

I WOULDN'T TRADE THESE YESTERDAYS: The Reminiscence of May Cargill Doan: Part I
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I WOULDN'T TRADE THESE YESTERDAYS:

The Reminiscence of May Cargill Doan

PART I

ALMOST the first thing I remember is of watching a live lobster walk around the floor in my cousin's kitchen. It was a startling sight, especially to me, who had only seen red lobsters served at the table, and this lobster was very, very black. I think that I was about three years old at this time and I promptly climbed on a chair. The cousins, seeing that I was terrified, picked up the lobster and threw him into a pot of boiling water, at which I burst into tears, and had to be assured that lobsters did not mind boiling water.

I had been sent from our home in Montclair, New Jersey, to my aunt's home in Poughkeepsie, New York, because of my mother's illness. There were four Cornwell cousins, Antoinette, Mary, Irene and Helen. Their names, however, never really mattered, as we always spoke of them as "the cousins." It just happened that the eldest was the shortest; and the youngest, the tallest; which, as I grew older, seemed quite right to me, as I had heard of people "growing up" and people "settling down."

I don't remember why we were living in New Jersey at this time, but perhaps because it was not far from New York City where my father, Andrew

Hays Cargill,* was a broker. He was born in Jackson, Mississippi, January 19, 1844, and had married my mother, Caroline Van Kleeck, in Poughkeepsie, where both families were living at that time. The Van Kleecks lived in a large four-storied red brick house on Cannon Street, and the Cargills in a smaller house at Garfield Place, although that house had four bedrooms.

My father had been out West for several years before he married my mother, and the story of those years will come later. Soon after his marriage to my mother they went to San Francisco and there was born their first child, my brother Stuart, on July 18, 1877. They had planned to name him George, for his maternal grandfather, but at one time they had lived in a boarding house where a very bad little boy was named George, and they would not give their own beautiful boy the same name.

One evening they went to take him up from the large chair in which he was sleeping and discovered that he had a soft spot on his head, and my father has described how he rushed from the hotel to the doctor's, running all the way, and so happy to be told that all babies had soft spots for awhile. My father paid the doctor and discovered that he had lost one of his \$20 gold pieces. The doctor offered to walk back away with him and see if they could find it, but my father assured him that it didn't matter now that the baby was all right, and he hurried back to give my mother the good news. That gesture was so like the father I remember. He was to make money and to lose it, and he took it all so easily. If he was hard up he always said "My ship will soon be in." If he had money he would spend it, and if he didn't have any, he was sure that before long he *would* have it. Years after, my brother-in-law Fletcher Doan was to say, "Sister, if I ever have a million dollars, do you know who I would ask to spend it with me, or to show me how to spend it?" and I said "No, Fletcher, who?" and he said "Old man Cargill." I didn't know whether to be insulted or laugh but knowing my dear father very well I was able to laugh with Fletch.

* Andrew Hays Cargill was born in 1844. After serving as a Confederate officer during the Civil War he traveled to San Francisco by way of the Isthmus of Panama in 1868. The following year he went to Tucson, where he obtained a job with Hooper, Whitney and Co. In 1878, he became deputy sheriff of Yuma County and served as postmaster at Castle Dome Landing. In succeeding years he served in various other public offices including clerk of the District Court and deputy recorder of Yuma County in 1898. He died in 1920.

When Stuart was still a baby, my parents moved back to Poughkeepsie and there I was born October 2, 1880, and our sister, Irene, November 27, 1882. After Irene's birth we moved to Montclair, New Jersey, and there our mother had the miscarriage that was to leave her an invalid. In Montclair, we children had a nurse,—or perhaps she was a distant relative,—at any rate we called her Aunt Sarah, and she used to give us our supper before our parents had dinner in the evenings. I seem to remember that these suppers consisted of bread and butter and milk, with apple sauce for dessert. No doubt this menu was changed from time to time, but the changes evidently made no impression on me.

Aunt Sarah was very kind to us and we all loved her, but Stuart was somewhat of a tease and he used to play what he called "tricks" on her, and one I remember, was putting molasses in her bed.

I was rather a noisy little girl and it was thought best to send me for awhile to the cousins, the Cornwells, in Poughkeepsie. I have seen a picture of my mother taken in Montclair, lying in bed with her leg raised by a sort of pulley, and a pretty afghan spread over it. Her hair was fixed softly around her face, and she was smiling. I think that she did not realize then how ill she was, or perhaps, it was because she *did* realize, and wanted us to remember her as smiling.

I was quite happy at the Cornwells; I remember sitting on a cousin's lap, and being fed beef tea, so I may not have been as strong as they thought I should be. One day I went for a walk with the cousins and they noticed several people looking at me and laughing, so they stopped and looked at me too, and found I had tied Helen's bustle around my waist, over my little dress.

The cousins at this time were all young ladies, and I was only about three. I think it was because they had me with them when I was so little that they never quite realized, years later, that I had "grown up." In 1931, when I visited them, and was a grandmother, they treated me in practically the same way as they had in 1883. We were shopping in New York and when I wanted to slip away and look at toys, they said "No, May, we think you had better stay with us, as you don't know the city." The cousins always said "*We* think" or "*We* do." They were *one*.

From Montclair my family moved back to Poughkeepsie, and we lived

at 114 Academy Street. I remember that house very well, as we lived there until I was nine years old. It must have been a well built house because when I saw it in 1933, it looked just the same to me. We had a cook and I think, a nurse, as our mother was always in bed and we used to go in to kiss her, and talk about what we were doing. We went to Sunday School at Christ Episcopal Church, and Irene and I went to our Aunt Janie Van Kleeck's for our daily lessons. Aunt Janie was a semi-invalid. My father once said of her, "She enjoyed poor health." Irene and I remember that we loved our lessons with her and she must have been a most capable teacher for when we finally went to a private school, we were ready for our grades. She had even given us our Sunday School lessons before we were old enough to go to the Church School.

We were still at Noxen Street, with the Stearns cousins next door, when Papa left for California. My mother had died in 1889, and I think he had borrowed from his parents, what money would later have come to him, so that he could buy an orange ranch and then send for us. Stuart was still at the Riverview Military Academy in Poughkeepsie. Grandma and Grandpa were to take us out to California later. My father had learned to love the West when he was there before his marriage to Mother and I think he had always wanted to go back there. He finally found a ranch, rather an orange grove, that he liked about three miles out of Anaheim, in Orange County, California, and bought it. The orange orchard was surrounded by two rows of eucalyptus trees as a windbreak and there was a lovely large house, which was a very good thing as we were later to have quite a family in it. The place had a name: Brookshurst. It was so called because Mrs. Ryan, wife of the owner, had been a Brooks, and hurst meant wooded knoll. The railroad station, for it was on the Southern Pacific line from Los Angeles to Anaheim, was just off our place. The train did not make a regular stop there but one could flag it. By the station was a warehouse, and there our oranges were picked up for shipment. The house had two stories. Downstairs there was a large living room, a dining room, a large hall with bookcases all around, and a good thing as we had so many books. There were three bedrooms and a bath downstairs, a very large bedroom with an alcove upstairs, and two small bedrooms. From the dining

room a covered way led to the big kitchen and just outside was a room for the Chinese cook. The bathroom was strictly that. For other conveniences we had to take a short walk past a pampas hedge. On the place was a two room house for the men who had charge of the Chinese workmen who lived in what we called the tank house, out by the orchard. There was a lovely tennis court and also a croquet ground that had pepper trees all around it, and we always had to sweep the red berries when we wanted to play croquet.

Meantime, back in Poughkeepsie, Aunt Kitty Stearns and her three boys had gone back to Australia to give "Uncle Harry" another chance. One day in 1892 Grandpa and Grandma and we three children took the train for California, the grandparents fully intending to come back to Poughkeepsie, which they never did. At that time Irene was ten, I was twelve, and Stuart fifteen. We had to change cars in Chicago and we spent the night in a hotel. Every time we heard a fire alarm, and there were many in the night, Irene and I had visions of Chicago going up in smoke, as we all had heard of the city of the "Big Fire." No cow, however, kicked over the milk pail that night, and we took the train next morning and in due time reached Brookshurst.

The Ryans had moved out but we later saw the two little Ryan girls, one of whom, Bunny Ryan, later became the tennis champion. We loved our new home and Grandpa loved the garden with lawns and flowers. Our foreman was a German, named Louis Dahlman, who lived in the little two room house. My father had always been a broker and I don't think he knew anything about raising oranges, but he did know how to live well and for years that is just the way we lived. We had a Chinese cook, named "You"; we sent all the laundry to a Chinese place in Anaheim.

Across the road lived a German family, the Allgeyers, with a daughter, Louise, just between Irene and me in age, and a boy Herman and another girl, Laura. Louise and Irene and I grew to be very good friends and continued our friendship until Louise's death in 1958. Mrs. Allgeyer raised chickens and made jelly and we were terribly interested in both. We named the chickens, and our favorite was a hen we called "Comfort." Mrs. Allgeyer used to tell me in after years that I would come over to watch the jelly making and when I got through tasting, there wasn't much left for the glasses. Irene and I used to help Louise with chores so she could have time to play with us. We would gather the bark from the trees about our orchard

to use in starting the fire in their cook stove, and we even went out in the fields and helped to "thin" the corn. There were only four rooms in the Allgeyer house and the whole family worked. When we were there, we worked too. We thought the family had wonderful meals. Then we would go home to a delicious meal that "You" had prepared, with a dessert of chocolate pudding, served in cups, with whipped cream on top, and the cream had been made most attractive with the little instruments "You" knew how to use, but we would wish he also knew how to fry potatoes like Mrs. Allgeyer.

I think Louise must have liked the cookies and cakes that our "You" made and once he complained that we were always raiding his cupboard. He would hold up his apron as if it were full of goodies, and say "Here go Weezey," so I expect he often found us running off with something he had planned for our lunch. We had a series of cooks. One had learned to sing our hymns in a Sunday School, and one day when we came home he was playing the piano and singing them. Another time we all came home to find Grandma had locked herself out on the porch because the cook had been taking opium and she found him asleep under the dining room table.

One day my father had a letter from Aunt Kitty in Australia saying her husband had left her again and Papa, who loved all of his family and never hesitated to spend his money on them, when he had it, sent them the fare to come to us. After the Stearns family came, we changed our sleeping arrangements. The grandparents had the large room off the living room, Papa, Stuart, and we girls the two bedrooms at the other end of the house and the whole upstairs was given to the Stearns.

One day Papa had a letter from Yuma, Arizona Territory, and he told us he had to go there for a few days but would bring us a present. We thought it would be the real little iron stove he had promised us for our playhouse. He was away for several days, but as long as we had our grandparents we were content. They had been abroad, I think twice. Once my grandfather was sent from the Masonic Lodge. The second trip was made because of their daughter Corrine. They had sent their three elder daughters to the Convent of the Sacred Heart in New York City, and they wanted Aunt Corinne to go there too, as the Sisters gave them wonderful training. But just before the end of the year someone told them that Aunt Corinne was about "to take the Veil," and Grandma said they drove to the Convent and brought their youngest daughter home and

soon after took her to Europe. On this trip abroad they were in France at the time of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) and rode around the city with small American flags, for safety, but finally it was necessary to get out of France and they went on to Germany before coming home.

Well, I have left my father in Yuma, Arizona, quite long enough, so now I must write about the present he brought us. Not the stove we expected, but a pretty young woman of twenty-one, who got off the train when it stopped at our ranch. He introduced her to Stuart and Irene and me as "your sister" and I have no memory of what we said, but we smiled at her and all walked into the house where he introduced her to his mother and father and called up to Aunt Kitty and said "Come down, Kitty and meet my daughter." She said later that she knew he wouldn't have spoken of me that way, so she hurried down to see what on earth he meant. I don't remember just where he began this story so I'll start at the beginning.

It seemed that in 1869 my father had come out to Arizona and was very much interested in mining, in fact, at one time he owned stock in the Castle Dome Mine,* which "castle" one can see from the town of Yuma. In Tucson he met and married a very pretty Spanish girl, Epiphania Rivera, but when their baby was born the mother died, and my father left the baby, named Felice Cargill, with her grandmother and came back to New York and later married our mother. He did not tell any of his people about this marriage in Tucson, but he did tell our mother, he said, before they were married. Felice grew up in Tucson and was educated at the convent there. Shortly after her grandmother's death, Felice married an American from Virginia named Thomas J. Harrison and had a baby girl named Lydia. But her husband Harrison soon deserted her and, we learned later, died of smallpox. My father said that he and Felice had corresponded, and when she was left with this 13-month-old baby, she wrote to him and said she was staying with friends in Yuma, and that is when he left us so suddenly and went to bring her to us. I know now that it must have been a blow to the grandparents, and, mostly I expect because he hadn't told

* The Castle Dome Mine was discovered in 1863 about fifty miles northwest of Yuma near a flat-topped granite mound of the same name, which was a landmark along the Colorado River. The mine was worked profitably in 1869 and '70, and the ore, chiefly of lead, was shipped to San Francisco for smelting.

them of his other child. Stuart was then about sixteen and he didn't like the idea at all, in fact I think he never could quite forgive the secrecy of it all, but Irene and I thought of nothing but the baby we would soon have in the house and were delighted about the whole affair. Felice went to Yuma and brought back the baby, and after that she was our sister, in every sense of the word. She was about eight years older than I was and although the grandparents and Aunt Kitty must have been under a strain, we children never noticed it, so they must have taken it as well as they could, because I can't remember noticing anything out of the way in the days that followed and there were not *many* of them, because Grandpa decided that they and Aunt Kitty and the boys would move to Los Angeles. The grandparents often came down to visit us and the large bedroom was always kept for them. Grandpa liked the ranch best and Grandma liked the city, so they would go back and forth and everyone got along very nicely and we adored the baby. Felice spoke both Spanish and English and Papa hoped we would learn Spanish but English was so much easier for Irene and me that we learned very little Spanish.

There was so much that Irene and I did not know. Papa used to go to the Jonathan Club in Los Angeles, as he was a member, and years later Stuart told us that he also had a lady friend there, but we were far too busy to have worried about such a matter. Before the grandparents went to Los Angeles Grandma's bachelor brother James Campbell Hays had come from New York to live with us, and as by then Papa's money was getting low, the Chinese cook was dismissed and his room redone for Uncle Cam. He was really a character. He was a retired lawyer and had a pension from the Mexican War. Every month when his pension came he would take us into Anaheim for a treat, candy or toys. I remember one day he stopped in town, and said quite loudly, just in fun and to embarrass us, "Well, what will you have, ice cream or lager beer." He was a very good old man, read only his law books and the Bible. But how he could swear, really not meaning the words he said. Sometimes ladies would be playing whist at our house and Uncle Cam would say "Jesus Christ, why did you lead that," not meaning more than if he had said "Dear me." After the Chinese cook left, Felice and Irene and I did the cooking, Felice teaching us all she knew, and since she knew quite a lot, the meals seemed to satisfy everyone. We went to the grammar school to the sixth and seventh grades and then I

wasn't well one winter and Irene caught up with me and we finished the eighth grade together. Stuart went to the Anaheim High School.

One winter we had a telephone put in our hall; I think it must have been about 1896, and none of us had used a phone before.* My grandmother was afraid of the "contraption" as she called it and never answered it. It was a wall phone and one had to be careful in taking down the receiver, that no others were talking; there were quite a number on the same line. One time I was very glad that we *had* a phone. Papa had thought Irene was not looking well and he decided to take her to Coronado for a change. Of course he could have taken her to Laguna Beach for less money but Papa liked to do things on as grand a stage as possible. So he reserved two rooms and a bath at the beautiful Coronado Hotel,† which is still there and still beautiful. But Irene missed me, and so in a couple of days Papa telephoned that I was to come down also. I was driven to the train at Anaheim, he met me in San Diego, and we went on to the ferry to Coronado. We loved our big rooms and the large dining room with music at dinner. There was a piano in a small room on our floor but Irene and I were too timid to use it. We did get up courage one evening to ask the band leader to play "Narcissus" for us. We went bathing on the lovely beach and when we came home at the end of two weeks Irene was herself again, Papa poorer, and I sitting on top of the world to think I had actually stayed at the Hotel Coronado.

Our expenses at the ranch must have been very high, not only those of running the ranch but the household expenses as well. A "Gentleman Farmer" would have been the right title for my father. Being a broker in New York was no experience for raising oranges. Also the market was not as good as it had been. There were frosts and there were Florida oranges to compete with.

My father realized that he was losing the ranch, and he wrote to E. F. Sanguinetti,** in Yuma, Arizona, and obtained a position in the office of Sanguinetti,

* Telephones were first used in California about 1882, and transcontinental service reached the state in 1915.

† When the ornate Coronado Hotel opened in 1888 with 550 rooms, it was called "the largest hotel in the world." It was a very popular resort, attracting visitors to Coronado Beach from many countries.

**Eugene F. Sanguinetti was born in Mariposa County, California, in 1867. He arrived in Yuma at the age of fifteen in 1882 and obtained a job in John Gandolfo's store at \$40 a month. He had become a partner in the firm by 1887, and the following year the E. F. Sanguinetti store was established. Sanguinetti became prominent in Yuma

netti's General Store. He had known Mr. Sanguinetti (who practically owned most of Yuma) when he had been mining there long before his marriage to my mother. Felice and Lydia were to go with him and for the present he arranged that Stuart, Irene, and I would have a sort of apartment in the home of Mrs. Laura Gassoway Robison, Mother of Alice who was one of my young friends. Papa was to send for us as soon as he could. Stuart got himself a job in Anaheim, and there was another position in Fullerton, as cashier in the store of Stern and Goodman for either Irene or me. I don't remember just why it was decided that Irene should take it and I go to the Anaheim High School and take typing and also keep house. There was the idea, I think, that I could get an office job.

Mrs. Robison was such a kind and motherly person that it could hardly be said we were in a "cold world." We had two bedrooms upstairs over the living room and a large room downstairs where we cooked and ate. Irene was to earn \$5.00 a week and Stuart would give us another \$5.00 as his salary was small too. We had never bought our groceries or paid bills, but we had perfect confidence that we could manage beautifully. I am sure that I enjoyed the short time I attended the high school and I don't know just how I was given the lead in a play called "France," but I was.

Stern and Goodman were hard men to work for and finally got my Irene down. They used the cash register just as much as she did but one day when the register was \$5.00 short they took it out of her wage, which, being the same sum of \$5.00, left her no money to bring home for our housekeeping, and, worse, sent her home in tears. We decided that I should take her place and she would do the housekeeping. I'm sure I don't know how we managed without her \$5.00 that week because we were having a difficult time with our food expense. Our friend, Melanie Cahen, used to come over often and she and her mother took a great interest in us. One day she said, "May and Irene, why do you have cornbread and coffee so often for your suppers?" We laughed but answered honestly, "because we can't spend any more some nights" but we in-

and the surrounding territory. He opened eleven branch stores, reopened the Castle Dome silver-lead mining district in 1890, built Yuma's first packing shed for shipment of farm produce, led the movement to build a school in the town, built an ice plant, helped bring electricity to Yuma, organized and managed an early Yuma bank, and helped bring other civic improvements to the community.

sisted that we really were doing all right. Still she and Mrs. Cahen worried and one day they came over and outlined a plan they had. They suggested we rent the ballroom of the Del Campo Hotel every Saturday night and give dancing lessons to the young high school crowd. Both of us danced and we played dance music, and we decided to follow their kind plan. We were able to get quite a crowd and we charged twenty-five cents a lesson. The room at the hotel must have been rented to us for very little, for the lessons gave us some extra money each week and we were able to live a little better, besides having a lot of fun.

As I look back to those days when we were with Mother Robison, I realize now that it must have been very, very hard for my father not only to lose the ranch but be compelled to leave us for awhile, until he could afford a place for us. He had watched over us so carefully ever since our mother's death in 1889, and though he knew that Stuart would take good care of us, it was the first time we had been away from him. Our life was certainly different from the life we had known. One day Grandma Cargill came down to see us, and I remember she cried when she saw us carry our bath water up the stairs. We explained that it didn't bother us at all, that we liked living on our own, and I fear I didn't make matters any better by saying, "Grandma, we can always take care of ourselves, even if we have to take in washings and ironings," which we didn't have the slightest fear of ever having to do. I don't remember just when we went to Robisons but I think we must have been there eight or nine months and it was in August of 1902, when Papa sent for us.

Papa wrote to us that he had rented a house in Yuma. It had belonged to the Col. James Barney family,* and one of his daughters, Clara, would keep a room there for a few weeks, but we were to leave as soon as we could pack. It was then about 120 degrees in Yuma but the thought of heat didn't worry us at all, we were so happy in the thought of being a family again.

* Col. James M. Barney (1838-1914) and his brother, Benjamin A. Barney, brought their families to California by way of the Isthmus of Panama in 1854. In the spring of 1864, Col. Barney traveled to Yuma where he and five others went into partnership in the general merchandising firm of William B. Hooper & Co. In 1868, Col. Barney built the first freight road across the desert from Florence to the Salt River. The following year he was appointed as aide-de-camp to Governor Anson P. K. Safford. In 1870, he became treasurer of Yuma County, and the following spring he was elected the first mayor of Yuma (Arizona City as it was called). Col. Barney had been given



MAY CARGILL AS A BRIDESMAID AT HER SISTER'S WEDDING IN YUMA, 1903



THE CARGILL FAMILY AT BROOKSHURST, 1892

Seated are Mary Hays Cargill and Augustus M. Cargill; standing in the rear are Kitty Stearns and Andrew Hays Cargill. The children in front are Irene, Stuart, and May Cargill.

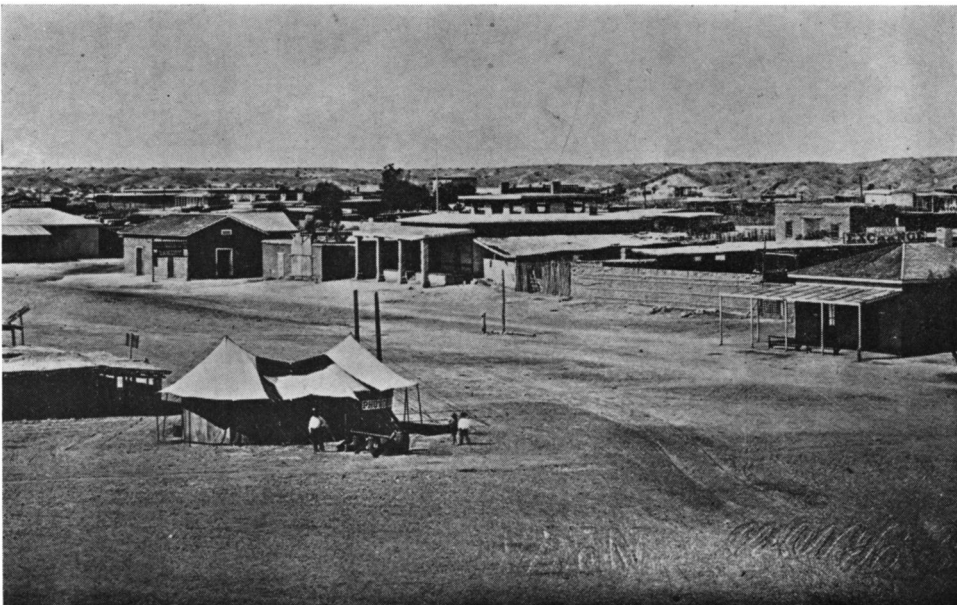


THE CARGILL SISTERS ABOUT 1894

May and Irene Cargill are wearing new dresses made at their home by a professional dressmaker.



(APHS Photo from the Reynolds Collection)



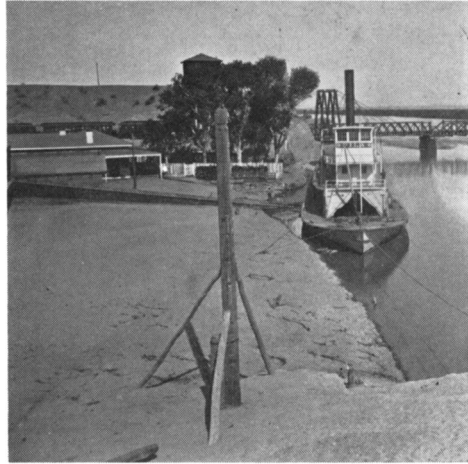
(APHS Photo from the Holliday Collection)

YUMA, ARIZONA, AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY



(APHS Photo)

OLD YUMA FERRY ABOUT 1904



(Watkins Photo)

STEAMER TIED UP AT YUMA



(APHS Photo)

THE YUMA RAILROAD DEPOT ABOUT 1900

(From the Reynolds Collection)

The fore part of the train is on the Colorado River bridge (seen behind the steamer, above right) which was removed after a new bridge was built about 1924. About that time the railroad station was converted to a sanitorium. The station finally was razed in the early 1930s to make way for a lettuce crate plant.

We went by train and at that time there was no Salton Sea, just the desert all the way, and the ride took eight hours. The windows had to be shut because of the sand and since there were no refrigerated cars in 1902, it was a terribly hot and sticky ride. When we reached Yuma and went to our new home we found cots on the porch with nets over them because of the mosquitoes. It was an adobe house, the coolest kind, and there were porches on two sides as well as a wide hall right through the middle of the house with screening across each end, so it was almost like another porch. The water from the Colorado was not filtered in those days. There was a large barrel by the kitchen door and we dipped water off the top for drinking and cooking. We just let the water for a bath run into the tub for baths, and it looked pretty muddy to us at first, but we finally became used to it, and at least it cooled us off for a few minutes.

People talked about "When the mosquitoes come" as if they would arrive on a certain day at four o'clock, which was exactly what they did. Irene and I were walking home from work when suddenly we were surrounded by them. You couldn't sit outdoors after dark unless you had a smudge pot close by, and then not very comfortably. It seemed that when both the Gila and Colorado rivers were high, it meant mosquitoes.

James Barney, who had built the house we were to live in, was a wealthy man from San Francisco who had come to Yuma and married a Mexican woman. His son Jim* and the girls, Celia and Clara, later followed their father to

full charge of the Hooper store in Yuma, as well as a branch in Ehrenberg, some 85 miles upriver, where he was appointed postmaster in 1871. He married Cecilia D. Peralta in Yuma on November 8, 1874. By 1875, the mercantile business was completely in his hands, and in the same year he became the Wells, Fargo Express Co. agent at Ehrenberg. In 1876 he purchased the Vulture Mine and subsequently obtained controlling interest in the highly profitable Silver King Mine. When Col. Barney died in 1914, he was one of the richest men in Arizona Territory.

* James Mitchell Barney, who has frequently been mistaken for Col. James M. Barney's son, was in fact his grand-nephew. Jim's grandfather was Benjamin A. Barney, Col. Barney's brother. William Cartwright Barney, Jim's father, came to Yuma in 1864 with Col. Barney, and went to work in the Hooper store. James Mitchell Barney was born in Yuma, October 22, 1874, but later went to Palo Alto, California, to live with his grandparents. He entered Stanford University in 1891 and obtained an engineering degree in 1895. He returned to Arizona where he worked as surveyor, engineer, and draftsman. He worked for the United States Surveyor's Office, for Maricopa County as Deputy County Recorder, and for the State Land Department. Following his retirement in 1938, Jim Barney devoted most of his time to writing many articles about Arizona history until his death on June 15, 1965. For more information see Patricia Bowe, "James Mitchell Barney: Historian of Historians," *Arizoniana*, Vol. IV, no. 2.

San Francisco. Then his wife, in Yuma, had another girl, Mary, who stayed with her mother and was a good daughter to her.

Several years later we rode over the Southern Pacific to Los Angeles and saw where the Colorado had broken through and made a very large lake from the mountains to the railroad, and it was named the Salton Sea.†

Papa was bookkeeper at Sanguinetti's store and Felice was clerking in the Harry Brownstetter clothing store. Lydia was about ten years old. Felice was also a practical nurse, so never lacked employment.

Of course the first thing Irene and I did was to look for jobs. Our only experience was the cash register at Stern and Goodman's, but we never had an unkind boss again. Irene found a position first, at the Water and Light office, with Mr. Frank Blaisdell. Shortly after, Mr. Peter Hodges, who had the Yuma Meat Market, asked me to keep books for him. As a matter of fact he never before had any books to keep. He was remarkable in doing his bookkeeping in his head. He did hang the slips on a nail, but he really knew just what each customer owed him. Irene and I had never done any bookkeeping but as my husband said years later, when our daughters were in high school, "There is no need to take bookkeeping in school, May, everyone keeps books differently and one can learn by keeping them." That is true, as Irene had no trouble in learning at the Light Office and although in my case I had to begin from scratch, I learned. A young man named John Doan helped me a lot.

When we knew we were to go to Yuma in a few days, we had written Felice to send us the names of the young men she knew there. I was keeping a diary and when Felice sent us some names I chose the one I wanted. I had dedicated my diary "to the John I will marry some day," as that was my favorite name. Since John Doan was the only "John" Felice mentioned, I wrote in my diary, "I am going to Yuma to marry John Doan." After I met him I thought he was too absent-minded, as he had passed me one day and never even seemed to see me, so I wrote again in the diary, "I am not going to marry John Doan" (but I did). Irene did not choose a name but she married one of them a year

† During the floods of 1905, the Colorado River broke from its channel and filled an inland depression called the Salton Sink. Other floods threatened to inundate what had become the Imperial Valley, but the break was closed in February of 1907, with 1,200 pilings and 6,000 carloads of rock and gravel at a cost of \$1,600,000.

later, Alf Foster. We did not know it but we were to marry the two most eligible men in that town. Alf owned the *Yuma Morning Sun*,* and John was Clerk of the Court. One day he came by the Hodges Market and saw me in the office on a stool with a large book on my lap. He came in to tell me that I could lay the book on the counter to work, and then went on to explain just what different books I should keep. I was better at figures than anything else so it wasn't too hard to do the work, get a trial balance and give Mr. Hodges a statement each month. I think it came as a great surprise to Pete Hodges that he could tell at any time just how he stood.

He and Mr. Blaisdell were certainly different from Stern and Goodman of Fullerton days. They would see that Irene and I went out every afternoon for an ice cream soda or a root beer. In the summertime all stores and offices in Yuma were closed from noon to three o'clock, except the Court House and City Hall. Irene and I could walk home, have a cold bath and lunch, and come back at three to work until six. Saturday nights the stores stayed open until nine.

There were three other "Anglo" girls in Yuma, Bess Munn, Grace Fredly and Edna Greenleaf, and a number of other lovely girls of Mexican descent. The twins, Katey and Agnes Baltz, were our favorites. Agnes had gone out several times with John before I came.

At the meat market I had a little office by the front door. It had a wall on two sides and a grating on the others with an opening for customers who wished to ask about their account. I wanted to brighten up the place so I asked every firm to give me one of their calendars and I had them solidly on my walls. It was quite attractive and cheerful too. In warm weather there were always ice cold melons in the large refrigerator and I could have a piece whenever I wanted it.

There was a ferry that went back and forth across the river from Yuma to the California side, where the Indian Reservation and Fort Yuma Indian School stood on the hill. The boat was really a glorified raft, quite large, and was used to carry freight across the river. One day, soon after we had come to

* A. M. Foster was editor during 1908 and part of 1909 of the *Yuma Morning Sun*, a daily newspaper established in 1905. He edited the weekly *Yuma Sun* during the same period, and was also editor and publisher of the *Arizona Pythian Record* (later changed to the *Arizona Pythian*), a monthly publication established in 1903.

Yuma, there was great excitement in the town because with a large consignment of cyanide in boxes, the raft had tipped so badly that the boxes all fell into the river. It was a frightening time for a while as people said when the boxes swelled and broke open the cyanide would poison the water and we would all die. It was a dreadful thought but wiser heads decided that before this could happen the silt would bury the boxes forever. I guess that is what happened as no one died.

Our pleasures were picnics, rides down the Colorado in the steamers, and dances. We danced in a hall over the Gandolfo Hotel and we *danced* no matter how high the thermometer went. We later had electric fans and there would be tubs of ice in front of each fan. I remember one night my date, one Henry Levy, who lived near the hotel, went home six times to change his silk shirt. Irene had a few dates with his brother, Louis, but pretty soon there were only dates for her and Alf. He once told her that he had read a book, called "Dri and I," where the hero couldn't decide between two sisters, and that at first he felt a little like that with Irene and me but he really didn't, as after he knew her there was no one else for him. It wasn't that way with John and me, however. My first date was with Jim Polhamus, the son of Old Captain Isaac Polhamus,* who ran one of the steamboats on the Colorado. He asked me to go to the first dance after we reached Yuma, and I happily accepted. It seemed that he was practically engaged to Edna Greenleaf, a teacher who was spending the summer with her parents in Phoenix, but had decided to come home for the 16th of September dance. September 16th is a Mexican holiday,† like our July 4th. Jim came to the office and explained to me that he could not take me to the dance, but that his great friend, Henry Levy would take me instead. I was very cross, to put it mildly, and said the California young men did not break dates, which was a silly remark as the only dates we had in California were the few while we were at Mother Robisons. However, I finally agreed to go with Henry and had a wonderful time, for he was the best dancer in town. After that I went with Henry altogether, and Irene and I had a gay and happy time.

* Captain Isaac Polhamus (1828-1922) operated a Colorado River steamer from Yuma to LaPaz, Ehrenberg, and Ft. Mohave for the Colorado Steam Navigation Company. His was one of the last steamers to go down the river before the Laguna Diversion Dam was completed in 1909.

† Mexican Independence was proclaimed on September 16, 1810, when Father Miguel Hidalgo gave the "Grito de Dolores," or "Shout of Independence" in the village of Dolores, Sonora.

We loved it and everybody, and besides that we liked our work. Irene was really in love, and I certainly thought I was. Henry was a very devoted "swain" and used to insist on buying my gloves and handkerchiefs. He gave me books and candy and flowers, and best of all, he and Alf and sometimes other boys would serenade us. I wish my granddaughters could know how one felt when along about three in the morning, one woke to the music of guitars and violins playing under the window. You could let the musicians know that you heard by pulling up a curtain or lighting a very small light, but you did not go to the window or say anything. The musicians were usually Mexican players, with our beaux standing nearby. Years after I was married I was downtown in Yuma one day and one of these musicians came up and said, "Do you remember when we used to play under your window, Mrs. Doan?"

Poldie Heimann, one of our T. U. C.'s (The Unfledged Chickens),* came down for a visit one month and she was delighted to have one of these serenades. The week she was there, it happened that Edna Greenleaf, Jim's girl, was away, and Jim dated Poldie all that week, and one day wrote a short note to her in my note book, just a line about "our good time." After Poldie went home Edna was talking to me in the office one day and in an idle way turned the leaves of my notebook and saw Jim's handwriting, and went straight to Jim about it. Later Jim came in and said he had told Edna the note was to *me*, because she wouldn't mind me, knowing that I cared for Henry. That time I really got angry at Jim, and Mr. Hodges, who was Jim's brother-in-law said to me later, "I thought May, that you were going to stamp a hole in my office floor," so Jim had to own up to Edna that it was a note to Poldie. A year later Edna died very suddenly and Jim later married another lovely girl.

We used to attend dances up at the Indian School and sometimes would stay all night with one of the teachers. Louise Wallace was a very fine girl and a fine teacher and the school had one Indian teacher, a Cherokee named Jerdie Faber. She was a college graduate and an awfully nice girl, and the summer before she and I were both married we went to Coronado for a two weeks vacation, and had one of the thatched cottages and the little tent to cook in. Then we came home and she married a doctor and I married John.

* The Unfledged Chickens was a club of young Anaheim girls.

[TO BE CONTINUED]