

A photograph of a calm lake with ripples in the foreground. The background is a dense forest of evergreen trees, partially obscured by a thick mist or fog. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall mood is serene and nostalgic.

# **RECOLLECTIONS**

## **OF LEONARD LAKE**

**Interviews with Local Residents**  
**Sandra Marshall**

# Recollections of Leonard Lake

Interviews with Local Residents, 1979–1983

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Recollections of Leonard Lake  
Dr. William A. Boyle and Helen Boyle  
San Francisco, May 20, 1979

Dr. Boyle "I was born in San Rafael in 1887 on the ninth of February. When I was a youngster we spent our summers up there at the lake. We usually went up in the latter part of June and stayed until the Fall, coming down usually pretty well before Thanksgiving. We would start off from San Rafael in the summer and take the train to Ukiah—at that time that was as far as it went. In Ukiah we would rent a livery team to take us on to the lake which was about a three-hour trip. We did lots of walking on those trips. You know, when my mother and father first went up to the place the train only went as far as Cloverdale and they took a livery team on to Ukiah, then another in, to the lake.

"At the lake we kept one horse to do all the work and we used to rent a cow and take her in with us from Ukiah, so that we'd always have plenty of milk.

"My father bought the place. They went up there first because my older brother used to have attacks of croup. You never hear of croup nowadays but that was a pretty wicked disease in the old days. He could get really sick but in a dry climate he got along pretty well. The climate at the lake was dry and good for him. Before buying the lake they used to stay at various springs. In the old days that was where you went to get rested up and to get your health back. At any rate, up there the climate used to suit my brother all right.

"We always used to have chickens around, plenty of chickens. That was so if we got short of meat we had lots of chicken. Then with this one horse we used to drive a buckboard (a low horse-drawn vehicle) down to Calpella, or to Ukiah to get meat and other provisions."

Sandy "Was there a family living along the road in to the lake named Putnam or Dickenson?"

Dr. Boyle "Oh yes... One of the Dickenson girls was my sister Una's good friend. They used to ride together. There's a soda spring up on the hill above where she lives. Then there is another soda spring much closer to the lake than hers. You know the green lake, which we used to call Carson's Lake, that's covered with a green algae now? At the lower end of that, about a mile or so beyond that and up the hill someplace (it wouldn't be easy to find), there's a soda spring. We used to love to go up there and drink that soda water."

Sandy "How close is that to the lake?"

Dr. Boyle "Oh, it's about three miles away from the lake, altogether."

Sandy "Who else was living close-by, back then?"

Dr. Boyle "There was a man named Prior, a Mr. Prior and his wife. They lived, well it wasn't too far down the road below where that soda spring is. They lived alone there for many years. He was an Irishman, had quite an Irish brogue and a nice way about him. But, whiskey was his trouble, every once in a while people would come up there and get him to guide them hunting. He was a pretty good shot. But then he'd get drunk. He'd get drunk and set fires. Set fire to the forest so as to drive the deer out. He was so tormented, you never knew when he was gonna get drunk and set a fire going.

“At about the first creek that you come to, that’s where the Wagggers lived. They belonged to the Orr family. Mrs. Wagger was an Orr, you know, from over at Orr’s Hot Spring. Have you ever walked over there?”

Sandy “I’ve ridden horseback.”

Dr. Boyle “When we had any emergency at the lake we would hike over there and use the telephone. There was no telephone at the lake house or at the house in San Rafael. But, to telephone in emergencies, we’d go over there to Orr’s and there, there was one of those old-fashioned telephones: you’d ring a bell and there’d be all kinds of people who would come onto the line, and it was hard to get anybody to understand what you wanted because there were so many people answering it. My sister Gabriel, who is a Carmelite nun now, acquired a fear of the telephone from that time on. Now she won’t answer a telephone because that telephone back then was so hard to understand. I was the one who usually did the telephoning back home.”

Sandy “Was your sister one of a group of nuns who used to live there at the lake?”

Dr. Boyle “Well, no, they didn’t live there. She became a Carmelite nun and that is a very strict order of Catholic nuns. No, we never had any nuns live there. We did have priests visit us, so we had Catholic services in the house from time to time. My sister always wanted to use the lake as a religious place, as a convent or as a place for priests, but no, we never did have any nuns up there.”

Sandy “One thing sort of new that is there now are otters in the lake. They’re beautiful animals. Do you remember there ever being otters there when you were young?”

Dr. Boyle “Not when we were little (laughing). The fact is, we were getting on in years when autos came into the scene.”

Sandy “Not ‘autos,’ ‘otters.’ “ (Laughter)

Dr. Boyle “Oh, otters, o-t-t-e-r-s.

Sandy “Exactly, much better than autos.”

Dr. Boyle “Ah, speaking of mistakes like that, we had a man employed to guard against poachers, who lived down near the end of the lake in a little cabin. My sister said to him once that she had heard stories of snakes hypnotizing birds. She said to him (he’d seen a lot of snakes): ‘Did you ever see a bird charmed by a snake?’ He said, ‘Chaw’m-they don’t chaw’m, they swallow’m whole.’ “

Sandy “Let me ask you about another family. Do you remember the Staleys?”

Dr. Boyle “Oh yes, I didn’t know the Staleys too well. One of the Staley girls worked for my sister Una at the lake. They were good friends. Una, of course, spent a lot more time at the lake than the rest of us. I had to go into the army and my sisters went into the convent. Una stayed on and kept the place going. She married a man named Mr. Nunes. He was of Spanish origin and they lived on up there.”

Sandy “How did your father happen to buy the lake?”

Dr. Boyle “My father was looking around for a healthy place with a dry climate for my brother who had croup. He got up to Cloverdale where he heard about the lake and after he saw it and found out that my older brother seemed to thrive there, he bought it. Mr. Leonard was still there.

Mr. Leonard had been renting for a number of years, I think, to hunters and so on.

“I remember my mother telling about one time in the early days when she was up there, a couple of men of the Leonard family were hanging around and she didn’t like it. She went out with a rifle and shot a chicken off a roost in a tree and the men, they too disappeared. She was a good shot.

“In my day, the only near neighbors that we had were the Priors who were about three miles below and then Poe up on that hill above.”

Sandy “Tell me about him.”

Dr. Boyle “Well, his name was Americus Napoleon Poe, A. N. Poe. He was quite dark. I wondered in later years if he had some Italian in him. But, he never had any friends. He had a wife and she lived there all alone. He didn’t believe in the education of women and he wouldn’t take any newspapers or anything. He did have a horse who was pretty near starved most of the time, and he also had a dog. But he was a very good hunter, and incidentally, he used to act as guide to people who wanted to hunt around there. He made some money that way. Then, he used to come around to our place when Una was there alone. They got to be pretty good friends and she used to give him food, I think.

One time Poe didn’t show up for three or four days and Una went out, walked up to his place, and she found him lying dead out in the field and the little dog standing guard. Oh, was he ever. For a long time she had trouble coaxing the dog to let her approach. Then she called the Sheriff and they took the body down. Although Poe was rather cruel to dogs, that dog really stood by him in the end, guarding his body.”

Sandy “Was that after his wife had died?”

Dr. Boyle “Oh no, she left him, finally. Seems to me she married somebody at Staleys, but I couldn’t be sure. I was rather surprised, because she was not a very good-looking or attractive woman but, she did get married again, after she left Poe.

“Poe was a very good shot. He used to shoot deer and sometimes bring them around and sell them to us.’

Sandy “Can you describe where he lived?”

Dr. Boyle “It was sort of a bare spot up on the hill. Now, you go down to where your tennis court is. There’s a little hill there that we used to call ‘Snake Hill.’ “ There were always a lot of snakes, gopher and water snakes. You went on from there, on up through the woods and finally came up to a bare area, on the top, where Poe lived. His place was always very bare looking.

Sandy “The place that they call ‘Poe’s Cabin’ is—you know where the big house is, then the barn. If you keep going up from there, way up on the top of the ridge from there is a little cabin built in the shape of a cross. It’s very old and beginning to fall down now, but that’s known as Poe’s Cabin. Do you remember any place built way up on the ridge like that?”

Dr. Boyle “Yes, well, that was built after my day mostly but I have been up there. I think it was Harris’s. If you were going down the road past what you know as Mud Lake, past Mud Lake a little bit there was a road that turned off to the side. There lived a man named Harris who was something of a hermit. He lived there all alone but he was quite a striking man. That was Harris. His cabin was taken, later, and put way up there on the hill.”

Sandy “That sounds like it. Maybe someone has the names mixed up, I think, because the cabin was taken apart and put back together.”

Dr. Boyle “There were steps going up to the porch and there was an attic.”

Sandy “Now wait a second, this one doesn’t have an attic and couldn’t have, because of the way it’s designed. But there is another cabin which, I think, was taken apart and put back together. You said a while ago that there was a man who lived in a little cabin down the lake, the man who guarded against poachers?”

Dr. Boyle “Yeah, our employee. His name was Jack Alt. He lived there down the lake for ten years or so, all by himself.”

Sandy “Was that cabin there when your father bought the place?”

Dr. Boyle “Oh no, he had that built. I’ll tell you something interesting. Although we rented cows, we had a jersey bull. A young jersey bull that was born up there. Jerseys are usually much more vicious than other cattle. At any rate that jersey bull used to roam the trail along the side of the lake, and one night some member of the Orr family— now he told me this himself—had come to poach in our lake. Our lake has bass and in those days, the early days, the bass were fairly easy to catch. They came over, Mr. Orr with some member of the guests at the Orr’s Hot Springs, came over to poach in our lake. That jersey bull started for them and they climbed up into a tree and they spent all night in that tree with that bull below until the next morning, when they finally got down. One of the Orr family told me that and I had heard some rumor about it, that some men had been caught up there by that bull. We were a little afraid of him ourselves. I was—I kept away from him so he didn’t bother me.

“That was when I was stationed at Mendocino State Hospital. You know, I was a psychiatrist and at that time I was staying there on the grounds.”

Sandy “Did you work in Mendocino for a long time?”

Dr. Boyle “Yes, I think it was about five years or so. I had been in the army quite a while. I retired from the army at the age of sixty-five, I think it was. Then I started working in state hospitals.

Sandy “Dr. Boyle, were you there when the main house burned?”

Dr. Boyle “Oh yes, you bet ya. I was right there. It burned in 1895. I was nine or ten years old. We had guests. We didn’t have very many guests come up from Ukiah but, at that time there was Mr. Hersh who had the Grand Hotel and some attorney—about five of them—came up together as our guests. We had a man who worked for us, George Moore, who was an old-timer, had worked lumber mills and everything and he was our handyman. Everything depended on him but he was out hunting that morning- it was a Sunday morning. The guests had come up Saturday night. All of a sudden that fire got started. They’d had an extra fire in the kitchen. I think it had gotten up into the shingles, into the shingle roof. The fire broke out fast and the house burned. There was nobody there to do anything that knew anything. My father was not accustomed to doing much work and they handed up some buckets but the thing just lasted, well, a little over a half hour or so, I’d guess. I had been sleeping out on the porch, and they moved some furniture out there and at any rate we moved out a way so that we had something to live in. It went flush to the ground. When George Moore finally came back there was nothing left except the chimney, the big chimney. That was 1895, I remember.



“George Moore was a very, very fine man. He was a handyman. He used to make boats, as a matter of fact. When we used to come up there to the lake in the summer time he’d have new boats, all newly painted, such a handyman, a very fine man. He married a maid that we had. Her name was Minnie and the two of them lived there together for several years.

“At any rate, that first house had gables and I think there is a picture of that. I think I gave that to one of the Dakins.”

Sandy “Yes, it’s there. It’s placed in the hallway right before the kitchen entrance.”

Dr. Boyle “I’ve got another thing of interest. My older brother, the one that had been delicate at one time, his name was Harry. At any rate, he saw elk horns. The lake was unusually low and quiet and he saw them and he dived down and put a rope around them and hauled them up. I guess they’ve got them up someplace. That’s where there was an elk drowned, many, many years before we had the place. There were never any elk around Mendocino County for a long, long time before we had the lake.

“Regarding fishing in the lake, in the first place, I think, Mr. Leonard tried to raise trout but they didn’t do very well because the water was not cold enough and not moving. They say that there are some warm springs that come in underground. At any rate, when my father first started fishing there, the fishing was really wonderful. It hadn’t been fished at all. They had planted black bass and I remember there was nothing easier. These people would go out in a boat and you’d hear the sound of the reel unrolling and they’d get a three-to five-pound bass. We used to have bass every day for one of our meals. There were some pikes put in at one time. They weren’t supposed to have pike and the pike grew bigger than the bass. The pike looks something like the bass but they grow bigger. I don’t know them very well because we didn’t catch many pike. I’ll tell you another thing that they have in that lake that they shouldn’t and that’s suckers. They have a mouth, well, they go along with their mouths protruding and suck things up. The perch were planted with the idea of giving food for the bass but I think they have sort of overrun things and they’ve got a lot of bones. They’re not too nice to eat.

“I never heard of termites when I was young up at the lake but, we used to have what we called flying ants. Sometimes when one of the great pine trees would fall to the ground then these, what we called ‘flying ants,’ would come out from the rotten wood. We didn’t realize that they were the cause of the rotten wood, that they were termites. I didn’t hear anything about termites until many years later, when I was at Stanford, I guess. I did notice in later years in the house, about the time we were selling it, when I’d come back from the army, that some of the porch was rotting here and there. That was undoubtedly the work of termites.”

Sandy “Did the Dakins build the Bee Hive, or did your family?”

Dr. Boyle “Originally that was where Mr. Leonard had a cabin. He lived there. I don’t think the Main House had been built in his day. Then Una had a very good friend named Beatrice Howard. She used to come up frequently. Her father was a doctor. At any rate, Beatrice lived in the cabin for a time. She lent Una some money and Una built the cabin and she called it the ‘Bee Hive,’ after B. Howard. That’s the Bee Hive.

“We younger ones used to live there, usually. At night when it was getting cold we used to leave the big house and the fireplace and go with candles to the Bee Hive to sleep. But it’s very much improved since my day. We also lived there for a time after the big house burned.

“Incidentally, after our house burned they had some architect from Ukiah come up to make plans for a new house. The house burned in September, I think and through October and November they hauled lumber up from Ukiah. When they got to the bottom of the hill, they had four horse teams and there at the bottom of the hill they’d add another four, so they had eight horses. They’d get them all started, go up part way, stop to rest where somebody would come from behind with a log of some kind to block the wheels so they could rest a bit. Then they’d go again, on the run. We, as kids, used to just love watching all those horses going up there on the run.”

Sandy “How long did it take to build the house?”

Dr. Boyle “I think they had it built by the end of the season. We stayed longer than usual and I think it took six months or so.

“Then the next year my mother came up with an upholsterer from San Rafael. He put in the wall paper and the carpets. He had the time of his life, up there where there’s quite a lot of game. He used to talk about it—when he wasn’t working on the furniture he was having a good time. My mother helped, she cooked for him.”

Sandy “What was the house like then?”

Helen “Well, there was a big kitchen and a dining room. The kitchen that they have now used to be his mother’s [Mrs. Boyle] bedroom. The kitchen faced the Bee Hive and there was a porch there also. The dining room was different too.”

Sandy “You don’t have any old photographs of the place as it was then do you?”

Dr. Boyle “I’m afraid not. What I had I’ve given away. Most of the old photographs... My sister the Carmelite nun, Sister Gabriel, is so crazy about the lake. For her it’s always ‘the dear old lake.’ In Una’s later years it was getting pretty run down. Sister Gabriel never saw it when it was getting rundown and it’s always ‘the dear old lake’ to her. I just don’t feel as much sentiment.”

Sandy “In the big house a lot of the furniture has marble tops. Was that furniture that you brought in?”

Dr. Boyle “Yes, we brought it up from the San Rafael house. I think they got it from the outside. It wasn’t local. We had it for years. That was our old furniture. It was brought up after we moved into Leonard Lake.

“They had a big write-up in the newspaper about the furniture, but that wasn’t true. It all came from our San Rafael house.”

Sandy “There used to be a fantastic story about how it had all been bought at an enormous auction of things from the Palace Hotel when they were redecorating the interior there. Bought there and then transported to the lake by stage coach.”

Dr. Boyle “Well, that’s not true. It wasn’t taken from a hotel. It was from our San Rafael home. They sold our San Rafael home about 1911 or so, but I think they took up the furniture a good bit before that.”

“There at the lake we had governesses. My father employed governesses to teach us so we could stay longer, so we didn’t have to come back for school.”

Sandy “So that you could stay on into September?”

Dr. Boyle “Yes, we usually stayed until about September. With the governesses we could stay

longer, sometimes until Thanksgiving.

“My father always liked to have clocks a little bit fast, wanted them ten minutes fast. We didn’t have any telephone or anything and sometimes they would get so they were half an hour or even an hour fast, we didn’t know what time it was. My father was happy as long as things were ahead of schedule. Fast.

“In my early days we used to have an agent in Ukiah, his name was William A. Hawkman. He would handle meat coming up to us and so on. It would come up on the stage to where Reeves Canyon begins. Our man, George Moore, would drive down with his horse and buckboard and when the stage came along they would throw him a sack of the things that were coming for us. We’d go down and meet him coming back, and act as stage robbers. In those days stage robbers were quite a talk, they really had them once in a while.

“They had a hill there known as Stage Robber Hill, and one time the horses and the stage were dashing by down there and the driver was so scared he didn’t want to stop. He had just been held up a short time before and robbed of everything.

“One of the men who had driven us a number of times, a man from the livery stables, was shot and killed by a stage robber.

“There is, in one of the hotels in Ukiah, what they call a ‘Black Bart Room.’ Bart was a very famous robber of the olden days but I don’t think he was ever really on the Ukiah run. He was from San Francisco and he posed as a man with mine holdings. He would go and hold up stages. He held up a number, and finally one day he dropped a handkerchief in the process.

“That handkerchief was found and it had the mark of a Chinese laundry on it. Detectives there in San Francisco took that around to all the Chinese laundries and they finally identified it as that of a very respectable man who used to go away to see about his mine holdings ... Black Bart ... but I don’t think he ever was on the Mendocino run.”

Sandy “Did they catch him with that clue?”

Dr. Boyle “Yes, oh yes.”

Helen “I’ll bet he wished they had Kleenex in those days. Would you like some more coffee or cake?”

Sandy “I’d love some more coffee, thank you.”

Dr. Boyle “You know, when I was serving in Puerto Rico they used to have chocolate ice cream every day and I took that for several months and I finally got so I couldn’t eat chocolate any more... I can eat vanilla.”

Sandy “How long ago was that, when you were in Puerto Rico?”

Dr. Boyle “Well I was there when World War II broke out. It broke out December 7, 1941. Helen couldn’t join me over there until they found a place for me to live. They finally did and she came over on that very day the War broke out.

“People sometimes ask me where I practiced and I say I practiced from Juneau, Alaska in the North to San Juan in the South and from Manila in the East to San Francisco in the West. But it was always for the army. Wherever the army wanted me, there I went.

“Then I retired when I reached sixty-five. I reached the highest rank of pay I could get. At the age of sixty-five my pay ceased to increase. I dropped out and then to Modesto State Hospital. I

retired from there when I was seventy years old and haven't done any regular practice since.

"Helen and I met in the army, in Honolulu. She had been there before I was. She was an army nurse. We were married in New York. Sometimes now she asks me if she isn't entitled to retirement, to give up her cooking and all.

Sandy "What was your father like, Dr. Boyle—was he a doctor too?"

Dr. Boyle "No, he was a capitalist. He had done some teaching in his younger years at Saint Mary's Hospital. Most of the time that I remember him he had retired and was living on money that he had gotten from his investments."

Sandy "That's interesting that you call him a capitalist."

Dr. Boyle "Kelly, then there was Kelly. At any rate, at the end of the Second World War when all these Nazi heads were captive, he was the only psychiatrist available and he was given the job of examining all of them, as to their mental condition. That was in Nuremburg, Germany. He interviewed several of them and he said that Göring was the smartest of all of them. He was the second in command to Hitler for a long time. He was a navigator and very vain. But at any rate he said that Göring was the smartest of all of them. They were all given cyanide pills to take in case they were in trouble. Göring hid out his cyanide pills and so when they were all sentenced to execution, were all to be hanged, Göring was the only one who was not. He took his cyanide pills and committed suicide.

"Then this lawyer who I knew, Doug Kelly, he wrote a book, *Nine Cells in Nuremburg*. He worked later on at the University of California in the department of psychology and he taught criminality to county sheriffs and chiefs of police. He taught all about the minds of criminals and so on.

"Thanksgiving, Kelly invited a number of people to Thanksgiving dinner. He was a man of considerable ability in various areas. He cooked a turkey, a big turkey, proceeded to go upstairs, returned down and said to his guests: 'Dinner is off, I've taken cyanide pills...' and he fell down the stairs and he was dead within a few seconds and that was the end of him. Nobody knows what made him do that. He was a very highly thought-of man and I knew him well. Dr. Kelly was his name and I had appeared in one or two legal cases with him, because as a psychiatrist I appeared in court in some cases and, at any rate, he was a very likeable man."

Recollections of Leonard Lake  
Judge and Mrs. McCowen  
Ukiah, July 5, 1979

Judge McCowen “Last year I ran across the deed to John Leonard for the lake property. From the location I’m fairly sure it’s the lake property but I’m not positive.

“As I told Mrs. Little [Mrs. Doralinda “Doris” Pilar Little, wife of Naman F. Little. The Littles were managers at Leonard Lake from 1958 to 1975.]

“I think there was somebody else, several owners maybe, in between when he owned the lake and when the Boyles acquired it.

“Reeves, the man Reeves’ Canyon was named after, owned it at one time. There again I haven’t had time to check, find out if he was the one the Boyles bought the property from.

“What Reeves was interested in was timber, although I don’t think the lake property was ever logged.

“The land not very far north of the lake was logged in the late 1950s. Made the worst mess that I’ve ever seen. Mr. Dakin later bought that piece and spent a lot of time and money trying to get the creek cleaned out and get it shaped up.”

Sandy “Naman Little put in a lot of work on that creek.”

Judge McCowen “I haven’t been up there in quite a few years. That type of redwood country comes back pretty fast. I remember one area that was logged back in the ‘twenties and when they got through they touched a fire to it and it ended up looking like somebody had dropped an atomic bomb—couldn’t see a touch of green any place. Actually, then the trees came up too thick. They should have been thinned out forty years ago.”

Sandy “How did you come to know the Boyles. Was it through your father?”

Judge McCowen “Yes, and after my father went out of the law business I did some work for Dr. Boyle. In fact I probably handled the deal when the sale to Mr. Dakin went through.

“I don’t know how the families got acquainted in the first place, whether it was through Mrs. Boyle and my grandparents or just how it happened. I don’t know if my ancestors were just always kind of interested because one of them used to own it and went out of their way to get acquainted with the Boyles when they bought the lake property or just how it happened.

“The first time that I was up there was way back in the ‘twenties. I wasn’t very old at that time.”

Sandy “Do you know Vivian Staley?”

Judge McCowen “Yes, and I was going to suggest that you look her up. Her father had a mill up there.”

Sandy [referring to photo of woman seated on porch of Big House with sheep] “Do you recognize that woman—I was hoping it was Mrs. Boyle.”

Judge McCowen “It looks a bit like her, but I can’t be sure. She died up there you know. It was

in the wintertime and they had to take the body out by horseback by way of Orr Springs. It's not very far across over there to Orr Springs.

"I remember, back in the 'twenties. Grandmother worked for a while, cooking out at Orr Springs for the Waggers who owned the place. Mr. and Mrs. Wagger were descendents of the original Orrs. So I spent an Easter vacation out there with my grandmother. One day Una came riding in on horseback and that really puzzled me—how she could have made such a long ride. I was young enough then that I didn't quite realize that you start out on the road heading for Leonard Lake and you think you're going north all the time, while really you go around in a big curve and then go south, so it just puzzled me: how she could be so far from home. Actually it's just a short distance from Orr Springs to Leonard Lake.

"Didn't Una say we could come up there and spend our honeymoon?"

Mrs. McCowen "Yes, big deal [laughing], no way could we in our circumstances, we had orders."

Judge McCowen "We couldn't quite do it because that was when I was in the army, we had to get back to Louisiana."

Mrs. McCowen "Yes, those were our orders."

Judge McCowen "Una told me not too long before she died that—the way she thought about horses—if they had horses pulling her hearse that she'd raise up out of her coffin to take a look at them." [Laughter]

Sandy "Hazel Putnam is the same way."

Judge McCowen "Yes, Hazel is another one. She and—really—her father Dr. Dickenson, bought that property up there, way back."

Sandy "One thing that I'm curious about is the Boyle family. There seems to be some sort of mystery about Dr. Boyle's father."

Judge McCowen "I don't have any recollection of him. Of course he died back in the late 'twenties or early 'thirties. There was dissension in the family. I don't know whether they started out in Seattle originally or not. I know that at the time Mr. Boyle died he owned the Reindeer building in Seattle.

"One brother was up there and he was sort of managing things. As far as the rest of the family was concerned, I guess he sort of mis-managed things, and well—Una had a sister who was a Catholic nun and they had a large home in San Rafael that Mrs. Boyle gave to the Catholic Church.

This brother up in Seattle about had a stroke at that—I gather he was not a Catholic. That was part of the division in the family. The rest of them were all good Catholics and he somehow had no use whatever for Catholicism—I guess he begrudged every nickel his mother ever gave the Church.

"I don't know, his father, Mr. Boyle, must have put him in charge some way because the way the rest of the family felt about him I don't think that they would have voluntarily put him in control.

"Meanwhile, they eventually lost the building up in Seattle. My feeling is that at one time they were a wealthy family, but by the time Mrs. Boyle died, why the lake property was just about all that was left. I think she may have given their big house down in San Rafael to the Catholic

Church but, matter of fact back in the 'thirties it probably wasn't worth very much.

"Dr. Boyle helped a lot in those times, during the depression, paying taxes and things like that, just out of the goodness of his heart. As far as he was concerned he would help Una out for as long as she ever needed him."

Sandy "He sounded like a very kind man. He seemed to have complex positive as well as negative memories of the lake."

Judge McCowen "It was a certain financial drain on him.

"I guess it was when they no longer had the house in San Rafael that Mrs. Boyle finally moved up to the lake. My recollection is that Una was living there year 'round. First she got married and that wasn't a very successful marriage. She and her husband lived there at the lake I'm sure, and then it was sometime after their marriage broke up that her mother moved up.

"As far as her mother was concerned, I imagine it was financial necessity. Because as I said, in those days the road was closed all winter, which was fine with Una—of course she could go out by horseback, by way of Orr Springs. As I said, she did love horses and she did love the lake, never wanted to live anyplace else.

"I've no recollection of Mr. Boyle at all but I'm positive that he died at least by the early 'thirties.

"I guess you've heard the story of how Leonard wound up, up there? He had something wrong with him. I don't know what it was, but the doctor told him to get out into the country. Mrs. Little thought he was living in San Francisco at the time, which may have been true.

"As I told Mrs. Little, it seemed a little puzzling to me because it seemed to me that in those days everything in Mendocino county was out in the country.

"He was there for awhile, I guess, his obituary says that he settled in California in 1858 and with the exception of a few years made the lake his home.

"Anyway, in the very beginning the doctor told him to get out in the country and that's why he ended up at Leonard Lake.

"Evidently there was somebody already there at the lake who was starting to improve upon the place.

"My recollection is that he gave the fellow a horse and saddle and a hundred dollars for his interest in the claim. Mrs. Little seems to think that there was a bottle of whiskey thrown into the deal some way but—I'm positive it wasn't more than a horse, saddle and a hundred dollars that he gave this fellow for his interest in the place. Then he later proved up a patent there."

Sandy "With a trade like that at that time, what would his interest be? Did he virtually obtain half ownership at that point?"

Judge McCowen "Oh no. Well, to prove up on a claim you had to live on the property for so long and had to do a certain amount in the way of improvements and you had to build a cabin or house.

"I've never checked into it but I assume that with somebody—like that fellow who was already there—that I could come along and buy him out and tack his possession onto my legal possession and what I had done. The horse, saddle and the hundred dollars may have just been to

get him out of there. If a man started taking up a claim on a piece of property he had to have certain things starting from that time. As long as he was in possession nobody else could come along and say, 'Well, this is a pretty nice looking piece of ground, I think I'll take up a claim here.' If he's already there and has staked out his corners why then nobody else can come along and throw him out. Leonard may have merely been making a payment to the fellow, to get him out of there."

Sandy "—and with transportation included . . . [laughter] "Oh, to have been born a hundred years ago."

Judge McCowen "Leonard came west earlier than any of the rest of my family. He came to California, according to his obituary, in 1849. He died about 1890."

Sandy "How was Leonard related to you?"

Judge McCowen "He was a brother of my grandmother McCowen. In other words, an uncle of my grandfather's."

Sandy "Is it true that he rented to hunters?"

Judge McCowen "You mean there at the lake? I don't have any idea. I would be surprised to find out that such things went on in those days but, city folks, I guess even back then, were looking for places to hunt, although there still was a lot of property that hadn't been claimed. It was sort of wide open."

Sandy "Yes, it doesn't seem like there'd have been much need and even if he did rent he couldn't have charged much."

Judge McCowen "Of course a little bit of money went a long way in those days.

"There's no saying even from his obituary, what he did, what his occupation was."

Sandy "I wonder once he moved there, if he farmed to feed himself?"

Judge McCowen "My great-grandfather wrote to my great uncle George when he first came out to Potter Valley. What he says here is sort of interesting. The thing I like is here where it says: "Hurry up and get over here cause the country's really filling up fast. It's getting crowded."

Judge McCowen "Well, Leonard came in 1849, he went back to Ohio in 1850 and then in 1852 he crossed the plains again to California and stayed there.

"This is the diary that my dad's Uncle George kept when he came across the plains. He came into Yreka and had to work his way down to Grass Valley, got to Grass Valley and commenced inquiring for John Leonard. Leonard was living there at the time."

Sandy "Back to the lake, I'm not sure about the sequence of owners or the purchase conditions?"

Judge McCowen "Well as I say, I'm going to check the records, see who Leonard sold it to and also who the Boyles bought the place from. It seems to me that Reeves was in between there, though he may not have been.

"One thing Dr. Boyle was interested in when he sold the property—he could have sold it with no difficulty at all to some of those timber operators— well, he was firmly determined that he didn't want to sell it to anybody who was going to cut the trees. He wanted to sell to somebody who would reassure him that they would leave it just the way it was. Finally Mr. Dakin came along and felt the same way about things as Dr. Boyle did—that's the reason Dr. Boyle sold it to him."



Sandy “Did he have to sell it financially?”

Judge McCowen “I don’t know that he ‘had’ to but one thing that might have been in his mind was he wasn’t a young man anymore and he was so determined to have the property stay the way it was, I think he figured if he hung onto it until he died that then when he passed on some timber operator would grab it up and everything would be cut then.

“Of course legally there wasn’t any agreement in writing with Mr. Dakin—that he wouldn’t log it. Mr. Dakin was that kind of man. His assurance that he wasn’t going to do anything along those lines was enough. Dr. Boyle took him at his word and sold it to him. He would never have sold it to him without that confidence.

“Dr. Boyle could have sold it long before he did but, he was looking for somebody that felt the way he did. I don’t know if he told you all that but it is a fact.”

Sandy “You said Reeves had a mill in the canyon?”

Judge McCowen “Well, I’m sure that he did. That’s what he was primarily interested in—timber for the purpose of cutting it into logs. In fact, back in those days redwood was a very prevalent wood around here. Most of this house of ours is redwood. In the original kitchen, all the cupboard doors and everything else were redwood. All the doors upstairs are redwood. It was the cheapest lumber around here. That was Reeves’s main interest, timber.”

Sandy “Do you happen to know when, or how old the Boyle girls were when they went into the Church? And is it true that there were a couple of them who entered the Church?”

Judge McCowen “I’m sure of one, although it may have been two. I’m not sure.”

Sandy “Another story is that Una ran away from the Church to come back to the lake.”

Judge McCowen “Yeah, well, the one sister that I do remember, she was several years older and so far as I know she became a nun fairly early in her life.

“I’ve always had the impression that Mrs. Boyle was very religious, and for some of those Catholics, to have your child become a nun or a priest there was nothing better that could happen to you.”

Sandy “I guess it can be extreme.

“We’ve talked some about Leonard and the Boyles, now how about Mr. Dickenson?”

Judge McCowen “Well, he bought his place up there, which is where Mrs. Putnam is living now, way back. He was sort of like the Boyles: wanted things to stay the way they were.

“My father represented him in a lawsuit which—this was the outfit that logged just north of the lake property. The old road had been fairly narrow through Dr. Dickenson’s property. Those timber operators like most timber operators went in there with bulldozers and widened the road, knocked down some trees and of course there were a lot of them traveling back and forth all the time, kicking up continual clouds of dust.

“Dr. Dickenson wasn’t trying to shut them off altogether, merely wanted them to leave the old road the way it was. He even made them an offer: if they’d take off up on the right, on the west side of his property, he was willing to give them the right of way. They could take off and go around the hillside to where they could drop down and come into the road south of his land. Then he wouldn’t have logging trucks ripping back and forth kicking up dust clouds widening

the road as they went.

“This outfit turned down the offer and we’d have won the law suit according to the way the judge’s original opinion on the thing was. But, before he signed the judgment, the judge changed his mind and decided that: yes, before the loggers started in one of them had come to Dr. Dickenson and said, ‘What about it, we’ll enlarge the road’ and Dr. Dickenson said, ‘All right.’

“Under those circumstances, if that actually happened and the loggers had spent money on the basis of Dr. Dickenson’s saying it was all right, then he couldn’t later change his mind.

“I don’t think it ever happened, don’t think the company ‘consulted Dr. Dickenson. I think the judge was on the side of the loggers. The evidence would appear to show that they had changed the road, these timber operators changed it and widened it.

“But, as far as I know Dr. Dickenson’s interest was leaving things the way they had been. Course I assume if you went up and started picnicking on his property that he’d quite possibly have told you to move on.”

Sandy “Did you know Dr. Poe?”

Judge McCowen “I just have a very hazy recollection of him.”

Sandy “Would he be in any of these photos?”

Judge McCowen “No, no I don’t think so.”

Sandy “There are so many details. I’m really impressed with what your family has done.” [Re: family history]

Judge McCowen “Yes, it’s a funny thing, Mother’s side of the family: evidently nobody ever wrote down anything and Mother and her brother didn’t even know of what nationality they were on her father’s side. Her name was Prosser but they didn’t have any idea—they used to sit around: ‘Well maybe it’s an Apache name...’

“Of course they knew part of their ancestry because let’s see, I guess it was my mother’s grandmother on her mother’s side had a renowned thing about history, even put out a book about family history—which is of interest because it tells hwo we tie in with the Rockefellers—[laughter] which—after all, they don’t know we exist.”

Sandy “You are great, Leonard and now Rockefeller. “One thing I don’t have clear is—well, when did you go up there when you were little?”

Judge McCowen “Well it was back, the first time I can remember was back in the ‘twenties.”

Sandy “Tell me more about what it was like to go up then. Did you go by car?”

Judge McCowen “Oh yes. The road was real narrow. In those days the only paved road in Mendocino County was down here—down at the foot of Burke Hill.” [Laughter]

Sandy “That kind of detail, I love.”

Judge McCowen “All the county roads, well they were wide enough for one car. There’d be turnouts out on the points and once in a while back in the gulch. It was pretty good, you could see another car coming by the cloud of dust so you’d wait at a wide spot.”

Sandy “Did you spend summers ...“

Judge McCowen “No, we’d go up there occasionally and visit.

“We used to camp once in a while along-side the creek north of the lake. Of course we were camping on the Boyle’s property. Back in those days most property owners didn’t care if you came along and camped on their property. Weren’t so many people around for one thing.

“Well, if I check into the county records are you interested in what I find?”

## Recollections of Leonard Lake

Hazel Putnam

Reeves Canyon, June 29, 1979

Hazel "I used to visit Americus Poe in his house. His front room was so loaded with books, periodicals... he was a very learned man. His kitchen, well, one of the last times I was in it the wooden floor had completely worn out and he was walking on hard dirt. He had never replaced the floor in the kitchen area.

"He avoided ever riding in any sort of vehicle, a buggy or an automobile, because he had crushed ribs and it would be too painful. But, he could walk and cover ground in an amazing way. He traveled on foot every place he went. He could just tear out and cover the ground like a deer."

Sandy "His house was where Rick's is now?"

Hazel "Just about—it was a little closer. It was under the walnut trees. Well, not under them really, no, because at that time the walnut trees were very tiny. Not too long before he died they had grown up far enough so that he could put a rope up on a limb and hang up the things that he would kill so that they would be cooling and sort of refrigerated by the cool wind that blows up the canyon.

"I don't know if anyone has told you what a fabulous garden he had. You know where those figs are, just below the house? He had the spring down amongst them developed to irrigate the trees. He had terraces, like they have in Europe, on that whole hillside. He had the stream irrigating back and forth. Those figs are Smyrnas. The only place they grow is in Italy and the only reason that they grow there and not anywhere else is that it takes a very special insect to get into the little low end of the fig. Of course the fig, the whole meaty fig is the blossom. He sent to Europe and imported some of those insects. He used to can those figs and he gave some of them to me. The figs were so large that four was all that he could get into a quart jar. They were fabulous."

Sandy "What other things did he grow?"

Hazel "He had plums, and then he crossed apricots and plums and called them plumcots. He would cross everything that had similar pits, seeds. He had everything under the sun crossed there."

Sandy "Did he have vegetables as well?"

Hazel "A few, not as many. It was mostly fruits and berries. He would grow enough fruits and vegetables for himself and he had a lot of potatoes so he could boil them up.

"He was a very slight man, small and sharp. He disliked and distrusted almost everyone who came into the canyon, though he liked Una particularly and he liked me. He didn't trust my father too much but he did like me and then he got to liking my husband and he liked Harry Jr. as a little kid growing up. He really was a very interesting person and the claim is that he was a descendent of Edgar Allen Poe, which he probably was.

"At one time he had a wife who lived up there with him. I do not ever remember her but then when I was very young there were stories, hush-hush type, as if they suspected she . . . well, she

disappeared. They suspected murder but it was a supposition. Possibly she just ran away. I don't know.

"Then, down the canyon from the lake, just before the Staley turn-off, was where the Priors lived. They had locusts planted all around the house and you can still see them there. The locust is the one with thorns and they have little blossoms on them, kind of like a sweet pea blossom.

They planted the locusts. Then there is the Prior Spring. It's a mud hole. The water tastes horrible. Their property ran up to where Testes has his place. Prior Spring is back up that gulch behind Testes."

Sandy "East of Testes'?"

Hazel "Closer to the lake. It has a little cooking area and one small house over in the trees and the spring is in the canyon behind."

Sandy "Was Prior the man who on occasion, took people hunting?"

Hazel "No, Poe was the guide. I never at anytime saw a man there at Prior's. Only a mother and daughter. I never once knew of a man being there."

Sandy "Hazel, tell me about the prospector's cabin."

Hazel "That was the cabin on the cove. It was Una and Adolph's honeymoon cottage. The cabin that has been built onto, the one on which Rick has just completed replacing the deck, I think it's called the Bee Hive now—that's the one the Boyles called the 'Shell Cabin'. The reason being that it was the first cabin that they put a propane water heater in and it was 'shell' propane."

Sandy "And how did it change to being called the Bee Hive?"

Hazel "Oh, somebody later changed it to the Bee Hive. But, while the Boyles were alive it was always called the Shell Cabin.

"Anything else?"

Sandy "Yes, what do you recall about the Cross Cabin, the cabin way up on the ridge?"

Hazel "Most every bit of the lumber that is in that cabin was stolen from us."

Sandy "By whom?"

Hazel "Now, that man was an acquaintance. He was a man who had been coming into the canyon and Poe had at times taken him on hunting trips, guided him. Below Poe's, you know where there's a spring down the gulch there and it's such a mess now? There used to be a beautiful grove of redwood trees and a beautiful fresh water spring that came out in the clump of trees. That was the place that he used to rent to some of those hunters and they never went hunting unless he guided them. It was one of those hunters who started the Cross Cabin. The only way you could get to the Cross Cabin was to come down into the redwood grove by the Sinclair Lumber Company and go up that first draw where there's a stream that comes down. It was a severe switchback trail. Everything that went up there went on a man's back until finally he got a burro. No horse ever went up that switchback trail. It was too steep.

"I had a wager with the cowboys from Ridgewood Ranch, Charlie Howard's cowboys. They were making fun of me all the time with my English saddle. They were joking about it, you know, 'that pansy saddle'. But then they used to come over evenings, on horses, take their western saddles off, borrow my English saddles and we'd all go over jumps together. Anyway, they just kept kidding

me and then once something was said about the Cross Cabin and they said, 'Gee have you ever been up there?' and I said, 'No, it's a long walk and I have no reason for going up.' They said, 'We'll bet that you can't ride any distance up there on your flat saddle.' I returned, 'Okay, let's get down to cases. You boys pick out any saddle horses you want and your western saddles, I don't care as long as you ride with western saddles. But you can pick out which horse you want me to ride.' So they picked out the horse that to them looked the least likely. It was a very spirited thoroughbred and they were riding halfbreed horses. Anyway they picked out the thoroughbred and asked me to ride my very smallest English saddle. It's almost a racing saddle. I used it for steeple-chasing and when you steeple-chase you don't put much weight on a horse, you put as little as you can. So anyway, we had a bet. I was to buy them both Stetson hats if they beat me. They were to buy me a nice pair of English boots if I won. So, their horses began huffing and puffing and they had to stop and rest, and stop and rest. I would go on with Sargent (my horse's name was Sargent) and we would go on a way and then I'd look back. . ."

Sandy "This was on the switchback trail up to the Cross Cabin, right?"

Hazel "Yes. So my horse was able to dig into the trail and the rocks and still keep going. I was not interfering with his progress by leaning back. The fellows couldn't do it. They weren't good-enough riders to have ridden their horses without the cantle to lean their weight on. This meant leaning their weight back onto the hindquarters of the horse and the hindquarters of course, are the driving power. It's just like driving him up with the brake on. Like driving a car with the brake on. Well anyway..."

Sandy "Did you get your English boots?"

Hazel "Sure did. After a while they said, 'Please, we cannot go any further, lets call it quits.'

"Here on our property we had a cabin. It was made out of hand-hewn redwood boards. The outside was covered with bark. Some of those planks on the Cross Cabin still have the redwood bark on them. They came from right here. We came up here one spring at trout time and that whole cabin was down and all of that lumber was piled, ready to go. The next time we came more of it was gone. They used to come down here and get it and take it up there instead of making their own lumber for that Cross Cabin."

Sandy "And you presume that those were the same men who used to come up and hunt, guided by Poe?"

Hazel "Yes."

Sandy "Who designed that cabin, do you know?"

Hazel "He did, that man, he tried to make it point, North, South, East and West. [Looking at photos] That was my Dad up here with our grizzly bear."

Sandy "When did you start living here year 'round?"

Hazel "At the time that my husband's health got so bad that he just couldn't breathe out anywhere else. The doctors said that if I kept him alive for two weeks we'd be lucky. I knew that every time we would come up here to fish or to hunt he always went back to San Francisco feeling better, even when he wasn't sick. So, I thought, 'Well, we're going to Ukiah.' He began to be able to breathe better and he had ten years of retirement time right here.

[Regarding other photos] "The main part of the big house is practically as it was except that

before, you went out and into another long unit that was dining area and the kitchen. Where the kitchen is now was another bedroom. Down at Antony's place is the framework of a stove from the old cook house. It was a restaurant-type wood stove with many lids and a boiler, a water well where you could heat water that could be dipped out. It's a shame that it wasn't kept up there and saved but it was given to the Antonys and he was going to preserve it but people got in and took parts of it."

Sandy "What were you going to say about the Boyle's boats and the names on them?"

Hazel "Each child had his own boat, made and beautifully painted by George Moore and each one had its child's name painted on the stern. Well, every once in a while we would notice that the name of a child was gone from the boats and the name of a tree or a location replaced it.

"Then there's one of the girls who became a White Sister. I used to visit her occasionally. The last time I visited her I could only look at her through a tiny viewing space and oh, she just cried and cried. It was sad."

Sandy "How many Boyle children were there?"

Hazel "Oh, I'm not sure that I remember. There were quite a few. As I recall one became a nun and one a doctor, that's Dr. Billy and there was Una... and..."

"Have you ever been on the top of Eagle Peak?"

Sandy "No, I never have."

Hazel "I'll show you something [photo of Hazel and Harry on the top of the peak]. This shows just how big the tip-top of Eagle Peak is. Harry and I were engaged at the time of that picture but hadn't yet been married and there we were standing on the top of Eagle Peak. Isn't that something.

"And this one shows my son holding the type of fish we could catch in the old times."

Sandy "What kind is it?"

Hazel "Oh, a trout, steelhead trout."

Sandy "I'm sorry, I don't recognize many types of fish."

Hazel "Anyway, that is the kind we should be getting here. Everything is, oh, people just are destroying this canyon. They get into trouble with me. In fact, yesterday I spent part of my time at the sheriff's office complaining about certain people and what they're doing. They're out with their bows and arrows already and are hunting. You can't hear a bow and arrow. It will get you—before you get it!

"Now, these pictures are of Mud Lake as it used to be."

Sandy "Those are beautiful. Dr. Boyle referred to it with another name: 'Coston's Lake' was the name they knew it by."

Hazel "Yes, the Costons were at the upper end . . . You see, Poe's original property came into the end of Mud Lake just below the spring. His property made a corner right down where the watercress is.

"Mud Lake was very deep [indicates photo] and the surface looked like a beautiful lawn. It was covered with something called 'duck weed', the whole lake was green with it. And deep, which

is so good for fishing.”

Sandy “What happened to it?”

Hazel “When loggers came and logged they even pulled out the old floating trees. On those grew water lilies, ferns, and huckleberries. You could walk out on a log over the water and pick huckleberries. You didn’t want to fall in or you’d have to swim.”

Sandy “What do you mean ‘floating trees?’”

Hazel “Trees had fallen from the banks. Some with the roots intact were still living. When the logging people went in they snagged all of that out and they just made a slew out of it. It had been so beautiful to go up and come up upon that scene.

“Now the Chuckhole, it was moved to the lake from down below the San Geronimo Company property. A woodcutter had been living there. He used to go to church every Sunday morning. He would go by our place here but we would never know it because it would be before daylight. He rode a bicycle when he went to church. Then he’d come back in the evening and bring on his back the few supplies that he might need.

“Una and I would take rides over to the coast sometimes and at times we wouldn’t get back on the same day. In different spots, in a little meadow or by a spring, we would bury one of those old kinds of big square tins. I forget now what we used to call them but we’d put crackers, cereal, food, something in there so that if we should get lost out we would have something to eat and our horses could rest.

“Now look [photo], if you got right in here you would see just beyond to what they called the, ‘Dutchman’s Folly’. Somebody in the old days, I guess in the days of the Leonards, tried to make an outlet to the lake down on the west side of the Big House, down in that hollow there. Well, that was the Dutchman’s Folly.”

Sandy “Who was the Dutchman?”

Hazel “He was someone who either worked there or lived there, very early. He tried to make a year-round overflow, tried to anyway.”

Sandy “Why do...”

Hazel “I don’t have any idea why. “[Looking at more photos] Oh, look at this one, a Fourth of July party. Those are all the Dickensons and they’re roped up, ready to hike to the top of Eagle Peak. “

Sandy “Like that?!”

Hazel “That’s the way they went. It was dangerous to take them to Eagle Peak in those kinds of dresses so I usually was at the other end of the rope and Dad at this end. When we got to dangerous places we’d string the rope across so we’d have something to hang onto, across a gulch or something.

“My father was either very dignified or very clownish, whichever he wanted to be. We’d have house parties and we girls were just neglected. The boys would all be around Dad talking to him. He was very strict and very knowledgeable.

“Now these are pictures of our stream when Harry and I first moved up here. Those are all wild grapes hanging around the house. We had a very nice house over there [across stream from



current home] but it got destroyed.”

Sandy “How did that happen?”

Hazel “The flood and the bad logging. “Now this [another photo], see the picket stakes? This was a little meadow up close to that watchman’s cabin, beyond the Chuckhole on the lake. That was where Una used to pasture her horses when she was going to be away with no one to care for them. It isn’t much of a space now but it used to be a nice meadow back there but trees have fallen, slides have come down, leaving it very small. It had fruit trees but a lot of them have died.

“Here we have two donkeys, Sonora Pete and Salami Joe [photo]. They would let children ride them and we had them in the canyon a lot. But, no adult could ride them. They’d throw them off all the time. These two were the clowns for the Willits rodeo, Sonora Pete and Salami Joe.

“And here . . . This was the first automobile that ever came to Mendocino County. We were in the Fourth of July parade with it. The whole community came out. They decorated it with sheaves of wheat and big blue ribbons. There was no back seat so they built one on. Mom and Dad are there in white and we two girls, my sister and I, in the back seat. All the horses ran away... We were the only automobile in the parade.

“This shows our spring house up here, before... You see, at the time that house burned, Mrs. Gabin McNab and I had gone up to visit with Mrs. Boyle. Hunters...! It was getting toward the end of deer season and the hunters started a fire to burn the deer out... They weren’t getting enough deer. Mrs. McNab and I were coming down the canyon and the fire was creeping over toward this road so Mrs. McNab brought me on down here and said, ‘I’ll go on out and alert the fire department.’ I got out a saddle horse and started back to warn Mrs. Boyle.

“We had been visiting but we didn’t know that Una and Adolph were gone to a rodeo. Mrs. Boyle was alone except for one hired man who had a broken arm.

“I rode like mad...”

Sandy “When was this?”

Hazel “Oh about, I’d say 1936 or someplace in that area. So I rode back to see what I could do for Mrs. Boyle, whether I should take her ...”

Sandy “When did your family purchase your canyon property?”

Hazel “Dad started buying this as he could, before the turn of the century. The first piece that he got was the forty acres that the house is on. The rest he bought as he could get hold of it because you see it belonged to the Reeves, for whom the road is named.”

Sandy “How much of this area did the Reeves own?”

Hazel “They had all of this valley up to the Sinclair Lumber Company. Sinclair property came down to the Cocks and Howl, which was owned by three people. Holiday has that area now. Well, the little bit of it that they acquired was Sinclair Lumber Company’s and the Reeves property went up to that. Right here there was a mill. Over in those trees where we have our picnic area were the mangers for the work horses and sometimes there were oxen kept here, other times big work horses. So we had to clean up the area and then build our house. The shingles and the

hand-hewn boards were all made here.

“You asked about the sheep barn. The Boyles had sheep and Una and I used to drive them about. Una had English sheep dogs. One time I was in a boat, taking a short-cut over to the sheep barn by canoe. One of her sheep dogs was sitting there and it decided to clean my neck and ears and I couldn’t make the dog stop because we’d have tipped over the canoe. That sheep dog counted Una and me as sheep. If we were going through a gate that dog would always wait, until he counted us passing through. We were counted as sheep and that dog would never miss a sheep.

“Now, the Bee Hive was built by Adolph after Una and he were married. All of the hardware, the hinges and the latches he made by hand, Adolph did. That was sometime in the ‘thirties.”

Sandy “That was the Bee Hive or the Chuckhole?”

Hazel “I’m talking about the Shell Cabin.”

Sandy “So that’s the Bee Hive, now.”

Hazel “And it was called the Shell Cabin, nobody told you that, did they?”

Sandy “No, you’re the first one to recall that. “Did you ever hear of anyone drowning in the lake?”

Hazel “No, I never knew of anybody drowning in the lake.”

Sandy “That’s a story from my early days and I don’t remember where it came from.”

Hazel “Well, that’s a story I never heard.”

Sandy “Yes, it may be a ghost story told by somebody who was completely making it up for the benefit of us little ones in our sleeping bags.”

Hazel “Now, about the fish... No one knows when the bass got into the lake and they weren’t planted according to the stories we’ve always heard. As far as anyone knows the bluegills were planted. The bass—as long as my father was alive and I’ve been alive—were there. The reason for any planting in the lake at all was that Fish and Game wanted to get some of that specimen. They are a distinctive specimen of bass only found in that lake. The Fish and Game people wanted some of them to plant in other places. They talked to the Boyles and kept telling them that the bass would die if they didn’t have something to eat.

“And so they swapped bluegills for some of those bass and they were never successful in propagating them either. That is the story of the bass as far as I ever knew.

“There were bass in the cove below where Una’s house used to be, and below the dressing rooms and bath house that they had just above the water. In that area no one was ever permitted to fish because Una and I had gentled a bunch of the bass. We could call them. Standing ankle deep in the water, we would pull out a fresh clam, open it and wave it back and forth. These great big bass would come and eat out of our hands. So no one ever fished in that cove. Occasionally someone got to sneaking in there... Those fish knew that was where they were going to be fed and they had their young there. We had tame bass right there.

“So, before the advent of the bluegill you could go out in that lake. It was crystal clear, and you could see down. It would be as if you were in an airplane looking at the top of a redwood forest. Every place there was a water plant that appeared from above to be a miniature forest with enormous

fish swimming about and making their nests. It never interfered with any of our swimming.

“The water lilies—there were no planted water lilies originally. Only the wild ones, tiny ones. After the bluegill got in there it became a muddy filthy mess.

“Oh, and you asked me about that barge that had a rack on it. It hauled hay from the upper valley at the south end of the lake. It was loaded with loose hay. The reason for the framework was to keep it from falling in. Then when it wasn’t in use, hauling hay or taking supplies up to the workmen it was anchored out there and we used it as a diving platform.”

Sandy “You’re a fountain of information.”

Hazel “Well, you see I probably knew that lake nearly as well as Una did.”

Sandy “And she isn’t here to ask questions of.”

Hazel “And you see when the family broke up, they broke up and that was just it... Do you know that I never saw Billy Boyle until Una was about ready to die? Una was very ill for quite a long time. They were not sure if it was cancer but my father suspected it was. She spent her winters as she got older in the house that burned down, the one on the knoll out in front of the Bee Hive.

“The ‘Chuckhole’ is what Una named the cabin down the lake when she and Adolph were building it and you see the lumber for it came from the tree splitter’s, he lived in the little canyon below the lake, at the bottom of the switchback trail that went up to the Cross Cabin.

Sandy “Oh, that clarifies where the start of the Cross Cabin trail is.”

Hazel “So, originally the Chuckhole fireplace and chimney was mud and rock.”

Sandy “Yes, my Father rebuilt it. The mud was washing away due to lack of use.”

Hazel “Oh, and what did he do with the sights that were in there, in the fireplace structure?”

Sandy “They’re inside the building structure now but outside the fireplace.”

Hazel “Una and I, we’d be together and there would be somebody that she was showing around and she would say, “Oh, and you must see the sights up the chimney.” She’d have people get down on their hands and knees to look up the chimney. They couldn’t see any sights up there. So anyway, the framework of the fireplace was the guns, old guns.”

## Recollections of Leonard Lake

Herb Singley

Ukiah, July 20, 1979

[A continuation of conversation regarding Americus Napoleon Poe and how he died in his meadow, whereupon Una found his body.]

Herb "Poe had a little pet dog and he had a lot of hogs there and, a body, they'll eat it if they can, if they can get to it. This little dog was darn near starved to death but he stayed there with that body and kept those hogs from bothering it.

"Una found a home for that dog down in San Rafael somewhere. Although she didn't think too much of that old guy she did spend quite a good bit of time just seeing that he was all right."

Sandy "Tell me, do you know anything about the little cabin that is built in a cross shape, seems to face North, South, East and West."

Herb "I'll tell you that didn't belong to the Leonard Lake property in those days. It belonged to a fellow by the name of Doc Dollin. He built it up there as a kind of hunting cabin, although it was never used for anything.

Sandy "Do you happen to know who designed it?"

Herb "Oh, I think it was old man Poe himself. He was an interesting character, old Poe. Of French descent and first cousin to Napoleon Bonaparte [1769-1821]."

Sandy "So that's how he got his name."

Herb "Americus Napoleon Poe, yup, that's the way it was. He was a particular guy but also a mining engineer and was pretty good at land surveying.

"Ah, and another thing, Una had a place up the lake in a little pocket up there. They called it the 'Chuckhole.

"They built it and she was the one who designed it, had it built and fixed it up. Was a rather cute place last time I saw it.

"You know actually I haven't been there for a long time. I'll tell you the last time I was there was when I took the older boy, Harry Boyle, there when his mother was sick.

"Tell me are those big redwoods still there, down from the lake?"

Sandy "They are. Since Dick Dakin bought that land there has not been one tree cut unnecessarily. They use down lumber for firewood and most other wood needed also. It is respected and protected."

Herb "Oh that's good, fine, fine."

Sandy "There is very little hunting and what does take place is always on the perimeter of the property. My guess would be a buck a year or probably less."

Herb "That's great. I'm tickled to hear that."

Sandy "Have you seen the otters in that area or over in the rivers?"

Herb "Yes, in Big River."

Sandy “I ask because that is one thing new there, new since I was little. There is a family of four and maybe even two families.”

Herb “There’s otters that have come in to the lake?”

Sandy “Just yesterday I saw a big one and two babies. They’re gradually becoming less shy.”

Herb “Actually, they’re predators. They are there after the fish. I’ll tell you where they come from. They come up Big River. Those darn little devils have had to travel. I’d say the nearest point from where they could take off from Big River is liable to be four miles over ground and that covers some pretty rough country.

“I know they’re in Big River because when I was a kid we used to go down there, years after they’d quit sluicing logs.”

“We’d crawl out on those drifts, look down in the clear water and watch steelheads and sometimes catch sight of an otter chasing a steelhead.

“There were some beaver that came into the country there a few years back and they were building beaver dams over in the head of Big River there and then on over in the Singley Ranch area. Then some darned hellion slipped in here and killed them all.

“You know I think it’s a darned crime... you have a variety of trees like over on our ranch in Booneville. One of the neighbors had some timber there. There was one yellow pine. Well, he had some logging done and darned if that wasn’t the first thing cut. It’s all right to log a country but if there’s just one tree of a variety they shouldn’t be so hungry that they have to cut that.

“You know they’ve let out a tremendous amount of line there, right in the center of that lake. It is deep, very deep.”

Sandy “When I was little everybody used to say that it was bottomless. And I sure believed it.”

Herb “Actually I think it was a blowout of some volcanic action. The fissure is there and evidently that lake is fed by cold-water springs. That’s pretty good water there.”

Sandy “What do you know about Mr. Leonard himself?”

Herb “Not much, really. He was in possession of that lake well before I was born. I’m seventy-five. The Boyles owned the lake when first I knew, but I do know that a fellow named Leonard did own it.

“I’ll tell you something. Una brought Dr. Boyle across the hills. He’d just gotten back, a very straight-laced army officer from World War I. Well, they came over to our ranch and we didn’t even know they were around until we heard Una laughing out in the barnyard there.

“We had a pet sheep there that the kids had raised and this sheep had learned to like chewing tobacco or cigarette tobacco. That sheep was crazy about any tobacco. Any man that was around, well, this sheep would go up to him and if he didn’t give him some tobacco he’d butt the devil out of him.

“Here comes this army officer through, and of course he didn’t know anything about our tobacco chewing sheep. That animal just butted the stuffing out of that poor guy... Una was laughing. Laughing fit to kill herself. She knew that sheep and she probably knew what he’d do. A high-ranking army officer—to have his pants flattened by this darned sheep was pretty startling. He was a nice guy.”

Sandy “He told me that when they used to need a telephone they used to hike over to your ranch.”

Herb “That’s right, and also they used a lantern. If anything was wrong over there we’d see that light hanging up on top of that ridge. Usually my brother would go across on horseback to see what the problem was.”

“Another thing Una used to do, she’d go to town for supplies in wintertime and if there was a storm and she couldn’t cross the creek, be it day or night, she’d swim across.

“She was proper, very nice girl but when need came—very tough!

“We had an old horse there at the ranch when I was a kid. He came off the Oakland race track, a quarter horse. He wasn’t quite fast enough for the track. We had him there at the ranch for years.

“That was when they had the logging camp at the head of Big River. That horse was turned out to pasture and he followed the loggers around in the timbers. The loggers would take their lunch out and leave it somewhere and first thing we know we got quite a complaint that that darned horse was stealing the lunches and eating them.

“Then we used to have a pack of varmint hounds there. That was the only way to keep predators off the sheep.

“They’d catch bear, coyotes, every other thing too, even wildcats. They’d catch those wildcats and we’d dress them, cut them all up in pieces, and make a wildcat porridge. Now that porridge was intended as food for those hounds. We had fifteen of them.

“That darned little horse . . . He’d go down there and if he could get the top off of that steel pot why, he’d just fill himself on wildcat porridge, and we’d have nothing left for the hounds.”

Sandy “Amazing—a quarter-horse eating stew... a carnivorous horse.”

Herb “Do you know, on the way over to the lake from the Singley Ranch, way up on the ridge, is there a tremendous madrone tree?”

Sandy “I sure do. It’s still there.”

Herb “That older Boyle told me, he wanted to know if, on the way over, if we’d pass that tree. He remembered that tree from when he was a kid. Asked if it was still there and it was. Then he showed me where he used to go out on the ridge there, look across to the Butt’s cabin.

“It’s funny how a boy comes back there pretty near sixty years later and remembers things about the country.”

Sandy “When was that, do you recall?”

Herb “I think that was about 1945.”

Sandy “That must have been remarkable for him to go back there, but did you say that was after his mother had become ill?”

Herb “That was just before they brought her down. He arrived in town and they’d sent word in to send a priest out. But, well he was a bit outspoken, that fellow, and he said, ‘A priest, hell—a doctor is what we want.’ I got a kick out of that... and he did get a doctor out there.”

Sandy “How about a man named Harris, who was reported to be quite a hermit and who lived

down the canyon a way?”

Herb “Harris? No, I don’t recall that name but I recall a man it could have been. He lived on the way to Big River, name of Joe West. I don’t think he’d ever had a bath in his life. He’d put clothes on and never take them off until they fell. He had nothing to do with anybody, no more than a wild pig. You’d see him now and then but you talk about a hermit... he was one. When I was a little kid I was deathly afraid of that customer. He didn’t look too good to me.”

Sandy “I’d imagine he didn’t smell too great either.”

Herb “There used to be quite a few bear, well I guess there still are quite a few bear in that country, yet. The last grizzly bear in Mendocino County was killed right, you know that cabin on the top of the hill at the head of what they call Jack Smith Canyon—that’s where they killed the last grizzly in Mendocino County.”

Sandy “How long ago was that?”

Herb “Let’s see, must have been in the 1880s, along in there. Boy, that darned grizzly was down here where we grow livestock. There was a lady here who lived in town, a friend of my grandmother’s. She told about how that darned bear chased the Indians around the willow patch where the old Ukiah Ice Plant used to be. Used to be a bunch of willows there and that particular bear was giving some trouble to the Indian tribe one afternoon and she was able to see it from where she lived.

“Eventually that bear came up through this country and they turned him off and killed him there at the head of that canyon.”

Sandy “The Indians?”

Herb “Oh no—was a white man. I don’t remember the fellow’s name. You know, you hear something as a kid and pay no attention at the time but it would have been something to know now.

“Well, that road up Reeves Canyon up to Leonard Lake is far different than what it used to be.”

Sandy “That’s what I’ve been told, that it was a completely different route and then what with the logging...”

Herb “Oh yes, they got in there and logged and logged, the whole country has changed there and they didn’t improve the looks of it any.

“I got a kick out of this: Mr. Dakin’s father had Leonard Lake and over there on this Americus Poe’s place, where Poe’d lived, there was a kind of an old highflier there who wasn’t a very good neighbor to anybody. The piece wasn’t worth very much anyway and Dakin came along and asked him what he’d take for it. I guess he wasn’t getting along very well with him. The way the story goes, he said, ‘\$75,000’ and Dakin said, ‘Well, you’ve sold it.’ He just bought it to get rid of him.

Sandy “That’s a good story. He does have a good-sized piece of property now.”

Herb “Yes, I know he does. He has quite a holding in there having bought up various pieces. Actually what he bought it for—he didn’t want to be bothered.”

Sandy “Exactly, and he didn’t want to see things logged either and he didn’t want people hunting. He really wanted to protect it.”

Herb “Actually he has. Around the lake there it didn’t used to be worth much but he’s got some pretty darned valuable timber up there.

“Pardon me, but unless he’s starving to death I don’t think he ever ought to cut it. He has got quite a little timber there, especially on the west side, there’s a bunch of fir timber up there. Most of it didn’t used to be very valuable but it is now. Last time I was in there I was looking around there at that timber and he’s got quite a few thousand dollars worth of timber there. It’s surprising what that’s worth.”

Herb “Yes, well, I haven’t been round there for quite a long time. I went away to college and then occasionally I’d go out to our own ranch there but the fact is I’ve been living right here for coming onto fifty-three years. I’ve lost track of a lot of things there.

“Una always had some horses and ponies there at the lake and she took a liking to my brother’s daughter. She was just a little bit of a thing, and darned if she didn’t break a pony and bring it over and give it to that kid there and teach the kid to ride it.”

Sandy “That’s beautiful. From what I’m told she must have had quite a few animals in her time.”

Herb “Oh, she did. I don’t think she ever sold a one or ever did anything with the animals for profit or anything. That was an expensive hobby. She had some good ones and she was a pretty good hand with them, very good hand with them.

“One thing she did, they had a float out there anchored in the middle of the lake and it had a diving board up a ladder, I’d say about fifteen feet off the water. She’d swim out there with her dog. He was an Irish Setter if I recall. They’d swim out and she’d climb up that ladder and that dog was right behind her. Then she would take a dive off of that board and darned if that dog wouldn’t catch the next bounce of that board and it too would dive into that lake. They’d make the prettiest dives you ever saw. Then she’d swim around and climb up that ladder and she’d no sooner hit the top than that dog would come up just like a monkey behind her.

“She was really good. Actually she was quite a person. If she ever saw anybody else do anything, like a circus act or anything, she’d go home and work until they were doing it there.”

Sandy “And that is not easy. She must have had amazing contact with animals.”

Herb “She had a good hand to do the things she did.

“You know when I was a kid I used to... the pigeons used to come in to the country out there, you know wild pigeons. I used to hunt pigeons and as far as I know I never knew of her shooting anything or anything like that, but when I was a kid there she used to follow me and watch me shoot pigeons.”

Sandy “Out of curiosity—the interactions and all?”

Herb “Yes, I don’t know whether you’ve ever been in that country when those pigeons were flying in there. Used to be thousands of pigeons that would come in there to eat on acorns, berries...

Sandy “Over on Singley property is there anyplace where there are bats?”

Herb “Not that I know of now.”

Sandy “I ask because there used to be many at the lake and then for some years not very many at all and now they’re coming back.”



Herb “Well, I’ll tell you, there’s a little black one, not coal black, but he’s a little black bat, not too big. There is a bigger one, the brown bat that’s in that country there. Those bigger bats, they have teeth like a dog and they’d make a noise sometimes. I know that there were some up in the attic of the house there and we had to get them out of there because they made a noise that sounded like somebody moving furniture.

“I didn’t know better at the time, when I was a kid, and I’d catch those darned bats and I’ve had those things bite me. Now I’d be scared to death—you know they carry rabies. I guess I was pretty lucky.”

Recollections of Leonard Lake  
Dorothea Hardy and Esther Clifton  
Palo Alto, July 14, 1979

Sandy “The purpose of this interview? Ever since I’ve been going to the lake (that’s since I was about five), there have always been stories and people have always had questions about different things and places there. ‘What happened regarding one thing or another?’ and ‘Who were the Leonards, or the Boyles?’ No one has ever put it together.

“You’ve got to admit neither of you are teenagers [laughter] and Dr. Boyle and his sister are in their nineties.”

Dorothea “Are they all still alive?”

Sandy “Dr. Boyle and Sister Gabriel, yes.”

Dorothea “The nun down here?”

Sandy “Yes, she’s there in Santa Clara, writes to Doris—marvelous letters, but she’s ninety-one herself, getting on.

“I wanted to find out as much as I could, collect it and put it together so that people could share it.”

Dorothea “I see. Well, of course we never saw Mr. Leonard—that was long before I went first, in 1933.”

Esther “How did you discover it, Dorothea?”

Dorothea “Well, Dr. Roth was a doctor down here and had grown up on the next ranch up there. He told about when he was a boy, coming over the hill to make the fish jump in the lake. I don’t know whether he fished for them or just for fun, there were so many black bass which it was stocked with. Dr. Roth heard that Una and her husband Adolph were taking paying guests.

“So Ed, my husband, had the Three A’s case it, to see if that was correct and they said yes, it was very nice and all.

“We went up there and Ed liked it, he just loved it because he could collect bass, he could fish. See, Ed was in a wheelchair. Adolph would put him in a boat. At that time, we went for just two weeks and stayed in what we called the Big House.

“Una loved it when we would come and fish.

“When I first saw the place I took a dim view of it because I was used to the High Sierras where I vacationed with my family. But you know, I just got over it and we went back. My oldest daughter was two and a half, that’s how I remember it was ‘33. She was born in ‘30 and she was just a toddler. On the way up there she was kind of mixed up. She said, ‘Is we campin’, is we campin’?’ [Laughter] That identifies her age.

“The year that Honey (my youngest) was three was the first year we stayed at the Chuckhole, so until then we had stayed at the Big House and for just a couple of weeks. Of course, they had excellent food, excellent meals. Ed used to resent it because just when the fish were biting they’d ring the bell, for us to come in for dinner.”

Esther “But such meals they served . . . It was just wonderful.”

Dorothea “After the Big House then we stayed in the Bee Hive. The only year I didn’t go up was when my son was born in November. That was 1934, but Ed went up and did his fishing.

“It must have been in 1939 (because Honey was three) that we started using the Chuckhole and staying all summer...”

Esther “And having everybody in the country up there to feed. Dorothea did all the cooking on Mrs. Roar, a great big wood stove.”

Borothea “No, the stove wasn’t so very big.”

Esther “No, it wasn’t so big, but she-he-it was a wood stove.

Dorothea “And you know the one that’s there now, I’m sure it’s the same one that we later used. That was Aurora, because it was younger and more beautiful than Mrs. Roar.”

Sandy “Tell me just one thing—does your stove here in Palo Alto have a name?”

Dorothea “Oh no.” [Laughter]

Sandy “Mrs. Roar sounds like a strong personality.”

Esther “Let me tell you, Mrs. Roar fed thousands...”

Dorothea “And baked bread. First and last time I ever baked bread. Because we only got supplies once a week when the hired man went to town. Of course you know we had no fresh meat. So between this and . . .”

Esther “They had no refrigeration.”

Dorothea “Nope, there was a spring up in the back of the canyon.”

Sandy “Behind the Chuckhole?”

Dorothea “Um hum. That’s where the water came down.”

Sandy “I wonder if it’s ever above surface?”

Dorothea “Oh no, there was a spring down below. They had dug down to it. Una fancied herself as a water-witch with these things. There was a rope five or six feet down to the spring and we used to sink the beers down in it.” [Laughter]

Esther “But there was another spring up in the canyon where we would go for fresh water.”

Dorothea “Oh yes, that was drinking water. You see, this one had a lot of iron in it.”

Esther “You couldn’t drink it. You just used it for cooling.”

Dorothea “One of the things the children had to do was to go to the old apple orchard ‘round the bend from the Chuckhole. They had to dip water out of that spring into jugs and bring them back. That was our drinking water.”

Sandy “In that spring could they reach the water easily?”

Dorothea “Yes, with long dippers.”

Sandy “There’s no spring there now, but those old apple trees are still there.

“I just wish I could have seen it all, back then.”

Esther “It was absolutely beautiful.”

Dorothea “It was a neat experience.”

Esther “When Charles and I first went there, it was probably 1937 or 1938. We were married in 1932 and met the Hardys right soon after.”

Sandy “So that’s how you first happened to go up?”

Esther “Sure. They told us about it so the we went up and stayed in the Big House. Then we went to Europe for a year. Came back and had two babies so we missed a couple years. I have pictures of 1943. I think we stayed in the Bee Hive but spent a lot of time down at the Chuckhole. We were there on the Fourth of July and they built a huge bonfire just out in front of the Chuckhole, on the slope. Judge Hardy made this patriotic speech. Oh, it was just wonderful.

“From that day on, until they stopped the outside burning, Fourth of July for our kids was a bonfire out in the orchard so that we could celebrate the way we did at Leonard Lake. We always did until they stopped the burning.”

Dorothea “The experience for children of this generation, the generation of my children who are now in their forties... it was so exceptional with the kerosene lamps, the candles...Honey would come back and she regaled her stories to her third-grade class and her classmates were just amazed and her teacher very appreciative. They couldn’t imagine living without electricity and telephones and all.”

Esther “Dorothea told me the other day that Honey is a new grandmother. When I think of Honey, I think of a little long-legged girl running along the top of the ridge between the Chuckhole and the Big House. Always, her long legs just flying. She’d be going after milk or some other thing that was needed, and here she is, a grandmother.”

Dorothea “I have a picture of her with the milk jug.

“You know, she could row before she could swim. My children learned to swim in the lake when they were five. But before that she used to go down to get the milk in this row boat. You could hardly see her, she wore a life-jacket. The boat was a bit long, sixteen feet you know, and people would be amazed.”

Esther “One time Chuck and John got out in the middle of the lake. They were just little tiny guys and well, people say the lake is bottomless—no one knows how deep it is. Nevertheless, those boys were out there rowing in circles and there was nothing we could do. They weren’t ready to come in.

“Oh, and then do you remember the duck eggs? They’d find duck eggs along the banks. Oh, the number of times they fell in trying to get those, and slipping in the mud.”

Sandy “Were those wild duck eggs, or some domestic white ducks?”

Dorothea “Oh, I think they were wild ducks, mallard ducks.”

Esther “And do you remember the nests that the fish would make right up close to shore?”

Sandy “They still do, both the bass and the bluegill. “ Esther “Swimming around and ‘round, sweeping their little tails...”

Dorothea “And do the water lilies still grow along the edge?”

Sandy “Oh yes. One thing is sort of new—there are otters in the lake now.”

Dorothea “How wonderful.”

Sandy “They’re delightful.”

Dorothea “Did they import them?”

Sandy “They came up the stream, I think. Nobody knows anything about anyone bringing them in, and Naman saw them one time when they were moving from the lake down to that little lake down the road just a bit, beyond the spring at the bottom of the hill.

Esther “Yes, we used to call that Carson’s Lake.”

Sandy “It’s called Mud Lake now because apparently it was just destroyed during the logging. The descriptions of it in the early days sound as though it was really nice.”

Esther “Well, it was always more or less swampy.”

Dorothea “It was covered with green algae, a water plant. The surface was covered with green but under that it was absolutely clear water.”

Sandy “What I was going to say was, once Naman was driving down from his house toward Mud Lake when he encountered an entire otter family, parents and several babies just going right down the road. He got out and looked at them—they came up and looked at him—such curiosity.

“They make the funniest noises, little chirps, squeaks and odd blowing noises.”

Esther “Do they do anything to the fishing?”

Sandy “The other morning just at dawn I got up. Mist was rising from the surface of the lake. My father was there and he saw one of the otters close to shore. I went down only to hear a shaky deep sort of knocking sound. They were between the boards of the swimming dock, right there. I don’t think they even knew we were there and when the four of them swam out, they didn’t pay the least attention to us. With my camera I went around and got into one of the canoes to join them. Mostly I just let the canoe go and we coasted right up. The otters were playing on a huge log in the early sunlight and that’s where the breeze chose to guide us, into the narrow tip end of that log. Suddenly one of them caught a fish. It was quite good sized compared to that otter—between four and six inches. Otters aren’t really all that large. The sound—the smacking of wet lips and the crunch of small bones. He just chomped down the whole thing.

“I must have stayed for twenty minutes. Finally I just plain got hungry and left. As I pushed off one of them came up barely farther from me than you are now, wanting to know what I was about.

“Just precious, they swim along with only noses and eyes above surface. Reminds me of alligators in a way, but so sleek and shining.”

Dorothea “That is a wonderful image.”

Esther “The Hardys were the most wonderful swimmers. Dorothea swam back and forth across—and the kids...”

Dorothea “They were in swimming competition down here and of course their dad trained them, up there.”

Esther “And he was a fine swimmer too.”

Sandy “He must have been one amazing man. Was he crippled for much of his life?”

Dorothea “Yes, from age thirteen.

Esther “He had the strongest shoulders and arms.”

Sandy “He must have been strong in many ways.”

Esther “Oh, he was really wonderful. He would drive in that road when it was so treacherous. One time he had to get out of his car and get under it to fix something.”

Dorothea “A board, one of the length-wise boards on the bridge came up and got caught under his axle.”

Esther “And he had to get out, by himself. He was all alone, but he did it.”

Dorothea “And it was at night, too. He said he used his flashlight and the deer were all around. “At first when we went up, I believe we counted thirty-six bridges across the creek.”

Esther “A lot of them were just wheel on board and nothing more.”

Dorothea “For years the road was very different. When they did the logging, well, it was terrible.”

Sandy “Do you remember when that was?”

Dorothea “Let’s see, we went up through 1950, maybe ‘52. I always say we went up for twenty years, you know, a general figure. The logging went on during the last four or five years that we were going up so it would have been in the late ‘40s.”

Sandy “Mr. Dakin bought the area around the lake in 1953.”

Dorothea “It came up for sale and I don’t think it was on the market for too long.”

Esther “John got out of college in 1962 and that’s the year we went exploring. We were going to find Leonard Lake again because highways—and it seems everything—had been changed. That’s when we met Doris. Did she tell you about that?”

Sandy “I’m not sure.” [Laughter]

Esther “Well...”

Sandy “I laugh because I know she is not really too receptive toward people who just happen in there without her having advance notice. They get a real lookover and then some.”

Esther “Oh well, we just happened in by hook or by crook because we stopped in Ukiah and then Calpella where we ran into some friend of Doris’s who tipped us with, ‘Well, if you call so-and-so [I can’t remember her name now] she would tell you how to get in.’

“Well, she not only told us how to get in, she gave us the combination to the lock on the gate. So, we went, opened the gate, and drove on in.

“Doris and Naman’s house had been built by then. That was all new to us, we’d never seen such a thing. We drove up by their porch and here stood Doris, arms folded, you know. Looking down at us she said, ‘Who are you?’

“It was only five minutes before we were in her kitchen having coffee, because of the very fact that we had loved Leonard Lake so much and remembered so much about it. We became very good friends. They came to our home and we went to theirs.”

Sandy “And she has your husband’s painting in her kitchen, a painting of the Chuckhole.

“I’ve only seen her once when she was—well, I guess I’d say ‘encountering’ someone, for lack of a better word. She had described such situations before and I’d just cringe—do not cross the boundary!

“It’s important though.”

Esther “Una had a hired man named George Kneeland. Do you know about him?”

Sandy “No. George Moore, yes, but Kneeland, no.”

Dorothea “And before him was Mr. Staley.”

Esther “I didn’t know Mr. Staley.”

Dorothea “Well, I’ll tell about him in a moment. Go on, go ahead about George.”

Esther “When we first went up to the lake, Una told us that George was very shy, very ‘bushqueer’ we call it.”

Sandy “ ‘Bushqueer’—a marvelous expression.”

Esther “That wasn’t Una’s expression, but ours. Means somebody that lives way out and is scared of himself.

“Well, George was very shy. He didn’t make up with you, Dorothea, like he did with me.”

Dorothea “But you’re a much easier person . . .”

Esther “He almost instantly took a liking to me, for some unknown reason. I don’t know why.

“One day he said to me, ‘Mrs. Clifton, you sure look terrible.’ And I did, wearing orange colored shoes, a red bandana, and a pink sweater. That was a great compliment for George to say that to me.

“When they told me not to invite George to dinner, that he would run sixty miles an hour the other direction, I invited him to dinner and he said, ‘Yes, I’d like to come.’ She’d also told me, ‘Don’t ever give him string beans.’ Well, string beans were all I had, and he ate them. We were just great friends.

“Then he came down to the Stanford Hospital. He was sick. We were going up to Leonard Lake soon after he got out of the hospital, so he came and spent the night with us at our house. He was an old woodsman and he sat in our living room where we have a beam ceiling. He said, ‘For God’s sake, what happened to that guy?’ because on one side it’s random widths and the other it’s wide, narrow, wide, narrow, alternately. We had lived there for years and had never seen it.

“That was Una’s right-hand man.”

Dorothea “He started a saying in our family: ‘This ain’t the season.’ When you gave him a book and thought he might like to read it he’d say, ‘This ain’t the season.’ That would be summer—time was only in wintertime that there’d be time for reading.”

Esther “He was always going out and getting ‘mouse’ meat. He’d say, ‘Would you be needing some mouse meat?’ That was when he’d have to kill a deer himself, to give to us, you know. We had to have something to eat.”

Dorothea “And boy, did we enjoy that.”

Esther “Ah, yes, but it was always ‘mouse’ meat.”

Dorothea “And we had to keep absolutely quiet.”

Esther “Oh heavens, you wouldn’t dare tell him you were eating anything but mouse meat.”

Dorothea “Now, Mr. Staley had a place out at the beginning of Reeves Canyon. I don’t know just where it was, well, I know where but to describe it... Mr. Staley was the hired man when we first went up. He was married and his wife stayed at home. He had a daughter.”

Sandy “Would that have been Vivian Staley?”

Dorothea “That’s right, Vivian.

“Vivian was the cook during the first year that I stayed all summer. I had not only my own kids but two or three others also. I remember when Ed left from the Chuckhole in the morning that day. I just wept because I had all these kids and in the Chuckhole all alone, but, I wanted to do it and so I did it.

“When we got back to the Chuckhole I had a big surprise for them. I let down the ladder, the trap doors to the attic, and it was the first time they’d ever seen those. They’d always used the outside stairs.

“In the night a light shone down, shone right in the windows. It was a flashlight and it shone right over me. Oh, I was horrified, scared to death. I looked up, and I could see the light go back, back into the woods. The thoughts that you have, two o’clock in the morning. I thought, now they’re going to build a fire and it’ll come down through the redwoods and I’ll just have to take the children out in the boat on the lake. I thought in those terms. Then I saw the light move back into the trees and stay put. They didn’t come any closer.

“Well, I was so upset that as soon as it was light and morning, I got into the boat, rowed down to the Big House, and tackled Vivian. I said, ‘This most horrible thing has happened.’ I was just so upset. Well, she slowly looked ‘round at me and said, ‘Now, I suspect they’re more scared of you than you are of them.’ “

Esther “Didn’t she have any idea who it was, or anything?”

Dorothea “She said, ‘Well, after I finish the dishes, I’ll come down and look.’ So she did. She went back into the woods and found where they had stopped and camped. They had come over the ridge-were poaching.

“Apparently they used the Chuckhole when it was not occupied, and this time it was. [Laughter] I’ll never forget how she said, ‘I suspect they’re more scared of you than you are of them.’ “

Esther “You were there with how many of the kids?”

Dorothea “I think it was five: Maxine’s and Miller’s.”

Esther “Having been a nurse I always used to feel like we were so away from help, if anything really bad happened. I had a quarter of a grain of morphine with me for years. It had been left with a patient, a relative of mine who died. I got there just in time to see her pronounced dead. The doctor left that quarter grain of morphine and I didn’t tell him. I had it in a little glass and I had my syringe with me. I knew how to reduce the dosage to a child’s if necessary. I still have it. I should probably ask somebody if it deteriorates, just to know.

“It really would have been quite a trip into town if somebody had broken a leg or something. It took a good couple of hours to get in there when we first went, didn’t it Dorothea? Or an hour, at least.”



Dorothea “Oh yes, forty-five minutes was the quickest you could make it from the highway to the lake and that was the old road, of course. Just nothing but chuckholes and hose bridges, so you just crawled.”

Esther “I have pictures from when Charles and I were last up there, in 1970. We stayed in the Bee Hive.”

Dorothea “I’ve been just once with Honey (my youngest) and Bob and their children. They took me.”

Esther “After Doris and Naman were there?”

Dorothea “Oh yes, we arranged it with them. I don’t know what year that was, but anyway, I saw their home and the docks and those things.

“You see, each year after we arrived in the beginning of summer, just as soon as school was out, we made floats and docks, and fixed up the old ones. In winter they always floated down with the high water to the far end of the lake. One of the first things we did was to go down and swim and drag them back to the Chuckhole.

“Our dock at the Chuckhole was about sixfeet square, logs and then boards on top. I repaired those things or made new ones every year.”

Ester “I have a picture of them all on the dock: Honey and Ed, Chuck, Tore and John and Charles (who is dead now). I brought some pictures.”

Sandy “I’d love to see them.”

Dorothea “Then we had the swimming float that was of heavier logs and boards. We anchored it half way out across the lake, between the Chuckhole dock and ‘swimming rock’, which was straight over on the other bank. So that was a place to swim, and to take baths. I’d take the soap out there.

“Then on the dock, the one close to shore, we had a big plank from the dry ground out to that, because you had to lower it during the season.”

Esther “How did you anchor the float out in the middle there?”

Dorothea “Rocks—we just used rocks on long lines. Then we had a mooring for Ed’s boat because he sat in the stern of his boat and sculled. We dug a place in the bank so his stern could get right up flush with it. Then we had a sled. They’d made it for him with metal, a sheet of tin on the bottom. Ed would get out of the boat on his arms and onto that sled. Then the children and I had to get him up the bank.”

Esther “Didn’t you have some kind of pulley system arranged?”

Dorothea “It was a bit steep. Yes, we had two pulleys and then line and we’d get on the end of that line and pull. That way Ed could slide up the hill to the cabin. Then into his wheelchair and we had a ramp up onto the porch.

“One year we got a Springer spaniel. She loved to go out in the water. When you went fishing, she would swim along behind, which kind of spoiled the prospects.

“So we left her tied up to the tree, but, it was the same tree from which the rope led down to the sled. We came home and she was tied all right, but the other rope was in lengths, just in short pieces.”

Esther “Oh, and the sled?”

Dorothea “That was not good for the sled, right? But you know, there was always lariat rope around, and other pieces.”

Esther “You also had a sailboat, didn’t you?”

Dorothea “Oh yes, and you should see the pictures. I’ll get them.”

Esther “And remember the time Gerald was out in the sailboat and he couldn’t get it docked back at the shore? We all stood down in front of the Chuckhole waiting to grab him when he’d come by. He’d come up close to shore and away he’d go again. I thought that was the end of him, thought he’d spend the rest of his life... He didn’t know what he was doing, had no rudder or something. I don’t know what it was but, it was so funny.”

Dorothea “Once some ducks hatched. They had to stay out of the water so Una kept them in a pen until they got some feathers so their mother wouldn’t take them in and drown them. You see, they can’t swim at first. You know, some of those ambitious mothers would take them right down into the water.

“Now this [photo] shows some of our homemade arrangements. Here someone was just rinsing her toes instead of washing, but, you see, we heated the big tub on Mrs. Roar and washed things, beginning with white and ending with the jeans and the socks. Every kid had to do his own, you know. Not when they were three months old, but pretty young. Then we took them down to the lake to rinse. We had lines along from the first post up to the trees (there were fences on both sides back then), to get a little of the sunlight.

“This is my pony Patches, and my little girl Honey. [Photo]

“Una had, usually, eight horses and they were pastured out someplace, not kept in the barn, and she wouldn’t go out just to ride. They were not for hire, they were her babies, her children.

“I got to ride Deirdre one summer, just one summer.

“And then there was her Arabian stallion. He was her finest child. He stayed in all summer and she rode him everywhere. He was so beautiful. That’s where I got my first taste of Arabians and eventually I ended up owning one down here. Not a stallion, but a mare, which I had much fun with. I just love Arabians and that’s where I learned about them.”

Esther “I didn’t even go up near that barn because horses and I are two different breeds. If a horse comes near me, if I’m at the front end it opens its mouth to bite. If I’m behind, there’s a leg aiming to kick. I’m scared of them.”

Dorothea “We had a litter of pups that we took up there because there were always people—good homes, you know.”

Ester “And remember—you gave one to me? You had sold her and the lady’s husband wouldn’t let her keep her, so you gave her to me. I had to give her away because I absolutely couldn’t train that dog in any way.”

Dorothea “Yes, that was one strong dog.”

Ester “She’d put her head over her shoulder, look at me, laugh and go tearing across the orchard. My boys were just at the age where she would put her paws up against them and—over they’d go—they’d cry and cry. I found a good home for her.”

“We had a witching hour up there. Eight o’clock at night was when all the kids were due in bed.

Seems the days were long.”

Dorothea [Photo] “I kept a fish box there in the shallow water and my husband liked to fish but just for fun. He used barbless hooks so he could let them go without tearing. I’d practically have to beat him to get him to keep enough of them for us to eat. He’d come in to the fish dock at the end of the day and literally there were times when there was no meat so his fish were important and if he didn’t keep any, well...”

Esther “Oh, and it was more fun to bite into a cooked bass.”

Dorothea “You see, that’s one of the early years [photo] because—look at that string of fish and after that we never had such a string, after the bluegill that is.”

Esther “Sande, did they ever get electricity up there?”

Sandy “They have a few gas lamps now and all the old kerosene lamps and then the generator, which is used for large work, mostly for pumping water to fill the tank.”

Dorothea “You know, I don’t think Una’s house is there anymore. She used it in the winter. Una’s was up there in the sun above the Bee Hive. She called it the name of a cook that she had.”

Sandy “It’s gone now. I believe it burned shortly after the Dakins bought it.”

Dorothea “Then there was, if you’re on the Big House porch on the right toward the lake, there was a row of either two or three cottages.”

Sandy “Where was the barn?”

Esther “Up behind the Bee Hive. Isn’t it still there?”

Sandy “Yes, but from what Dr. Boyle told me I thought that there used to be a barn down in that flat area out Doris’s front window.”

Dorothea “Yes, I’ve heard that but...”

Esther “It wasn’t when we were there. It’s always been up above.”

Sandy “Maybe that was the carriage house.

“Could you tell me about building the Chuckhole?”

Dorothea “Una was full of wonderful stories. She’d come down to the Chuckhole after dinner at night, and we’d sit around the kitchen table and she’d tell the children... They were small... Anyway, Dr. Elosser was a very prominent San Francisco doctor and he was a friend of the family. You’d see him written up in the paper once in a while.

“At any rate, the Chuckhole was going to be demolished. It stood where the lumber company was going to build a chute. It was owned by a hermit who was a friend of the Boyles. He made things out in the garage, one of which I have which is an inlaid piece of redwood burl about that big [gestures], and inlaid in the middle. He had made that into a table and each leg was a sapling naturally set in and it stood about that high [gestures again]. It was in the kitchen of the Chuckhole. We prized it and I’m saving it for Jainer, who is very fond of the old things.

“So, the hermit was going to lose his cabin, and Una, Adolph, and some logger went down with a team of horses and somehow they got the wagon in close and they proceeded to take apart the cabin piece by piece. The doctor numbered and labeled each piece before loading it on behind

the horses. The team brought the whole works up to the lake where it was floated down to the cove and put together again.

“Then, Dr. Elosser, who had studied the Indian method of constructing chimneys, added the rock and mud Indian-style chimney.”

Sandy “So when you first went, the cabin wasn’t there, so you stayed in the Big House?”

Dorothea “Oh no, this had happened I believe around 1922.”

Sandy “And your husband had been there back then?”

Dorothea “Oh no, 1933 was our first year.”

Sandy “That’s what I thought, but, I had the impression that Judge Hardy was there when it was being built, that he was the one recording or numbering all the pieces.”

Dorothea “No, that was this Dr. Elosser.”

Sandy “Oh, I see.”

Esther “How long had Una lived out there before you knew her? When did she go there?”

Dorothea “Oh, I don’t know.

Sandy “Was her mother with her year ‘round?”

Dorothea “During the first years we went there, yes.”

Esther “Oh, yes? I’d always thought that Una sort of left her family and went out there.”

Sandy “I had that impression too, but if...”

Dorothea “Well, the others, you see there was the doctor, and her sisters were in convents by then.”

Esther “And she was not about to become a society lady.”

Sandy “And not about to become a nun, either.”

Dorothea “At first, Mrs. Boyle had another residence down in San Rafael so she was only at the lake part of the year. Then I guess she sold the San Rafael place.

“Una and Adolph used to communicate with interest about horses, he being a cowboy. You see, Una was a very cultured person, of delightful Irish culture derived from nursemaids and such. They always had their governesses. Una was so delightful, really special.

“One thing though: whenever she had a problem, she used to eat radishes and they cured her, made her feel lots better. Not for most of us, but...”

“Then Adolph left and he got a divorce. Of course, she was married all of her life in the view of the Catholic Church.

“I wanted to ask about Poets place. What is there now?”

Sandy “I’m not sure if the living structure is his original house, but from photographs, I think so. It has recently been restored and it’s being well kept up, has been reshingled. That’s where Rick lives now. Poe’s barn was there too until a couple years ago when it burned down. Then last year Rick built a new barn right on the same site, a handsome big barn. He had just completed it when he brought home his first horse.”

Esther “Is the tennis court still used?”

Sandy “Yes, and the tennis court is still in immaculate shape. It is surreal.”

Dorothea “Where is this tennis court?”

Sandy “Just at the beginning of the road that turns off to what was Poe’s property. It’s there on the flat at the crest of the little hill and it’s set back in the trees.”

Esther “And you’d never know it was there.”

Sandy “A lot of us resented it at first, it seemed decadent and nothing else, but now it is a piece of living art.”

Esther “I had visions of it being all overgrown.”

Dorothea “I think about the winters that Una stayed up there and what she underwent, going out by horseback, when at times the road was impassable.”

Esther “Una used to put up a sheet to signal over to Orr’s Hot Springs.”

Dorothea “And she told about how she had to go out and hunt food for her animals sometimes, not for herself but for her cats and dogs. Her dogs and cats had to eat so she had to go hunting and sometimes there was nothing but snow on the ground.

“I don’t know how she did it. She was just a little tiny thing, big as a gnat. She always wore orange-colored lace-up boots.

“She had her pick-up truck and we could ride out to town with her. She went to Willits because she did her business there. So the children and I would go and she’d set us down in front of the Safeway store, and my children bought their comic book from the store and sat out on the pavement and read. She’d finish her shopping, return and say, ‘How are you papooses today?’ She always called our children the papooses.”

Esther “Do the Putnams still live down the canyon?”

Dorothea “The Putnams?”

Sandy “That was Dr. Dickenson. His daughter is Mrs. Putnam and she lives there year round now. What a marvelous character. She used to ride with Una all the time. She still has about fifteen horses although she lives there all alone—alone but for her animals, and there are plenty of them! They built a house there on the hill, she and her husband, before he died. They also dammed the stream to make a swimming and fishing pond that they stocked with trout.”

Esther “Does Doris play bridge with her?”

Sandy “Not with her. They’re two independent ladies who live close together and they’re both as strong as can be. Mrs. Putnam in her way is just as strong as Doris is.”

Dorothea “About having horses, Una had a terrible time making ends meet. I don’t know how she did it. She always had her family of at least eight horses. Two were brother and sister, and some were born in the field. How could she keep those creatures?

“I keep thinking about Poe’s place because when he died, that spring when Una found him in the field, well, the children and I hiked north up to his cabin and that cabin was just as he left it, not a hair moved. His hat was on the rack, his clothes, the dirty dishes in the sink. He put up canned jellies, fruits and such and those were all around and his gun in the corner.

“Nobody went up to do anything about his belongings. They were not important and nobody’d been in to see after anything.”

Sandy “You had your children with you—were they tiny? I was wondering when that happened.”

Dorothea “In the late ‘40s. It wasn’t one of the last times we went up.”

Sandy “You remember Poe alive? You knew him?”

Dorothea “Oh yes, he came down a couple of times to visit, all dressed up. A spry little man, and really quite elegant.

“There was a family that lived over off in the mountains in a northerly direction. Adolph took my husband up there. They took the road in and drove up—my husband said that the man was on his porch with his gun. They were either fugitives living up there, or bootleggers, or something. But Adolph was a friend, you see, so they were all right. Anybody extraneous would not have been allowed.

[Photograph] “This photograph shows the swimming cove. It’s down to the left below where Una’s house was and there were dressing rooms there. The shore was nice. In later years it got kind of full of weeds, so it wasn’t as good for swimming.

“When I was so pregnant that I couldn’t go swimming, I stood up on that dock with a lariat tied onto my inner tube, and went in that way, but then I got a flat tire.

“The memories, you know, for my children too—such precious memories.”

Recollections of Leonard Lake  
David Moore  
Petaluma, California, March 3, 1983

David “My family first went to Leonard Lake in 1933 and again in 1934 in the summers for a month or so. My parents found out about Leonard Lake from Helen La Plant in San Francisco, who was a friend and contemporary of my mother’s and lived in the neighborhood. She and her brother Dr. Leo Elosser were both friends of Una Boyle Nuñez. So that’s how we heard about the lake. We went and stayed in the Prospector’s Cabin that they called the Chuckhole then. It was almost the same as it is now, only the name is different. It is a little more sun down now after fifty years.”

Sandy “Who was there then, living there all the time?”

David “Una and her husband, Adolf Nuñez whom we knew as Dolf, and then there was someone there who helped them, I never got acquainted with him. The guests living in the Big House were Mr. and Mrs. McNear from Petaluma and their family. Then ourselves and another family who were friends of my parents and they had two girls and I had a friend of mine and also my sister and we had our dogs. We had a police dog. The dogs were allowed there then.”

Sandy “Did you have two families living in the Chuckhole?”

David “We had two families with five children between them.”

Sandy “It sounds kind of crowded. Did you use the upstairs?”

David “Yes, we all slept upstairs and I think that building in the back was there then but I can’t remember if we used it.”

Sandy “That back building isn’t used now and the upstairs of the cabin is so fragile that nobody ever goes up anymore. We go up and peek in but the floor isn’t trustworthy.”

David “It was quite usable. We slept in sleeping bags on bedsteads and when I looked in recently the bedsteads were still there, piled up and sort of decaying.

“We swam every day. They had a float and a diving board and in the afternoon people would go and sit on the bank. The McNears, my parents, and the children would swim.”

Sandy “Had they built a wooden bench along there?”

David “There was some kind of bench there, that’s right. I can remember some of the elderly folks sitting there. There was always a lot of laughter, splashing and calling out and everyone’s voice echoed all around. It was jolly.

“They had dinner that we joined every night in the main house and the dining room was right where the living room is now. I remember it being bigger but perhaps that’s because I was small.

“When I was fifteen my friend Robert Porter was with me. As they say now we were ‘into’ deer hunting—we didn’t use that expression then—we were interested in deer hunting, we liked to hunt deer. We had never done any actual deer hunting before, either one of us, but that was one of Dolf’s favorite pastimes and it was August, deer season had started. The night before we took

our sleeping bags up to the main house and slept there. He woke us up at 3:30 and we gathered in the kitchen around the low light of a kerosene lamp, where Dolf made breakfast of pancakes and sausages, doing everything in great style.

“We got the horses out and saddled them, took our guns and our lunch and started out. The trail went by the Chuckhole and down to the other end of the lake, then up to the left over the ridge. We had been an hour on the trail when we reached the ridge and were sitting on it when the sun came up and the fog lifted. By the end of the day between the three of us we had two bucks that we brought back on the horses. We hung them from the trees over by the house and I remember being shown how to make jerky from the meat and hanging it from the clothesline after covering it with salt so that the flies wouldn’t get into it. It was an education. Dolf was very solicitous of us. He had no children and we had a marvelous time with him.

“Dolf was a soft-spoken Spanish fellow, spoke very politely all the time, overly gentle and polite for a capable and outdoor-type man but that was his manner, that was the way he was. He was a colorful figure. He had a bottle of white-horse whiskey stashed away in various parts of the forest up there. On the trail once in a while he would go and take a little nip from one of his hiddenaway bottles. Of course we thought that was marvelous, such a daring character. It didn’t seem to affect his personality at all. He was just thirsty. I think I must have said something to my parents about it and they told me that Una wouldn’t let Dolf have anything to drink around the place so he had to keep it elsewhere. So that’s what he did, very obediently.”

Sandy “As you said—a character. Do you know if Dolf got along with Poe, the man who lived down the road and back up to the left?”

David “I’m not aware that there was anyone there at that time. I don’t think there was anybody nearby at all.”

Sandy “Poe was there for a long time but when you were there may have been after he died.”

David “As far as boats go they had heavy wooden row boats. People staying down at the Prospector’s Cabin would put all their gear in one of those and row down. You could walk around on the trail on the cabin side of the lake but there was no road. You know, to take provisions to stay for any length of time it was more convenient to use the boats.

“Una and Adolf seemed to have a distant relationship. She never said ‘dear’ or patted or held or kissed him. There was nothing—no public display of affection whatsoever—that I ever saw. You usually see some sort of a sign of affection or something but there never was any. They were polite and seemed to get along but it was as if he were a foreman or something. To people in their teens as I was, that made the whole picture very colorful because it wasn’t the usual mother and father business, it was something else. It was a very rare treat for children to see this sort of a set up where the husband is a cowboy with a fancy silver belt buckle and an exotic appearance and has whiskey bottles stashed under the fir trees up on the ridge and he could do everything, it seemed. He could cook and ride horses, shoot, and fish. There wasn’t anything he couldn’t do.”

Sandy “Una was capable in the same way, wasn’t she?”

David “Well, she was great with horses but she didn’t hunt or fish. Once a day she would go swimming. Late in the afternoon she would take a swim. She seemed to like being a gracious hostess. She liked to attend to all the details when there were a lot of people there. She was a sweet soft-spoken lady who was very capable with horses.



“Dr. Elosser was a close friend of Una’s who spent time at Leonard Lake quite frequently. He had a convertible Cadillac roadster and he had two dachshund dogs that rode in the back. He usually traveled alone but one day, he took a friend up to the lake and the friend told this story to Una: Dr. Elosser drove very fast on that lake road that was in terrible shape in those days. The road would go along in a bumpy way and then climb up ten or twelve feet very steeply and then make a sharp, almost ninety-degree turn around a tree, then go down the other side. You repeat this many times and you have an idea of how the road was. Well, Dr. Elosser was a speedy driver. He drove on this road at top speed as fast as his car would allow and this passenger of his was very apprehensive. Suddenly a big truck was coming from the other direction. They saw it at the last moment and Dr. Elosser didn’t slow down or swerve or anything. The truck driver was horrified and sped into the bushes as fast as he could. The Cadillac roadster kept right on going. Dr. Elosser’s passenger peeked out through his fingers, saying, ‘Oh, good for him,’ meaning the driver of the truck. Dr. Elosser said, ‘Good for us.’

“That gives you some insight into the character of Dr. Elosser.”

Sandy “He must have been loco. I mean that’s unusual, a bachelor who drives like a maniac and has dachshunds.”

David “Well, he was a very unique individual.

“After those two years I don’t know why my family didn’t go there again, but when you are fifteen or sixteen things are happening fast. I went away to sea shortly thereafter for a while, got homesick, jumped ship and came home, then wanted to go to the naval academy, changed my mind again and went to work in a gold mine. So you see, at that age anything can happen. I put Leonard Lake out of my mind for about twenty years and then I really began to think about it, got out the old photographs and pored over them.

“It was interesting, the place had been out of my mind for a long time, until I met your parents up at the Bowles, at Geysers Peak. Your mother made some mention of Leonard Lake and I said, ‘What, what you mean the lake over in Mendocino County?’ We got to talking about it and have been up to see it since then.”

## Recollections of Leonard Lake

Doralinda "Doris" Little

Ukiah, March 7, 1983

Doris "When I first met Dr. Boyle he was in his seventies and he came up to the lake with his wife and another lady named Beatrice Howard who was a member of the California Native Plant Society. She was the one for whom the Bee Hive was named because her money helped to rejuvenate that cabin.

"Dr. Boyle told me about his early childhood, how he had watched the ox-carts bring furniture and supplies up from Ukiah. He said that when he was about six, he would stand at the bottom of the hill and the oxen would stop there. They had huge loads of furniture or whatever was needed. The drivers would rest the oxen for a while then suddenly they would whip up the oxen, yell and yell and the oxen would make a wild dash up the hill. Otherwise, if they attempted to go up at a slow steady pull they would never make it up that steep section.

"He said that they had quite a few servants and their own tutors at the lake because they were up there most of the year.

"Did he tell you about John Phillip Souza's band coming up there while his father was still alive?"

Sandy "No."

Doris "They played on the point, across the lake from the Big House.

"The Boyles entertained quite a bit while Dr. Boyle's father was still managing his business in San Francisco. Mr. Boyle knew a number of people and many famous people came up to the lake.

"And then his mother, who was a devout Catholic as you know, would invite the nuns and priests. In fact, just as you start around the lake, close to the boat dock and above the road is the remains of a priest hole. When we first moved there, there was quite a bit of the structure left. A priest could go in there and be alone. Retreat they called it, they would go into retreat. In isolation he would think about his religion and that sort of thing.

"There were boats built for the sisters, for each one of the girls, did Dr. Boyle tell you about that?"

Sandy "He mentioned the boats. Could you tell me again? He was younger when he spoke with you. "

Doris "Yes he was, and quite a guy. He still had that twinkle in his eye."

Sandy "I'm willing to bet he was born with that twinkle and I think he probably died with it too.

Doris "Anyway, when the girls were five or six they had a workman there who built each one of them a rowboat. It was their very own boat and when the two of them went into the sisterhood, became nuns, their boats were never taken out again. Each of their boats was left to float around the lake at will.

"The last boat, the one that belonged to Una, was in pretty good condition when we first moved there, but now, no longer. Every spring after the floods you would see it in a different place."

Sandy “What happened to Una? “

Doris “She died. First Una went to be in the convent but I think she was a bit capricious, she just couldn’t stay there so she ran away. The other two sisters were content to be nuns, Sister Gabriel and Sister Edith. Anyway, Una went to the convent as the rest of them did but she ran away. She was a rebel and she came back to the lake and lived there until the end of her life. When the father lost all his money and finally died, Una’s mother, Mrs. Boyle, came to live with her.

“Along the way Una married a wrangler of some kind named Nunes and they tried to begin a dude ranch. Mr. Nunes worked around there for a while and then became disgruntled or something and he disappeared, never to be seen again. Although the dude ranch didn’t really take on, I have met two families, with whom we’re still friends, who used to come up there during that time and two young fellows whom Una taught to swim and they just adored her. We met Dr. and Esther Clifton and Judge Hardy’s wife Dorothea. They confirmed many of these things.

“They told of how the prospectors cabin was taken, board by board, from that little canyon up the side road where there was an old mill, the San Geronimo mill. Judge Hardy, Dr. Clifton, and the workman went to work on that cabin. Judge Hardy was in a wheel chair but he was there with the rest of them and as they took this cabin apart, from up this small canyon they would bring each timber to him and he would mark it with numbers. They brought them back, ferried them up to that cove and put them together again the same as they were in the canyon, by using all these coded numbers of Judge Hardy’s.

“Sister Gabriel told me that she was there when the earthquake came in 1906 and the lake became just like a cauldron, with white caps. The lake water level dropped and she said it never came back, and now it has dropped quite a bit. Naman and I used to feel an earthquake and we would rush up there to see whether the lake was still there or not. Geologists say that was what happened to form the lake. The mountain was riven many years ago and it dropped down and that’s where all those warm and cold springs come from.

“I also knew the woman whose father had the Cross Cabin built.”

Sandy “Who was that? “

Doris “Her name was Dollin, Irene Dollin. She loved Poe’s place. Her father was a dentist. They didn’t go up to the lake but to Poe’s, you know, up to the Upper Ranch and Doc. Dollin would rent from Mr. Poe the privilege of hunting around his place and he would take Irene with him. Irene has since passed away, she would probably be in her nineties now. She came up to Orr Springs Inn one time, and she tried to walk in to the lake but she lost her way.”

Sandy “You mean to see it again?”

Doris “Yes, she wanted to see it again you know and she tried to hike in and all. Well, when she couldn’t make it someone told her to get in touch with Naman and me and she did. She told us that she had been a young girl when she used to go up there to the Poe Place, as it was called then, and she wanted to know if she could come in and just see it again. Of course we welcomed her.

“She came and we went by jeep up top-side, to the Cross Cabin, because that used to belong to her father. Mr. Poe built that for her dad. It was a hunting stand, that is why they have the arms on it, so that he could see each way across, watch for game. It’s built in a cruciform so that the hunter could see each direction, from which any deer might be coming.

“Now Mr. Poe brought all of the timber for that cabin up along the back, up the Jack Smith Trail, because there was no road up there then. Mr. Dakin is the one who had that road put in.”

Sandy “Yes, I remember when that happened, a horrendous project accomplished by Les Garzini, the man who actually cut the road and he was the one who found the fawn, Sweet Pea. “

Doris “Yes, and he died at the lake, had his heart attack right there at the lake. “

Sandy “I didn’t know that. “

Doris “And Mr. Dakin was very generous with the widow, bought that bulldozer from her for an enormous price. Mr. Dakin was such a generous, wonderful man.

“You know, he first bought the 400 acres around the lake and that was all virgin timber. Next he bought the place down the road from the little lake, from what they call Mud Lake, and then he bought another section that went up to the Cross Cabin. The last piece he bought, and we were there, he bought the Poe property from the ranch. They used to run sheep up there. That is around four sections, lets see, 64 acres in a section, that are now owned by the Leonard Lake Reserve.

Sandy “How did you and Naman end up at the lake?”

Doris “Well, at the time that we learned that they wanted someone at the lake, we lived in Mount Shasta. We had always been used to living out in the woods and we found out that they were going to build tract houses around our place. We decided that we would go to Canada or Mexico—get away from all these people.

“We were visiting down in Santa Cruz and I was looking through the Sunday paper and saw this ad. It sounded as though it could be from friends of ours, so as a joke we answered the ad. We went back to Mount Shasta and completely forgot about it.

“Pretty soon here came this brochure and questionnaire. We found out that the ad had not been placed by our friends at all.”

Sandy “I don’t think I’ve ever heard this. “

Doris “I filled out the questionnaire and in the accompanying letter it said that if you had small children going to school you need not answer because there was no way for them to attend school because it was way back and sometimes the roads were not passable. So in my letter back I said that we didn’t have small children but we did have two large labrador retrievers and if you don’t want our dogs you don’t want us.

“Then we had a letter in August asking us to meet at the International Building in San Francisco where Mr. Dakin had his office. We were going down that direction anyway so we decided to stop by. Well, Mr. Dakin was there at his desk and he had a whole pile of applications. First though, we introduced ourselves and Mr. Dakin’s secretary, Johanna, said Mr. Dakin was waiting for us. I didn’t understand that because he didn’t even know we were coming but later we found that he was intrigued by the letter that I had written, about the dogs and about what Naman could do and what we enjoyed doing together, fishing and hunting and that sort of thing.

“Then he asked us to come up to the lake. So we stayed overnight in San Francisco and then we came up to Leonard Lake. When we got there, there were two other couples. Mr. Dakin had told several to come up because he wanted Mrs. Dakin to meet these people. And shortly, two more couples arrived. So Mr. Dakin came to Naman and me and said, ‘Why don’t you go up to

the barn? My daughter and my grandson are up at the barn. Why don't you go up and talk to them?' I thought it was rather strange because it was our turn but we went up there anyway. We came down after he had interviewed the third couple and he said, 'Why don't you take your car and drive around the lake?' By the time we came back these other people had gone. Mr. Dakin said, 'Will you come up and have tea?' So we had tea on the porch. We met Mrs. Dakin and we talked about different things. We never did talk about the job. Then we went down to look at the house. I protested, it was so filthy, just horrid—Mrs. Dakin told me we could fix it any way we chose. Mr. Dakin said that he would let us know about the job in two weeks.

"We were on our way, we were in our car just starting when Zacky came running down and he said, 'My Grandfather wants to see you.' So we got out of the car again, started walking up the hill, and Mr. and Mrs. Dakin were walking down. He said 'You can have the job if you would like it.'

"I liked the place, it is so beautiful up there and so I looked at Naman. He nodded at me and said, 'Yes, we would like the job,' and I said to Mr. Dakin, 'I think that you would be lucky to have us.' He laughed.

"In two weeks, on Labor Day weekend, we moved. Mary was there waiting for us and the housekeeper, Wilhelmine, was there, and Mrs. Dakin. The funny part was this: when we came we had cases of all sorts of things. We had lived up in the mountains and there you bought things by the case. We had cases of soap—Wilhelmine was so pleased because she knew that we would be clean.

"At that time there was no washing machine. You know there is no instant electricity even now but they had a generator. So Naman built the laundry so that I could have a washing machine. I wasn't about to scrub on a scrubbing board, which I did do for three weeks.

"We were very content there. It was really a nice place to be. When all the Dakins were alive we—Roger and Naman—worked together, played and ate together. It was just like a big family, you know, until the disaster.

"We lived there seventeen years until Naman died and then I stayed on for three years until I retired."

Sandy "Would you tell me the story of the grotto?"

Doris "The grotto was along the side of the lake. It was in the living rock and was rather hard to get to. When Mary was a young girl she found a statue there. It was called the grotto because it was a perfect place. There was a shelf of rock where you could kneel and pray. Knowing that the Boyles were of religious bent we thought that was probably one of the places where they could be alone and practice their prayers or religion. It's a beautiful place to be, but very difficult to get to. You had to climb up or climb down the side of the rock.

"Oh there was a time when Mr. Dakin and Naman found two deer carcasses with their horns locked, by the side of the lake. Roger kept the horns for a while, took them down to his office. You remember where the old pump house was? It was on the side of the lake toward the other end. They found them just below there. Remember the apple orchard? Near there. They hadn't been dead more than a few days. They had been fighting, their horns locked and these two stags died there by the side of the lake."

Sandy "And-about Susanna and the way she stopped the loggers—"

Doris "Oh yes, they were lumbering up to the Dakin property. Now Mrs. Dakin told me this

and she giggled, she was so cute. She went down and the loggers were getting ready to cut this huge redwood and she said, 'You can't do that, that is on my property.' They argued and she finally said, 'If you cut that tree I will sue you!' So they left it and—the next day she went down and bought the property.”

John “It’s a shame that she let them log the whole canyon before she bought the property. “

Doris “Well, I don’t think she was really taking a stand until she saw that they were going to do something to that gorgeous tree, and that did it. She laughed, she giggled, she thought it was so...

Sandy “When was the canyon logged?”

Doris “That was in the ‘50s.”

Sandy “After they bought it?”

Doris “Yes, some of it was done after they bought the 400 acres, that is.

“You know going up the road from the gate up to the upper ranch, all that was a beautiful stand of timber. When Irene Dollin was a young girl they used to make camp in that grove of redwoods.

“ John “What amazed me is the number of logs in the canyon that are still there, that they left. Evidently once they cut them the quality wasn’t there—they weren’t worth...”

Doris “You know what happened? When we came there the creek ran down the road in the wintertime because the creek bed was full of logs. Naman spent hour after hour...”

Sandy “Hours—he spent months. “

Doris “Well, that’s true. He pulled the logs up out of the creek bed and burned them. There were bonfires as big as this house. “

John “What did they leave all those logs in the creek for? “

Doris “They were gyppo loggers. They just took the best and left. I used to call myself a back-hoe widow. Naman dug out these huge logs and burned them. It used to terrify me because he would take the bulldozer and go right into the flames. I would think-I was afraid to go down and watch him and afraid not to. At night these huge fires would be going and he would get up at two in the morning and go down and push the fire with the bulldozer. “

John “So that’s why all that timber is still in the meadow along the road. Naman pulled it out of the creek so that the creek could go back to the creek bed. “

Doris “Yes, he made that creek go back where it belonged. And remember the place where the falls are? Nobody knew that the falls were there until Naman pulled all that timber out and they called it Naman’s Falls. That is twenty-five yards or so below the lower lake and you can’t see them from the road.”

## Recollections of Leonard Lake

Honey Hardy Powell

May 31, 1983

[The following recollections were written by Mrs. Powell, the youngest daughter of Judge and Mrs. E. Hardy after she read a proof of my interview with her mother and Mrs. Clifton]

Una Nunes had great admiration and respect for our dad, Judge Hardy, and she saw very early how much he enjoyed the quality of life and appreciated Lake Leonard's beauty and she wanted to share it all with him. Una was a very unique person treasuring all that nature produced, never disturbing its balance. She loved poetry, had a wonderful imagination, and loved to name everything from cars to landmarks and places. Dad also had a vivid imagination enabling him to be a great storyteller. He loved to write, paint watercolors of the lake's beauty, and to read, which he did daily while dangling a fishing line over his boat's gunwales and puffing on his famous pipe. Mom often either read a new novel aloud to him or rowed him around the lake at a steady speed so he could troll. She had convinced him to start painting with watercolors and she "coached" his painting and encouraged him plus successfully critiquing his work. She is quite an artist in her own right.

Dad loved to sail "The Katie" and Una enjoyed seeing the crisp white sails out on the lake. We owned a thirty-foot sloop which we crewed on for Dad all over the San Francisco Bay for pleasure and racing. Sailing was a way of life for all of us. The Katie was a rowboat-made-to-sail creation of Dad's design and Mom's skills. She was ten-feet long and had a very broad-beamed hull with three thwarts. She had a bamboo mast stepped through her forward thwart and a bamboo boom. Mom made the mainsail out of cotton duck with four stitched casements to hold the four battens that Dad had whittled and sanded smooth. The Katie's jib came up from a home-rigged bowsprit. Her fixed keel was held on with four shelf brackets. The tiller and rudder, a canoe paddle, was held under your arm then rested in an oar lock mounted on the transom's top edge. If you were becalmed you simply sculled home or to a windy area. Dad sculled from the stern thwart every where he went. If we wanted to sail he used the "Woodchuck," one of the lake's long heavy old row boats. We also took up our El Toro sail boat to race and enjoy. We had a fleet of six model sail boats that we raced and they looked beautiful all grouped together racing to their next marker. By the way, no outboard motors were ever allowed on the lake by Una or by us. Quietness added to the lake's beauty.

Evenings were lovely and often we would row over to the "Pocket", a cove, and hike up to the sheep range to the west by the giant madrone tree to watch the sunsets. They seemed to get better each time. On the way back we would pick cans full of wild black caps by the old sheep barn. The picking was safer after sundown because the yellow jackets had retired. The black caps were the biggest sweetest juiciest berries we had ever eaten.

Another evening of fun was rowing, after dark, around the edge of the lake with a couple of large flashlights to "spot" for deer along the shore. They came down to drink and graze on the sweet shoreline grasses. Mom was the official oarsman because she was the only one who could row without squeaking and splashing the oars on the Woodchuck. After returning to the cabin we would listen to Dad tell wonderful stories and play the banjo.

Mom tried to grow vegetable gardens on the banks in front of the Chuckhole. She had to remember to cover the plants each night with any available object, such as buckets and boxes weighted down. If she forgot just once it was the end of that plant. After several summers of trying, the deer finally won.

Una had a huge vegetable garden, all fenced, located in front of the Bee Hive and extending down to the beach. Keeping the gate closed and locked was the most important rule to a successful garden. We kids were always chewed out by Una when she saw us leave it open. Not only were the deer a problem, but her horses that roamed freely had to be kept out.

We took hundreds of great hikes, many just daily trips up to the Big House to see Una and her pets. We could either take the High Trail or the shoreline if the plank bridge spanned across "Steep Rock Cove." The High Trail was in the cool shade all the way and ended at the big redwood barn where Kaliff, Una's Arabian stallion, was corralled, or we would leave the trail before there and slide down our dirt slide on the seat of our pants, from High Trail down to the chicken pens. It was dirty but fun.

Sometimes we'd hike up to the "Bear Caves", in the rocks high above the apple orchard below the Chuckhole. One time, when Ed and Tor were strong teenagers, they pushed Dad in his wheel chair back to the dry creek bed at the shallow end of the lake until the canyon narrowed. Then they made a carrying chair with their four arms and carried him back to a lovely shady cave and waterfall. We picnicked and Mom read a story to us.

Una told how we could hike to Lou Dunsing's cabin and asked us to hunt for an old pitchfork of hers that he had borrowed way back in the 1930s. When we finally got there and were looking around we found it in his big barn so we took turns carrying the heavy steel-handled fork home. Una was most appreciative. Lou Dunsing's cabin was located near the edge of a steep cliff with a long drop off down to a wide canyon way below. His clothes line was strung along the edge and we laughed at the thought of the wind whisking clothes off down into the canyon, no way to retrieve them. His belongings were still in his cabin. His coat and hat hung on hooks, dishes were piled in the sink, pack rats had torn up his mattress over the years, but his chair still sat on the front porch where he once watched with his rifle for friends or the law to approach, as Dad had witnessed with Adolph back in 1933. Lou reportedly had one of the first showers in the county and it was still intact. It was plumbed on the outside west wall of the cabin.

A favorite hike of ours was to hike down the beautiful Reeves' Canyon road to meet Dad when he was returning from his trips to Palo Alto. Car engines could be heard for miles as they came up the canyon and our excitement grew to a bursting point until we'd start running and see who could spot his car first. He usually brought a gift for all or when we were older he would bring our school friends up for visits. It was a big treat. We made the hike so often that it was natural for us to name many landmarks like sharp bends in the road, road banks, fallen trees, or camp sites. We loved using our imaginations and Una had showed us how naming things gave them importance, character, and personal attachment.

Our days were filled with adventure and sports, even school studies. Mom, who had taught school, gave us lessons after lunch every day in our young years then followed it up by reading aloud kids' adventure stories to all four of us. We loved it. I recall a series of books starting with Swallows and Amazons, about English kids at their own summer vacation land getting into all kinds of exciting adventures. We related easily.



Every summer we four played ranchers and built vast miniature ranches in the dirt behind the Chuckhole. It was shady and cool. We used old roofing shingles for houses and barns, and thousands of tiny fence posts for our pastures that were green moss with broken window glass for ponds. We each had trucks and our herds of cattle were wood chips. Mom insisted we kept the main road through our ranch sites very wide so all could walk easily through in the dark of night and not stub a toe or worse.

One summer my brother, Ed, had a broken collarbone. His arm was in a sling and he wasn't allowed to swim. He built a raft, stepped a mast, and rigged a rectangular sail on it. He named it "The Window Blind" and he sailed all over the lake on it, or paddled if the wind died. I'm sure he created many adventures by himself as the rest of us were enjoying the cooling water activities.

Another summer Mom invited my sister Jane's Mariner troop up for a sailing camp. They organized many troop activities and one that my Dad planned and set up was a wild treasure hunt requiring teams of two to row, paddle, hike, and climb from one hidden clue to the next. It was very clever and took all day. A tough race, but fun!

Competition was keen between the four of us and Dad often set up sailing, rowing, or swimming events. We were always anxious to participate and he sometimes made them amusing, probably so we'd want to try another. A little leeway or head start was my only chance to win, and once I did, I think.

There are many more wonderful memories of Leonard Lake like trying to catch just one turtle that sunned on the fallen trees around the shore, or playing snake charmer with the beautiful yellow and black water snakes that we would catch... Dressing up the long-haired black cat in my T-shirts and, shorts (and he loved it!)... Watching the dragon flies swooping across the lily pads and making our Springer spaniels run off the end of our dock on a swimming chase... Playing with the frogs, toads, and salamanders... The new litter of kittens at Una's house every summer... The calf that Ed and Tor tried to bulldog in their own pretend rodeo... The unusual albino herd of deer I saw from the road on the way out to Calpella (about 1950)...

There was the "Yellow Jacket Scream" that Mom could detect from great distances that told her one of us had been stung. The scream of pain was one of a kind. There were the bouts with poison oak, one of which landed Tor in the hospital and there were the necessary preventative Fels Naptha soap baths after each hike.

There was the time we heard the sound of a deer hunter's shot from down the lake and as we waited and watched a wounded buck appeared on the shore and tried to swim across the lake, but only made it half way. One night wild cat screams came from across the lake and Granddaddy picked up the twenty-two and rowed out on the lake to try to spot them but they ran off. There was the summer a close big forest fire sent clouds of ash over us and covered the lake like a grey blanket. Scary!

There was the collection of old buggies, a surrey, buckboard and two Model T trucks that we played on and pretended trips to town and all kinds of adventures. There was the "Tin Tub" row boat and canvas canoe of Unafs that she let us borrow on occasion. There were the wood brigades to move stove wood that George had cut behind the Big House, by row boat down to the Chuckhole and hand-to-hand it up the bank to the cabin for Mom to use in Mrs. Roar or Aurora. There was just relaxing in one of the two hammocks hung in the shade and the time Dad was napping in one of them when Una rode up on big Kaliff and towered over Dad. Kaliff didn't

stand still and made Dad a little nervous so he asked Una to move that “meat grinder” back a bit. To break the quiet of the day one of us would yell to test his echo, as if it wouldn’t return. There were the hours and hours we spent fishing or catching minnows with the net off the dock.

These are only some of the thousands of warm loving memories of a wonderful twenty years for our family in a historic and romantic way of life. We became a part of it, treasured it, and want to pass it on to future generations. Leonard Lake is part of us. We are all so grateful to have been a part of the lake’s history.



