AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF

WINNIE MAY ARTHUR PHILLIPS

Completed June 1, 1985

BORN: 08 October 1897
Germania, Midland County, Texas

DIED: 01 April 1992
San Jacinto, Riverside County, California

Written to great-granddaughter, Jayna Rhodes Brown Quinn, in response to a letter.
All information in parenthesis which is italicized, was added by
Jayna Quinn, in order to clarify or expand upon the facts for genealogical purposes.

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Farmington, Utah 84025

Winnie May Arthur Phillips
264 North Ramona
San Jacinto, CA

ANCESTRY:

Scotch and Irish, to the best of my knowledge.

MOTHER: Eugenia Cornelia Fenley, Born in Arkansas
(*Texas Census of 1900 shows her state of birth as Mississippi*)
FATHER: George Perkins Arthur, Born in East Texas
(*Texas Census of 1900 shows his state of birth as Mississippi*)

PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS: Rebecca (*Rogers*) Arthur, Born in Mississippi
George Perkins Arthur, Born in Texas, Killed in battle, Civil War

MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS: Grandmother's name forgotten (*Arenthia R. Dansby*)
John (*Robert*) Fenley, Born in Arkansas*

* Grandfather Fenley, his daughter, Lizzie, her husband Dick King, and their son Alvin King, are all buried in Rocky Mound, Arkansas. I believe this is the name of the cemetery. It's a few miles from where my mother lived after marrying her childhood sweetheart, Marion Dickert. Grandfather Fenley was responsible for the establishment of the first post office and school in that area, which is near Fouke, Arkansas.

MY CHILDREN:

Mary Eugenia Phillips, named for both of her grandmothers.
Born 06 November 1914 - Weight 10 lbs and 6 oz.
Dorothy Ruth Phillips, named for an actress. At this late date I can't recall who it was.
Born 19 March 1920 - weight 5lbs 8oz.

Both were born on a little farm in Martin County, County Seat, Stanton, Texas.

Mary married Bonner Rhodes on 29 January 1933.
Dorothy married Henry Goodhart.
Both divorced. Mary remarried, Dorothy has not.

The following pages are in answer to your questions as per letter:

WHERE DID I LEARN TO PLAY PIANO?

I had a few lessons, but to do so, had to drive 10 miles on a deep sandy road, therefore, had very few lessons. I'm not much of a piano player, church music mostly, and a few easy to read noted pieces. I love music, so just plugging along on my own for what little I do. Mary is the musician of note in this family. She was born with this talent. At age 6, when she entered her first school she played the organ for assembly. Today she plays for Lodges, parties and clubs. Dorothy also plays, but never devoted the time to practice that Mary did.

ANY SPECIAL MEMORIES OF MOTHER AND FATHER?

Mother was one of the kindest women I have every known or met. The ranch was midway between two towns, Midland and Stanton. The Texas Pacific RR ran across it, tracks were about 800 feet from the house. The tramps who walked on the railroad stopped for water and food. She never turned one away. She'd go into the kitchen and fix something for them. Occasionally they'd ask what they could do to help pay for the food, sometimes she would have them cut up a little stove wood. The County road also crosses this property, running in front of the fenced-in yard. In those days, all travellers were in covered wagons. Since it would be 10 miles to the next water, all travellers stopped, watered their teams, and rested in the shade of our big trees. This type of traveller was seeking a better life, some going to the copper mines in Arizona, some seeking land to homestead. I want to add I never heard my mother speak an unkind word about anyone. She always saw their good points.

Father was a man of a brilliant mind, a kind heart, but could be severe at times. Well conversant with the laws of the land, and fearless. He always brought us each a sack of candy when returning from town. I remember how smart the horses were. They seemed to learn that after entering the corral that if the gate was closed it meant work. So, when possible they tried to escape before one could lock them in. Trips to town were made every ten days or two weeks. I never knew my Grandfather Fenley. He died 40 or more years before my birth.

WHERE DID I LIVE AS A CHILD?

I was born and lived on the same ranch until I was sixteen and married William Preston Phillips.

FIRST PLACE I WENT TO SCHOOL

Mama's niece came from Louisiana and tutored us for over a year. The house was two stories. Classes were held upstairs. My grandmother, Rebecca, had already taught me to read and memorize some of the multiplication table. After this I was boarded and taught in a convent for

several months. After this, Jack and I stayed over at uncle Jim's (*James Morris Fenley*) for a few months where Aunt Delia taught us. We went home Friday nights. Sometimes we had to walk home, which was 7 miles if we cut across the pastures. After this, a little settlement developed a mile and a half from home; three or four houses, a post office, and a little school house. We walked to school each carrying a lunch bucket. We would sometimes trade food, depending on who had the best and was willing to make the trade. In those days a teacher was competent of teaching from the first grade to the twelfth; Latin, geometry, algebra, etc. There were thirteen children in this school. We did not talk during school session, we studied, took all books home at night to study the assignment for the next day. This was done by the light of a kerosene lamp. It was always my duty to wash the globes as my hands were small enough to enter the globe and scrub it. From this school went two boys who became professors.

I wish to digress a bit and return to the convent. It was late one Sunday afternoon. I was being punished for talking the night before to the girl in the bed next to mine. The Sister took me to the dormitory, sat me down in a chair, told me not to get up until services were over. I was very homesick. The cotton gin was two blocks away. I looked out the window, saw the gin, and a pair of grey horses hitched to a wagon the color of the team that hauled our cotton to the gin. I slipped out of the building ran close enough to see it was not my father's team. Then I thought and hoped, if only a freight train would come by and stop, I could ride it home. There was a long steep grade which slowed all trains before they passed our house. But no freight, or Father's wagon. I ran back to the building, sat in the chair, and looked very innocent when the Sister came to release me.

I wanted to be a teacher or a missionary in old Mexico. But no money for college materialized. Maybe it was for the best that I took the long hard road and won most of the battles.

WHERE DID YOU FINISH LATER YEARS OF SCHOOLING?

My school days of "Finishing School" have been going on for the past 87 years. Don't think I'll ever graduate, but have acquired a lot of knowledge from experience and observation.

WHERE DID YOU MEET YOUR HUSBAND?

I met my husband at the little school house where country folks met on Sundays for Sunday School. Once a month a minister came from Midland or Stanton to deliver a message. In the summer there was an all-day meeting "dinner on the ground." All who came brought food which was spread on a long table for the feast. His mother (Mary Frances Banks Phillips Phillips) taught Bible class, his Uncle Banks was a U.S. Senator. The Phillips all came from Alabama, first settling in east Texas. We were married in the same little school house on a Sunday afternoon. The congregation was our audience.

DID YOU HAVE AN EXOTIC HONEYMOON?

Dear Jayna, those were pioneer days, struggling to exist, very sparsely settled, drought, barren land. We were lucky to have the fee for the marriage license. I never heard the word "Honey Moon" until I was 30 years old. You were born about fifty or more years after my childhood days. It is difficult, I know, for you to comprehend the conditions. No, no Honey Moon as it's done today, but we lived together fifty years before his demise.

MY SECRET OF A GOOD MARRIAGE?

My best answer to this is: Keep your mouth shut-- This applies to both parties when an argument starts. This is "advice" remember. I never followed it and you probably won't either, but from observation I see it does pay off.

MY FAVORITE HOLIDAY/BEST BIRTHDAY AS A CHILD?

Have none, as I don't like any of them. Kills off too much time and I always have a job to do or one to finish. Remember no special birthday event, we were too busy with more important things.

SPARE TIME ENJOYMENT? SPECIAL PETS?

Nothing special. My work, as usual, and reading. Seldom turn on TV. Over the years I had horses, dogs, cats, pet prairie dogs, and a pet hen who came in every day during laying season and deposited her egg on my bed.

PROUDEST DAY OF MY LIFE?

Not only one day, but several. Namely; being appointed by Congressman John Tunney as Chairman of Post Office appointments, being appointed by the Governor of California to the Board of Directors of the Farmers Fair of Riverside County. The election to the Democratic Central Committee. Being awarded the contracts on mail jobs on which I had placed bids. *Supplement is enclosed, giving a deeper insight.*

MY SADDEST DAY?

Attending funerals of parents, grandmother, brother, and other relatives.

DID YOU GO TO A WORLD'S FAIR? WHO WERE YOU NAMED AFTER?

I never went to a World's Fair, nor had any desire to do so. There was some noted female in Texas named Winnie Mae or May that I was named after, but can't recall what she was famous for.

FAVORITE TYPE OF VACATION - LEGENDS - KEEPSAKES?

My vacations consist of enjoying my home, flowers, trees, and perhaps making more improvements. There are no legends, only occurrences, some happy, others harsh. Keepsakes - none.

MY GREATEST LOVE? WHERE MY PARENTS MET?

No special one. I cannot recall where they met.

WHAT IS THE BEST JOB YOU EVER HAD?

There were two. Twenty years of mail carrying, and twenty seven years as a Real Estate Broker.

WHAT IS YOUR POLITICAL PARTY?

I vote 90% Republican. All elected officials will bear watching.

IF YOU COULD CHANGE ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR LIFE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Can't think of a thing I'd change, as I believe I have done a pretty good job.

SUPPLEMENT TO QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY ANSWERED

The plains of west Texas are level lands, no hills or mountains until getting close to the Mexican border. From our ranch, one could see for miles and miles, no trees, only mesquite bushes. the nearest ranch was 10 miles away. Nearest neighbor was the Section Foreman and the Mexican workers on the R.R. My playmates were the Mexican children. I learned to speak and read Spanish from them. There was one little boy, eleven years old, who was extremely bright. I taught him to read in English and he taught me in Spanish. I loved Spanish food, couldn't expect them to give me a tortilla with chili or beans every day, so I contrived the idea of taking an egg over for an exchange. This worked out perfectly.

The winds blew for days, especially in the dry years, which was three out of six. One could see only a few feet, due to the sand in the wind. I can hear it now. The land would be parched, no grass, but in the years of rain it was like a garden of Eden. Flowers of all hues waving in the breeze, fat cattle grazing in the fields. I remember one year there had been no rain for over two years. The cattle had licked even the grass roots up. A hard cold winter came, cattle were very poor, as no crops had been raised to provide food for them. As a storm approaches, cattle drift to the south, turning their backs to the northers. After this great blizzard there were 300 head of cattle dead, piled up against the fence. When cut open there was nothing in them but mud. Remember, in those days there was no government aid of any kind, such as subsidies, loans, etc. We either produced food for ourselves and cattle, or we starved. It was a difficult life, but it created strong determined people.

I was born, raised, and married in this area. I had two brothers: Dick (*Richard*), and Joe Senate Arthur. Mama was first married to a man named Ingle (*James David*). From this union there were three children: Ada, Van, and J.D. (called Jack). they were all much older than we were, and gone from home before I grew up. I can recall very little about the time they were with us. All three of the Ingle children are now deceased. Brother Dick died at the age of 22 in Mexico City. He left the wind blown ranch in Texas, when he was 16 to work in the oil fields in central Texas. After a year there he and his buddy decided to go to Tampico, Mexico for oil work there. He worked there for perhaps 6 months when, on a short trip to Mexico City, he was stricken with convulsions, diagnosed by a doctor as having yellow fever contracted by bites from a certain mosquito prevalent in the marshes of Tampico. He had saved his money, hoping to have a cattle ranch someday. My brother Joe, worked ranches in his younger days, then developed into a first-class chef, working in the best hotels. He now lives in Florida, retired. After leaving the chef work, due to worn out feet, he and Jack went to Idaho, where they each had a nice cattle ranch. After a few years, Jack sold his ranch, and retired. Joe sold a year later and went to Florida where he leased land, and raised cattle for about ten years before retiring.

Papa read a lot, sitting by a table every night. He always had the pistol lying in reach. The window shades were pulled to the bottom at dusk. There had been two attempts on his life. He was a defender of the oppressed. Many people who came west were homesteaders. By living the land, usually 160 acres, and improving it, after a certain time it became theirs. They were usually poor people. The land in our area (5 miles away) was being grazed by a rich man who resented the intrusion. He would have his riders circle around the dugouts in which a lot of them lived, shooting their guns, attempting to scare them off the land. I remember one old man who had only one ear, the other had been shot off.

Cross ties were being put in daily in the rails, due to decay. At that time they had not learned that a bath in creosote would preserve and make them last for years. In order to get them off the track and to the section house, a hauler was given one load for hauling two loads to the foreman. This day, the foreman told my dad he could haul ties and told him that they were located in the red cut. This was a place where the RR had cut through a small hill, leaving the dirt high on each side of the tracks. The place for the job was well planned, no doubt. The purpose of this murder was to silence my father, as he had been giving the nesters advice on how to protect themselves legally. He was told to come at 12:00 midnight. He went, taking brother Van, who was about 10

years old. They got to the place, crawled through a 4 wire barbed fence, got one or two ties, and placed them in the bottom of the wagon. He had on high side-boards, so as to haul a good load, and to hold the ties in place. After pitching the tie into the wagon he had to get in and lay it down flat on the bottom. On about the third loaded tie, a bullet whizzed across his back. He came up with his loaded Winchester. The murderer was at the fence close to the wagon. Papa fired and killed him. The plan was to shoot Papa as he raised up from placing the tie down, but he missed his timing. This was a long, drawn out trial. The rich man had money to try for conviction. Papa had two good lawyers, but in the end he fired both, and took his defense into his own hands. My brother Joe Senate was named for these lawyers; Senate Hardwick and Joe Cunningham. He was acquitted.

During Papa's absence from home one night, a Mexican decided to raid the house. Mama was alone with 6 little children. She also kept the Winchester by her bed at night. There was a grape vine on an arbor close to the window at the foot of her bed. This particular night she did notice that the cat kept looking out this window, but she gave no great thought to it. Late in the night she saw the window go up and part of the intruder fixing to crawl through. She grabbed the gun and fired. He ran. Too bad she didn't kill the ape. He disappeared. Heard later some Mexican with a powder-burned face was seen in El Paso, but no proof he was our intruder, of course.

This I can't miss telling you. It's connected with the above. In those days women wore long skirts, almost touching the ground. A windmill will blow to pieces in a storm unless tied so the mill can't turn. A big wind storm came, so Mama climbed the 40 foot ladder up to the top, got on the platform under the mill, tied it to the stabilizer, and climbed back down. I remember it well, even tho' I wasn't 4 years old.

The next attempted assassination was six years later, paid for by the same rich cattleman. This was a young man about 23 years old. Papa had never seen this man. I remember later one evening, about dusk, a man rode up the road in front of the house in a gallop, went up a ways, then came back and repeated this a time or two. We kids didn't miss anything.

A few days later he came to the house, visited nicely, and told Papa he would like to talk to him privately. He suggested they just walk up the road, it was such a nice balmy evening, so they walked up the road with we three kids right behind them. This young man was timid and scared. No doubt he planned to do the job this evening but we kids scared him off. About ten days later Papa was on the way to town. There was a saloon in the little village I told you about earlier. He stopped in and this young man was there, very friendly and nice, and invited Papa to have a drink with him. Father said yes. So a glass was poured and as he raised it to his mouth the man fired. The bullet just barely missed the heart. He was apprehended, not jailed, but the trial date set. During this time his wife sent word to my father that she wanted to see him and tell him something. He did not go as he was afraid it was another trap. But later he decided it was not a trap, that she wanted to tell him all the facts. She explained to Papa what had happened. Her husband's name was Bill Ogle. (There was a man I remember seeing, named Bailey, who had a daughter named Ora.) The rich man employed Bailey to swear that Ogle had raped his daughter, Ora. This, of course, was a lie. The morning of the trial, as Ogle was going to trial Bailey shot and killed him. This silenced him from ever turning State's Evidence.

I recall that once, when travelling, the rich man was on the same train and in the same coach. Both were armed. Papa never budged an inch, was only hoping the rich man would make one move for his gun.

I remember as a little tyke watching the passenger train stop to let his lady guests off. They were beautifully dressed, the wealthy women wore boas. His guests were met by a driver in a shiny pretty surrey, pulled by two matching fat horses. A beautiful display of wealth.

The big 15 room house where the rich cattleman lived, (which was about 7 miles or so from our home) became our residence. It was during one of the dry periods when he left the country. His place had been sold. The nesters had built homes, more had come in with a little money. Homesteading land was all taken up, so there was no grazing land left for the rich man. While living on this place, during winter and into the spring, it was decided my husband and a partner would trap in order to make a little money. They did well with the catch, but the partner absconded with all the pelts.

When brother Dick was about 3 1/2 years old, he slipped away from the house, went over to the Section House, crawled up on top of the fence 10 feet from the train, naked as a jay-bird, and sang, "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder" while passengers were alighting.

In the days when I was a young girl, cattle were guarded with guns, almost. On this particular day, June 13, 1913 (a Friday), my father either saw or felt someone was on his land where his cattle were, so he got his Winchester and pistol, got on a speedy stallion, and took off. He rode many miles at high speed, found no man. Possibly the trespasser left upon spotting Father approaching. He came home shaking like a leaf, wet with sweat, and said he had to go to town. The passenger train was due in half an hour, and it stopped if flagged. He got on, went to town, to a doctor's office. He told the doctor he needed a drink to settle his nerves. Dr. said O.K.

Papa went to the medicine cabinet, looked in and saw a bottle labeled "Alcohol". He got a glass, put in some water, reached up for the bottle of alcohol. Beside it was a bottle labelled "Carbolic Acid". This he evidently did not notice in his haste for the alcohol. He poured the acid in the glass, drank it, and was dead in a few moments. Through all the hardships, Papa continued helping the homesteaders. Then to think he died by his own hand....

Mother and we three children lived on the ranch after father's death, for several years. I married, and moved to a little farm a few miles away. Dick went to the Texas oil fields. Mama went back to Arkansas where she married her childhood sweetheart, Marion Dickert. Our farming experiences were the same as what I grew up with. Droughts, crops blown out of the ground, a bale of cotton (500 lbs.) would not pay for the ginning, so the cows were turned into the fields to eat it. We rented several farms, but non were profitable. Four years before we left for California the RR laid off the Mexican workers and employed the destitute farmers. There were six of those. The pay was $3.00 per day, nine miles of track to maintain. They used a handcar for transportation, three men on each side pumping up and down to propel it. They then spent all the rest of the day putting in cross ties. To get this work we moved to the ranch which was very close to the starting and stopping place. We saved two horses and two cows from starving because of this job. We were required to buy a liberty bond, which was $250.00. There was

rationing of flour, sugar and a few other commodities. This was about 1918. Worked on the RR for about two years, took the $250.00, and went back to the farm. A rain had fallen and the world looked promising. Crops failed again.

Now we close the book of life on the plains of Texas.

My Uncle Jim (*James Morris Fenley*)(mother's brother) and Aunt Delia left the dried out farm and moved to California. However, there was one very good year he did have on the farm in Texas. He raised a water- melon that weighed 54 lbs., sent it to the Dallas Fair, and won the prize. Van Ingle was also living in our area. He moved to California and liked the looks of it. My sister Ada and her husband were already settled there, so after another dry year, we, both families, packed up to move also. Took five days to get here as Van's car broke down about a hundred miles from home. We had to camp until repair parts came. Think of this--I brought the cotton scales, feather bed, and old irons we heated on top of the stove to iron with... We landed in Imperial Valley, where my sister lived, farming and dairying. There was no electricity, no running water (had to dip it out of the canal). Toilets were outside, and hotter than a pistol in summer. Refrigerators were unknown at that time. To try to have cool water or milk, we had a square box, open on all sides, with a metal top that would hold water. In this was placed the ends of gunny sacks. The water would seep down the sides and in a breeze was better than nothing. This valley was just being settled at the time, so everything was very primitive. This area did not suit us, so we came up to Hemet, where my uncle lived. They had an apricot orchard. In Texas we had no fruit to speak of. An old man who lived eleven miles from us in a hollow had an orchard, and sometimes we went there and bought fruit, but rarely. When we landed at my uncle's place my aunt had canned a lot of apricots. They had a cow and lots of rich cream. Naturally, coming from a fruitless area I was starved for fruit. Never tasted anything in my life so good, as some of those apricots covered with thick cream.

We spent a couple of days in Hemet, then travelled over to San Jacinto, (three miles away) rented a house for two months, later found a place near by which was for sale and bought it. It was an old house with lots of old cottonwood trees on it. It took years to get them cut and removed.

When I was young, it was disrespectful to address people by other than Mr., Mrs., and Miss. Therefore, I never called my husband Bill or Will. It was for over the 50 years "Mr. Will." Seems silly today, doesn't it? Now, hereafter I'll refer to him in this manner.

Mr. Will got a job as caretaker at the school just across the street from our house, a job he held for 12 years. I worked cleaning desks etc., on Saturdays. I got a job cleaning the Bank every morning, doing windows, stoking the coal in the furnace. I went down at 4:00 every morning. For this I was paid the sum of $25.00 per month. I held this job for four years. All this money and Mr. Will's salary at the school was banked and saved. I taught a little music, too. I also cleaned a school teacher's house once in awhile. We had a cow, and chickens, which meant milk, butter, and eggs. During the years when we had several cows, we always got one that gave a lot of rich milk, which I sold for .15 cents per quart. Butter sold for .50 cents per pound. We put down a well, 14 feet deep, and planted the lot 100 x 365 all in alfalfa. This lot was the second piece of land we bought and it was adjacent to the house lot.

Artesian water was flowing from many places in the valley in those days. After big wells over a thousand feet deep were drilled to irrigate vast acreages the water lever went down to where it did not pay for us to go deeper when our well failed to yield more water. Also, by this time the town began to grow, and chickens, cows, and horses were forbidden. This phase of operation was closed.

Mr. Will was unable to do the heavy work required at the school any longer, so we built a service station on the front of the lot where we had grown the alfalfa. He and Mary's husband, Bonner, ran it for some time, this during another depression. I sold hamburgers and candy to the school kids for a time. Bonner left the station for a better job. Mr. Will was unable to run it alone, so we rented it out for a time. The tenant couldn't pay rent, as he could not collect for the gas, etc., that he sold. When the station was closed there were IOU's totalling $3500.00. No chance of ever collecting it, as people were too poor. That's when I decided to change its use. I went to work on it making into a livable place. I worked on it when I came home from my mail trip each day. It took me nine months to complete it. It now rents for $250.00 per month, but in the beginning, upon completion, we were lucky to get $35.00.

We now come to the year 1934.

Now, I was very restless, I bid on a mail route from here to Riverside, serving four post offices and mail boxes on the roadways for twenty miles. I was awarded the contract. I carried money from a grocery store that I served, and post office, to the bank in Riverside every morning, so I became well known. There was an elderly woman living in an unfinished cottage, who was confined to a wheelchair. Sometimes I would take her mail up to her door. One day she was crying. I asked her what the trouble was. She had a man working for her who was supposed to finish the house and do other little things for her, but he was a wino, so worthless. She wanted to sell. I had three hours lay over every day, doing nothing by lying on a cot in the ladies room reading. One day I decided I was killing off too much time and began to wonder what I could do for income during the three hours. The answer was -- buy the old lady's place. Now, in order to buy this property (I didn't have the money) I told the banker, where I had been depositing the store's money every day for two years, that I wanted it. I told him my plans and said that if he felt I was able to carry out the project, to lend me the money. My home property was clear and I would not place a mortgage on it. I got the loan. This land faced two streets, one in front and one along the side. It contained approximately 1 1/2 acres.

A couple of years before this I had built a small cottage in Palm Springs on Indian land. Rent on the ground was $5.00 per month. I rented to musicians for the two seasons I had it there. I was told anything placed on Indian land could not be removed. I did remove it, hired a big hay trailer rig, had it cut in two, and moved it to this old lady's place. Other pieces of property were coming up for sale to the highest bidder, where lakes or parks were to be established near this property. I also got loans for this. I then had two lovely bungalows.

I then needed help finishing up the old lady's place, so I would go to the unemployment office, where as many as 30 men would be lined up to apply for a job. I can usually look a person over and see how they move, and judge if there is very much energy in them. I would need help hauling lumber, etc., and with carpentry work. I would take the man I selected from the line, tell

him what I wanted and how it was to be done. Once in a while I had to let one or two go when I discovered they knew practically nothing about construction. It was less than a ten minute drive from this property to the post office in Riverside, so I was there every day until time to go back to the post office and load up for the return trip and deliveries. To make a long story shorter, at the end of this eight year contract I had four nice houses, all situated so that when it came time to sell, the land could be evenly divided, all furnished, honeysuckle shading the carports, trees shading the houses, and all rented.

This route was discontinued at the end of my eight year contract, July 1, 1942. Doing a certain job for eight years becomes a habit, and I wanted to continue the same work. I knew it was to be terminated, so I placed bids on two other routes, both mountain. One went south from here, the other east into the San Jacinto Mts.. I was awarded both contracts. The big question was, who would run the other route, as I couldn't do both alone. Where would I find a dependable man? There were taverns on both routes. I did not want someone who would stop in, drink, and perhaps wreck my truck. I advertised, had a lot of applicants, but didn't care for any of them. Finally, just 12 hours before the run was to begin I found a man in the San Jacinto Mts., a big Irishman, who had worked for the Electric Light Co. for 28 years as a trouble shooter. I knew he would be dependable, my guess was right. He was restless since his retirement and was delighted to take the job. I had to buy a new 3/4 ton truck for his run. On both of these runs we hauled passengers, groceries, medications, papers, and bread.

One period of six weeks he was laid up with hip trouble. This was during the winter - lots of rain, some snow, and with the roads being unpaved, deep mud, and hills. Now that he was unable to drive, I had to find a replacement until he was well enough to resume the work. I found a man on my route that could do the job, but refused to take the muddy run. He said he knew ice, snow, and chains, but not mud driving. I knew I could do it if anybody could. I took it, and ran it until my old driver recuperated. The Irishman stayed on the job for four years, until he became slightly ill. When this four years was up I decided to give up his run, as I had enough to do without it. I sold the truck to a man who wanted the route, for the same money I paid for it, $2,500.00 cash.

Now to tell you about my mountain run for twelve years.

July 1, 1942 to 1954. I had two post offices to serve, and many mail boxes on the roadside. After leaving the Idyllwild post office each day, I came back to the highway to turn on the long run. The second post office I served was off the highway about a half a mile. No road work, such as snow removal, was done on it. Also, when it was established in that spot it was a busy resort, but by now, had become practically deserted, with the exception of the old lady who ran the office. She was living on the cancellation of postage for her salary, which was at that time 3 cents per letter. Some months she only made $18.00. As I turned a corner onto the highway, I could look down and see about 6 acres of beautiful pines, with a big house and in front of that was a big, mostly open, building. It had no ceiling, and some sides still open. It had been built years before as a garage, constructed from mountain lumber, when lumbering was being done. Instead of 2 x 4's it was built with 4 x 6's. I began to think how foolish to have a post office hidden off the travelled roads. I first thought of buying the old garage building and making it into a place where I could go, but on second thought I gave up that idea, knowing the house by it was

big, and that the rest of the land would be sold and possibly filled up with undesirables. I decided to buy it all. I asked the locals if they had any objections to making the open building into a new post office. All liked the idea.

I consulted the department in Washington, saying I would build the building, and rent it to the department, explaining that the present location was isolated, causing small revenue for both parties. The department agreed. Then I wanted the money to do this job with. I again called on the same bank, telling them of my plans. The Vice President came up to me and said, "Fine," I could have the money I needed, and that he thought I should buy up all the land I could around there. I didn't need any more than what I borrowed that time, as it took me about 35 years to do all I wanted to do on that plot. I got a good, fast carpenter, and we went to work almost day and night to finish off the south half, making it into an apartment and post office. I spent $7000.00 on this job. The following Saturday and Sunday the Postmaster was to move in, but on that Saturday night the great forest fire came raging through, burning even to the tops of the tall pines. I was up there that night, in the big house, and was awakened by people screaming for me to get out. I hated to leave, but as I looked around I could find no place to put my passenger car to keep it out of danger, as the grass was over a foot high, dead and dry. I reluctantly drove off the mountain. I went back up the next day and found my new building in a pile of ashes.

The night I stayed there and ran from the fire, was windy and very cold. There was a heater in the living room which the people who owned it before had left behind. I thought I'd light it and get warm, then I remembered our ranch house burning on a Thanksgiving day from worn out stove pipe on the cooking stove, and decided I'd better crawl up into the attic and check the condition of this stove pipe. I did later, and found it completely separated. Had I built a fire, that house would have burned, too. So, never build a fire in a stove in a house you know nothing about.

I was not to be defeated in moving the post office. I put it in a corner room of the big house, closed in a part of the front porch facing this room, for deliveries, etc., and let the Postmaster move in. She was in there for about two years before the building could be rebuilt, and her part completed. The upstairs portion, and vacant lower half of the big house was not completed for another year and a half. A grocery store went in there. After the fire, some people said they were selling and getting out. I said, "Give me two or three years, and I'll have roses blooming again."

After the nice ranch house burned, there was no money to replace it, but we had lots of cross ties, and with these, several rooms were built, chinking cracks with something like cement, and papering it with building paper, just like the pioneers did with their log houses.

After finishing the post office and store building, I started getting houses on the land. I bought some and had them moved in, and again, with a good carpenter, went to work for the next few years. I wound up with eight neat furnished cottages besides the two storey house. It was not finished either below or above. I never rented it, afraid of fire from a crowd. My family came up quite often, and I slept there every Saturday night and sometimes during the week, depending on what had to be done. Mary or Dorothy could always do the mail route, when they were both living around here. By the time they moved away I had it all under control.

During this period I also built a Tire/Auto repair shop here in San Jacinto, and also bought another house and two lots about 3 miles out of Hemet. I sold that 6 years ago, carried the contract, though it is not paid off yet.

July 1, 1954, I retired from the trucking business, after twenty years. I had sold the four houses I put up when I was going to Riverside a few years before retiring. I had them surveyed and sold one by one. With the mountain building and mail work, it was, or got to be, too much to keep them up. I did for a while, though, taking a painter from here after I came in from the Mountain trip, and he got off work at 5:00pm. We could go over the 20 miles from here and paint the inside of a house by 2 or 2:30 am, come home, sleep a bit, and start out on the mail route at 8:30. I had all loans paid off by this time.

My mountain place was the showcase of all the mountains. Lawns tidy, trees kept pruned, pine needles kept cleared away, flowers blooming in summer. The place was always orderly and neat.

I bought cedar trees about 15 inches high, set them out on the side of the road that bordered the property. Today they tower up near 40 feet. Enclosed are two pictures, some with the small new trees, another taken years later. Compare them. I named the place "Pine Haven," and to this day it's still called that. The man I sold to has not maintained the property as I did. I hate to tell anyone that it was my place, once.

1954. Next project: I now only had the two main properties, the mountain ranch, and home property where I have three rentals to keep up. I decided to get a license to sell real estate. I went to Los Angeles to a school, where I studied until two or three in the morning. I stayed there two weeks and came home Friday nights. At the end of this time the teacher felt I was ready for the state examination, but said he saw no need for me to wait until these were held. He suggested I appear before three R.E. Commissioners. He arranged this meeting. I also carried recommendations from the bank where I borrowed so much money and from lumber companies. I passed this exam, qualifying for a broker's license instead of a salesman's. Therefore, I did not have to go to work in some broker office. I opened my office in Hemet, which I operated for 27 years.

Besides selling real estate, I was Notary Public, Registrar of voters, and carried Merle Norman cosmetics. When I had to close my office due to this back trouble, I had served the public 47 years.

I now live with this Biblical Quotation:

Man looketh on the outward appearance,
But the Lord looketh on the heart.

Love,

Winnie.

P.S. Next Feb. I will have lived in this house 63 years.

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