

pt 1

WILSON and MESSERLY  
FAMILY HISTORY.

WILSON - FUELLING and MESSERLY - STUMPF members.

As remembered by Omar J. Wilson in Nov. 1985, in Vista Calif.

This account will not be as accurate or complete as it should be due to the fact that on the Wilson and Fuelling sides I never had personal contact with any of the Grandparents. On the Wilson side great grandparents came from England. Definite record of the grandparents accounts for them living and operating a farm near Brighton Iowa, and grandad also served as a Preacher in that area. They had two sons and a daughter, named , Herman Treadway, Omar and India.

During the Civil War grandad served in the Third Indianan Bluntary Cavalry as Lieutenant Louis C. Wilson, from 1861 to 1864. I have his sabre, scabbard shoulder epaulets, cap insignia, and two leather bound diaries, of the service. My Dad Herman was not satisfied with the harsh life of farming at that time and took a course in Chemical Engineering at an Iowa College. My uncle Omar was an intellectual type and after College was a Professor for quite a number of years. Aunt India had no special training and was married to JJ. Challen Smith, who was a preacher and realtor. They later lived in Salt Lake and finally moved to Sawtelle Cal. the rest of their lives. Uncle Challen married us in Glendale. They had three children, Jimmie, Josephine and Cornelia, all now deceased.

My Dad , Uncle ED , Uncle John, and a cousin Ed Wilson all went to Cuba and were with a Sugar Plantation and Refinery for some time. Later they went to a large Plantation in Mexico, where later on Uncle John became one of the principal owners and manager.

After some time in the Sugar Plantation Dad returned to the States and became a leather Chemist which he followed the rest of his life until he got the Ranch in the San Fernando Valley. During his years as a Chemical Engineer he was very highly rated , and was the President of the Association and Chairman at the Convention, which was held in Europe.

He was married to Hanna Fuelling in 1895 , and they has a daughter who died very soon after birth. I arrived on the scene in Peoria Ill. on July 4 1900, and have been here ever since. INSERT IA AND IB HERE

My first memories of life are from Buena Vista Virginia, as we moved from Peoria very early in life.

Dad was the chemist in the local leather tannery. This was a quiet pleasant little town in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and one of Dad's college chums was in charge and secured the position for Dad.

## Family Histories

I never had any personal contact with the Fuelling grandparents as they were all deceased after my birth, and had lived in the Washington area after coming to this Country from Alsace Lorraine. The family lived in the old country during the Prussian occupation, which they hated with a vengeance to the point that altho grandad was impressed into the Military there, when the opportunity occurred, the whole family packed up and defected to the United States. Some time after becoming U. S. Citizens, the Civil War started and Grandad enlisted in the Union Army and served for the duration. *of the war.*

The family consiste of the two parents, and five children, namely: my mother Helena F., Aunt Sophia, and uncles, Edward, Paul and John. With the exception of Uncle John, they all eventually came to California, at different times. Uncle Ed was the first to leave Washington, where he served a short duty in the Navy, and then learned to be a cook under some French cheffs in high class Restaurants in Washington.

Most of his time in Colorado and Wyoming was spent as a Cow Puncher and Gold Miner, before going to Alaska during the Cape Nome Gold rush. His luck as a miner was poor so he fell back onto his previous cooking experience and operated a Restaurant very succesfully. He was getting \$1.00 apiece for a fried egg, which was real money in those days. From there he came back to Denver and operated another restourant. He married a very nice woman there, but she only lived a short time, which broke him up so much that he began drifting around the west again and personally knew, Teddy Roosevelt, Wild Bill Hickock, and Buffalo Bill. While in the West before c coming to California, he was associated with an old friend by the name of Judge Colburn, who was a wealthy Cattleman and Miner, in Colorado. He had a ner do well son, so in the hope of getting him productively occupied he started an Auto factory. This was probably about 1914, and the car was called the Colburn, which lived a very short life like many of the other assembled cars that came on the market about that time.

Uncle Paul after coming to Los Angeles, had a son Charles, who was with the Los Angeles County Surveyors, until retiring to Trailer Park in Escondido, where he passed on.

## (NOTE)

At the time that the Colburn came on the market there were over 2200 different cars on the market in the U. S. which were mostly assembled cars, with little or no R. & D. which ~~shows the~~ <sup>shows the</sup> ~~fast~~ <sup>fast</sup> attrition which took place in those years.

## Family History - Messerly

Janes parents were the Messerly and Stumpf, families. All of the senior Stumpfs were deceased at the time that I met the Messerly family. Grandpa Stumpf was a builder and built the classic big two story house that was their home in Boyle Heights. A detail interior picture is in the Family Album. The heirs were, Gertrude, ( Janes mother) , Victor, and Stella, all now deceased.

The Messerly grandparents were all deceased at the time I met the family and he was a Laundry owner ,originally in Los Angeles, and later built the Crown Laundry in Pasadena, which Everett Messerly was operating, when I met the family. Everett had one sister Mamie who married a preacher , Alpheus Ball and they had three children, Connie, Caroline and Josephine, the only survivor.

Stella married Frank Bryant ( an Attorney ) and had children, Conrad, Caroline and Josephine alone surviving.

Everett and Gertrude Messerly were living at 640 N. Orange Ave in Glendale when I met them and three daughters Elizabeth, and Janice, and Catherine. born 1898, 1906, & 1900. Before coming to Glendale the family had lived in L. A. Portland Ore. and Eagle Rock Cal. Catherine married Edward Martindale, about 1922, and moved to the Sanfermando Valley where they had a daughter Myrna, and sons Edward and John.

Elizabeth married Reynolds Ross about 1924, under the Almond Blossoms at Uncle Victors ranch at Banning Cal. with all family members attending.

Janice graduated from Glendale High in 1924 and then took a secretarial course from Sawyer College in L. A. and served as a secretary until we were married.

After we were married this training served her in good stead when she served in secretarial capacity to the Principals of Vista, Newport Beach and Costa Mesa High Schools.

We were living in the last house on the street, and about an eight of a mile on the foothills behind was a heavily wooded area with all kinds of trees shrubs and vines, where I used to play with the neighbor kids. One thing in particular that we used to enjoy was swinging from the log vines that came down from the tall trees, just like in the Tarzan movies. These woods were also plentifully supplied with grapes, blackberries raspberries strawberries, wintergreen berries, black walnuts chestnuts and hickory nuts.

One of the main recreations for our friends on Sunday would be to get a group together, with picnic lunches and take a hike up into the Mountains. At first my legs were too short to always keep up so one of the men would give me a ride on their shoulders.

Dad's intimate College chum Oma Carr, lived in the house closest to us with his wife and two sons. He owned a 1905 Cadillac one cylinder roadster which I remember as the only car in town. He and Dad would drive home for lunch, and leave the car standing in the drive. I can remember swallowing my lunch and running over to their place so I could sit in that car and admire it. It had a demountable crank which you would stick through the side under the seat to start the engine. I can still remember the pleasant smell of the real leather upholstery and the gasoline vapor which was really pleasant in those days.

I only remember riding in it once when Mr. Carr loaned it to Dad for a Sunday drive. The last part of the drive Dad took on a one lane road back into the foothills to a Mountaineers settlement. These people were squatters, who would pick out a desirable spot in the woods, build cabins and establish a settlement. They were good natured friendly folks that practically lived off the land. They had pigs chickens and made a few cows, and large gardens, and the wealth of wild fruits and nuts from the woods. Occasionally the men would pick up odd jobs in town, and the women would pick the wild fruits and nuts from the woods, with some of their garden produce and sell it to the townspeople.

This Sunday we arrived at this Mountaineer settlement and found that was the end of the road. After visiting with for a while Dad turned the Cadillac around and headed for home. However there was a little stream that that crossed the road at this point, and the smooth 30 by 31 1/2 tires just spun in the goo. Our audience thought that was a real laugh.

As soon as the fun died down a group of the men came forward and began pushing us out of the mud. At this point I looked back to see how they were doing and one of the men was wearing a pair of mephistopholes

slippers, one of which promptly got stuck in the mud but he never missed a step and kept pushing until we were free and chugging down the trail.

This was in the days of wood cook stoves kerosene lamps, wash boilers and tubs , wash boards and hand wringers, and I can remember sitting in the kitchen and dropping wood in the cookstove from my highchair.

The second stage of my life was in DuBoise Penna. where it started when I was about five. We lived in a two story house with a full basement and a coal furnace. My only two recollections of that place are first the big Sauercraut event that we had with our next door neighbors. <sup>THE WALDBEISERS</sup> They were a pleasant German family, who brought some of the old world crafts with them. This fall it was time to make Sauercraut for the year. After buying bushels of cabbages, two oak barrels and cutting boards we all retired to our cellar, and sliced cabbage until it was all gone and weight down in the barrels. That sauerkraut lasted until we maved away.

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One other thing that made an indelible impression of the days in DuBoise was one very hot summer day, when Mr. Waldbeiser invited Dad and I to go down and visit the Brewery, where he was the Brewmaster. It was Sunday so we had the run of the place . The tour included the massive Copper kettles where they cooked the brew, and the final stop was in the Cooling room where the Brew was chilled before bottling, or Keg filling, he drew glasses of Beer from the frost covered pipes and we all had a sample of his work. This was the first time that I had tasted Beer, but in spite of my youth it was delicious and refreshing, and if that Brew was still available I would remain a Beer drinker.

bricks and got nicely scuffed up, but the lady hit the car tracks and was badly injured.

Clothes were never an important part of my life, and my most vivid memory of clothes was how itchy and uncomfortable the long underwear became in the winter after it had been washed a few times. The only other clothes that I can remember was a corduroy suit when I was about seven which was good looking warm and comfortable, and a pair of patent leather shoes, which cleaned and polished with vaseline.

From DuBoise we moved to Lock Haven Penna. which was a small nice residential town along the Susquehanna River. We rented a home with a nice back yard and a horse barn off the alley. We were only one block from the river and I remember one cold winter when an abandoned dam below town started an ice jam and the jam extended upriver as far as our house. This caused the water level to rise almost to the top of the River bank and I can remember going out to the River bank at <sup>NIGHT</sup> and hearing and seeing the big ice cakes grinding and crunching against each other and wondering if it would force the river into your house. It was a really spooky feeling especially at night.

The street at our end of town was not paved, but it did have a street car track down the middle, which was a lot of fun in the winter soft snow and ice formed on the overhead trolley wire. The first car through in the morning would put on a regular fireworks display as the trolley would arc and throw sparks and flame in the air.

Two major events in my life occurred here. We got our first car, a 1908 two cylinder Maxwell Roadster, and my first bicycle, with a New Departure coaster brake. The Maxwell was fire engine red, with a carbide gas generator for the headlites and kerosene side and taillamps. After you started the water dripping on the rock carbide and the gas started generating you would rush up front, open the lamps and light the gas with a match, if the wind wasn't too strong. Mother was the first woman in town <sup>to drive a car</sup> and some of the men didn't think it was proper and came up to her and told her so. ("you've come a long way baby!")

This little bus had a top like a buggy but no windshield and when the stinging bugs got in your eyes or it rained, it wasn't so much fun.

I ran the family auto laundry and brass polishing service and lube service. The specifications said that the car would do 35 miles an hour which I thought should be verified. The County Fair grounds had a dirt Horse Race track below town so I persuaded Mom to drive down there one day and let me drive it. I pushed the throttle to the floor board for a few laps and then we figured the elapsed time and sure enuf it did exactly 35 M. P. H.

I met my most intimate boy friend there who is now living in Miami Fla. and we still correspond. His dad was the local undertaker and had a big two story barn at their home where he kept a beautiful pair of blacks, hearse, funeral carriages, and in the loft caskets and hay. We used part of the loft for a gym with boxing arena, rope climbing etc. His mother made the best Strawberry Cobbler that I ever ate. During the season she would make a giant shortcake, every Sunday and I was always invited

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over for the evening meal of all the Shortcke and Ice Cream we could eat. I never missed an invitation.

Our next car was a four cylinder Overland touring car. The first Overland still had gas headlites ,but used Prest-O-Lite gas. The next Overland had electric lights and starter, and was a four door touring and a very good trouble free, powerful car. The dealer demonstrated it by disconnecting one spark plug and climbing the steepest hill in town in high gear.

Lock Haven was a great place for a boy to grow up. In the summer we had a good time in the River boating canoeing and swimming. The river was crossed by a massive covered bridge which seemed like it was a quarter mile long, and had an outside footpath which you could fish from. The other side of the River was mostly farm land and woods and in the fall we would go over there to gather nuts and climb the old Indian trails on the cliffs, where I got stuck once.

We made a vacation trip from Lock Haven to Asheville , one year, and at that time you had no road maps or Motels for the long distance motorist. Accordingly we equipped ourselves, for a come what may trip. We built full length storage boxes on both running boards, for tent bedding food etc. The trip was a real education in long distance travel for the times. Several times at the end of the day, we would be out in unknown territory, so would pitch the tent , make camp, and have two meals there before moving on the next day. A local constable checked our camp on one occasion. Tire trouble was a constant companion, requiring the purchase of three new tires and about six repairs. Aside from this the Overland performed admirably and gave us no trouble.

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Some time after this trip we moved down to Asheville, where Dad was employed in the local Tannery. The Carr family lived there so we had ready made friends in our new location.

The Carrs had two sons, about two years older and younger than I and the older, "Hugh" was mechanically inclined as I was, so we jointly decided to build a junior automobile. Due to the fact that it was to be a joint venture, we named it the Wilcarr. We bought an old wrecked Twin Indian motorcycle for the engine, did all the frame and body work ourselves and got a beautiful set of steel rimmed artillery wheels. It had leatherobelt and pulley drive, but no reverse. The brakes were external drum type but not the most effective. One day at the end of a run I zipped into

Carr's garage and didn't stop until both front springs punched through the siding and the 2x4 wall studs stopped the car. When we moved from Asheville to Michigan, Dad refused to pay the freight to move it so it remained in town.

I was very surprised at the low moral standards of the young people of the area, but they were very friendly and generous and there was always something interesting going on. Reynolds Ross and his mother lived there and as a boy he was very interested in electrical devices, and had quite a few Electric trains.

We lived across street from a big two story house, occupied by a widow and her son and servants. There was a monstrous high Oak tree in their backyard in which we built a treehouse as high as the limbs would support. It was made along fort like lines and we used to conduct rock fights with groups on the ground. We had a rope hoist on a nail keg which we would fill with rocks for ammunition against the ground forces. On peaceful days we would have lunch up there as there was room for three. An illustrated article the tree house and occupants was printed in the C. S. Monitor without any mention of our battle activities.

The public schools there were in badly run down buildings and heavily populated with blacks. As a result the Whites that could afford it sent their kids to private school that was restricted to whites. These schools also were not the best, because the operators were afraid to discipline the students for fear of losing the student and the income. The resultant quality of education was poor and I was sorry for the abuse that the teachers and owners were subjected to by some of the students.

Fortunately we moved from Asheville to Petoskey Michigan before I got into High School where the Education system was first class and completely under control, where I graduated.

Life and the climate in Michigan was quite a contrast to N. Carolina, but Petoskey was a nice clean town right on the shore of Lake Michigan, and there were other clean inland Lakes nearby. We had our own Polar Bear Club, and in the spring before the thaw we would go to one of the small lakes, break the ice and have the first swim of the year. The Ojibway Indians had yearly Tribal shows there for the Public. Winter up there was clean deep and quiet, with no Automobile traffic and horse drawn plows to keep the sidewalks open. By the end of winter the snow was about head high where I had shovelled it to keep the walk open to the house.

Lake Michigan was unpolluted at that time, and the water was so clear that when you were swimming you could clearly see every pebble



at the bottom of the Lake and drink the water.

The main winter sports were , crosscountry skiing ,with a noon cookout in the snow, skating, Basketball, with parties after the games, and an occasional horsedrawn bob sled ride, to a nearby town for a Basketball game, and always snow to shovel. The car we drove there was a four cylinder Studebaker roadster with three passenger staggered seating.

The High school there was very good and made it possible for me to qualify to enter the University of Michigan in the fall of 1918. Shortly after entering college I enlisted in the Army Engineers Corp, and was in training until the Armistice. We lived regular Army life and drilled with triangular bayonet Russian issue rifles. After the Army service I moved into regular student quarters in one of the large homes bordering the campus. Other homes were converted into boarding houses and served very good food.

At that time class procedure gave the Sophomores considerable superiority over the Freshman, who were always taking great pleasure in ordering the Frosh around. Hazing at the end of the Freshman year was a real scramble featured by three main events : A gauntlet run down a hill lined on both sides by Sophomores armed with paddles sticks or hoses, a tug of war across a cold stream, and a push ball contest using, large leather balls about 8 ft. in diameter filled with some kind of heavy material, which of course turned out

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After the first year at Ann Arbor, I was pretty short on funds and looking for some way to supplement them. One of my High School chums, Hobert Bard had worked at the Chevrolet Plant in Flint Mich the summer before and suggested that I go down with him to see if I could get on for the Summer 1920. We went down as soon as classes were over and applied and was accepted. My Job was lining brakes, assembling and testing rear ends. He was on a block boring mill. Some of that procedure was really crude, and I was not impressed with Chevrolet quality.

Our ease of obtaining employment there shows the vast difference between Labor Relations then and now with Unions running the show.

Our factory experience gave us an " IN " with the local dealers which gave us some jobs delivering cars by the drive thru method, even when snow was on the ground.

He had two adopted children, a boy Ralph, who was killed in WW#1 and a daughter Dorothy, who married Chuck Eastin, and is now a widow living in a Moor Court in Escondido. I got to meet Dorothy for the first time as she came home from College while I was there. I got my first taste of farm work there with cutting and raking Alfalfa, and operating a horse drawn spray rig with a one cylinder engine and wooden stave tank, using Nicotine Sulfate for the insecticide.

He led a lonesome unprofitable life, and later married a woman who was able to financially make life a lot easier and pleasanter for him.

Next stop was Hollywood Cal. where Aunt Sophie and Uncle Ed were living. After a short visit there, we put our belongings in the trailer of a 1920 Buick seven passenger touring car and headed for, as the song says, "To Make The Sanfermando Valley My Home". The Ranch was'nt much, consisting of 40 acres, a small frame house with an unfinished attic which were my quarters a Fair barn, two massive beautiful Oak trees, and a small gopher riddled Alfalfa field, that soaked up water before it reached the end. There were also a few fruit trees and two Giant barrel cactus that had such large needles that I cut some off and used them as needles in the Edison phonograph.

After the home place was developed, and producing, I bought a Fordson Tractor, equipment, and a team of my own and farmed on leased land so that I would have my own income.

Uncle Ed and Aunt Sophie couldn't stand the Ranch work so they moved back to Hollywood and operated small Mom and Pop restaurants with very poor results. Later on they moved back to Owensmouth, and lived in a House and converted Bus, until they passed on.

The Martindales were farming there at that time and through them I met the Messerly Family, and My future wife Janice. They lived in a nice two story home at 640 N. Orange, St. in Glendale, and I had many pleasant times visiting them there, and on their boat the "LOCKINWAR" and the Beach House on Balboa Bay. The Cruises on the Lockinvar always required quite a lot of preparation but it was worth it, especially when we went to Catalina, and we generally had a party of about twelve people.

About this time Elizabeth was making a move on me Janice was the one that appealed to me so I decided to take evasive action. My old friend from Asheville, Reynolds Ross, had moved to Pasadena with his Mother so I arranged for a meeting with him and the Messerly's, especially Elizabeth and it worked. A few double dates and they were real serious and that gave me a clean field with Jane. They were soon married in an outdoor ceremony under the Almond blossoms on Uncle Victors Ranch at Banning Cal, about 1923.

### Farm Life in the San Fernando Valley,

The transition from College boy to farmer was an easy one for me, and altho I was a lightweight, weighing a little over 135 pounds, I soon toughened up to the work at hand, but wrestling hay bales that sometimes, weighed close to two hundred pounds was not my speciality. Although I didn't, "A" from "Z" about farming, both DAD and Uncle Ed, and the local professional <sup>KNOW</sup> Farmers soon showed me which way to go.

Uncle Ed picked the first team we had on the place and I think that they were about the wildest pair that were ever hitched up to a farm implement. They were so wild and touchy that would run away at the drop of a hat. One day I had been working them on a neighbors Bean Threshing rig until after dark, as the weather was dry and sometimes fog set in at night shortening the threshing time. I unhitched them and climbed on one on top of the harness for the trip home. Walking home was not their idea of the preferable way to get to the feed rack, before I could hold them they were at a full gallop. Even in the dark across country in the dark they knew where they were headed, and directly bucked me off in a dry wash.

When I finally got to our place I found them peacefully eating in the barn, as someone had fortunately opened the corral gate before dark. Sometime later I was mowing for a neighbor and had driven them up against a tall tree row, while I went for a drink, The neighbor foolishly came by and waved at and yelled at them to stay away from the hedge and that was all they needed to wheel around and take off full speed. I tried to catch them but was only able to touch the mower seat. One of them tripped crossing an irrigation ditch and broke a leg, so I had to shoot him.

After that we bought tame work horses and had no more trouble like that. The first team after this was a mare and a horse, and the mare had an outside belly and was slightly on the lazy side. One morning I went out to the corral to hitch up and there was a beautiful little Pinto colt lying on the ground. I kept her for a pet and broke her to ride with an old McClellan Army saddle that Uncle Ed had bought for the purpose. After breaking her I found that she had such a round smooth back that it was more comfortable riding her bareback, even at full gallop which was her favorite pace. Riding was fun but being harnessed was not for her and she never was any good in harness.

Our only transportation at first was a 1919 Buick seven passenger touring car, that Dad got when he first came to Hollywood, and unsuccessfully tried to operate a Taxi business. It served both as car and truck, when sometimes rain threatened at night with sacked Beans in the field we would hook on to a trailer, and fill both car and trailer, and haul them through the loose field to the Barn.

Our power equipment was two Fordson and a big two cylinder John Deere tractors, which really earned their way. I recall that the Fordsons cost about \$ 580.00 new. One of our neighbors had a son about my age who was a hot rodder and several times when we were working adjacent fields at the end of the day we would unhook our farm implements, and go to the far end of the field and line up abreast. At a given signal we would take off wide open and as soon as we got peak r. p. m. in second we would crash shift into high and go down the field in a cloud of dust. We had installed extra long lug plates on the rear wheels to give more traction in loose ground and at full speed they threw dirt roostertails high in the air.

My first car at the Ranch was a 1919 Model "T" Ford that I bought on Figueroa St. in L. A. when it was the center of the Auto business. It was equipped with a demountable pick up bed which could be easily removed to install a Roadster turtle deck for pleasure driving. This conversion was seldom used as it was mostly a work car.

Janice was very tolerant of this heap and didn't refuse to ride in it. I dubbed it the "Fifty Minute Egg", due to the fact that by keeping it wide open wherever possible I could drive from the Ranch to her home in Glendale in fifty minutes. This procedure resulted in several speeding tickets when passing thru Burbank, but didn't halt the violations. Loose con rod bearings were a way of life, with engines of that day, so to solve the problem, and not having a repair<sup>SHOP</sup> nearby I dug a pit under the shade of the beautiful White Oak, near the house and tool shed, planked it on the sides, and used it frequently, for lubrication, oil changes and taking up bearings on car and tractor.

After the home place was all developed and in crop, for which I received no remuneration, I decided to start out on my own as much as the Home Ranch could spare me. This required equipment so I bought a team and Fordson Tractor and needed used implements, and grew Baby Lima Beans on leased land, and occasional vegetable and hay. During the Harvest season I worked as a sack sewer on two different Bean Threshers. The first was on our neighbors the Barenchies which was a stationary Ventura, powered, belt drive by a Fordson, and the other was a Rancher developed pickup type.

This was hard dirty work, but most of the crews were neighbors and we enjoyed being together, and it was a welcome change from the majority of solitary work. At the first of the season my knuckles were worn so thin from jiggling the 100 pound sacks that they were pink and almost bleeding, but by the end of the season the callouses were so tough that I could run a file across them without any effect. The human body is a very, adaptable organism.

In December of 1925 Jane submitted to my entreaties and agreed to become my wife with the approval of both sets of parents. December the 13th at three o'clock at 640 N Orange St the Messerly Home was the time and Place set for the Ceremony which was performed by my Uncle J. Challen Smith, with an audience of all our local family, relatives, and close friends. After the ceremony, refreshments and visiting, we changed clothes and took off on our honeymoon in our new 1925 Model " T " Ford coupe. Our itinerary was first to Mrs Messerly's cabin at Las Tunas Lake, Santa Barbara and finally to Big Bear Lake at the Potters Lodge. This was just after the Santa Barbara earthquake and the Hotel elevators were still out of operation.

Our first home was a house we rented not far from the home place. With the long hours of Ranch work this was not the most desirable arrangement so we decided it would be better to build on the home ranch so we could be together more, and I was supposed to get an interest in the Home Place in return for all the unpaid time that I had put in there.

I contracted the building as I didn't have the time to spare or the tools or experience for the job. On March 26 1926 we received Permit No. 24515 from the Los Angeles building Dept. to build a house and one car garage. The permit provided for the expenditure of \$1,100.00 to build the structures, with plumbing but no Electricity or heating. The house was all clear Redwood exterior, Wood shingles and vertical grain Douglass fir flooring. I built the pergolas and did all the painting and landscaping. how big?

We had groups of friends out for the housewarming and were comfortable in the little place.

However farm life was <sup>not</sup> acceptable to Janice and she insisted that we move to the City, and get employment there. The result was that we moved to Glendale, bought a new tract home with all the City conveniences and I went to work for the Union Oil Co. at a Service Station on San Fernando Rd. in San Fernando. This was a dismal inactive job that I disliked in a most positive way. After that I transferred to truck driving which was much more interesting. Driving a solid tired ~~paired~~ Tank truck over the rough gravel and Rock roads of Sunland, Tujunga and Montrose was quite an experience. The truck was a big Mogeland four cylinder, which was manufactured in Burbank on San Fernando Road. The other truck I drove

was a Four cylinder White stake bed express, with a high geared overdrive fourth speed. Whenever I got out on a straight stretch of open road, I would get it near full speed in third and then drop it into overdrive and listen to the sing of the gears as the scenery flashed by. It reminded me of the first job I had in Petoskey, when I was driving the Model "T" express delivery for the Furniture Store, and used to hold it wide open when coming back empty from a delivery around the Lakeshore.

After a while with the White 017 2

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The firstborn of our family trio was Everett Richard who arrived on Jan. 15 1928 , at 1245 Sonora St. in Glendale. The second was Nancy Helena on May 2 1929, at 1204 N. Cedar, and the third and last Victor Louis on April, 12 1935, at the same home. The Sonora St. house was a new tract home and didn't have much to offer so we soon moved to the North Cedar home which was in a nice tract with pleasant neighbors, and our next door family were the Jim McLains, who were Gladiola growers and gave us our first introduction to the Hills of Vista.

We were here for several years until we bought a big two story house at 1310 N. Pacific, which was our last Glendale Home, before moving to Vista. To have Super Service Station. He agreed to the proposal, I located a large steel service building and steel pump canopies, and modernization was on the way. Now we had separate facilities for two Pump islands , for cut rate and regular gas , an office, tire and battery dept , a garage, separate rest rooms , indoor hoist lube , and Reynolds rented the front section for his Radio Repair Shop.

After a short time operating there I got the idea that it would give us full coverage of the neighborhood if we had a station on the vacant lot diagonally across the street, because Brand Blvd. was divided by the Pacific Electric R.R. on a wide strip of unpaved ground. My partner, Huffman agreed to the idea but I was to finance the total expansion. The new station was a steel building with two canopies, and a lube and service dept. Before the station was complete Huffman demanded that we terminate the partnership, and operate separately. This was a low blow but rather than get involved in a long expensive law suit I agreed and he ended up with a majority of the customers and some of the best help.

This went on unpleasantly until 1941, when the Bank of America, ( which is really the Bank of Italy ) served us with a "deficiency judgement" for delinquent payments on an Orange Grove in Redlands which we had traded to another party several years previously. At that time the law allowed a Bank or lending institute to collect a debt from the original lenders even tho the property had changed hands. The Bank was allowed to appropriate any or all of a previous lenders property to satisfy an unpaid loan.

We engaged what was supposed to be a top flight attorney to represent us without any success , and as it turned out the only way we could protect ourselves was a sacrifice sale of our property before the Bank could process the condemnation. The result was we cashed out on the Service Station property and business, and the home on Pacific Ave.

This resulted in a complete change in life for us when we bought a Avocado and Lemon Orchard in Vista, with a nice big two story house. The income from this grove and another adjacent one we bought was not enough to keep us going , so Mom abd I both held jobs with the School District, she as secretary to the Principal and I as Bus Driver and Egg Farm operator. This was during the war years, and the High price of eggs was a big help. After the war ended we sold this place and moved into Vista on E. Vista Way, where we enjoyed a nice Hilltop home on a few acres , with only a family flock, a riding horse for Nancy, a Whippet coupe for Dick and a cow "DAISY JUNE" for the Family.

After a few years at this location Jane got the urge again to live in the City, so we sold out and moved into a small cottage in Balboa near the Yatch Club. After a while there with the boys and friends and relatives sleeping in the garage, where Johnny Martindake recovered from the boat fire burns, we bought a two story old triplex on Balboa Blvd.

We were in this location with my Mother living in the upstairs garage apt. and the boys living on the first floor quarters. Later I built a big two story house near the end of the Peninsula opposite the Coast Guard Pier, which had five bed rooms three baths and two fireplaces. We later sacrificed this place and moved to Costa Mesa, where I was the Street Lighting Supt. and Right of Way Agent. This lasted for over ten years during which time Dick and I built a Garage Apt. on the property, which he Nan And Dobie occupied while he was getting his Teachers Credential.

While we were living in Vista we had made a friendship with Rose and Joe Siegel who had Ranch property off West Lilac Rd. in Bonsall. Rose offered to sell us a 40 acre parcell which they had never developed. In spite of having owned four non profit groves I had always wanted to develop a good one as a retirement project, so we bought the forty from her. At that time Acqueduct

water had not reached that area but due to the fact that they had a good dug well on the adjacent ranch we thought that the same would apply to this 40. Some years later we hired a Well Digger to bring his equipment in after drilling two dry holes and hitting solid granite, we gave up on the Ranch development until the Acqueduct was installed.

By that time Dick was teaching at Escondido high so we decided to go ahead and develop the place ,and started working working weekends clearing and planting, until we got the entire 40 in Avocado and Citrus trees.

Dick built his home on the property and we moved to Vista and both worked full time on the grove. After several years we began experimenting with drip Irrigation, which we found required very effective filtering to work dependably. After research and development we produced a filter using a plastic case and stainless steel screen, that was capable of handling the local silting and algae problem. After several years ,I terminated my connection in the business and turned it over to Dick, who has now expanded it to include fertilizer application.

About 1980 we processed a Boundary Adjustment on the property to put the Ranch in better condition for future sales. About the same time I built a three stall corrugated <sup>SHEET METAL</sup> shop on one of my parcels so that I would have a place of my own to work on my personal projects. I restored and trailer mounted an old Ingersoll-Rand Air Compressor, and used it in the restoration of the 1922 Buick.

A lot of the early plantings of Fuertes, Bacons and Zutanos have become unprofitable so they have been topworked or removed for replacement with other varieties. Poor prices and oversupply , in the recent past have made the Ranch non profit operation, with 1985 being a recovery year.

Time will tell what what the future holds, but on the whole it has been a satisfying endeavor.

I hope that this dissertation will be worth the time and trouble of the preparation, as time goes on and memory becomes dim !

INSERT "A" LAST PAGE

When the original planting was completed there were about 5000 trees on the ranch ,due to double and quadruple planting of some tall growing varieties , and on questionable soil.



" ODDS AND ENDS "

The automotive record on the Messerly side is rather dim, but we know they had an E. M. F. touring car which stands for Everett, Metzger, and Flanders, but more commonly called "Every Morning Fixit." This purchase might have been motivated by the fact that Pappas name was Everett. Production of this car terminated about 1915. They later owned a Buick Six touring, about 1918, and a 1923 Studebaker Special Six Sedan. This was a big hearse of a car which stood over six feet high, with rear carriage lamps, foot rest, robe rail, and carpeting with mohair upholstery, and enough floor space in the rear to bed down three small children. It had high pressure tires, a free wheeling chain drive self starter off the crank shaft behind the fan pulley. It was a tough old wagon, and served two families with no trouble. It made many a trip to Balboa with the Kids and a Boat trailer.

After we moved to Glendale from the ranch and started to raise a family we needed more room than the Model "T" provided, so we acquired the old "Studie" sedan, when Mrs M. bought a new Franklin.

This Franklin was a real Luxury car, with Mohair upholstery, German Silver trim, robe rail, foot rests, etc. Mechanically it had three features that were Franklin exclusives, namely: Full elliptic spring suspension, laminated wood frame, and air cooling. This cooling system was so efficient, that it was publicized by locking one of the cars in low gear, and driving it across Death Valley in the middle of the summer. She didn't keep this great car very long as Elizabeth had moved in with her at that time and was running the show, and had her mind set on one of the new Chevrolet six cyl. sport sedans. The only thing to its credit were six wire wheels and red paint. It had no performance, comfort, handling or any thing else to favor it over that Classic Franklin.

After the old "STUDIE" had served the family for ten years, we decided to go modern and bought a 1933 FORD "V-8" two door sedan. For some reason I can't recall we only kept this car a year, and ordered a 1934 two door on a drive through basis. The dealer would send a salesman to the factory, where they would mask out the front of the towed car, and drive them both to Calif. that way. I ordered the towed car which came thru in perfect condition. The price was about \$85000 and \$85000 for the towing fee. This was a trouble free economical, going machine and I breded in the beautiful the Martindales Ranch and show the box

OMIT  
REPEAT

After that we had a swarm of cars, and rarely kept one over a year. We had another Ford "V-8", three Pontiacs, a Buick, Two Lincoln Continentals A Chevrolet, a Cad Coupe-de-Ville, a Dodge and Ford pickups and three Chevy pickups.

During my Service Station years, a whole gaggle of cars were involved. The first service car was a beat up old Essex Four touring car. (Topless). I bought it from the resident mechanic, Herb Vail who owned one of the Essex light sixes, which was such a Lemon that he was never without a car to work on. This old four had one cylinder so badly scored that it ran like a three cylinder motor, but in spite of that it served without trouble. Later on I bought an Essex coach, which was a real workhorse, which we used for all kinds of service calls or towing.

One year the Atwater-Glendale area was badly flooded by a rain storm, and some of my customers, with drowned out cars called for help. This Essex had radiator shutters, just like the Diesel trucks, and the ignition and carburetor were on top of the motor. By closing these shutters and taking the fan belt off, this bus would navigate water over the floor boards without a miss. This made it possible for me to pull these people out, where nearly everything else was drowned out.

About that time Reynolds Ross was going to get a new car to replace the 1923 Willys Knight Sleeve Valve four touring that had been their Honeymoon car. I bought it from him, removed the back seat and doors, and installed a long steel pickup body. That engine was still whisper quiet and we used it to pull a trailerful of houseware when we moved to Vista in 1940. Later on I traded it for a Whippet 4 which I gave to Dick for his first car.

During the " OMARS GAS OASIS ", days, in addition to the Willys we had a Model "A" pickup, and bought and sold cars including a Dodge and Chrysler sedans that I bought and gave my folks when they were living in Redlands.

At one time there about forty Yellow Cabs parked on the lot which a customer bought, for resale.

In 1933 we decided to go modern, retired the old 23 Studie, and bought a second edition FORD V8 two door sedan. ( I removed two Coach Lamps and the cut glass bud vase for souvenirs, which I still have. This Ford was all right but for some reason we wanted to stay up to date, and ordered a 1934 " V-8 ", with a special high geared rear end. We took delivery of this car by the drive through method whereby a salesman would go back to the factory and bring back two cars with a drawbar and a masked out towed car. I ordered the towed car and it came thru perfect. It was an economical, fast, trouble free car, and only cost a little over, \$800.00, and \$85.00 for the tow fee.

I used to have fun doing Brodies in the Martindales bean fields.

Almost forgot to mention one ~~CBB~~ among my early collection, which was one of the early Cadillacs, a V 8 touring which was a big beast , closely related to a three quarter ton truck, and just as rigged. It had 35x5 high pressure tires and wasn't much fun to drive but would be a real collectors item today.

After the service station days we had a variegated procession of cars another and I believe the only overdrive Ford, three Pontiacs, a Chevy, two Lincolns, and a Cadillac Coupe de Ville.

Before leaving Costa Mesa Jane located a Model "A" 1930 Rumble Seat Roadster that one of the School Staff had for sale, and bought it for me. It was in rather sad shape, but was basically sound. We had a four car garage under the garage Apartment that Dick and I had built at the Santa Ana and Broadway home ,so I used one of the stalls to start the restoration which was not completed until we moved to Vista. I used it in several Parades featuring the Costa Mesa Street Lighting District, and Vista Events.

While living in Costa Mesa, I located an old abandoned 1923 Buick Six touring that had been chopped up and converted into a Ranch pickup. I saw it sitting abandoned in an Orange grove off Newport Blvd. near Tustin, belonging to J. Worth Alexander, who owned a fully restored duplicate of the first Red Maxwell that we had in Lock Haven Pa. After recounting a lot of Old Time memories he felt so sorry for the Buick that he offered it to me for \$85.00 . I didn't argue and paid the man. Vic had a Jeep and I borrowed a big trailer, with Pete we dug the old wreck out of the shed and loaded it for the trip down to the Costa Mesa garage. Some disassembly was done there but all the major work was done in Vista after I took a two Semester Course in Auto Body and Painting at Palomar College in San Marcos under Bill Golden. Not counting class time the restoration took about 1500 hours and about the same number of dollars, but resulted in a one of a kind askind Speedster, which has received a lot of compliments and been requested for lots of Public events.

Still have 1930 Ford AA six wheel Lumber Truck , A1941 Chevy 6 Pickup, and a 1922 Mc Cormack Deering tractor, due for restoration, but it doesn't seem too likely that the time and energy required will be available.

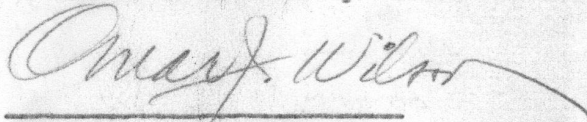
Our venture into Foreign Car ownership, started with the purchase of a 1984 Mercedes 240 Diesel Sedan, with a four speed stick shift which spelled it's doom as Jane could not adapt herself to shifting gears after years of automatics. So we sold the four banger for almost cost and bought a 1975 Mercedes five cyl. Diesel Automatic, which has been highly satisfactory, and economical and is running stronger at 95,000 miles. I am afraid we will have trouble wearing it out as we have never kept a car this long.

This has gone on long enough, so to sum it all up we have lived active productive lives, and have been blessed with a successful healthy family who are willing to associate with us. We are among the few who have lived from a period when the Horse and the Railroad were the only means of land transportation. There were no telephones, radio or television, and our money was backed by and redeemable in Gold and Silver. There was no drug scene and alcohol and sex was for adults, and the Family was the center for Education and Recreation.

Now we have Technological developments in communication, transportation, space travel, and new scientific developments unheard of in our youth. However with all knowledge acquired material advances made millions of people are starving and fighting each other, when there should be abundance and peace. It makes you wonder if all these discoveries and improvements are worth it when they are accompanied with a loss of morals, trust, honor among individuals and Nations, dope liquor, sex, and worthless money backed by nothing but the printing press, with practically every Nation bankrupt.

Conditions being what they are, let's hope that there will be enough world leaders the ability and knowledge, to work together for Zero Population Growth, Peace, elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and the control of Hazardous materials, so that this Sphere can continue as a habitable place for Civilization.

INSERT "A"



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Omar J. Wilson.

Vista California.

Nov. 1985

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