

Interview with Gladys Van Deerlin in 1975, Interviewers unknown

(tape begins during the interview)

Gladys: ... But, it was quite a change from everything that they'd been used to. And it took, oh I suppose, fully two weeks to three weeks to get here. I have letters you know, that my father wrote to his father. He wrote every week faithfully, from the time he left England, and describing all their experiences out here.

Q: How did your father happen to decide on this area?

Gladys: Well, there was a Mr. Morgan whom he had known back in Ealing, they'd been friends. Ealing is suburb of London, and Mr. Morgan had come out, oh I suppose ten years before, at least, with his family. He had gone to San Diego, and I think had come up to this area through Mr. Crouch. Mr. Crouch had this ranch over here, you know, he had a very fine farm there and everybody thought a great deal of him. Where the, you know, that school was there later, off Oceanside Boulevard ...

Q: Down where Garrison school is now?

Gladys: Garrison is on this side, isn't it north of Oceanside Boulevard? No, now this was south. It wasn't on top of a hill, his was down in the valley, his place there. But he had such a fine farm that some people came there one day and asked if it was Oceanside. But he had a very, very nice place and I used to stay there and Mrs. Ronsse used to stay there a great deal. We used to see the Escondido train go by, you know. So, father came out to be a partner, and was a partner with Mr. Morgan. Basil, my brother, had come out first, I think he was either 16 or 17, to look the situation over.

There were a great many young English remittance men who came out, younger sons from the family, and they were supposed to learn farming and do it. Well, I don't think Mr. Morgan did quite as much as he should for them, and I don't think people regarded him as too ... Well, anyway, my brother suggested that they didn't come. But they did come.

Q: How old were you when you came here?

Gladys: Two and half.

Q: Where was Morgan's ranch in relation to the valley? Because I understand that you spent most of your years in the valley.

Gladys: Yes, in the valley. How much do you know of the valley? I could show you exactly where our place was. But I don't know ... Do you know where the Libby school used to be? It's been moved now to over by the little church. Well, you know where it used to be? Well, we were about, I suppose, calling it "city" about two blocks up from there and on the north side of the road. Well, that's where we were, up there, and the Morgan place was on the other side of the road, a little ... Do you know where the Stokes' place is now?

Q: The old Stokes' Dairy?

Gladys: Yes. Well their house must be there still, I suppose.

Q: No ma'am, the senior Stokes lives out on Wilshire road and his son lives just down behind him.

Gladys: Well, the Libby's used to live in that house there near the school, because I guess he gave the land for the school, probably. Mr. Libby had been a school teacher back in New England and came out here and he was very keen on education. So we were just up that way and that Libby school was my alma mater. I started there.

Q: You said it used to be rough trip to get from town out to the ranch because the roads weren't really very much.

Gladys: The roads were very bad and the grade was extremely bad. Now, of course, you can just go up it and down it. It took seven minutes to go up the grade going to town. It wound around like this, it was very narrow and only one or two places where you could pass. Lots of people had accidents where the horses backed them over the side. But it usually wasn't too serious in those days, big buggies and things like that. But the grade was a nasty, narrow, difficult thing, really. But, of course, there were beautiful wild flowers growing all along on either side, you know. Lots of wild flowers, particularly at the grade.

Q: That hill, that grade has always been called the Rosicrucian grade, but wasn't that named after a settler, Amick?

Gladys: Well, yes, he lived there at the top. They ... I think they were called Amicks in those days, at least as far as I know they were. But ... oh, perhaps just because he lived up there they named it Amick's grade. I don't know. I never thought of a name for it, we always called it "the grade." And that road belongs ... a great piece after you get down, it's there still. When we came it was called the "New Road", it had just been built. And before we came they'd always gone over the hill past the Rosicrucians rather than going out to the valley. So for ages that went by the name of the "new road."

Q: What was your father's name?

Gladys: J. H. Young, John Henry Young.

Q: How many was in the family that he brought with him.

Gladys: Three of us came with him. Basil was here already and that's all the children he had. I had one sister in England and she died before I was born and so we never knew each other. Basil, that was the eldest, Sidney was next. You see, Sidney was a good deal older than I was. I have a few pictures I put out that I thought you might like to see afterwards. Then, Gavin was my younger brother. He was about 10 years old when we came out. It was quite funny, my uncle said to him, something about, "How do you like the idea of going to California?" He was a rather solemn little boy. He said, "Well, I think it's a good thing, because I haven't been much of a success in England."

Well, they came out to raise fruit. There were fruit trees here and all that field opposite, sort of catty-corners from where that Libby school was, and across from Mr. Libby's, was a fruit orchard. But you see they really didn't, as Mr. Morgan's son said later, he said it was so ridiculous because

they didn't raise enough fruit, really, to do anything. They couldn't market it. They grew, I understand, the most beautiful peaches. Great big ones, but they only sold at a cent a pound. And then the boys would have to take them in and market them in town. They couldn't sell them in town. If they would have shipped them to San Diego but there was no shipping facilities there. So, they came out and started with the fruit. Then we had several years, sort of drought years, and the fruit trees mostly died.

Well, Mr. Morgan left eventually, went up to the city and then we turned to cows. And there was the creamery, quite close to the Mission. And, that, of course, was the saving grace for everybody. You took your milk down there, it was quite a gathering place in the morning, and then while the creamery man separated the milk all the people stood around and talked. You got your milk, the skim milk, back to take and feed your animals with and at the end of the month you got a check for the things you'd taken in. Of course that check was what kept most of them going. It was a big help, that.

Q: Then the farming like the Kawanos' and Agadas are doing hadn't started that early?

Gladys: Oh no, there was no really ... nothing organized, you know. Everybody sort of did what came naturally! Oh, it was very haphazard. But the cows were really something and that's what I suppose saved the day for us, probably.

And, of course, as I say, most of the young men in the place, and there were a good many of them, many young Englishmen, were younger sons, and they were sent out because, I suppose, there was no particular provision for them. But apparently, they could run up bills and when their allowances came they always paid them and seemed to have a pretty good reputation. There was Goldbaum's saloon there, after you ... well, when you come down the hill from Oceana, if you went straight on for a little ways, why, that's where Goldbaum's saloon was.

Q: On what's now North El Camino Real?

Gladys: Yes, it would be on further, and so, that was there. Then across from there, about once a year they'd have a fiesta. And they put up these tule shacks and for two or three days, and you could buy tamales there. Father always took me over there to buy a tamale and they'd have a little bit of gambling. I suppose bingo and things like that and a good deal of drinking. And I guess the boys very often had trouble and fought in the deal. But anyway, they had that about once a year. That was near the Mission, you know, but across from Goldbaum's saloon.

And then there was a little post office there, further on. The San Luis Rey Post Office. And there, in the early days, we used to just drive up by the house and the postmistress would open the window and hand you your mail out. You didn't have to get out of your buggy or anything and I used to ride horseback over there when I was older to get the mail. That changed, later she had an office. But it wasn't as convenient because then you did have to get out of the buggy and go in.

Then, they've always been having ... all the bridges were washed away. Every year when the river came down there was trouble. Because, just after or shortly after we came, they built this lovely big bridge. It led toward where that school used to be, the Libby School, and they had a big sign on either end of the bridge saying "\$5 Fine, anybody riding or driving over this bridge faster than a walk." I don't think anybody ever paid any attention to it that I know of. But anyway, they had it. I had a great uncle that stayed with us for a little while, after we had gotten here and he said there was

a small place where they were going to have a man hidden to arrest the people when they did it, but, of course, that wasn't true. I don't think anybody ever paid the slightest attention to it. And over there where we were you could hear when people came across the bridge and we must have been a full mile away. Well, a mile, of course that's if you went by the road. I suppose if you went direct it wasn't quite a mile, I mean as the crow flies. But you could hear when people go over the bridge. We certainly needed Women's Lib or something in those days. I used to milk cows, you see, for the family when the boys went to town to visit their girlfriends, why, I usually milked cows on Sunday. And I used to get 5 cents for milking eight cows and if they had to employ the neighbor's boy, and not me, he got fifteen cents for milking five cows! We certainly needed a labor union or Women's Lib or something! However, it didn't disturb me, I was perfectly satisfied. I got some money, so I saved up and by the time I went up to school at 11 I had saved up three dollars, I think, altogether and that was wonderful.

Going into town, there's another thing I thought of that might be of interest, going into town, you know they cut down that last hill that leads into town. There used to be a big house that stood on the right, where the ... well, there's a service station there now, and then the stores over at the shopping center. But that was fairly high, and there was this great big, old house that belonged to Mrs. Gault and Mrs. Marsh. Rumor had it that they'd been Mormons and both been married to the same man. But that I don't know anything about! The first sound you'd hear as you came over that hill was always the blacksmith, hammering his anvil. And he was down on, oh what is the name of that street? He was south of ... oh, he was on Tremont, south of Mission, but you could hear that just as clearly as anything and it was always the same thing. It was just a little up over that hill, what's that street along the top called now? It was the one above Clementine, where the hill was. Horne. You see, as you came over Horne, you could hear this down on Tremont, you could always hear it as regularly as anything. And, of course, we had a harness maker in town that did a good business and the bank stood on the corner of Hill and, and well, it's called Mission now, it was called Second street.

Oh, and then when the telephone came to the valley, I think it must have come in about 1903 or 1904. Well, I went up to school in 1904. It might have been 1902 or 1903, but we had 10 people on the same line. And you rang two rings to call central and there was always ... they always thought some of the people listened in to the conversations. Our ring was one long and four short. But the funny part was Ms. Clewitt, who was the chief telephone operator, was quite a character. And the office was right downtown on Second, on Mission, you know, below Hill. And you'd call up and she'd say, "Oh, there's no good calling her, I just saw her go past the door. I just saw her, she's downtown, you can't get her." She was always giving you information like that! She also at one time was the public library person. I remember going in asking for "Peck's Bad Boy." And she was very much shocked and she said, "Are you sure your mother would like you to read that?" Mother didn't give a hang what I read of that kind, she didn't mind a bit!

It was always a great thing when the river came down each year, you know. It was always dry under the bridge most of the year, but after we had a good rain, well, then the first question was, "Is the river down yet?" That was always very thrilling when that came.

Q: Was the river, that early, dry most of the year like it is now?

Gladys: Oh yes, yes. Absolutely dry, but in the winter time after a good rain it was there for awhile. I did go swimming in it once or twice. It was very cold, I don't know how I endured it.

Q: Was the little Episcopal church there when you came here or was it built later?

Gladys: No, that was built by the Morgans, really, mostly with subscriptions from people back in Ealing and the people here in the valley. The men, themselves, built it and one of the young remittance men, or one of the young Englishmen, built the altar. They opened that, we think, the first service there was Christmas Day, 1890, we think, Mrs. Ronsse and I as far as we can figure it out through letters and things. There was a Mr. Jacob who took care of the Carlsbad church and this ... That little church building which has now been made a historical monument, or whatever you call it, was the oldest Episcopal building in Northern San Diego County because when the Bishop ... (phone rang)

Q: You were discussing the young minister you had.

Gladys: Oh yes, well he wasn't very young. But he was an Irishman, quite a character. Not very well educated, but a tremendous worker. His son-in-law used to say he was somewhere out in the wilds that he had taken his training. He was an Irishman and a very kind, fine man. They said that he became ill at the time the exams were given when he was supposed to be admitted to the ministry and I don't think he took the exams, and anyway, they passed him. They needed workers and he was a fine missionary worker. But they used to say he had an awful time over any of the long words and long names in the Bible, he used to wander around a great deal. But he did come about once a month, I think, maybe it was oftener. And they'd have an evening service there in that church. And then there was a Ms. Ramsey up the valley who had five or six nephews and nieces whom she ruled with a rod of iron, and one of those used to play the organ. And their collections ... how they ever made, I don't know. They'd only make about two or three dollars and the collections wouldn't even bring in that. Father was treasurer of it quite a while. I don't know how they ever made out at all, I don't know.

Q: Was the little church ever used on a regular basis for the residents of the valley or was there always a church in Oceanside?

Gladys: Oh, no, this was used by the valley people. I don't think the Oceanside church had started then. If it was it was only meetings, they had no building. They were only meeting in the Library or in a rented room somewhere. No, this wasn't Oceanside, this was entirely San Luis Rey. There were quite a few residents then and most of them, you see, were in those days, Episcopalians.

Now the people across the road from us, who were there for awhile, I think they were called McWhirters, and they had brought this young woman out with them to work for them. I don't know what the arrangement was, but Mr. French, who was an old English sailor, who was a very capable fine man, but older, fell in love with this, or proposed, to this young woman and she married him and left the McWhirters and they were very angry about it. But they were our next door neighbors and Mr. French was really quite a character. When we had our fire and everything was burned down, he saved what furniture and what things. Mother saved that picture of her mother, but otherwise he saved quite a few things. And then later there was somebody who almost got drowned. I saw that in Father's letters not too long ago, and Mr. French was the one who saved her and he was quite ill after that. He went out and brought her in. And those were our next door neighbors.

Q: When was the fire?

Gladys: Oh, mother and I had been back to England ... It was in 1898, I think.

Q: And your father rebuilt out in the valley?

Gladys: Yes, we lived across the road for awhile and what we called the McWhirter place, where these people had been, they'd left. And for about a year and then our place was rebuilt. I left when I was 11 and went up to school. I mean, I was only back in the summertime then. I went to school in Los Angeles after I was 11 years old. But I was back and we didn't leave the valley until I was about 17 or 18. Father and Mother, meanwhile, had built a summer cottage in Oceanside and they sold the ranch and moved into the summer cottage and lived in Oceanside for many years after that.

Q: Are any of your family other than your husband in the cemetery in the little church?

Gladys: Yes, my uncle and aunt, and mother and dad, and my sister, and my younger brother and his wife.

Q: Your whole family then.

Gladys: Well, pretty nearly, my youngest brother went back to be buried somewhere in the South with ... I don't know which one of his wife's he was buried with! He had three, so ...! They had all died, he hadn't been divorced!

Q: This was Basil?

Gladys: Yes.

Q: He's the only member of your family who isn't buried in the All Saints Church?

Gladys: Yes.

Other: No, there's another sister buried in England.

Gladys: Oh yes, well she died before we came out. I did see her grave when we went back. (Interview ended and begins again)

Gladys: ... The housework, learning to do that and do the washing and everything was a terrible thing and the first day that mother and Sidney did a good, big wash they got up on the line finally and then it broke. And of course there's nothing clean for it to come down on, came down into all the dust and the dirt.

... We did have a wood stove in the dining room, that's what really caused the fire that we had, but, we cooked mainly with gasoline and, but, you had to bring out coal oil. The coal oil was for the lamps and everything, you packed everything in the back of the buggy and every once in a while the coal leaked or something and it would get in the sugar and some of the food and it was simply awful! Mother thought it didn't matter too much, though.

Q: You had gasoline stoves?

Gladys: Yes, we had a gasoline stove. It was very satisfactory. We really didn't have much trouble

with it.

Q: Your father didn't think that was dangerous?

Gladys: No, I guess not. You had to heat things up and it was terrible, so you really needed something of the sort. I suppose a good many people had coal oil stoves, but we didn't. This was a gasoline stove. There were long things like this and the burners were up here and you'd strike a match and turn it on and it worked all right. I only remember once having any trouble with it and that was when the family was away and some woman was here with her little son and somebody went over and told my brother that the gasoline stove was flaring up and he came dashing around and she went out there, "Oh, Mr. Young, Mr. Young, don't run so hard!" And Basil said the only thought he had was having to tell mother again that the house was burnt down. But she hadn't even removed some cloths that were hanging above, but, he got it all out all right. But that's the only time I ever remember any trouble with the gasoline stove.

Q: Gasoline was a lot cheaper then than it is now.

Gladys: I suppose so!

Q: How often did they play cricket in Oceanside?

Gladys: Well, in the early days we played in the valley, informal matches. I remember going to them and Mr. Jacob being there but later in Oceanside they ... I don't know how often they played ... but they played matches with other places--Riverside and Redlands and places like that used to come. Our men used to go up there sometimes.

Q: They had a regular cricket field then?

Gladys: I don't suppose it belonged to them. There was this Oceanside Athletic Club where we had tennis, you know, by the Santa Fe depot. There were four courts there. In the early days Oceanside was very well known because it was the station with the tennis courts. That all had been started by the Britishers. They started this athletic club which started with cricket in the valley in the early days. Just when they built the tennis courts, I don't know, I can't remember. They must have done it fairly early on because it seems to me they were there and later they built the tea house at the end of the tennis courts. That, I remember very well. There we used to serve tea every Saturday afternoon and it was a very old-fashioned kind of club because men did all the voting and decided everything, and the ladies served the tea. We didn't have any vote or anything at all! But, I don't think anybody ever bothered much. ... Some of the Americans finally decided they wanted some cold drinks and I think we tried to persuade them that tea was much more cooling when you were playing tennis, but I think afterwards we did serve some cool things, too, but I'm not sure about that. Across from the tennis courts where the um ... some sort of amusement thing is, as you are going toward the pier, there was the old opera house. It was known as the opera house.

Q: On the corner of Pacific and Third?

Gladys: What was the street that runs down to the pier? Third. Well, no, it was not Pacific, it was the further one up. Myers. That's where the opera house stood. We used to have our bazaars there.

Q: Would that be where that parking lot is now?

Gladys: I don't think it's a parking lot. No, that's way down, no.

Q: At Third and Myers, just past the railroad tracks, there's a big parking lot.

Gladys: Well, it's on this side, south. I think there's some sort of amusement thing there.

Q: Pacific Holiday Land.

Gladys: The miniature golf is in back of it but there's something on the corner.

Q: That's Pacific Holiday Land.

Gladys: They used to put on plays there in the opera house. There used to be all kinds of entertainments. When we went in we'd drive in at night sometimes if there was something good there. Or what we thought was going to be good.

Q: Did the local people put on plays or were there touring companies?

Gladys: Well, sometimes there were touring companies but then we had quite a good amateur lot who used to put on entertainments there and plays. Father and mother, I knew, were in several plays there. But, of course, you know, father was only 50 when they came out and Mother was 40. I don't know how they had the courage to come out, but they did.

Q: Your father owned a boy's school?

Gladys: Yes, and he sold that and they came out.

Q: Did your mother help?

Gladys: Yes, she helped in the schools. She took care of the ... it was a boarding school, you see, and so she had to see after the school and everything. I think she did a little teaching in the school, too. Not very much, the small boys, I think, she probably did. I think he had entirely male teachers in the school. Mother may have coached some of the small boys, I don't know whether it was French or what. She was pretty good in French. But she got, I think, thoroughly tired of it. They did quite a little entertaining there. I understand they had some very nice parties and things, but that was before my time. I had the place pointed out to me when my sister and I went back so I could be shown where I was born.

Q: Did you ever think you might like to be in England than here?

Gladys: Oh, no. I was thankful they came out. I am so glad they didn't listen to what my brother said. Heavens, no. I enjoyed life here. I loved life in the valley. I was devoted to the valley. My brother, younger brother, probably suffered most in the way through coming because he was sort of betwixt and between. He didn't get as much of his education as he should and I don't know ... but he was the one, he never liked the valley particularly, but oh, I just loved it.

Q: I understand that in one of your father's letters back home, he had a few choice words concerning what he thought of the Episcopal minister that was here, concerning his education.

Gladys: Oh, well I don't know what was said exactly. He didn't admire him, except that he was a very nice man and a great authority on horses, but I don't remember what he said about it. I think he thought he was very ignorant, which he was. But the church situation here would not have been anything like the same if he hadn't done all the work he did. I think he even drove up to Fallbrook. I don't think he went to Escondido. He went down to Merle, that was a little place down the coast, and to Oceanside.

Q: A town called what?

Gladys: Merle. M-e-r-l-e. It hasn't been there for some time.

Q: Where was it?

Gladys: Oh good gracious, I don't know exactly where it was. It was about 12 miles or 15, I guess it must have been this side of Encinitas. I don't think it could have been further than Encinitas. It was a little place on the railroad track and there was a Mrs. Hallet (sp) that lived there. She was a very peculiar character.

Q: We mentioned awhile ago looking at those pictures of Mr. McKay, what did you say he had in his place?

Gladys: George McKay. Oh, I used to think the most wonderful place at Christmas time because he had all sorts of little ornaments, things covered with shells and things that I thought were perfectly beautiful and little calendars that rang bells. But he had a great variety of things. She had a soda fountain there and she sold candy and I can't think what he had on the other side. He must have had, I don't ... no men's clothing, I think. I don't know. Mary might know what he had, I can't remember. I can only remember Mrs. McKay and the things that I admired. But he was usually on the counter on the other side and I don't know what he had. I don't think they had stationery.

Q: Was he a druggist?

Gladys: Oh heavens, no. We had two drug stores. We had Exton & Nichols up the street, which was there for years. ... It wasn't a general store ... I'll call Mary and see if she knows. It's not too late to call Mary. (made phone call to Mary Ronsse)

... She said later in his store, later they did move away, but that was a lot later because they were still there just before I came up to get married. I remember Father O'Keefe being there. She said he had guns there, but I don't think he had guns in that place ...

Q: From what I overheard in conversation he might have had sporting goods.

Gladys: Well, I think he might have now. Because I can't think of any other place but in those days I wasn't getting much of that. All I can remember is the candy and the soda fountain and the beautiful things that I thought she had at Christmas. Oh, I thought they were so wonderful. Little cardboard things with shells stuck on them. Oh, they must have been horrible, really!

Father went to buy some pigs soon after he came out, from one of the farmers there and he was a very friendly, hospitable sort of person. And when they finished the deal, it was about lunchtime or

dinnertime so he invited father in to have dinner with them. It was the first place father had eaten out anywhere since he came, so when they sat down at the table he said, "Now, Mr. Young, we don't have any of your English "pleases and thank you's" here, you just stick your fork into what you want"!

Q: Was this a close by neighbor?

Gladys: Well, it was a neighbor, wasn't very close. I know who it was, but I'm not going to tell, in case anybody ... I wouldn't want people to hear it, I mean, you know, that knew. I do know some of the descendants nowadays. I knew him or knew his wife quite well. You see, they had little Christian Sunday School that met in the San Luis Rey School house, that's the one near the Mission, not the Libby one. Lizzie French and I used to go over there to it. Mr. Borden, you've heard of the Borden family, well, he was the great Patriarch. We'd be driving into town on Sunday going to church and he'd come marching over the hills with his coat, or in his shirt sleeves and his coat thrown over his arm, and he had rather long hair and a beard. He looked exactly like one of the Old Testament prophets coming down to conduct this Sunday School. Later Lizzie and I used to go over to the Sunday School there. I suppose it was under the auspices of the Christian Church, really, I don't know. But the blacksmith, Mr. Watson was one of the teachers and he had a very fat wife and she was there, and, Mae Watson was very sweet and pretty used to teach our class at first. So we used to go over there regularly. I think it went on until they wanted me to sign the pledge that I would never drink and I think I took that home to the family and father was so shocked, father and mother, that I think they said I couldn't back anymore! But, by that time it was about time I was going away anyhow to school, so it didn't matter.