

UPDATE NOTE

## COMING TO CALIFORNIA

As told by Herbert and Clara Morgan  
And little son Merrill (translator)

It was the first week of April 1942, Herbert and Clara, their then three children, my aunt Mindy Bell, my grand mother Ora Carpenter, the dogs snow white & mickey and my mothers bird left for California. World War II was five months old, America was losing the war on all fronts and the public did not know what a long struggle they were in for. It was a different time and age, before television, freeways plastic tooth brushes and throw away shaving razors and peoples "civil rights" was only understood as "civil responsibilities". We had family living in Sod houses south of town. Many people were still waiting for electricity. An era was coming to an end.

We take so many things for granted today. Water electricity, housing, transportation- food, also things like medical care and education. We even live in a society that has many social programs "safety nets" for people who cannot provide for them selves. My parents did not grow up in society as we know life today. Things were very different for them. My parents do not particularly like me to refer to them as coming from a rural society, but the truth is they came from the heartland of America, a small town in Nebraska. Population of their community when they left was approximately 400 inhabitants, less than a thousand people in the county.. Both my parents finished High School and had a little college, academically speaking put them a little ahead of the mainstream. Life was difficult in the late 1930's and early 1940's in rural Nebraska. The great depression as it was called was the existing economic structure at that time. A true cash economy did not exist at that time in Nebraska. In other words for all lifes needs, food water transportation ect. You did not go out and buy everything you needed. You depended on you family friends and neighbors to assist you, this was mutually understood. You helped each other when ever possible. This is how they lived.

I suppose my parents condition was not different than many Americans found themselves at this time and place in history. What always makes me proud of my parents is how they always conducted themselves in times of difficulty. When things were difficult for them they did not turn to alcohol or drugs, my father did not abandon his family. I actually think we, and I include myself, would have starved to death before we would have gone for welfare. Most all their life decisions at that time were for their children and family survival. My father got life insurance on himself as soon as he could afford it so his wife and children would not suffer. It was not an easy decision to leave Nebraska, a place where you had grown up, all your family and friends lived there. This decision was not made overnight. My father had worked in the hay fields for a dollar a day, he worked in the W.P.A. building the Rock County Court house for not much more. He drove a fuel truck and helped his father. I don't think my father was ever bitter over the fact he could not get a better job. There were people worse off than him. I know my father was not unhappy in Nebraska, in his heart he is a rancher/farmer. He had no interest in the new defense industry jobs my other family members wanted.

My Mother had dreams. She dreamed of material security for her little brood. She dreamed they would get an education and have a decent life style. She also dreamed of becoming an artist

at the Walt Disney studios in Hollywood. My mother sacrificed her dream of becoming an artist so that she could provide the basic necessities of life for her family. She taught school for 30 years so her children would have life a little easier. My mothers strong religious belief and convictions are her principal strength. My mother has always prayed for her children's salvation, health and success in life. (from the editor) she is still praying for her children.

The decision to immigrate to California was not a complete unanimous decision by my parents. I do not remember, but I have heard it discussed many times how when the car was packed and everybody was in the car to leave for California Herbert was at his parents house. There were 7 people in the car and we towed a little trailer, with the life possessions of these people in it. Herbert had told my mother he was not going to California. My parents had been living with their parents to save on money. The trip to California began on Sabbath evening after sun down. My aunt mindy drove my Uncles Herbert's greenish blue 1937 Lincoln Zephyr to my grand parents house to see my father. He had yet to agree to go to California. After calm reflective conversation he stated, yes he would go to California to help drive and would check the job situation out and if he could not find work after one month he would return to Nebraska.

HERB DID NOT PACK, LEFT WITH CLOTHES ON HIS BACK.

Leaving money: A major factor for all migrants My parents did not have any--- . What meager salary my father earned went to feed his little family. My mother had a "rich uncle" in town. She went to this uncle to borrow money to move to California. Her uncle demanded "collateral" and my Dear Mother explained she did not have "collateral", her uncle explained yes she did. She owned a small parcel of land, less than an acre ,her father had left her, in the township of Bassett near the High School which he would accept as "collateral" My mother brought her uncle the deed to the property and he loaned her seventy five dollars. With that 75 \$ my mother brought her husband, three small children, her strong belief in God and their limited luggage to California to begin a new life. Much of the leaving money was to be spent on gas money.

The trip began that evening when my father agreed to go. That first night on the road to California was a sleepless night for my parents, aunt and Grandmother. There was a certain excitement in the vehicle. My father was a little reserved at first but by morning they were in different country and my fathers mood began to be a little more positive about the trip. By the time we could see the rocky mountains Herbert was excited. We probably never went more than 35 miles per hour and most of the Highways were two lanes, one each way. It was not like in today's world where in a nights drive you can cross several borders. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME MY MOTHER

HAD BEEN OUT OF NEBRASKA

There are of course many things I do not remember about the trip and there are things that are crystal clear on my mind. I remember my aunt Mindys humor and laugh. My Aunt Mindy was one of the few people that could openly challenge and make fun of my father and he would take it good humordly. Once , I forgot what the Burma Shave sign said, and everybody was laughing about it except my father. Aunt Mindy said "that sounds like you Herb", "what's the matter don't you think that's funny?" then more of my aunt mindys laughter. My father was not a man to be made fun of but he always took it very good from my Aunt Mindy. I would keep an eye out for the Burma Shave Signs, sometimes we all read them out loud together and then laughed. There was another game they played with license plate letters and numbers. I was to young to read and play it but again I remember Aunt mindys beautiful laugh, sometimes Herb would not

like the name they made up and sulk a bit. You don't sulk around my Aunt Mindy, soon she would have all laughing again. There is a wartime poster of a woman factory worker, she was wearing bib overalls, hair tied back with a rag, gloves on hand, riveting an airplane. My aunt Mindy could have been the model for that poster because that is how she dressed and worked, as a rivitter.

The vehicle was packed. There was no room for me to sit. I would stand much of the time and sleep behind the rear seat next to the rear window. (there is a name for that location which fails me now) My dear Grand Mother Ora Carpenter would talk to me and have me to sit in her lap occasionally. My Dear Grand Mothers lap usually had my little sister or brother in it. It is safe to say now, my sister and I did not like snow white, my aunt Graces dog who traveled with us. It was a matter of rights. We began to think the dog had more rights than us as people worried about the dog more than us. I always remember my sister really disliked that dog. (my mother now admits it was kind of a scroungy dog and may have had fleas.)

When we were in Wyoming or possibly entering Colorado and were passing a large Army base. We saw on a plain literally thousands of soldiers marching in relatively tight formation. We had never seen anything like that. We almost had to rub out eyes and make sure what we were looking at. We pulled over to watch them march. Was my Uncle Herb in that formation ?? We were going to see Uncle Herb maybe he was out there marching, my Dear Mother went and got her square Kodak camera and began to take pictures. About that time several jeeps pulled up with armed military policeman. They came out of their vehicles quickly and more or less encircled us. One soldier began speaking, "did we see that sign over there?", he informed us this was a security area, there was no parking alongside the road "couldn't we see". My Mother protested that she was only looking for her brother and maybe he was in that formation. The military policeman was very firm and professional. He continued to talk as he took my mothers camera from her hands, open it and removed the film. He then inspected the empty camera clicking it and looking at it while he lectured us. It scared me. I remember we got out of there just like they told us.

I have other bad memories of the trip but probably the one that caused me to feel the most odd was the night we were robbed. There had been discussion about staying in a motel but of course money had been a factor. I believe it was Roswell New Mexico that motel price, and tired travelers from Nebraska came together. We got this "discount type" room. It was crowded but better than the car. We heard a new language, Spanish was being spoken around us. I cannot remember if it was early morning or evening but to this day I can remember my fathers face when he was standing by the door telling us we had been victimized. It was dark outside. At first he was not speaking in a strong voice and would glance toward the trailer., the trailer had been broken into. My family was calmer than I expected, possibly they were feeling sorry for the thieves who thought they might find something valuable in the trailer. We had few things a thief would want. Most of our worldly possessions we were on our backs.

My Uncle Ernest was already in California. He had told us how difficult it was to enter California. He had been stopped from entering California several times in his youth when he had been riding the rails. Many years ago when I first became a policeman my Dear Uncle Ernest

told me , confidentially that in his youth in Prescott Arizona he had been pulled from a freight train in the train yard by the rail road police and turned over to the local sheriff who put him on a chain gang. Apparently much of the sewer system was dug by hand from these chain gangs. My Dear Uncle Ernest was an intelligent resourceful guy, he told me he went along with the program to get some regular meals and that once he was rested up he escaped. I never did check it out but he was convinced there was still a warrant out for him. I do know when Uncle Ernest drove back to Nebraska he always drove north through Utah ☺. We knew they kept people out of California. At the border and we were concerned.

When we arrived at the California border there was excitement and tension. There was a long line and what appeared to be people mulling about. They made us remove everything from the vehicle and trailer, they then inspected us. I don't remember anything bad happening but I know my mother did not like it. She did not like the way they treated our belonging. The war had started and they were looking for saboteurs. We were glad to leave there.

I remember being hot and thirsty in the Great American Desert. Air conditioning for cars as we know it had not been invented. We drank water from bottles and at gas stations, sometime it did not taste very good. We began to talk and think how nice it would be to have a glass of ice water. I think it must have been Needles we got enough nerve to go into a restaurant and ask for water. Water was sold by the glass we were told. It may have been 5 cents a glass, I forgot, but we did not get any. I developed a great dislike for the Great American Desert. Where we came from there was always plenty of fresh clear cool water, for everybody. Things were cleaner and the people nicer.

I will now turn the whole family in for criminal offence's, they are guilty of including myself. Remember I told you it was a different time and place a long time ago. We generated trash and at times the vehicle became littered. What do you think became of that trash,? well it went out the window just as happy as could be, not a worry in the world. For example if you had an egg to peel you held it out the window of a moving vehicle and you peeled it. Just that simple. Once as some trash went out the window I asked what became of it. I was told it decomposed just like any organic plant that died along side the road. There was much truth in that statement because packaging, especially the type we used did not have all the plastics it has today. This was long before plastic diapers and fast food stands and aluminum foil, we had paper sacks and cloth towels and diapers.

We were a little surprised there was so much desert in California. We saw some people plowing dry dirt and making little ridges with the dirt. Later we saw water running between the rows, we had never seen anything like that. My father, who knows everything announced that this was "irrigation" and they were going to grow things out in the desert. I was amazed, growing things in the desert and they were also selling water by the glass full, what a strange place this was.

On April 11, 1942, it must have been in Riverside county or some place similar when we felt we had really arrived in California. We had seen some palm trees and this was a new experience for us, what a funny shape they had, and how tall they were. What made us park the car, get out and walk up to them were "ORANGE TREES", with oranges on them !! They were beautiful !!. Actually I think it was my mother who made them park the car .(my mother could not drive then)

We walked into the grove. We were pulling fruit off the tree, smelling it and tasting them. We had missed meals on the way to California and were possibly hungry. They must have been not ripe yet because I do not remember a complete consensus that these are good oranges. Today I live near orange groves, if I saw an immigrant family romping in an orange grove, pulling oranges and such I would not be upset, I would remember the delight of my mother when she smelled and felt the oranges. She knew she had her family in California. Everybody "breath in" she would say, "smell the oranges" and all her little children would. The smell of an orange grove brings this memory back to me to this day. My mother would often give instructions to all her little children at the same time.

I remember arriving at the home of my Dear Aunt Francis and Uncle Ernest, it must have been evening or early morning as I remember sort of a dusk looming. I must have had to go to the bathroom or something as I remember being sort of preoccupied at the moment, Herb had me by the hand we walked around a corner and there was another new site. All these large helium filled oval shaped balloons several hundred feet in the air. They were held down by a steel cable but the fascinating part was they had steel cables strung between the balloons, which held up this incredible floating mesh over everything. I asked my Uncle Ernest what those things were for He explained that in the factories below us they were building airplanes and that these cable could catch & snag any fighter plane coming into attack. Some of the cables also held camouflage. This was not like Nebraska.

My Dear Uncle Ernest, my loving Uncle Andy were already working. My dear Aunt Minday went to work almost immediately. All in the Defense Industry. My father found work about two weeks later. He did not want to go to work in the factories making airplanes. My parents borrowed my Uncle Andrews car and My father began looking for a job. My parents with all their children went looking for a job. We went to several places. When we arrived at Golden State milk processing plant my mother actually entered the building first and began talking to the first man she saw sitting at a desk. My mother describes him as an elderly man with influence at the plant. My mother explained to the gentleman we had just arrived from Nebraska and that her husband , that handsome fellow in the hall knew a lot about modern dairies and had studied Agriculture in college. He wrote my mother a note on the back of his business card, directing Herbert to interview with this other person. When Herbert arrived to talk to this other person he looked at the note, looked at Herbert and told him there is no need to interview, with this fellows recommendation you have the job. This made my parents very happy. Herbert's starting salary was .49cents an hour, things were looking good, that was almost 5 \$ a day. Herbert was very happy when he learned they also had overtime and got paid extra for it. My father worked for golden State Dairies and affiliates for over 43 years. He began at the lowest entry level job possible and when he retired he was the plant manager. My father missed very few days work in his career. I remember him going to work sick and exhausted. I also remember during the war Herbert worked for Coca Cola bottling on South Central Ave. full time, while also working full time at Golden State.

The war years brought other experiences and tragedies to our lives. In our little neighborhood housing was small and neighbors were close. You could stand in a number of locations and see the "Stars". If you had a blue star you had a son or husband in the Navy, A brown star indicated a son or husband in the army. If you had a gold star your family member had been killed. As

time wore on more and more gold stars appeared in windows. At nights we had "air raid drills" and the air raid warden came by to make sure no light was emanating from your house. The Air Raid Warden was usually an old man with an arm band, a pack of some sort and a helmet. Then the letter came we knew would come. My fathers draft notice. He had to report to the draft board. On the appointed day my father dressed in his best suit. My father and mother were (are) a handsome couple. My father was tall and erect, no pot-belly then. He would shave with a brush, mug and adjustable steel razor. He would put on quite a show for his kids watching as he shaved. He would often chase them around like he was going to paint their faces with shaving soap. Some of his children would get in trouble playing with dads shaving things. On this day Herbert was more somber than most. We did not know what to expect. We had heard of people told to report for the draft and that was the last you saw of them. All of us, my two brothers, Nial had been born recently, and my sister my mother and father went to the building outside the Draft Board Office. My parents were very concerned, what would happen to us if they took Herbert. My mother did not work, did not drive, she was about 23 and had four small children and now the government wanted her husband for war.. I remember that day . First we all prayed for Herbert and I can imagine the prayers of small children wanting to keep their daddy from going to war. We did this on the street in broad day light in down town Los Angeles. Herb left us and went across the street. I remember it to be a two story building light brown in color. My mother, brothers, sister and myself stayed on the sidewalk and continued to pray for Herbert. I kept my eye on that building, I was not going to let them keep Herbert without a little fight. It seemed like ages but eventually he came out. I do not remember an overjoyed reaction from Herbert but I do remember some "alleluias" from my mother. I also remember some jumping children when they were told their father would not have to go to war at that moment. I believe God did hear the prayers of that little group

We had one neighbor lady friend, actually she was everybody's friend. I want to call her Mrs. Lewis but I am really not sure of her name. She lived in the apartment next to us in the front apartment on Coronado. Her unit was on the south side of the building and had a view of the street. This was the best apartment in the building as the others only had a window to the apartment next to them and her window let in little light. Her apartment was very small by today's standards but we thought it elegant. She did have nice furniture and things, and she did dress elegantly. This was a time when people took pride in their dress. She was a thin woman, I always thought old to have son as a naval aviator, I never remember her speaking of her husband but the walls of her apartment were covered with photographs of her son. Pictures of him in college, in training and on his aircraft carrier. Her apartment had a kitchen about 4'x6' and a front room probably 8'x10', small by any standard. When we visited her, and my mother was usually with us she would always give us some coins. Usually a dime, occasionally a quarter and we would do little errands for her. She was so proud of her son, the whole neighborhood was proud of her son. One day her blinds were drawn, soon there was a Gold Star in the window. We all felt bad. I remember being in her crowded apartment with other people. Their was sobbing and grief. I can say, without remorse that everybody in America, Everybody that I knew felt hate for Japanese and Germans. We were becoming aware of their war crimes. We did not have television but we did have radio and newspapers, and news reels. When there was a battle or an invasion and many enemy deaths were reported, the population felt good. When the war ended my mother and I were walking in front of a fire station. My mother was taking me to my violin

lesson. The fire Station began ringing all types of bells. We were not sure what was going on so I went inside the fire station and asked what the problem was. The happy fireman told me "the war is over" I was not sure what to think of that but reported to my mother. At first the news was numbing. We had been at war so long. What is an atomic bomb? Soon people came out onto the street, people would shout, it was a very joyful time. When the neighborhood learned about all the Japanese killed in nuclear attacks many people wanted to keep bombing them. The hate from the war was very alive and real, retribution was the existing sentiment.

(out of sequence)

We have been in California several weeks, Herbert had a job and he is starting to get into the mood, California is not such a bad place. Then we they went to find a place to live on our own. The war had just started and housing was scarce. My parents would borrow my Uncle Andys car Mindy would drive while they looked. It became very frustrating, doors were slammed in their face, people laughed at them, not with all those kids they were told. They were told this many many times They were getting desperate. Soon they began to leave the children in the car so they would not be subject to the humiliation and rejection. They went to this real estate office inquiring about rentals. They were told there were some "courts" that people could live in until the war was over, but the minute the war was over they must vacate the property. This did not sound bad. A Mr. Palmer who had been the owner of this property and who was to collect the rent showed them the property. The house had been the managers office of the court. The rent was a grand 22.00\$ a month. My parents took it on the spot. An alley terminated in our front yard. There was two story brick apartment house next to our court. There was no off street parking and there was a vacant lot south of us which on one bright sunny afternoon I caught on fire. The lot needed cleaning as it was very littered. We lived there about 3 years and I have many memories of that location. Occasionally my parents would ask that something be repaired in the house, Mr. Palmer would repeat "not one thin dime", and the whole time we lived there he did not spend one thin dime to repair the place. Herbert began to shine to California mebey things were not so bad. Herbert rode the trolley to work, but first he had to walk about 1 ½ miles to the trolley then home again. He did this for some time thinking he was saving money. Being a Strong Nebraska boy walking 1 ½ miles was nothing. Herbert would watch the other busses and trolleys go by as he walked but he did not want to spend any extra money. One day someone asked him why didn't he ask for a transfer. I am not sure of his reply but they explained to him he could get a transfer slip and catch the trolley that took him by his house. It took Herbert some years before we could tell other people about this and laugh. Note: We lived off Alvarado St. for two months or less and with relatives for a similar time We were Nebraska gypsies for the first few months we were in California.

Because Herbert worked for Golden State we signed up for a home delivery account for milk products, which was almost the normal situation in those days. My mother was very happy with this arrangement as she would have milk, eggs cottage cheese and other dairy products delivered to her door and she did not have to pay for them at that moment but could wait until the first of the month. She felt it was a "God Send". After a period of time my father was able to bring home "day old" dairy products which had been taken off the shelf.(I never did find out who took them off the shelf) As the war continued and rationing was implemented these "day old" dairy products became one of the ways we functioned. I was the salesman/delivery boy and we would

sell/trade these products to our neighbors. It was not very difficult and the reality was when people learned we had butter for example we never had any difficulty getting rid of it. Note: My mother does not like me telling this' I do not find it offensive at all. I am glad my dad was able to bring those "day old products" home. It did give our household a little status in the neighborhood. My dear Mother is afraid we were breaking some law, to this day. The rationing system and wartime regulations made all fearful. Note: Nial in convinced one reason all of Herbert and Claras children are as healthy as they are is because of their high protein diet as children.

One day when were living on Coronado street we had visitors. Ralph and Billy Henderson, brothers whom had spent much of their life as children with my Grand Mother Ora Carpenter's family in Nebraska. Both had been in Army training in Riverside California. They were training to land in Gliders behind enemy lines. We were very proud of them in their army uniforms and boots. Billy visited us twice, I was always very excited to see him and of course he would grab and wrestle like kids do. Billy smoked and acted sort of cocky in his uniform, he was a no stripe private. My mother would feed him and yes as a small boy I looked up to him, usually with many questions about the war he had never been to and his cap at an angle. The last time Billy came to see us he was standing on the front porch of the Coronado place, he reached onto his collar and took off one of his round army buttons and gave it to me. My mother still has that button. He probably had little else to offer a small boy who admired him very much and was very impressed by his uniform. Billy and Ralph landed in gliders in the Normandy Invasion. Billy was killed the first day, Ralph told us later Billy and 11 other fellows were seeking shelter in a French barn when a German soldier threw an hand grenade in the building killing him instantly. Billy was seventeen. Ralph lived and fought all the way through Europe. I remember him telling us about the join up with the Russians and how he hated Russians. I asked him why ? are not the Russians our friends ? Ralph said the Russians would fire their cannons and rockets on the Germans then fire on us. Ralph physically survived the war but had other problems from which he never recovered and died at a young age.

We got by without a car for the first 6 months or so. Automobiles were getting harder to get and of course the prices were going up also. I remember my father telling my mother about the "new car" and we became excited that now we would have a car. My father brought home a black 1936, 4 door Ford, we were glad to see it. That car did not last long, once it had 3 flat tires at the same time- you just did not go out and buy a tire during the war- none were available. Automobile production was stopped in the United States in late 1941 for the duration of the war. Of course tires and spare parts were all scheduled for the military and were difficult to obtain. My father sold that car for 100\$ more than he paid for it, 300\$. Things were looking up. My father then bought a new (used) 1941- 4 door Chevrolet sedan. To us it was beautiful. Until almost two years after the war ended it was one of the nicest vehicles around. On Herbert's day off we always went to see other dairies and farms. Herbert would drive the big 1941 Chevrolet down the street and say " kids do you see a newer car on the streets" we would all say in unison "no" he would then say "do you see a nicer car on the streets" we would all look around and again say in unison "no". And it was true, all the other cars were older. That car lasted my parents many years, until about 1950 as I remember. One of the things we liked to do as a family on a warm summers night was to go to the fountain at the corner of Fountain and Griffith Park

Ave. and watch the fountain change colors and shapes. This was big fun time. Lots of running noise making and snacks. Nothing like this in Nebraska.

Rosemont Street School, where I began my formal education in California. It was a short walk from our house on Coronado St. The first day my mother and I walked to school, it would be more correct to say my mother brothers and sister walked me to school. We walked a lot as that was how we got around without a car. My mother took me into the class room, we will call it that, it was a large room like a small auditorium and there were many children and people there. When my mother left I felt very frightened and alone. There were some play logs in one corner and I spent the day there, hiding in the logs. I went to Rosemont School the next 4 years. I do not have many good memories of Rosemont school. The student teacher rate was probably 45 to 1. Once I was chased all the way home by this big black kid, about twice my size. This was not the first time it happened. He chased me all the way to my front porch, I decided right there and then this has got to stop, no more. I knew exactly what I was doing when I reached up, as he was much bigger than I and punched him as squarely and as hard as I could right on the end of his nose. The punch was successful drawing a good amount of blood causing the bully to run away. My mother saw the whole thing and knew I was not the aggressor. What was funny in about 15 minutes this boys mother, who was over twice as big as my mother (seriously) came to our house wanting to know why I was picking on her boy. My mother stood her ground and did not allow herself to be intimidated by that woman. I was very proud of my little mother. That was the last time I got chased home from school and I don't ever remember seeing that woman or her boy again. When I began school in Baldwin Park I was behind the other students academically. During the war years Rosemont School teachers would discuss what was going on in the War and have "Stamp Drives" these were little different than the "Bond" drives which were for adults. I don't remember learning much at Rosemont School, the teachers (baby sitters)would send notes home "this kid is a dreamer" and "has smudgy papers"(unusual for a left handed kid with a soft #2 pencil to drag his hand over his paper ?). During the stamp drives children were encouraged to buy these stamps for 25 cents up to a dollar. I bought stamps but I have never heard of anybody cashing in stamps. Children were part of the war effort also. I collected cans and metal objects to turn in. Some you got paid for and others you got thanked for. I also collected bottles in the alley for redemption .value. Some of the items you turned in at school. At times they would even collect lard and animal fats. The war effort effected our whole lives and that of the country. It is difficult if not impossible to explain in today's "mind set" how things were then.

MEMORIES OF CORONADO STREET: ☺@My little brother Andrew, for a number of years wore a home made cape. He had many ways to make a cape and at times he almost did begin to fly. He was superman !! He did conduct many flight experiments and could make his cape fly up behind him as he ran about the house and porch. The front porch, my younger brothers and sister spent much time there. I was often in the giant caster bean plant next to our house or on other adventures, which I will reveal to my parents now for the first time ☺@. We did not have many toys, I don't even think you could buy them if you did have the money. We used to make things, improvise. One of my favorite play things, and other kids in the neighborhood was the stubs of transfer coupons you obtained when riding the trolley. You could get these in a number of ways but off the trolley was the best way. Often I would wait for the trolley door to open then dart inside the trolley picking the stubs up off the floor. Soon other little friends and myself got to be

pretty good at this. Then somebody got the idea, and it was correct, that downtown on Broadway there were many trolleys and we could get many more stubs. How to get downtown—easy , we ride the trolley. So I jump up on the back of the trolley grating and away I go. It was easy and fun and downtown was a gold mine of stubs. I was never kicked off the trolley and people would look at us as if that was normal. I guess it was for the times. I have been in foreign countries where children still do this and it always looks so dangerous to me now. ☺@I was aware of my parents financial struggle. There was a neighborhood market on the South side of Temple East of Coronado St. we used to frequent. It was owned by a Jewish fellow named "Sam Oberg" as I recall. He and my mother were friends, he also was fond of Andrew and would give him a little something when ever we visited him. He probably looked at me and said to himself that is one of those kids that jump onto the trolley. Sam would extend my mother credit and he would put it on our bill and we would pay him when we could. I have made trips to the market and had things put on the bill.☺@ When we went to the movies (14 cents) they would also have "news reels" of the world, mostly war. When they had a bad battle scene with many bodies laying about my Dear Mother would have a fit. "Close your eyes children" she would begin saying in the movie theater. The smaller children closer to her she would put her hands over their eyes, then she would insist the other children put their hands over their eyes, I did but I peeked-sorry mom ☺@ Often I would go with Herbert on his days off, early in the morning to the wholesale market on Central Ave. and Seventh Street. I always liked that place, all sorts of activity. Herbert would buy potatoes by the hundred pounds, grapes by the big box. It was always fun to go there with Herbert and walk through the wholesale district. Then when we brought the big sack of potatoes and other things home there was always a big feast of the fruit or what ever things in season we brought . Herbert and Clara were never happier with their children than when they came home from the wholesale market with lots of goodies to eat ☺@ Cliftons Cafeteria makes me hungry to hear those words. Clifton's was located on Olive and Sixth Street as I remember, we had to ride the trolley there of course, and had to get cleaned up before we went. It was worth the effort because we got to eat our little hearts out. We always looked forward to eating at Clifton's. Clifton's was for special events like birthdays. Clifton's had religious overtones. As you waited in line, which there always was, you went down these stairs below street level. There was replicas of Christ when he was put in prison by Pilot. They had a liberal policy about payment and guaranteed satisfaction Once my mother got sick after eating there, we told them about it and she was given a free meal. Going to Clifton's was a major event.

After the war ended we knew we had to move. Regular housing was impossible to obtain. We had looked every spare moment we could. Herbert and Clara would look without ceasing for housing, with their children. Nials first words were "how much is the down payment". Everyone it seems like was looking for housing. The people who came to California for the war jobs were staying and all the military persons who had been in California knew they wanted to live here. The largest construction boom in California's history was about to begin. My Grand Mother Ora Carpenter and my Uncle Andrew had purchased from some of their church friends, the Strong's property, a one acre lot and house on Vineland Street in Baldwin Park. The property had several out buildings and my Uncle Ernest and Andrew were building another small house on the property. My parents bought a 30' house trailer and placed on the property towards the rear. Everyone was excited about this, we had a place to live. I had helped to clean out an old chicken

coop, it became housing for humans. I never did sleep in the trailer as I slept on the porch of my Grandmothers or in the laundry room. Sometimes on "Sabbath" many people would congregate at my Grandmother Carpenters house on Vineland. There would be "potluck" food, sermons, long prayers and the part I enjoyed most was singing- music. My little brothers and I were getting pretty good at jerico road, Old Rugged Cross and other songs were we could sing our little lungs out and nobody would notice. There would be so many people parking would be a problem. I wish family and friends still got together like that. We were not all that unusual in family gatherings, I think its something America doesn't do any more. We were still driving the 1941 Chevrolet and my mother was about to begin teaching school. Herbert was getting promotions at a regular rate and was about to be a foreman at this point. California had been good to us. We had many blessings. All of us children were healthy and strong. As my Grandmother Carpenter used to say of the Morgan kids, "in California they grow year round". (polio was rampant at the time, at school you could see a number of children on crutches)

New experiences, there were a number of these. One day a friend of my dads had invited us over to his house for dinner. Not just any dinner but for "Mexican Food". We did not know what to make of this but we went along with the program. My dads friend was a Mexican American and he assured us we would like this dinner. He and his family had the food all laid out for us so we could see what was in it. This was a major concern for my mother. Then he showed us how to take the tortilla, put the beans in first, then the meat, then the tomatoes cheese and lettuce. I can remember to this day my first taste of taco, I loved it. My whole family loved those tacos. I ate them till I thought I would burst and I would have eaten another if I could have. My mother tried to make tacos later, this was at the insistence of her whole family. Sometimes my mother made good tacos and other times not so good. During this time we did not eat at fast food restaurants or drive thru's. Families ate together, shared their food together.

If there was an event which marked my family being assimilated and becoming true Californians this was it. My father and I, one Sunday, were continuing our frustrating search for housing. We were in our faithful 1941 Chevrolet. We found this one housing tract under construction in north Baldwin Park. The road had not been paved and they were just framing the houses. Herbert parked the car, told me to stay in the car, there was so much construction going on he wanted me to be able to tell anybody he would be right back and he went and talked to some guy. Herbert came back and said we could get one of these houses. We parked and talked. Herbert explained he could get this bigger lot but they wanted 300\$ more, should we buy it?. We decided to go look at the bigger lot. We thought it was enormous , compared to what space we had had it was. Herbert struck the deal at that moment. \$6550.00 sale price,\$750.00 down payment and \$48.00 a month payment, which included taxes. We were happy. Two bedrooms a bath and a garage, and a big lot with orange trees. My mother was a little disappointed, she wanted a bigger house, at least three bedrooms for her children. We moved into the house before it had its final inspection. We really needed the space. A few days before we moved in we went to a "war surplus" store on valley Blvd. Herbert bought two sets of army bunk beds for his children to sleep in. Rules for bathroom useage were soon to follow. My mother wanted roses, my father planted them for her alongside the driveway. We were part of California now. Nebraska seemed far away, it was.

Television had just been invented. It must have been in the early 1950's when a friend of my dads at the dairy invited us over for television. When we arrived at my dads friends house he had in his front room he had it set up like a movie theater with benches and all. There was quite a crowd at my dads friends house. You had a hard time seeing the picture and I forgot what the programming was. Later in the year Herbert would take us (his children) to the radio store in Baldwin Park to watch television. Radio stores sold televisions then. They would put a television in the store front window and at night people would stand outside the store and watch the television. Sometimes you would get quite a crowd at the radio store, or worse yet the television would get out of adjustment and there would be nothing but electronic junk on the screen, this was about half the time. Televisions were not as reliable as they are today. Herbert decided he had to have a television set. I am not sure he discussed this with my mother as television made an instant hit with Herbert- it changed his life ☺. Herbert paid a handsome sum for his first television. It was an 8" Muntz and cost \$368.00. They only came in black and white. I must have been about 12 years old before I saw my first television set. We began to feel and express thoughts that we had it much better than those folks in Nebraska and we were glad we lived in California. We did not miss the ice , wind and snow of Nebraska winters.