

## VICTOR HEAD CORRESPONDENCE—TYPED FROM ORIGINAL

409 Bensal Road  
Hatboro, PA 19040  
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Dear Barbara [Cater] ---

Please feel free to copy any and all of my GRIST articles. Though I claimed copyright, the claim was never registered. Dave Shannon, Executive Director of Millbrook Society, concurs in this permission. Enclosed are more, some which may be useful to Alpine Historical Society, and some which may amuse you.

Spring 1996 One-Room Schoolhouse, Part 1, New Hampshire

Summer 1997 – Tuna Part 1

Fall/Winter 1997-98 – Tuna Part 2

Spring 1998 – Tuna Part 3 (mostly about my brother Norman's life and career)

Summer 2000 and Fall 2000 – My hobbing adventures in February 1937 when I hoped to wind up west and marry Patty [Patty Foster Heyser]

Summer 1998 – Lindbergh Field and more

Also enclosed a sheet of five photos. You can see Bell Bluff in one of them.

Thanks for the little book, "Echoes of the Past," by Neil Galloway. I read it a bit at a time to Patty and she plans to order more copies from Alpine Historical Society for her family. Thanks also for your encouraging letter of 21 March 2007, with all the printouts of the society's website. After all the research you did on Benjamin R. Arnold, I think it would be a shame if they insist on shortening it. You have a knack for finding things out, and I wouldn't know where to begin!

Daddy Foster was known and loved all over Alpine, according to my mother. She told me how, when he was prospecting for gold, a large centipede crawled over him, leaving two rows of claw marks which became infected. He used tobacco juice as a disinfectant, which may well have saved his life. I always thought he was Patty's grandfather, but Patty says no, it was her father who went prospecting, and he never used tobacco. I think it likely that prospectors were advised to carry a plug for just such a purpose. I'm sure he would have carried a "rattlesnake kit." Every household in Alpine must have had such a kit before antitoxin shots were developed—a small wooden box with a small bottle of alcohol and cotton, a razor blade with which to lance an "X" on the bite, a package of potassium permanganate crystals to pack into the lanced place and appropriate bandaging. I remember Sister Foss (Bertha) had such a kit.

Patty's husband proved that oranges could thrive at the high altitude of Alpine.

When I was at the McNett Ranch, the foreman was Charlie Bottsford (sp?). I'll never forget when they brought in one of the wild horses to "break" for a riding horse. Charlie was holding

a rope on a halter when the horse reared so high he took Charlie's feet a couple of feet off the ground! Charlie had planted his own orange grove, near Lemon Grove perhaps, and he let me eat a few so ripe they had fallen to the ground. I've never had oranges nearly as sweet. I took five more, all I could carry. But when we stopped at the Log Cabin on the way home, I traded them to Patty's grandmother for an ice cream cone. I didn't know Patty then. She was doing early grades in the Garfield Elementary School in San Diego. But I'm sure she can tell you lots of stories about her parents and grandparents.

I should probably do a story about the Foss Ranch for GRIST. But another family I've never seen mentioned was the Amoses. It was probably the summer of 1928 when Mr. Amos asked Sister Foss if I would like to earn some money picking beans. They were dried but still in the shell. I had never seen money and had no sense of its value. I picked all there were filling a large gunnysack, singing at the top of my lungs a song I must have learned in school when Miss McClain was teacher:

Bring the good old bugle boys we'll sing another song—  
Sing it with a spirit that shall start the world along—  
Sing it as we used to sing it 50,000 strong  
Wile we were marching thru Georgia  
etc.—loads of verses

Mrs. Amos gave me a dime for my work. It was pretty but I don't know if I ever spent it. My singing was so loud Sister Foss could hear it and how she scolded! It seems the Amos family had come from the south and would be offended at any song celebrating Sherman's march, but to me, at age 10, it was just a funny song.

How the turkeys gobbled which our commissary found—  
How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground—  
Wile we were marching through Georgia—  
Hurrah, hurrah, we bring the jubilee  
Hurrah, hurrah, the flag that makes you free-  
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the Sea\  
While we were marching thru Georgia.

We were trying to escape the influenza epidemic started when the boys came home from "The War to End all Wars." Of course, I learned with horror of Sherman's scorched earth policy later.

I have a great deal of trouble reconstructing my life. I was with my whole family in Oakland east of San Francisco Bay and some little village called Fruitvale which I can't find on the map after having been born on Pauly Street, East San Diego, 31 December 1917, when there was open country between East San Diego and San Diego. Later as San Diego grew and absorbed East San Diego, the street was renamed 43rd Street.

I lived at Sacratro Valley twice. First while a baby right after the divorce. Then for five years the four of us were at the Theosophical school on Point Loma, beginning when I had just turned three and Norman was close to nine. After that it was here, there, everywhere and not all together.

Exact dates?  
Clark Cottages  
McNett Ranch

La Mesa  
Sacramento Valley again (GRIST "Kid on the Sweetwater")  
Foss Ranch

Left with mother and sisters for New Hampshire in June of 1929, though Norman stayed in Alpine.

Connie was with me sometimes at McNett Ranch, sometimes Foss Ranch, though Connie hated Sister Foss. She ran away back to Sister Mary at Sacramento Valley.

Those 1920 Census records leave much to be desired. I can't believe Sister Mary and Brother Tate were so young. Lampitt was Raymond, not George L. Brewer should be Brower or Brouer. I was born in California, not Maryland. Our father's place of birth was Washington DC and not New Hampshire. And how you ever found it when there is no mention of Sacramento Valley, only building numbers—WOW! I can't find trestler in the dictionary, and it is interesting that Kosmon House appears only under occupation.

If the old San Diego Orphanage still exists, it may have records of who went there and when. From Beatrice LaForce's book one would suppose that only Mexicans had lived in Sacramento Valley and that one teacher had divided his time between there and the first little school on the Foss Ranch.

A few other names of kids:

Schultes: "CH" who married my sister Connie, though I only saw him once getting into his car to go deer hunting at Sacramento Valley after the terrible flood destroyed the Kosmon Community.

Harold—tough talking kid.

Ruth—my adventure with hardboiled teacher, Mr. Beadle, third grade.

Bill who started school after we moved to New Hampshire.

Hills—Tommy walked home with us—a huge flat field that dried into many cracks and then burst into flowers (shooting stars) at first fall rain

Evan Jones and family

"Junior" Gibbs

Gordon Gershon

Petra Isaac

And especially Ostes probably listed as Ostes Foss, two years younger than I, many adventures until his parents took him away. He was really Ostes Largent. Grew up to be a California motorcycle cop, made the front cover of Life Magazine twice, but died young—heart problems, I think.

Well, I better quit now. I've only 2 ½ weeks to prepare what will doubtless be my last sermon as a "lay preacher" on Mother's Day.

God Bless,

Vic Head