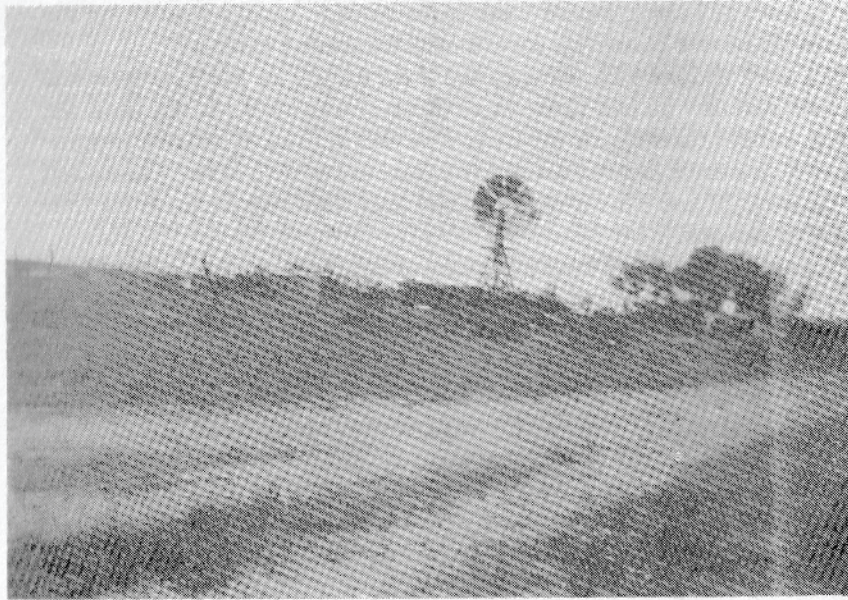
The Two Heads, or Dos Cabezas, part of the Dos Cabezas Mountains were very noticeable now. They had been a useful landmark for travelers in the past century and surely for Indian tribes in previous centuries.

Soon another little group of trees, small buildings and corrals came into view. This was the Thompson Brothers Ranch. There were cottonwoods and evergreens around the low, whitewashed house and an enormous windmill out back. A screened-in porch along the north side turned out to be the summer kitchen. A small covered porch with a couple of chairs marked the west entrance to the house. Across the road was a smaller, unpainted house which was the home of the John Thompson family. John was Alec's younger brother by several years.

As we stopped at the gate to the larger house, with hound dogs barking and turkeys gobbling, a nice-looking, slender young woman with brown, wavy hair came out, a very pretty little girl at her side and a smaller boy in her arms. They were Grace Thompson, John's wife, and Frances (called Fifi) and Jack. Blackie found his way to the corrals and the rest of us went inside.

The living room had better furniture than might be expected on a homestead and the dining room table was stretched to the limit and set for company. The older Mrs. Thompson came in from the kitchen. I at once recognized her as the distinguished-looking lady I had seen at the El Dorado school program.

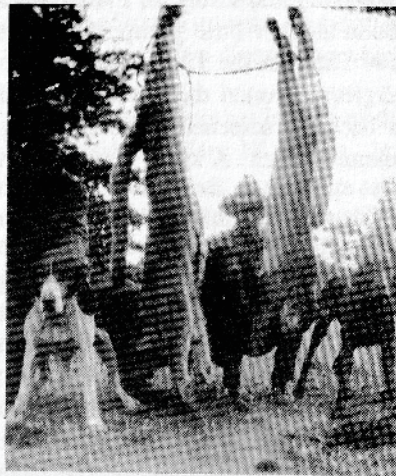
This time she wore a house dress and as she brushed the white hair away from her face, she apologized for being busy in the kitchen. We offered to help but there seemed to be nothing we could do. Grace suggested we might



The original Thompson Brothers Ranch in the Sulphur Springs Valley, May, 1926.



Trapline results on the Thompson Brothers ranch in the early 1920s (left photo). It's a typical collection for southeastern Arizona —grey foxes on top with a bobcat pelt in the middle and coyotes on the bottom. Right photo, Alec J. and John Thompson with hounds and two mountain lions killed in the Chiricahua Mountains in 1926.



like to sit on the front porch where it was cooler. Fifi and Jack joined us while Grace went to the kitchen to help.

Little Ben seemed surprised and pleased at these small people who didn't tower over him as grownups did. Fifi and Jack had a good time trying to get him to talk. Ben was only nine months old while Fifi said she was five-years-old and Jack was 1½.

Just then, a cowboy on horseback came around the house. For a moment he seemed like a stranger. Then he tipped his cowboy hat and I recognized his black, wavy hair and gray eyes which seemed to be smiling. Ruth greeted him as Alec Thompson and I remembered the pleasant visit we had all enjoyed at the Grauer place.

Alec suggested that we might like to watch them "cut the cattle" in the pasture north of the house. I wouldn't, for worlds, have admitted that I didn't know what that phrase meant. But I went with the others where we could see the herd of cattle against the sweep of the Dos Cabezas Mountains.



Cutting cattle at the Thompson Brothers Ranch, May 1926. Alec Thompson on left.

It was indeed interesting to see the men on horseback manipulate the cattle, separating some from others. This was my introduction to real cattle work, in contrast to the growing sport of rodeo, which I had once seen at the Frontier Days of Cheyenne, Wyo.

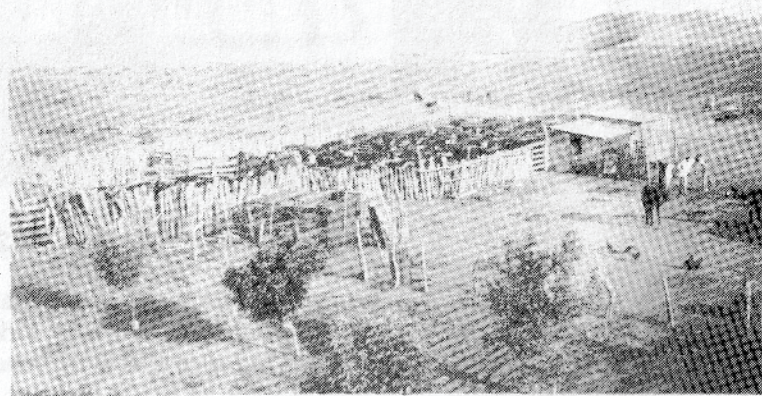
Soon Alec and Blackie rode to the fence along with Alec's brother, John Thompson, another typical cowboy. He wore his hat tilted back but his hair was not quite as dark and his frame heavier than his brother's.

We had a photographer on hand, George Amalong. He had taken pictures of the cowboys and cattle in action and now Blackie suggested that George should take a picture of me on his (Blackie's) horse. I said I wished I had

worn my hiking clothes but now Ruth took charge. Someone donated a pair of chaps and Ruth said she'd arrange me suitably on the horse.



Alec Thompson, Blackie Stidham, Maryan Williams and George Amalong were photographed in May, 1926 at the Thompson Brothers Ranch. Maryan is wearing good shoes and borrowed chaps.



The sorted cattle were in the Thompson brothers' corrals in this May, 1926 photo. The ranch garden is in the left foreground. Note the chickens in the horse corral. The pinto horse is the same one as in the photo of Maryan Williams and Alec Thompson in Barfoot Park.

By this time, Helon and Albert Hendrix had joined us. Helon said she would hold little Ben so Ruth and I climbed through the fence (not an easy task!) and Ruth got me situated on the horse. Two or three pictures were taken.

Later, in looking over the pictures George Amalong gave us, I was drawn to the one of a cowboy with a certain slant to his hat and a forward leaning posture on his horse as he worked cattle. It was Alec Thompson.

A little after noon, we had our good old Southern dinner, fried chicken with all the trimmings. Then Ruth got Ben settled for a nap on the south sleeping porch. Some of the men took naps too, as they had been up before dawn.

After a while, the men gathered at the corrals and George Amalong climbed the windmill tower and again took pictures. As the shadows lengthened, Helon and Fifi and I took a walk up the road to look at wild flowers. Like those on the eastern side of the Chiricahuas, these were probably at their best around Easter time, but they were still the sign of good rains which had come to the ranch country in the spring of 1926.

Farther up the road, out of sight, Helon said, was the little one-room house which she had used to prove up on her homestead. Then she sold the house and homestead to Alec and John.

She said that Albert would probably be the principal of a larger school next year in Marana, a farming district northwest of Tucson. Albert was dignified but friendly and seemed to have chosen a career that was just right for him.

Before long, it was supper time with cold fried chicken now and plenty to go with it. Helon, who was passing things around, insisted on giving me a wish bone. Later, she took up the plates. It was getting dark outside and there was the usual commotion of people departing. Helon asked me privately if I had noticed who was the first man to go through the door to the kitchen. Looking around and not catching her reference to an old bit of folklore, ("The first man to walk under the wishbone..."), I said, "Alec?"

"Yes," said Helon, "and you know what that means." She reached up and took the wishbone from the top of the doorway. We both laughed as she said, "He is the man you are going to marry."

I was glad that Alec was engrossed in conversation with his brother John at that moment.

We finally got on our way to North Pinery. Alec went with us, as he was going on to the road camp with Blackie. I happened to look up at the Dos Cabezas Mountains and saw a little cluster of lights shining in the darkness.

"They must be having a party at Mascot," said Alec. "With all those secretaries at the mine, they've got to have something for them to do. But they won't be there long. It's just a stock-selling scheme."

I never saw those lights again, and I never met any of the secretaries. In time, the mine closed.

I spent the day after the roundup hiking to the teachers' cottage "on the other side." My principal during my two years at Hilltop School, Mary Fritz,

was staying there with her teenage son, John. We had a good visit and then I somehow managed to tote a suitcase full of clothes and other essentials back to the Grauer place. Ah, youth! I can't even remember being tired.

About this time, Blackie acquired a burro for me to ride. Alec brought over some feed he bought at the Amalong ranch. A saddle and bridle also appeared and now I could go burro riding up and down North Pinery with the little white dog, Jiggs, dancing about and chasing yellow butterflies.

The next time I saw Alec Thompson, he came to the Grauer place in a new two-door Buick sedan which the Thompson brothers had just bought. Their old Chevrolet, with the top taken off, was soon a make-do pickup, in which they transported chicken feed, groceries, ailing calves or muzzled bobcats which they used in training their hound dogs to track mountain lions.

One Saturday night, Alec and I went to a dance in Willcox. I remember dancing with one of the lion-hunting Lee brothers, either Dale or Clcell. He was a nice-looking young man, dressed up for the dance. Years later, when I saw pictures of the Lee brothers at the end of a lion hunt, I found it impossible to recognize the young man I had danced with.

After the dance, Alec and I drove to the Thompson ranch. I slept in one of the beds in the south sleeping porch, Alec's mother occupying the other, for this was her bedroom.

In the afternoon, Alec saddled horses so we could ride in the pasture. My horse was the one that Fifi and Jack sometimes rode.

Alec gave me a few directions and I got seated correctly, reins in hand and ready to go. Alec turned to mount his horse, when suddenly my nice gentle one started running. Alec shouted something which I didn't hear and I realized that I was on a runaway horse. He seemed headed for the Big Draw, a dry, sandy area of low, scraggly bushes. Alec continued to call and perhaps my horse got the message, for he slowed to a stop. Alec said if he had tried to catch him, we might have had a real horse race of it.

With Alec riding close by, there were no further difficulties. Soon we stopped in the shade of the only haystack in sight and I was glad to rest on terra firma for a while.

Alec told me of the time when he was riding horseback up to the Ericksons (Faraway Ranch) and was almost there. Suddenly a woman on horseback came bouncing around a curve in the road, her horse just about to throw her off. Alec jumped off and grabbed her horse by the bridle. The young woman was a teacher from Douglas who had come to Faraway as a guest to enjoy a bit of the Old West. Some time later, she married a prominent rancher east of Douglas. I never heard how she got along with the horses.

One day, Blackie persuaded me to ride my burro over to the road camp about the time he and Alec got off work. Then they would show me how to get back to the Grauer place by going over a hill and down a wash which would bring me to North Pinery, with which I was familiar. It seemed a little scary but Blackie said there was nothing to it.

In the afternoon I followed directions and rode my burro to the Pinery Road. Before long I came to the large, open area where the road camp had tents, machinery and corrals. There was the smell of supper cooking for the men coming in from their work. I soon spotted Alec and Blackie. Alec said Blackie was busy and he would get me started home.

I wasn't exactly scared, as the Chiricahua Apaches had been driven from the area 30 or 40 years before. But I did wonder if I would get lost. Alec walked beside me up the little hill and a bit farther. Finally we stopped and I looked at the sweep of green ridges before me. They seemed to melt into each other. I asked Alec where the Grauer place was in all that confusion and he estimated the direction.

"But don't worry about that," he said. "Just follow the sand wash."

So I directed the burro down off the knoll, waved goodbye to Alec and saw him watching me from a distance. My uneasiness lasted through twists and turns of the wash, when I didn't know if I was going north, east, south or west. But suddenly the wash widened out and there I was, on a familiar part of the North Pinery Road near the Grauer place.

Once Alec had his Buick, I saw more of him. We had long conversations about his growing up in the mountains of North Carolina, and my growing up in Greeley, not far from the Rocky Mountains which I loved. "The hardest job I ever did," he said, "was keeping up with my oldest brother, Ed, and his teenage friends when I was about nine. They were planning a camping trip across the Blue Ridge Mountains and I put up a big fuss to go with them."

"Ed said, 'Well, you better keep up with us or you'll get lost.'"

"So I kept up with 'em, but some days I thought I'd just die on the trail. Nothing been as hard since then."

A reversal in fortunes started for the Thompsons soon after the turn of the century. Perhaps the word "Depression" had not then been given its later meaning, but whatever the terminology, it was devastating. The Thompsons had relatives in Arkansas, so they moved there first. Most of them had the "chills and fevers" there, so they moved on to McAlester, Ok.

Alec was young and restless in McAlester. So he got on a train and headed west. He happened to get in a railroad car with a bunch of people from Kansas.

"They were friendly folks," he said. "All excited about the free homesteads they were going to get near Willcox. Some friends had already got theirs and they told these folks to hurry up and get theirs before the best ones were all taken. They talked me into getting off with them. And I got a homestead just a little east of the Kansas Settlement. That was in the spring of 1910."

Alec's father came next because he had been having asthma so bad and hoped Arizona would help him. John came as soon as he graduated from high school. They managed to get a house started and then Alec's mother and Helon came too.

"We never aimed for a good house," he said, "till we got all the land and cattle we wanted."

I told Alec that my folks had been pioneers too, back in the last century. My father was just two when he came with his family from Wales in 1887. They wanted to get into something besides coal mining, so most of them worked for the railroads.

My father's first job, when he was just 10, was as a water boy on what later became the Million Dollar Highway from Ouray to Silverton, Col. Later, a teacher encouraged him to go to the Kansas City Conservatory of Music and he became a piano teacher and pipe organist.

My mother's family left a perfectly good farm in Iowa, homesteaded in Kansas and were wiped out by grasshoppers. Her father became a carpenter in Glen Elder, Kan., where she was born in 1877. Both families wound up in Crested Butte, Col., and my parents married in Gunnison. My brother was born there. Then they moved to Cripple Creek, where I was born.

The mines were booming and people could afford piano lessons. After my brother went to the University of Colorado at Boulder and became an electrical engineer, an aunt said if I would come and teach with her in Swan Lake, Idaho, and save my money, maybe my folks could send me to the University in Boulder, too.

So I took the teachers' exams, taught in Swan Lake and went to the University in Boulder for three years. Then we moved to California and I graduated from the University of California in Berkeley. But I wanted to get back to the "real West," so I taught the primary grades at Hilltop for two years. We kept hearing that the mine would close, so I might be teaching in Douglas in the fall.

Alec told me about his early days of homesteading. He and John sometimes hired out as cowboys at \$30 a month or broke horses at \$10 each. Or they would ride horseback to the Chiricahuas and hunt mountain lions for the bounty of \$25 each. Coyotes, which could mean death to small calves, were killed closer to home. I found that I could see the cattlemen's point of view in such matters.

Alec and I were falling in love and I did some real thinking about it. Would I be any good as a ranch woman, or did I really want to teach in Douglas as Mary Fritz and I had planned? We were to sign contracts in August. I surely liked the wide open spaces better than towns or cities, in spite of inconveniences.

Alec was 14 years older than I was, but that only made him more interesting than the young fellows I had known. His experiences during World War I were fascinating. He could tell me more about Germany than I had ever learned in school.

I also had something else on my mind at this time. I was to have a visit from my college roommate and dear friend, Opal Ralston Stratton. She had married the summer before, taught school in Colorado and was coming to visit

me. Then we would go to southern California and do a little sight-seeing before she returned to her husband in Boulder.

I had made arrangements with our obliging mailman at Hilltop to meet Opal's train at Rodeo, N.M., and bring her on his regular mail run to the teachers' cottage where I would be staying with Mary Fritz. Then Opal and I would hike through the Hilltop tunnel on to Ruth and Blackie's. Opal and I had been in the hiking club at Boulder so I knew this would not be too strenuous for her.

Alec met us at the Grauer place and Ruth suggested we all go on a camping trip around Rustler's Park to show Opal that Arizona had some real mountains. Alec said he could get horses and assured me that they would all be tamed down by the time they got to the Grauer place and into Pinery Canyon.

On the appointed day, Alec came with the horses, including a pack horse. Ruth, with Ben in the saddle in front of her, and Blackie started ahead of us. As soon as they were out of sight, Alec announced we were not carrying Ben's baby basket, which Ruth had insisted on taking.

We soon caught up with Ruth and Blackie and Ben. Alec said he was sorry about Ben's crib, but the pack horse wouldn't have stood for it.

"Well, Ben won't let us get much sleep tonight," Ruth said.

Alec had been over this country when he and John hunted mountain lions. He pointed out a saw-mill on the north side of Pinery Canyon but I have forgotten whether this was the Riggs' saw-mill or if theirs was another one which did not come into view.

Soon trees gave way to taller pines with patches of a softer green in the distance. These were quaking aspens which would be golden in autumn.

Eventually we came to the open area of Barfoot Park. A dilapidated cabin had hay in both room which we used for mattresses. The place was surprisingly free from insects or small animals. We did our cooking outside.

We didn't get much sleep that night because of Ben but Alec, Blackie, Opal and I were still ready to hike to Fly Peak the next morning. Ruth said she'd try to calm Ben down, so they stayed around camp.

With our horses carefully hobbled at Barfoot Park, the four of us hiked to Rustler's Park, where mountain springs kept wild flowers in bloom throughout the summer. We didn't have any rustled cattle to enjoy the spring water but we enjoyed it ourselves.

Farther along a narrow trail and gaining altitude, we came to the cabin and Fly Peak tower. Grace Thompson's brother, Bill Hudson, manned the tower. He was tall, lanky, good-looking and greeted us warmly. Blackie kidded him about not being on the job, pointing to the tower.

"Heck, I just came from there," Bill said. "Not a fire in sight. A good view from there. Why don't you all climb up and see?"

Blackie was the first to accept the challenge and Alec and Opal were game too. I was a bit scared about climbing that high into the blue sky but I tried not to show it. So we all had our climb and a wonderful view.



Maryan Williams and Alec Thompson in Barfoot Park, July, 1926, top photo. The fire lookout tower on Fly Peak, July, 1926, middle photo. Opal Stratton, Bill Hudson, Blackie Stidham and Alec Thompson were in front of the Fly Peak cabin in the bottom photo.



Fly Peak was named for the famous Tombstone photographer who made excellent pictures here when photography was still rather new.

Fly Peak was one of the tallest of the Chiricahua Mountains, but one thing I noted about these mountains was not one had a summit above timberline. I was used to Long's Peak and Pikes Peak and others in Colorado, where there was hardly a blade of grass above 11,000 feet. Arizona's high mountains kept their mantle of green except for occasional outcrops of bare cliffs.

When we got back to Barfoot Park, Ruth said that she, Blackie and Ben had better start back home first thing in the morning, as little Ben was still upset at roughing it. Alec, Opal and I would enjoy the mountains for another day.

I was glad Opal and Alec had this time to get acquainted. Indeed, she thought it would be a good thing if I married him. Before Opal came, Alec and I had done some talking along that line and I well remember what he said as he was leaving the Grauer place one night. "I think I can take care of you. In fact, I know I can."

Of course, this sounds quaint in this latter part of the 20th century but at the time I was perfectly willing to entrust my life to him.

On our way from Barfoot Park, we decided Alec would come in the Buick and take Opal and me to Douglas, where we would board the train to California. Alec and I also set the day for me to meet him in Tucson, where we would be married in Grace Episcopal Church on Stone Avenue.

I persuaded my parents to wait and visit us at Christmas time instead of coming to the wedding for Alec and I would be leaving immediately for the Grand Canyon. Alec and I were married on July 24, 1926. Helon and Albert were hosts at a wedding dinner at the Pioneer Hotel.

They then took Alec's mother back to the ranch, to prepare for the coming visit of Frances Thompson Bridewell, the older daughter of the Thompson family, and her 17-year-old son, Billy.

The Grand Canyon was new territory for me but not for Alec. When he got home from the war later than the others in the community, William Riggs treated him to a trip to the Grand Canyon and some of the sights of Arizona along the way. Now I felt like a true Arizonan, making a similar survey of the state that was to be my home from now on.

When we got back to the ranch, we received a warm welcome from the family, including the visitors, Frances and Billy Bridewell. Frances was one of the most attractive women I had ever met. She radiated charm. Billy was a handsome teenager, about six feet two, with the family's dark hair and expressive eyes.

When Alec and I went into the house, we had a nice surprise. The little room just east of the summer kitchen, which had been the winter kitchen, was now painted a pleasing ivory to match the new ivory dresser and dressing table the family had given us. The bedstead had also been painted ivory and there were Navajo rugs on the floor. Helon had been the inspiration for all this change and had done much of the work herself.

Next we went into the room just south of this one and greeted Alec's father. He was an invalid and hadn't met me before because he didn't like strangers to see him "stacked up in bed." But I wasn't a stranger now. Alec Sr. had the same amused slant to his eyes that I had noticed in other members of the family. Before long, I found myself visiting him to see what he had found to be amusing since the last visit.

Frances helped her mother with a good deal of the cooking and I took over the dish washing, trying to observe how things were done here. I hoped to be a help instead of a hindrance in the family.

The most pleasant part of each day was the evening, when we all sat out on the little west porch and spun yarns.

The two chairs on the porch were usually occupied by Frances and Grandma Thompson and the rest of us sat on the cement. Some of us leaned against the house until we got tired enough to go to bed. John's family would be with us for a while but when the children began to get cranky, Grace pronounced bedtime and took them home.

Billy rode horseback with Alec and John and we visited with Helon and Albert while they were still in Ida Lillie's house. But all too soon, it was time for Frances and Billy to go home. Life on the ranch seemed very quiet after they left.

Frances had cleaned out cupboards and organized supplies before she left, so I didn't mind asking her about how things were done. I was not an expert cook and I didn't want to be just in the way, so I kept our bedroom neat and helped with other things that needed doing. But I left most of the cooking to Alec's mother.

One day in September, everyone else wanted to go to "town," meaning Willcox. So I volunteered to stay home and fix Grandpa's dinner. I wasn't sure what he could eat, so I erred on the side of too much. He couldn't eat it all. I told him I would learn and after I washed our dishes, I went in to visit.

I asked him what chores he did when he first came to the ranch. He said he was given the task of driving a team and wagon to West Wells, about four miles away. There the workers let him load barrels of water to take back for people and livestock. This went on until the Thompsons' own well and windmill were installed.

His oldest son, Ed, gave him The Saturday Evening Post every Christmas. He told me to help myself to a pile of them. There were not many books around, so I was glad to read them from cover to cover.

It was a pleasure to talk to him, but unfortunately our friendship was short-lived. He died that year on my birthday, Sept. 29th, and was buried in the old cemetery at Willcox.

I was still trying to fit into the work around the place and not succeeding very well. One afternoon when the men were away, Grace said she'd try to teach me to milk the cow. Cow and milking stool were arranged in the small corral, and Grace gave me a large bucket. She told me how to pull and

squeeze but nothing happened except that the cow got irritated. Grace asked Fifi to show me how and Fifi was glad to oblige. Her little hands moved just as they should, but she couldn't explain the process so I still didn't know how to milk a cow. I thought surely I would learn in time but I never did.

I decided that I could pick the green beans that were flourishing in the garden. Grace worried I might be bitten by a rattlesnake she had seen an hour before among the green beans. But I looked carefully, saw no rattlesnake and picked all the beans that were ready that afternoon.

One day, I happened onto Alec's souvenirs from the war, most of them from Paris, where he had been on leave with three other fellows. They hired a guide to take them to the usual tourist spots and Alec had a good collection of postcards, maps and even a small book in French. I had taken two years of French in school and was delighted that I could translate it. I suggested to Alec that some day in the distant future, we might see Paris together. But he said that he had seen all of France that he could stand and I could go with some women friends. That I did in 1964.

Alec had served two years with a heavy artillery unit, was gassed, had the flu and was sent to Germany with the Army of Occupation. He did not get home until late in the summer of 1919.

Because he had been gassed, Army officials told Alec to stay in New York and apply for compensation. But Alec was one of these independent Westerners who didn't want to accept handouts from the government, so he went on home as fast as he could.

The early 1920s brought hard times to the cattle business in Arizona. Prices were so low that John took the Thompson cattle to Nebraska one year and sold them there. When a drought hit at the same time, some ranchers were forced to give up, sell off whatever they could and try their luck somewhere else.

I began to think of Mr. C.W. Bush, who was ranching near Portal when I came to Arizona in 1924. The summer rains had been very scanty and he sounded so mournful that I almost wanted to laugh. I have learned that "hard times" are not funny. A beautiful moist spring as we had in 1926 could not be counted on regularly.

After Frances and Billy left, it seemed that most of Alec's and John's conversations were about the lack of rain, which pasture was driest and whether the cattle should be moved around. It was late for the summer rains to start. One day I came in from the yard and mentioned that there was a good-looking cloud up over the north pasture.

"Yeah," said John. "But it's staying up there. What we need is for it to come down on the ground."

After that, I didn't try to be encouraging about the weather.

We did have a few light rains that summer. But that meant Alec and John did more riding, with appropriate medication handy in case screw worms had infested a wound on some cow or calf. Cattle could be killed by those worms

if their progress in an animal wasn't caught in time.

Early in September, friends asked me in their letters if I didn't get lonesome for the sound of school bells, after spending most of my life going to school or teaching. I had not thought about it. Some married women did continue teaching, but it was not the usual thing. And what would I do for transportation if there was some vacancy in a school within 20 miles or so from the ranch? I simply put such thoughts out of my head.

I do remember that some time in September, I was walking in the pasture and a feeling of desolation came over me. I wondered what I was doing there. Alec and John were used to doing cattle work together and certainly wouldn't appreciate a greenhorn woman in the way. Grandma Thompson did most of the cooking. I kept our room tidy, washed dishes and did some cleaning in the other rooms when I thought it wouldn't bother anybody. John complained that I kept the family wash pan too clean! He was used to washing his hands and face there to avoid carrying the water to his own house.

But things changed with the death of Alec's father. Frances wrote and asked her mother to come and spend the winter with them. From then on, it was up to me to do the cooking.

Grace made the best rolls I had ever tasted but when I tried to imitate them, the little hard things that turned out were comical. Alec told me not to bother. I tried to cast some of the blame on the small old cook stove. In fact my cooking did improve a year later when we moved to the OB Ranch near Dos Cabezas and Alec bought a good range for that kitchen.

Early in November, 1926, Alec and I took his mother to Willcox to put her on the train for Bridewells' in Arkansas. Then we started for the Adams ranch in the Little Dragoons southwest of Willcox. Small clouds here and there flamed with the gorgeous colors of an Arizona sunrise as we drove beside the Willcox Dry Lake.

This dry lake is famous for its mirages. Suddenly there they were, almost straight ahead of us, small hills of exaggerated shape, constantly changing at the edge of a body of water. At times they appeared to be standing on their heads. Then they would quickly grow more slender, then plumper, then tall and thin. There were reflections of these forms in the dry "water" or they would almost disappear and then start their formations all over again.

After 10 or 15 minutes, our road turned but I looked back and saw the large "lake" spread over most of the flat land behind us. Then the magical forms gradually disappeared.

In later years, on a train headed for California, I found that the waters of the "dry lake" could come up over the railroad tracks. I would look around at other passengers and invariably find some who were genuinely alarmed at the possibility that our train might be caught in a flood. Then their fears would turn into sheepish recognition of the fact that they, too, had seen the famous Willcox Dry Lake, also known as the Willcox Playa.

Of course we could hardly wait to tell Lizzie Adams of the mirage we had

seen. When we got to her place she said she had seen good ones too, going to and from Willcox.

She was a nice looking, middle-aged woman who, for some reason, was all alone at the ranch that day. She insisted on giving us breakfast, which helped relieve the morning's chill. While she and Alec put on coats to go look over the cattle, Mrs. Adams asked me if I wouldn't prefer to stay by the fire and read a magazine. I said I would. I was sure I could be no help to them and I enjoyed reading.

I wondered why Mrs. Adams was all alone at her ranch, but she was very knowledgeable as she and Alec talked over the deal while warming their hands after coming back inside. The deal was going very smoothly. However, she seemed a little uncertain as she mentioned a few cutbacks. Alec said he could take those too.

"At what price?" she asked uneasily.

"Oh, I'll take 'em at the same price as the others," he replied. A big smile brightened her whole face.

This was the only time I ever heard Alec make a cattle deal, except over the telephone in later times. But I have a feeling that not all of his cattle deals turned out so happily for both parties.

Also in November, 1926, Alec and I made a visit to some family in the Riggs Settlement, I can't remember which one. Going home afterward, it was such a lovely moonlight night, with the long stretch of the Chiricahuas behind us and the closer range of the Dos Cabezas looming up north of us, that I suddenly felt that this Thompson Ranch was exactly the right place for me.

Early in December, there was an occasion that called for the presence of practically everybody in the community. Tom Riggs, the oldest of Brannick and Mary Riggs' children, had died and the funeral was held at the Riggs Cemetery. Alec and I, John and Grace and their children and many neighbors that I had not met before were there. It must have been a consoling thought to the family that Tom was buried in this special place, nearer their part of the Chiricahuas and nearer still to the rolling ranch land they all knew so well.

While Tom Riggs was a real pioneer, it was his son, Ed Riggs, who became, with his wife, Lillian Erickson Riggs, the discoverer of the fantastic rock formations soon to become known as the Wonderland of Rocks. They had been hunting for a wounded deer, Lillian once told me, making their way through densely wooded country a few miles from their Faraway Ranch. They kept catching glimpses of amazing rock formations and never did find the deer. Instead they found more of the dramatic rocks. They thought it would add an interesting attraction to their guest ranch, so Ed established trails for horseback parties and they found their guest ranch really thriving.

About 1930 I had a young woman guest who wanted to go on one of these horseback trips. So Alec called Lillian, as he was an old friend of the Ericksons, and it was arranged. There were several people in our party. Some young man working for Faraway led our group. He gave an interesting ac-

count of the rhyolite formations.

When we got back to Faraway, I got out my checkbook to pay for the two horses we rode. But Lillian insisted that I should only pay for my friend, as I was practically the same as family. I was pleased, but just a little amused, as it was Alec who had been thought of as a possible suitor for Lillian's younger sister, Hildegard, a few years back.

At Christmas, my parents came from California and spent about a week with us. My father was used to playing the pipe organ for Christmas services, some of them quite elaborate. We thought he should see how it was done in ranch country, we went to services that a Rev. Mr. Duckett held at the El Dorado school house.

Both my parents had come West with their pioneering families in the 19th century and they couldn't quite see why I wanted to repeat the process. They were both small in stature and more the "city type." But the visit was pleasant and they looked forward to coming again.

After my parents left, I thought about the things I especially enjoyed in the eventful year of 1926. Of most importance was being able to see Alec every day instead of maybe once a month, as would have been the case if I had taught school in Douglas. I still enjoyed his tales of pioneering.

I asked him one day if he had lived in a tent at first out here. He said no. He had felt that a big wagon and horses to pull it were of more importance and he got a big tarp to go over the wagon. He slept in that and cooked over a camp fire until his father and John came out. Then they built a small shed and called that home for awhile.

Gradually they acquired adobe bricks, boards, doors, windows, roofing and cement to make a living room or a dining room. They sent for some furniture which had been in storage at McAlester and more rooms were added as needed.

Grace told me that she and John had the original shed for their room when they were first married and she was surely relieved when they finally got their little two-room wooden house, with storage shed attached, across the road from the older house.

I thought it only fair that I should share some of the inconveniences of the early ranch days. As a matter of fact, I had become used to carrying water in a bucket instead of turning on a faucet during my three years of rural teaching. I had learned about wood fires from camping in the Colorado Rockies, so I felt that I was not the complete greenhorn.

It was a real pleasure to become acquainted with neighbors during my first summer there. While Helon and Albert were still in the new, yellow house at Ida Lillie's and while Frances and Billy were still with us, we all drove up to have dinner with Helon and Albert. Ida Lillie and Carmen came over to visit.

Ida Lillie was of the older generation but her lively intellect was still apparent. I enjoyed her interest in good books and told her that I had a copy of "Anna Karenina" I would be glad to lend her. In a few days I got the book to

her and within a month or so, she and Carmen came down to the Thompson ranch. Ida Lillie drove their small, black car, dressed as was suitable for women motorists in those days, with a large dark veil holding her hat in place and wearing leather gloves although the day was quite warm. They came in, all of us chattering at once. When they were seated, Ida Lillie took my book out of her purse and handed it to me.

"I'm sorry," said said, "But I didn't like it. I'm surprised that you like it. It's so immoral!"

Now I was the one to be surprised.

"But it's telling people about the sadness of immorality!" I replied, but didn't press the subject. We quickly began talking about something else.

One evening we all went up to the STK Ranch (named for the cattle brand.) Harold and Susan Stark lived there after their marriage, which took place just five days before Alec's and mine.

Harold's parents, "W.A." and Mary Riggs Stark, had brought up their family of four in the Long Beach, Calif., area. But all four turned back to this family ranch at times and later had ranches of their own.

It was great to meet other couples who preferred ranching to city life. Susan came to visit us one day when the men were otherwise occupied and it was good to talk with someone familiar with universities and teaching. I was glad to have Susan and Harold for our closest neighbors.

We had visitors from Pearce one day. Mrs. A.Y. Smith, wife of the president of the Commonwealth Mine of Pearce, and their son, Lewis, drove up unexpectedly hoping to find Helon. But she and Albert had already gone to Marana, which was a disappointment to "Mrs. A.Y." as she and Helon had been good friends while Helon was teaching in Pearce.

But the rest of us enjoyed the visit, as Mrs. A.Y. Smith was an Arizona artist of growing fame and an interesting person as well. She had been the belle of the ball when Pearce was booming. Now she had her career to think of and her son's. He was a nice looking young man, but, it seemed to me, rather over-shadowed by his mother's forceful personality.

Years later, when Mrs. A.Y. Smith, as a widow, had a room in the Gadsden Hotel in Douglas, Alec and I went to see her because Helon had told us that Mrs. A.Y. was having a spell of hard times. Alec and I had talked about buying one of her pictures and, as luck would have it, she had one of her Grand Canyon pictures for sale. We were glad to buy it but she insisted on knocking \$25 off the price because "the Thompsons were such good friends."

This particular picture, she said, was either the one that had hung in the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., or was so much like it that she couldn't remember for sure. So I have always been careful to qualify this picture as the one that might have hung in the Corcoran.

A wedding was always a festive occasion in the ranch country and in August we attended the wedding of Walter Amalong, a husky young member

of the ranching family Amalongs, and Virginia Lindsey, a very pretty picture of a bride in her long white gown. She was, if I'm not mistaken, the oldest of the Lindsey children living in Aunt Rhoda's house. I remember thinking that she had probably grown up helping with their younger children and was probably well qualified to be a wife and mother.

I saw Walter and Virginia now and then in future years, sometimes at the county fair in Douglas. Each time they would have some of their children with them and each time the children would have grown beyond all possibility of recognition. But Walter and Virginia always had the same genuine smiles that I remember from their wedding day.

The young woman who played the traditional wedding music for Walter and Virginia was Tess (Lylene Clarissa) Karlsbrotten, who married Walter's brother, George Amalong, the following year. Their daughter, Jean, married Billie Riggs in 1952. The relationships among these ranch families makes an interesting study.

It was good to see our old friends, Blackie, Ruth and little Ben Stidham now and then. We had stopped in Flagstaff on our way back from the Grand Canyon and hunted them up to let them know we really were married.

Ruth was going to the teachers' college there to renew her teaching certificate. She insisted that we stay and have hamburgers with them for supper. Blackie was working at the saw mill there. I don't remember who was taking care of Ben, but they always seemed lucky in finding someone who could.

Among our visitors at the ranch were Mr. and Mrs. Kirby and their two little boys, whom I had known at Hilltop. Mr. Kirby ran the store at the Hilltop mine and Mary Fritz and I had found it was a convenient place to buy something we had forgotten to get in Douglas. Once in a while, I would see his wife, who seemed to be older than her neat, good-looking husband but probably wasn't. Her hair was prematurely white.

Both were good-natured and I was glad to see them drive up to the ranch one Sunday afternoon. They told us they had bought the store in Dos Cabezas and they hoped we would shop there. When we moved closer to Dos Cabezas we did patronize Kirby's Store.

Sometimes I felt a real need for company and this was provided one day in autumn when an old man came by with a small herd of raggedy goats. He looked a bit the worse for the wear himself. He told Alec he was on his way to Bisbee to join some relatives who had goats on the hills there. His wife stepped out of their wagon, looking very neat and clean. I couldn't quite figure them out, but I took a picture of them. Alec gave them the best cross-country directions he could and they were on their way.

The visitors who brought the most happiness to Grace were, of course, any of the Hudsons who dropped by. When Mr. and Mrs. Hudson drove up one day, I thanked them personally for the nice picture of a lake with green trees around it, which they had given us for a wedding present. Mrs. Hudson said we would see enough of dry desert, so they decided to give us something else

to look at.

Mr. Hudson seemed to be in reasonably good health now, although he was quite thin. Mrs. Hudson impressed me as a very kind-hearted person, in spite of the many difficulties she had encountered in life.

They were from Blanco, Texas, where their first two children, Grace and Bill, were born. Mr. Hudson was in poor health from lung trouble so he moved to the Riggs Settlement for a change in climate, in August, 1897. His mother was a sister of Grandma Riggs. I heard Aunt Rhoda nursed him back to health.

In May, 1900, Mrs. Hudson and their two children rejoined their husband and father who had started homesteading the old Barfoot place near the Riggs Settlement. Government records show that in 1903, James Lee Hudson leased 45 sections of land from the Chiricahua Forest Reserve. This was the first lease in that area.

The Hudson family grew in Arizona with the addition of Fannie, Winnie, Frank, Mildred, Marvin, Della and James Lee, Jr., known as Jim. He was born in 1918. The first time Grace took me to see the Hudsons, I noted that Jim had the same second reader that my pupils at Hilltop had used.

Some of the Hudson children were still at home when Mr. Hudson bought a nice modern home from someone in the Sulphur Springs Valley and settled down a short distance north of the well-worn pioneer house. Soon the Hudsons had many of the advantages of town living on their own ranch.

Grace learned the art of economizing early in life. I had thought that I was good at that, for music teachers were not too well paid, yet their families must not seem poverty-stricken. But among the early ranchers, practically everyone started out on a meager basis. People were not distinguished according to their possessions. As time went on, those who survived droughts, depredations, accidents and other misfortunes could finally begin to have things a little easier. Within a few decades, the primitive homes of pioneers were regarded as real oddities.

In autumn of 1926, Alec and John worked on the summer kitchen to make it warm enough for winter. The open screens along the north side were boarded up except for one long, narrow place which they filled with a glass window. The screen door was fortified with more canvas, especially along the bottom, so our feet would not get quite so cold when winter winds came from the north.

I don't remember where Alec and John got the wood for the little kitchen stove. I do recall that they bragged on mesquite wood for a good, clean fire, but the mesquite could hardly keep up with the settlers' need for it. Alec and John must have gone to the Chiricahuas for oak and pine, although pine burned too quickly and got soot all over everything. The real old-timers complained that the mountains around Dos Cabezas looked bare because the mines used up so many trees.

That fall, work on the road over the Chiricahuas was halted for an indefi-

nite time, so Ruth got a job teaching in a one-room school at Camp Elmo, a small mining camp on the north side of the Dos Cabezas Mountains. An aerial tramway was built to carry supplies from the Dos Cabezas side and Blackie was hired to help work the tramway.

There was also a very narrow, winding road that went from the Mascot area, passing over to the north of the mountains not far from the base of the Two Heads. Then the road wound around toward the east, finally coming to a few small houses and a little school house, almost hidden from sight among the trees. I couldn't see any mine there, so it must have been hidden too.

In March, Ruth arranged for Alec to bring me to Dos Cabezas. Blackie met me to take me over the mountains to Camp Elmo. I enjoyed the ride for Blackie seemed perfectly at ease with that kind of driving. Alec's mother was due to arrive in Willcox Saturday from her winter in Arkansas so Alec would take her to the ranch then and come for me on Sunday.

It was always fun to see how much little Ben had grown since the last time. Ruth was cooking a big supper for us, so I told her frankly that I would not be able to eat so much. Alec and I were starting a family and my stomach felt queasy.

"That's all right," Ruth said. "You go ahead and eat and if it comes up, I'll have plenty of newspapers spread on the floor by your bed." It happened and I was glad that it didn't bother her.

I enjoyed visiting the one-room school for I wondered how such a variety of classes could be managed. Some schools had only one pupil per grade but that one could not be neglected. I soon realized that both teacher and pupils were used to that. Ruth thought nothing of helping an eighth grader with arithmetic and then going back to first grade reading.

I did some wandering among the trees but these mountains were too steep for easy climbing. It was nice to have so many trees around. The mines had apparently not used up all the trees here.

I was pleased to have my picture taken with little Ben standing beside me. He was not a baby any more.

When Alec came for me on Sunday, I immediately noticed that he no longer had the mustache he had been growing for a couple of months.

"Mom didn't like it. In fact, she had a fit about it," he said.

We all laughed and I admitted that I hadn't liked it either. The colors in it were all wrong, some red, some brown and gray and black. But I had resolved not to complain about things unless I felt it really necessary.

Alec hadn't enjoyed the drive over the mountains at all.

"Heck, no," said Blackie. "You just keep following the road and it'll getcha here."

Alec's mother told the sad news that Frances and Billy might not come for their usual stay at the ranch next summer. Billy would be working with his father and trying to decide about going to college.

And there was more family news. Helon and Albert were getting along fine

with the job in Marana and were expecting a baby, probably September. They would spend most of the summer in Warren, the small suburb of Bisbee. Helon had friends there, including a doctor in whom she had confidence. I was sure that we could go see them there, especially after the infant arrived.

Alec and John were busier than usual, moving cattle around, hoping for rain and then, when it came, wishing they had more land. During the summer, when they went to Willcox, they talked to other cowboys and heard that there were a couple of outfits near Dos Cabezas that were available.

The Busenbark spread had a small ranch house in a little canyon southwest of Dos Cabezas with a good spring well at the site of Ewell Spring of Butterfield stage days. There were Indian metates among the rocks on the hillside showing that there was a dependable source of water even in earlier times. The cattle brand was IT, so of course the ranch was called the IT (Eye-Tee).

In the canyon just to the southwest of Dos Cabezas was the Ted Waughtal ranch with a big L-shaped, whitewashed adobe house. Some of the neighbors said it was 50 years old. There was also a large barn, corrals and fences. This was the OB and the letters were joined together on the brand.

I did not pretend to know all that went on in making a deal for these ranches. I was preoccupied with soon being responsible for a new human being. I knew no more about babies than I had known about ranching and I was glad Alec and John could manage business affairs without my suggestions. They did buy these two ranches but there was still only one outfit, Thompson Brothers.

It was decided that John's family should live at the IT. Fifi would start school at Dos Cabezas in September and the IT was closer to the school house. The OB house was large enough that Alec's mother could have a little apartment of her own.

Helon's new son arrived on Sept. 13, 1927 and we went to Warren to see them. Alec insisted that there was a bit of folklore to the effect that anyone born on the 13th of a month would always be lucky with the number 13. He had been born on Nov. 13, 1888. Helon's son was named James Willard Hendrix. Of course they shortened that to Jimmy.

Alec and John were so busy with ranch activities that we decided I should get a small apartment in Douglas near Mary Fritz and be ready for our infant to arrive. Things went along uneventfully until early morning of the 21st of October when Mary Fritz came over to tell me to brace myself for the news she had was not good.

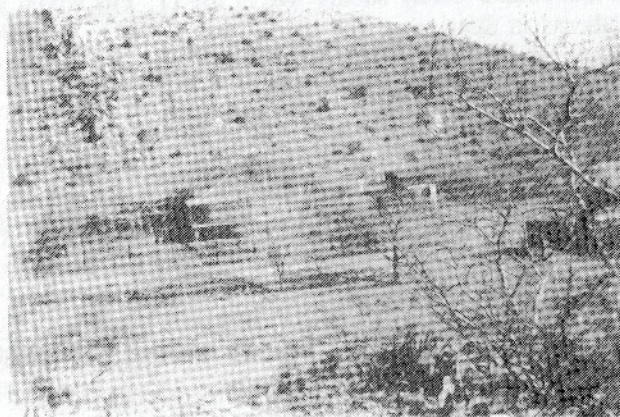
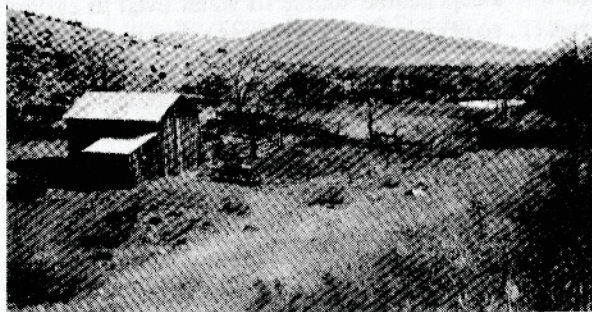
I gulped and told her to go ahead. She said that Ruth and Blackie had brought little Ben in to the hospital with intestinal trouble but it was too late. He died early that morning.

I was terribly shaken. If Ruth could not keep her baby alive, how could I hope for better luck with mine?

The sad story was that Ruth, Blackie and Ben had gone to Nogales to a

teachers' convention to see about Ruth's possibilities of getting another teaching job. They were living in the Hudsons' old house and Blackie was working for Mr. Hudson.

There had been a typhoid epidemic at Nogales and perhaps that was the cause of Ben's trouble. Ruth hadn't thought much about it, until the morning of Oct. 20th when a cowboy came by to ask Mr. Hudson for a job. Ruth told



Barn, corrals and dirt tank at OB Ranch near Dos Cabezas, top photo. The OB ranch house near Dos Cabezas, bottom photo. The L-shaped house was said to be 50 years old when the Thompsons moved into it in 1927.

him where he could find Mr. Hudson in the pasture. The cowboy had looked at Ben in his little bed and went on out. When he caught up with Blackie and Mr. Hudson, he told them there was a very sick little boy back at the house. In fact, he might be dying. Blackie went back immediately and they took Ben to the Douglas hospital, where he died.

Alec had just come to Douglas and Blackie met him on G Avenue. Blackie was crying when he told Alec about little Ben. He said he didn't know where he was going to get the money for the funeral. Alec simply wrote him a check for the required amount. The Thompsons were deeply in debt for the ranch and cattle but there was no question about a matter of this importance.

Ruth was at the home of the Colvins, old friends from Hilltop days, and Alec and I went to see her. She was lying on the bed in the front bedroom and the Rev. Mr. E.W. Simonson was seated on a chair beside her. He was sometimes called the Clergyman of Cochise County and I couldn't think of anyone who could handle such a difficult assignment so well. He happened to be from the Episcopal Church but that made no difference when someone was in trouble.

When Ruth saw me, she said, "No, no, you shouldn't be here!" I told her I just wanted to come in for a moment.

Alec and I also attended the little funeral. Blackie was there and so were some of his relatives from Bisbee, but Ruth was not. She was subject to seizures and was afraid of having one at the service. For this same reason, the doctors had convinced her not to have any more children.

Just a few days later, our own baby was born at 11:20 p.m. on Oct. 27th. She was a very little girl, just 5 pounds, 12 ounces; no doubt showing the Welsh ancestry on my father's side. We finally decided on her name, Ellen Louise Thompson.

Ruth and Blackie came to see us in the hospital and Ruth and I made a joke out of the fact that I did not wait until after midnight, for Oct. 28 was Ruth's birthday. I thought Ruth was handling herself very well.

When we got out to the ranch, I found that John and family had already moved to the IT and Fifi was now a first grader at the Dos Cabezas school. It took us a while longer to get moved. A nurse at the hospital had shown me how to bathe the baby and I had acquired two small books on child care, one from the government and the other from a distinguished doctor. Alas, I found that they didn't always agree. In the years to come, still other authorities sometimes disagree with both of them, but somehow our daughter managed to survive.

About three or four days after we got to the old ranch, I placed the big white enameled pan of bath water on a chair near the kitchen stove, tested the temperature of the water and started to put my little daughter in it. She suddenly screamed and kicked her tiny feet and I wondered what could be wrong.

I felt the side of the pan nearest the stove and it was hot! I looked quickly at

the bottom of each foot and there was a blister on each from yesterday's bath. I wanted to faint dead away but you can't do that with an infant in your arms. So I pulled the kitchen table closer and managed to bathe her on that.

When we got up to the OB, I found that the kitchen was not so drafty. So we didn't get so close to our nice new stove with its even heat.

Ruth and Blackie had given us Ben's baby basket. It was rather large but that just meant that we could use it longer. We put the baby basket on two chairs, a foot or so away from the big bed so I could attend to her during the night. God be thanked, there were no unexpected disasters for a quite awhile.

About Christmas time, I took Ellen to California so that my parents could see their first grandchild. I also enjoyed visits with other relatives and friends. A favorite cousin had managed to keep her two little boys alive and well, so I began to think that I should be able to do the same with one little girl. I still thought of little Ben often and I wrote to Ruth frequently to help her develop other interests.

In the spring, another Thompson family arrived in Dos Cabezas. Sullivan, the brother just older than Alec, suddenly found himself out of work in the Midwest. The company he had been with for a number of years went out of business. After failing to get another job, Sullivan decided to come to Dos Cabezas and perhaps work on some of the mining claims that were still available.

Sullivan's family consisted of his wife, Mary, and their daughter, Betty, about eight or nine, and her two younger brothers, Dick and Don. They rented an old house in pretty fair condition and Sul tried mining.

Sul was not the cowboy type. That was too bad, for Alec and John could have used a good helper. In Alec's pictures taken in those days, he seemed thinner than ever and so did I.

Ellen seemed quite small too. When a friend came to visit me with her three-year-old daughter, she persuaded me to feed Ellen more. I had been so afraid of making her sick that I wasn't feeding her enough. So I cooked Cream of Wheat and strained orange juice and she began to thrive.

I had consulted the doctor at Mascot about her diet but he just suggested things to increase my supply of mother's milk. We didn't get back to the doctor in Douglas until Ellen was 11 months old. After that, she developed an enormous appetite and I was kept busy straining fruits and vegetables for her. No canned baby food in those days!

Helon, Albert and Jimmy paid us a visit during the summer of 1928. Jimmy was a big, husky, handsome boy with a lot of energy. He even spoke a word or two before Ellen, but she soon overtook him in talking, as girls generally do.

Before long, autumn arrived and with it, Ellen's first birthday. I wasn't expecting company but I made her a very plain birthday cake without frosting. I was still a little afraid that I might upset her digestion.

In the afternoon, we did have company — Helen Brown Keeling, who was

county superintendent of schools when I was teacher at Hilltop, and with her, Martha Criley, a sister of Mary Fritz. Helen Brown was retiring from teaching, as she had just married a brother of Shelton Keeling, who owned a large ranch in Texas. She was taking Martha around, introducing her as Helen's choice to replace her as superintendent.

I was glad I had baked the birthday cake, for this now made a birthday party, Ellen's first.

I wondered how Helen would like living on a ranch after being a prominent educator and politician. As a matter of fact, it wasn't long until she was back in Arizona, at Tucson, where a picture of her is still on the principal's wall at Keeling Elementary School in the Amphitheater District. Keeling was the guiding light for this school and I am sure she enjoyed her work there.

When Christmas time rolled around in that year of 1928, my parents came in for a visit. Ellen was at the stage of always thinking up something new for a grown-up to do. Alec was very busy with his ranch work and I was busy with housework, so it was grandparents who read to Ellen or joined her in playing with her Christmas toys.

My father needed to get back to his work, but my mother stayed a while longer, as she felt I needed some help. Finally, she too left for California and Ellen and I settled into our own routine.

One day I happened to find a small stamp picture of my mother and I showed it to Ellen, asking, "Who is that?"

She studied it a moment and then proclaimed, "'At's tiny grandma." So to this day, my mother has been known in the family as Tiny Grandma. I'm not sure whether Ellen was referring to the size of the picture or the size of her Grandma, who was the smallest of the grown-ups she had known.

About this time, her Grandma Thompson decided to move into Dos Cabezas so she could see more of John's and Sullivan's families. Her first move was to the substantial adobe building which had been the first school house in Cochise County. There were two rooms in it and she was quite comfortable there. But it was a little off the main street, so she moved to a little white frame house near the post office and Kirby's Store.

We had subscribed to the Douglas Dispatch when we moved to the OB. Alec stopped for the mail (including the Dispatch) every day if possible. He would also stop in at his mother's. Daily mail was one of the new luxuries that came with being closer to town.

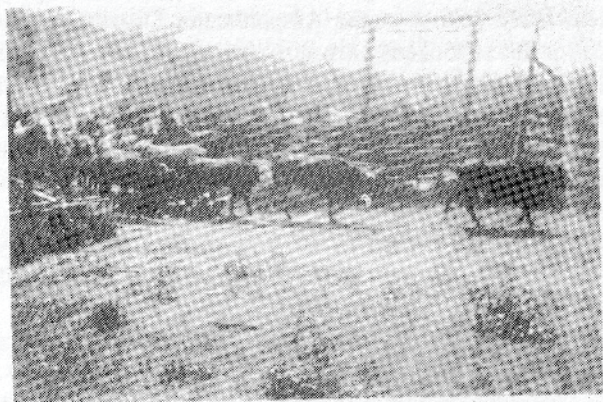
Another new convenience, a telephone, was already in at the IT but not at the OB. That was one of the things I really did nag Alec about. As soon as he could spare the time, I wanted an extension put in to join us with the IT phone.

Ellen and I were home alone so much and I still worried about some disaster befalling her. Eventually a big phone was put in the living room. It was one you had to crank by hand but it was beautiful! Grace and I could now visit by telephone.

Alec and John could also do some of their planning now by telephone, which made things easier for them. It was a bit scary at one time, though, when Alec was phoning during a thunderstorm.

Streaks of lightning shot out from under the high heels of his cowboy boots and for a minute he seemed pale. But these cowboys are a durable lot. He just cautioned me never to use the phone during a storm.

Early in October, 1929, Alec met Lillian Riggs in Willcox and she insisted that he bring his wife and daughter out to dinner at Faraway some time when



Here comes a cattle herd being driven into the OB Ranch corrals, top photo. Cattle in the OB Ranch corrals near Dos Cabezas, bottom photo.

neither the Thompsons nor the Riggsses were shipping cattle. The date was set but the time of day was rather vague.

"Come any time, said Lillian, "and you can show your family around, Alec, so they will know what Faraway is."

Ellen seemed more little girl than a baby now but she still had a fairly strict schedule. She was used to having a glass of milk when she got up from her nap but it was a little late. I persuaded her that she would soon have supper, so maybe we should get dressed and go.

It was a lovely ride from the OB to Riggs Settlement. As we reached the Riggs Home Ranch, we saw Kay standing by the gate so it seemed natural to stop and have a little visit with him. By this time, Ellen was really missing her glass of milk and said so.

"Well, bless the little girl," said Kay. "She can sure have some milk." He was ready to carry her into the house, but I said that we were already late getting to Faraway, so we went on.

When we got to Faraway, I thought Ellen would be interested in the old two-story house and would forget the milk. We met some people and talked about the fireplaces in both the living room and the dining room and we climbed the narrow, steep and twisting staircase to the second floor. I wondered how many people had fallen down that stairway and took care that Ellen wouldn't be another one.

We took a little walk outside, and looked up at the beautiful mountain setting for which Faraway was noted. Finally we went in and waited some more, until at last, Lillian called us all to the big table in the dining room.

Lillian was a gracious hostess and she seemed pleased to be arranging a comfortable chair for Alec's little daughter. Then she announced, "I'm sorry that we are out of milk just now. What would Ellen like instead?"

Since Ellen hadn't been out among people enough to have developed company manners, I was shuddering at what she might say. But Lillian brought her something, possibly orangeade, and we got on with the dinner. Needless to say, Ellen got her milk as soon as we got home that night.

There must have been someone with a cold on that little trip, for Ellen came down with one and it lasted through her birthday. I gave up the idea of a birthday party for her, but Grace brought Fifi and Jack over anyway and there was cake with frosting and I took snapshots. Through the years that followed, Ellen had quite a few birthday parties as the time was just right for Halloween decorations.

I don't remember exactly when we heard the news that the stock market had fallen almost out of sight back East on Oct. 29, 1929. It probably took the Dispatch a few days to reach us.

At first it seemed like something happening in a foreign land. The market would rise and then it would fall badly and Alec wondered how the banks would be affected. It wasn't until men began jumping out of high windows in the business districts that we realized that there was something different about



Branding time at the IT Ranch near Dos Cabezas in northern Cochise County.

this particular kind of "hard times." Alec didn't seem to be terribly worried about our financial situation. I must have been subconsciously using him for a weather vane.

At any rate, when my brother, Sherwood Williams, wrote from Pittsburgh that he was planning a Christmas vacation to California, and hoped Ellen and I could join him, I asked Alec what he thought. It was o.k. with him and I started getting ready.

That Christmas season brought reunions with cousins who had moved to California, including some Welsh cousins who had tried Canada first but were now solid citizens of Southern California. I loved their accent and was glad to meet more of the Welsh relatives on my trip to Europe in 1964. Ellen was at a talkative stage on this trip and friends and relatives enjoyed her recital of nursery rhymes.

I was listening for tales of "hard times" in California but heard surprisingly few of them. I knew of nobody who sold apples on street corners and I can't think of anyone I knew who was out of a job.

My brother was not worried about his job with Westinghouse in Pittsburgh. His job was in the sales department of their heavy electrical equipment and his talk about it didn't have a serious ring to it. In fact, he stayed with

Westinghouse until his retirement in 1965. We were just two months into the Depression at this time, so maybe the hard times just hadn't gathered steam at this point.

On New Year's Eve, some of us who were all cousins in our 20s, gathered in the apartment of Frank and Adele Williams to welcome in the New Year of 1930. I'm sorry that I am the only one left to tell this little tale, but I don't believe the others would mind.

Those were, of course, the days of Prohibition and many people who had never thought of "drinking" before were caught up in the spirit of flouting the law. Frank scrounged a bottle of home-made wine and some one else contributed some home-brew.

As I remember it, there wasn't enough to do any harm. I was foresighted enough to ask for half of a small glass of each. But at least we were protesting that the Prohibition movement shouldn't have put one over on the country while our young men were away at the World War.

Soon Ellen and I were back at the ranch, catching up on our chores. She would take a very small turn at our glass churn which made our butter or she would sprinkle part of the chicken feed from our old coffee can and I would do the rest. It was still winter and there was laundry to be done in the kitchen. Everything seemed easier instead of harder, as one might assume from reading papers or magazines.

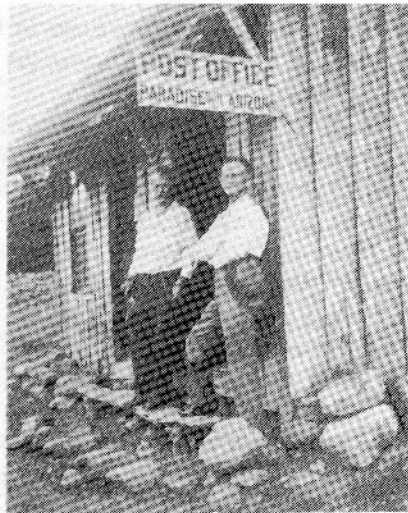
However, we began to hear that some of the Mexicans in Dos Cabezas were in dire need of food and clothing and a quiet little charity was done by those of us who didn't have to worry about going hungry. Our credit was still good at Kirby's Store and a few places in Willcox where the Thompsons had always traded.

It was still possible to get loans from the banks in Douglas or Willcox. Later on, I remember that Alec made a trip to El Paso and succeeded in getting financing there.

I was still careful about spending money but everybody around Dos Cabezas was in the same boat. I developed friendships with the two Kirby girls, Edythe and Flo, who were a few years younger than I was, and with Neva Atherton, whose uncle was still employed in the business office of the Central Copper Company, formerly the Mascot Mine.

One day, I drove the Buick up Bonita Canyon, a short distance beyond the Faraway Ranch. That was as far as the road went in those days. Neva, Flo and I hiked up a little farther.

Another time, I drove Edye and Flo up North Pinery, near the Grauer place, and then we hiked up to the west entrance of the Hilltop Mine. But there was no entrance this time. It was blocked with old mine timbers. Everything else around there had the look of being abandoned. An old ore truck was sitting on rusty rails some distance from the mine opening and there was a round, rusty metal tank which looked as though a strong wind might send it tumbling down the hill.



Maryan Thompson and Neva Atherton hiked beyond Faraway Ranch in January, 1931, left photo. This was some time before a road was built into what came to be called the Wonderland of Rocks. Right photo, Judge Hancock and Urias Williams, Maryan Williams' father, stood in the doorway of the Paradise post office for this 1933 photo.

Flo had been married and divorced, and had a cute little girl, Eleanor, just a few months younger than Ellen. Whenever we took Ellen to Kirby's Store to have her weighed on the store scales, Mr. Kirby would call out, "Well, here comes Eleanor!" Both little girls were blonds about the same size and enjoyed playing together while Flo and I visited.

The Episcopal clergyman from St. Paul's Church in Tombstone was making the rounds of the outlying districts of Cochise County, usually conducting services in the old school house. He began coming to Dos Cabezas during the winter of 1930, sometimes having supper with us before the service, as he had heard that I was an Episcopalian. He asked me to play the piano for the hymns and I felt quite at home.

When spring came, we took Ellen to Tombstone and had her baptized in St. Paul's, which is widely known as the oldest Protestant church in Arizona. Every time I drive through Tombstone, I glance up the side street and there it stands, a small church but sturdy as ever.

About this time, Alec and John bought a herd of steers from somewhere south of the border. They were carefully dipped, to avoid any ticks or possibility of scabies or hoof-and-mouth disease. They dried off in the corrals near the border and then Alec, John and some hired cowboys started to trek up the Sulphur Springs Valley. I forget whether they were on the road one night or two or three. (A real old cowboy could probably make a good guess at that.)

He had made arrangements beforehand and nobody gave them trouble, but that kind of cattle drive was not often repeated.

Another time, they drove a herd of heifers from some place on this side of the Mexican line. Grace, Fifi, Jack and even Ellen and I were stationed at strategic points below the OB to keep the heifers from wandering until Alec and John could get them into one bunch to drive them over to the IT.

I have a picture showing the Arrowhead brand on the left shoulder of one heifer, so I surmised that they were branded before they traveled. The Arrowhead was the Thompson Brothers' brand at the old Thompson ranch. Someone else took this picture, for I had just driven the Buick to the other side of the herd and was standing by the car. I should have taken Ellen's picture, for she was very proud of the little cowboy boots she was wearing with her play suit.



Hereford heifers bearing a new Arrowhead brand on their left shoulders. Maryan Thompson is standing beside a Buick car behind the herd.

Neva Atherton was staying with us for awhile and she had a boy friend who came to see her in an ancient roadster which loudly announced its coming a mile or so away. That was not unusual. Anyone who had a car that would run was considered lucky.

After we greeted the young man, I was suddenly reminded that Ellen didn't always talk like a grown-up. When there was a lull in the conversation she said, "Your car isn't as old as ours. It's older." That brought a laugh from us grown-ups and the young man took Neva for a ride in his roadster to show it would run.

Ellen had her own vehicle now, a tricycle which she rode on the wide covered porch which ran almost around the house. As the house was built on

a sloping hill, that made room for a cellar, in which I sometimes stored canned fruit and other things.

The fad for home brew had reached the Dos Cabezas area and Alec and John decided our cellar would be a good place for a little private brewery. There was no convenient room at John's place; they were more open to the public over there and perhaps some Prohibition agent would come sneaking around. So they acquired the necessary brewing equipment, which gleamed with newness in the dark of the cellar. They brought ingredients along with directions for use and somehow found time for their great experiment. I stayed out of it and kept Ellen away too.

It didn't take long for the experiment to fizzle. I think I had one sip of the product and Alec and John agreed that it wasn't worth fooling with. I don't remember what happened to their equipment. Perhaps they gave it (or sold it!) to someone else who wanted to experiment.

Every once in a while, a small group of people would turn up at the OB, saying they heard that there were gold panning possibilities among the foothills just below us. Would we mind if they had a try at it?

One time, two young couples came by, saying they could find no work in the Midwest, so they wanted to give gold panning a try. They really worked at it but when Alec saw them at the post office and asked how they were doing they confessed their panning netted them about \$1 a day — just enough to keep the four of them in food. They soon moved on.

A national election was looming. The Democrats were grinning at the possibility of ousting President Hoover. The poor man had been so good at organizing relief in Europe after the World War and had done wonders in various positions, but he had not been able to cure the country of the Depression. When he said that recovery was just around the corner, people laughed and voted Democratic.

The Thompsons from North Carolina were, of course, Democrats. I quietly voted Republican, wondering if politics of any kind could cure the Depression.

The country seemed to take a new lease on life when Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the presidency. The whole country seemed to accept his optimism and Congress passed laws to rectify the deficiencies of the bad old days.

The weather, however, was one factor which could not be counted on to favor cattlemen. The Dust Bowl days of the early 1930s were disastrous for many ranchers. But it was my impression at the time that the ranches I knew of could not be accurately described as dust bowls. Rain was spotty as usual but huge clouds of dust usually came from the east, losing their density as they came.

Cattle prices were disturbingly low, in the range of a few cents a pound. But we pinched the pennies a little tighter, bought what clothes we had to from the sales catalogs and got by. Grace bought Fifi two new pairs of Levis

at the beginning of each school year, and come what might, they lasted her until the next year rolled around.

Alec and John had many heated discussions about what the government was doing about the Depression. They thought the government was making beggars out of good citizens and what people in Washington were doing with their hair-splitting rules wouldn't end the Depression.

Privately, I thought that not everything the government did was bad. I can't remember details from this distance in time, but *The Cochise Quarterly*, Volume 17, Number 2, Summer 1987, gives a good account of some of the changes. The Taylor Grazing Act, passed in 1934, established rules for use of public grazing lands and the Bureau of Land Management was organized.

The government buyout program was also in effect in 1934. A good cow brought \$18, a calf \$6, a yearling \$10 and a cowhide was worth 50 cents. The "New Deal" was accepted by the Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers Association, but there were still many ranchers, among them the Thompson brothers, who grumbled at government interference and the fool ideas of politicians.

About the same time, Frank Boice, president of the Arizona Cattle Growers Association, said nobody could think he was out of the woods until he could survive the drought and a depression, one on top of the other.

I remember seeing Frank Boice and his new bride at a dance in Light in 1926. This little community had a building with a good floor for dancing and ranchers and friends from miles around were glad to go to the dances near the Ash Creek School.

Connie Stark McCauley, whose family ranched in that area during Depression times, kindly answered some questions for me.

"Frank Boice's wife was Mary Grantham, daughter of Bob and Musette Grantham, who ran a small country store inside their home, a little way east of the Ash Creek School. She was a beautiful person in every way and we all loved her."

About the dances at Light, Connie says: "Mama and Daddy used to go there. They would make a bed in the back of the car for Mary and me. One time we had the window rolled down a little and some one put an arm through and stole a blanket off of us. I can see that arm yet, coming through the window space."

Connie wrote that Granthams' Store had a gasoline pump near the road. Mr. Grantham went to Pearce once a week and got the mail for the families in that area. It was put in large cloth bags with draw-strings at the top. These were hung on the inside of the door to the store.

"We were fascinated by the large stalk of bananas that hung from the ceiling and the boxes of candy bars on the shelf behind the counter," writes Connie. "The climax came when Mary and I each got a bottle of Delaware Punch to drink on the way home. That was a big day, when we went to Granthams' Store."

When Mary Stark was about nine, her parents thought she was old enough

to drive the car to get herself and Connie to Ash Creek School from their ranch a little farther south. She was careful not to drive onto the road that ran in front of the school, but stopped and parked on the Bert Smith place, and they walked over.

Connie says she hardly realized that there was a Depression. They were just living the way everybody else did.

When I asked Ellen if she remembered the Depression, her answer was quite different. "Oh, yes. There was the soup kitchen in one of those vacant buildings on the main street of Dos Cabezas and we all went down from school and ate there."

She said there were quite a few Mexican children who got their one meal of the day by going to the soup kitchen. One little three-year-old was allowed to come to school so that he, too, could be sure of one meal a day. His big brown eyes could hardly see over the desk he was given, but he gave no trouble.

Winnie Hudson, Grace's sister, was the first and second grade teacher at this time. I am sure she must have felt deeply sympathetic toward all those hungry children.

Of course, there were also "Anglos" (that is, all the rest of us) in the community but I didn't know of any Anglos that were really desperate. Some families moved away from Dos Cabezas and we lost track of them.

Dos Cabezas seemed to be developing a good community spirit and various women helped at the soup kitchen. I can remember sorting frijole beans by the kettleful. Alec and John contributed money at times.

The main trouble seemed to be that there were Mexican families left in Dos Cabezas when the mine closed with no place to go and no jobs. The Kirbys at the store seemed to know pretty well who were most in need and I can remember donating some of Ellen's clothes that she had out-grown.

Card parties were sometimes held in the same building as the soup kitchen, each player contributing, I believe, a quarter. Then there were prizes. On one occasion I felt terribly embarrassed, as Alec and Ellen and I won all three prizes! It seemed that they should go to those in need. We were used to giving, but not receiving.

Ellen's Grandma Thompson now lived in a little white wooden house near the soup kitchen. Before long she asked Ellen to come and have lunch with her and Ellen was glad to do that.

While John and Goldie Stark and their daughters were ranching a little south of the Ash Creek School, Susan and Harold Stark and their daughters were now on their ranch farther south on the west side of the highway which led to Douglas. In 1936 their son, William, was born and he is still carrying out the family ranching tradition at the same location. When we were living in Douglas, we sometimes stopped to say hello to Susan and Harold.

In the early 1930s John began to get restless and wanted to try something else, perhaps raising horses for racing. At any rate, he persuaded Alec that they should sell out if they got a really good offer. Alec would make a good

cattle buyer and that wouldn't be as hard as ranching. I was inclined to agree on that point, but it seemed unlikely that we could make a good sale until the Depression was really over.

Alec often said, very firmly, that the Depression was not over until the United States entered World War II. The whole country was galvanized into action and jobs were plentiful in the Armed Forces and defense industries.

An air base was built north of Douglas and Sullivan Thompson was employed on the construction. He stayed in our garage room for awhile.

It almost seemed that the Depression was over for me in 1933 when Alec bought me a second-hand Elwood Baby Grand piano. A banker was leaving Willcox and his wife didn't want to take their piano and would let it go at a reasonable price.

My father contributed some music he had accumulated and I had a great time practicing the easier pieces of Schubert, Mendelssohn and Beethoven.

Fifi, now called Frances, wanted me to teach her just enough so that she could play cowboy music in the jazzed-up manner which seemed to be in style. I told her that was not my line, but I tried to teach her a few basics which might be helpful. When she grew up, she became successful in many things, such as piloting planes as a WAC in World War II. But I heard no more about her cowboy music.

I did give a few lessons to others. My favorite pupils were Dora Patterson, a school teacher in Paradise and then in Dos Cabezas, who really wanted to practice, and Lynn Kirby, an energetic boy who enjoyed the rules of classical music the way he enjoyed baseball and other sports.

About this time, Thompson Brothers bought a nice new Oldsmobile sedan. This was to be mostly for John and Grace, as we had used the Buick more than they did. We did use the Olds for a trip to Prescott to visit Helon, Albert and Jimmy. Albert was now the principal of Prescott High School and later superintendent of schools.

If Alec was to have a son, we'd better be getting to it. Alex Sherwood Thompson was born in Douglas on Aug. 7, 1935. Our son was a lively youngster who gave me very little sleep during his first year. He resembled the Thompsons more than my side of the family.

He was named after his father and my brother. Having two Alexes in the family made for confusion, which his father settled by calling him Buddy. But when I started school, he announced firmly that his name was Alex. I tried to get around this difficulty by calling his father Alec or Alex J.

Alex was a good student and in the years to come got his master's degree in a field of high technology which I never tried to understand. He and his wife, Mary K, live near me in Tucson.

When Ellen and her new brother and I were still in Douglas in 1935, Mrs. Matilda Anderson, an Easterner with a yearning to live on a ranch in the West, bought the Thompson Brothers Ranch for a price considered very good in those days.

Our move to Douglas was timed to let Ellen finish the third grade in Dos Cabezas. Then we moved into a little brown shingle house at 1245 Ninth St., Douglas. Two years later, we bought as our permanent home the Piper house next door at 1255 Ninth St.

Alec was now a cattle buyer and still very much interested in cattle ranching. Sometimes he kept a herd of cattle and rented pasturage for them at El Centro, Calif., or at Kingman or elsewhere in Arizona. His health began to improve immediately.

The John Thompsons settled first on a ranch south of Springerville. There were other moves and then they bought a house in Phoenix so John could attend to his horse racing. Grace was miserable in the city, so they tried other ranches.

Alec kept in close touch with other Cochise County ranchers, who tended to gather at the Gadsden Hotel or the sidewalk outside. Great arguments were held about the New Deal and about the current rainfall or lack of it.

Alec began to vote Republican in 1936. "I didn't leave the Democratic Party," he would say. "The Democratic Party left me." He thought the New Dealers were doing too much for people, making them helpless.

This thought was echoed many years later by Fred Moore, a prominent rancher of the Rucker Canyon area, when he said, as he leaned forward on his crutches, "Fellows, you all know that I do not now own a cow or an acre of land, but I am a good American citizen. I do not believe in government support of any kind. All I want, all I ask of the government, is to carry my mail."

The Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers' Association had grown in members and influence through the years. There was a gradual willingness on its part to accept some kinds of legislation that proved to be helpful.

In 1936 the Arizona State Land Board was acknowledged for its helpfulness in legal matters and in 1937 the cattlemen's association pledged support for a "sound and equitable Soil Conservation Bill." In the 1940s, association meetings were held in different towns in Cochise and Graham counties, with speakers from federal and state agencies as well as University of Arizona experts on range improvement programs.

It would be hard to say which changes have been most beneficial to the cattle industry. A Commission on Cattle Brands was formed in 1885. By 1914, the Forestry Reserve had become the National Forest. The Fence Law was enacted in 1916 and that was the end of the open range and a big change in the way cattlemen did their work. Public domain now became state lease land.

The first convention of the Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers' Association was held in April, 1917. Although hampered in some ways by the World War, more publicity was now given to cattlemen's troubles, such as loco weed and destruction of range by rabbits. It was decided that bounty laws should be carried out "to clear the ranges of lions, panthers and lobo wolves."

From the talk of the cowboys, I think there was less stealing of cattle by the time I came to the ranch in 1926 than there had been in earlier years. But careless people would still open a gate that was in their way and leave it open.

In 1939, an organization was founded by and for ranch women, under the presidency of Mattie Cowan (Mrs. Ralph Cowan.) Its phenomenal growth throughout the state and nation shows how much it was needed. I'm sorry it was not in existence in my early days on the ranch. With its whimsical title of "The Cowbelles," it could have eased a good deal of the loneliness of those times. It did come at a time when many ranch women had a car available for occasional meetings.

Cattle prices seemed to go up just about the time we left the ranch, so times were really getting better in the cattle country. The gas rationing of World War II slowed down ranchers and their wives to a certain extent. Alec sometimes had a hard time convincing the ration board that he was putting as much or more weight on cattle than some were doing who lived on a ranch.

Some improvements seemed to take a long time in coming. I remember being delighted when Arizona joined the Screwworm Eradication Program in 1964. It had always seemed such a disagreeable chore for Alec and John to do whenever there was a good rain: Go out and check the cattle for screwworms!

During the eradication, sterile flies were dropped from airplanes wherever the worms were found in the state and before long screwworms were practically gone from Arizona. The same program has been carried out in northern Mexico and it is hoped that soon screwworms will be eradicated in this hemisphere.

It has been a real pleasure, thinking of those times going back to the 1920s. Even the talk of the old time cowboys seems different from today's. Or does it? The following is Ben Erickson's account of the naming of Ida Peak in the Chiricahuas:

"Well, Ida Peak the way it got its name. The Riggs outfit had the saw mill at the Gulchin camp. The women folk used to go up there on the weekend, such like that. All the rest of the Riggs boys would go up and help once in a while beside the Bradacks crew. Ida Lillie Riggs, (that was William's wife), she was up there with the rest of them. One afternoon she (Ida Lillie) took a notion and said she was going up on that mountain, to see what it looked like. She pulled out and went off up there. The men was workin' there — they all worked there until Ida Lillie never showed up. They hollered and carried on and never could find her.

"The next morning, they started hunting for her, in case she answered them. There she was, coming off down the mountain — there she got lost and had sense enough not to try and go any place, so she just layed out up on that mountain there all night. Got daylight, she knew where she was; she started back to camp. It's been called 'Ida,' her name was Ida Lillie Riggs, and it's been 'Ida Peak' ever since."

This incident must have taken place well before 1913 as Ida Lillie and

William were divorced in that year.

There have been many changes since those early days and one of those changes is the way cattle are taken to market. No more filthy railroad cars to complain about. Big cattle trucks go to the ranches and pick up the cattle. Some ranchers have trucks of their own to take cattle to the sales ring at Willcox, for instance. Willcox has been known as the "Cattle Capital" for over 70 years.

One time in the early 1930s Alec and John Thompson were among the cowboys loading their cattle on the trains at Willcox, and helping other cowboys to load theirs. Finally, being through with the job, they went across the street to a cafe to get their well-earned suppers.

Just ahead of them was a young man who had come from a box car, where he had been getting some unpaid-for transportation "back home." At the counter of the cafe, he asked for a glass of water. When he had finished it, he turned to go out. He fainted and fell to the floor.

The cowboys and others in the cafe were concerned. Someone said, "He's just hungry, that's all." He finally came to and admitted that he hadn't had any food for days. They were all ready to order him a big feed, but Alec said, "Don't feed him too much now, or it'll make him sick."

They asked him where he was going and he said, "Back home to Oklahoma." He had gone to California to try to find work, but there wasn't any so he was going home.

The cowboys immediately took up a collection to buy him a seat in a passenger car and saw that he had his light supper and enough to eat on till he got home.

Alec told me about this when he got home to the OB that night.

"The poor kid just wasn't used to asking for charity," he said. "It might have been any one of us."

That seemed to reflect conditions in the cattle country of southern Arizona among the people I knew during the Great Depression.

SOURCES

Information from The Cochise Quarterly, Volume 17, Number 2 Summer, 1987. Article by Terry McNair McEuen, The First 75 Years of the Cochise-Graham Cattle Growers' Association, 1912-1987.

Interview of Ben Erickson by S.R. Albert and L.E. Rawdon, Jan. 28, 1970 as furnished to the author by Richard R. Murray.

Articles, letters and conversations with Richard Y. Murray, retired teacher and now historian at the Western Archeological and Conservation Center, National Park Center, Tucson.

Letters from Mildred Hudson Stevens.

Letters and conversations with Connie Stark McCauley, Cora Riggs Chatfield and Ellen Thompson Quimby.

About the Author: Maryan Williams came to Arizona to teach in the 1920s at the mining community of Hilltop, on the east side of the Chiricahua Mountains. After the death of her husband, Alec Thompson, she married Blackie Stidham, who was also widowed. She now lives in Tucson.

House for \$750

Dear Editor:

I was reading with interest the Spring, 1992 issue of *The Cochise Quarterly* when I was struck by the photo on page 21 of the Lutz home. The article, written by Ellen Patton, was informative, but the information under the photo notes the address of the home as 1260 11th Street. I must disagree.

The home pictured belonged to my parents, Frank and Lois Lindsey, from 1935 until 1947 and the address was 1277 12th Street, although it faced Carmelita Avenue. They bought the house from a Mr. Almond Bearden for the magnificent sum of \$750!

I lived there, except for my years at the University of Arizona, until my marriage in 1945. My parents sold the house when my father became plant foreman at the smelter and they moved to the row of houses out there.

But it was a wonderful article and I very much enjoyed learning of the history of the house.

On another matter: I am writing of the early years of my parents and am seeking information about the ranchers and ranches around Douglas. Among the many who were friends were the Kimbles, the Cowans, the Culls, the Hunsakers. Any help would be very much appreciated.

The *Quarterly* is excellent and you are to be congratulated for the consistently interesting articles. It is a very readable record of the past that would otherwise be lost.

Florence L. Blitch
1725 Sunrise Lane
Fullerton, CA 92633

Best friends

Editor's Note: A check of city directories showed the Lutzes lived at 858 8th St. in 1907, 1277 12th St. in 1912, 1105 12th St. in 1913, and at 949 10th St. in 1915.

Dear Editor: I enjoyed the article, "The Superintendent's Daughter" by Ellen Patton. Our families were very close friends. Ellen's brother, Cedric, and I were bosom buddies.

When we were about six years old, Cedric and I decided to run away from home. After much searching, Mr. Lutz found the two of us heading for Mexico. We were about 200 yards from the boundary.

Cedric had a cap pistol and I had a penny. Our fannies were given a good working over when we were taken home.

The first automobile I had ever ridden in was a Model T Ford Mr. Lutz owned. It had acetylene headlights and a kerosene taillight. An acetylene generator was attached to the running board and when gas was needed for the headlights, a charge of calcium carbide was placed in the generator and then activated with a flow of dripping water.

Sometimes it took many tries to get the headlights lighted. If there was air in the line, the matches would be blown out; and if a wind was blowing, it was almost impossible to light them.

Mr. and Mrs. Lutz would take us on picnics often and sometimes it would be dark before we arrived home. Enroute to the picnic sites, Mrs. Lutz would read children's stories to us such as "Little Black Sambo."

When the Lutzes moved to Morenci, my mother said I cried and cried as I was sure I'd never see my dear friend again.

Since you have changed printers and have opted for white paper, the reproduced photographs are not clear and sharp like they were formerly. Can this problem be corrected?

Charles B. Fleming
Mesa

Editor's Note: The quality of photographs reproduced in *The Cochise Quarterly* has nothing to do with the color of paper or ink. It has everything to do with the quality of the original photo. Since many of the photos used are old and thus often faded, the quality of photos in *The Quarterly* suffers too.

Whipped into shape

Dear Editor: Thank you so very much for the copies of *The Cochise Quarterly*. Our older boy has taken one back to Texas with him, I suppose to show to his two boys. I'll send one to my brother's daughters to share among the three of them. My copy I'll share with our daughter in Lexington, Ky.

C.B. Fleming wrote me a letter that was very touching, in part because of his sorrow at having to part with Cedric. I remember how happy my brother and I were when we went back for a visit with the Flemings in Douglas.

However, both of us found life-long friends in Morenci. Both Cedric and

his friend have passed away; but I and my friend from the fourth grade linger on — she in Tucson and so we visit only by phone.

As C.B. mentioned my father whipping two boys, I will tell you two more tales of whippings administered by him. One father, who could not control his boy, requested the whipping. Years later in Morenci, the boy, now a successful business man, visited with my father and told him that the whipping had straightened him out and set him on the path to success.

While my husband and I were in the Canal Zone, an electrical engineer who worked with my husband told a similar tale. After the whipping, he decided to stay in school and went on to become an electrical engineer. Before he died, my father told my husband that the bunch of boys in Douglas were the toughest he had ever encountered.

He had no easy time when he went to Morenci. Mexican boys as old as 18 were in the grade school. None went on too high school. One attacked him with a knife.

In future years, all Mexicans went on to high school due to a wonderful basketball coach, who just happened to be a Catholic, and a vocational education program my father put in, including shop and carpentry work.

I have read Mr. Knickerbocker's interesting article [also Spring, 1992] and intend writing to him. He just happens to live in the same Texas town as one of my husband's sisters.

Once again, thank you for the copies of *The Cochise Quarterly*.

Ellen Patton
Wynnewood, Ok.